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The Language Problem in European Cinema
Discourses on
'Foreign-Language Films' in Criticism, Theory and Practice

Thesis by
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Submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Glasgow
Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies

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Abstract

The Language Problem in European Cinema. Discourses on 'Foreign-Language Films' in Criticism, Theory and Practice

The thesis describes a range of discourses on language in cinema as they have emerged in film reception, production and exhibition contexts in Europe, and assesses their implications for the critical construction of European cinema. The thesis argues that the 'problem' of language is constituted in a number of pervasive but seldom acknowledged discourses which have circumscribed the ways in which the category 'European cinema' is understood. The primary sources utilised in the research, which date from the 1920s to the present day, are film magazines and journals, trade journals, policy documents and interviews.

The thesis pays particular attention to the exhibition and reception cultures surrounding 'foreign-language films' in Britain. It takes a historical approach in addressing the cineaste attitudes promoted in the magazines *Close-Up* and *Sight and Sound*, and reflects upon the reaction against the film appreciation tradition communicated by the journal *Screen*. The thesis also explores the positioning of European cinema at film festivals and contemplates the translation issues therein, including the contemporary correspondence between the practice of subtitling and rhetoric on the 'original version' and the culturally 'authentic' film. It examines how language is implicated in the argument for a 'cultural exception', which was used in

defence of European film industries during the 1993 GATT negotiations, and considers how filmmakers in Denmark have attempted in their production activities to test the parameters of this discourse on exceptionality by producing Dogma '95 and English-language 'cross-over' films.

The thesis finally looks at the relationship between Scottish cinema exhibitors and the European Commission, organisations which are institutionally linked through the Europa Cinemas network, and suggests that a similar ethics of consumption is articulated by each with respect to European cinema. The thesis argues that while the status of European cinema as foreign-language cinema is rarely addressed, its framing as such nonetheless impinges significantly upon the ways in which European films are consumed. While not attempting to provide a history of language and translation in European cinema, this thesis does offer some historically grounded explanations for the circulation of discourses on language and translation in European cinema cultures and the competing interests at work in shaping these.

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This thesis is dedicated to Elizabeth M. Renfrew Munro (1909-2005)

Contents

<i>Abstract</i>	i - ii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	iii
1. Introduction. The Language Problem in European Cinema.	
Discourses on 'Foreign-Language Films' in Criticism, Theory and Practice	1 - 22
2. Sound Motives. Language Problems and Cultural Ideals in the	
Transition to Talking Pictures	23 - 62
3. Film Criticism, Specialised Cinemas and Subtitles: 'For Filmgoers Only'	63 - 103
4. European Cinema Studies? The Status of Art Cinema, 'Post-Theory'	104 - 137
5. Film Festivals, Film Industries. Debating Inequity and the Cultural Exception	138 - 185
6. English-Language Films and the Global Cultural Economy. Building an	
International Profile at Denmark's 'Film City'	186 - 237
7. Educating the Citizen-Consumer: Foreign-Language Films and the	
'Europa Cinemas' Network	238 - 270
8. The Language Problem and Cinema: Themes, Limitations and Findings	271 - 287
<i>Notes</i>	288 - 316
<i>Bibliography</i>	317 - 358

Chapter 1

Introduction.

The Language Problem in European Cinema. Discourses on 'Foreign-Language Films' in Criticism, Theory and Practice

I began watching 'foreign' films as a teenager in Scotland in the mid-1990s. The films I encountered in this period of discovery invariably came from continental Europe and were critically acclaimed. I developed a fascination with contemporary European films by chancing upon late-night, subtitled films shown on BBC 2 and Channel 4 which I began habitually recording onto VHS to see after school. Without exception and unquestioningly I watched these films subtitled and regarded them almost generically as 'world cinema'. My enjoyment of subtitled stories tempted me, infrequently at first, into the Cameo and the Filmhouse in Edinburgh, then as now regarded as more specialised 'art' or 'cultural' cinemas.

Although I know certain of my contemporaries have had different adolescent experiences with foreign films in Britain, sampling so-called 'cult' imports (often genre filmmaking from Western Europe or Hong Kong, appearing subtitled, dubbed or without translation on video and later DVD), my own burgeoning awareness of film culture outside popular American and British movies was limited to the purportedly intellectual films produced in other European languages. As is arguably often the case, my experience of European cinema quickly became circumscribed by the conditions under which I could have access to the films and by the reception activities surrounding the films' exhibition contexts. The self-consciously grown-up, quality film recommendation

in the television guide, the extended promotional blurbs in art house cinema programmes or the film reviews in *Sight and Sound* magazine undoubtedly influenced my perception of foreign films and their privileged status in the alternative film culture which had captured my curiosity.

The ways in which my own and other film consumers' perceptions of the apparently diverse body of films sheltered under the umbrella of 'world cinema' might be structured or directed has become a topic of fascination for me. This thesis has been strongly motivated by my desire to understand historically what conditions and opinions have led to the particular ways in which European films have been identified, treated and consumed in Britain. In particular, I am interested in the broad-brush differentiation taking place in the British exhibition sector which sees Hollywood films in their more popular manifestations domesticated in ways that subtitled, foreign-language films, in all forms, are generally not. Language and its translation appear to be a sticking point in the separation of the familiar and the foreign and the popular and the specialised in Britain. The objective of this thesis is to examine this dynamic. Although there is an increasing amount of research being conducted into the mechanisms of cinema economics and marketing, up until now there has been little effort made by film scholars to understand what it means to consume films as 'foreign-language cinema'. Few have attempted to address how the consumption of foreign-language films is done and in relation to which critical reception cultures.

The history of foreign cinema exhibition in Britain has been shaped by the notion of specialist interest. In the silent era, certain 'big' foreign films were available in British picture houses but it was more usual that foreign films could not be seen by the majority

of cinemagoers, particularly those living in provincial areas. Beginning in 1925, the London Film Society imported and exhibited films from abroad (especially from Russia) which were either banned from regular cinemas or censored, and prided itself on the selection of films of artistic merit. While the Society was criticised for being elitist its screenings were extremely well attended – if only accessible to a metropolitan few.

Popular claims continue until the present day that the silent period was a golden age for European cinema consumption internationally as the 'language barrier' didn't apply.¹ Some scholars have suggested, however, that even if differences between films were not heard, cultural differentiation between films occurred nonetheless and could amount to prejudice against certain identifiable national cinemas for political, cultural or aesthetic reasons (see Budd 1990). It has been said that before sound Hollywood films were associated in Europe and the United States and Canada with a 'brand guarantee', the acknowledgement of which may somewhat dispel the notion that European films could compete with Hollywood on a grand international scale before the coming of sound (Bakker 2005: 42). Kerry Segrave has discussed how in the United States 'quality' was used as the primary argument against the exhibition of imported films; European films, according to many industry spokespeople, simply weren't good enough to be shown on American screens (2004: chapter 2). Ironically, or perhaps predictably, Hollywood studios were concurrently recruiting talent from Europe as they complained of Europe's cinematic shortcomings.

The successful era for foreign films in the United States, according to Segrave, was 1895 – 1915. In the second half of the silent era the U.S. market was dominated by domestic productions which were protected by vertical integration practices (Segrave

2004: 35 – 6). The 'Film Europe' movement towards European co-production and distribution arrangements, which is sometimes celebrated for its boldness of international collaborative vision in the interwar period, can be seen as an emergency measure after a decade of uncertainty while Hollywood consolidated its position of strength in European markets after the war, which had devastated a number of national film industries.

Sound was rolled out largely under American steam after a period of decline for European film industries. Many of the more vocal enthusiasts of foreign pictures in Britain were principally opposed to sound and its connotations of American bullishness. Sound was considered a threat to sophisticated silent film technique, which was regarded as mature 'film art'. They expressed concern, as indeed Hollywood also did for a short time, that including speech in films would 'nationalise' cinema once and for all and put an end to film's perceived enlightening universalism. Sound, as I will explain in the next chapter, could be recuperated by the foreign film enthusiasts with guidance from the Soviet montage theorists whose opinions on film art they held in high esteem. It was in fact speech, as a dominant structuring element of film narrative and characterisation, which created a crisis across the range of film culture in Europe, in industry, criticism and theorising.

The research which forms the basis of this thesis is underpinned by the hypothesis that not only are filmmakers, distributors and exhibitors frequently engaged in problem-solving with respect to the potential international circulation and appeal of cinema but also that attitudes towards language and translation in film influence the outcomes of this activity. Although it has often been remarked upon as an issue, little serious investigation has been conducted into how approaches to language translation and the value or

significance of the actor's voice in cinema might contribute to the success with which a film is sold, distributed and exhibited internationally. When I began the research I felt there was a need to address the ways in which language may be approached by those involved in the production and consumption of cinema not solely in practical ways but also in ideologically laden terms. I believed it was high time to consider more directly the role of film critics, educators and policy-makers in shaping the notion of foreign-language cinema and to explore how cinema practitioners respond to, negotiate and develop the discourses deployed by these groups. This second conviction proved to be an ambitious undertaking. What has emerged from my attempt to follow it through is neither the proof nor the shaping of a cause and effect model with respect to the relationship between writing about films and cinema practices. Instead, I have in the research process uncovered some discourses on language and cinema which are shared across the overlapping fields of film criticism, theory and practice in a European context.

The choice of case studies in this thesis is deliberately suggestive of the sometimes elusive connections between film criticism, theorising and industrial practices. The central questions I wanted to address through the case studies were as follows:

1. What discourses have developed in film criticism and theory around language and language translation with respect to European cinema?
 - Where have critical discussions on language and translation in European cinema emerged and why?
 - Are there relevant contexts where these discussions have been avoided and, if so, why?

- What are the dominant critical and theoretical discourses on language and translation in European cinema and where, when and why have they been subject to change?
2. What currency do these discourses have with cinema practices in Europe?
- Can parallels be drawn between the dominant critical and theoretical discourses on language in cinema and the attitudes towards language difference in European cinemas held by film industries?
 - Do discourses on a 'language problem' in European cinema affect contemporary European film industries and the cultural policies directed toward them?

I understand film culture to be that which differentiates films themselves as 'raw' product from our mediated relationships to them and it is the latter which I aim to demonstrate is the key to understanding attitudes to foreign-language films.

At this point the topics of language and translation in film studies might at best be described as loosely defined. It is only within the last fifteen to twenty years that debates around screen translation practices have emerged in the academic world and these have been predominantly contained within the newly emergent field of translation studies.

While in the 1980s film scholars became excited about sound, with few exceptions there remained a reluctance to speak about spoken language, the voice and its transformation or mediation in translation. As a corrective I have identified instances where the subject of language in cinema, if not exactly explicitly analysed, is at least visible in the wings.

As I shall discuss at various points, the notion of cinema as a language in and of itself has been a prominent discourse in film criticism, theory and even amongst certain film practitioners. However, this attention to the language metaphor to describe cinema's appeal and potential universalism has limited the impact of attempts to confront the practices and attitudes which facilitate or obstruct international, multilingual film consumption. While there has been little serious analysis of how approaches to language differentiation contribute to the pervasive problem of achieving satisfactory international distribution and exhibition of European films, language in film, at both conceptual and practical levels, has been a persistent and troubling theme for commentators on European cinemas since the transition to sound film. The 'problem' of language, I will argue, is manifest in film criticism, theory and practice and has circumscribed the discursive treatment and consumption of European cinema.

My research here is not about film 'texts' but rather how the experience of cinema might be anticipated and understood through a number of pervasive, but often unaddressed, discourses on film consumption. It is for this reason that the thesis does not address the range of material on screen translation which is concerned with analysing translation textually. Such sources typically compare source (original) with target (translation) text and usually identify areas in which the translation is deficient without providing any explanations for the occurrence and acceptability of this lack beyond the technical, economic and temporal constraints of the translation apparatus and translator. An increasing number of translation scholars who would have traditionally focused on literature are now choosing to work on screen translation. But while the textual level of screen translation is already being addressed in translation studies, attention to the

contextual, social aspects of translation and its relationships to film industries and film reception have not been adequately confronted despite a few notable attempts.

For clarity, I will describe the literature on screen translation as having fallen into two camps, although I should say there are certainly areas of crossover between these areas and some publications bridge both. The first, which I see as an applied linguistics strand, looks at issues such as who translates, where and under what conditions, and considers the technology used for screen translation. Work in this area also addresses supposed problems around subtitling and dubbing as techniques. On the subtitling side, these include issues around the economy of subtitling from a technical perspective (Karamitroglou 2000, Titford 1982), subtitling's literary form (Kovacic 1998, and the problem of subtitles being open to direct comparison with the source (spoken) text being translated (Gottlieb 1994). Certain studies also consider issues such as which languages are easiest to dub into which other languages (Kilborn 1989), and the aesthetic advantages and disadvantages of screen translation (Mera 1999).

The other group of publications has a greater sociolinguistic emphasis and is more concerned with the 'whys' of screen translation than the 'hows'. This research explores context-based issues such as why certain countries, cinema exhibitors and audiences appear to prefer one translation practice over another (for example, dubbing over subtitling or voice-commentary over dubbing), and may discuss possible historical explanations for these choices (O'Connell 1998, Danan 1991). The work in this area is often concerned with the ideological implications of translation for both the producers of the source text and the consumers of the target text (Nornes 1999, Smith 2003, Danan 1999a, Ascheid 1997). It will become clear in the thesis that my work is more concerned

with this second approach than the first, which I find of doubtful interest for film scholars owing to its lack of attention to the social and historical aspects of screen translation practices and their reception.²

Within the second group, works by Martine Danan (1999a) and Antje Ascheid (1997) stand out as being especially relevant to this thesis and are worthwhile describing here. Martine Danan's article 'Subtitling: Multiculturalism or Commodification of Culture' (1999a) offers a historical perspective on the role and significance of subtitled translation in French film culture. Danan outlines how the privileged status of subtitled films amongst intellectuals and cinephiles has given subtitling a reputation of prestige in France. She continues her analysis by discussing how the protection of the subtitled *version originale* by an elitist cinema culture has come to imply respect for cultural and linguistic diversity and an 'authentic' cinema experience in a contemporary, pan-European context.³

Danan's article is particularly valuable in its critique of the prestige model for subtitled films. She points out that young, urban, upwardly mobile French cinemagoers have sustained a market for *version originale* Hollywood pictures. This trend, she adds, has less to do with a cinephile respect for original language versions than it does with the desire of the young middle-class to engage with the global, hegemonic culture associated with American English. She concludes provocatively with the argument that Hollywood cinema may be the only truly 'European' cinema as it is the only cinema watched by all European audiences (1999a: 768). While I won't look specifically at the French attitude to Hollywood and other English language cinemas, I will be elaborating further in the thesis on the status of English as a global language and the possible effects that a growing

cultural economy around English may have on the perception of audiences' attitudes towards films not in the English language. In particular, I will argue that as border crossing becomes increasingly necessary in cinema production and distribution, and English is more frequently employed as the common business language for facilitating such cooperation, it has become more important to conduct analysis and debate around the role of language in cinema.

Of further interest in the screen translation studies group is Antje Ascheid's (1997) comparison of subtitling and dubbing as translation methods which attempts to understand the possible effects of each technique on spectatorship. Ascheid makes some convincing points about the reception of dubbed films by audiences who have been conditioned to accept the practice as the dominant translation method. Ascheid argues that dubbing can provide opportunities for viewers to disavow a film's cultural specificity and reinscribe it with their own cultural contexts. With this spectatorship practice in mind, she suggests film dubbing could be especially significant for audiences in countries which are struggling against the effects of globalisation and might encourage international sales of films from small nations (1997: 40). She writes,

dubbing as a translation technique must be seen as transforming the original into a blueprint, which shifts its status from that of a finished and culturally specific text to that of a transcultural denationalized raw material, which is to be reinscribed into a new cultural context via the dubbing process.

(Ascheid 1997: 33)

Ascheid sees subtitling, in contrast, as a reflexive practice which encourages the spectator to pay attention to difference by creating a heteroglot text. In an argument

which is echoed by other theorists on the subject, including Nornes (1999) and Eleftheriotis (2002), Ascheid claims that subtitles interrupt 'cinematic identification [and] the suspension of disbelief' which are said to characterise supposedly unmediated cinema spectatorship (1997: 33).⁴ She maintains that an essential difference between subtitled and dubbed films is that while the subtitled film foregrounds its processes of translation (and this to the detriment of spectatorial enjoyment), the dubbed film 'efface[s] its own operation' to the extent that it pleasurably masquerades as the original (1997: 35). It is from this perspective that she defends dubbing, suggesting that it may encourage audiences to accept a greater international range of films in cinemas and on television (1997: 38).

Tracing the history of translation practices in Europe casts doubt upon the viability of Ascheid's arguments in support of dubbing and particularly their widespread application. Nonetheless, she makes interesting points about the status of translated films in the international movie marketplace and the potentially radical significance of language translation in film for both audiences and producers. Unlike Ascheid, I have not attempted to produce a model of spectatorship in this study. Janet Staiger's work on film reception has had a considerable influence on my research methods for this study. Staiger interprets films by researching their reception contexts through the evidence available in media and film criticism; she describes her approach as 'not textual interpretation but a historical explanation of the activities of interpretation' (1992: 212). Taking up this principle, I hope to demonstrate through a series of case studies how audiences might be understood and approached as critical constructs which are described and then interpolated by individuals and institutions in certain ways for particular reasons.

The case studies are arranged chronologically, as chapters, and in the next few pages I will offer some further contextualisation of their contents. The first part of the thesis examines the critical framing and reception of European cinema as sourced from film trade journals, magazines and academic publications dating from the 1920s to the 1980s. The magazine sources used in the first section have been chosen because of their relevance for understanding attitudes towards 'foreign language' films in Britain and the USA. These Anglophone countries have different relationships to Europe and, in the sources I refer to, different ideas about European cinemas. The sources which I have consulted offer particularly clear examples of the discursive treatment of a language problem in European cinema by people engaged in evaluating and theorising film from contrasting settings and perspectives.

The second section of the thesis focuses on the fields of cinema production, distribution and exhibition in Europe in the 1990s and 2000s. It consists of three contemporary case studies which draw on a range of sources including trade journals, web resources, policy documents and interviews. The two parts of the thesis are not to be regarded as separate from one another; parallels are drawn between chapters in each section and the reader is encouraged to note the similarities between the discourses outlined in the earlier chapters of the thesis and those described in the latter. The case studies are, I hope, interesting but they also, collectively and accumulatively, confront some vital and at times uncomfortable issues about the way many of us view European cinema and its linguistic components.

In chapter 2 I begin this discussion by exploring approaches to the sound film, and to the emerging 'foreign-language film', in Europe during the transition to sound. The early sound period was an interesting time for experimentation with the place of language in film and marks the beginning of work around a 'language problem'. It is the moment of transition when foreign films started to be regarded also as foreign-language films which necessitated translation. The development of translation techniques during the transition to sound is a little explored aspect of cinema history but it is an area which reveals significant details in the dynamics between Hollywood production and overseas markets, particularly European territories. Multilingual versions of films were made by Hollywood and European studios in an effort to meet the perceived audience demand for films in their own languages. Multilingual film production was short-lived and amounted to, I will argue, a stop-gap on the road to improving voice dubbing as a translation technique in the larger European countries. These films consisted of the same scenario shot a number of times in different languages. Some filmmakers creatively devised special settings or gave their characters particular occupations which would make a multilingual encounter, or foreign-accented speech, more plausible.⁵ In the United States, a negative assessment of competency in English could push many actors back to their native countries from Los Angeles to continue or end their careers with the sound film.

In chapter 2 I illustrate how the solutions proposed to the 'problem' of varied linguistic markets in American trade papers involved simultaneously developing screen translation and raising the status of the English-language picture. The idea that Hollywood's English-language sound cinema may have been promoted as the new

international standard and universal entertainment medium is again a neglected topic, and yet approaching this possibility is important if one wants to get a better grasp of the place of English in cinema cultures around the world. As there are at least two sides to every story, however, I also describe in this chapter how the conceptual parameters on film art which had developed in English-language film criticism in the 1920s around European modernist cinemas adapted to the sound period. I discuss why some cine-journal debates on sound, as represented in this case by the Anglo-European avant-garde publication *Close-Up*, focused negatively on concerns over what were considered non-artistic uses of sound and the loss of a universal art form (the silent film).

After the transition to sound, foreign-language European films continued to be positioned by British critics as art films but no longer held the avant-garde, high-cultural cachet they once did. In chapter 3 I look at this change in the cultural status of European cinemas for English-speaking audiences by surveying how the British Film Institute (BFI) interpolated a middle-brow audience for foreign-language films through the magazine *Sight and Sound*. 1930s Britain saw films using American-accented English quickly associated with mass culture and popular entertainment while foreign-language films were identified as belonging to an elite, intellectual cinema culture. The first specialised film theatres appeared in this decade, responding to increased demand for a more varied (and distinguished) cinema culture generated by the increasing number of film societies around the country.

The establishment of the BFI in the early 1930s implied that 'quality' film culture could be administered at a national level. The BFI's in-house magazine, *Sight and Sound*, took up the mantle of earlier cine-journals, which celebrated the foreign film and

promoted especially continental European films and displayed a liberal universalism with regard to cinema. 'Serious' subtitled films were contrasted with the easy consumption of (American) English-language films. However, 'continental' was a very accessible, and aspirational, category for middle-class cinema enthusiasts and reflected a Francophile tendency amongst that group. Middlebrow film appreciation as a critical approach and reception culture developed throughout the 1930s, 40s and 50s in Britain, taking its cues from the film society movement and the growing middle-class interest in 'good' films. The connection between film appreciation and foreign-language films was supported by the emergence of 'specialist', 'continental' or 'art' cinema exhibitor and the National Film Theatre in London. These exhibition contexts encouraged audiences to see subtitled foreign-language films as films of sophistication in contradistinction to movies of mass cultural appeal.

After the Second World War, cineaste culture mushroomed. In France, the cineclubs were revived by an increased interest in filmed entertainment and the analysis of cinema grew in popularity as an intellectual occupation. In Britain, while overall cinema attendances declined in the late 1950s, the number of specialised cinemas increased. Film critics, producers and enthusiasts were encouraged to come together at international film festivals, many of which were established in Europe in the post-war period in an effort to convey the peace message and to reinvigorate local economies. 'Foreign' films, of course, took pride of place at these events and although only fully accessible to those with competency in either the source or target (translation) languages, they were regarded as part of the fabric of a universal cinema culture whose supporters appreciated film art.

The 1960s was a peak period for 'art cinema', with young European directors being feted at festivals and an apparent burst of 'new waves' approaching from a number of countries. 'Art cinema' was youth-driven and, in Britain, made way for a greater number of 'other' types of film from Europe than had appeared before, namely sex and horror films, to be screened in smaller cinemas. A number of those who had experienced the European cineaste boom and the institutionalisation of film appreciation in Britain through the BFI and the creation of the Regional Film Theatres in the latter part of the decade were to bring film studies into higher education in the 1970s. The development of film studies, in contradistinction to film appreciation, was to lead to a debate on the contents and role of an 'alternative' film culture in Britain and whether or not canonised European directors and films had a place within it. As I shall discuss, the political mood was such at this point that the dominant, official 'alternative' film culture supported by the BFI came under fire from some educators for being middlebrow, stagnating and elitist.

Chapter 4 discusses how, as a reaction to the *Sight and Sound* culture of distinction and in the politically urgent post-1968 context, the first major English-language journal dedicated to film and television analysis emerged. *Screen* addressed questions of cinematic 'language' and of representation in both the dominant American cinema and the European materialist avant-garde. But, in doing so, it avoided analysis of the majority of European films distributed internationally and eschewed the problem of language difference in cinema (which was also, of course, an element of representation). Uncovering the roots of this avoidance will, I hope, help to explain the reasons why European cinema has an uncertain and changeable status in film studies and why the

reality of international, translated film consumption has been neglected within it. While *Screen* was not monolithic, its influential articles on the semiotics of cinema and later on psychoanalysis and filmic representation directed English-language film studies away from confronting the place of European cinema as a known 'alternative' to Hollywood.

With interest in European politics increasing across academic disciplines, studies of 'European cinema' emerged in the early 1990s. Although precipitated by the fall of the Iron Curtain, the transition to a common European market and the need to reassess Europe's geopolitical, economic and cultural topography, the work drew upon a decade of scholarship on identity politics. Issues of representation had been made particularly pertinent in the 1980s with the expanding influence of feminist approaches to representation and the development of work on race, masculinity, sexuality and nationality and a number of scholars were beginning to show some regard for films from Latin America, Africa and India in an effort to engage with post-colonial criticism.

In the 1990s a number of publications appeared around the theme of Europe and European identity in relation to cinema (Dyer & Vincendeau 1992, Eleftheriotis 2000 and 2001, Everett 1996, Hjort & MacKenzie 2000, Holmes & Smith 2000, Konstantarakos 2000, Petrie 1992, Sorlin 1991). Several of these are textually-focused studies on European films which, while compelling enough as individual papers, en masse give the impression that the study of film in Europe is a process of identifying key (film) texts, filmmakers or film stars and interpreting their meaning using methods adapted from literary analysis. Such an approach marginalised empirical enquiry into the history of the way these canonical objects (in studies of 'popular' as well as in 'art' cinema) were produced and consumed.⁶

Scholars of European cinema in the UK took on board the critique of 'Eurocentrism' which ran concurrent to discussions on what constituted European cinema and European identity. Within this movement, popular cinemas produced in Europe became a focal point for some researchers in an effort to reassess the conceptual opposition of popular Hollywood cinema to European art cinema and to get a better hold on what might constitute film culture in European countries (see Dyer & Vincendeau 1992, Eleftheriotis 2001, Nowell-Smith & Ricci 1998). At the same time, issues surrounding the marginal place of European films in European cinema cultures were only peripherally being addressed by academics. Despite undergoing significant changes in the 1980s and 1990s, distribution and exhibition were unusual research topics, particularly studies which considered non-Hollywood films. Meanwhile these decades saw the consolidation of oligopoly by multinational entertainment conglomerates, a process which involved Hollywood distributors pricing independent European distributors out of the market to make room for the creation of their own specialist distribution units and the spread of multiplexes which would put smaller, independent exhibitors at risk.

In chapter 5 I discuss how the argument for a 'cultural exception' for European cinemas was mobilised during the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) debates of 1993 in defence of European interests. I suggest that a discourse on cultural exceptionalism was deployed which was motivated in part by linguistic issues and I consider the effectiveness of the argument in view of contemporary film industry practices in Europe. The chapter reiterates what is now regarded as a familiar and problematic opposition of European to American film industries in order to demonstrate the historical basis of inequities between Hollywood and Europe as they have been

perceived by many European film practitioners. In the chapter I link the history of Hollywood market domination in Europe to the proliferation of European film festivals and speculate on the role of the major film festival given this context. I suggest that the practical decision to screen subtitled versions of films at festivals connects ideologically to a preservationist discourse on the 'original' or 'authentic' version in cinema exhibition, belief in which is also implicit in the cultural exception argument. In this chapter and in the two chapters which follow it, I argue that the rhetoric surrounding the sale of European films is closely related to assumptions about their cultural value.

In the contemporary situation one can find a number of contradictory and complex linguistic problems within cinema cultures. Corporatism and profitability are, in most parts of the world with a couple of exceptions, associated with an English-language cinema. In Europe, American films are either dubbed or subtitled but these tools of mediation appear to make little difference to the popularity of Hollywood movies. At the same time, some European filmmakers are making films in the English language, recognising that the United States is the largest single market for films in the west and that English-language films attract huge audiences worldwide.

Chapter 6 is closely related to the issues surrounding the distribution and exhibition of European cinema explored in chapter 5. It considers the strategies employed by production companies in a small, linguistically marginal country to maximise the international profile of, and commercial interest in, its films. The chapter describes how the production context for Danish filmmakers working in the 'Film City' facility near Copenhagen has developed since the Dogma '95 'movement' raised international interest in Danish films. I discuss how the success of Dogma has encouraged Danish production

companies to take larger risks in addressing an export audience by making English-language films aimed at achieving a 'crossover' effect. The chapter addresses the reasons why Danish filmmakers make English language films, in what production contexts and with what degree of success. There is, I will argue in the latter part of the thesis, a massive English-language cultural economy operating on a global scale. The second part of this thesis considers what relative position this places films not performed in English or made to the familiar Hollywood standard and how film practitioners, in a variety of industrial contexts, deal with the enduring association of Hollywood films with entertainment and 'foreign' films with specialist interest.⁷

In Britain subtitles continue to be identified as a put-off for those who claim to prefer watching mainstream films whereas 'art house' enthusiasts can be heard remarking on the pleasure of contemplating different cultures and hearing other languages on film. At a time when international travel has never been cheaper or more accessible, and when we are in daily contact with news, culture and people from other countries, it seems peculiar that language is perceived as a barrier to film consumption. Why should some audiences feel that subtitles are a kind of quality marker whereas others believe subtitles demarcate a film as unpleasurable? Chapter 7 returns to the notion of the culture of appreciation surrounding the exhibition and reception of foreign-language films in the UK by investigating the programming and education activities of exhibitors in Scotland who receive European funding and who are attempting to widen access to their cinemas. The chapter highlights possible links between certain cinemas' attitudes to exhibiting European films and the policies of the European Commission with regard to audiovisual material and language. In it I suggest that in relation to ideas about cinema and language

there are some ideological parallels to be drawn between the attitudes of the policy makers and those of the cinema exhibitors they assist financially. I conclude, however, by asking whether these similarities can be attributed to the exhibitors deliberately adopting the rhetoric of European cultural policies or whether it is more likely that the European policies are somehow complementary to an ethic of consumption supported in 'art house' cinema exhibition practices.

This thesis investigates a wide range of historical contexts, albeit within the rather protected confines of European (art) cinema. As others have indicated, for a very long time 'European cinema' has been regarded as synonymous with 'art cinema' despite difficulties in defining concretely either term. I regard this phenomenon to be closely tied to cinema exhibition and reception traditions and a good part of the thesis is dedicated to describing and contextualising these. I am especially concerned with identifying the discursive features which characterise European cinema as art cinema. It is perhaps the very 'safeness' of art cinema within film criticism and the academy which makes it such an appealing topic for analysis in a project such as this which approaches the rarefied 'art house' cultures critically, if affectionately. This emphasis has occurred partly because these cultures have been the most persistent champions of a particular notion of European cinema which, in some rather distinct and interesting ways, transforms the linguistic aspect of cinema into a commodity.

The thesis works accumulatively, each chapter a stepping stone on the way to a fuller understanding of how the production and consumption of cinema in Europe has occurred alongside the construction of discourses on the place of language and its

translation in cinema. As André Bazin said of Roberto Rossellini's editing technique, '[t]he mind has to leap from one event to the other as one leaps from stone to stone in crossing a river. It may happen that one's foot hesitates between two rocks, or that one misses one's footing and slips. The mind does likewise' (1971: 35). I am confident that the gaps in this instance are not so large or unfamiliar so that one would slip catastrophically.⁸

While not attempting to provide a history of language and translation in European cinema, this thesis does offer some historically grounded explanations for the circulation of discourses on language and translation in European cinema cultures and the competing interests at work in shaping these discourses. By approaching the topic of language in European cinema as it has emerged through discourse, I have been able to research a range of different contexts across a broad timescale while remaining relevant to the original aims of the research as described in the research questions. I have been able to explore the commonality of the fields of film criticism, theorising and cinema practice by identifying how certain discourses may be shared and adapted by each. In this thesis I interpret different ways in which critical discussions on European cinema have involved conceptions of language and I consider the implications of this for the production and consumption of European films. I aim to demonstrate how the production and the reception of meaning and knowledge are contingent on one another and, by discussing discourses on language and translation, I hope to illustrate the importance of this feedback loop for understanding the construction of European cinema. We enter the chain at the transition from silent to sound cinema, and at the beginning of debates on foreign-language films.

Chapter 2

Sound Motives. Language Problems and Cultural Ideals in the Transition to Talking Pictures

The transition from silent to talking pictures caused significant ruptures in both the production and the reception of cinema. The development of synchronized sound effected substantial changes in film industry working practices, heralding a new phase of experimentation. But it also created a crisis in film theorising which in Europe, up until this point, was focused unapologetically on the image. If language can be described as problematic for cinema, this period of transition and adjustment presents itself as an essential point for discussion.

This chapter lays the ground for further exploration in the thesis of what I see as the two central and related discourses on language and cinema in Europe. These are, firstly, the idea that cinema is (can be or should be) a 'universal' mode of communication or 'language' and, secondly, that language difference in cinema is divisive as it limits the export potential of European films which in turn makes the European market vulnerable to Hollywood domination (Hollywood being understood here as the *truly* 'universal', mass public cinema). The chapter also demonstrates the research method employed throughout the thesis in which different kinds of documents about cinema are used to understand the way that discourses on language and European cinemas have emerged and changed historically.

I shall examine here two separate but contemporary instances where critical discussions on language and translation have materialised in specific relation to European

cinemas. In each case, I will argue that the place of language in cinema is debated in terms of identifying problems and solutions. The studies are primarily based on my interpretation of contributions to two publications dated around 1927 to 1933: a Hollywood trade paper, the *Journal of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers* (JSMPE) and a European film art magazine, *Close-Up*. While these are clearly very different publications situated in different cultural contexts with divergent readerships, one of the purposes of this chapter is to identify correspondences between the two types of source. I hope to illustrate how such parallel readings can be useful for forming a fuller picture of the period in question but I also want to demonstrate from the beginning of the thesis how language has been defined as a 'problem' for European cinemas at both critical/theoretical and industrial levels and by both Europe-identified and 'outsider' commentators.

I am aware that my decision to privilege Hollywood's point of view over those of film producers in Europe for the industry discussion in this chapter is disputable. I have chosen to focus on the Hollywood trade discussions for quite deliberate reasons, however. The place of Hollywood in Europe has proven an unavoidable area of enquiry for theorists attempting to describe the whats and whys of constituting 'European cinema'. This is not a recent phenomenon. As my discussion of *Close-Up* in this chapter illustrates, Hollywood's considerable influence as the paradigmatic example of mass entertainment has concerned proponents of a European film culture and industry for some time and this concern was heightened in Europe after the First World War as the coming of sound to film encouraged anti-American feeling around the movies being imported into Europe. Hollywood became an important counterpoint against which to legitimise

support for European film production and reception, particularly in the context of forming alternative, minority film cultures. What my discussion of Hollywood offers here is a contrast against which *Close-Up*'s debates on sound and alternative film culture can be measured and a demonstration that what constitutes 'European' film culture is not solely defined in Europe by Europeans. 'Europe', politically and culturally at least, will remain throughout the thesis a discursive construct, its existence equally contingent on 'outside' influences and definitions as it is on those formed within its own flexible confines.

For ease of comprehension, before I discuss my own findings I will outline a pre-established historical account of the transition to sound which considers the impact of sound upon relationships between Hollywood and Europe and the development of screen translation practices in this context. The account is taken from '*Film Europe*' and '*Film America*' (Higson & Maltby 1999), a substantial publication which describes the ascendancy of Hollywood in the face of competition from pan-European cinema initiatives. The essays in the anthology make notable use of the American trade journals *Variety* and *The Journal of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers* to investigate 'Film Europe', ostensibly more of an idea than a movement, which held some hope in the 1920s and 1930s for an international European film industry based on co-productions.¹ Collectively, the essays provide a fairly detailed and adequate account of the development of language translation for film alongside sound in an Anglo-American context.

In consulting the '*Film Europe*' and '*Film America*' essays the following narrative emerges.² The production of silent films with intertitles presented few problems

for translation across different language cultures. Intertitles (these were described as 'sub-titles' even well after the transition to sound had been globally achieved) were conveniently accommodating of linguistic differences as they were easily adapted to suit a particular market, while retaining narrative intelligibility. By 1927, intertitles for Hollywood films were frequently being translated into as many as 36 languages and allowed audiences to 'ma[k]e sense of Hollywood in their own cultural terms' (Maltby & Vasey 1999:41). The development of sound films in Europe challenged Hollywood's dominance of the global film marketplace, particularly as nationalistic feelings and expectations were increasing amongst movie audiences in European countries (Danan 1999b). Until 1930, synchronised voice dubbing was not technically feasible. It took as many as eight weeks to complete a dub, and the results were not guaranteed to be satisfactory. Hollywood consequently made multiple language versions (MLVs) of its American films using foreign casts and, often, European directors to compensate for the predicted demand from European audiences of films in their native languages. It took around a fortnight to produce a foreign-language version (Danan 1999b).

Multiple language versions were also made in Europe by European companies, for example in London's Elstree studios and the German Ufa studios, in an attempt to provide products for other European countries which could compete with Hollywood's attempts (Higson 1999b, Garncarz 1999). However, Hollywood studios had the capital to make huge investments in the multiple language version sector and even to set up studios in Europe, such as the Paramount-Joinville site outside Paris which initially had the sole purpose of producing European language versions of Hollywood-conceived narratives. The multiple language versions resulted in embarrassing losses for Hollywood studios

and encouraged producers to experiment further with dubbing and subtitling, as well as to continue production of silent versions of sound films.

In late 1930, the invention of multiple-track sound mixing technology made dubbing practical, but this translation method was still only economically feasible for serving larger language groups – French, German, Spanish and Italian. Italy decreed in 1931 that all foreign imports had to be dubbed into Italian and, shortly after, in 1933 the Italian government imposed tariffs on films that were dubbed outside Italy itself (Maltby & Vasey 1999:46). This protectionist trend also continued in Germany and France and, in France at least, resulted in the larger Hollywood studios opening dubbing facilities in the country of import (Danan 1999b). By 1932 dubbing had become the routine translation method for major Hollywood productions exported to larger European countries. Smaller language communities either saw films dubbed into a neighbouring language they were assumed to have some comprehension of or titled in some way, although not necessarily with the superimposed subtitles we are familiar with today.

'Film Europe' and 'Film America' offers evidence to suggest that translation practices in Europe were principally developed by Hollywood for American movie trade interests and, in fact, reading the collection I quickly became aware of just how Hollywood-centred most of the articles are. There are at least two important indications to be gleaned from this privileging of the American viewpoint. Firstly, the producers of Hollywood films are understood to have been far from ignorant of the threat language difference might pose to their market and, indeed, the 'language problem' appears to be a central preoccupation in Hollywood at this time. Secondly, the emphasis placed on Hollywood's approach to language difference in Europe by the authors suggests that

while Hollywood may have been concerned about the impact of sound on its market dominance, it cannot confidently be described as actually having lost its lead on the European marketplace in this period.

Reading the essays symptomatically, one might also acknowledge the difficulty of constructing a straightforward historical narrative on translation practices in European cinemas and observe that, despite a desire to represent the pan-European industrial experience at this time, researchers encounter significant practical limitations when approaching a phenomenon whose development is documented in multiple languages and cultures. The task of approaching a comprehensive review of translation practices in European cinemas is, because of the large number of varied language communities in Europe, probably impossible for even the most linguistically skilled of historians. It is because of this challenge, however, that the kind of collective work represented at international film studies and interdisciplinary conferences and in collections such as *'Film Europe'* and *'Film America'* is vitally important. As I will discuss later, the field of modern languages could be instrumental in developing transnational film studies but it has traditionally held a rather nationalistic perception of European cinema (see chapter 4: 146-7).

A criticism of national studies of European cinema has been that they have tended to privilege certain critically legitimated types of cinema over other, often more popular forms and that they reinforce an art/popular cinema binary which is interchangeable with the conceptual opposition of European cinema to Hollywood cinema (Eleftheriotis: 2000: 31-2, 76-7). These problems emerge in pan-European accounts as well as in nationally contained studies because of the association of European cinema with national cinemas

operating in resistance to Hollywood. Having said this, I want to begin my own analysis of the situation by suggesting that such an anchoring to a Hollywood/Europe binary does not represent an unmitigated failure for European film studies so long as moments of convergence and contradiction are acknowledged and evidence of the opposition is grounded in a relevant critical context and not based on mere assumption. As we will see, Hollywood does indeed appear in my account as instrumental in developing traditions and technologies of screen translation in Europe and there is a critical tradition reaching at least as far back as the transition to sound which sets European cinema up as an oppositional alternative to Hollywood films.

Hollywood: 'a certain great oneness in the world'

The purpose of this section is to describe the discourse of confidence in the sound film which appeared in Hollywood trade reports and announcements in the transition period. In the following discussion I explore primary evidence of the 'language problem' in Europe from a Hollywood perspective, where linguistic diversity appears to threaten the desired dominance of the Hollywood talkie in European film markets. Principally, I address two areas which are relevant for understanding the Hollywood attitude to sound: the development of expertise in sound film production and the choice of multiple language versions as a desirable translation method for larger European markets. These factors, I will argue, are connected to a wider discourse of confidence on the American sound film's international potential and the relationship of Hollywood cinema to notions of universality. This latter view is supported in the way the English language is

positioned as the language of global progress, as I shall explain. Developing an ideological perspective on American attitudes to language in film will be particularly important for understanding the work of *Close-Up* which shows, in contrast, how discourses on universality and internationalism were unsettled by the arrival of the American talkie in a modernist European 'art cinema' context. The 'language problem' was for Hollywood primarily an economic one but the solutions it proposed to the problem, which had far-reaching consequences as we shall see in the rest of the thesis, were not simply pragmatic decisions but they were also heavily inflected by ideological assumptions.

'But we [already] know how the sound film developed,' Michel Chion determines in his book on the voice in cinema, 'along the lines of establishing tolerances, approximations' (Chion 1999:131). Inevitably changes in technology bring to the fore practices of experimentation, leading to discovery and invention. There is certainly evidence for experiment and invention in American journals like *The Journal for the Society of Motion Picture Engineers* and *Electronics* while articles in *Close-Up* testify to an unstable relationship to sound on film in Europe, albeit from a particularly biased viewpoint as we shall see. But the overall accession to sound film was neither highly experimental nor tentatively approached and was seen, in Hollywood at least, as a progressive move for cinema. As Douglas Gomery (1985) also argues, America's rapid conversion to sound compared with the rest of the world indicates a confidence in the talkie medium that belies reports given by Hollywood in the late 1920s and early 1930s on fears over losing revenue in the foreign markets.

Discussions from *JSMPE* on sound production and reproduction on film do sometimes betray a slight unease with regard to being overwhelmed by the instruments they were utilising and developing, notably in their desire to concretise certain practices, such as sound and voice post-synchronisation, into discrete areas of expertise. An article by Joe W. Coffman of Audio-Cinema, Inc., for example, describes the sound mixing panel as implementing “hokum”. His playful distrust of the magician sound technician is further elaborated in his allegation that some technicians ‘not wholly mature in their work should try to establish taboos and conditions for the guidance of co-workers not yet initiated into the deep mysteries of technical “expertness;” for it is by supposed knowledge of these taboos and conditions that “expertness” is established’ (1930: 173). However, because experimentation was employed with the purpose of establishing expertise, rather than being the sign of a weakened, unsteady industry it might instead be the mark of commitment to new technology.

A number of technical problems needed to be resolved or, at least, got used to with the production of sound film at this time. In general, the sound set was highly limiting for the cast, director and crew. The cacophonous silent film set, where the director was at liberty to shout the actors into emotion while a model of a village was being banged together off-shot, mutated into a guarded silent chamber where ‘unless elaborate precautions are taken, every sound becomes an echoing mockery of itself’ (Scotland 1930:68). There was also the matter of having to house cameras, and sometimes their operators, in boxes (the ‘blimp’ in the case of the camera and ‘the dog-house’ in the case of camera operator) to stifle the noise of the camera mechanisms. This severely curtailed freedom of expression in cinematography (see Physioc 1931:409). The central focus for

improvements at this time, though, was the recording and reproduction of high quality sound.³

The development of the 'sound stage' required significant changes in approach to film production. As the influence of sound technologies expanded and studios responded to a demand for quality sound reproduction, substantial division of labour in the studios ensued. Partly as a consequence of this, the representation of reality on screen became necessarily a more heavily structured process and there developed an emphasis on 'educating' the viewer more systematically on the film's diegesis. Harold B. Franklin urged producers to see that '[w]here the silent motion picture left something to the imagination of the audience, a dialog picture, to be acceptable, must absorb the full attention of the auditor' if sound production is to progress beyond novelty and mystery (1930a: 303). For commentators such as Franklin, the introduction of speech was to generate greater realism in cinema, a sophisticated mode of representation which would demonstrate cinema's full potential to be a mirror on the world and further captivate audiences.⁴ In another article, Franklin describes the human voice on film as an unsung hero in the development of the cinema and is forceful in his affirmation of the sound film's superiority over the silent picture:

[a] talking picture intensifies whatever a silent screen would do. When characters speak from the screen, they become more intimate, more real; speech intensifies Life [sic]. No matter how effective your silent sequences might have been, they still were shadows, legends, phantoms. Once they become vocal, however, they become people.

(1930b:18)

Franklin asserts a new order of film production that is distinctly realist in its approach. The silent film was 'legend', mythological in its dimensions but ethereal in its approach to life as a result. Franklin's description of the voice on film as a force for realism is representative of the Hollywood trade press's optimistic rhetoric on sound, perhaps necessary to promote the medium their livelihoods were dependent on.

The aim of the motion picture industry, wrote John L. Cass, was to create the 'illusion of reality'. Sound added vibrancy to the 'gray shadows' of film and, if sensitively applied, would encourage audience members to lose themselves in the filmic world. They would be engaged in the film's meaning but unaware of its processes of production (Cass 1930: 323-4). Primary to the success of the effect Cass desired was intelligibility of the voice. Reaching a high standard of intelligibility, to enable the illusion of 'natural' vocal reproduction, was the key concern for sound engineers, producers and exhibitors in the early 1930s when sound films were well established but expertise in their production not perfected. For instance, Carl Dreher of RKO Studios suggests that desirable film sound is distinguished firstly by intelligibility of dialogue and, secondly, by 'naturalness, or acoustic fidelity to the original rendition' (1931: 756). 'Fidelity' may be compromised to enable good intelligibility, according to Dreher, but not the other way around. Although he employs words like 'naturalness' and 'fidelity', Dreher points out that sound reproduction is an 'artificial process' requiring mechanical devices to produce results that are acceptable to audiences.

The effect of 'realism' in the sound film was, then, not necessarily dependent on naturalism for its accomplishment, as a contemporary article in *Electronics* further illustrates. The Vice President of the Radio Corporation of America Photophone reports

that film audiences are likely to be less forgiving of actors speaking incomprehensibly on film than they are of actors on stage. The stage actor is acquitted by virtue of being 'only human' whereas the screen actor, in contrast, must have a voice that is 'more human than a human being' (Goldsmith 1930:23).⁵ Strangely though, while Carl Dreher is satisfied with the 'naturalness' of most sound processes, he claims that interlingual voice dubbing (dubbing into a foreign language) is an illegitimate and falsifying act (1930:373).

Similarly, Ivah Bradley (1933) claims the unity of sound and body is fundamental to an actor's success. George Lewin from Paramount also makes a distinction between the standard artificial practices of sound recording and reproduction and those used for interlingual dubbing when he describes using voice doubles to replace the voices of the on-screen performers as a 'faking' process:

I would like to emphasise the fact that ordinary dubbing is not a form of faking, since, regardless of how many times a voice may be re-recorded for the purpose of adding sound effects, it still remains the actual voice of the person who is seen speaking in the picture. The only time voices are really faked is in the preparation of foreign versions in which case it is done only to bring to foreign countries at least the face and personality, if not the actual voice, of a popular star.

(1931:48)

So, while the artificiality of sound production is broadly acceptable in the interests of achieving the intelligibility, fidelity and 'naturalness' of speech, the replacement of a performer's voice with that of another actor is viewed as a kind of tyranny in the production of sound film. Imperative to the successful illusion of reality in a Hollywood sound film, then, was the authenticity of voice and body union.⁶ It is in this context of

developing expertise around vocal intelligibility and fidelity that Hollywood's production of multiple language versions for European audiences should be positioned, alongside the equally important rhetoric of confidence deployed by the higher echelons of the industry.

When the voice entered the cinema, actors without American accents became severely limited in the roles they could play in Hollywood. For some performers, like Marlene Dietrich, their accents made their career and for others, like Emil Jannings and Conrad Veidt, the vocal marker of difference together with inadequate English language skills marked the end of their American calling. American critics, like Mordaunt Hall of the *New York Times*, were quick to damn or approve particular European accents. Hall complained vehemently in the *New York Times* (1st September 1930) about the English language version of *Melodie Des Herzens* (*Melody of the Heart*, dir. Walter Ruttmann, 1930) where, in his opinion, lines were spoken 'with ludicrous hesitation as well as a German accent' (cited in Crafton 1997: 431). In contrast, he found the accent of Russian femme fatale Olga Baclanova 'fascinating' (cited in Walker 1978: 130). Vilma Banky, a European film star who had a contract with Samuel Goldwyn, was marketed as 'The Hungarian Rhapsody' and, owing to her accent, her first Hollywood talkie role was as an immigrant working in an American diner (*This is Heaven*, dir. Alfred Santell, 1929) (Karney 1984: 13). In contrast, the Polish vamp of the silent screen stage-named Pola Negri (a name connoting Pole and blackness), who was renowned for inventing a fictitious, exoticised past life in which her father was a gypsy traveller exiled to Siberia, had her voice dubbed over in her first English language talkie (*The Woman He Scorned*, 1929) (Karney 1984: 32).

The handling of foreign actors in Hollywood was far from arbitrary, and by reviewing actor biographies one can conclude that Hollywood devised a number of strategies to cope with foreign (in this case European) accents:

- Avoid use of foreign actors
- Dub over the actor's voice with that of another
- Consign the actor to foreign language versions
- Contextualise the accent

Of these options, and after some experimentation, the fourth became the most important to Hollywood cinema. It maintains the unity of voice and body intrinsic to a believable demonstration of the star's 'personality' and sets a precedent for the ideological function of that star in line with the film's narrative and their wider Hollywood representation. Hollywood film producers attempted in the 1930s to harness the expressive qualities of the European voice speaking 'accented' English for the projection of themes of exoticism and assimilation, around which the European was to be constructed in the classical Hollywood cinema.⁷

With the development of speech in cinema, language difference presented an ideological challenge to Hollywood and indeed all cinemas dependent on international distribution for their success. Language differentiation at the point of exhibition seemed incompatible with the manufacture and export of a product that was supposed to be universal in its appeal. In this context, the production of Multiple Language Versions can be seen as a stepping-stone in the development of a classical Hollywood cinema that could never truly be 'universal'; the new, 'progressive' and international cinema was, and has remained, Anglo-American, and disseminating representations of America as an

aspirational culture could be considered Hollywood's ultimate solution to language difference.

The economic record of Hollywood multiple language versions attests to their commercial non-viability, and has led to film historians approaching them as unsuccessful. Ginette Vincendeau writes, 'MLVs interest me because they failed: aesthetically these films were "terrible", and financially they turned out to be a disaster' (1999: 208). Similarly, Andrew Higson concludes

the multiple language film thus failed to resolve the perennial tension between a national cinema defined in terms of cultural distinctiveness and indigenous tradition, and international cinema whose standards were established by Hollywood and imposed world-wide.

(1999: 293)

Both Higson and Vincendeau in this case are coming from a position where 'national cinema' is normative and so suggest that the MLVs were unpopular because of their lack of cultural specificity. The European stars of the MLVs were 'too Americanised for their compatriots, but condemned to remain foreigners in the USA' and hence, 'relegated to a sort of media "no man's land", which uncannily reflects the fate of the MLVs themselves' (Vincendeau 1999: 221).

As a result of reading a history of MLVs through the concept of failure, Vincendeau is pushed toward interpreting their place in European culture as a poor second to 'national cinema' despite their very conception being emphatically transnational. She suggests the 'failure' of MLVs proves that an acceptable 'national cinema' is one with established 'narrative patterns' and a high degree of 'intertextuality

with the culture of its country' and implies that MLVs were unpopular because they were not manufactured according to these parameters (1999: 222). Yet, MLVs were not produced to be a stand-in for 'national' cinema and nor were they intended to set the standard for the international cinema of the future. MLVs were, rather, a valuable testing ground for Hollywood and they helped to fill a gap until dubbing technology was refined enough to overcome the seemingly unprofessional disunity of voice and body apparent in the experiments with early voice dubbing which was predicted to be off-putting for audiences.

Reports from the Motion Picture division of the US Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce clearly demonstrate how pragmatism rather than idealism informed the choice and justification of MLVs as a desirable translation method despite their high cost. In one article, Nathan Golden discusses the markets of thirteen European countries for the purpose of assessing the challenge a varied export market posed to Hollywood in Europe. According to Golden, sound films made in Europe were 'the outstanding problem confronting American exporters of motion pictures today' (Golden 1930: 11). His research expresses concern over three central areas: language, censorship of American films, and exchange between European countries to the exclusion of American produce. Significantly, Golden's paper shows an awareness of each country's particularity with regard to sound films at this early stage, in terms of both production and reception. He reports that Italy was considering the use of sound equipment to produce nationally specific film versions of opera, that France would not tolerate foreign talkies unless they were 'American super productions' with 'short dialog sequences and box-office names', and that in Spain and Hungary, English-language productions were

'naturally' unacceptable. The situation in Switzerland, a country whose film culture was based upon imports, is presented as unique by Golden in the importance he assigns to employing 'subtitles' (intertitles) as a translation tool in border regions where multiple languages are spoken.

Golden concludes that at this juncture America's reputation abroad as a quality motion picture producer is in danger of being compromised. America's prestige in this area is for Golden dependent on both the quality and the quantity of US films exported to Europe, which he recommends should typically be either silent films or 'sound film without dialog' rather than talkies (1930: 26). Less than a year later, further research presented by C.J. North with Golden suggests even less confidence in the American capability to export talking pictures to Europe. They are categorical in their warning to the industry: '[f]ilms in the English language stand little or no chance in most non-English speaking areas' (North & Golden 1930: 749). The use of captions to explain dialogue is rejected by North and Golden in all sound films apart from those with minimal dialogue such as the musical and films being exported to smaller markets (the 'less well-known languages, such as Portuguese, Hungarian, Rumanian and the like...' [1930: 757]), while dubbing is regarded as objectionable on the grounds of its status as a 'faking' process. Multiple language versions, then, were seen as the only acceptable and profitable form of screen translation for the larger language markets in Europe until dubbing could be improved. Paramount was overly cautious, it seems, as they produced Hungarian, Romanian and Portuguese language versions in 1930 and 1931 (see Waldman 1998).

To understand what is at stake here, the conclusions reached by the Bureau of Commerce need also to be read alongside wider trade discussions on the place of the English language in film. Many articles from the *JSMPE* reflect the effort made by Hollywood producers and distributors to develop a discourse on Hollywood sound films as an 'international' cinema which would promote the 'universality' of the English language and Anglo-American culture.⁸ For example, when Cecil B. DeMille (1927) pronounces '[t]he movie and the radio will bring people together. They will make for unity and a certain great oneness in the world. Ultimately it may even be oneness with God' (cited in Eyman 1997: 23), his ecstatic vision is of a harmonious global union brought on by the progressive perfection of cinematic communication. It reflects an assured confidence in the talkie medium connected to discourses on internationalism, universality and progress. According to these terms, the sound film was 'the universal servant of education', as Will Hays put it (1930: 264). As I will discuss in the second part of this chapter, similar themes were evoked in defence of the silent film, and in opposition to the talkie, by those who supported modernist avant-garde ideals of film art. In the Hollywood context, though, the rhetoric on education and universality was deployed as a declaration of the (American) sound film's potential omnipotence and international outreach.

There were reports, not only from America but also from other Anglophone nations, about the potential talkies held for 'anglicizing speech throughout the world' (Irby 1930: 32) and improving the speech of current English speakers.⁹ A measure of the degree to which such claims were circulating during the early years of the sound film can be found on a critical front page from London's *Film Weekly* which contains the headings

'Is Hollywood Obsolete?' and 'Universal Language Nonsense'. The author of the feature conveys his scepticism over recent proclamations for the sound film which were suggesting it would work in the service of the English language, saying

[t]he idea that Conrad Nagel and Dolores Costello would make English a universal language, after six hundred years of our dazzling [English] literary dynasty had failed to achieve such a thing, was the high point of Hollywood's utterly bewildering cocksuredness.

(F.W. 1929)

Hollywood's discourse of confidence on the sound film did not, therefore, go unnoticed and was criticised for its imperialist overtones by outside observers. There are clear indications that Hollywood's production of the sound film at times involved citing the superiority of the English language over all other languages and thus implied that America was the main gatekeeper and disseminator of English rather than Britain. In a mutually reinforcing discourse of excellence, this implicit claim to ownership of the English language appeared alongside claims that Hollywood cinema surpassed all other cinematic 'languages'. Harold B. Franklin was almost certainly referring to the international exhibition of American feature films when he described in *JSMPE* an imminent 'internationalisation of appreciation' attached to the talking film. For Franklin, the talking picture has the power to stop wars and exchange ideals. The sound film is primarily 'a medium for understanding' that 'will give each country a chance to see that its neighbor and its enemy are human exactly like itself' (1930b:18, 19). The status of English as the language of choice for an international, conflict free culture inspired by American ideals is implicitly made in Franklin's assessment. He writes:

languages will have to, and will be, altered, unified. It may be centuries, but the United States of the World is going to come, and when the history of its vivid arrival is written, a talking picture will have, it seems to me, a star role.

(Franklin 1930b: 19)

Franklin's phrasing 'the United States of' neatly implicates North America and, by extension, the English language into the development of cultural progressiveness, 'a world-wide presentation of the best in everything, a universal understanding, and a cosmic peace' (Franklin 1930b: 19). By asking rhetorically '[w]hat country is there in the entire world unacquainted with the American Cowboy and the American Indian?'

Franklin (1930b: 18) affirms the universality of American culture in its umbrella inclusion of both the 'Cowboy' and the 'Indian' and its mass cultural outreach through the popular genre of the Western which had been, and was to remain for some time to come, so important in maintaining Hollywood's international appeal.

While Hollywood used European film stars to market its cinema abroad, it also deployed their accents as markers of foreignness that would affirm English as the lingua franca and normalise Anglo-American culture as the supposedly universal space within which such linguistic standardisation could go unquestioned. Given the ideological implications of Hollywood's classical cinema for many 'accented' Europeans, it is perhaps not surprising that in the so-called 'dubbing countries' it is films representing the dominant English language cinema (Hollywood in all cases) that are still most frequently dubbed. Martine Danan explains how the dubbing of Hollywood films might be read as an expression of nationalism. She cites the popularity of (and, eventually in all cases, the insistence on) dubbing as a screen translation practice with fascist governments (in

Germany, Italy and Spain), where linguistic unity and consistency was a corollary to political and cultural stability and where regional dialects were suppressed (1991: 611). Acts of linguistic standardisation and resistance to 'foreign' influences conceivably conditioned audiences in these countries not only to accept the 'violence' of dubbing, but also to read it as an affront to the perceived cultural imperialism of the dominant cinema. One might also wish to consider here how this positions subtitling, and the consumption of subtitled films, as an oppositional practice in these countries. Additionally, it is useful to chart how the administrative nationalisation of film production in European countries paralleled the rise of both authoritarian regimes and patriotic national configurations opposed to those regimes. I include here not only the wartime patriotism mobilised against fascism but also efforts by governments to suppress or discipline revolutionary socialist movements.

There are further historical explanations for the acceptance of dubbing in some European countries compared with the subtitling monopoly in others. Ostensibly, audiences for dubbed films were created in the early 1930s in the 'dubbing countries' because large countries had strong enough indigenous film industries, and audiences, to provide the resources and attract investment in dubbing. In contrast, smaller language communities in western Europe like Denmark and Sweden were unlikely to have had the industrial support or the potential box office revenue to justify dubbing pictures. Audiences in these countries would have had to watch foreign films in their original language versions either untranslated or with subtitles. Because of the relative slowness of most European countries to convert to sound, compared with Britain and America, and the accuracy with which the recommendations for film translation in Europe coming from

the US Bureau of Commerce reports reflect what actually occurred, I think one can conclude that Hollywood actively influenced the development of screen translation in European countries. Moreover, Hollywood's enthusiasm for dubbing over subtitling as a translation method, coupled with its rhetoric on Hollywood cinema's universal appeal, suggests that dubbing was very quickly associated with ensuring a film's translatability and popularity.

Although there had been an emphasis early on in the American conversion period on the importance of voice-body unity, once appropriate formal conventions had been established for the talking picture (see Altman 1992b: 60-2 and Williams 1992) and post-synchronisation was improved, anxiety over dubbing as a synthetic 'trick' technique disappeared – from Hollywood discourse, that is. But, as Charles O'Brien (2005) suggests, although Hollywood presented itself as the obvious model for sound film production in the 1930s and, to an extent, was indeed referred to as the standard for cinema 'modernisation' (with European filmmakers repatriating from Hollywood because of the conversion to sound and working to establish studio systems in Europe similar to those in the USA), in most cases sound technology had to be domesticated in European countries to suit pre-existing industrial structures and practices (2005: 36-7). So, while the practice of dubbing can be seen in some sense as an emulation of Hollywood principles in sound film technique, the realities of sound film production in Europe may have meant that there were initial discrepancies between the types of sound heard in dubbed American films and those heard in nationally produced films.

My research has indicated that industry approaches to the sound film in America were focused and deliberately optimistic rather than reluctant or arbitrary. Evidence from

The Journal of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers and other Hollywood-oriented publications suggests Hollywood producers worked to promote a constructive and confident dialogue on sound film production. The choices made concerning the mechanisms of sound production and reproduction were naturalised into discrete areas of expertise and were to become convention as soon as was feasible. The Hollywood reports in *Close-Up*, the publication I turn to next, describe an industry turned on to Europe and its multiple languages; movies were being previewed in Los Angeles' 'foreign settlements' to test their marketability to corresponding language groups and cultures abroad (Howard 1930c) and émigré director Jacques Feyder was proposing tours of Europe for American filmmakers and actors:

[c]onsider the recent public announcement issued in all seriousness from the studios of Buster Keaton, that, after an intensive course in German, coupled with a trip to Berlin, "Keaton now speaks the tongue of Goethe and Schiller".

(Howard 1931:119)

Within the pages of *Close-Up*, these efforts were not cause for celebration. Hollywood's interest in supplying Europe with suitable sound films was a warning of its future pervasiveness and influence in shaping a mass cinema culture that was, in *Close-Up*'s opinion, artistically and politically retrogressive.

***Close-Up*: 'The closest up to what cinema should be'**

The development of talking films was not positively received in *Close-Up*. *Close-Up*'s sound debates begin rather innocuously with editor Kenneth Macpherson's review

of a Movietone preview. He is hardly enamoured with the new technology but appears resigned to its inevitability (Macpherson 1927a: 9-10). Soon after, however, the backlash against the impending technology emerges. Sound technology is criticised for being a lazy development devised by unprincipled film producers attracted to the big audiences and quick profits which novelty undoubtedly would provide (Watts 1928). Along similar lines, another author perceives the commercialism of talkies to be the major obstacle to convincing others to oppose them and to maintain some popular appeal for silent pictures (Chowl 1929). *Close-Up*'s Hollywood correspondent attempts to put a positive angle on this issue, amidst all the '[f]ear, uncertainty, bewilderment', by arguing that the success of the Hollywood talkie will free silent pictures from having to compete with 'the overshadowing commercialism of moviedom' and is returning famous actors 'with alien accents' from Hollywood to Europe (Howard 1929a: 38, 39). Overall, however, talkies are 'unsound', limiting the expression of actors and cinematographers (Betts 1929a), and they are vacuous, artistically impoverished presentations based upon musical revues and stage plays rather than original screenplays and ideas (Castle 1929; Howard 1929e; Betts 1930). '[T]he raucous howls of the talking films' are not wished upon sensitive viewers who were, it is said, able to 'hear' the voices in silent pictures anyway (Needham 1928), and multiple language versions are as laughable as they are deplorable (Castle 1930). The talking picture may at some point achieve technical competence, it is admitted, but art is doubtful '[i]n the Land where Images Mutter'; the 'all-talkie' constitutes '[m]uttering images, not as yet uttering. The stutter would be more interesting' (Potamkin 1930a: 11).

So, amongst the contributors' misgivings about the talking picture were its commercialism and exploitation of novelty value, the shrinking of audiences for silent

pictures and the consequent demise of silent film production, and the limitations placed upon artists and creative ideas by the new technology's requirements. I will argue in this section that in addition to these objections, and in many respects informing each of them, the talking picture was perceived as a problem because it destabilized critical claims for film as a universally understood medium of communication, a visual Esperanto (with all the middle class connotations that entails).

Even in the silent era the intrusion of linguistic specificity in the form of intertitles was of debatable value for some *Close-Up* contributors and readers. Dorothy Richardson, a regular columnist, appreciates the 'caption' for its literary affinities ('[a]rt and literature...have never yet been separated' [1927b: 55]) but distinguishes the successful, succinct caption from the clumsy, belaboured one that lingers on screen for a damagingly long time. Jean Prévost believes intertitles are applied judiciously to Marc Allégret's travel film *Voyage au Congo* (1927) but points out that he generally 'hate[s] sub-titles in a film as much as I hate pictures in a book', suggesting that he finds titles all too often over-illustrative and perhaps a little immature (1927a: 39). A reader's letter on '[t]he translation of sub-titles' conveys a similar attitude towards intertitles, suggesting that films with few titles allow viewers to come to their own conclusions about the presentation. She further reasons that films with few intertitles will travel better for, in her experience, 'foreign films, which in themselves are excellent and concise, are reduced to banality more often than not by some quite inept and naïve statement flashed on informatively just where it least is needed' (Drysdale 1927: 71-2). This common equation of the intertitle's success with its degree of invisibility is particularly interesting as it is an argument that has often subsequently been made for subtitles. It is an attitude which

perhaps also finds expression in, and is a reflection of, the medium specificity debates of the time and suggests that intertitles are an intrusion on or an interruption of the fluency of the moving image. Aside from the purism inherent in such arguments, a feature of medium specificity theorising was the conviction that film constituted a universal medium of expression. As Weis and Belton (1985) suggest, the introduction of sound onto film precipitated a crisis around pre-sound medium specificity theorising as the 'nature' of the medium, and in particular its difference from theatre, was questioned.¹⁰

It was suggested by another *Close-Up* reader that the 'cinema industry' spend some time and money on teaching audiences Esperanto to enable the continuation of film as a universal language:

[e]ach sub-title [intertitle] would have the Esperanto version below: short lessons would be given after a news reel, it would be a publicity stunt, and for less than is wasted on a bad super-film the industry could propaganda all over the earth. It may be forced to do this yet, because of the talkies.

(d'E. B 1928: 68)

This comment reflects a growing awareness on the part of the journal and its readership of the need to find translation solutions for the introduction of speech into film. In January 1931, *Close-Up* had an advert published in the US magazine *Experimental Cinema* which stated '[a]s films – through speech – are becoming more and more national, in proportion the function of an international journal such as *Close-Up* is complicated' (cited in Donald 1998: 26); language was intruding upon ideals.

Close-Up was edited from Switzerland and via correspondence in London.¹¹ The Switzerland-England dynamic was significant for *Close-Up*'s development, form and

ideological leanings, contributing to the magazine's simultaneous Britishness and Europeanness, neither of which were considered to be mutually exclusive. Commercial cinema from all over Europe was available in nearby metropolitan areas like Geneva and the part of Switzerland in which *Close-Up* resided had a liberal censorship policy regarding film exhibition (Cosandey 1996:51). In contrast, while the London Film Society had from 1925 begun showing films which were not easily accessible elsewhere in the UK, censorship was a persistent problem in Britain and one which *Close-Up* vigorously campaigned against. In fact, *Close-Up*'s campaign to lift censorship in England to allow the wider exhibition of Soviet films led, they proudly announced in their 'Censorship Issue' (Vol. 4 No.2 February 1929: 92), to the *Daily Express* (15 Jan 1929) describing them as a 'pro-Russia propagandist organisation'. In this context, the Swiss location can be understood as one of comparative freedom (from censorship but ostensibly also from Film Society debates and gossip) but must also have contributed to the sense that the journal was at the vital centre of a European nexus, located in a linguistically diverse, politically neutral country with arms reaching out to England, North America, Russia and the surrounds of western Europe.

A few pre-sound articles mention specifically the experience of watching cinema in a bi- or multi-lingual environment and the acts of spoken and written translation that occur (Richardson 1927a: 62; H.D. 1928: 23). They show a distinct effort to engage in a European rather than British cinema culture, such as the instance when an issue is introduced as 'a Russian number...because with a rush of new films from Russia into Germany, there was nothing else to write about' (Macpherson 1928c: 5) or when a report from Paris appears in which the new *salle spécialisée* is described, a cinema in which

sound films are presented without translation in their original (English) language versions (Stenhouse 1930).

This was a time of growth for film criticism in France and Germany, with film criticism becoming established in newspapers as well as in specialised film, literature or art journals and small book publications (see Cosandey 1996:52, Wedel 1999 and Aitken 2001: 74-5). *Close-Up* was published in English but included frequent articles in the French language, sometimes with brief précis in English (as with Prévost 1927b) or translated (Prévost 1927) but more often without any English note of explanation (Crevel 1927; Prévost 1927c; Aron 1927; Chevalley 1929a; Lenauer 1929b; Chevalley 1929b). By publishing French language articles, *Close-Up* sustained a commitment to its French readership and on one occasion had Clifford Howard's Hollywood report translated by their Geneva correspondent Freddy Chevalley for the benefit of French-speaking readers (Howard 1930b). When the format of *Close-Up* changes in 1931 to include more pictures, these are presented with headings and/or comment in English, French and German. Following *Close-Up*, the British magazine *film art* (1933-7) sporadically translated its illustration titles into French and German, although not for any conceivable reason other than it might have given the magazine a continental air.

The art of film was being explored in Europe at this time according to a consciously international, peace-time perspective. In the 1920s, a number of international film congresses and exhibitions took place in Europe, including the First International Cinema Exhibitor's Conference in Berlin (1928), designed to focus on European co-operation in the film industry (see Higson 1999a), and congresses on independent cinema in La Sarraz, Switzerland (1929) and in Belgium (1930) (see Lenauer 1929c and Rees

1996:100-1). Film was celebrated for its 'universal' characteristics and as an art was viewed in this modernist art context (where to be avant-garde was to exercise the indivisibility of art from life) as a language that knew no geographical bounds. Informed by this position, Kenneth Macpherson declares films can be:

1. A universal (a) language (b) educator (c) backbone
2. An international (a) sympathy (b) friendship (c) common-sense
3. An inter-racial (a) goodwill (b) league of nations (c) peace-conference

(Macpherson 1927b: 5)

There are interesting and clear parallels that can be drawn between Macpherson's idealist (silent) film manifesto and the rhetoric deployed by Hollywood in its discourse of confidence in the sound film. Whereas the American statements were designed to promote the commercial viability of English-language sound cinema to export markets, Macpherson's list is based on possibilities offered by the silent film.¹² But within his statements there also lies a doctrine on film criticism. *Close-Up* is not criticizing merely for criticism's sake. Unlike critics who damage cinema's status by choosing to 'indulge in ugly wit' and becoming 'petty and moralising' (Elliott 1927:48), overly concerned with the cinema's effects on the State of the Nation, *Close-Up* positioned itself as acting in the service of film art international and those who love and engage with it.

Reflecting this service is *Close-Up*'s promotion of the Volksverband für Filmkunst (People's Association for Film Art) based in Berlin under the directorship of the writer Heinrich Mann and filmmaker G.W. Pabst. Associated with the magazine *Film und Volk*, the Volksverband claims to have as its aims the development of 'artistically progressive' cinema and 'the mission of collecting together [-] wide masses of

cinemagoers and to educate them into critical perceptions' by creating a circuit of 'pioneer' and 'repertory' cinemas (Schwartzkopf 1928: 72-3). The article concludes by expressing the Association's wish, characteristic of the growth of alternative film exhibition in Europe, that film appreciation movements from different nations may be united – 'for the film being silent, speaks all languages of the world' (Schwartzkopf 1928: 75).¹³

Close-Up's address was to a burgeoning alternative film culture, founded at this point on what Deke Dusinberre calls 'an avant-garde attitude' which involved the idea of 'a shared progressive aspiration' amongst its adherents (1996:66). They were supportive of the London Film Society and encouraged the promulgation and expansion of similar establishments in the provinces for the educative 'benefit of disseminating good stuff' (*Close-Up* 1927: 54). Bryher comments in '[h]ow I would start a film club' that films should be cut by their directors and '[i]f an adult is not intelligent enough to see *Potemkin*, *La Tragédie de la Rue*, or *The End of St Petersburg*, in their original uncut form, then he is not intelligent enough to be in a film society' (1928b: 290). There is an interesting tension to note here between the journal's clear advocacy of artistic autonomy for the film director/author and the general avant-garde reaction against bourgeois notions of the autonomous artist at this time, as has been described in Peter Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1984). The idea that film could be an expression of an author was most particularly developed in the 1920s in relation to cinematic impressionism, an avant-garde film style that was developed particularly in France from around 1918-1929 and theorized by Jean Epstein and Louis Delluc amongst others (see Aitken 2001: 69-90). While it cannot be said of *Close-Up* that it was a great enthusiast for French impressionist

filmmaking, generally preferring the Soviet montage technique and Weimar expressionist films to the pictorial preoccupations of cinematic impressionism, it certainly built up its own canon of authors amongst which Sergei Eisenstein and G.W. Pabst were especially prominent. *Close-Up* encouraged a demand for films of special artistic or social value and called for the protection of films together with respect for and their integrity as artistic visions originating from a single author.¹⁴

Most demand that emerged for European films outside metropolitan areas (in the UK at any rate) went unsatisfied, however. New foreign imports were rarely available for audiences in 'the provinces' (smaller towns or suburban outlets of large cities). This did not preclude provincial readers of *Close-Up* from engaging with critical debates on worthy films that they may never see. In one article, a young woman describes how someone with her enthusiasm for the cinema must 'become your own film-critic, and learn to take no heed of the weekly reports in the local papers' (D.L.H. 1929b:52). Her article followed a letter she had written in a previous issue declaring what she perceives to be her marginal position in contrast to the magazine's London readership:

[u]nless you've lived in the Provinces, you will never comprehend the depths of my anguish... No, I don't suppose I'll ever see a Russian film... I'm jolly well going to Stuttgart, although it means no new clothes this Summer.

(D.L.H. 1929a: 105-6)

This reader's willingness to sacrifice an aspect of cultural capital (fashionable clothes) in her quest for good cinema, Germany being the next best thing to Russia in terms of *Close-Up* cinematic vogue at this time, is given as proof of her commitment to film as art. The proposed trip to Stuttgart, presumably for the 1929 Stuttgart 'Film und

Foto' exposition (cited in Rees 1996: 96), deliberately signals her engagement with artistic appreciation.

Close-Up's notion of internationalism and, particularly, of universality requires further qualification. The 'universal' quality assigned to film art was a highly Eurocentric concept. For example, when Macpherson describes the general state of cinema output he mentions Germany, Russia, France, England, Austria, Sweden and Italy alongside the United States. Japan is added to the list with the comment '[m]akes hundreds of films per year. But makes them for Japan... [I]t is almost impossible to see a Japanese film in Western Europe, and some of them would be of the greatest interest' (Macpherson 1928a: 6).¹⁵ Macpherson also voiced concern for sustaining film production in Europe, arguing for European artistic and financial cooperation to facilitate such an end (1927c: 14). He opposes the European to the American cinema, viewing the first as a cinema of individual works because its directors cut their own films and, by comparison, discrediting the latter because its directors do not (1928b). This bias towards European films is reflected in the journal's film recommendations and its promotions of individual directors as seen in its self-congratulatory 'Success to Close-Up' pages (a good range can be found in Vol.2 No.5 1928: 85, 87, 89, 95) and the signed photo from Eisenstein on the inside front cover of Vol. 4 No. 1 (Jan 1929). This was titled '[a] valued tribute from S. Eisenstein, maker of film history' and was signed by Eisenstein with the inscription '[t]o K. Macpherson – Editor of the Closest Up to what cinema should be. With heartiest wishes'.

There appears in *Close-Up* a general sense of distrust towards the USA and its popular cinema, perhaps directly connected in this highbrow magazine to Hollywood's association with mass culture. This is evident in Bryher's attack on what she sees as a

non-critical mode of reception whereby the viewers 'hypotize [sic] themselves into an expectation... and achieve complete gratification whatever the material set in front of them provided it is presented in an expected and familiar manner' (Bryher 1928c: 59). With sound, there emerges some discussion on the place and effect of the American accent on film, not unusual in Britain at this time. D.L.H. describes how the American accent interferes with her viewing pleasure: '[w]hen the ear is accustomed to American of all shades, and the average audience has become bilingual (Anglo-American), then, perhaps, we might be permitted to see a little acting now and again' (1930:151). Now audible, class is sometimes directly remarked upon in this context. Clifford Howard's (likely tongue-in-cheek) assessment of the disapproval of lower-class voices describes how the talking film has proved to be

a wrecker of pedestals, a profaner of shrines at which we were wont to worship. Instead of the divine tones we had been hearing in our mind's ear... [came] flat, vulgar, unschooled voices, the voices of saucy shop girls and earth-born dairymaids.

(Howard 1930a: 396)

Tellingly, some of the most positive comments in *Close-Up* on the talking film and on its address to a commercial audience also come from Clifford Howard, *Close-Up*'s Los Angeles-based Hollywood correspondent. Howard even suggests that sound has moved cinema to 'the complete democratizing of the drama – the spoken drama, produced with unprecedented lavishness and skill and effect, not alone for the entertainment of some imperial potentate, but for the enjoyment also of the village bootblack and Uncle Silas' (1929c: 51; see also 1929b and 1930d). Howard had earlier criticised the trend in Britain

whereby Hollywood talkies were maligned because of fears over the effects of American English on (superior, upper middle class) British English.¹⁶ Howard defends popular cinema and even speaks plainly on the condescending attitude of the intelligentsia towards films which, he implies, were not intended for their appreciation:

Hollywood is the *bête noire*... without culture; a bounder, an upstart in the sacred realm of art; impudent and profane. On the other hand, a motion picture from Berlin, from Moscow, from Budapest, whatever its lack as compared with a Hollywood product, is assured a sympathetic reception by the American movie scorer. It is invested with an implication of excellence, of artistry, of *savoir vivre*. That is Europe.

(Howard 1929d 63-4)

There were other efforts to present a balanced view of Hollywood's contribution to film culture, notably Bryher's 'Defence of Hollywood' (1928a) which rubbishes the 'chaotic criticism' over Hollywood's domination of the European market. But in the larger context of the journal, these defences seem somewhat piecemeal or incongruous as *Close-Up* was to the most part unappreciative of Hollywood and its seeming perniciousness. *Close-Up* delights, for example, in having caused consternation to arise within Viola B. Jordan of Tenaflly, New Jersey who writes in to cancel her subscription to the journal, insulted by 'grouches, snobbishness and sly hittings at America and its MONEY. And its ART, and its PEOPLE, and its general all round BIGNESS.' She goes on, 'I am quite fed up on it and I do not read anything modern anymore' (Jordan 1928). *Close-Up*'s only response to this was a heading: 'Wow!'.

Ian Aitken (2001) has identified three major modernist film movements in 1920s Europe: French cinematic impressionism, Weimar cinema and Soviet montage cinema. There were other modernist film movements in this period, including documentaries, dada and surrealism and *cinéma pur*, but, as expressed by A.L. Rees (1996), these were aligned more with an artists' avant-garde than with the 'narrative avant-garde' or 'art cinema' which was *Close-Up*'s main concern. Soviet montage cinema and theory was especially important to *Close-Up* authors and their approach to sound was largely informed by ideas on how to accommodate this in their response. Initially, the regular contributor Dorothy Richardson is opposed even to the experiments with sound effects in films which she calls 'evidence of a blind move in the wrong direction, in the direction of the destruction of the essential character of the screen-play' (1927c). But with the publication of the Soviet 'Statement on Sound', authored by Eisenstein, Pudovkin and Alexandrov in 1928, *Close-Up* contributors had a touch-stone for their critique on sound. Subsequent articles in the magazine reinforced the Soviet idea that sound was to be used as counterpoint to image and, interestingly, often emphasised the 'poetic', avant-garde aspects of this cinema over and above the narrative and propagandist functions of montage.

Following the Soviet statement, talk is to be opposed for it 'attacks the film's peculiar and individual function, which is to imitate life in flowing forms of light and shade to a rhythmic pattern' (Betts 1929a: 24; see also Betts 1929b and Potamkin 1929). Finding speech tolerable only if it contributes to this principle, Harry Potamkin describes the recording of Yiddish on film as an 'opportunity for rhythm, stylized utterance'. He can reach this conclusion only because he does not understand the language spoken and

the untranslated, foreign word is described in this instance as an aspect of sound rather than talk (1930b: 103). Oswald Blakeston later made a similar point in *Close-Up*, arguing that 'language has so much imagery inherent in the sound that it is AN ECHO OF RACE MIND' (Blakeston 1931: 311), a sentiment which feeds off avant-garde ideologies of primitivism and art current in the 1920s and reflects attempts to implicate sound into these ideals. Pudovkin visited the London Film Society in 1929 and Robert Herring's report for *Close-Up* on the event takes the opportunity to push again the Soviet line on 'contrapunctal' sound: 'Pudovkin would combine the fury of an angry man with the roar of a lion,' he writes. 'Think what that means' (1929: 38). Eisenstein, too, held lectures at the Film Society that year which are reported upon in *Close-Up* (Eisenstein 1930a & b) as is an interview with Aleksandr Dovjenko (Bond 1930).

Following *Close-Up*, the idea of using sound in film as counterpoint was later to be supported by Paul Rotha's *Film Till Now* (1930) and the short-lived, though lively, British journal *film art* (1933-7). The offsetting of Hollywood cinema against Soviet was also evident in *film art*, a self-proclaimed 'high-strained product of "montage" enthusiasts' (Braun 1934: 4). For *Close-Up* and *film art* alike, 'montage' was a crucial marker of art in film and associated with European films. As an editorial in *Close-Up* explained, '[t]he only place for individual work is in the cutting room. European directors, naturally, cut their own films. American directors don't' (Macpherson 1928: 16). Martin Stollery's fascinating account of the parallelism between British and Soviet state propaganda in the 1920s and 30s considers the importance of *Close-Up* and the London Film Society in shaping the British documentary aesthetic. He suggests that since the Film Society and journals like *Close-Up* had established the idea that Soviet films

were artistically valuable, this encouraged the emulation of some Soviet techniques in the Empire Marketing Board films. John Grierson was a central force in promoting this attitude and arranged screenings for officials of Soviet films. He also wrote his 'Notes for English Producers' with what Stollery describes as

[a]n aspiration to universality via the highest aesthetic standards...[where] slippage between internationalism and Eurocentrism, typical of modernist film art discourse, is evident...'

(2000: 157)

The documentary movement's investment in discourses propagated by the film art journals and Film Society meant that British documentary makers subsequently looked to these bodies for legitimisation. With such a cycle in place it becomes clear why the documentary movement is often discussed in terms of British 'art cinema', despite its propagandist and imperialist backdrop.

The place of spoken language as distinct from sound is not in itself central to this Soviet-influenced strand of debate. However, it is worth bearing in mind that there was much talk about talkies before they were even exhibited in many parts of Europe – Europe wired its theatres for sound a couple of years later than the USA, around 1929. Indeed one Paris correspondent, once 'hostile' toward the talking film but now bolstered by the Soviet Statement on Sound, predicts that sound will ultimately be a positive addition to filmic expression. The final line of his exposition reads '[a]fter that, I perhaps have the right to tell you that I have not yet seen a talking film' (Lenauer 1929a:21).¹⁷

In this chapter I have described how language was critically discussed as a problem for cinema in Europe during the transition to sound. According to the *Journal of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers*, the 'problem' was an economic one: how could Hollywood companies maintain control of European markets given that there would be a demand for films in multiple languages? For *Close-Up* writers, the problem was theoretically based: how was 'film art' (at the levels of production *and* reception) to proceed now that speech threatened the continuation of film as a universal ideal and artistically mature language? As I shall suggest in the chapters which follow, the solutions proposed by each party were not short lived; rather, they had far reaching consequences.

Hollywood's solution to a language problem in Europe was twofold, both discursive and practical. It consisted of developing a discourse of confidence in the new technology, which involved normalising US English and promoting the idea of English as a potentially universal language in the service of peace and co-operation, while they engaged in a series of pragmatically informed experiments in screen translation which would finally split the European market into dubbing and subtitling territories. Hollywood's encouragement of dubbing, except in the least profitable countries (those with small language communities and limited revenue potential), was ideologically suggestible. In the 'dubbing' territories, dubbed films were to be mass entertainment, the extra costs of dubbing justified by the market; subtitled films (in the dubbing countries and in the UK), on the other hand, were a minority interest. This ideological/pragmatic coupling of subtitling with films that had small market potential was in the future to be carried as a badge of honour by proponents of an alternative film culture in Europe.

Although only hints of it are suggested in *Close-Up*, supporters of a minority interest film culture developed discourses on film art that would evade the prickly issue of loss they had attached to the talking film. Unity could be retained by a belief in an international culture of film appreciation where a common understanding of what constituted artistic value could circumvent language barriers. So long as the film was shown in its original language and subtitled, there could remain some sense of universality in reception which might be enhanced by a shared recognition of the film as the vision of an author or as an expression of national character. What is more, there was a feeling that an educated audience should be able to appreciate languages and cultures that were not their own and, as I shall discuss further, that cinema now had the potential to aid in the learning of foreign languages.

The discourses formed at this crucial point of disruption for cinema - its initiation into spoken language - have had a long-lasting influence on the way European cinemas have been and continue to be discussed and described. Several points in this chapter have credence for the rest of the thesis but two conclusions are key: firstly, Hollywood has been instrumental in organising screen translation practices in Europe and, secondly, a certain ideological understanding of language difference is a vital component of 'alternative' film cultures in Europe. Both these points are important for understanding the way European films are handled as 'foreign language' cinema and, in particular, for grasping the connections between language difference, translation and the notion of 'European art cinema'. As I shall explore elsewhere in the thesis, the label 'European art cinema' has paradoxically required the critical affirmation of distinct national identities in films in order to promote a bourgeois-intellectual idea of a pan-European identity

grounded in a common artistic culture and heritage. There are hints of this paradox forming in *Close-Up* and not only once sound had 'nationalised' cinema but even before then when the well-being of national film production was judged by the international prominence of its cinema artists, as in this case with Russia (S. Eisenstein *et al*) and Germany (G.W. Pabst). The dual importance of the national and the international really took off after World War II, however, when the reception of 'art cinema' continued to be invested with modernist notions of universality, and of peacemaking, but production seemed resigned to national cinemas because of political reasons. Later, from the late 1950s onwards, many 'art cinema' directors associated with particular national contexts became involved in international co-productions, upsetting any simple definition of 'national cinema' (see Elsaesser 1998; Betz: 2001). *Close-Up* was one of the first champions of an alternative reception movement based upon the appreciation of film art, and I will be arguing that the awareness of language this cinephile culture developed during the unwelcome transition to sound was not going to disappear with European producers' total accession to the new technology and the decisive formation of foreign language films.

Chapter 3

Film Criticism, Specialised Cinemas and Subtitles: 'For Filmgoers Only'

This chapter attends to the notion of 'art cinema' with respect to the exhibition and reception of foreign language films in Britain. In it I explore the specialised cinema phenomenon chosen with respect to its relevance for understanding the status of European films within the UK. As I discussed in the previous chapter, 'foreign' films imported to Britain from Europe have, at least since the coming of sound to cinema, been treated as exceptional fare in a marked and deliberate contrast to Hollywood. Seldom available for mainstream exhibition, foreign films were from the 1920s imbricated into a rarefied taste discourse which was developed and sustained by film societies, cinephile magazines and specialised cinemas. These highly regarded institutions of alternative cinema culture addressed a critically engaged, educated, middle-class reader who was expected to uphold certain cultural values with regard to cinema including certain criteria for evaluating films, the acceptance of which was important for legitimising the critic's authority and reinforcing the specialised cinema canons.

Deliberations on 'the language problem', as a set of definable issues around the production, exhibition and reception of sound films (some of which I discussed in chapter 2), miraculously disappeared with the stabilising of sound film technique and the political nationalisation of many European cinemas. However, certain assumptions about what constituted artistically worthy films in a European context which developed in the midst of debates about language in film remained in critical discourse. As I will explore in this

and other chapters to come, ideas on language as an expressive cultural marker within film and on subtitling as a means of preserving the linguistic mark as an integral aspect of cinema were retained beyond the transition to sound by proponents of art film cultures in western Europe.

Art cinema as a textual category is commonly discussed in relation to post-World War II European cinema. As Penelope Houston (1963) saw it, this was a flourishing cinema culture of new waves and 'first films' which was in the late fifties and early sixties leaving poor old Hollywood in its wake and drew a prominent reception culture around young (mostly French or Italian) male directors. David Bordwell's essay 'The Art Cinema as Mode of Film Practice' (2002) has perhaps been more influential in drawing out this line of description for academic scholars, although he was not the first to classify modern European art cinema (see for example Arnes 1976). Bordwell's art cinema also appears after World War II in a moment of international strength for European cinemas as Hollywood's dominance begins to wane as a result of the popularity of television and the forced collapse of the Studios' vertical integration monopolies.

The international art cinema described by Bordwell is self-consciously contrary to the forms and conventions of Hollywood classical cinema, motivated by 'realism' and 'authorial expressivity', featuring 'psychologically complex characters' and 'eroticism' (2002: 95-6). Crucially, this art cinema is contingent for its success upon 'competent viewer[s]' who are able to unify the art film's subjective and potentially confusing narrative form by identifying authorial signatures which they can recognise and confirm as such by engaging with film reviews, film festival publicity, published scripts and film director seasons (2002: 97). Following Bordwell, Erik Hedling (2001) describes art

cinema as a form of post-war European film narration which was, in the British critical context, most clearly addressed in the cine journal *Sequence* (1947-52) and which invites 'a higher level interpretation' (Bordwell) from educated, middle class cinemagoers (Hedling 2001: 241). The multi-layered approach to post-war European cinema demonstrated by Bordwell and Hedling, which conceives of cinema in a holistic way by considering the textual and narrative features of films alongside the contexts of their production and reception, is a sensible methodology, frequently enlightening. But, while I cannot criticise the method in this case I would ask where does such historical circumscription leave the earlier modernist-inspired European art film reception culture which I explored in the previous chapter?

Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (1996), keen like Bordwell and Hedling to ensure attempts to describe 'art cinema' are historically situated, for the most part also focuses his definition on the European cinema movements and directors which emerged in the late fifties and 1960s. He does note, however, that notions of the 'art film' existed long before this particular period (1996: 567). Bordwell, too, will accept that 'art cinema' has some extraction from interwar film traditions such as German expressionism and French Impressionism but not from the '[m]ore radical avant-garde movements, such as Soviet montage filmmaking, Surrealism, and *cinéma pur*', which complicates the distinction I made in chapter 2 where I (correctly, I feel) aligned Soviet montage cinema with the narrative rather than the artists' avant-garde. By discounting the artists' avant-garde from 'art cinema' (including Soviet montage films) I think Bordwell forces a discrepancy between forms which have been treated similarly as 'art cinema' in western European and American exhibition and reception contexts. In doing so he neglects the importance

(and unifying function) of the reception cultures surrounding specialised cinema in the years before the Second World War which shaped discourses on cinephilia and artistry in filmmaking. In my view, these earlier film reception movements undoubtedly influenced the exhibition and reception practices which would (re)emerge after the war and mushroom in popularity alongside the rush of film production in the mode that Bordwell describes.

In order to approach a properly informed understanding of the international art cinema practices which Bordwell and others attribute to the post-war era in Europe, it is worth paying attention to the making of traditions of exhibition and reception over an extended period of time. In doing this one can address questions such as how, given all the concerns in the coming of sound period over the 'nationalising' of cinema by sound, was it possible for an 'international' sound cinema to emerge? And what critical traditions made the 'European art cinema' an attractive, appropriable category for film critics and theorists? This chapter focuses especially on answering that last question and works with the assumption that the notion of 'European art cinema' developed out of a sustained trend of critically informed film reception which was promoted and shaped in the UK by film magazines such as *Close-Up*, *film art*, *Cinema Quarterly* and *Sight and Sound*. I will describe the discursive construction of European cinema within the context of 1930s, 40s and 50s Britain by exploring some of the film criticism which encouraged the promulgation of specialised cinemas for the exhibition of foreign language films in the UK.

My central focus is on *Sight and Sound* from 1932 to around 1960. Before I begin, it is important to note that the cinema activities which I discuss in this chapter - of

the film societies, British Film Institute and specialised theatres – had, around the same time, counterparts on the European continent in the French ciné clubs, salles spécialisée, and La Cinémathèque Française, the German Volksverband für Filmkunst (prior to Nazism), and in the proliferation of national film institutes and international film festivals across Europe. These activities, along with evidence for the similar treatment of selected subtitled films in many Western European countries both critically and in practice, suggest that the UK scenario for the exhibition and reception of subtitled foreign language films, while historically specific (and culturally particular in some ways, as with the peculiar British obsession with France), is not unique. As I shall discuss later in the thesis, even in countries such as Denmark where the popular Hollywood cinema is subtitled there exists a self-consciously alternative attitude to most European film imports which follows the lines of the international ‘art cinema’ discourse I describe here. These potential areas of international correspondence should be borne in mind as the chapter progresses.¹

The core of this chapter describes a series of elements in British film appreciation culture as they emerged in *Sight and Sound*. Centrally I examine, in this order, the idea of the intelligent filmgoer and the middlebrow, the significance of the National Film Theatre, the formation of a specialist cinema canon, the instruction of *Sight and Sound* readers in film criticism and its techniques, and the attitude of *Sight and Sound* toward European film festivals and internationalism. These topics are book-ended by specific illustrations of the status of language and translation in the magazine which invite a comparison of attitudes to language and cinema in the early 1930s with that in the 1950s following twenty years of the film appreciation regard.

Being a journal part-dedicated in name to sound, *Sight and Sound*'s first issues addressed the topic of language in a very direct way in terms of its use and application in education. The early issues (1932-3) contained adverts for Linguaphone language courses and discussions of British Instructional films that promoted proper use of the English language, such as *The King's English* (cited in Postgate 1933) and *48 Paddington Street* (in Lloyd James 1932), a film which was specifically addressed to Indian immigrants. Articles were also featured which discussed the possibilities of radio and the gramophone, independent of film accompaniment (Lloyd James 1932, Pear 1932, Whitworth 1933). In 1933, the magazine published two lengthy articles on language and film - 'A Prophecy' and 'A Solution' - written by Dr. J.B.C. Grundy, a school master and author of *Brush Up your German* and *Modern Method French*. Like the *Close-Up* critics, Grundy is still concerned with the threat language poses to cinema's supposed 'universality' and he is quick to reject interlingual dubbing and multiple language versions as options for language translation in cinema. He explains that these methods belittle the cultural significance of spoken language, which he says *nationalises* the film's content. For Grundy, the international success of talking cinema will depend upon language education.

Grundy's idealist solution to the translation issue is in some regards rather pessimistic in that he predicts the decline of cinema 'until language education catches up' and audiences progress to 'that happy time when civilised people will have acquired some notions of their neighbours' tongues' (1933a: 46, 45). He is confident, however, that increased opportunities for language learning and travel abroad were creating favourable conditions for sustaining 'a nucleus which can understand a foreign language

well enough to enjoy a foreign talking film' (1933b: 86). A point which I will be developing in this chapter is that pleasure in watching foreign-language films is conceptually linked to ideas about viewer proficiency. In Grundy's argument, the proficiency required is linguistic and I hope to show in the course of this chapter how this idea fitted well with the broader notions of competency in film spectatorship which were to be communicated in *Sight and Sound*.

An implicit assumption that the student of film be also a student of European languages had already appeared in other 'intelligent' film magazines. *Close-Up*, for instance, advertised a course for self-instruction in German which had been prepared by two of its major contributors. The course's selling point was that it was a guide to foreign languages 'for hurried people' by 'humanitarian' authors. These credentials were meaningful at a time when the learning of European languages was still unpopular in Britain following the First World War and remained, to a considerable extent, reserved for those experiencing a privileged, academic education (Rowlinson 1994: 12). In this insular climate, learning German for communication purposes rather than as a mental discipline was a political statement and in that respect shared an affinity with the practice of engaging with foreign cultures through ('forbidden' – at least to the lower classes) cinema. The modernist-inspired film culture *Close-Up* represented was determinedly internationalist in its attitude and deliberately contrary to popular public opinion, language learning and travel were part and parcel of this posture.

Grundy wrote his statement on the possibilities of film for foreign language learning while *Sight and Sound* was still being 'published under the auspices of the British Institute of Adult Education'. In this context Grundy's educational authority as a

school teacher is significant. *Sight and Sound*, as I shall discuss, was self-consciously distinct from the aesthetic film art journals like *Close-Up* and *film art* in adopting a broadly sociological and educational outlook. It was instrumental in championing the cause for a national film institute that would institutionalise the magazine's demands for a 'constructive' debate on the use and development of cinema as education as well as entertainment (Cameron 1932: 8). The case for such a body as described in *The Film in National Life*, a report prepared by the Commission on Educational and Cultural Films, was not state control of recreation but 'a new outlook' that would connect 'intelligent public opinion' to the film industry. One means of achieving this was to encourage the growing demand for film societies in provincial towns with the objective of improving public taste in cinematic entertainment (Cameron 1932: 8-9). Another was the instruction of young audiences through film with the hope that film would aid learning of traditional school subjects and that film appreciation could expand (and, by implication, advance) the cinema tastes of the future adult public (see Selfe 2003). This latter tradition, I will argue in chapter 7, has been upheld by the specialist cinemas to the present day, particularly in connection with the collaborative teaching of modern languages and the emergent field of 'citizenship education'.

Sight and Sound in its early incarnation was concerned mostly with the use of film in education. This gradually changed with material for schoolteachers becoming more and more marginal as the alternative film culture and readership of *Sight and Sound* expanded. The BFI's ownership of the magazine from 1934 shaped this trajectory which saw a concern with film as a tool for educating children shift towards encouraging film art appreciation as a means to educate adults in a much broader sense. This altered

emphasis was eventually officiated with the setting up of a National Committee for Visual Aids in Education (1946) which relieved the BFI of its films-in-schools educational mandate, and the Radcliffe Report (1948) which formally recorded the restructuring of the BFI, emphasising its broader cultural duties. *Sight and Sound* reflected the changes that were occurring in post-war BFI organisation with the new BFI director Denis Forman (1949-55) encouraging writers Gavin Lambert, Penelope Houston and Lindsay Anderson from the film magazine *Sequence* into the *Sight and Sound* fold.

Sight and Sound did not only address itself to but, I want to suggest, also interpolated the expanding number of cinemagoers interested in film societies, amateur film groups and 'serious' film criticism. This continued and developed a tradition conspicuous in other film magazines with a predominantly British readership, such as *Close-Up* (1927-1933), *film art* (1933-7) and *Cinema Quarterly* (1932-8, then absorbed into *World Film News*), which fostered and edited a dialogue between publication and public which was in keeping with hopes the BFI then articulated for developing an intelligent and discerning cinema audience. Yet *Sight and Sound* was envisaged to be divergent from these magazines as its focus was predominantly on addressing a middle class readership with a curiosity for education rather than sustaining intellectuals and avant-gardists.²

What was to become the primary target audience for *Sight and Sound* is explicitly laid out in a book published under the British Institute of Adult Education, *For Filmgoers Only. The Intelligent Filmgoer's Guide to the Film* (1934), a collection of essays by film critics, filmmakers and educators, most – if not all – of whom had contributed to *Sight and Sound*.³ This was a handbook for would-be middlebrow film enthusiasts. The

'intelligent filmgoer' is defined in the introduction by R.S. Lambert as one 'who wishes to form standards of his own for judging films and to use his influence effectively in raising the level of public taste in films' (1934: 9). 'He' is discriminating and demanding where the reception of films is concerned, may attend film societies or amateur film groups, and 'brings his intelligence to bear upon films'. While this filmgoer is in a minority, they realise the limitations of the individualism represented by intellectuals and thus understand that 'subordination to the group or community is demanded more and more' if intelligent film appreciation is to have any influence on the public imagination (Lambert 1934:14).

The importance of collective rather than isolated engagement with film culture is further taken up in the guide by Andrew Buchanan, who argues that the organisation of intelligent filmgoers in support of 'unusual' films can encourage provincial cinemas to show the occasional worthy film. The book's advice is not directed to a metropolitan audience but to those unfortunates who do not have access to the cinematic glories London has to offer, what C.A. Lejeune in her contribution calls 'Academy' films or '[a]ny picture made by René Clair, or Pudovkin, or Pabst' (1934: 83). For Norman Wilson, writing for *Cinema Quarterly* in light of *For Filmgoers Only*, the championing of specialised cinema can only be effective if the patronage of such films is organised. The co-ordinated support of 'films with higher ideals and a greater sense of artistic integrity than the average cinema audience is accustomed to' is also for Wilson conducive to an affront on 'the attitude of the commercial cinema which prefers to ignore intelligence rather than to cater for it' (1934: 143).

The encouragement of amateur film groups could be understood as another rejection of the commercial cinema bearing in mind some of the connections to avant-garde traditions apparent in amateur and independent film practice. But Lambert's hope for amateur filmmaking expressed in *For Filmgoers Only* is not as the artisanal practice of the privileged class which the *Close-Up* editors and some London Film Society members represented but rather as an 'obvious means for educating the filmgoer in the technical and economic problems presented by professional filmmaking' and to help refine their critical competencies (1934: 12). The metaphor of film 'language' is relevant here, with Lambert implying that amateur filmmaking is a means to developing film 'literacy' which will be more valuable to intelligent viewing than the non-cinematic 'literary sense' relied upon by high-brows to understand films (14).⁴

Middlebrow film appreciation, as described in *For Filmgoers Only* was between the high-intellectual and the low-popular. Its criticism was neither 'nauseating film gossip' nor 'the theories of photographic surrealists' and was designed for an audience that demanded variety but was also discriminating (Lambert 1934:9-10).⁵ By 1940, Ernest Lindgren (then Research Officer of the BFI's National Film Library) was serving a death notice in *Sight and Sound* for the highbrow, describing the pioneer film art journals as 'quaintly out-moded'. Lindgren sentimentally summarises *Close-Up* and *film art* as representing 'a sharply-defined, unified epoch, which has passed away' (1940: 49). Yet he is also critical of what he sees as extravagant 'pseudo-aesthetic rubbish' in these journals (perhaps an all-too-obvious peace-time indulgence) and proposes a more moderate approach to film appreciation that would reach a wider public than the pre-war magazines could (1940: 50).

And still, while the early *Sight and Sound* might have been able to argue some formal divergence from its contemporaries, the film criticism it developed borrowed heavily from preoccupations already established by its supposedly more avant-garde counterparts. The film art legacy evident in *Sight and Sound* included: a dedication to foreign films, predominantly European and often grouped in terms of national origin; appraisals of selected directors, frequently revealing the assumption that the director was the creative mind behind the film; assessments of contemporary film criticism and terminology, sometimes in response to readers' letters; a disapproval of film censorship, but not necessarily of cinematic propaganda; recommendations of 'must see' films, periodically prompting evaluations by readers both in terms of the canon's validity and availability; and, suggestions as to what cinema could or should be, frequently couched in terms of an attack on British or American cinema.

Less explicit in *Sight and Sound* was the distrust, and denigration, of Hollywood cinema and its commercialism, a position set up most flagrantly in *Close-Up* in opposition to the preferred Soviet cinema. However, as Alan Lovell (1971) describes it in his article on the crisis of the BFI's Education Department (which replaced the Advisory Service in 1957), the BFI's educational ideology was also supportive of the aesthetic principles associated with Soviet montage filmmakers. This 'support' was rather more domesticated than it had been in the 1920s, habituated in the leftist political sop which was the Documentary Movement, but nonetheless the conviction 'that editing was the key act in the creation of a film; that a direct analogy could be made between film and language...and that the cinema was inherently a realistic medium' (Lovell 1971: 14)

filtered through to the pages of *Sight and Sound* and indicated an indebtedness to the avant-garde attitude.

In contraindication to this particular tendency, Colin McArthur (2001) argues that in the 1950s there was a paradigm shift in the BFI from the defence of national cinemas to the categorisation of films in terms of (directorial) authorship. It may be true that there was a change in emphasis toward appraising films more frequently according to their directorial status rather than national context or formal aesthetics in *Sight and Sound*. As illustration of this, one could cite the trend which flourished in the mid to late 1950s of treating directors as other publications might film stars. Photographs of filmmakers at work, comparable to the portraits in the latter *Close-Ups*, were incorporated into *Sight and Sound* alongside features on the 'New Names'.⁶ However, these treatments of filmmakers were always bracketed off from one another in terms of the directors' nationalities. They were 'names', but also French, Soviet, Italian and Spanish filmmakers. For example, the New Names articles appeared as 'New Names: Italy' (1955/6) and 'New Names: Spain' (1956) while another directors' double page photo spread was headed 'New Italian Productions' (1956/7). In fact, *Sight and Sound* had always been preoccupied with individual filmmakers and continued to be interested in cinema production and exhibition abroad, and this pretty much happened regardless of the influence of *Cahiers du Cinéma*, oft attributed originator of 'auteurism' along with Andrew Sarris, whose articles it occasionally translated and reprinted in the 1950s (see Bazin & Daniol-Valcroze 1954, Manod 1957, Rivette & Truffaut 1954) and whose importance I shall discuss in the next chapter in relation to *Screen*.

Alternative film cultures were gaining momentum at this time, not just in the UK but Europe-wide. France in particular was experiencing a surge of cinephilia following the revivification of the ciné clubs after the war, the success of the Cannes film festival and a boom in film publications. The massive release in the mid 1940s of Hollywood films forbidden during the occupation seemed to increase rather than sate the appetite for cinema in France and there was a subsequent growth in concern for the intellectual study of film and its influence which coincided in the 1950s with Existentialist philosophy (see Lowry 1985: 5-12, de Baecque 2003). In France and elsewhere, as is foregrounded in the discussions of post-war art cinema which I described earlier, low-budget, 'independent' production (with the political and aesthetic connotations that term entails) seemed plentiful. The glamorous, high-profile exhibition of these films at film festivals suggested the specialist film culture was in full swing and was rewarding a spate of film director 'authors' who included Ingmar Bergman, François Truffaut and Federico Fellini.

It was in the first half of the 1950s, Alan Lovell (1971) argues, that *Sight and Sound* gained its reputation for representing 'quality' film culture. This was a perception, Lovell suggests, which was perhaps reinforced by the magazine's promotion of the National Film Theatre in London, although as John Ellis (1978) indicates, specific critical attention to ideas of 'quality' in relation to cinema can be dated a few years earlier. The 1950s saw a number of articles and advertisements published in *Sight and Sound* relating to the National Film Theatre (NFT) which would support its image as a distinctive and special place. The first high-profile NFT programme (for winter 1952) was promoted following the 'Telekinema's' initial construction for the 1951 Festival of Britain. Although the Telekinema had been built primarily to screen 3-Dimensional films, the

opening programme included the categories 'world cinema' including 'world cinema 1 – René Clair', 'fifty years of film', 'experimental', a 'special premiere programme' and 'members' nights.' These categories emphasised internationalism, history and art but, more importantly, distinction – particularly as communicated through the members' nights arrangements.

When it was rebuilt in 1956, the NFT was described in *Sight and Sound* as a unique venture for the good of the British public: 'the idea of a national cinema is a new one', said one reporter, 'ours is the first and only one in the world' (Robinson 1956/7: 137). To celebrate the building's completion *Sight and Sound* featured a group photograph of the guests attending the opening alongside a picture of the theatre's interior. A rather incongruous grouping in some respects, but representative in others, the prestigious attendees included Charles Beddow (the chief projectionist), G.A. Smith ('doyen of the British cinema'), Princess Margaret, René Clair, Lawrence Olivier, Gina Lollobrigida, John Ford, Akira Kurosawa and Vittorio de Sica. The selection of representatives was a considered choice; clearly, attending the NFT was to come with a certain caché, and a particularly international one at that. The first two programmes for the new theatre, announced in a *Sight and Sound* editorial, were a season of films from Japan and the first international London Film Festival organised by the BFI in collaboration with the *Sunday Times* (Editorial 1957).

The National Film Theatre and *Sight and Sound* shared a modest self-importance with respect to their function in British culture. Aware of their minority public, they remained assured of their national purpose owing to the perceived 'range and calibre of [their] activities rather than the size of [their] audience' (Editorial 1957). The rebuilding

of the NFT coincided with what was described by Penelope Houston (1958) as a 'Time of Crisis' for the cinema in Britain, when cinemas across the UK were forced into closure due to lack of revenue. At the same time, however, the specialised cinemas had been steadily growing in number and popularity indicating a diversification in audience tastes rather than a complete downturn in cinema-going as the result of television. Thirty years of film societies and criticism had provided the platform for the expansion of an audience made up of informed and active spectators with penchants for foreign films. This growth helped to validate the NFT and other specialised theatres' existence despite the overall decline in cinema audiences.

The NFT programmes reflected *Sight and Sound*'s own value system to a large extent, the two conjoined with the BFI's commitment to educating the cinema-going public in good taste. The NFT mirrored *Sight and Sound*'s tastes by reproducing its cinematic canons and thus legitimising the terms according to which these were created. Canon formation had been important in establishing a personality for *Sight and Sound*, the incantation of selected names and forms of cinema as a way of announcing its cultural capital, and was to serve the same purpose for the NFT. Later, with the establishment of BFI Regional Film Theatres which were supposed to follow the NFT model, films were to be selected for exhibition according to the principle of the 'best of world cinema', programming on the basis of director, country or theme (British Film Institute 1971: 14). Articles in *Sight and Sound* on individual European directors were often glorified interviews described as '[a] Conversation with...', invoking a privileged and personal relationship between filmmaker and critic (for example, Lauston 1933, Seton 1933, Sadoul 1948, Waddington 1948). These were complemented by pieces

written by acclaimed directors expressing their opinions, ideologies and craft which included articles by Alfred Hitchcock (1937), Sergei Eisenstein (1946, 1947), Josef von Sternberg (1955) and Carl Dreyer (1955).

Intelligent and aesthetically worthy films were more often than not European. In an early *Sight and Sound* article, Elsie Cohen in fact conflates 'intelligent films' with "unique" films, actually a careful selection of the best work of the European studios' (1932). The audiences who read *Sight and Sound* were presumed to have recognised the value of appreciating the cultural variety and artistic experimentation that foreign-language films were reputed to offer. The exhibition of European films was in some ways a kind of familiar tourist attraction that encompassed a curiosity for difference accompanied by an assumption that the films on offer shared, in common with their audience, certain social and artistic values. Arthur Vesselo saw the public for Continental films 'divided into two fairly rigid categories, the one, which feels that an outstanding film ought to be "gay" and "charming", the other, more seriously-intentioned, which feels that a solemn and earnest state of mind is ultimately the only one worth cultivating' (1937b: 83). But it is likely that the sensibilities of the audiences he describes were not so easily separated.

Vesselo's column on 'Continental films' (1936 to 1942) was dedicated to assuring a place for European films in the reader's imagination, acting as a barometer for the rise and fall of various national cinemas as determined by imports to London. The column assessed what was on offer in the way of Continental films exhibited in London each quarter and was sometimes prefaced with a title that would reflect the column's conclusions, often containing sensationalist political connotations or cultural stereotypes:

'Tradition and Experiment' (1937a), 'Autocracy v. Democracy' (1937/8), 'Babel Cinema: From all over Europe came these films' (1938), 'Vermouth, Vodka and Beer. The Continental cocktail this quarter is 80 percent French, with a dash of Russian and Austrian to taste' (1938/9), 'The Grand Alliance. France, Russia and Poland' (1939a), 'The Great Bear Marches' (1939c). The purpose of the column was to provide a dependable review section that would help readers make informed decisions about what foreign films they should see, should they become accessible. More implicitly, the reviews also recommended hire choices for the film societies and specialist theatres.

Sight and Sound's recommendations were reinforced by extraneous publications, notably supplements and the *BFI Monthly Film Bulletin*. *Sight and Sound* produced a series of thirteen supplements between 1943 and 1949.⁷ The series was justified in the first supplement by the rather unconvincing rationale 'we believe that to enable any research to see the light of day which assembles a large number of hitherto unrelated facts, will be a valuable addition to the cultural literature dealing with the film' (Weinberg 1943). With the exception of two (a study of *The Birth of a Nation* [dir. D.W. Griffith, 1915] in Stern [1945] and a discussion on 'The Cinema and the Negro 1905-1948' in Noble [1948]), the supplements were all author studies, usually claiming to be indexes to a particular director's work. The *Monthly Film Bulletin* was a source of the 'unrelated facts' referred to, providing 'discriminating filmgoers' with information on and the evaluation of films (Editorial 1935/6: 154). The *Bulletin* was published by the BFI from 1934 and was arguably a companion to *Sight and Sound*, a legacy borne through in the eventual integration of the publications in 1991. Subscriptions to both publications were supplied with the BFI membership which film societies were

encouraged to sign up for (Manvell 1949: 169) and together they created a collectors' market for the supplements.

Readers of film magazines were encouraged to learn the publication's canons, both cinematic and literary. Induction into film appreciation required an active reader who was prepared to participate in the affirmation of the magazine's (or film society's or cinema's or Institute's) standards of assessment. This is not to say that the canons and strategies of the various film publications and institutions of alternative film culture were stable and homogenous. The number of writers involved in each issue of *Sight and Sound*, from critic, to interviewed filmmaker, to correspondent reader, could potentially destabilise the canon and its validity. For instance, *Sight and Sound*'s publication of filmmakers' and critics' 'ten best films' (Editorial: 1952b, 1952c) engendered instantaneous response from readers desiring to assert *their* top tens. The magazine published one letter which suggested hopefully that readers might be invited to submit their own top ten lists as, '[i]n addition to encouraging reader participation (no magazine likes to feel that it exists in a void) the results might prove useful when choosing future National Film Theatre programmes' (Broster 1953). Thereafter, *Sight and Sound* received over one hundred readers' lists (although the space devoted to them in publication was little more than a token compared with the critics' and filmmakers' choices) (Editorial: 1953).

Because it was encouraging a readership that was critically active in its appreciation of the cinema, *Sight and Sound*, in turn, practically presented itself for evaluation. But invariably any criticisms of its own and the BFI's work that *Sight and Sound* did publish were absorbed into the discursive fabric of the magazine's form, either

answered by the person/s at whom the reproach was lobbed or by other readers. A case in point is the response to the 1950s BFI publication *Critics' Choice*. Described as 'an attempt at popular film appreciation' (Editorial 1952a), the release of *Critics' Choice* roused some consternation from one *Sight and Sound* reader. John Fletcher (1952) from Surrey articulates clearly his dissatisfaction with purchasing a BFI publication that seems to be at odds with *Sight and Sound*. How, he asks, is it possible for *Critics' Choice* to have listed *The Greatest Show on Earth* as choice number five when *Sight and Sound* had described the film as 'a field day for vulgarians'? In the editorial of the same issue as this appeared is an explanation by the *Critics' Choice* editor, and the BFI's first Film Appreciation Officer, Stanley Reed who reassures *Sight and Sound* readers that *Critics' Choice* is not in fact for them but 'directed to that growing number among the mass audience which prefers the best to the worst that local cinemas provide' – 'the mass' representing quite literally here a different class of filmgoer (Editorial 1952a).⁸ By publishing Mr Fletcher's letter in the same issue as the editorial which introduces *Critics' Choice* to the *Sight and Sound* readership, the editors both endorse Mr Fletcher's point and subsume it to their more considered knowledge of the situation. Mr Fletcher is rewarded for his faith in *Sight and Sound*'s criticism by having his letter published, but the magazine (and the BFI through Reed) retains its authority by implicitly suggesting that Mr Fletcher's remarks are somewhat ill-considered. Thus Mr Fletcher's conclusion that '[t]he slick, meretricious get-up of critics' choice is all too indicative of its cultural level' might be seen by readers to be unfair on balance, given the good intention of the BFI to educate a less 'cultured' audience (those who don't read *Sight and Sound*) in the ways of film appreciation.

The critic's role in *Sight and Sound* was a dual one of informer and educator; they were instructors for an audience of specialised readers as well as cinemagoers. The cinematic canon promoted by *Sight and Sound* extended to literature on film history, technique and criticism. Book reviews supplied one method by which to endorse a particular book or writer, for example Ernest Lindgren's *The Art of the Film* supported by Arthur Vesselo (1948) or the letter from Stanley Reed (1955/6) defending Roger Manvell's *The Film and the Public*. It was also not uncommon for critics to include book lists in their articles for readers to explore as part of their education in film appreciation (for example see Bulleid 1941). But increasingly at the end of the 1940s and in the 1950s there was a tendency toward self-reflexivity on the part of *Sight and Sound*'s critics. Articles examining film criticism in the 1940s and 50s included a humorous dig at vacuous strains of 'highbrow' film reception ('you can be a crank, a snob, a documentary-pontiff or a super-critic'[Goldschmidt 1948/9: 191]); a couple of pieces on the 'forgotten critics', Vachel Lindsay and Hugo Munsterberg (Manvell 1949, Pegge 1949); an appeal by Penelope Houston (1949) for the critic to be more confident and optimistic with respect to their occupation and the cinema; an offer of explanation by Ernest Lindgren (1950) on why he wrote *The Art of the Film*; and, from 1954, a column by John Grierson entitled 'A Review of Reviews'.

Some of the key publicists of film appreciation, including Roger Manvell, Ernest Lindgren and Paul Rotha, published an edited collection of film reviews from 1949-51 on behalf of the British branch of the International Federation of Film Critics who 'felt that it would be a valuable service both to criticism and to international understanding if the film critics of each country could have some knowledge of the film criticism which was

being written in other countries' (Anstey *et al* 1951:11). There is a sense here that, as a result of having traversed from youthful pre-war experimentalism to being the experienced and socially conscious establishment, certain writers felt the time had come to re-evaluate their relationship to art and public. Certainly this was the impression given by Paul Rotha and Basil Wright in a forum on 'trends and currents' in film criticism, which attempts to historicise the impact of film magazines like *Close-Up*, *Cinema Quarterly*, *Sequence* and *Sight and Sound* on British film culture (Houston 1958).

Assessments of film criticism were also an invitation for readers to extend their involvement with specialised film culture to an engagement with the discursive strategies of the film critics. This was perhaps a natural progression from the address to the 'intelligent filmgoer'. The articles on criticism focussed, after all, on discussing the critic's professional deployment of skills that this specialised audience was supposedly developing in their leisure time – restrained enthusiasm for, intelligent assessment of and sincere discrimination between cinema products. As one writer was at pains to point out by classifying varieties of filmgoers, every filmgoer is critical but there is only a minority 'interested in the film out of artistic, aesthetic, educational or sociological motives... These cineastes are the film students and usually readers of *Sight and Sound*, and potential or developed film critics' (Thompson 1947: 71).⁹ Indeed, it was the very rejection of the critic and, along with it, intelligent authority that one *Sight and Sound* article determined was the mass audience position in the 1950s (Lassally 1956: 12). Ernest Lindgren's book *The Art of the Film* (1948) is representative of the importance assigned to film criticism and critics in middlebrow film appreciation culture. Lindgren defines film appreciation as the '[e]ncouragement and development of *criticism and*

discrimination among filmgoers, especially by organised courses of instruction' (1948: 206, my emphasis) and he is insistent on the objective 'science' of film criticism's approach to artistic 'laws' (1948: viii).

A benchmark for *Sight and Sound* where reader participation was concerned occurred in 1956 when a reader's letter prompted the intensification of debate on the purpose of film criticism. This reader's reproach of a humanist film criticism was answered by Lindsay Anderson in his notorious article 'Stand Up! Stand Up!' (1956) which defended the critic's right to critique films according to moral and social ideals as part of their responsibility to the public. The poor critic was uneducated; it was the breadth of interest and concern for humanity of the serious critic which distinguished them from the homogeneous mass. As was the case with *Close-Up*, the cultural lag between central London and the rest of the UK may have meant, in fact, that the knowledge a significant proportion of *Sight and Sound* readers had about 'unusual' cinema was imbibed solely through criticism rather than their own reception of the films. While for some readers the establishment of cinematic canons by the film magazines was an inspiration, for others it was a cause for frustration. A reader from Lancashire asks

must so much space in *Sight and Sound* be devoted to foreign films? ... It is particularly hard on those who, like myself, live in the provinces, to whom a foreign film is an event. Visconti, Mizoguchi, Kinugasa and the rest are just names to me, and, I am sure, to thousands of others.

(Scrutton 1956)

And indeed, in response another reader writes of the influence publications like *Sight and Sound* have on the provincial cinemagoer, who is thus inclined to ignore British cinema in favour of 'foreign masterpieces' when, and if, these come to town (Francois 1956).

What these examples illustrate is how non-metropolitan audiences were being presented in *Sight and Sound* as active in their approach to cinema and well read in film criticism regardless of the actual availability of specialist cinema in their environs. All readers, from the metropoli to the regions, were amateur critics, in the sense that they had a love for the art and a desire towards self-improvement regarding their film choices. The feeling of distinction amongst such spectators, however, was sometimes apt to lead to snobbery. One *Sight and Sound* reader expressed acute displeasure at the manners of some of his fellow spectators, describing the '[c]anoodling, toffee-sucking and galumphing departures in the climactic fine moments' at Manchester film societies' screenings. He elaborates,

[e]ven where there appears to be considerable activity in the way of specialised cinema, there is just not enough *critical* appreciation to ensure the satisfaction of anyone approaching a student or connoisseur attitude... One *feels* the audience reaction and it does not feel good to me. If you listen to the conversations and opinions, if any, before and after (yes, and during) the shows, you feel that much of the audience is simply paying for privacy, an assured seat and, tell it not, something *excitingly* unusual.¹⁰

(Crone 1950)

The spectators predisposed to reading *Sight and Sound* and attending Continental films were both consumers and manufacturers of a taste discourse that valued a particular

experience of reception. Whether in film societies or specialised cinemas, the discerning filmgoer preferred to watch their chosen film with few distractions. John Chetham, an independent theatre manager in Bedford, described in an interview how he prepared his cinema for the introduction of foreign films and 'a new audience' (Dellow 1948). The Bedford audience for foreign films were to be treated to 'records of light music, operatic overtures such as 'Marriage of Figaro' and pieces like 'Eine Kleine Nachtmusik' in the intervals, in contrast to the usual 'It Must be Jelly, 'Cos Jam Don't Shake Like That' (Dellow 1948: 130). Mr. Chetham was also careful to ensure that foreign films would be screened on a Sunday (the traditional slot for film society meetings) in two separate performances rather than as part of a continuous performance, believing that '[s]ince the films were of a more serious nature, it seemed only fair that audiences should not be disturbed by people coming and going and torches flashing' (Dellow 1948: 129).

Patrons of specialist films were supposed to share an understanding with the cinema programmer and other audience members of the value of 'unusual' films and 'classic' revivals. According to the manager of the Everyman specialised hall in Hampstead, a cinema requiring 'none of those things considered necessary by the large cinemas – no organs, neon signs, betrousered usherettes', 'the film is very much the thing' with such a 'clientele'. Furthermore, there is tremendous satisfaction to be gained from showing 'a tattered copy of a silent film or an early outmoded sound film and attract[ing] an audience which knows precisely why that film is being shown' (Jones 1937: 134). In 1956 Walter Lasselly launched a lengthy attack on dissenting members of a NFT audience who, in the manner of what Lasselly calls 'the cynical audience', emitted 'loud comments and raucous laughter' at a silent film screening (1956: 14). Lasselly

writes, 'this kind of insensitivity and cheap emotional cynicism on the part of a National Film Theatre audience seems even more disquieting than hooliganism in the mass audience' (1956: 14). In support, a reader's letter in the following issue reads:

I have had enough of these pseudo-intellectuals who consider it "the thing to do" to visit the N.F.T., attired either in their mink or duffel coats. During the showing of *Nosferatu* (a classic of its time) they laughed and roared in their ill-mannered way... Out with these fools!

(Lindsay 1956)

Whether reinforcing *Sight and Sound*'s own position on such erroneous conduct or published as a provocation (Lassally's article was uncharacteristically conservative), the letter outlines the polite standards of intelligent cinemagoing and the importance of established behaviours.

The specialised cinema aimed to attract members of film societies as their core audience. For filmmaker and critic Thorold Dickinson, film societies were 'the intellectual spearhead of cinema audiences' (1950). But the advent of World War II, and the lack of international cinema activity in Europe, meant that the purpose of the film societies had to be reassessed. In 1942 Forsyth Hardy wrote an article for *Sight and Sound* arguing that the strength of the film societies was their members, who represented 'an organised and articulate audience prepared to pass judgement on ambitious and experimental work' (1942: 63), rather than their reputation for showing new foreign cinema. However, a large part of the education in film appreciation championed by the film societies and specialist theatres had been an awareness of film's 'progress' internationally and the co-operative efforts to support film as an art in Europe in

particular. And so, in the thriving period for European cinema in the 1950s, the first national conference of the Federation of Film Societies which was held in London in 1956 keenly stressed the 'international scope of the movement' and invited speakers from overseas to complement screenings of foreign films (O'Laoghaire 1956).

While generally encouraging of film societies, film magazines did publish articles that called into question the efficacy of such forums for raising public standards in cinematic taste. The London Film Society had come under fire in *film art* for elitism, being described as 'more a meeting place for the elect than a place for showing worthwhile films' (Editorial 1934: 7). This was a sentiment reflected in a *Sight and Sound* article by Eric Hakim, manager of cinemas in Leeds and Liverpool, who criticised the snobbery of certain 'advocates of the "superior" film' who gain 'pleasure in the fact that "we" can see [worthwhile films] through a film society' (1934: 10). Hakim suggests that the film societies were in danger of losing their rebellious streak by siphoning themselves off from the rest of the cinemagoing public and forgetting their duty to influence the improvement of general cinema exhibition. The tension between promoting the activities of film societies in principle and objecting to their elitist tendencies appears to have been common. Roger Manvell's *Film* (1944) embodies this ambivalence, requesting that readers join or form film societies while simultaneously criticising the 'evil in the Film Societies' in the form of the member who thinks better of themselves than others (1944: 164). All the same, Hakim, along with other specialised cinema exhibitors, was keen that there be co-operation rather than competition between the theatres and the societies.

The film societies were seen as a preparatory ground for the active audience of the specialised cinema: 'the specialised audience can be tapped...provided that Film Societies make it their business to see that the specialised audience is ready' (Todd 1933: 13). As such, the societies were entrusted with a responsibility to support unusual film ventures at local cinemas and 'further stimulate any awakening interest by study, explanation and development of appreciation' (Dellow 1948: 130). Hakim, seeking legitimisation of his cinemas, promoted the educational possibilities of the specialised cinema. His belief that 'the successful establishment of an unusual film theatre should mean the provision of a recognised cinema cultural centre; the natural home of experimental educational displays' (1934: 12) reflected an association held in cinema magazines between foreign cinema and education and was an effort perhaps to entice their readership.

Given the proclivity *Sight and Sound* had for discussing foreign films, it is unsurprising that reports on international film festivals became a feature of the magazine. But as Lindsay Anderson, one of *Sight and Sound*'s most prolific festival reporters, stated, '[w]riting about festivals is a problem... nothing is harder to communicate the quality, the precise feel of films that one's readers have never heard of – and may never have a chance to see' (1955: 48). In a sense, Anderson need not have worried as the exhibition context for the screenings may have provided as much interest for critics and readers as the films themselves. The post-war period saw the firm establishment in Europe of 'a series of [film] Festivals notable for their atmosphere of luxury, their classy clientele, the babel of international critics, the liberal talk of art and the issuing of some peculiar awards' (Editorial 1949/50). Cannes was a touchstone for such activities,

distinguished by its obligatory 'sumptuous galas, official lunches, supper and cocktail parties' as much as (or more than) by the films themselves (Barry 1947: 65).

Correspondents for *Sight and Sound* frequently complained about this dominating special aspect to the festival, although their status as delegates evidently counted them amongst the more privileged attendees.

Official festival functions were described as 'often pompous', a 'whirlpool' that absorbed the individual, despite representing exclusivity (Koval 1950: 272). Readers were left under no illusions as to what a festival like Cannes stood for; it was patently 'a deluxe shop-window, accessible only to delegates and the rich, and there was more than a hint of snobbery' (de la Roche 1949/50: 25). Of course, this didn't make the 'big' festivals any less alluring to readers or critics. While *Sight and Sound* writers distinguished themselves in name from the popular presses (who pandered to what Lindsay Anderson called 'distasteful publicity hunting' [1956 a: 17]), the magazine consistently evoked the social glamour of Cannes and Venice. The first full festival report, on Venice in 1938, was little more than a piece of travel writing accompanied by a large photograph of delegates seated in formal dress for a screening (Zasio 1938) and at one point *Sight and Sound* published glossy photographs of 'People at Cannes' (Hawkins 1955).¹¹ Aside from the superficial glitz and glamour, social events at film festivals were also recognised for their political influence (see Barry 1947: 65) and although some reports could be unfavourable regarding the overall purpose and quality of certain festivals, there seemed to be an agreement amongst the correspondents for *Sight and Sound* that the opportunities festivals provided for the meetings of 'film folk' minds made the events worthwhile.

One lengthy discussion of 'International Film Festivals' concluded that, despite misgivings, festivals did 'set international standards; they provide, more effectively than any other method yet devised, an opportunity to consider the output of the film industries of the world; they bring together people – executives, directors, critics – who can, and should, profitably meet more often than in the usual course of things they do' (Anderson 1954: 10). Furthermore, not all festivals *Sight and Sound* reported on were as lavish as Cannes and Venice, and the best of these were enthused over for their creative atmospheres. Edinburgh, being the only international film festival in Britain from 1947 to 1956 when London's was established had, at that time, a special place in *Sight and Sound*'s heart and was praised for its lack of competitive interests and provision for enthusiasts to debate the exciting range of films on offer (see Beveridge 1949/50, Wilson 1954). A more unusual festival, of *Film Maudit* at Biarritz, garnered praise for bringing together 'visitors from Lisbon, Bombay, Paris and Oxford' who would gather in cafes 'like exiles who could once again speak their native language' to discuss the most remarkable screenings (Brien 1949/50). Similarly, the abandonment of official prizes at Locarno encouraged film critics to conduct an informal discussion to determine the best films at the festival, forming an 'animated and multilingual' jury that nevertheless were united in their love of film art (Koval 1950: 272).

The festival reports were a reminder to *Sight and Sound* readers of the international and communal significance of film appreciation, something that may have had particular relevance on this historical threshold between World War II and the cold war. The intelligent filmgoer's interest in unusual films was furthered by film festival articles, which emphasised the festivals' support of specialist interests and the glamour of

travel abroad while underlining their homogeneity and usefulness for bringing together like-minded enthusiasts. Film festivals were aligned with a politics of film appreciation in that they showcased a range of films from around the world and often evaluated them in awards presentations for an international cinephile audience. Cinema had a duty to reflect a national consciousness, but this was something which would be most relevant in a context where commodity-based cultural exchange was the order of the day. The specialist cinemas in Britain reflected similar values in their programming of films 'picked-up' at festivals and in, their screenings of 'author' retrospectives and seasons of 'national' cinemas from around the world. The commitment by film festivals and specialised cinemas to the preservation of 'authentic', and thus definitive, versions of films was reflected in the choice to use subtitling as the translation practice for foreign-language films. As I shall discuss in chapter 5, the ascension of English as a global lingua franca and, particularly, as an international business language means that today English subtitles are standard for film festival screenings around the world. However, the subtitling of films for festival exhibition at a time when English was not unquestionably the international lingua franca of commerce could cause complications for British reporters. Julian Stringer has identified one case which appeared in *Sight and Sound* in the early fifties where the reviewer interprets a Japanese film she saw in Venice as 'the true sound film... not interrupted by sound' because subtitles were in Italian, a language she could not understand (2002: 36).

In his 1958 epilogue for the third edition of *The Film Till Now*, Paul Rotha writes 'I feel that there is a need among the English-speaking peoples particularly for a deeper sense of dedication to the cinema and all that it should and could stand for in the world

community' (1967: 774). Specialised cinemas, along with the film societies, film archives and growing number of film festivals, were the provision for such dedication at a time when, in Rotha's opinion, television was poised to take over the role of national mass entertainment provider and indirectly 'free' film from commercial and political exploitation. It is interesting that Rotha emphasises the linguistic singularity of his primary audience and in doing so suggests that linguistic identification plays a role in film consumption. The intelligent filmgoer was assumed to have a healthy fascination for foreign cultures and to share a liberal humanist ideology on the importance of understanding other nations. A liberal attitude to other cultures and their value held pride of place in a discourse that distinguished the intelligent film enthusiast from those who invested in a homogenising mass culture. In reality, however, and as reflected in the pages of *Sight and Sound* this attitude was generally Eurocentric and often comfortably focused on the sophistication of 'the Continent' (denoting western Europe, primarily France).

The mass cultural opiate was seen to be first and foremost Hollywood cinema, accompanied by popular British films (melodramas, comedies, war movies) and American films were thus domesticated to a large extent. While this may be considered a fairly typical assessment of the place of Hollywood in most European countries, in Britain the 'foreignness' of American cinema has been even more negligible than in other European countries because of the shared language aspect; in the UK, American cinema requires no translation apparatus. The extent to which Hollywood cinema in particular can be considered 'foreign' in the British context is an interesting area of enquiry but not one which I have the inclination to explore in detail here as what I am mostly concerned

with here is language difference rather than parity. But it is important to note that although the basis of Hollywood's popularity, not just in the UK but in all countries where Hollywood cinema has demonstrated a hegemonic pull, is not linguistic, in the UK film industry there is a tradition of collaboration with Hollywood to create something that looks like 'British' or, more often than not, 'English' cinema (see Glancy 1999, Ryall 2001). 'Continental' cinema stood in contrast and as an alternative to English-language cinema and its supposedly easy consumption. Yet the 'continental' was in itself a highly digestible category, differentiated from the mainstream but still accessible and a reflection, too, of the predominance French cinema had in foreign-language film exhibition in the UK.

POEM AND DRAWING

Stevie Smith

The Film Star

Donnez à manger aux afamées
 It is a film star who passes this way
 He is looking so nice the women would like
 To have him on a tray
 Donnez à manger aux afamées

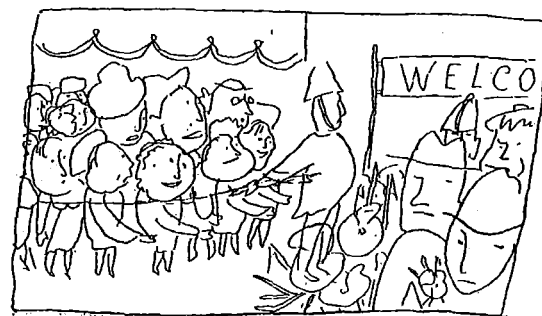


Figure 1. Evoking the sophistication of continental cinema in French.

Stevie Smith 1950 'Poem and Drawing: The Film Star', *Sight and Sound* Vol. 19 No. 8, p.318.

One example of the cultural currency of continentalism in post-war British alternative film culture is 'The Film Star', a poem and drawing by popular humorist poet Stevie Smith featured in *Sight and Sound*, which uses the French language as part of its

address (figure 1). The illustration evokes the notion of a populist ‘feeding frenzy’ (‘Feed the starving’) and uses French to distinguish the educated and continental-enthusiast readership of *Sight and Sound* from those (women, as indicated by the feminine ‘affamées’) who are the objects of the joke and supposedly prefer film stars to film *auteurs*. The presumed learned and special status of *Sight and Sound* readers was implied by the magazine’s occasional inclusion of French language phrases. The International Bookshop in London published an advertisement in *Sight and Sound* that used the British connotation of French with distinction to flatter the magazine’s perceived readership. This advertisement took the form of a letter to the ‘[d]ear Film Enthusiast’ and listed a number of film appreciation ‘classics’ that it had in stock along with the following note:

“we” don’t read French – not even to translate accurately the title of René Clair’s book, “Reflexion Faite – Notes pour servir à l’histoire de l’art cinematographie de 1920 a 1950,” priced at 10/6d., but we have it in stock, together with one or two other excellent books in French. And we always stock the magazine “Cahiers du Cinema”

(The International Bookshop: 1953)

The ‘letter’ presumes, in simpering fashion, that the readers of *Sight and Sound* associate quality with France and regard literature in the French language to be an essential part of their cinema education. This form of address gives some idea of the extent to which *Sight and Sound* had become associated with specialist, foreign language cinema despite protestations by Arthur Vesselo (‘not all French productions are works of genius’ [1939:

78]) and other critics that 'continental' was neither synonymous with intelligence nor quality.

In 1955, as if in ironic self-recognition of the privileged place assigned to continental films in *Sight and Sound*, a curious poem entitled 'Sub-Titler's Love Song' was published underneath an article about an American film (figure 2, with an accurate French translation below which did not appear in the original publication).

Sub-Titler's Love Song

Chérie, je te désire
(I'm fond of you, my dear)—
Baisotons, je t'en prie!
(Have you a hug for me ?)
Tes yeux, tes seins, ton corps
(The things I love you for)—
Me rendrent presque fou
(All make me sigh for you) !

Comment—tu me détestes
(You've lost your interest) ?
Et tu t'en fou de moi
(Is that the way things are) ?
Tu rien dis que "Merde"
(You never really cared) ?
Alors, fiche-moi la paix
(You'd better go away) !

ANTHONY BRODE.

Figure 2. The subtitler's play with words.

Anthony Brode 1955/6. 'Sub-Titler's Love Song,' *Sight and Sound* Vol.25 No.3, p.139.

(Darling, I desire you

Let's kiss, I beg you!

Your eyes, your breasts, your body

Nearly drive me crazy

What? You hate me

And you don't care about me

You say nothing but 'shit'

So leave me alone) ¹²

The poem mocks the inadequacy of subtitled translations by contrasting a hypothetical source text, spoken in French, with its English language subtitles to humorous effect. As in 'The Film Star', the reader must be proficient in French (and the erotic permissiveness of European films)¹³ in order to get the joke. But the poem centrally presumes that its reader will be familiar with the economies of the subtitling apparatus. The reader is assumed to be particularly aware of the high cultural status of foreign languages in the reception of European cinema, an assumption which is all the more apparent for the lack of relevant context or debate to frame the poetry. Thus (but in a confoundedly indirect fashion!) the poem serves as an indicator of the specialised cinema audience's turbulent love affair with the subtitle.

The subtitle, abstracted from its direct function of translation, has come in art house film culture to symbolically represent the sorts of values propounded by bodies such as the British Film Institute, *Sight and Sound*, the film societies and the specialised cinemas. It stands for education, the preservation of art and intercultural dialogue, and its functional yet literary form addresses a particularly active, 'well-read', spectator. However, subtitles also serve as a reminder to spectators of their shortcomings with regard to appreciating cinema's 'universal' language and, indeed, their foreignness with respect to the foreign cultures they are hoping to know through film. Voice dubbing, in contrast, does not support the kind of preservative cultural exchange desired by the intelligent filmgoer. When *Sight and Sound* published an article by Oswell Blakeston (1947) suggesting that there may be some artistic merit in dubbing films it was quickly rebuked with the emphatic cry of 'No! Mr Blakeston' (Summers 1948). Blakeston's suggestion that the dubbing method offered an exciting opportunity to forge 'synthetic'

screen personalities using two actors for the same role was described by Walter Summers as 'a near heresy'. Interlingual dubbing, for Summers, represented 'a retrogressive and vicious principle, which...serves no aesthetic or economic purpose'. Dubbing was utterly unacceptable on the grounds of its artificiality and lack of sympathy for the original soundtrack. Blakeston's argument was threatening art rather than supporting it, and, as Summers (1948) articulated on behalf of the *Sight and Sound* readership, '[w]e want no more synthetics lest we harden for all time into a synthetic art, which is not art at all'.

In the long period between 1932 and 1960, with the exception of the early (pre-BFI) Grundy articles, I found little debate regarding the appropriate way to translate languages in the cinema, despite *Sight and Sound*'s promotion of foreign films and, via the film festival reports, glitzy continental lifestyles. Subtitles were a 'natural' aspect of specialist cinemagoing. Significantly, it was the Federation of Film Societies' magazine *Film* that began in the late 1950s and early 1960s to discuss the place of subtitles in more detail. These articles accept subtitles as essential for viewing Continental films; Grundy's 'solution' appears to have been forgotten. And yet a principle remains, for it is assumed that a central pleasure for the viewer of subtitled films is the ability to 'ignore' the subtitles. The author of the articles, John Minchinton (1963a, 1963b), claims the greatest satisfaction for the subtitler is to discover that spectators were not aware of the film's translation at all. The 'invisibility' of the subtitles is regarded to be essential for a pleasurable cinema experience whereby the audience becomes not merely a group of tourists but experienced and equipped travellers. The viewer's linguistic shortcomings and their need for language translation can be overwritten by the assurance that they

know how to appreciate European cinema's artistic heritage. According to these terms, it follows that the more proficient the spectator, not just in watching subtitled films but also in understanding the film's original language/s, the more enjoyable their viewing of the foreign film. The attractiveness of Continental cinema will by implication be intensified for those who take pride in their multilingual competencies and cultural curiosity.

At this stage in the thesis we have some evidence to explain why subtitling a film for British exhibition is to imbue it with particular 'art cinema' connotations. Subtitled European films have traditionally been exhibited in the UK in smaller, independently owned cinemas, or the BFI's Regional Film Theatres which emerged in the 1960s, which have a commitment to promoting the cultural and artistic value of foreign-language cinemas. As I shall demonstrate in the final chapter, these film houses are keen to attract (and educate) the most diverse audience but are in reality patronised by predominantly middle class, often university educated audiences. Following movements toward European integration this audience presently includes a significant number of university students of various European nationalities who are likely to have a high degree of linguistic awareness and be proficient in at least two languages. The foyers of these cinemas may file publicity fliers for theatres, concert halls, art galleries, language courses, political movements and local festivals, testifying to the cinema's support of cultural diversity, artistic pursuit and education. These cultural advertisements are permitted space alongside the cinema's own weekly or monthly programme and, 'in selected cinemas', there may well be an opportunity for visitors to purchase the latest edition of *Sight and Sound* along with their admission tickets.

As I shall address later on, for those exhibiting European films in Britain today, subtitling is by and large regarded as the only acceptable form of language translation practice. The clientele for European films in the UK, now as in the past, accept subtitles as part and parcel of the foreign language film experience and, I would argue, are aware of how their interest in subtitled movies differentiates them from 'mainstream' cinemagoers. For the 'art house' enthusiast, there are pleasures to be bought along with one's ticket to the subtitled film. These might include for some spectators affirmation of their place in a particular reception culture, a shared acknowledgement of their 'good taste' and distinctiveness, and an appreciation of cultural difference inflected ideologically by their humanist sensibilities and declared resistance to the homogenising mass culture. *Sight and Sound* has to a considerable extent documented and shaped the status of the foreign language film in British film culture and continues to articulate its still current cultural capital.

Both this and the previous chapter have discussed how the exhibition and critical reception of European cinema in Britain has historically been based on class and taste distinctions and, at least until the 1960s, generally celebrated in opposition to American and British feature film productions. The role of *Sight and Sound* in encouraging an audience for 'specialist', 'Continental' films is particularly interesting with regard to British film culture's relationship to Europe and European cinema more generally. The encouragement of an audience that would appreciate foreign language films under the terms which *Sight and Sound* set out can be seen as BFI policy to the extent that the BFI aimed to foster a culture of film exhibition and reception that would 'raise' the taste of the public in the face of concerns over the effects of popular forms of filmed

entertainment. However, winds of change blew into British cinema culture in the 1950s and 60s which would alter the contexts in which film appreciation culture could be received. John Ellis (1978) argues that in the 1950s and 1960s critics started to invest Hollywood cinema with some of the humanist qualities previously associated with European films. *Sight and Sound* reflected this change in approach by integrating American authors more visibly into their canon. This coincided with Andrew Sarris' appropriation of *Cahiers du Cinéma's* *politique des auteurs* as the 'auteur theory', which transformed an attitude towards films into a critical treatise. The central distinction that had been made between film as art form and film as entertainment, which had been interchangeable with the opposition of European films to Hollywood movies, persisted but had its field of reference altered to include more and more English-language films in the 1960s and 1970s with the development and critical discovery of an American 'independent' film sector.¹⁴

The 'exploitation' distribution and marketing of European 'art' films in Britain in the 1960s complemented and encouraged the exhibition of sex and horror films in smaller independent cinemas which were trying to increase cinema attendance (Murphy 1992: 70-1) and suggests the status of foreign-language, European films was not fixed for all time in the film appreciation regard. The creation in 1964 of a post of minister for the arts enabled the funding of Regional Film Theatres in England which would arbitrate National Film Theatre programming policy outside London. However, this occurred at a time when the traditional film appreciation approach, reflected in the BFI's publication *Sight and Sound*, seemed in the eyes of some educationalists to have reached a plateau as far as serious and democratic film criticism and education was concerned. The May 1968

demonstrations in France mark a point of transition which inspired radical changes in conceptions of film and its relationship to culture and education in the UK. This shift would impact further upon the ways that foreign language cinema could be received and how linguistic and cultural difference in films could be positioned and theorised.

Chapter 4

European Cinema Studies? The Status of Art Cinema, 'Post-Theory'

The use of the term 'European cinema' is frequently justified in film scholarship with reference to Benedict Anderson's conceptualisation of *Imagined Communities* (1991), as Thomas Elsaesser acknowledges in the introduction to his own collection of work exploring the contested 'historical imaginary' *European Cinema* (2005: 21). The regular confession by scholars of the provisional nature with which the term European cinema is applied testifies to the shape-shifting which has occurred with critical notions of the category since the celebratory era of film appreciation. Academic discourses around European cinema, its contents, contexts, prospects and canons, appear now to be interminably concerned with the appropriateness of definitions: 'European', 'national', 'international', 'art cinema', 'popular cinema', and so on. One of the aspects less frequently discussed is the notion of 'foreignness' with respect to European cinema as if that is one area which could be taken as read or is irrelevant to the project of definition. Debate around European films as foreign-language cinema has not been especially forthcoming.

The 1970s was an important decade for discussions of films and their theoretical definition in British and American educational contexts. Film Studies was formally established in higher education at this time with discussions over the ideological operations of cinema dominating the field and circumventing future developments in film scholarship and criticism for some time to come. The journal *Screen* (1969 -) attempted

to direct intellectual and cinephile interests away from film appreciation and towards film theorising. This chapter marks a transition point in the thesis. It handles the shift in emphasis from discussions of film criticism in a national (British) context to the assessment of a variety of contemporary cinema practices placed in more obviously international formations, partially closing on one and opening up to the other. The space which this chapter occupies, hovering between criticism and practice, is theory. The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the following questions: firstly, how can my objective to describe how European cinema has been positioned and evaluated as foreign-language cinema be conceived as a critical intervention? And, secondly, what actually constitutes the field of study into which the thesis might intervene?

Over time, *Screen* has gone through various incarnations in terms of its editorship, concerns and form and has encountered a number of high-profile resistances to its work and role. As is made apparent in Geoffrey Nowell-Smith's piece 'I Was A Star*Struck Structuralist' (1973), fairly quickly *Screen* writers became identified as belonging to a particular school of thought, despite the journal's publications being far from a homogenous collection either methodologically or thematically.¹ As the 1970s drew on, however, it might be fair to say that the semiotic and psychoanalytic vocabulary imported into the journal was becoming increasingly normalised. The unquestioning application of such language precipitated internal ruptures in the *Screen* Editorial Board and discontent from *Screen*'s parent organisation The Society for Education in Film and Television (SEFT) as well as provoking critiques from elsewhere.²

David Bordwell and Noel Carroll have, separately and together, published extensive critiques of what are perceived to be the dominant theoretical assumptions

emanating from *Screen*. They have in particular questioned the intellectual rigor used as a justification for encouraging a 'mystifying' Althusserian-Lacanian approach to film interpretation. Here is Bordwell's description of what he terms 'top-down inquiry' in Anglo-American critical thought:

[t]he sources drawn upon by top-down inquiry have remained surprisingly consistent since the 1960s. The books, journals, seminars and symposia which promulgated semiotics, Structuralism, Post-Structuralism, Lacanian psychoanalysis, and Althusserian Marxism were based principally in France, and it was as "ideas from France" that they entered Anglo-American film culture... To this day, contesting orthodoxy often comes down to picking different Parisians to back... The *maîtres à penser* bump into one another in the pages of film books far more often than on the Boulevard St. Michel.

(1996: 19)

Bordwell implies that Francophilia amongst English-speaking intellectuals has distorted the development of film theorising to such an extent that Anglo-American film studies has atrophied into a 'provincial' (Bordwell's term) set of discourses. This observation is ironic considering the radical beginnings of *Screen*'s theorising which precipitated and sustained this investment in French intellectual authority and perhaps Bordwell could be criticised for short-sightedness, playing for laughs.

Certainly, although rigorous in method, the polemical tone with which Bordwell and Carroll have junked 'contemporary film theory' has the flavour at times of a personal attack. Because of its origins prior to the emergence of a British 'academy' of film study, *Screen* was less an international *academic* publication than it was a focal point for

intellectuals concerned with cultural politics in Britain (see Bolas 2003: 18-20). Yet *Screen* intervened, whether purposefully or by default, into an area of educational expertise which had developed in the US along different lines and in a different cultural and political context. The journal was quickly picked up by US scholars as a potential publication outlet, appearing in North American university libraries before film studies had even been established in higher education institutions in its own country of origin. However, efforts by American academics and graduate scholars to enter into a productive dialogue with the journal were apparently frequently and deliberately frustrated and prejudicial attitudes against this particular 'foreign' academic influence were sustained by *Screen* until the late 1970s (Bolas 2003: 25).³

The contradictions and moments of contention which appear in *Screen* emerged partly as a result of the journal's reluctance to adequately historicise itself and its sources. This is not to say that *Screen* contributors and editors completely avoided reflecting on the journal's development but, at times, certain contexts and political positions were taken as read rather than explained. This chapter reflects my efforts to practically engage with that problem in addition to addressing some fundamental issues with devising and teaching European film studies in the UK. Such a discrete subject area as 'European film studies' exists in undergraduate options and Masters courses in the UK and *Screen* has been influential in this field. Its presence can be identified both methodologically and conceptually, from the point of view of work on cinema as a system of signification (an early *Screen* concern) and on cinema as a form of representation (developed by *Screen* most vehemently in the 1980s), an approach which informs textual approaches to cinema as a form of national expression and occurring alongside discourses on authorship in

European film studies. This is an interesting state of affairs given *Screen*'s special social and political history, as I will explain.

One of the most problematic developments that needs to be confronted by those wishing to study 'European cinema' in an Anglo-American academic context must be the valorising of European theorists in the process of critiquing 'mainstream narrative cinema' with its dominant aesthetic of realism, as well as certain tendencies within the contradictory genre of art cinema' (Eaton & Neale 1981:ix). As I will illustrate, *Screen* could be seen in the 1970s displacing the film appreciation canon of film auteurs while simultaneously constructing a pantheon of European theoretical authors. By contextualising the development of film theorising in *Screen* and its relationship to wider developments in British film culture and education I hope to reinvigorate the debate on the utility of French theory for Anglophone film studies. In charting aspects of *Screen*'s development I will reveal some of the peculiarities of the journal in relationship to European film culture but I also aim to make clear the logic informing the journal's critical choices in relation to its historical and political situation. Although seldom acknowledged, *Screen*'s exclusion of European 'art cinema' (sequestered away as a 'genre' of commercial cinema in Eaton and Neale's terms) has had implications for the way European cinema was consequently to be defined in an academic context.

In the 1960s, the BFI's Education Department started to diverge from attitudes which had been inculcated by the Institute around developing a film appreciation culture. The appointments of Victor Perkins and Peter Wollen to the Department (in 1967) gives some indication of its change in direction. Perkins was known for his involvement in the

pro-Hollywood magazine *Movie* and Peter Wollen's book *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema* (1969) represented a critique of the film appreciation tradition by arguing against subjective methods of textual evaluation. The continued BFI establishment attitude towards the NFT and *Sight and Sound* and its governing Board's rejection of the call for an independent inquiry into Institute policy led to the resignations of two Governors in 1970, filmmakers Lindsay Anderson and Karel Reisz, who had been potential Education Department allies (Lovell 1971: 23-4). Soon after, suspicion in the Board over operations in Education led to an investigation of the Department. The Department was criticised for spending too much time on research and the recommendation was made that editorial responsibility for the Cinema One series of film study books (which had included Peter Wollen's book) should be put entirely into the hands of *Sight and Sound*. As a result of the inquiry and the way it was handled, six department staff resigned and the department was renamed the Educational Advisory Service (Brock et al 1971; McArthur 2001: 116).

Screen, which was still in its infancy at this point, felt hard hit by the inquiry. The episode was positioned in the journal in terms of a crisis in film education and an issue was devoted to discussing (and publicising) the problem (Vol 12. No.3, 1971: *Crisis in Film Education: The BFI and Film Education*). Sam Rohdie (1971c) noted the ironic timing of the BFI's vote of no-confidence in *Screen* given that he had recently set out a bold editorial policy for the journal, assured of its financial security, positioning it in relation to its relevance for wider film and education cultures. The editorial to the special 'crisis' issue turned on the Governors and their disingenuous claims to support pluralism, accusing the BFI of fostering a conservative and anti-intellectual 'official film culture' through their administration of *Sight and Sound*, the NFT, the RFTs and the archives

(Rohdie 1971a: 11).⁴ *Screen* had apparently been singled out by the BFI's Director, former 'Film Appreciation Officer' Stanley Reed, as 'too 'theoretic [sic] and academic'' and neglectful of educational 'practice' (Rohdie 1971c: 9).

The *Screen* editorial policy overseen by Sam Rohdie from 1971 marked a distinct reinvigoration of the journal since its first issue in 1969. Rohdie's conviction that *Screen* was 'not a 'forum of ideas', a format for extreme Liberalism giving space to all opinions' (1971b: 6) can be read as a direct reference to the 'old' *Screen* which appeared as the continuation of SEFT's journal *Screen Education*, evolved out of *The Film Teacher*. The Editorial Board for the 'new' *Screen* notably included members who were to resign from BFI Education (Alan Lovell and Paddy Whannel) and, crucially, declared a commitment 'to develop theories of film study', the particular wording of which was significant (Screen 1971: 4). The importance of working with their patron organisation SEFT was also stated and discussion and teaching outside the journal ('practical' work) was regarded as essential for informing theoretical developments that could guide film pedagogy. Rohdie clarified this position stating '[t]he Work of Screen is to develop a politics of education and of film. The two are not separate in a journal of film education' (Rohdie 1971b: 4). His direct call for a more rigorous methodology of film study admonished the uncertainty and disagreement amongst critics and educators at this time over how a film study culture should be developed.

Arguably, key to the Institute/Education Department dispute was the shift from general ideas about supporting a film appreciation culture to developing a film study culture. SEFT, the BFI Education Department and *Screen* had called for the Institute to mobilise a change in emphasis from educating the public generally to appreciate the

'best' of film towards educating target groups (such as educators and university educated cinephiles) into more scholarly and analytic approaches to film reception. This change in priorities triggered a knee-jerk reaction amongst those in the BFI who perceived intellectual work to be an exclusive practice going against the liberal tradition to educate the widest possible public. The BFI management was not clear on how to handle a demand for theory nor could it conceive of what part it should play in meeting it. This was a challenge recognised by Paddy Whannel and discussed in his letter to the Chairman of the BFI, published in the 'Crisis' issue, which proposes that the Institute be regarded as 'an agency of Film Culture', defined below:

Film Culture implies breadth. It embraces not only film as art, but film as entertainment, film as communication and film as business. It implies a variety of approaches to film study of which criticism is only one and which includes film history, film sociology and film theory. Both together [cinema practices and film study] emphasise the importance of ideas allied to action.

(1971:42)

Whannel's proposal for a film (study) culture included two important recommendations. Firstly, the NFT and Regional Film Theatres should disrobe their 'art house' status and become 'centre[s] of film culture in which the showing of films was part of an integrated programme of seminars, debates, discussions, exhibitions, etc'. Secondly, *Sight and Sound* should be 'converted to a genuinely popular journal of film study mediating between advanced work and the general audience and not confining itself to criticism' while *Screen* would be supported as an academic and theoretical journal (Whannel 1971: 43).

The discussion about film culture and the role of institutions with educational mandates within it continued, notably with Alan Lovell's 'Notes on British Film Culture' (1972). Lovell describes two film cultures: a declining majority film culture whose preoccupation is with American and British films shown on mainstream exhibition circuits and a growing minority film culture committed to analysis, scholarship and theory. The 'establishment' within the minority group is represented by cine-journals (Lovell says *Sight and Sound* is propagandist for the minority film culture), it is detached from 'its own national cinema', opposes 'art' to 'entertainment', and, in terms of production, it has been influenced by the documentary movement. Production within the minority culture is dependent on the state for finance, a factor which impacts negatively on its capacity for producing feature films.

An 'opposition' within the minority culture is also described by Lovell, characterised by its critical alliances to the post-'68 *Cahiers du Cinéma*. He includes in this group 'descendents of *Movie*' (1972: 10), publications which demonstrate not only a special interest in Hollywood and the French New Wave (after all, even *Sight and Sound* was doing this now) but also in the role of ideology in film and more experimental British film practice such as that explored by the London film-makers Co-op and in The Other Cinema's distribution of politically and aesthetically innovative left-wing films. Lovell says that *Screen* is 'forced to be oppositional' because of the minority establishment's (the BFI's) complacent and ambiguous attitude to film education. He calls on *Screen*, therefore, to be at the forefront of establishing 'film study as a systematic discipline' as a 'critical challenge to the establishment' and as part of an effort to make the opposition within the minority culture more cohesive (1972: 13).

Lovell's description of tendencies within the opposition provides an interesting assessment of *Screen* and the direction it was heading. Importantly, he indicates that *Screen* may not only have a role in constructing film theory for scholars but could also influence a wider-reaching oppositional film culture which was indeed to become a vital and contentious aspect of *Screen*'s work. Lovell's ideas on British film culture were to be further historicised and reconfigured in John Ellis's (1978) later critique of the culture surrounding 'art cinema'. Ellis's essay, as I shall discuss, can be regarded as representative of *Screen*'s critical orientation and its interventionist ideals with respect to British film culture. Both Lovell's and Ellis's discussions hold uncomfortable implications for the place of European films within British film culture because of their suggestion that European narrative film is not a politically radical alternative to commercial cinema practices.

The May 1968 student protests in France had a profound effect on education and intellectual work in Western Europe. The revolutionary stance against the intellectual and administrative establishment within the universities signified a call for a (Marxist) politics of education, particularly of higher education. The influence of this moment is clear in *Screen* which was founded immediately after the struggles of '68 and has as one of its defining characteristics in the 1970s the translation and ingestion of contemporary French theory. The French literary journal *Tel Quel* had issued a manifesto in 1968 supporting the Paris 'Cultural Revolution' which was signed, among others, by Julia Kristeva and Jean-Louis Baudry, both of whom were later to become fixtures in Anglo-American film theory. The manifesto signalled a movement in textual politics towards a 'politics of subjectivity' where culture was seen as a site for political and ideological

struggle (Reader 1987: 10-13). In fact, theoretical developments by Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes had already signalled a sea change in conceptions of culture before 1968. 'Culture' was in the process of being radically reconceptualised; no longer did it denote high cultural 'intellectual' leisure pursuits but it was, rather, to be regarded as part of the fabric of everyday life. Structural linguistics was providing the terms according to which all aspects of culture, 'high' and 'low', could be understood.⁵

One can read the influence of the French critical revolution on *Screen* in editor Sam Rohdie's polemical piece 'Education and Criticism. Notes on work to be done' (1971a) which is also set out like a manifesto, in numbered sections. For reasons of economy I am including an edited extract from this piece from which one can infer the relevance and influence of a politicised critical context:

Screen has made a demand for theory, for an aesthetics of film.... Why now ?... What is the relation of education to criticism ?... Both film and its critique are easy modes of consumption.... *Auteurs* are out of time. This theory which makes them sacred makes no inroad on vulgar history, has no concepts for the social or the collective, or the national.... work must not be one of refining *auteur* concepts, but rather of explaining them.... What is the ideology behind auteur theory ?... what system of cultural and social (hence educational) domination does it presuppose and is implicit within it ?... Education serves as a mode of cultural consumption and of social domination... Is there a kind of film criticism which cannot be taught unless teaching and education are themselves altered ?

(Rohdie 1971a : 9-13)

The French journals *Cahiers du Cinéma* and *Cinéthique* were to be important reference points for *Screen* in answering the kinds of questions Rohdie poses. Significantly, a prominent feature of Sylvia Harvey's book on May '68 and Film Culture (1978) is her discussion of these cine-journals which stand as records of the hopes expressed, theories conceptualised and polemics articulated by people hoping to intervene in the French film culture after the cultural 'revolution'.⁶

Cahiers du Cinéma, which from 1965 was strongly influenced editorially by Jean-Louis Comolli and Jean Narboni, had become increasingly politicised throughout the 1960s (Hillier 1986). Foreshadowing the radicalisation of *Screen* in Britain, the events of May '68 and the 'Langlois affair' in France precipitated *Cahiers*' reassessment of the importance of theory and its place within the wider film culture.⁷ In Spring 1969, Lacanian psychoanalysis was profiled in the magazine as the basis for a theory of film spectatorship with the publication of Jean-Pierre Oudart's 'La Suture'. In Autumn, Jean-Louis Comolli and Paul Narboni's categorisation of film types, 'Cinema /Ideology/ Criticism' demonstrated how a Marxist conception of ideology could be used as the conceptual framework for evaluating the formal structure of films. This essay was amongst *Screen*'s first translations and was to play a central role in its 'realism debate' by connecting a film's formal technique to its ability to challenge or reproduce dominant ideology. Both the Marxist and the psychoanalytic strands of theorising were to be adopted by certain *Screen* writers and the influence of *Cahiers du Cinéma* on *Screen* was consistently borne out: in Stephen Heath's articles, which lay down a method for film analysis in the mould of the *Cahiers* 'Young Mr Lincoln' model, through the introduction of Lacanian psychoanalysis and in *Screen*'s preoccupation with Bertolt Brecht.⁸

The journal *Cinéthique*, founded contemporaneously with *Screen*, could be described as more radical than *Cahiers* in that it reflected the belief that mainstream cinema could only be illusory and not open to contradictions as Comolli and Narboni argued. *Cinéthique* proposed an alternative cinema founded on a materialist, theoretically aware avant-garde (see Harvey 1978: 36-8) and this prospect became a focal point for *Screen* in projecting what an independent film culture should consist of in Britain. *Screen* purposefully claimed to confront the ideological circumscription of both production and consumption which, Sylvia Harvey claims, were the respective foci of *Cinéthique* and *Cahiers du Cinéma* (1978: 110).⁹ France was not the only place *Screen* theorists looked to for direction in their film study project, however those articles by Brecht, Benjamin and Eikenbaum published in *Screen* reflected an approach to intellectual enquiry that had been developed in France more vigorously than in the UK. Brechtian theories and favour towards dialectical materialism had already been a feature of *Cahiers du Cinéma*.¹⁰

The new French criticism raised expectations around the possibility of radicalising British film culture and education and inspired two of the most pressing questions for *Screen* in the 1970s. Firstly, what kind of engagement was possible with the dominant (Hollywood) cinema and, secondly, what form should oppositional cinema take with this in mind? These problems and the way in which they were addressed in the journal provided the sightlines along which young British intellectuals could envisage the formation of a politically literate, alternative film culture. To address the first question, *Screen* looked to the influence of structural linguistics on film theorising in France. This gave the cue to work on exposing the 'productivity' of film form, which structured cinema 'like a language', and to assess how narrative structure might be ideologically

complicit. Translating the *Cahiers* analysis of *Young Mr Lincoln* was a deliberate effort on *Screen*'s part to demolish traditions of 'British' film criticism that celebrated the conceptual unity of form and content (see Rohdie 1972). Films that seemed ideologically transparent were now to be viewed as constructs containing hidden ruptures – form might betray content, meanings might be repressed.

Christian Metz brought a systematic method of semiotic analysis into film study. While the earlier Metz (of the *grande syntagmatique*) was problematic for *Screen* in that it seemed to validate realism as the definitive cinematic form, the latter Metz appeared more flexible and could be integrated with *Screen*'s critique of realism (Eaton & Neale 1981: vi-ix). *Screen*'s translations of certain Metz essays just preceded the publication in English of volumes containing both his earlier and later works in the same year (*Essais sur la signification au cinéma*, Vol. 1, 1968/ Vol. 2, 1972 [Film Language, 1974] and *Langage et cinéma*, 1971 [Language and Cinema, 1974]). The inclusion of Metz in the *Screen* canon was about defining the film as object but cast in terms quite different from the ontological, medium specificity explorations of early film theorising in that it conceived of film as a signifying system (see Rohdie 1975). Furthermore, the said 'object' was not just any film, as significant focus was placed by *Screen* on films ignored by film appreciation trends, a move which was deliberately conceived as a reaction against 'Leavisite' educational values.

The central proponent of the Metzian approach was Stephen Heath who also regarded the introduction of Metz into the body of *Screen* as a means to accomplish methodological coherence and rigor in the practice of film study. Merely describing a film in terms of a collection of codes was not going to justify the use of semiotic analysis

politically, however, and *Screen* was encouraged from within to develop its analysis of the structuring elements in film further, to consider more emphatically ideology and the material effects of cinema techniques, prompting the question '[w]hat would be or is our revolutionary cinema?' (Brewster & MacCabe 1974: 10).

Laura Mulvey's article 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' (1975) became a canonical film studies text because of its prescriptive rejection of the narrative conventions and viewing 'positions' offered by classical Hollywood cinema which, Mulvey claimed, privileged a male subject. This essay was a treatise on film consumption which suggested a direction for those seeking a method for alternative film production. Its publication not only coincided with the announcement in *Screen* of its editorial commitment to theorising the viewing subject using psychoanalysis but also with Mulvey and Wollen's exploration of an anti-illusory, feminist film 'language' in the making of *Penthesilea* (1974) and *Riddles of the Sphinx* (1977).

Screen increased its commitment to discussing alternative cinema following Peter Gidal's (1975) complaint in *Studio International* that *Screen* was deploying its theoretical weight to the wrong kinds of films – to classical narrative cinema rather than to the avant-garde. This coincided with the foundation of the Independent Film-Makers Association which Peter Wollen hoped to influence with his proposal for bringing the European and American avant-gardes closer together in 'The Two Avant Gardes' (1975), also published in *Studio International*. Wollen was later to confess that part of his strategy for writing the article was to do with his wish 'to push the magazine *Screen*, with which I was associated, away from a univocal 'Parisianism' towards a more cosmopolitan stance' (1981: 9). While contributions and comments from the independent film sector were

published in *Screen*, its relationship to the avant-garde became somewhat troubled, particularly in the late 1970s. A range of efforts to broach the space between theory and practice in a politically charged manner had shown up some mutual antagonisms – between the American and the European avant-gardes (witnessed at the Edinburgh Film Festival forum on Avant-Garde film in 1976) and between independent filmmakers and outside commentators.¹¹

Just as had been the case with *Cahiers du Cinéma* and *Cinéthique*, *Screen* wanted to encourage the practice of a theoretical cinema that could prove the utility and relevance of theory in a politically progressive manner. With this in mind, although mainstream commercial cinema was often the subject of analysis in *Screen*, generally its engagement with dominant film culture was to be critical rather than celebratory. While it was acknowledged that the pre-'68 *Cahiers du Cinéma* of Godard and Truffaut had made a necessary step by validating Hollywood cinema through auteurism (Buscombe 1973; Caughie 1975/6), the intervention which *Screen* directed was different from that conceived by *Movie* which went against the establishment by identifying authorial stylistic and thematic traits in popular films which had been excluded from the film appreciation canon. When *Movie* returned after a three year absence in the early 70s, Steve Neale (1975) found it uninformed and out-of-touch with the recent theoretical developments which *Screen* had supported as well as destabilised by the appearance of the 'New Hollywood'.¹² What *Screen* and *Movie* had in common was their disregard for the film appreciation culture fostered by the BFI but their methods, in the end, differed dramatically.

Screen's adherence to structuralism and post-structuralism marked a shift of critical priorities, away from authorship and towards spectatorship. Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (2003) describes a 'contradictory development' occurring in film theory as a result of the coincidence between literary theory's death of the author and a burst of activity in film criticism around identifying auteurs (2003: 3, see also 1973). The method resulting from this contradiction became known as 'auteur structuralism'. Described by Peter Wollen (1972: chapter 2), the 'author' was regarded as a 'sub-code' of a film whose structure could be revealed by comparing it, intertextually, to other films identified with the same director. It was not considered particularly problematic within *Screen* to be including some filmmakers and films as objects of study and excluding others because the selection did not, apparently, occur on the basis of the subjective category taste but rather was made by considering the potential of certain texts to illuminate particular problems. Thus reassured, *Screen* contributors perhaps did not see themselves as producing a cinematic canon in the traditional way, through the evaluation of aesthetic merit. Peter Wollen wrote in his conclusion for the second edition of *Signs and Meanings* (1972: 169-171) that no longer was a humanist tradition of film criticism adequate to the task of evaluating films. Structural analysis, by exposing fissures in the text, upset the old criteria whereby a work could be evaluated on the basis of its unity, coherence and sensitivity to human experience.

Screen's Rossellini issue (Winter 1973/4) was a turning point for the journal, according to Paul Willemen (1983: 293-4), as it indicated *Screen*'s transition from auteur structuralism and the 'formal semiology' represented by early Metz to the 'politics of signification' apparent in *Screen*'s critique of realism and concurrent appropriation of

Bertold Brecht. In collaboration with *Screen*, the NFT held a Rossellini season which included seminars for discussing the special issue. Evidently, auteur structuralism could be reconciled with film appreciation interests to some extent, and for mutual benefit, as this as well as further seasons and retrospectives on Rivette, Pasolini and Fassbinder were held at the NFT in the 70s, accompanied by seminars and documentation from the BFI Monograph series.¹³ In his preface to the Pasolini booklet, however, Paul Willemen indicates how this apparent concession to the old film culture was also perceived as an intervention. He writes,

[p]eople purchasing this booklet demonstrate in doing so that they are interested in (which is not the same as accepting) the notion of film-reading, the reading of films through analyses, i.e. analytical viewing as opposed to consumerist viewing.

(Willemen: 1977: v)

The distinction between 'reading' a film and 'consuming' it was crucial to *Screen* but it can really only be considered innovative in as far as structural analysis provided a new method. As we saw in the previous chapters, proponents of film appreciation had long been arguing for more critical, distanced approaches to film viewing. Appearing as an interesting contradiction in *Screen*, because of its obvious cinephile resonances, was the publication of screenplays to support 'analytical' approaches to viewing. *Screen* published the script of *Riddles of the Sphinx* (in Vol. 18 No.2, 1977), which directly explored the propositions made in 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', and also produced translations of foreign-language film scenarios by Daniele Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub - *History Lessons* (1972) and *Fortini/Cani* (1976) (respectively, in Vol. 17 No. 1, 1976 and Vol. 19 No. 2, 1978). In publishing the scripts, *Screen* was in some

respect widening access to the films but the act also implied that films which did not follow conventional strategies of narrative and representation required a particular kind of detailed textual analysis and perhaps a complex reading strategy involving knowledge of intertextual references. The publication of whole, translated film scripts in English occurred with some frequency during the 1960s and 70s, largely issued by American publishers. For example, the extensive Lorrimer Publishing Ltd/Simon & Schuster (London & New York) series of *Classic and Modern Film Scripts* (1966-75), mostly translations of European modern 'classics'; the Orion Press/Grossman Publishers, Inc. (New York) *Screenplay series* (1963-73), along the lines of European auteur filmmakers; and the Grove Press (New York) *Evergreen* film book series (1968-70 and 1973-76) which contained numerous translations of scripts and scenarios of European art films.¹⁴

The publication of film scripts was designed to profit from the perceived demand for immersive cineaste engagement with the work of auteur filmmakers and 'classic' films. *Screen* certainly created something of an alternative film canon in the 1970s, privileging Wollen & Mulvey, Huillet & Straub, Godard, Oshima, Ozu and Rossellini.¹⁵ Yet, Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (1978) explicitly states in his introduction to *Fortini-Cani* that the publication of the script is not meant as a 'promotion of 'authors'' (1978: 10). The scenario of *History Lessons* is published 'for its value as a text in its own right and as an aid to detailed study of the film, but also to help provide an English audience with a fuller understanding of it' (*Screen* 1976: 6) and the *Fortini/Cani* shooting script, illustrated with stills, is reproduced in English for the benefit of seeing 'its textual strategy, in the particular relation it sets up between mise-en-scène and language... [for]

there are limits to the load that sub-titles can be expected to carry' (Nowell-Smith 1978: 9).

The reference in both Straub-Huillet cases to language translation is interesting as it indicates some realisation of the problems screen translation poses for certain theoretical conceptions of spectatorship. By mentioning the needs, or rather the limitations, of an English (-speaking) audience with respect to the subtitled text, pragmatic justification is provided for the reproduction and translation of the scenario and script. But the explanation also suggests some doubt around the effectivity of 'reading' a film that has been subtitled. Although the reasons why are not fully articulated, the implication is that subtitles either interfere with or aggravate the complexity of film analysis strategies developed in *Screen*. Quite understandably too, for not only do subtitles present an extra semiotic field but they also cause particular difficulties for theories of subject positioning such as suture (elaborated on by Stephen Heath 1977) which tries to explain spectator pleasure with reference to unconscious processes. And yet, subtitles were not theorised at this time.

Such avoidance of theorising subtitles has been addressed by Dimitris Eleftheriotis. He considers the absence of discussion around subtitles in contemporary film theory to be an indication of the 'apparatus theorist's' reluctance to address the possibility of their having limited mastery over 'foreign' texts, a logic which stems from their belief that films 'construct universal positions that transcend difference' (2002: 11). Straub and Huillet had some interesting opinions on sound in film which held implications for cinema translation. They saw postsynchronous voice dubbing as illusionist and they described dubbing as 'not only a technique [but] also an ideology',

stupefying ('deafening') the Italian spectator/auditor (Kavaler 1985: 150). It is telling that the attention paid by *Cahiers du Cinéma* to Straub & Huillet's opinions on dubbing ('the cinema of lies, mental laziness and violence' [Kavaler 1985: 150]) and on their particular, ideologically situated, use of a synchronous sound technique ('direct sound') is scarcely investigated in *Screen*, save for Nowell-Smith's comments. While Nowell-Smith earlier saw fit to publish a vigorously articulated article on dubbing in Italian cinema in *Sight and Sound* (1968), sound technique and screen translation were seldom discussed in *Screen*.

Projections for a 'revolutionary' cinema and ideology could not be discussed without some conception of audience and reception. However, *Screen*'s concern was less with audiences and their response to films than with 'the spectator' as positioned by the text, following psychoanalytic theories of subject construction.¹⁶ *Screen*'s editorial commitment to psychoanalysis in film theorising was made explicit in 1975, by which point Ben Brewster had taken over as editor from Sam Rohdie. Brewster says in an editorial that 'classical semiotics' is inadequate for understanding how the viewing 'subject' is constructed when watching a film, '[h]ence the concern... to re-cast semiotics in a frame-work defined by psychoanalysis, for psychoanalysis is precisely a theory of the symbolic system as imposed on the human animal in its construction into a subject...' (1975: 5-6). This announcement was published next to Heath's extensive (seventy pages!) proposal for a method of film analysis, 'Film and System'. Already in the next issue, however, discontent was being metered over the place of psychoanalysis in Anglo-American film study. An article from the American journal *Jump Cut* was reprinted in *Screen* discussing some demerits of applying Freudian frameworks to film study and

suggesting that an American readership would find such dispositions anachronistic and sexist (Lesage 1975). Defence of the use of psychoanalysis came (rather unconvincingly) from Brewster, Heath and MacCabe alongside another Metz translation apparently published 'for its exposition of the way psychoanalysis is being applied in France' (Screen 1975: 5).

Keith Reader relates the explosion of interest in Lacanian psychoanalysis amongst French Leftist intellectuals directly to the events of May '68 during which a radical 'political re-evaluation of the self, and a self-based re-evaluation of the political' had been brought forth (1987: 61). Lacan's emphasis on language as the site of identity formation and 'as ideological and libidinal battleground' along with his expressed anti-Americanism potentially offered a critique of the repressive structures of patriarchy and cultural imperialism, which appealed to those wishing to challenge bourgeois values (Reader 1987: 64). But, crucially, Reader sees a tension between the volume of intellectual activity dedicated to exposing the ideological structures of society, institutions, culture and texts and the rapid canonisation of the authors of such critiques in the dissemination and defence of the approach. He describes this as a tension 'between the socially and historically determined content of the ideas and their often para-theological form' (1987: 62), and it is a problem which was carried into and fought over in *Screen*.

The Editorial Board was divided over the issue of psychoanalysis and the implications its promotion had for *Screen*'s commitment to SEFT (see Screen 1975: 6). The seeming obscurity of psychoanalytic terms and concepts and the lack of a proper, open justification of its use value for screen studies resulted in the resignation of the (by

now) 'old *Screen*' Board members, including Alan Lovell, who had been most committed to the early promise of moulding a film study culture in reaction to a stagnating BFI film culture. *Screen* was denounced as being 'unnecessarily obscure and inaccessible', 'intellectually unsound and unproductive', 'sectarian', and having 'no serious interest in educational matters' (Buscombe *et al.* 1976).

A central problem was *Screen*'s perceived relationship with its readers who some felt were demoralised by having to conduct a 'torment of endless re-readings in the effort to understand' the psychoanalytic material (Buscombe *et al.* 1975/6: 121). At the same time, *Screen* in the 1970s was interacting with its readership in somewhat evangelist formations. If not exactly subject to revision, the work produced in *Screen* was up for discussion at a variety of forums – SEFT day and weekend schools, BFI summer schools, NFT seminars, reading groups and even the Edinburgh Film Festival provided opportunities for *Screen*'s work to be promoted or disputed. Famously, *Screen*'s efforts to engage the wider minority film culture with its ideological position using the Edinburgh Film Festival as a platform resulted in a very public dismissal of *Screen*'s work by Barry Norman in his television review of the Edinburgh Film Festival publication on Raoul Walsh (1974, containing contributions by Edward Buscombe, Paul Willemsen and Pam Cook and Claire Johnston) which Colin MacCabe (1975) consequently staunchly defended in *Screen*. In the years that followed, there were a number of events organised at Edinburgh in association with *Screen* which reflected the journal's interests: Brecht (1975), Psychoanalysis and Cinema (1976), an International Forum on Avant-Garde Film (1976), Historical Materialism and the Cinema (1977), and feminism and cinema (1979).¹⁷ All the same, *Screen* was experiencing continual criticism, including

accusations of conducting 'intellectual terrorism' (Williams 1981: 91). Recourse to Lacan was seen from the outside as the gold standard for 'screen theory', and from the cultural studies perspective highly limiting and doctrinaire (Hall 1980: 161).

In 1978, Andrew Britton felt able to identify in a detailed and scholarly manner '[t]he Ideology of Screen' itself, under which lay, Britton claimed, 'a continuous, and disabling, uncertainty in Screen's intervention' and doubt surrounding the journal's claims to political radicalism (1978: 7, 28). Critique was also forthcoming from the inner circle, with Paul Willemen publishing a 'History of Contexts' on *Screen* which asserted that *Screen* had become theoretically isolated, depoliticised and dogmatic (1983: 295). Willemen's piece reinforced Sylvia Harvey's (1982) observation that *Screen* had misappropriated Brecht in order to defend the political progressiveness of anti-realist stylistic techniques in film.

John Ellis's piece on 'Art, Culture and Quality' (1978) appeared in the context of *Screen*'s attempts to prove it was, contrary to perception, engaged with the institutions of cinema and education. Ellis assesses the politics around film consumption and production in Britain and brings together a number of *Screen* concerns with cinema culture. His discussion is positioned in terms of its relevance for a contemporary dispute over state subsidy for film production in the UK. In order to defend his objections to the Association of Independent Producers' (AIP) call for a subsidised British art cinema, Ellis historicises the emergence of critical support for what he terms a 'quality' cinema tradition. He explains how certain discourses on 'national cinema', 'art', 'quality' and 'culture' have been mobilised in the past in order to encourage interest in a certain kind of 'quality film' and continue to be used by organisations like the AIP to justify state

support of commercial films that conform to bourgeois values. However, while the critical conception of a 'quality' cinema appears coherent, the descriptive terms it utilises (particularly the notion of the 'artist') are, Ellis argues, less stable. Consequently, he believes that the Independent Film-maker's Association (IFA) could exploit the art cinema discourse in order to gain recognition from the state financing system and win subsidy for independent, workshop-based production that is essentially oppositional to the European art cinema model. Ellis's article represents a turning point in as much as it calls for a revised attitude towards the film appreciation tradition based on the assessment that its discursive legacy could be exploited for the benefit of developing the politically and socially progressive film culture which *Screen* was prescribing as an antidote to commercial cinema.

Because of its oppositional stance, *Screen* was relatively silent on the front of European cinema cultures in contrast to the attention given to European films and national cinemas in *Sight and Sound*. *Screen*'s rebellion against the BFI/NFT/*Sight and Sound* film appreciation drive and its concurrent celebration of the critic and the auteur provided strong motivation to avoid discussing 'national' cinemas and 'authors', discourses which were associated with the commercialising of European cinemas. In *Screen* parlance, the lack of discussion surrounding European narrative films could be called a 'structuring absence'. It represents a curious, almost contradictory neglect of contextual considerations, a problem borne out in *Screen*'s translations of essays from abroad which appear to be positioned in the journal practically without historical or cultural context.

Central to the *Screen* project, in as far as such a notion can be identified, was of course the questioning of notions of authorship and realism following Barthes, Foucault and a decline of interest in Bazin. As Stephen Heath noted, to praise the 'cineaste author' was to be considered 'intensely unintelligent' in the context of developing an anti-bourgeois political practice of study which aimed to (de-)code film ideology (1973: 12). Nonetheless, it remains somewhat intriguing that many of the most influential *Screen* figures were also linguists, often proficient in one or more foreign European languages, and were likely film enthusiasts fond of European narrative cinema. It is ironic to consider that one reason for the reaction against the film appreciation culture by certain intellectuals in the UK might have been the increased availability of the film appreciation canon, including foreign language films, in cinemas. The high visibility of the European 'art cinema' as a circulating commodity may have contributed to its diminished value in the eyes of cineastes, *Screen* contributors included.

The status of 'European cinema' begins to be confronted in more detail in *Screen* with the publication of Steve Neale's assessment of 'art cinema' (1981a, 1981b) which was influenced by Ellis' piece on the 'quality' discourse. Neale's *Screen* articles on 'Oppositional Exhibition' (1980), 'Art Cinema as Institution' (1981b) and 'Authors and Genres' (1982) suggest a renewed consideration of cinema's institutional aspects and attempt to make circumspect conclusions about the ideologies of cinema institutions rather than film 'texts' in isolation. The work of Andrew Higson which was published in *Screen* on British cinema (1983, 1984, 1986, and with Neale 1985) suggests that the journal was finally vanquishing the fear of parochialism which it developed as part of the

reaction against traditions in British film criticism, British commercial cinema and so-called 'British empiricism' in the Academy.

The impact of Thatcherism on the availability of funding to the arts and the restructuring of national arts organisations made the open questioning of British mainstream film production and nationality topical. This new 'national cinema' critique was accompanied by concerns about where subsidies for independent filmmaking were to come from and debates over who the new fourth television channel should represent and serve. Andrew Higson's work coincided with the self-conscious re-emergence of a British 'art cinema', revitalised by Channel 4 funding. *The Draughtsman's Contract* (dir. Peter Greenaway, 1982) appeared as the first product of the Channel 4 scheme; its critical success was, for Paul Willemen, a signal that 'English literary ideology ha[d] returned to a virtually unchallenged position' in a newly reactionary England (1983: 310 n.21).

The Thatcher government sounded the death knell for the alternative cinema cultures *Screen* had supported in the seventies. In 1984 a special issue of *Screen* on Independent Cinema indicated that the independent sector felt static (see Aspinall et al 1984). This was followed by an issue on British Cinema, anticipating the 'British Cinema Year' campaign to promote British films and cinema-going in March 1985, which was introduced by Higson and Neale referring to *Screen* contributors of the seventies, stating '[n]o longer, it seems, do we need to regard British cinema as 'the unknown cinema' (Alan Lovell), or, as 'utterly amorphous, unclassified, unperceived' (Peter Wollen)' (1985: 4). Rather, 'British cinema' had, in its critique, become a known imaginary.

The special issue *Other Cinemas, Other Criticisms* (1985) indicated an attempt by *Screen* to show interest in a greater variety of cinematic objects and experiences and

presents its initiation into post-colonial criticism. This issue contained Ella Shohat and Robert Stam's article on language in cinema – pretty much the first and the last detailed analysis of possible representational and ideological codes related to spoken and written language in film to appear in *Screen*. This article discussed some of the power relationships at work in an institution (cinema) stratified by linguistic and cultural differences, foreshadowing the political emphasis they were to develop in *Unthinking Eurocentrism* (1994). Leaning on the newly 'discovered' Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin (numerous translations into English of Bakhtin's work appeared in the early 1980s), Shohat and Stam conclude that '[w]hile the discourse of Power strives to officialise a single language, one dialect among many, into *the* Language, in fact language is the site of heteroglossia, open to historical process' (1985: 58). The authors might be understood here as not only speaking about power relations in cinema but also of the pitfalls and contradictions apparent in trying to shape a coherent language for a field of study and their piece indicates a theoretical shift into poststructuralism. Shohat and Stam warn that universal models of cinema are constrictive, limiting both the questions that can be asked of cinema and the ways in which those questions that are permitted can be answered. Importantly, their article implies that conceptualising cinema in terms of national specificity may fall amongst those limited models.

At the same time, though, debates on Third Cinema were reframing the significance of the national for (post-)colonised and politically and economically disenfranchised filmmaking communities (see Willemen 1987: 24-30). *Screen* in the 1980s records a shift in concern from exposing the signifying structures of film to interpreting issues of representation in film, which reflected the influence of cultural

studies on the expanding field of film studies. One of the consequences of the shift to issues of representation was the growth of interest in politics of identity, particularly in relation to film consumption and the possible influences a spectator's (still abstract and idealised but now differentiated into categories of identification) gender, class, race and sexuality could have on their reading of a film. With the attention given to the matter of race came a critique of 'Eurocentrism' which Robert Stam defines thus:

Eurocentric thinking attributes to the West an almost providential sense of historical destiny. Like Renaissance perspective in painting, it envisions the world from a single privileged point. It bifurcates the world into the "West and the Rest" and organises everyday language into binaristic hierarchies implicitly flattering to Europe [and the US].

(2000: 269)

European cinema studies, in the form of conference proceedings and other publications which I mentioned in the introduction (see chapter 1: 14-15), emerged concurrent to this critique and, indeed, can be seen as part of it (see Dyer & Vincendeau 1992, Everett 1996, Hayward 1985, Petrie 1992). This context, along with the intellectual divergence from the film appreciation tradition, provides an explanation for why the special object of regard at this point in many, but by no means all, cases was popular European cinema and the hot issue was European identity in cinema rather than analysis of those 'high European' films that were seen to constitute 'art cinema' culture

European cinema studies constitutes a strange aspect of the Eurocentric critique, though. While postcolonial studies has aimed to dismantle the binary oppositions which structure discourses that support inequality and cultural myopia, European film studies

(re)constructed a new opposition – that of Hollywood versus Europe. Admittedly, this being the opposition of two culturally and economically privileged continents (if we take ‘Europe’ to mean western Europe) there is a sense in which it could be seen as destabilising the discourse of Eurocentrism for, in this binary, it is not Europe which is in a position of power but the new ‘colonisers’, America. However, although European film industries are argued to be disadvantaged and marginalised in this context, the Hollywood/Europe binary also appeals to discourses of European cultural supremacy in order to posit the difference of European cinema from Hollywood and to prove the unfairness of Hollywood’s colonisation. It is perhaps in an attempt to avoid this problem (the Eurocentric discourse of European film studies) that studies of European cinema emerged under cover of ‘rediscovering’ popular cinemas in Europe other than Hollywood and thus avoiding the high cultural connotations of European art cinema. Likewise, discussions on ‘European identity’ in cinema could be framed as representing the critical deconstruction of, rather than investment in, Eurocentric discourses.

Allow me to reiterate my belief that two central discourses have developed around the problem of language in cinema. The first conceives of cinema as culturally non specific, a universal medium of expression. The second regards films as culturally inflected and often delineates their specificity in relation to nationality. *Screen* in the 1970s and 1980s moved from the first to the second position as different theoretical paradigms developed. Until that critical shift occurred it was difficult to imagine a place for theorising language in cinema, for cinema had up until that point been regarded if not exactly a language in its own right then at least ‘*like* a language’. Yet, as we have seen, contradictions did emerge, and no one theoretical position was absolute.

Rather than thinking of theory published in *Screen* as a totalising '*Screen theory*', we should rather refer to a *Screen* study culture. The *Screen* study culture was developed in a piecemeal fashion, but with political and intellectual conviction and specific cultural aspirations. It was simultaneously national and internationalist in that it looked to European intellectual traditions and language for guidance and legitimisation but had its sights firmly set on an intervention into British film culture and analysis of English language objects of study. Unfortunately, the efforts to formulate another universal language – contemporary film theory – meant that while there was vigorous appropriation of works conceived in foreign cultural contexts there was no proper debate around the terms according to which this intellectual internationalism and Eurocentrism occurred nor on the implications of describing cinema as 'like a language' whose effects could only be understood fully (analysed) by the initiated.

In an editorial in which Ben Brewster and Colin MacCabe discuss the importance of a historical materialist approach to film, they suggest that theorists must remember their cultural and geographical location as being 'now and in England' (1974: 5). *Screen* never was decisively 'now and in England', having been inspired by France's May 1968, having borrowed from foreign theory, and having applied its new theoretical tools to the Hollywood cinema and the European avant-garde. As Lesley Stern put it, the development of 'Screenese' was emphatically 'not cricket' (1987: 116). On the other hand, *Screen* was at the fore of developing film and television studies in the UK (if the pedagogical element had been sidelined as the seventies progressed, the merger with *Screen Education* in 1982 brought the 'problem' of education back in view), and because it wanted to see itself as making an intervention into film and television cultures in

Britain, it was very much the product of alliances and divisions amongst British institutions and individuals. In a sense, the attention given in *Screen* to Hollywood cinema was also 'now and in England' in that Hollywood was indeed the dominant cinema – the national-popular in terms of film consumption.

In a complex institutional scenario, a significant number of scholars who would regard themselves as specialists in the area of 'European cinema', if not the majority, work in university language departments. The relationship between film studies in modern language departments and film studies in film, media and drama departments requires discussion in the future because of its impact on the development of 'European' and 'world' cinema studies. A comment on film scholars based in modern language departments, used as both criticism and defence, is that they do not engage with 'film studies' debates and that, despite contributing to the body of knowledge on cinema culture worldwide, they are somehow operating in a different milieu from 'pure' film scholars. This is a startling claim considering film studies was frequently habilitated in modern language departments in the course of its emergence in higher education. However, these departments already had an established disciplinary structure built around literary studies and the development of film studies in modern language departments has perhaps reflected this context.

Efforts to domesticate film studies may account for Jill Forbes's feeling that it was 'difficult, if not impossible, to realise' a conjunction of film and French studies (1981: 71) despite evidence that, at the time in which Forbes was speaking, film courses were most commonly found in French departments (Simpson 1981: 155). Forbes expresses a wish that language studies transform film studies, enabling greater attention

to be paid 'to the conditions of production and reception than is possible in the kind of filmic Esperanto which is usually the medium in which film analysis is conducted.' She continues with a further opposition to the universalising tendencies of contemporary film theory, insisting '[t]he cinema is not a universal language but a tower of Babel...' (1981: 77). The step that Forbes is keen to make, which the *Screen* theorists of the 1970s would not, is to take as a first principle the cultural and historical variation of European narrative cinema and, also, the cultural specificity of theory (the example she gives is the French cultural references in Barthes' *Mythologies*).

What the case of *Screen* shows, bearing in mind its influence in defining film studies as a discrete subject area in higher education, is that as far as there can be a field of 'European cinema studies' in the UK, its position will always be contentious and its value historically and socially determined. Perhaps it is a moot point but it remains a central one. Having worked through this problem, I don't think it is foolish to acknowledge that the remainder of the thesis bears contradictions which are a result of the competing discourses which have and continue to attempt to position European cinema. European film studies in the United Kingdom must negotiate with both film appreciation and 'theoretic' terms of engagement. The work is not undermined by this admission for it is as competing discourses that any worthwhile field of enquiry emerges; contradiction and contention, as the development of *Screen* illustrates, is the driving force of research and forms the epistemological basis of theorising.

However dubious or inadequate I might find the idea of a field of European cinema studies, this thesis is nonetheless an admission of my complicity with it at some level. It is a self-positioning which I have grown increasingly uncomfortable with

through the duration of this project but one which I have tried to unpack rather than abandon. The thesis has so far viewed examples of the language problem as prisms through which one might look in order to come to grips with a critical understanding of the imaginary of 'European cinema' in a number of different discursive contexts. What I turn to now, in the next section of the thesis, is essentially what formed the impetus to my enquiry and engagement with ideas of European cinema culture – the observation of contemporary cinema practices in Europe. The next section recalls some of the discourses explored in this first part of the thesis by examining what currency these have in the contemporary, globalised cultural sphere of film industry. It represents an inquiry into the ways in which discourse can bridge both theory and practice while being transformed by each in turn.

Chapter 5

Film Festivals, Film Industries. Debating Inequity and the Cultural Exception

This next section of the thesis presents three case studies which discuss the formation and use of discourses on foreign-language films and European cinema in a range of industrial contexts. It is different from the first section in its contemporary focus and its attention to questions of practice which often appear contrasted to matters of criticism but, as we shall see, not necessarily in opposition to them. This section addresses discourses *in* practice rather than discourses *about* practice. Before we embark on this second path, it may be appropriate to take stock of the thesis so far and to draw out some themes which appeared in the first section and will continue in the chapters to come. The research subjects in this and the forthcoming chapters have been chosen to complement the investigation which occurred in the first part of the thesis. The main purpose of the previous three-part section was to establish an understanding of how European films have been critically identified but not subsequently theorised as 'foreign-language cinema', principally in the UK but also in other parts of Europe and in North America. Crucially, the examples I used to explore these matters have flagged up issues to do with the categorisation of European cinema and the ways in which this activity is socially, historically and politically nuanced.

The example of *Screen* was an important illustration of how the value of cultural objects is subject to change according to the availability of alternative and oppositional approaches to those objects. It demonstrates how the manner in which 'foreign films' and 'European cinema' are approached hinges upon the dual aspect of discourse formation -

who is the interlocutor and who the recipient. In chapter 2 we saw how different approaches to the coming of sound to film deepened antagonistic feeling from European cinephiles towards Hollywood cinema and its 'universal language nonsense' (F.W. 1929), despite them having employed a similar discourse in honouring the silent film. European sound films could only be redeemed in *Close-Up* through a discourse on artistic worthiness and its opposition to Hollywood talkies.

The sound era saw the canonising of subtitled foreign language films in the UK as part of a discourse on quality cinema which domesticated and lowered the brow of the high cultural, modernist cinephilia of the 1920s. *Close-Up* and *Sight and Sound*, the two main publications discussed in chapters 2 and 3, were addressed to different readerships: the one upper-middle class, left-wing and international, and the other middle class, liberal and national, but the way they positioned foreign language European films demonstrated some discursive similarities, including a humanist outlook which formed the basis of their evaluation of foreign films. There were differences, too, and one of these was the ways in which 'language' in cinema was conceived. Discursively, the *Close-Up* 'international' outlook was characterised by an attention to avant-garde film 'languages', in cinematic terms, while the 'national' *Sight and Sound* engaged more enthusiastically with narrative sound cinema, which used speech as one of its fundamental techniques for storytelling and representation.

The process of identifying how language in film is addressed with respect to particular configurations of locality and outlook is carried through into the remainder of the thesis. This chapter introduces the handling of European cinema in relation to the cultural exception. The cultural exception argument was employed during the 1993

GATT debate in reaction to the American-led request that audiovisual services be treated as other goods, subject to laws based on the principle of free trade. The rhetoric used in the argument, as I will discuss in this chapter, positioned European cinema in opposition to Hollywood and invested it with special cultural value and artistic significance. The relevance of cultural exceptionalism as a discourse will become especially prominent in chapter 7, which examines European cultural policy in relation to cinema consumption, but it also has resonances for chapter 6 which addresses the ways in which European films are strategically designed for distribution in international markets. In anticipation of these studies, this chapter will demonstrate how an ideology of cultural exceptionalism has been mobilised to support the business practice and policies involved in producing cinema in Europe and to differentiate European/local cinema culture from American/global cinema culture.

In order to contextualise these apparent oppositions and their relevance for understanding some contemporary debates on language and European cinema I will examine three distinct but interrelated contexts. I begin the chapter by discussing what has become a familiar story of inequities between the Hollywood and the European film industries. This somewhat standard history is set against a perhaps less well-known background to film festivals in Europe. The purpose of this exposition is to offer some explanation as to why festivals are valued by European film industries as a way of encouraging the international distribution of European, foreign language films and addressing the problem of the European domestic market imbalance being weighed in Hollywood's favour.

I will then present as a case study the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) debate over the handling of the audiovisual sector which culminated in 1993 and was enacted at film festivals to some extent. I will consider the GATT discussions with respect to their rhetorical dimensions and in particular the discursive implications of the European side of the debate for the treatment of European cinema, including the idea that language in film should be regarded as a marker of cultural specificity and authenticity. The final part of the chapter considers what significance film awards have for the validation and institutionalisation of European cinema cultures in light of the issues highlighted by the GATT and the role of film festivals for promoting European cinema.

The amount of information becoming available in film studies about the relationship between Hollywood and Europe has reached a considerable volume and it has become exponentially difficult to argue that the limited potential of European films in the world market place has anything to do with Europe at all rather than being, as many accounts suggest, due to the persistence of American cultural hegemony and economic might. Examples abound of Hollywood taking advantage of European political disharmony and economic recession, and studies of European cinemas have since the 1990s been noticeably politicised in relation to Hollywood and the global(ised) cultural configurations which Hollywood cinema practices appear to represent.¹ The American film industry's self-sufficiency has been both a source of admiration and an area of contention for filmmakers in Europe. After the First World War, Hollywood began to consolidate its economic advantage over Europe by building distribution outlets for its movies which could ensure focused marketing campaigns for American films in

European countries (Jarvie 1998: 35). Already in the 1920s, before the coming of sound to cinema, American product was achieving more than an 80 percent market share in Britain and Italy and over half of the market in some other European countries (Nowell-Smith 1998: 3). The evidence of Hollywood's further expansion into Europe with multiple-language version and then dubbed sound films at a time when European producers were starting to regain ground by developing 'national' cinemas in their domestic languages showed American producers in an opportunistic light, as the examples from *Close-Up* in chapter 2 illustrate.

After the Second World War, a precarious situation for European cinema threatened to be cruelly aggravated by Hollywood imports. The expansionist force of American film culture was particularly felt in countries such as Italy where the importance of quota arrangements had been overlooked (see Guback 1969: 24). With the Hollywood studios running their own exhibition chains, requests for non-American films in the US were especially low; the vertically integrated American industry could more than meet demand for films in its domestic market and America liked to import talent, not product. At the same time as European films were struggling to get US distribution, America's Motion Picture Export Association (MPEA, renamed the Motion Picture Association [MPA] in 1994) was founded (1945) to provide the free trade position with an institutional identity in the film industry (notoriously in the 1993 GATT talks under the representation of Jack Valenti, President of the MPEA's partner organisation the Motion Picture Association of America [MPAA]) and to campaign against 'trade barriers' imposed by European countries as protectionist measures to help sustain and rebuild local film production (Guback 1969: 5). Yet, even those countries with quotas in

place were struggling to build sustainable, competitive film industries and there were indications that some import quotas in Europe not only limited American imports but also stifled inter-European film distribution. According to the Franco-American Blum-Byrnes agreement (1946) which allowed US films back into the French market after the war, out of 186 dubbed films imported annually to France, 121 could be American leaving only 65 import 'slots' for the rest of the world (Guback 1969: 22). This situation was only much later altered by European Economic Community (EEC) legislation.²

The first GATT agreement was signed in 1948 by 23 countries in order to reduce international trade restrictions. The GATT claimed to have cultural as well as economic objectives. As Ian Jarvie describes it, the formation of the GATT, which was intended as a stop-gap until the creation of a permanent ruling in the form of an International Trade Organisation (ITO), was justified in the name of peace with the rationalisation that encouraging commerce was encouraging international co-operation (Jarvie 1998: 38). Similar moral platitudes on the importance of cooperation for peace and prosperity were also in place for encouraging the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (1951) which was to transform over time into the European Union.

Before the first GATT agreement, however, the US studios were proven guilty of monopolising the American film industry and were ordered in 1948, following a ten-year-long 'anti-trust' case, to separate exhibition from distribution and production. As a result the major studios started offering finance, facilities and distribution deals to independent producers as the increased competition for exhibition venues meant studios had to curb their own production output. This was a radical change for Hollywood and it established a pattern which led to Hollywood making more than 65 percent of its films

using independent producers by 1958 (Mazdon 2000: 16). Effectively, the studios were transforming from large-scale producers to large-scale distributors and this facilitated a narrowing of the gap between the Major and the Minor movie studios. While television effected a decrease in cinema audiences for both America and Western European countries in the 1950s, Hollywood studios could adapt to television by making and distributing TV films for/to the networks. In Europe, conversely, public service broadcasting meant that television was presented as a competitor rather than a market (Nowell-Smith 1998: 9).

Creating competitive films for theatrical exhibition in Hollywood came to mean ever-increasing budgets for individual projects, a trend that was concomitant with the perceived need to attract audiences back into the cinemas (and away from television) with spectacular, technically impressive and star-heavy productions. As Thomas Guback points out, the costs of such productions could not be compensated for by the US market alone, potentially vast though it was. The new, competitive approach to filmmaking in America increased the importance of marketing and Hollywood's concern about the attitudes of audiences worldwide grew (Guback 1969:10). This is not to say that Hollywood had little interest in export markets before the 1950s. As we saw in Chapter 2, Hollywood's research into possible screen translation practices demonstrated its concern with exporting to Europe. Mark Glancy has argued that Hollywood produced 'British' themed films because of a desire to create positive representations (often of Anglo-American cooperation) that might appeal both to Americans and to Britons as the UK was one of Hollywood's key foreign markets in the 1940s (Glancy 1999: 4-5; for comparison see Vasey 1997: 99 and Nowell-Smith 1998b). In addition, Hollywood has

long been identified as advertising America and its produce through film (see Miller 1998: 373). The consumerist aspects of Hollywood cinema have become subject to popular scrutiny in this our current supposed age of 'product placement' and the 'high concept' film which is structured and marketed around the spectacular.

Hollywood has, therefore, historically been geared for competition to a level that other cinemas, with the notable exception of India, have had difficulty matching even in their home territories. Having said this, the rise in popularity of alternative means of cinema distribution and exhibition represented by DVD (also VCD in Asia) and the internet, while not necessarily affording great benefits for film producers, have encouraged the consumption of films neither made nor distributed by Hollywood. It is also true to say that there have been instances in the past of European sound films experiencing greater popularity than Hollywood in domestic markets. As examples one could cite the French films made in the 1950s which Jean-Pierre Jeancolas (1992) calls 'inexportable' because of their 'poor quality' and nationally specific references (he doesn't acknowledge the possibility of retrospective ironic viewings of these films in an international 'cult' market), or the Italian peplum in the 1960s which did not only perform well in Italy but was also successfully exported to France and the UK (see Lagny 1998; Wagstaff 1988).

At the same time, there have also been occasions when American distributors and exhibitors have seen market potential in European films – their difference from American films becoming a marketable trait rather than a put-off. Until the liberalisation of the Hollywood Production Code in the late 1960s, European films could be exploited for sexual or violent content. Barbara Wilinsky's interesting account of the emergence of art

house cinema in the United States features a provincial theatre advertisement for *Roma, città aperta* (Open City, dir. Roberto Rossellini, 1945) - "SAVAGE ORGY of LUST! Atrocious, Rugged-Horrors Committed by NAZIS in ITALY" (2001: 126) - which suggests that exploitation was a viable commercial technique for European films in America even before the 1960s when European sex and genre films became popular in the UK. However, as Guback says,

one would have to conclude that the foreign-made films which have achieved the widest circulation and the most significant financial returns in [the USA] have been those in which American companies have had direct monetary interests.

(1969: 74)

In 1956 a report prepared by a US senate committee for UNESCO described how they saw the European relationship to Hollywood as a bind of dependence (upon US imports until the recovery of domestic film industries) and resistance (of the punishing effects of Hollywood imports upon European national industries) (Guback 1969: 17). While this assessment likely rang true, the popularity and availability of the imported 'art film' increased in America in the 1950s, encouraged partly because of anxiety amongst exhibitors over an expected reduction in Hollywood output and choice after the anti-trust ruling (Wyatt 1998: 67). However, this increase was somewhat negligible and was at the time, as well as retrospectively, attributed to the practice of marketing European films on the basis of their sexual content and female stars such as Brigit Bardot and Gina Lollobrigida (Segrave 2004: 142). There is also evidence to suggest that an increase in international exports of popular European films may have occurred on the back of critical successes with 'quality' cinema, as was the case with Italian cinema following the

prestige bestowed on the national film industry with regard to neo-realist films (Wagstaff 1998: 78).

With exploitation of European films becoming commonplace in the late 1950s and 1960s one might assume that in the US and the UK, where such films were doubly 'foreign' (eroticism of a different order from Hollywood and not in English), the differentiation between subtitled (art) films and dubbed (popular) films would be lessened. The exhibition of *La Dolce Vita* (dir. Federico Fellini, 1960) in the USA indicates that this perhaps was the case. *La Dolce Vita* did good business in its subtitled version in 1961, indicating that it was attracting a much larger audience than was usual for a 'continental' picture. In this instance, the 'art house' context did not deter audiences, perhaps to the consternation of the Legion of Decency which approved the film for exhibition on the grounds that it would only appear in a subtitled version, another indication of the association of subtitled films with respectable middle class audiences (Segrave 2004: 144).

A resurgence of the trend seen in the 1950s towards ever-increasing budgets and spectacular movies began in the 1970s with the emergence of the blockbuster (with *Jaws* [dir. Steven Spielberg, 1975] providing a benchmark). This was attributable to the reintegration of the industry and the return to oligopoly, this time by multinational conglomerates (Mazdon 2000: 22). Hollywood companies had created divisions for the distribution of foreign films before conglomeration, often for legal reasons to avoid the studio brands being soiled by disputes over distributing products that broke with the Production Code, but in the 1980s the Majors developed 'classics' units to distribute films which were seen to require special handling, such as non-English language films

and old Hollywood pictures (Segrave: 185, 190). The specialist units, while in a sense in existence because of the 'niche' opportunities afforded by traditions of 'independent' and specialised cinema cultures, pushed many independent distributors out of the market for 'foreign' films and although they operated transnationally they were doing so arguably with US interests in mind (see Pang 2006: 69). Successful distributors of foreign language films such as Miramax and Dimension (both subsidiaries of Disney) have been criticised recently for altering 'foreign' films for the US market but retaining the 'original' versions of US films for global exhibition (Pang 2006: 78). In the 1990s, Hollywood Majors consolidated their economic advantage over European distributors and markets by creating alliances with European companies. While some European companies actively pursued deals with Hollywood companies, others found they were being pushed under and sought state and European financial support (see Jäckel 2003: 111-13).

Subsidies for film industries outside the United States were to become increasingly important throughout the 1980s and 1990s as the Hollywood anti-trust ruling was forgotten with the spread of deregulation in America. By the 1990s Hollywood had become, categorically speaking, global and Western Europe through the EC European, and they were to be assessed on these terms. There has been some suggestion that as a result of this shift from national to international production concerns, the provision of subsidy in Europe has changed also. Increasingly, European and national level subsidies are being offered in support of large-scale co-productions aimed at international distribution or, at least, distribution in all the participating countries. Because of Hollywood's monopoly in Europe, it has been suggested, the art house is 'safe' whereas

the popular is in terminal decline and thus seen to merit greater support (Eleftheriotis 2000: 204-5).

'Independent' European film production and distribution are amongst those industries currently experiencing a number of unfortunate effects that could be attributable to Hollywood's global business practices, as Miller *et al* describe them in *Global Hollywood* (2001). Hollywood's distribution oligopolies ensure the relentless circulation of commercial information around films which helps, in Miller *et al*'s terms, to normalise 'marketing bureaucracy' (2001: 170). Hollywood's marketing hegemony ensures that smaller distribution companies not attached to multinational corporations find it very difficult to compete and may end up spending more on marketing than the film cost to produce. Hollywood trademarks are circulated in advertising campaigns across various media and also appear at industry events including awards ceremonies, festivals and markets in an effort to secure popular acclaim both from the film business and from the general public (Miller *et al*, 2001: 151, 161). These big-brand marketing practices are another reason why European produced films, even those in the English language, are differentiated from the mainstream and are uncompetitive unless they are supported by a major US distributor.

It was within the context and following the histories of these sorts of interactions between Hollywood and Europe that the 1993 GATT debate on audiovisual products took place. The GATT discussion was influential in shaping perspectives which positioned European cinema in opposition to American cinema within a globalised cultural context. In the global business framework, Elizabeth Traube states, there occurs 'concentration of ownership and localisation or fragmentation of both production and distribution' (1996:

xii). The perceived problem of American cultural ubiquity is thought to be exacerbated by globalisation with 'Hollywood' used as a short-hand signifier for the American culture industry, by turns an appealing and imperialist imaginary. The complexity of global cultural interactions and influence is such, however, that it would be inaccurate, and not particularly useful, to posit a conflict model for globalisation based on the equation power/homogeneity versus disenfranchisement/difference. As Laikwan Pang writes in her study of copyright and piracy in Asia,

[n]o one can really provide a macro-level theorization of globalization, as it necessarily manifests and signifies differently in different contexts. Globalization also often entails opposing functions, and in the specific domain of moviemaking it strengthens the hegemony of Hollywood while constantly creating new possibilities for others to usurp its power.

(2006: 12)

The current explosion of film festivals in developed and aspiring capitalist countries is a symptom of the increased opportunities for the movement of people, goods and services worldwide and the rise of a mobile 'culture class' seeking out the benefits of globalisation. Film festivals can either strengthen Hollywood's business presence in Europe or resist it, but often they do both. Their existence and spread worldwide is doubly an effect and a facilitator of transnational cultural and economic flows, the spatial awareness of which is reflected in the commonly used reference to 'the festival circuit'. Film festivals occur at the intersection of culture, economics and politics. This can be accounted for by considering the attraction of hosting festivals for cities wishing to advertise their cultural awareness and economic stability and to attract a culture class,

resident and touring (see Elsaesser 2005: 84-6; Stringer 2001). But individual film festivals are not purely local government exercises in public relations, they must have industrial functions if they are to be vital stop-offs on the track.

The growth of film festivals after World War II was partly due to an industry need in Europe and partly due to political circumstance. Festivals represented efforts towards intra and inter-continental co-operation in a symbolic sense and brought film producers together to discuss their progress and limitations at a time when national cinema industries needed to regain the confidence of their local audiences. While film festivals had been established prior to World War II (Venice started in 1932 and Cannes was organised for 1939, although it didn't run until 1945 due to the war), after the war film festivals in Europe proliferated and became invested with political importance for the celebration of peace, unity and the spirit of cooperation. This liberal ideological significance has been maintained by festivals in search of continued economic investment and justification of their right to pass judgement on aesthetic standards for film. Jean Cocteau, three-times jury president for Cannes has been quoted on the Cannes website saying '[t]he Festival is an apolitical no-man's land, a microcosm of what the world would be like if people could contact each other directly and speak the same language' (Cannes Film Festival 2006a). However, political happenstance has often informed the festival *raison d'être*, despite Cocteau's claim.

There are pronounced examples of political presence at film festivals in Europe. Venice was established as a showcase for Mussolini's Italy and its preference for awarding films from fascist Europe led to the inception of an alternative, but also Mediterranean, festival in France at Cannes. The Berlinale is one of the most obvious

reference points when discussing the post-war festival but it was designed initially to propagand for an American consumer agenda, displaying West Berlin as a vibrant, economically secure hub celebrating the 'democratic art' (Fehrenbach 1995: 234-253). Critics appear to have been aware of this with international politics being noted, for example, in a few of *Sight and Sound*'s festival reports as playing a significant role at the film festivals. One reporter brought up the place of the festival in the context of mounting tension surrounding Berlin's division, describing how a Berlin festival (1954) coincided with riots in the East of the city:

There were to be film-shows and cocktail parties - the authorities, in an attempt to rival the more ritzy senior film festivals, even tried, unsuccessfully, to make us refer to the festivals as "Die Berlinale" - and the eastern sector was not to be mentioned: for this week it did not exist.

(Reisz 1954)³

Festivals became important after the war for building confidence in European films and filmmaking and for bringing filmmakers together to discuss their problems and successes. One can see as antecedents to this kind of film festival activity the film congresses that took place in the 1920s, again a post-war initiative. One filmmakers' conference held in Paris (1955) brought into view a consensus which had been reached in western Europe that film festivals were integral and essential to the progress of European film industries. The conference concluded that European film makers should involve themselves with economic co-productions, protect films from suffering alterations made without the 'author's' consent, intervene at times when works of art are refused export from their countries of origin, and encourage the promulgation of international film

festivals in their own nations. It was felt that co-productions should be organised purely from the point of view of economics and expertise, thus respecting 'the integral character of the subject' portrayed, and that film festivals, while being international, should 'present films which authentically reflect national characteristics' (Dickinson 1956: 40). The subtle sublimation of the relevance of the international under the importance of the national in these statements is telling as it is a process repeatedly seen in efforts to promote European cinemas. It suggests the taking of principled actions to ensure the preservation of cultural authenticity and, by extension, to protect the 'purity' of artistic endeavour which, although internationally appreciated, is seen to emerge creatively from national traditions and experiences.⁴

The current importance of film festivals for the European film industry cannot be determined without examining the ways in which festivals define and are defined by debates surrounding films such as those which emerged at earlier festivals and film industry symposia. The cultural debates that occur during festivals are today cited by trade papers as foci for wider discussions on national and international relations between film commerce and creativity. Traditionally, cultural ideals have been negotiated at film festivals but defining 'culture' within such a setting is not an uncomplicated issue. 'What is festival culture?' and 'what constitutes "culture" in the festival environment?' must be presented as separate questions for film festival culture and the circulation of cultural ideas at film festivals are different but interactive elements.

The festival culture is the sum total of activities taking place during the festival and performed by the festival as an organisation in between festivals. These include generating publicity for and interest in the festival as an institution, arranging the festival

programme, exhibiting films, press conferences, organised debates, media coverage of the festival, fund-raising, film trade and award-giving. In order both to serve the industry and attract it, film festival organizers create 'sidebar' events which help to differentiate the festival from others. Examples of contemporary sidebars include the Rotterdam Cine-Mart, a co-production and film development market, and the Berlinale Talent Campus, an initiative inviting young people wanting to work in the film industry to take part in workshops with professional filmmakers. These particular facilities were created in response to the film business's demand for co-production networking opportunities and appear to support efforts at innovation, co-operation and education in the European film industry. The main activities which major festivals generate, however, are primarily focused on facilitating film buying.

Two key festival functions are to exhibit premieres of films and to provide opportunities for selling these films in a competitive environment. Competitions and award ceremonies at festivals present a distorted view of the state of film production worldwide, often viewing films as national achievements and sometimes showing an amount of product from one geographical area or language group that is disproportionate to what is actually available to audiences outside the festival. Of course, this is one of the festival's attractions and is the reason why festivals are sometimes referred to as '*alternative* distribution networks', the 'alternative' in the phrase presenting as a bit of a misnomer. One such reference comes from a report by the European Audiovisual Observatory which tries to quantify the value of film festivals for European cinema. The report tentatively suggests that, accumulated, the programmes of film festivals amount to the exhibition of over three times as many new films than are shown in Europe each year

(Aas 1997: 5). Additionally, the report rather ambitiously claims that the attendance at film festivals in Europe may be equal to as much as ten percent of the entire cinema audience in Europe annually. The European Union is so convinced of the efficacy of the festival's role for circulating European films around the world that it offers funding to festivals in Europe that are prepared to dedicate 70% of their programme to European films from at least ten of the states involved in the Union's audiovisual support programme, MEDIA.⁵

The UK-based, European trade paper *Screen International* is a useful source for understanding the correspondences between festival culture and notions of culture at festivals. *Screen International* publishes daily issues for Berlin and Cannes during the festivals and also covers Mifed, the Milan film market which has recently had half of its business shifted to Venice to coincide with the festival there (see Serafini 2004). It publishes festival reports, interviews with festival directors and conjecture on the politics of festival funding, programming and awards. The speculative element of these articles reflects the way journalists for trade publications move very quickly on to current 'hot topics.' The reporters legitimise the journal's right to speak on behalf of the industry by demonstrating the immediacy of the news they report and the authoritativeness of their 'insider' information, often in the form of statements from industry professionals.

As with the film festival, *Screen International* seems full of tensions, promotional activities and the citing of ideals appear at times in the journal to be seemingly at odds with the experienced reality. In its pages we see reports on struggling European distribution and independent exhibition sectors as a result of Hollywood's dominance of European screens alongside glossy advertisements by American distributors boasting

their current box office successes. Pared down, the journal is a vehicle for film promotion regardless of cultural politics. But it could be argued that it is these interrelations between the local and the global, national and international, European and American that are at the forefront of crises within European film culture. It is interesting to see how *Screen International* builds its calendar around the film and television festivals, audiovisual markets and awards 'seasons'. Film festivals provide points of interest from which journalists and film professionals can take stock of a range of issues affecting the industry at any one time, from aesthetic trends to market considerations. The important point to take from looking at trade reports on festival activities is that, while film festivals and their culture are changeable, the pressure to remain relevant means that the festival is largely answerable to the expectations of the film industry.

Writing for *Screen International*, Patrick Frater (2003b) is critical of the increasing presence of public relations companies at festivals (see also Duncan 1997) and the festivals' encouragement of 'the worst kind of celebrity journalism' by inviting Hollywood stars to events. He argues that film festival culture needs to be reformed if festivals are to maintain any relevance for the film industry in the future. Marco Müller, the director of the Venice Film Festival (2004 -) and previously director of Rotterdam (1989 - 1991) and Locarno (1991 - 2000), suggests that it is not the festivals that are the problem but the pressure placed on filmmakers to meet global standards of production and promotion, a point which resonates with the next chapter. He believes the role of the festival 'as a response to a renewed and ever more visible market censorship' and a showcase for products of distinction is being compromised as a result of these expectations (Müller 2004). Müller and Frater indicate that the festival's role is up for

debate. They are in agreement with regard to two points: film festivals which do not try to resist the pressures of global capitalism and popular culture are somehow inauthentic, and the functions of a festival should be assessed and improved so that they meet the particular needs of its participants.

To get an idea of the ways in which film festivals have expanded and adapted to demands for relevancy one need only look at the websites for the major European festivals which provide potted histories of their development. Taking Cannes, Berlin and Venice as examples, not only has the way they group films into sections diversified over time but they have modified their facilities and activities to meet the requirements of delegates, sponsors, political interests and the media. Periodically doubts arise as to whose interests festivals are serving and what factors influence the festival selection and jurors. There has, for example, always been contention surrounding the dependency of the Venice Festival on government support and endorsement, an issue stretching from Mussolini to Berlusconi, and as Frater's (2003b) report shows critics are often skeptical about high-profile bids by festivals for Hollywood film premieres and movie stars.⁶ In Europe, the major film festivals are understood to represent the current state of European film art and trade. In their reports, journalists may focus on the ways in which a film festival addresses (or neglects) the concerns of its national/regional surroundings or they may prioritise international issues. However, festival culture is about engagement with both the local and the international and is frequently politically inflected. The politicisation of festival space is reinforced by journalism that contextualises festivals according to contemporary industry debates and, as we shall see, language issues do not escape this interaction.

Speculation in trade journals on the importance of festivals for local-international industry relations emphasises the integration of politicised cultural debate in the festival habitat. For instance, in 1994 a number of reports in *Screen International* discussed the possibilities festivals presented for promoting local film industries and airing their grievances.⁷ The interrelations between the local and the global are important considerations for filmmakers and are at the forefront of crises pushing the visibility of a 'European' film culture. Language is not an especially prominent area for debate in *Screen International* which, although frequently mentioning language issues in its columns in passing, only intermittently publishes features on language translation in film and television. But the fact that some attention is paid to keeping up to date with developments in the area of screen translation demonstrates its relevance to the film industry and its importance for sustaining successful international film trade.

Some examples of feature-length articles on translation in *Screen International* are 'Tongue Tied' (Horn 1991), which discusses with a special focus on Germany the rising number of European films being produced in English; 'War of the Words' (Korman & Seguin 1998) on advances in subtitling technology; 'A Way with Words' (Screen International 1999) which contains various case-studies on dubbing and subtitling; and a series of articles on remakes (the remake I also regard as a form of screen translation) which have recently considered the transfer of Hollywood interest from European films to Asian films (Frater 2003a; Frater & Kay 2003; Shackleton *et al.* 2003). These articles discuss the various approaches that have been taken by European film producers to help maximize distribution of their products. They demonstrate how the handling of the linguistic aspect of films (improving screen translations, selling remake

rights and producing English-language films) is an important consideration for both distributors and producers, something I will discuss in more detail in the next chapter.

I now want to draw attention to how visions of the place of language in cinema emerged as part of the GATT negotiations in 1993. Fiercely debated at the time, the GATT exposed an apparent conflict of interests between the USA and the EC in the area of culture.⁸ The cultural significance of language in cinema, I will argue, became a bargaining factor in this episode. *Screen International* provides good documentation of the debate, the way it was framed by European film festivals, and what was at stake for cinema in Europe. The EC position, largely interpreted as a French intervention, was to request the removal of audiovisual services from the proposed international trade agreement on the grounds that audiovisual goods were cultural, not commercial, products. European filmmakers seemed largely to agree that the American attempt to push audiovisual services through the GATT was a typically insensitive act of cultural imperialism. The battle against the GATT was seen as a 'protectionist' fight for subsidies, for the option to impose quotas and tariffs, and for the right of EC countries to create their own audiovisual laws such as 'moral rights' (copyright) for artists.

One of the most important elements of the GATT furore was the resistance by France especially not only of American cultural hegemony in the field of cinema and television but also of the relative marginality of French and European cultural product worldwide and the limited distribution of such 'foreign' material. In the end the EC request was reluctantly agreed upon by the US (who were mainly worried about the implications the cultural exception created for satellite television) and was seen as a

victory for European, or at least French, cultural traditions, but also of a certain kind of rhetoric on cinema. And so, a thorough understanding of what was at stake with the GATT exemption also involves looking at the connections between cinema production and cultural expression, the links between cultural influence and cinema distribution, and the on-going struggle in European film industries with the cultural politics of American dominance in the realm of cinema distribution and exhibition.

The vocabulary employed in the European side of the debate frequently appealed to the kind of rhetoric on the universality of art and the specificity of cultural heritage which has also been employed by cinephile magazines like *Sight and Sound* and *Cahiers du cinéma* to discuss the distinctiveness of art cinema and was later to be mobilised by the European Commission in their cultural policy documents, as will become clear in chapter 7. For example the French distributor Jacques Le Glou wrote melodramatically in an open letter in *Variety* addressed to Jack Valenti, President of the Motion Pictures Association of America (MPAA)

[t]he laws of capitalism are simple: produce for profit. We know that an English language film sells better than a non-English language picture.... What more could you want?... All I ask you is that one day you wake up thinking like a Frenchman, heir to 100 years of cinema history. You will remember that... cinema is an art form, that it doesn't have a passport, that a film is not simply an economic product but that it is a cultural product, rooted in every country's creative expression.

(Le Glou 1993)

These sorts of concerns, which I shall argue primarily sought sympathy for the marginal position of European filmmakers in the face of an indiscriminately destructive English-language cultural monster, were raised amongst filmmakers and politicians during the final stages of the GATT talks in 1993 and were resonant at film festivals. I will explore in what follows why film festivals were thought to be appropriate forums to debate the GATT and to garner support for the French position.

The opposition between America and Europe in the context of the GATT was at its most basic level an argument between free-trade and cultural protectionism. The EC rejected the American desire to eliminate all barriers to trade, including the use of tariffs, quotas and subsidies on the grounds that audiovisual services were artistic goods. America argued that audiovisual goods were not culturally exceptional but commodities subject to market forces and consumer preferences. Divina Frau-Meigs provides a convenient summary of the free-trade position at this time:

cultural exception is an elitist and backward looking approach; protectionism is a contravention of freedom of expression and consumption; State implication in culture does not foster talent and harms art; the “cultural exception” favours the development of an artists-in-the-unemployment-line mentality; it constitutes a block on competition and a perversion of the market; refusal to reduce costs menaces living standard improvement for the entire planet; protectionism’s inefficiency leads to a wastage of government funds; technological determinism will undo national policies with the effects of digitalisation (inevitably leading to the dissemination of American products).

(Frau-Meigs 2002: 7)

For Frau-Meigs, the cultural exception argument was used in retaliation against the free-traders in a way which conflated the concepts of globalisation and Americanisation (2002: 4).

Geoffrey Nowell-Smith describes the framework of the GATT debate in terms of the 'opposition between two continents, as if everything new and threatening emanated from America and everything old and traditional was a uniquely European heritage' (1998a: 2). These were the central dialectical propositions used in the European argument in the GATT, as I shall demonstrate, but despite the rhetoric (or perhaps because of it), the negotiations in 1993 were also an important test of the viability of the EC's move towards cultural regulation within the context of promoting liberal democratic market principles. During the Uruguay round of GATT negotiations (1986-1993), the EC was considered a state and thus the European Commission had the responsibility of representing all nations under a unified front.⁹ As I shall discuss in chapter 7, the European Union began in the 1990s to integrate 'culture' into its mandate to serve as both justification for and facilitator of its economic objectives. However, Miller *et al* claim that 'the consolidation of 'wealthy' Europe into one sales site has been a huge boon to Hollywood', thus ironically increasing the need for protectionist measures against US dominance of the audiovisual arena in Europe (2001: 37).

It is important to acknowledge that, with regard to the EC, America was primarily concerned not with films but with television and the quotas set by the EC directive Television Without Frontiers (1989). Commercial television had expanded in Europe in the 1980s and the opportunity satellite broadcasting presented for realising a European audiovisual community was attractive for the EC. However, the growth of hours of

broadcast promised by the expansion of commercial television could not be filled with European product alone and American companies were more than happy to fill the EC countries' need for non-European programmes (Collins 2002:12). Television Without Frontiers aimed to limit the amount of non-EC (i.e. American) programming and thus was seen to present a considerable trade barrier. As was laid down in the Hahn Report (1982), which warned that deregulation of broadcast media would turn information into 'merchandise' rather than a conduit of 'European identity', satellite television was seen by the EC as a useful way of fostering pan-European cultural identification amongst citizens (Collins 2002: 13).

Richard Collins (2002: 14) suggests that in the 1980s political interests in the European Community were divided between 'liberals' (a European equivalent to the American free-trade position) and 'dirigistes' (in support of public service broadcasting and protectionist measures for culture). The 'dirigiste' position was supported in the Hahn Report. However, as I shall discuss later in the thesis, European Union cultural policies since the 1990s present a rhetorical balancing act between economic liberalism and protectionism, commercialism and identity politics. While they insist that 'diversity' is the central tenet of 'European identity', the policies at the same time have to encourage commercial growth, expansion and 'harmonisation' of the economic community. The Television Without Frontiers initiative can be seen as such a policy. It pays lip service to cultural exception debates, claiming regulation will be maintained and 'diversity' ensured through such measures as curbing the predicted dominance of English-language (American) programming within such a system, while effectively calling for the dissolution of national public service broadcasting.

It was important for the free-trade proponents to push forward the centrality of television to American concerns as the European cultural exception argument largely relied on the connections between cinema and culture rather than other (more populist) media. Nowell-Smith claims cinema became the focus of GATT in 1993 because the Hollywood movie is 'the symbolic front for the acceptance of a slew of other products' attached to the American motion picture industry (1998: 1). But I feel that it was rather more to the European advantage to draw attention to cinema which could be used as a rallying point for mobilising themes of cultural heritage, artistry and particularity. This was somewhat frustrating for Jack Valenti, President of the Motion Picture Association of America, who decried '[t]his negotiation has nothing to do with culture unless European soap operas and game shows are the equivalent of Molière. This is all about the hard business of money' (in Brown *et al* 1993/4). The reference to Molière is deliberate as while the GATT has been discussed in terms of Europeans versus Americans, this is often accompanied by a postscript that, in the audiovisual debate, 'European' really meant French and the cultural exception was effectively '*l'exception française*' (Ezra & Harris 2000: 1).

The appearance of audiovisual products on the GATT agenda coincided with a socialist government term for France which was particularly concerned with addressing cultural issues in France. The French government's opposition to what its cultural minister Jack Lang called 'financial and cultural imperialism' was squarely aimed at America. This animosity had roots in a long ideological struggle between the two nations centred on each country's historical claims to democratic universalism and was

compounded in the 1980s by the fact that the French socialist government put subsidies for cinema high on the cultural agenda (Mazdon 2000: 6-8).

France's opposition to America at this time was also reflected in anxieties over the popularity of the English language as a second language and the integration of 'Americanisms' into the national languages of France and elsewhere in non-English speaking countries in Europe. Concerns surrounded notions of 'Americanization' and cultural imperialism. A decade before, Henry Kahane (1982) argued that a high global awareness of American culture in tandem with the increasing presence of American English outside the US had contributed to a growth in prestige around the English language. Indications were that this trend in favour of the English language was not going to disappear.

In France, Hollywood films are mostly shown dubbed into French but increasingly they have appeared in subtitled versions for *Art et Essai* exhibition and are attended by a young, educated, middle class who, Martine Danan claims, may regard English as a prestige language. Danan explains,

the progressive acceptance of subtitled English-language films by the segment of the French public most desirous of social mobility may be linked to the hope of being more directly immersed in the English language and in the "progressive", powerful global culture this language seems to represent.

(1999: 768)

The French defense of the right to a cultural exception for cinema had much to do with the marginalisation of indigenous films in the French language relative to Hollywood cinema and the difficulty for export posed by the international pervasiveness of

Hollywood cinema in Europe and the US. During the GATT disagreements in 1993, the desire to create a competitive French language alternative to Hollywood in France was a strong motivating factor in driving forward the cultural exception. While 1993 was the year of *Jurassic Park* (dir. Steven Spielberg, 1993) it also saw the release of French comedy 'blockbuster' *Les Visiteurs* (The Visitors, dir. Jean-Marie Poire, 1993) and of the classic literary adaptation *Germinal* (dir. Claude Berri, 1993), at that time the most expensive French film ever made.

The transition to a conservative government in France in the midst of the GATT talks did not mean that the cultural defense position lost momentum. To the contrary, the new government minister for culture, Jacques Toubon, consolidated the discourse by concretising associations between French culture and French language. Toubon insisted French was the primary tool for immigrant assimilation, 'the sign of their dignity, their passport to integration, the medium of a universal culture, their share in the common heritage' (in Judge 2000: 75). The year after the GATT 'victory' for European culture (a temporary amnesty until the next round of negotiations), Toubon passed a law to ensure that the interests of French consumers would be protected by ordering that commercials and public announcements for the French public should appear in French or with a French translation. The Toubon law (1994) was seen to be implicitly concerned with the perceived threat of English language vocabulary, imported through popular culture media and technological commodities – the growth of so-called "franglais". The French conservative position on language reflected not only anxieties about the assimilation of American culture in France but was also arguably concerned with the status of French in other 'Francophone' countries and the threat posed to standardised French in France by

immigration. Dennis Ager has suggested that in the 1990s French language and culture were problematically being elided in the concept of 'Francophonie' where the use of French as an official language outside France represented a 'belief in a spirit... inspired by French history, language and culture' and was modeled on the 'aspiration' to replicate Parisian French (1996: 1, 4). This hard-line position on standardised French as a conduit for 'French' identity and values meant that France refused to sign the European Charter for regional or Minority Languages until the late 1990s.

In the 1990s, David Crystal published a book on the issue of 'global English' which discussed the reasons for the emergence of the status of English as a *lingua franca* and the anxieties this might generate. His suggestion that language dominance requires 'economic, technological, and cultural power' and his insistence that the spread of a *lingua franca* is 'entirely governed by political factors' (which thus suggests that cultural struggle over the influence of a global language is also a political struggle) resonates with arguments made by European politicians and filmmakers in opposition to the free trade position (2003 [1997]: 7, 11). Amongst the possible fears Crystal identifies relating to the emergence of a global language are the idea that those who speak the global language as a mother tongue will constitute an advantaged 'elite monolingual linguistic class' and that the dominance of the global language will discourage people from learning other foreign languages (2003: 14, 17). These sorts of fears were, I think, manifest in the French linguistic protectionism seen in the mid-1990s. A significant aspect of reservations about the emergence of a global language is the connotation of the *lingua franca* with cultural (but not economic) impoverishment. The false perception of an impulse towards linguistic homogeneity for the purpose of global communication can be experienced as

threatening as it not only questions the value of linguistic differentiation but also that of all forms of cultural distinction and specificity. One can see how easily these concerns might be transposed into the argument for a European cultural exception in cinema where global Hollywood with its 'transparency' of narration (see Olson 1999) is seen to draw audiences away from contact with other film cultures and film 'languages'.

Figures 1 and 2 appeared in *Screen International* close to the conclusion of the GATT talks in 1993. The context for figure 1 was an editorial suggesting that dubbing European films for American audiences could help the European film industries increase their market share in US territory. Furthermore, the article points out that the dubbing traditions in European countries have undermined their indigenous film industries saying, '[i]f US films had been released only in subtitled versions in foreign markets, they might never have achieved the grip on the audiences that have left domestic films struggling' (Screen International: 1993b). At the same time, the cartoon is somewhat confusing in that it appears to depict an American producer apparently in support of subtitles and the cultural protection argument. But I think what it may suggest is that, in the US market, most American distributors and exhibitors are pleased to show subtitled European films positioned under some kind of moral justification (i.e. dubbing is an affront on difference, subtitling protects authenticity), and that this is a double standard (as the subtitle shows) intended to marginalise foreign films in the US market. Figure 2, which appeared the week before (Screen International: 1993a), confirms this assumption that subtitled films are unprofitable and critiques the rhetoric of cultural protectionism used antagonistically by both sides during the GATT talks.



Figure 1.

Screen International, December 17 1993, p8



Figure 2.

Screen International, December 10 1993, p9

The cultural exception argument involved describing European film producers and their films as diverse in terms of language, culture and creative approach but united by their common artistic goals and their importance for feeding a European cultural heritage. The concept of a shared European heritage is suggestive on a number of levels. 'Heritage' connotes historical and cultural continuity and thus is a concept with a unifying, or homogenising, purpose which is normally applied to national contexts. The reference to a European heritage in the context of the GATT indicates the importance for the cultural protection/exception argument of creating a European imaginary which (paradoxically, considering the insistence on cultural differences) essentialises the notion and experience of 'art' across communities and nations. Also in this case, it essentialised Europe's difference from America by opposing a cultured, historically rooted and conscientious continent to a consumerist, modern and amoral one, as seen in the French President Mitterand's separation of 'old continent' values from 'New World' mercantilism (see Strode 2000: 66). Such an opposition was intended to demonstrate that

European filmmakers were part of a cultural tradition which the US had not experienced and, the implication was, *could not*.

The discourse on European heritage was not only a celebration of past cinematic virtuosity, the archival legacy of European cinema, but it was moreover an attempt to differentiate Europe from America and to justify, almost on anthropological grounds, the protection of the archive to come. As Frau-Meigs confirms, 'over and above conservation of acquired heritage, [the cultural exception argument] is a method of valorising contemporary culture. The fundamental concern is the defence and promotion of contemporary art...' (2002: 8). The European Union continues to privilege cinema over television as a tool for publicly mobilising themes of cultural heritage, diversity and European unity which could be useful components in forming the argument for cultural exception which is seen to benefit European economic growth in the audiovisual sector. The European Commission's presence at the Cannes film festival and, over the past few years, the production of so-called 'Cannes Declaration[s]' is testimony to this.

The cultural exception, though, cannot rely on the idea of heritage alone to garner support. During the GATT negotiations, more obviously contemporary discourses on cultural responsibility and artistic rights became prominent, especially within film festival arenas. The festival was an obvious place to hold such debates as it gathered together film professionals, acted as a distribution network for European films and was primed for addressing the concerns of both creativity and economy. The US was particularly opposed to the EC directive on copyright which was to define the director of a film as the main author. This was extremely threatening for American business practices which preferred the production company to hold copyright and which regularly

profited from distributing films to ancillary media such as video without the director's consent. While the proposed EC copyright directive was criticised at Cannes in 1992 by producers who feared that such legislation would discourage American investment in European cinema, at Venice the following year the Festival director and filmmaker Gillo Pontecorvo arranged for a debate on 'moral rights' which was to support an auteurist stance on copyright matters. *Screen International* reported, 'moral rights legislation... drives at the heart of cinema's biggest paradox: is film just an industrial product or is it an art?' (Dempsey 1993: 10).

Pontecorvo was openly in favour of defining European films as artistic expression rather than objects for commercial exploitation. His moral rights forum, which took place over two days during the Venice film festival, brought GATT temporarily out of the hands of politicians and into the laps of the film industry. Although the emphasis was now on filmmakers' opinions, the Venice debate had a prominent political presence in the form of Jack Lang and Jacques Toubon – at that time the former and current French ministers of culture. *Variety* claimed that the anti-American tone of proceedings had offended American filmmakers who were attending the event in support of their European counterparts (Klady 1993). The outcome of the Venice Film Festival's 'moral rights' debate was to garner support for protection measures in favour of European filmmakers. The symposium voted for the creation of an International Authors' Secretariat (to be based at the Venice Biennale) and a 'high court' for defending freedom of expression in audiovisual production. Together these bodies were to lobby the EC to target major American distributors with anti-monopoly legislation (Finney 1993:1).

Other film festivals also made special arrangements to ensure that concerns on the GATT would be heard. The Munich International Festival of Film Schools issued a petition stating, 'the definition of film as a mere industrial product is unacceptable' (Blaney 1993b). The European Film Academy (the European equivalent to the American Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences) also held a symposium addressing GATT issues. It was entitled 'Death, Lethargy or Resurrection' and featured a critical speech by the British producer David Puttnam who said that European filmmakers did not respect their audiences and that film had to be a popular medium because of the costs involved (Puttnam 1993). The symposium resolved that forms of incentive funding (such as tax breaks to encourage production) were the most appropriate form of subsidy in Europe and that Europe needed to embrace 'dominant new technologies' if it was to create 'future employment and culture' successfully (Moore 1993).

And yet the protection of a discourse on cultural specificity for European cinemas is vital for the future maintenance of film subsidies, including tax credits, in European countries within World Trade Organisation law. Anna Herold suggests that under the new GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services) proposals, those policies aimed at supporting 'production of works *a la Hollywood*, without specifically related national cultural content, would be deprived of the cultural objective to protect cultural identity' and thus would be treated unfavourably (as potentially distortive to the market) by international trade rulings (2003: 7). This has acute relevance for the way European films might be produced and supported in the future. Were such rulings to come into place, cultural protectionist arguments from European countries would increase rather than disappear as European producers would be obliged to argue a cultural case for claiming

subsidies. It could prohibit subsidies being spent on Hollywood-led productions, which may use European locations and crew but are to all intents and purposes 'American', and on other types of European production filmed in the English language (with the exceptions of the UK and Ireland), examples of which I discuss in the next chapter. An advocate of cultural protectionism might argue that this would be no bad thing but the trade rulings could also discourage European investment (often subsidy-enhanced) in 'blockbuster' style co-productions made in Europe which, although dependent on Hollywood co-financing arrangements, combine a high production values look with European languages and locations. Such productions might have their cultural specificity and their difference to American (non-subsidised) films called into question as the national specificity of a production could be doubted on the grounds of its multinational financing arrangements. Such a scheme would certainly inhibit production volume given current practice in Europe as co-financing and co-production arrangements can be difficult to justify on cultural grounds or at least those articulated in the cultural exception as it stood in 1993.

In 2004 there was a taste of what might come with the controversy in France surrounding *Un Long Dimanche de Fiancailles* (A Very Long Engagement, Dir. Jean Pierre Jeunet, 2004). The case of *Un Long Dimanche de Fiancailles* was reported in press headlines as a matter of nationality: was the film French or American? The film was in French, set in France with a predominantly French cast and contained deliberate, if stereotyped, French cultural references. The real problem here lay in the credentials of the film's production company, 2003 Productions, which although meeting the CNC's approval as a 'French' company was 32% owned by Warner Bros outright with the rest

of the company belonging to employees of Warner Bros France (see Frater 2004; Goodridge 2004; Tartaglione 2004). The concerns over this film were complex but are perhaps best thought of as coming down to two basic problems: that American companies might profit from French subsidies (and, the implication is, another 'more French' production would lose out) and that by taking American money and French subsidies, French producers are making themselves vulnerable to criticism by presenting themselves as wanting to have their cake and eat it too.

The difficulty involved in determining the nationality of a co-production and the increasing concern over how national subsidy might be justified without citing some cultural argument in favor of national specificity also has consequences for film festivals and the way they categorise films. Although the major festivals in Europe claim to have a distinctly international orientation, they also have a history of showcasing and representing 'national' cinemas. As David Bordwell (1985: 231) says, the national has been a particularly convenient way of marketing films by 'unknown' directors and especially European films. Major festivals with lengthy histories are proud to have been platforms for the eminently publicised 'nouvelle vague' or 'New German' cinema and the idea of national cinemas continues to have an influence on festival operations. Marco Müller wrote in his introduction to the 61st Venice Film Festival (2004) that the 'geographical ecumenism of the "globe-like" festival' was anachronistic and undesirable. Any 'authenticity', he claimed, should be found in 'the contamination of styles, techniques, languages'; hybridity and contradiction is preferable to the grand leveller of global capitalism. As Müller points out, film festivals have been guilty of implicitly

reinforcing 'the myth of a "universal" language of cinema' which has not, in the long run, supported the 'world' cinemas.

The Venice Film Festival 'aims to encourage the awareness and the promotion of all aspects of world cinema as art, entertainment and industry in a spirit of freedom and tolerance' (Venice Film Festival 2006: Article 2). Equally ambitious are the Rules and Regulations for Cannes which state that

[t]he spirit of the Festival de Cannes is one of friendship and universal cooperation. Its aim is to reveal and focus attention on works of quality in order to contribute to the evolution of motion picture arts and to encourage development of the film industry throughout the world.

(Cannes Film Festival 2006b: Article 1)

Under these terms, co-production is seemingly not a problem for film festival ideology. And yet, Cannes requires that films considered for selection cannot have been released outside 'their country of origin' (2006b: Article 3), which implies that each film must assign a nationality. The national is further inflected by the Cannes regulation that all films be presented (with French and/or English subtitles) 'in their original language... the one in which a film is or will be exhibited in its country of origin' (2006b: Article 6). This rule implies that a film will be shot in the language of its main producer, which is increasingly problematic. The Venice regulations have similar requests and use the term 'the original version' to refer to the film in its original language, subtitled (in English and Italian) (2006: Article 9.3).

National cinema groupings may be becoming less feasible as large co-productions become the norm for festival selection. The consequence is that cinemas of continents

('European cinema', 'Asian cinema', and so on) are becoming convenient shorthand for describing the films on offer. However, these categories are still applied to groupings of films that are usually acutely unrepresentative of the actual situation in film production. 'European cinema' may include or discount films set in or majority produced by countries in eastern Europe, the Jordan region and Mediterranean Africa according to convenience or ideology. Similarly, the category 'world cinema' may be celebrated by a festival that has selected films from Western Europe, Canada, Australia, Japan and Hong Kong while conveniently forgetting the problems encountered by film producers in the rest of the world.

The film festival is interesting for the way it situates film translation alongside notions of what constitutes 'art' in cinema. It is the 'original version' of a film that is privileged at film festivals and considered eligible for reward. The idea of the original version upholds a film's supposed artistic integrity. It is an ideal concept of the film as text, internally coherent and expressive of an author's vision. It is implicitly opposed to the 'print' (ironically, as invariably at festivals prints are lost or the wrong print is provided, perhaps without subtitles or cut inappropriately), which is variable in quality and standard, may be edited according to commercial considerations (the producer's or distributor's cut) and may have its soundtrack altered by revoicing. By implication, the dubbed version is impure, populist and non-artful. This position is seldom fully articulated in these terms, however.

The global internationalism of the film festival is seen as a uniquely competitive arena where filmmakers are evaluated regardless of language biases. However this occurs in an environment that is also supremely exploitative of the commercial potential of

'foreign' (language) films. The apparent contradiction between 'art' and 'commerce' at major film festivals is complicated by their support of the 'original version'. Unreserved support for the original language version of films, while seemingly a democratic and fair practice, is perhaps slightly problematic in the way it ignores the work done by what is perhaps Europe's largest post-production sector – the dubbing industry. The practice of screening original language versions at film festivals with English language subtitles, despite their international delegation, testifies to English's convenient status as the preferred global language for film business while also supporting ideas of authorship, authenticity and artistic integrity. This reveals a complexity of discourse around original versions in the festival context where claims to artistic excellence and singularity are used to support European cinemas while simultaneously suppressing the value of the dubbing industry.

The mushrooming of the film festival phenomenon was concurrent with the explosive popular ascent of dubbed Hollywood films in Europe but, in contrast to the spread of mass entertainment via dubbed versions of American films, film festivals sought to provide a linguistically diverse, internationalist outlook and re-established the importance of film art for producers struggling to create viable 'popular' cinemas. Subtitling was cheap and relatively quick, thus advantageous to festival organisation, but also implied respect for the original version of a film, its language and its nationality. In Germany, the first section of the film industry to be licensed after the war was the dubbing sector. In the British and French controlled areas of Western Germany as well as in the American sector, dubbing became a tool for encouraging Germans to assimilate new, democratic cultures without fearing their imperialist aspects. Amongst most

Germans, dubbing was popular as it seemed to resist a total intrusion into their culture by foreign products (Brantigan 2001: 13-15). But while dubbing was being used for 'de-Nazification' (although certainly this wasn't the sole justification for such a costly technology), revoicing had previously been associated with fascism since Mussolini and Franco both insisted on dubbed versions of imports and Spain, Italy and Germany all imposed a national 'standard' on language, suppressing dialects (Danan 1991: 611-2).

Viewing dubbing as an 'expression of nationalism', Martine Danan provides an ideological explanation for the popularity of dubbing in larger European countries by arguing that in each of the 'dubbing countries' (Spain, Italy, Germany and France), cinema has been regarded as intrinsic to the national culture. She describes the practice as 'an assertion of the supremacy of the national language and its unchallenged political, economic and cultural power within the nation's boundaries' (1991: 612). She cites the popularity of dubbing as a screen translation practice with fascist governments (in Germany, Italy and Spain), where linguistic unity and consistency was a corollary to political and cultural stability (1991: 611). This tradition was to normalise dubbing as a translation practice and conditioned audiences to accept the 'violence' of dubbing. But while Danan makes the association between dubbing and fascism, dubbing had been necessary for foreign language films imported to the large European countries before this political juncture and perhaps could have been read as an affront to the perceived cultural imperialism of Hollywood cinema. The French and German governments, for instance, insisted on foreign language films being dubbed in situ, after import, in order to bring work and capital to the local post production industries (Glancy 1999: 12, 14). Ironically, of course, dubbing has also strengthened the position of Hollywood imports (even though

apparently undermining its production values) and we should recall how Hollywood encouraged the dubbing of its films into other languages where economically feasible in the early sound years.

The contrast between dubbing and subtitling according to certain discourses on European cinema is often made tantamount to the conceptual division of 'commerce' and 'art'. The support of the original version at film festivals seems to maintain this opposition, choosing the artistically worthy cinema over the commercial, a distinction maintained by award-giving. One might assume that the awards given at festivals and at other publicised events must be good for the nominated and winning films' distribution potential. Awards are a form of endorsement, by experts, of the work of a particular director, production company or actor. Awards are a useful tool for building a film's profile, an idea I shall discuss in the next chapter, but most trade reporting on awards insists that only the Oscar has a measurable impact on a film's economic success internationally (see Tutt 1996; Seguin 2000). The American Academy awards, of course, are oriented towards Hollywood films. The Oscars reinforce the status of non-English language films as foreign and specialised, sidelining these away from the 'best picture' competition into the category 'foreign language film'.

There has been some controversy over the regulations for the foreign language film category, usually concerning the Academy rules that only one film be submitted for this category per country and that the film must be mainly in the language of the country submitting the film unless the story requires that another (non-English) language should feature predominantly.¹⁰ In other words, 'foreignness' or at least the authenticity of that foreignness (what differentiates a French from a Russian film) is attributed to language.

On the other hand, John Mowitt has argued that as a film nominated for an Oscar must conform to expectations of what a Hollywood film should look like if it is to win the award. The 'foreignness' of the foreign language film, for Mowitt, is made most apparent not only (or not even) by its dialogue-track but by its subtitles; the visual impact of subtitles are what differentiates the 'foreign language film' from the standard 'best picture' nominee (2004: 397-400).

The European Film Awards (EFAs), created in 1988 and known as 'Felixes' until 1998, intend to offer a preferable alternative to the Oscars for European filmmakers. The inaugural EFAs led to the creation of a European Film Academy (EFA) in 1989 based in Berlin with German filmmaker Wim Wenders holding the position of Academy President. Films considered eligible for an EFA award must be 'European' in the sense laid down by the Council of Europe's European Convention on Cinematographic Co-production (1994: Appendix II) which is a points scheme that can put films on a scale of Europeanness according to the amount of labour carried out by Europeans.¹¹ In contrast to the Oscars, the EFAs normalise language difference by applying the labels 'European' and 'non-European' to films qualifying for an award.

The EFA has had difficulty in establishing its awards as something useful and marketable for the film industry. There are numerous reports on the EFAs in *Screen International* which, while not displaying any animosity, discuss the inability of the EFA to create a public profile for the awards. Funding problems have been cited as one reason for the EFA's difficulty in promoting the awards, with the EFA facing serious financial crisis at least twice over the past twenty years. At one time, Wim Wenders wrote to *Screen International* to explain that the awards would have to be 'a modest family event'

in 1994, only a month before the ceremony was due to take place. The EFA has taken several measures to increase awareness of its work. It engaged the international critics association, FIPRESCI, in promoting the awards in the press by creating a FIPRESCI award (certain film festivals have done likewise) (Finney 1993a). At the same time it changed the selection criteria for films to encourage more commercial successes to compete by requiring that entries must have sold to at least three European territories and have been box-office successes in their main country of origin. This was in direct contrast to the earlier awards under the direction of Polish director Krzysztof Zanussi, who claimed European cinema should not aim for a mass audience (Horn 1991b).

It may be significant that the EFA changed its selection criteria in late 1993, contemporary with the GATT debate. The change of criteria suggests some anxiety over European films' perceived lack of popular appeal, an imbalance which the EFAs could attempt to rectify in the public imagination. *Screen International* commented that the allowance by the EFA of six special nominations, outside of the awards regulations, showed that the EFA was prepared 'for some discrepancy between culture and commerce' which would reassure filmmakers worried about the box-office rule at this contentious time for cultural protectionism (Blaney 1993a: 14). The UK producer Nik Powell took up chairmanship of the EFA in 1996, a year when the awards were due to be broadcast only on the French/German cultural television channel Arte, with the intention of widening its membership ten-fold and dissolving its reputation for being elitist (Tutt 1996). In 1998, a PR consultant re-organised the awards, introducing a 'People's Award' which could be voted for on websites, via telephone and with voting slips in magazines and in cinemas (Warner Village, UCI and cinemas subsidized under the Europa Cinemas

scheme [see my discussion of Europa Cinemas in Chapter 7]), and the broadcast rights for the awards were sold to over fifty countries, including territories outside Europe (Scott 1998). Broadcasting the awards ceremony widely was instrumental in creating a profile for the EFAs, not only so they could appear to match the Oscars but also popular national film awards such as the Donatellos in Italy, the Césars in France, the Goyas in Spain, the BAFTAs in the UK and the publicity surrounding festival awards at the Cannes film festival in particular.

Screen International suggested in 1999 that the EFAs had finally found their place in European film culture as they were 'now firmly established as a unique means of honouring the diversity and scale of European film achievement' (Hunter 1999: 8). However, the coverage provided by the trade paper on the EFA and its awards remains marginal in contrast to that dedicated to film festivals and their awards. The EFA awards have a relatively low profile in contrast to the awards presented at European film festivals (and virtually no profile at all if compared to the Oscars). The EFA prize is warmly received, but without the public and professional impact of winning a Palme D'Or (Cannes), Goldene Bär (Berlin) or Leone d'Oro (Venice). The film festivals have the longest history of engagement with the industry and this is reflected in the amount of publicity they receive.

In order to promote itself, the EFA has tried to demonstrate that it is not only about award-giving but is actively involved with European film industry throughout the year. From its inception, the EFA and its members have purposefully involved themselves in facilitating and participating in discussions concerning the needs of and possible interventions into the European film industries. Interestingly, one way the EFA

achieves this is by emulating certain film festival activities by setting up symposia at the festivals themselves. Along with *Screen International*, the EFA commissioned Angus Finney's influential report on European cinema, 'A Dose of Reality' (1993) and it has continued its commitment to addressing the needs of European filmmakers by holding various workshops. Amongst its activities have been forums on the GATT troubles (at the Berlin Film Festival in 1993), Hollywood remakes (after the European Film Awards ceremony, 1994), the importance of language (Strasbourg, 1997), the role of film critics ('Don't Shoot the Critic,' San Sebastian Film Festival, 1997), and film festivals ('Film Festival in the Spotlight,' Berlin Film Festival, 2001). ¹²

In taking on film festival roles, the European Film Academy is both a complement to and a criticism of the international film festival in the contradictory age of global capitalism where 'foreignness' itself is negotiable. Facilitating international distribution remains the most important objective a major film festival can pursue for European film industry and is primarily achieved by providing a forum for the promotion of films, a commercial practice. This can be done by employing a discourse of exceptionality which may in fact draw comparisons between a film and earlier virtuoso works but must also differentiate it from what it is not, or cannot, be. In the case of European 'festival films', while many may be critically acclaimed, often it is assumed that what they cannot be is popular. Language is implicated in this presumption. David Puttnam's comment that European producers can only show respect for audiences by producing popular films is an attack on discourses of 'quality' and 'exceptionality'. The popular carries all sorts of connotations that are contrary to the ways European films are

generally promoted internationally but rather than addressing this problem most filmmakers and institutions are choosing to sidestep the issue when confronted.

While the directors of major film festivals can claim that co-productions are not problematic, their Festival regulations suggest otherwise and also notably privilege notions of national cinema. Cultural specificity is limited to the national and language is implicated in this with the screening of 'original', subtitled versions of films which symbolises the festivals' support of culturally and artistically 'authentic' and worthy cinema over commercial (dubbed) cinema. This distinction is maintained by award giving which rewards and promotes films which may not otherwise receive 'popularity' in the quantitative sense of box-office receipts. At the same time, the exploitation of the national category and of the cultural exception complicates the division of art and commerce. The major festivals negotiate a cultural ideal according to what is marketable, and this is where their seeming contradictions lie – between art and commerce, homogeneity and exceptionality, nationality and internationality – between elements which are not really opposed at all, but are interactive. By privileging the original version, film awards inform the press, industry and public of the validity, relevance and importance of films produced in languages other than English. This devalues the strong dubbing industry in Europe but with the objective of strengthening European film industries overall.

In 1993 the cultural exception became a political bargaining point used to ward off the corporate invasion but it has been a structuring element of film festival discourse since the first festivals appeared, and has had its validity questioned by both film critics, as discussed in chapter 3, and by industry figures more recently. The interchangeability

of the terms moral, artist's and author's rights to describe one of the key issues at stake in the GATT debate suggests a tautology of discourse on the European side where the repetition of suggestive concepts (morality, artistry, authoring) was used to frame the free trade argument in terms of what it was not, thus implying what it might be (amoral, inartistic). The propositions made during the GATT revealed weaknesses not only in the free trade argument, in the face of accusations of supporting unethical principles, but also in the cultural exception which, in the articulation made in 1993, cannot protect European film industries from international trade laws unless they are completely culturally, linguistically and nationally bounded. In the end, the GATT revealed a rhetorical impasse on the part of the opposing parties.

Chapter 6

English-Language Films and the Global Cultural Economy. Building an International Profile at Denmark's 'Film City'

This chapter addresses ways in which film companies in Denmark's Filmbyen ('Film City'), a production base in Copenhagen, have attempted to gain international recognition and to maximise the market potential of their products. On a more general level, it is an examination of strategies available to a small European country with a minor language for drawing international attention to its film industry. It could be suggested that Filmbyen, whose activities have gained significant media attention both in Denmark and abroad in the last seven years, is something of an anomaly because of its apparent success. However, I think the case of Filmbyen, and the fact that it exists at all, says something not only about Danish production but also about the attitudes held by producers of minority language films across Europe. It is less a facility for the production of popular national films than it is for testing the viability of transnational cinema, films which are, both in terms of the conditions of their production and of the dimensions of their consumption, representative of a cinematic deterritorialisation.

I will begin the chapter by considering the impact of the Dogma '95 film phenomenon for Danish film producers. I will subsequently outline Filmbyen's organisational structure and its relationship to the Dogma movement before discussing the production of English-language films at Filmbyen consequent to the Dogma success. I will suggest that both Dogma and the English-language films were conceived as

creative business strategies for attracting international interest in 'brand name' Danish films which were also appeals to transnational identification. I will also attempt to address the difficult question of why most of the English-language films did not succeed in sustaining public interest in Danish cinema, contrary to what had been expected. As I shall elaborate in the course of the chapter, the Dogma phenomenon and the English language co-productions are related closely in the Danish context, both in terms of the career trajectories of Danish directors, writers, producers and actors and as distinct strategies for attracting international attention for Danish production.

I have placed an emphasis in this chapter on understanding how promotional strategies for cinema may emerge at the point of production as well as in distribution and exhibition. By focusing solely on some instances where this process is evident in Danish film production, I am limiting the study in terms of the general conclusions it can offer on European cinema. I have not attempted here to compare Denmark's experience of producing English-language films with those of other non English-speaking European countries. Neither have I considered in much depth the ways in which the Filmbyen approach to producing English-language films differs from that taken by Danish companies not located in, or prior to the creation of, Filmbyen or from the experiences of those Danish filmmakers who have made English-language films in Hollywood. However, I think the recent activities of Filmbyen are a worthy 'mid-level' topic of enquiry (Bordwell 1996) and, while this chapter does not reach any grand conclusions about film promotion and the relationship of English-language cinema to film producers for whom English is not their native language, it will raise some important questions about the cultural value and use of language in cinema.

I have drawn the shape and the conclusions for this chapter largely from the dialogues I had with people working in Danish film production during two separate research trips to Copenhagen, one in August 2000 and the other in September 2004. The earlier visit prompted the beginning of my fascination with language and translation issues in cinema. It was the first encounter I had had as a researcher where I became aware of the economy attached to language in creative industries and the unquestioned position of power held by the English language in that economy. I was uncomfortable with the tacit assumption both myself and the participants made that the interviews would be conducted in English, which seemed to emphasise the unequal power relations between interviewer and interviewee and, symbolically, our respective 'major' and 'minor' native languages.

While I had travelled to Denmark with the objective of building a well-informed interpretative framework which might enable me to better understand the form and content of the Dogma '95 films, I returned to the UK with a new-found fascination for the critical success of Dogma internationally in spite of Denmark's marginal cultural visibility and the linguistic foreignness of the films, which I watched subtitled on video. Over the next few years I noticed with interest the shifting fortunes of Danish films in the UK, in Denmark and on the festival circuit and saw the emergence of new, internationally acclaimed Dogma films and a run of Danish produced English-language films alongside the production of lower-budget films, clearly influenced by the Dogma concept, and mainstream comedies and children's films aimed at domestic audiences.¹

The aim of my second trip was to establish two things; firstly, how had Filmbyen developed since I visited it during the Dogma boom-period in 2000 (by now the Dogma

public relations moment seemed well and truly over) and, secondly, why had successful Danish filmmakers been producing films in the English language? The first question functioned to set up the general terms with which I was going to look at Danish film production in 2004, limiting my research focus to the activities of Filmbyen and, in particular, the production companies Zentropa and Nimbus. It also gave me a chance to consolidate what I had learned about the Filmbyen concept in 2000 and heard about it since. The second question was my primary motivation for a second research trip, not only because of the language issues involved but also because amongst the slate of English-language films produced by Danish companies in close succession in the early 2000s were co-productions set in Scotland, my national home and location. I conducted my second trip over three weeks to maximise the possibilities for arranging interviews and in order to benefit from having access to cinemas, daily newspapers, magazines and television in metropolitan Denmark in my spare time. Although by now having a (very) modest command of the Danish language, my second series of interviews took place once more in English.

While I was in Denmark for the second research trip, a debate arose in the press about the Danish nomination for the Best Foreign Language Film at the Oscars (what the Danes call the 'not English-language film' category). The film selected was *De fem Benspænd* (The Five Obstructions, dir. Lars von Trier & Jørgen Leth 2003), an experimental documentary film produced by Zentropa which centred on the creative processes in filmmaking. In August 2004 I had attended a seminar hosted by the Director of the Danish National Film School, Poul Nesgaard, where this film was used as an example of the philosophy behind the Danish Film School education. The Danish

Producer's Organisation, lead by Kim Magnusson of Nordisk film, had protested the decision to nominate *De fem Benspænd* for Oscar consideration, a choice which they believed was made in an underhand way by a committee 'hand picked' by the DFI's Director Henning Camre. Magnusson explained to me, however, that this was less a political issue than it was a practical one; had the committee not announced the choice so early, he claimed, Danish films travelling to important international markets (at Venice, San Sebastian, and Toronto) would have been able to maximise their sales potential by playing on the idea that they *might* be Oscar nominated. The choice of *De fem Benspænd* was considered foolish partly because it had, in the eyes of many Danish film producers, little chance of being officially nominated for an Oscar and partly because it had already been sold to all territories and exhibited internationally (Magnusson 2004, pers. comm., 8 September 2004).

The Danish press framed the argument over the Oscar as a battle between art and commerce: did 'artistic' films have a place in the Oscars? Jørgen Leth (2004) disputed the idea that the film had no appeal for the Academy, remonstrating that it had performed very well in America and was amongst *Time Magazine's* top ten films of the year. As Leth's comments illustrate, the Oscar debate was centred on perceptions of audiences in relation to the international profile of Danish cinema. Could the Academy be 'educated' into appreciating a Danish auteur documentary? And if not, was an opportunity for increasing the international visibility of Danish film lost?

Danish films have attracted considerable critical interest in recent years. This upturn in debate around Danish cinema comes from both journalists and academics and is markedly contemporary in nature as it focuses on films and practices from the late 1990s

onwards, particularly the Dogma '95 'movement' (Hjort & MacKenzie 2003; Kelly 2000; Roman 2001; Schepelern 2003), Lars von Trier (Björkman 1999; Lumholdt 2003; Stevenson 2002) and what has been termed both 'new Danish film' and the 'Danish new wave' (Bondebjerg 2003; Grodal 2003; Hjort 2005; Pill 2002; Schepelern 2004). Mette Hjort and Ib Bondebjerg's book *The Danish Directors*, translated from Danish into English, offers some contextualisation of the success of Danish films produced at the outset of the millennium by providing a Danish film history from the 1950s to 1998. In many ways *The Danish Directors* is a model of the way that 'national cinema' is persistently critically conceived. The book consists, in the most part, of edited interviews with well-known Danish directors, listed chronologically by date of birth, and as such contains rich subjective accounts of what can then be interpreted as an 'evolution' of Danish cinema leading up to the new 'golden age'. As the editors point out, however, Denmark's film industry has experienced frequent periods of struggle and decline, the first notoriously appearing with the coming of speech to cinema.

Congratulatory optimism from and on behalf of Denmark is the tone of much of the material which gives any considered thought to the Danish film situation in its present incarnations; overall there is little fear expressed for the future. In November 2002, a special issue of the Danish publication *Ekko*, for teachers of film and media, dedicated to contemporary Danish cinema was released. Despite Oscar wins occurring in the 1980s in two consecutive years for *Babettes Gæstebud* (Babette's Feast, dir. Gabriel Axel, 1987) and *Pelle Erobreren* (Pelle the Conqueror, dir. Bille August, 1987), the magazine's editorial suggested it was not until the mid-1990s that a 'new wave' of Danish films broke forth. In featuring the anti-heroes from Thomas Vinterberg's first feature film *De*

største helte (The Greatest Heroes, 1996) standing defiantly atop a car, the front cover of this *Ekko* special issue reflected a carnival attitude, whereby the small and lowly have had a temporary (but still effective) transformation into cinema culture royalty (figure 1). However, the strongly tongue-in-cheek biblical reference in the title of the issue, 'Danish Film. The Seven Fat Years' (Dansk film de syv fede år), warned that a halcyon era for Danish film production could be followed by an equally long recession.

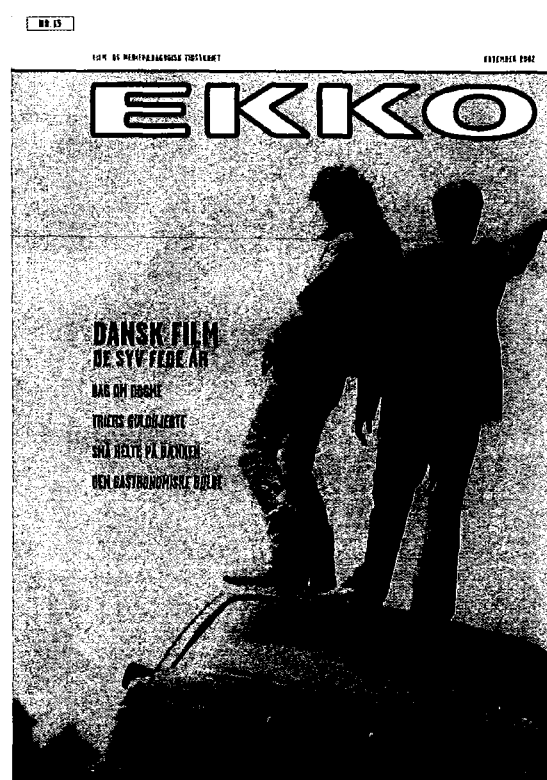


Figure 1. Danish Film. The Seven Fat Years.

Ekko, No. 15 (November 2002)

Only a few years before the change in critical favour towards Danish films, Angus Finney was reporting in response to the GATT troubles in pessimistic terms on the state of European cinema. Finney wrote that the European film industry was 'worryingly unstable and uncertain in its future' (1996: vii) and suggested a number of strategies for

filmmakers to adopt which might improve their situation by helping them to recoup some of the European market from Hollywood. He suggested that the film industry in Europe should build on some of the improvements made in the period following the publication of his first report on the industry in Europe (Finney 1993). He specified the need to maintain the focus on development and training, to review national funding programmes and to encourage European corporations to support indigenous film production and distribution. In addition to proposing changes to practice, Finney urged that European cinema 'needs to find a new creative direction now that *auteur* theory has lost its way' (1996: 33). The 'new creative direction' Finney proposed for European films had more to do with sales package than textual content and envisaged a commercial pan-European cinema enhanced by a European star system of actors rather than celebrated directors (1996: 52).

Finney wanted to see profitable films produced by filmmakers who have broken free from 'a subsidy-fed mentality', and which can appeal to a wide range of territories (distribution markets not necessarily contained by state boundaries) (1996: 115). This would require European producers giving serious attention to marketing, distribution and exhibition, areas which he felt were not being adequately addressed at this point in time. Finney's *Dose of Reality* reports (1993 & 1996) were supported by Terry Iltott's guidebook to *Budgets and Markets* in Europe in which Iltott boldly states that financial risk should be an intrinsic motivating factor in film production rather than something which European financiers, producers and distributors attempt to minimise (1996: 3).

It is perhaps surprising to see how the circumstances of a small nation's film industry such as Denmark's could change so dramatically for the better since Finney's

influential report, even while the recommendations he makes for a pan-European commercial film industry remain unrealised. The growing success with the domestic audience of Danish majority produced films since 1996 is clear enough from figures provided by the Danish Film Institute (DFI). The domestic market share for Danish feature films rose from 8% in 1995 to 26% in 2003. Between 1998 and 2003, the average share of admissions for Danish films in Denmark was 24%. In 2001 there was a peak of 30% and during that year five films out of the box-office top ten in Denmark were Danish, with *Italiensk for begyndere* (Italian for Beginners, dir. Lone Scherfig, 2000) at number one. These figures compare favourably with other European Union countries.² In addition, Denmark's production output has (from an outsider's viewpoint) appeared assured and stable for nearly a decade.

The relatively strong domestic audience share together with the recent high international visibility of some Danish films and filmmakers has been inspirational for other small European nations such as Scotland and Ireland which have struggled to build stable indigenous film production infrastructures and to attract and maintain international interest in their films across the axis of distribution-exhibition-reception. As a result, Filmbyen has become something of a model for collaborative production in small countries and regions. The Jutland region of Denmark has opened a creative industries base in Århus which is similar to Filmbyen and the phased development of Film City Glasgow, housed in a former town hall in the inner city area of Govan, is underway in Scotland. The majority interest in a Glasgow-based Film City is represented by Sigma Films, a small but successful production company which has co-produced with Zentropa, the Danish company which pioneered the Filmbyen concept in Copenhagen.

Although attention to the sales figures provided by the DFI can be particularly useful in charting some of the domestic commercial glory moments for Danish produced films, such statistics cannot monitor the impact that certain Danish films have made upon international audiences, amongst whom I include investors, collaborators, award-givers and critics as well as 'average' cinemagoers. Success is not only a question of attendance figures for a relatively small, if well supported, film community. The amount of material relating to Danish film-making that has been printed in English, by various publishing houses, is a positive indication of the international visibility of Danish cinema. However, the instigation of Filmbyen in the depressed Copenhagen suburb of Hvidovre has had relatively little scholarly attention despite it being one of the most significant creative developments for Danish film production in the late 1990s. Treating Filmbyen as a case study in this instance will allow for an evaluation of the institutional factors which can influence the decisions taken by production companies vis-à-vis developing solutions for raising the profile of their activities and the saleability of their products. This is a process which happens by necessity to address both distribution and exhibition and involves continual assessment of the place of the former in the latter sphere and vice versa.

Despite the crucial relevance of distribution and promotion arrangements and exhibition environments for national film industries, studies of 'national cinema' often neglect these sectors. Although there have been movements towards considering production in a more holistic manner, I think it would be fair to generalise that most scholars doing text-based work have tended to presume certain business practices when providing a social and economic context for their objects of study. Those who have written historical studies on production have also neglected to discuss in any depth how

the mechanisms of film sales and promotion impact upon decisions taken at production stage. Much of the work published on Danish cinema has concentrated on identifying patterns and themes at the level of textual analysis and interpretation. In this case, the conclusions drawn are not exactly ignorant of the conditions of production, distribution and exhibition for Danish films nationally and internationally but they are certainly not dependent on understanding these either. The approaches taken by these writers frequently involve describing and interpreting similarities in Danish films and detecting aesthetic, thematic and narrative trends. The national is invoked at a basic level in choosing 'Danish' films as studies and, in a more complex way, by contextualising the films with respect to their perceived national outlook, but this particular approach has problems.

Andrew Higson is one of the best-known critics of the terms of 'national cinema', following his *Screen* article (1989) which questioned the criteria for such categorisation. Higson has summarised the ways that the concept of 'national cinema' has been employed by a variety of users thus:

[t]o identify a national cinema is first of all to specify a coherence and a unity; it is to proclaim a unique identity and a stable set of meanings. The process of identification is thus invariably a hegemonizing, mythologizing process... At the same time, the concept of a national cinema has almost invariably been mobilised as a strategy of cultural (and economic) resistance: a means of asserting national autonomy in the face of (usually) Hollywood's international domination.

(2002: 53-4)

Such conceptions of the national in cinema for Higson imply that 'the politics of national cinema can be reduced to a marketing strategy, an attempt to market the diverse as, in fact, offering a coherent and singular experience' (2002: 54) by unifying a selection of products under the rubric of the national, which appears at once both dominant (privileged at a local level) and marginalised (by Hollywood).

Dimitris Eleftheriotis (2001) agrees with Higson's central premise, although he takes what I find to be a more optimistic approach to addressing the issue of national cinemas than Higson does and suggests how the national in European cinemas might be described in ways that acknowledge the reality of its contradictions and heterogeneity rather than its presumed unity. Stephen Crofts (2002) also sees multiplicity in 'national cinema', and finds seven types of film product within his hypothetical national production context. Crofts defines five of these categories in contrast to Hollywood, which effectively sets Hollywood cinema up as homogeneous and normative and positions 'national' cinemas as to the most part representing various strategies of resistance to the norm. He accepts that the groups he delineates may be permeable and overlapping, their modes of address not entirely stable. In addition, he acknowledges that a film's categorisation can change once the film is exported. Once the film enters into the field of international film sales, Crofts suggests, 'distribution and reception criteria supplant production and textual criteria' and the film is likely to be re-packaged as 'art cinema' (2002: 27). This is not the end of the transformation process, though, as the film product may be further differentiated in marketing according to nationality, authorship or sexual content (which, Crofts seems to be implying, is still par for the course for

publicising some foreign-language films in America on the grounds of 'artistic expression') (2002: 39).

Aside from the problem of setting up Hollywood as the normative and non-national cinema, Crofts' description of the film packaging process is rather limited. He does not, for example, discuss how the categories used to describe a film in terms of its textuality might interact at the point of reception with those used to market the film (see Willemen 2005) nor does he envisage any promotional context for national cinema other than as 'art cinema' in the international marketplace. But, although requiring some qualification as to what sales and distribution contexts particular conversions are likely to occur in and why, Crofts' suggestion that a film's 'national' criteria may be used as grounds for commercial exploitation is important and brings his exposition into line with Higson's critique. Partly because Crofts' terms can be unduly negative, such as his suggestion that the national origin of a film may serve a 'sub-generic function', Crofts' article inadvertently raises the question of the usefulness of the 'national' category for films. His argument about the variable uses for nationality in the journey of a film from production to exhibition makes it difficult to see any place where the national might definitively reside in 'national cinema'.

Janet Staiger's neo-marxist interpretation of this problem works with the understanding that 'the deterritorialisation of capital away from nation-states and into global financescapes' means that the nation has little or no standing in capitalist practices (2002: 243). But, particularly where the cinemas of small nations or countries with limited output are concerned, it remains the case that 'the nation' is one of the first discourses to be applied in film publicity, locally and abroad, regardless of the financing

arrangements of the films under scrutiny. Not only for those working in the film business, but also for those who are onlookers, the idea of the 'national' still holds sway, appearing in a range of critical discourses from journalism to audience opinion to academia, even while we contest its validity and usefulness as a definitive category. It is because of the persistence of the national as category that discussions of 'national cinema' continue but the best of these studies will acknowledge the correspondence, and the limits of that correspondence, between the institutions and processes of production and those of consumption. In this respect, it is interesting to see how scholars have responded to the materialisation of Dogma which seems to have revitalised approaches to Danish national cinema by pushing forth questions on the relations between national cinema, international distribution and marketability and the relationship between cinema promotion and its reception (Christensen; Elkington; Hjort; Le Fanu; Sauvaget; Nishimura, all 2003).

The purpose of Dogma '95 has been interpreted in and through various media – books, articles, interviews, reviews, television programmes and documentary films. Some prevalent attitudes to the Dogma phenomenon recur in a variety of publications. These include looking at Dogma '95 as a 'revivalist', but not avant-garde, call for a transgressive cinema (Combs & Durnat 2000; Falcon 1999) or, in the same vein, as part of an avant-garde movement towards a new realist 'cinéma purité' or 'cinéma vérité' (Thompson 2000). But in equal measure, or perhaps even predominantly, Dogma was viewed as a 'publicity stunt', a deliberate attempt to focus attention on certain Danish filmmakers by staging a marketing event around their films. One example is an extract from Jonathan Rosenbaum's film festival log, where he writes,

the two topics I hear the most about from American critics are the theme of incest ... and “Dogme 95”, the attention-grabbing manifesto for “natural” filmmaking of von Trier and other Danish filmmakers, in relation to *The Celebration* and *The Idiots*. Both these topics are discussed as if they represented the two most important new trends in world cinema. I’m highly sceptical about this – it seems grounded in the same mania for tabloid publicity and the exploitation of American Puritanism that made Larry Clark’s *Kids* the hit of Sundance... if Danish filmmakers want to get the attention of the American (and therefore the world) press today they have to write not a press release – everyone writes those now – but a manifesto. Existentially, in other words, the function of “Dogme 95” is to secure an American release for *The Celebration* and a Hollywood contract for Thomas Vinterberg.

(2002: 169-70)

Despite his scathing glances at other American journalists, Rosenbaum’s response to the excitement around Dogma was not uncommon. I recall that the suspicions expressed by Rosenbaum were also reflected in discursive interviews with the Dogma filmmakers published in British newspapers and were rebutted on the official Dogma ’95 website with protestations that Dogma was not a marketing concept. Although the first Dogma films, in particular *Festen* (The Celebration/Dogma # 1, dir. Thomas Vinterberg, 1998) and *Mifunes sidste sang* (Mifune/Dogma # 3, dir. Søren Kragh-Jacobsen, 1999), received critical acclaim and festival prizes, the mock tone and vocabulary of the Dogma manifesto and Vow of Chastity and the origination of the concept in Denmark (not the European film artists’ hubs of France, Italy or Germany) did not fit snugly with tried and

tested critical framings of innovation in European film such as 'avant-garde' or 'masterpiece'. Cynicism towards the project's motivations was probably also stimulated by the intense media focus on *Festen*'s young director Thomas Vinterberg, in spite of the manifesto's criticism of the auteur concept as 'bourgeois romanticism' and the insistence in the Vow of Chastity that the director not be credited in a Dogma film, and the concurrent press interest in the notion of a 'Dogma Brethren'.

Rosenbaum's assessment contains a number of points about the manner and function of publicity for European films. He seems to suggest that the type of publicity sought by Dogma '95 on the festival circuit is not only sensationalist but also aiming at a mass audience ('tabloid'). Although two out of the three festivals he is referring to are in Europe (Cannes and Rotterdam, the third being Toronto), Rosenbaum assumes that the function of maintaining a high media profile for Danish filmmakers is to solicit American interest in the films and to prepare the ground for every European filmmaker's dream, their promotion into Hollywood and, by association, English-language films and popular, international audiences. It is the discursive context, and not the films themselves (which, we should remember, he hasn't seen at this point) which allows Rosenbaum to make his judgement on what the function of Dogma is.

What I find particularly interesting about Rosenbaum's assessment is the way in which he connects Dogma to a cinema economy which is inevitably configured in relation to the English language mainstream of Hollywood. In cinema, as in so many contemporary media economies, the English language is demonstrably more valuable than other linguistic groups because of its ubiquity and this has had a regulative effect on other language groups operating in the global economy. The status held by the English

language in global culture industries is utilitarian but, because of this, normative. This presents, I believe, a considerable symbolic challenge to film producers attempting to sell internationally films which are not in the English language.

I am not suggesting that there is an industry assumption that English-language films will outperform non English-language films in every case simply because they are in the 'global' idiom. Indeed there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that English-language films made outside Hollywood which are not packaged as art cinema are regarded as poor imitations of American films and therefore bound to failure. In this case, it may be useful to return to the metaphor of cinema as language in which formulation it is not spoken language that is the problem for 'other' cinemas but their difference from the dominant cinematic 'language' which, in Hamid Naficy's account, 'is considered universal and without accent' (2001: 4). However, as I discussed in the last chapter, corporatism and profitability is associated with English-language cinema because of the pre-eminence of Hollywood in Europe, the use of English as a common business language at film festivals, film markets and increasingly in production, and the representation by the US of the largest single market for cinema in the west. This raises the problem of how to regard 'other' (non Hollywood, non American) English-language cinemas which frequently have been proved to suffer many of the same difficulties as films not in the English language do in securing international distribution and exhibition across Europe and in North America.

An audience study of Flemish speaking teenagers has indicated that (subtitled) Hollywood cinema is so much the norm for audiences in Flemish Belgium that 'American English has become the lingua franca when it comes to film consumption', an

attitude encouraged not only by the dominance of Hollywood cinema in Belgium but also by the teenage respondents' fluency in English (Meers 2004: 169). This example suggests that some audiences associate a Hollywood standard with English-language films which disadvantages films not created to the same specifications. At the time of writing, a UK-German co-production, a ghost story set in Wales, is being advertised on British television with a trailer foregrounding its American lead and using an American-accented voice over. This rather cynical marketing technique suggests that Richard Dyer and Ginette Vincendeau's opinion that regionally accented, British English is as much a barrier to exporting films from the UK as language is to films from other European countries (1992: 13, fn.2) is not only perceived to be true but is also seen to apply to the UK domestic context.

The known alternative to competing with Hollywood on its own terms has been (although not uniformly so) for distributors and even producers before them to package European films as art cinema. The Dogma manifesto might be read as self-consciously engaging with some art cinema thematics (such as oppositionality to Hollywood, experimentalism, and political consciousness) almost in anticipation of its future domestication in such a discourse, and its radical potential must be measured alongside this possibly deliberate address to 'art cinema' – not mainstream but not particularly avant-garde either. The Dogma manifesto appeared to be an assault on Hollywood with its rejection of traditional aspects of studio-based production technology and its foretelling of 'the ultimate democratisation' of filmmaking by digital video at a time when digital camerawork had a very distinct, low-grade aesthetic in comparison to film.

It is telling that critics looked for aesthetic reference points within the manifesto and the film texts to help them navigate the Dogma event. Dogma was a postmodern artistic declaration, a pastiche of the old modernist European art cinema; it referenced and criticised the French *nouvelle vague* and therefore could be seen in 'New Wave' terms; it was a game for the amusement of the directors; it was a search for 'truth' or 'reality' in the cinematic form; and it was a provocation for the film industry status quo. Most journalistic accounts of Dogma, especially those conveyed through interviews with the filmmakers, were directed towards explaining the rules of the Vow of Chastity and how these affected production processes such as directing, acting, photography and sound and, in turn, the film outcome (see Dogme '95 2006 and French; Logan; Romney; Rundle; Trischak, all 1999).

The critical obsession with the impact of the rules on technological and aesthetic elements ensured that Dogma '95 was seen publicly outside Denmark as superseding its national situation in terms of its artistic impact. As with modernist art manifestos, the Dogma concept was nationally transposable, experimental and part of an international artistic perspective and thus easily positioned within 'art cinema' contexts and discourses.³ The publicity around Dogma seems in some aspects to reflect an impulse to situate the national in terms of international recognition and stature but, on the other hand, there are elements of Dogma's internationalism which are neglected in the discourse such as the fact that *Idioterne* was co-financed with four other European countries and, thus, was not the low-budget, experimental production some would have it to be.

At the time when Lars von Trier released the Dogma '95 manifesto and 'Vow of Chastity' on behalf of the 'Dogma brethren' at a centenary of cinema seminar in Paris, film businesses across Europe were suffering from low audience share. A MEDIA 95 handbook on marketing, devised a couple of years prior to the Dogma declaration, suggested that appropriate film marketing was more important than ever before due to a decline in cinema admissions and the number of screens, the rise in popularity of home entertainment and the shrinking of the market share for European films which competed unfavourably with American products (Durie 1993: 18). For Zentropa, these familiar problems were worsened by their fall-out with the Danish Film Institute, the central funding body for Danish films, which Lars von Trier's producer Vibeke Windeløw described in retrospect as 'complete mistrust from their side against us' (Windeløw 2004, pers. comm., 20 September 2004). Ib Tardini, a producer for Zentropa, suggested that Dogma appeared when it did as a direct result of financial concerns:

[i]t's because it's a very cheap way to produce. Lars made the rules because we knew in Zentropa that there would be very little money in the future, for four or five years – we could see that. And all the time the cost of filmmaking was rising...

(Tardini 2000, pers. comm., 29 August 2000)

Most publicity surrounding Dogma has had a positive impact upon Zentropa and the legitimacy of low-budget filmmaking. Peter Aalbæk Jensen, the Executive producer and co-owner with Lars von Trier of Zentropa Productions, told me in 2000 that, as a result of the publicity it gathered, Dogma had become a marketing tool without having been strategically born as one. He explained,

[f]irst of all, we're probably a bit surprised that it became so special. You could say it's an old concept on new bottles, and besides that it ended up, you could say, being as much of a marketing tool as a political statement... The good thing is that it gave some pride to being low budget, even though the Dogma rules say nothing about budget.

(Jensen 2000, pers. comm., 29 August 2000)

The production arm of the Nordisk/Egmont corporation, Nordisk Film, which specialises in mainstream family entertainment in the Danish language for Nordic markets, took advantage of this new climate of favour towards low-budget filmmaking. Nordisk has experimented with the possibilities of fixed budget, 'small' films by launching a programme of 'Dogma without rules' called "Directors Cut". Under the label, Nordisk has released one 'mainstream' film (*Lykkevej*, dir. Morten Arnfred, 2003) and one 'art' film (*Reconstruction*, dir. Christoffer Boe, 2003), with more to follow. A new General Manager of production at Nordisk film, the Oscar-winning Kim Magnusson from M&M Productions, was employed to boost Nordisk's image in face of the high-profile claimed by Filmbyen, and Zentropa in particular. Magnusson told me he was critical of Directors Cut before he moved into Nordisk and had wondered if it was a case of 'Nordisk film trying to make Dogma films so they get a little attention' (Magnusson 2004, pers. comm., 8 September 2004). Once in Nordisk, he says he was happy to see that they were not promoting the concept as a marketing label and that the only rules they were working with applied to budgetary considerations.

A sympathetic understanding of the connections between Dogma and marketing is offered by Mette Hjort who has succinctly outlined three challenges which have informed

the emergence of Dogma '95 in Denmark: firstly, and supported by conversations I have had with producers in Denmark, Dogma was important for 'ensuring that publicly available definitions of what counts as a film are compatible with the conditions of production that are likely to be available to small-nation filmmakers' (2005: 94)⁴; secondly, there was a need to draw domestic public interest toward national and Nordic productions, away from Hollywood; and, finally, it was considered important to increase the attractiveness of 'local' films for foreign, international markets by framing these films as 'metacultural', and not merely cinematic, events (2005: 95).

International recognition was important for encouraging the emergence of various discourses on Dogma and Danish audiovisual culture in Denmark, which has sustained interest in the Dogma concept there. While a scattering of Dogma films have been made in various countries worldwide, Denmark continues to produce Dogma films which are primarily seen by domestic audiences and may not have much exposure abroad (for instance, *Et rigtigt menneske* [Truly Human/Dogma # 18, dir. Åke Sandgren, 2001], *En kærlighedshistorie* [Kira's Reason/Dogma # 21, dir. Ole Christian Madsen, 2001] and *Se til venstre der er en svensker* [Old, New, Borrowed, Blue/Dogma #32, dir. Natasha Arthy, 2003]). Hjort's (2003) discussion of the influence of Dogma in Denmark suggests that Dogma became not only a symbol of the legitimacy of Danish cinema culture within a globalised cultural sphere but was regarded as an 'ethos' which was frequently evoked by the Danish press to draw attention to political and social issues. For a while Dogma became ubiquitous in Denmark, with print advertising and TV commercials either referencing or designed in the 'Dogma style' (Kaufmann 2000, pers. comm., 29 August 2000). An example of the cultural significance of Dogma in Denmark, during Dogma's

peak of international visibility, was *D-Dag* (D-Day), an entirely unprecedented national television event whereby four Danish television channels transmitted a simultaneous live broadcast on the millennial New Year's Eve of a story filmed from four points of view, co-ordinated by Dogma directors. This event was financed by the participant television channels and the Danish Film Institute.

Hjort (2005: chapter 3) has discussed *D-Dag* in some detail and I will not repeat her points by expounding too much further on the significance of the event here. By means of brief explanation, the idea promoted in the run-up to the event was that *D-Dag* would be 'interactive' television – the viewer would be able to 'edit' a film by switching between channels. In practice, and partly because the storyline was kept secret, viewers found the 'editing' process frustrating and one objective for viewers engaged in the Dogma discourse became to guess which Dogma personality was directing which channel (Christensen 2000, pers. comm., 29 August 2000). The importance of *D-Dag*, Hjort argues, was the emphasis it placed on notions of co-authorship and nationhood which could 'mobilize the nation qua audience' by encouraging their participation in the performative 'metacultural moments' which characterised Dogma as an ethos (2005: 67). While *D-Dag* was a national event, the emergence of Dogma as a metacultural phenomenon was not only experienced in Denmark, as Jonathan Rosenbaum's vicarious evaluation of the Dogma films at film festivals shows. Centrally, though, Hjort's discussions of Dogma and *D-Dag* emphasise the cultural impact of Dogma in the national sphere. While Dogma had international reach, its symbolic significance was nurtured in the national context.

The volume of international attention gained by Danish films from the late 1990s seems particularly remarkable, given the size of the Danish population (around 5.5 million) and the limited interest outside Scandinavia in Danish language and culture. While the terms according to which one may attribute success may vary with the adjudicator, critical visibility is usually a positive indication of achievement by what some theorists have termed 'minor cinema' (Hjort 1996 & 2006; Hjort & Bjondebjerg 2001; Naficy 1999). The idea of a minor cinema has emerged from Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of Franz Kafka's literature (*Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, 1986), in which

[t]he term *minor* points [...] to the existence of regimes of cultural power and to the need for strategic resourcefulness on the part of those who are unfavourably situated within the cultural landscape in question.

(Hjort 2005: ix)

Choosing to apply the idea of minor cinema to Danish film production, Mette Hjort suggests that it is 'the problem of indifference' which can be most damaging to Denmark's film industry as the domestic market is small and international sales, even if only in Scandinavia, are vital rather than desirable (2003: 133). Success in the context of minor cinemas is for Hjort not so much about box-office returns (in many cases successfulness cannot be judged according to quantitative criteria) but it can be achieved by building a profile around the films and the terms of their cultural and political engagement.

To use the term 'minor cinema' to refer to a national context I find questionable, however. Even if the sustainability of a country's film industry can be considered

continually threatened by the dominance of Hollywood cinema and the configuration of film trade and audiences in relation to that fact, a 'national' cinema will always be a legitimated and visible cinema. As there are lesser represented minorities residing within Denmark, one might also consider the legitimacy of describing 'Danish cinema' as a minor mode of expression, particularly when Denmark's cultural and economic marginalisation is doubtful relative to other countries participating in and subject to the global economy (Denmark has the 14th highest GDP per capita in the world, according to the CIA, 2005 figures). Hamid Naficy has utilised Deleuze and Guattari's 'minor' concept with relation to filmmakers in exile, 'living at a tangent to the world and the industry they inhabit... opting for an alternative and interstitial mode of production' (1999: 132), which I feel is a more appropriate application of the category than that attempted by Hjort.

Deleuze and Guattari's (1986) idea of a minor literature does not arise from work written in a 'minor' language but rather work written in a major language from a marginal position. The minor expression is about disrupting dominant modes of expression, thus engaging in deterritorialisation. In Naficy's interpretation, this expression is managed interstitially rather than from the margins and so it is more representative of the foreignness within than the foreignness without. The exilic filmmaker is 'partial' rather than marginal and is 'located at the intersection of the global and the local' (Naficy 1999b: 134). It is difficult to see how this experience can be transposed to *all* Danish cinema, even Danish cinema that is different from the mainstream; if nationally validated and recognised, Danish films cannot constitute an

alternative, anti-territorial cinema on the grounds of their difference from Hollywood, the dominant cinema in Denmark.

It is the cinema that is not so easily classified that may constitute minor cinema. A serious omission in Hjort's transposition of Deleuze and Guattari's minor literature notion to cinema is that a minor practice involves the deterritorialisation of the dominant and the national, not its reinforcement. There is in minor practice an appeal to collective engagement, yes, but this occurs simultaneously with the questioning of that collectiveness. Additionally, while she does refer in her latest work to the minor concept in direct relation to English-language co-productions, Hjort does not appear to see this particular kind of cinema, as I do, as an obvious location for the concept of minor expression in the Danish context. English-language films constitute something of a sub-category in Hjort's conception of minor cinema, often in the form of 'self-defeating co-productions' which are construed as 'involving an intolerably contradictory mode of appeal, which prompts bad press and serious indifference' (2005: 177). These co-productions, in Hjort's view, often fail to attract audiences because they simultaneously involve national and denationalising appeals for identification. Speaking of the co-produced Scandinavian heritage drama she writes,

[i]n the context of minor cinema, it is tempting [for filmmakers], it would appear, to leverage national interest through deep epiphanic culture and to stimulate global interest by sacrificing the authenticity of this cultural configuration, most typically on the altar of Global English.

(2005: 172)

I will suggest in the latter part of the chapter that, while there may be anxieties around the 'denationalising' aspects of using the English language in an otherwise Danish-identified production, the attempt to create an English-language cinema within the Danish context can be understood as a proactive, critical strategy rather than a 'sacrificial' and defeatist submission to the English-language cultural economy. In order to demonstrate this, it is necessary to look in some detail at the conditions of production in Denmark which have borne a recent slate of English-language films. It is for this purpose that I shall now discuss the production base at Filmbyen from which the Dogma invention surfaced and, later, a run of English-language films directed by filmmakers who had become internationally known through the success of their Dogma films.



Figure 2. Aerial view of Filmbyen in Hvidovre.

The Filmbyen concept was devised by Peter Albæk Jensen (of Zentropa) and was created in consultation with Nimbus Film and with the cooperation of Hvidovre Commune (Hvidovre's local authority), which agreed to lease out and then sell disused army barracks to the film companies in the hope of boosting the area's economy. Zentropa's permanent move to Hvidovre in 1999 meant leaving the city centre, the traditional base for film companies (see figure 2). However, the new space opened up possibilities for Zentropa to own studios which promised them greater autonomy and the potential to compete on more equal terms with the Scandinavian film major Nordisk film, which already housed its own production studios in Copenhagen. Zentropa was not to be isolated by the move as they were joined in the barracks by Nimbus, with other small to mid-sized companies following suite. The Filmbyen website claims that there are currently more than twenty businesses in operation on site and many of these are affiliates of Zentropa (Zentropa 2006).

Zentropa has expanded its facilities since 1999 and now claims to have all of its production needs met at Filmbyen. Zentropa owns not only studio space but also equipment which it can loan as part of co-production agreements with other companies in Filmbyen, Denmark and overseas. Films produced by Zentropa can be put through post-production at Filmbyen and then sold by Zentropa's sales company Trust Film Sales. In addition, Zentropa has a number of off-shoot companies which handle television and documentary films (Zentropa Real); commercials (Zentropa Commerzials); digital communication (Zentropa Kommunikation); and websites, menus and features for DVD releases (Electric Parc). Another subsidiary, Zentropa Interaction, operates as a

development agency which works flexibly with a range of concepts from game and 'virtual community' design to work on storytelling, script development and film marketing.

The range of projects undertaken by Zentropa indicates its enterprise in experiment. However, it should be noted that this scale of venture is not necessarily adequately supported in financial terms. Zentropa has been criticised for its handling of staff wages which, particularly for young people entering the company at an internship level, have been said to verge on the exploitative (see Stevenson 2002: 168).⁵ The potential for commercial success in the innovative DVD and website division, Electric Parc, is undercut by low budgets, tight schedules and restrictions on television advertising. Growth of the initiative is hindered by the fact that distributors are not necessarily keen to buy whole DVD packages with features such as Electric Parc's 'behind the scenes' explorations (Sandager 2004, pers. comm., 15 September 2004).

While there are problems with some ventures on campus and Zentropa and Nimbus are competitors, Filmbyen is ideologically informed by social democratic and egalitarian ideals. To mark the official inauguration of Filmbyen, Lars von Trier wrote a vision statement on *Project 'Open Film Town'*, which denounced the inaccessibility of film production to the general public and celebrated the 'democratisation' signalled by technological developments in film and video equipment and the internet. Trier desired that no one company dominate the campus and the location of Filmbyen, which he described as being 'among the people', added to the 'army base's' socialist cachet. Trier announced

The Open Film Town project is an extension of production activities and internal communication into the establishment of a centre for external, non-commercial, open discussion and studies designed to benefit the medium at every level.

(Trier 1999)

One of the most successful manifestations of the 'Open Film Town' vision is Station Next, a centre offering tuition in film production for 13-18 year olds and their teachers at 'film camp' in Filmbyen. Amongst supporters of Station Next are the Danish Ministry of Culture, Hvidovre Municipality and the Danish Film Institute. A website provides a portal into Station Next where people can view the short films produced at the film camps. The site explains that the project has been 'spurred on by the dynamic revival of the Danish film industry and the interest this has generated both nationally and internationally in the future of the Danish film' and is as much concerned with the future *consumers* of Danish films as their producers (Station Next 2006). Zentropa has also been involved in assisting with the film and multimedia course at a local secondary school.

Trier's *Open Film Town* statement framed Filmbyen as a site for learning and exchange. Furthermore, it suggested that the open attitude to discursive practice being instigated at Filmbyen had been made possible by Denmark's recent international success with the Dogma films:

[t]hat we have every chance of becoming the central site for the discussion of film theory and practice is clear from the vast interest generated in connection with the Dogma 95 manifesto and films... If an up-to-date forum for discussing the medium belongs anywhere in the world at present, it is surely in the home country of Dogma 95!

(Trier 1999)

Setting aside for one moment the visibility of Danish cinema since Dogma '95, the declared respect for transparency and information developed in the broadest sense at Filmbyen has ostensibly been one reason why the production base has attracted such a wide range of visitors. Visitors to Filmbyen include researchers, politicians, investors, filmmakers and journalists. Zentropa, in particular, is a draw for the press as Peter Albæk Jensen has been a very public, and eccentric, spokesperson in Denmark for his company and the film industry in general.

Fronted by Jensen, 'ringmaster of the Zentropa circus' (Stevenson 2002: 167), Zentropa is renowned in Denmark for displaying a rather immodest and sometimes controversial image. Internationally, though, where Zentropa as a 'brand' is known mainly by those working in the film business or journalists, this is largely immaterial. Zentropa's high production output, wide participation in co-productions and reputation for making films of 'quality' mean that the public image of Jensen and Trier is more anecdotal than influential. Trust Film Sales, which handles sales for Zentropa, Nimbus and Memfis Film (a Swedish film company which the director Lucas Moodysson works within), describes its role as one of ensuring that producers have 'a big film in a small company'. Trust's publicity offers distributors a 'brand guarantee', showcasing only 'high quality' and 'innovative, hip films' at the various international festivals and markets they attend (Trust Film Sales 2006). It is interesting to note that even though Nimbus is represented by Trust with regards to sales, and in this regard its marketing and publicity is generally consistent with Zentropa, they claim to have a different approach to film production than Zentropa does.

Nimbus remains a small company in contrast to its expanding neighbour.

Numerically, producers dominate Nimbus's staff roll and although each producer has a specialist area (such as development or international networking) I am informed that all see their primary focus as creative, developing stories and attracting 'talent' which might traditionally have gone to large companies. They perceive themselves to be less corporate than Zentropa.⁶ Nimbus cannot offer equipment rental or production facilities as an investment for co-productions and so staff claim they must remain more nationally focused in terms of their activities. A producer for Nimbus, Lars Bredo Rahbek, explained the difference in these terms:

[m]ost of the producers here believe we could not work at Zentropa; the mentality's different. They are extremely shrewd with publicity, they also have a very cock-sure attitude and they live the role of the old-fashioned cigar-smoking producer to the hilt. They would be on TV shows, on quiz shows and things like that... Most of us are involved in politics, but not in quiz-games.

(Rahbek 2004, pers. comm., 15 September 2004)

Although Rahbek is negative about some aspects of Zentropa's company profile, he also believes that achievements have been made in both organisations. He describes the Filmbyen environment as one in which people 'feel integrated' in the filmmaking process, even those with administrative roles, and that much of the collaboration which occurs at Filmbyen is positive: '[i]t is like a commune, to an extent. We are fierce competitors, but we are also friendly competitors'. Many of the participants in my research who were working in Filmbyen conveyed similar sentiments. For instance, the director Lone Scherfig told me that the best thing about Filmbyen was being 'among

friends' which ensured that competition amongst projects and companies was 'at an inspiring level' (Scherfig 2004, pers. comm., 16 September 2004).

The ease with which companies and individuals in Filmbyen collaborate can in part be explained by the presence of a number of Danish Film School graduates, who have experienced a common education in filmmaking and who are beginning to dominate film businesses in Denmark. As the Film School students create graduation films in groups, they create networks through teambuilding which many carry through into their professional lives (Moritzen 2004, pers. comm., 8 September 2004).⁷ But, both in terms of collaboration and the association of Nimbus and Zentropa with the Filmbyen concept, the most cohesive moment for the Filmbyen inhabitants appears to have been the creation and success of Dogma '95. Significantly, all of the Danish Dogma films so far have involved Zentropa and/or Nimbus in their production so there is an argument for regarding Dogma '95 as not purely a Danish but, more specifically, a Filmbyen initiative.

The career of Zentropa's co-founder and film director Lars von Trier has been punctuated by a series of performative gestures which have, to varying degrees, drawn attention to his films (for example, see the three pre-Dogma manifestos in Björkman [2003], Trier's performance art project *Psychomobile # 1: The World Clock*, as documented in Jesper Jargil's film *De udstillede* (The Exhibited, 2000), and the project Advance Front, supposedly devised by von Trier and initially publicised under his name, which consists of three Danish-Scottish co-productions made in Scotland. The initial and deliberate announcement of the Dogma manifesto to an international festival audience at Cannes was a typical public declaration of intent by Trier, whose various artist's manifestos have purposefully pre-empted and invited interpretations of his work. Trier's

change of producers, following the departure of Vibeke Windeløv after ten years, is one of the most recent occasions for a press release which features Trier's 'Statement of Revitality' [sic], the declaratory tone of which is consistent with other Lars von Trier 'manifestos' including *Dogma '95* and *Project Open Film Town*. With this kind of definitively authored publicity in mind, Peter Albæk Jensen has said that Lars von Trier is 95 percent of Zentropa's image (Jensen 2004, pers. comm., 15 September 2004). Although this may not be entirely true, such a statement does purposefully underline the importance an auteur figure can command in a mid-sized European film company.

The centrality of Lars von Trier to maintaining Zentropa's profile abroad rather than solely in Denmark is especially significant. While Trier as a personality is universally known in Denmark, this does not translate into popularity at the box office. The films produced by Zentropa that have had the greatest commercial success with domestic audiences are in the Danish language and directed by women, such as *Italiensk for begyndere* (Italian for Beginners/*Dogma* #12, dir. Lone Scherfig, 2000), *Elsker dig for evigt* (Open Hearts/*Dogma* #28, dir. Susanne Bier, 2002) and *Brødre* (Brothers, dir. Susanne Bier, 2003). At the time of writing, Lars von Trier has released two feature films in Danish (*Epidemic* [1987] - which also uses the English language - and *Idioterne* [1998]) and six in English (one of these, *Europa* [1991] also uses German). With the exception of *Dancer in the Dark* (2000) it is some of Trier's Danish-language work for television, principally *Riget & Riget II* (The Kingdom, 1994 & The Kingdom II, 1997), which has proved to be his most profitable project in economic terms and which secured his recognition in Denmark. Although performed in the Danish language, *Riget* sold to a number of countries for television broadcast including Sweden, Germany, France, the

UK, the USA and Japan. It was later remade in English, transposed to an American setting, in a series written and largely financed by the American popular horror novelist and screenwriter Stephen King (*Kingdom Hospital*, 2004).

Since *Idioterne*, Lars von Trier's focus has been firmly on producing English-language feature films for an international 'art house' market. Although Trier has his creative base in Filmbyen, the means of production and market for his films have mostly been international. The costs of his productions make large co-financing arrangements a necessity with his producer sometimes having to go to great lengths to secure even relatively small investments (Windeløv 2004, pers. comm., 20 September 2004). In turn, the need to recoup such costs means that distribution of these films in every major territory is crucial. Lars von Trier films are not, however, about immediate financial gains as far as Zentropa is concerned. As Vibeke Windeløv, Trier's producer for ten years, pointed out, a greater profit margin could be achieved if Trier regularly produced films shot in Denmark and employed Danish actors. A sales representative from Trust Film Sales also pointed out that it is not such a huge challenge to sell a Danish-language film to distributors of films for the international 'art house' market because *nationality* (and here I think there is an interesting conflation of nationality with language) does not matter to these buyers so much as the story, the director and, occasionally, the cast. In addition, the risk involved in making and selling a Danish-language film is small and the rewards, if the film does well, can be good. Those films which are difficult to sell internationally are the more obviously generic films seeking a mainstream audience, regardless of whether they are in Danish or English or another language, and films which are not offered a 'festival platform' (Rosner 2004, pers. comm., 17 September 2004).

Lars von Trier, of course, is almost always guaranteed some sort of festival premiere for his films, which in turn influences the way the films are critically positioned and received. Mads Egmont Christiansen mentions in his discussion on the marketing of Dogma '95 that the first two Dogma films, *Festen* and *Idioterne*, were offered Cannes premieres because festival director Gilles Jacob admired Trier's work (2003: 193). Christiansen describes how notions of artistic value, attached to Trier and, by association, his company Zentropa, had a positive effect on Dogma's marketability. The positioning of Trier as an auteur has helped to support Dogma internationally, the Trier connection securing media interest, funding and exhibition for the first Dogma films and serving as a kind of quality guarantee.⁸

The combination of Danish auteur and English-language film is unproblematic in terms of the market for Lars von Trier films as the institutional film package is still clearly readable and its audiences predetermined. Trier has said that his decision to make English-language films was influenced by two factors; firstly, the films he knew best were in English (American) and, secondly, he thought his films might reach a wider audience if they were filmed in English (Björkman 2003: 66). In consideration of the first reason, one can see how Trier's English-language films have been characterised by formal and thematic preoccupations with replicating and transforming Hollywood genres (the thriller/film noir [*Forbrydelsens element*], melodrama [*Breaking the Waves*], the musical [*Dancer in the Dark*]) which is, bearing in mind Trier's positioning in the 'art film' critical milieu, as much an oppositional act as it is the mark of a cinephile. The apotheosis of these cinematic postures towards Hollywood came with *Dancer in the Dark* which darkly represented rural America using the Swedish countryside, but it was

Dogville which caused consternation, especially amongst American critics, for its creation of an American imaginary. The opening of this second critical treatise on American community and its myths coincided with the first months of the invasion of Iraq and the film's Cannes premiere was publicised in relation to Trier's apparently anti-American opinions. In the case of both *Dancer in the Dark* and *Dogville*, Trier was criticised for making films about a country he had never been to. His defence has been that he does not need to visit America to know what it was like. American culture, through media and globalisation, has colonised his subconscious (see Björkman 244-5).

Trier's pioneering into English language territory independent of Hollywood assistance has in a sense given authorisation for other Danish filmmakers to make films in English outside of Hollywood. Danish policy on film subsidies was apparently adjusted to accommodate Trier's desire to make films in English with Zentropa. It is widely accepted that the Danish Film Institute and government changed the wording of the 1982 Film Act, which had prohibited the awards of funds to films not in the Danish language, after the realisation that Lars von Trier's English-language production *Forbrydelsens element* (The Element of Crime, 1984) was drawing international attention towards Danish cinema. The new Film Act (1989) specified that a film would be considered Danish for funding purposes if a Danish production company was the main producer and, additionally, the film is either in Danish or can be seen as an innovative and artistic contribution to film culture (Hjort 2005: 12-13). In fact, the DFI had already supported the film's production, regardless of the Act, so the change of wording after the event may have been something of a damage limitation plan (see Björkman 2003: 66-7) but the alteration of the Act had longer lasting practical and symbolic effect for it ensured

Danish filmmakers would have the option of making films in English in Denmark. This opportunity, I shall discuss in a moment, was decisive for continuing the careers of certain successful Danish directors in Denmark and discouraging their possible emigration to Hollywood.

The initial structuring of Zentropa around the will and reputation of Lars von Trier since its establishment in 1991, with the early funding for the company being supplied by Trier's work on commercials, has had a significant impact on how the company has built up its profile for feature film production. Zentropa has paid special attention to the international 'art house' market as this has been the dominant channel through which to distribute and exhibit Lars von Trier films, both nationally and overseas. However, with the continuation of *Dogma*, a pivotal moment being the unexpected box office success of *Italiensk for begyndere*, Zentropa has managed to oversee the production and sales of 'crossover' films.

Crossover films traverse local mainstream, festival and international markets which can result in a film being exhibited in both art house and mainstream cinemas. It is worth quoting Peter Albæk Jensen's perception of Zentropa's output at length in this regard:

[o]ur aim is to make, you could say, entertaining art. We will not make mainstream films because, the times we have tried it, we have lost so much money on it. And we will not make the arty-farty movie because that we have also lost a lot of money on. An art house film where you're not bored, that's our aim. And we always try to say that the film has to be edgy in one way or another... [W]e have to have an edgy topic, an edgy way of shooting it, or whatever when

we do a film. Because that's also a way to position the film a little bit later, that we get attention because its shot only on a floor with chalk lines or whatever. So we do not need to have the big advertising budget because our audience, the art house audience, they do read newspapers and they follow whatever the journalist will find interesting.

(Jensen 2004, pers. comm., 15 September 2004)

But while Jensen frequently refers here to the 'art house' audience, and infers the influence of Lars von Trier's projects on the company's image and commitment to innovation (and marketability) by mentioning chalk lines on the floor (the trademark set design for Trier's 'American Trilogy'), he later revealed that he does not see the art house as the only market for Zentropa films. Jensen pointed out that the majority of tickets for *Brødre* were sold 'in the [Danish] provinces', a reflection of there being a relatively large market share for Danish language films in Denmark at that time.⁹ Importantly, he does not take this audience support as a given but sees it as an achievement earned by Filmbyen and Zentropa: 'we have really educated the audience... we have really met the people' (Jensen 2004, pers. comm., 15 September 2004).

Jensen also spoke with me about the 'loyalty' of the audience for Zentropa films outside of Denmark which represents a small (art house) market but is spread across many countries. There is a feeling from Jensen that in both domestic and export cases the audiences for films produced by Zentropa have some prior knowledge of and investment in the productions, having learned to enjoy the particular kind of cinema experience which Zentropa productions offer – perhaps the 'edgy' quality he is keen to highlight. However, trusting in the audience's loyalty remains a high risk strategy and has at times

resulted in substantial disappointment especially in the production of English language films. In 2002 and 2003 a number of English language films produced principally by Danish companies and directed by well-established Danish directors were released in Denmark: *Wilbur Wants to Kill Himself* (dir. Lone Scherfig, 2002), *P.O.V* (dir. Tómas Gislason, 2002) *It's All About Love* (dir. Thomas Vinterberg, 2003), *Skagerrak* (dir. Søren Kragh-Jacobsen, 2003), *Fear X* (dir. Nicolas Winding Refn, 2003) and *Dogville* (dir. Lars von Trier, 2003). All but *Fear X* and *P.O.V* were produced at Filmbyen; *Wilbur* and *Dogville* were produced by Zentropa and *It's All About Love* and *Skagerrak* by Nimbus. Significantly, the directors of the four Filmbyen films (including Lars von Trier who nonetheless should be marked as something of a special case) had each produced critically acclaimed and lucrative Dogma films and, as a result of their Dogma successes, had become well-known names both in Denmark and with certain audiences abroad immediately prior to making these English-language productions.

In Denmark, attendance for these films was very disappointing. In 2003, Kragh-Jacobsen's English-language film *Skagerrak* sold around 40, 000 tickets in Denmark (Danish Film Institute 2004: 5) which was compared to a figure of 350, 861 for his Dogma film *Mifune* in 1999 (Danish Film Institute 2000: 5). *Its All About Love* sold slightly more in its year of release (2003), around 51,000 (Danish Film Institute 2004: 5), but this was a disastrous figure compared to expectations and the film's substantial budget (nearly twelve times more expensive than any film produced by Nimbus before [Rahbek 2004, pers. comm., 15 September 2004]). Refn, however, who had made 'cult' (but extremely popular) Danish language action films before, suffered particularly badly at the Danish box office, with *Fear X* attracting under 6,000 spectators (Danish Film

Institute 2004: 5). P.O.V also struggled catastrophically to entice Danes in 2002, drawing only 1,460 viewers (Danish Film Institute 2004: 5). *Wilbur*, which was co-produced with the Scottish company Sigma and, like *Skagerrak*, was set in Scotland, fared the best out of all the group in Denmark, selling 130, 700 tickets in 2002; this was around 20,000 more than *Dogville* sold the following year (Danish Film Institute 2004: 5).

The availability of these sorts of figures have lead Marianne Krogh Anderson (2004) to conclude that Danish cinemagoers will go to see Danish films so long as they are in Danish. In response to this, Lone Scherfig has expressed concern over Denmark's 'nationalist' attitudes and hopes that the situation whereby 'it is harder for a Danish director to get support for an artistic English language film than for a commercial children's film in Danish' is not aggravated because of the lesser successes of Danish English language films in recent years (Anderson 2004, my translation). For Scherfig, the experience of making *Wilbur* became a conscious attempt to distinguish her work nationally and internationally from other Danish films about thirty-somethings and to make an 'edgy' film, following the Zentropa/Trust sales pitch. The decision to shoot in English arose partly out of circumstance as the stars of *Italiensk for begyndere*, whom she wished to play parts in a Danish-language *Wilbur*, became too expensive to hire after the success of the *Dogma* film. Setting the film in Scotland meant that Scherfig could 'go to the top shelf' for British actors rather than compromising in Denmark (Scherfig 2004, pers. comm., 16 September 2004).

While Scherfig says she was 'relieved that [Danish critics] forgave me for playing for a foreign team', the potential for another *Italiensk for begyndere* was, according to exhibition figures, neither accepted nor realised by Danish audiences. Although in 2001

Lone Scherfig's Danish-language Dogma film *Italiensk for begyndere* had sold over half a million tickets in Denmark alone (Danish Film Institute 2002:5), Scherfig was in 2004 hoping to find financing for two further English-language productions set, again, in Scotland. Scherfig discussed one of these productions with me at the time of my last visit but she appears now to be working on a Danish comedy and an English-language production set in Nazi Germany, if the Internet Movie Database is considered reliable (accessed 26 February 2006).

Søren Kragh-Jacobsen's Dogma film, *Mifune*, had been the biggest box office success for Nimbus since the company was established and his next film, *Skagerrak*, although not a Dogma film, could be seen as aiming for similar success in that it was made with a sizable, 'crossover' audience in mind. Lars Bredo Rahbek described *Skagerrak* as an experiment of importing 'all the good things that Scandinavian or Danish films could have – quirky storyline, interesting characters, offbeat atmosphere' into an English-language setting (Rahbek 2004, pers. comm., 15 September 2004). However, *Skagerrak* was very difficult for distributors, exhibitors and audiences to position because it was in English. In Germany this problem meant Nimbus losing a normally strong audience for Danish films (Rahbek 2004, pers. comm., 15 September 2004). The loss of the German audience for *Skagerrak* is rather surprising considering that Germany has potential for flexibility when exhibiting foreign language films; where financially feasible, successful subtitled films can then be dubbed into German and play in mainstream theatres to larger audiences. The release of a German dubbed version of *Italiensk for begyndere* ensured that the film received 816,000 admissions in Germany (Bureau 2004). The editor of the German film magazine *Cinema* explained that Danish

films have been popular in Germany since *Festen*; in Germany, the editor claims, there is a 'large and steadfast group of fans for Danish films' who think that Danish films are well made, 'small' films that tell universal stories (Helmut Fiebig cited in Bureau 2004, my translation). The failure of *Skagerrak* to secure German interest suggests, therefore, that the problem was one of placement. If *Skagerrak* was unpopular with German art house audiences (who would see the film subtitled but would likely also have a good understanding of English), it would be unlikely to cross into mainstream cinemas and the highly competitive, Hollywood dominated market for dubbed films.

Although *It's All About Love* sold to 120 countries, and as such was the most widely sold Danish film not to have been directed by Lars von Trier, it was unpopular with audiences and divided critical opinion. The film was described in a British newspaper article on the Danish English-language cinema trend as a 'fantastical misfire' (Rosenthal 2004). The commercial failure was surprising as the film featured well-known film stars, approved by investors, and the script had been carefully written with an international audience in mind. The film's Hollywood stars, Clare Danes, Joaquim Phoenix and Sean Penn had been attracted to the project because of Vinterberg's reputation after *Festen* and the unusual script, which explored fame and disenchantment with celebrity. The script had been redrafted during the development period of seeking out potential investors at film festivals and markets, and took on board comments from readers in the film business. For *Nimbus*, the project was designed to keep Vinterberg working with them after the success of *Festen* and to ensure he didn't depart for Hollywood. As Rahbek, the producer of *It's All About Love*, explained, any deviation from Danish or Scandinavian storylines would only occur for 'fledgling international

directors' and, seeing Vinterberg as one of these, '[Nimbus] set up a strategy, which was to create a platform which would enable a director with Thomas' promise to stay in Denmark, doing whatever he wanted' (2004, pers. comm., 15 September 2004).

Nimbus had profited even more than Zentropa from the early Dogma days, having produced two internationally acclaimed and award-winning 'local' films, *Festen* and *Mifune*, which featured Danish language, settings and cultural references. Of course, one of the main outcomes of the Dogma event was the entry of Thomas Vinterberg into the critical canon. This was very significant for Nimbus which had, since its emergence in the early 1990s, supported Vinterberg with the vision that building the career of an auteur figure could be capitalised upon for the company's prestige and international recognition. *It's All About Love* followed a pattern demonstrated by Zentropa with respect to utilising its alliance with Lars von Trier whose film budgets, even for his Dogma film, are the largest in Denmark and vastly out of proportion in comparison to other films produced by the company.

Trier's career, or the use of his 'brand', has, as we have seen, frequently been the driving force behind Zentropa's business plans with the staging of Dogma appearing as a solution for the company to cope with rising production costs and a lack of funding. Dogma saw Trier scale down production and make a lower-budget, Danish language feature film while ensuring that his status as an auteur filmmaker would be maintained. Dogma achieved the desirable effect of attracting interest in Danish filmmaking and encouraging investment in Danish companies which would facilitate the production of more expensive films. Following a number of disappointing performances for films produced by Zentropa and, perhaps, a reduction in interest in Lars von Trier's work as a

result of *Manderlay* (perceived to be a problematic repetition of *Dogville*), Trier has announced that, in an effort to 'revitalise', his next project will be a Danish-language comedy, the most popular type of production for Danish audiences:

I will aim to reduce the scope of my productions in regards to funding, technology, the size of the crew, and particularly casting... my films will be promoted considerably less glamorously than at present, which also means without World Premieres at prestigious, exotic festivals.

(Trier 2006)

It is important to note here that what appears to be a creative decision taken by Trier may well be influenced, as *Dogma* was, by the financial conditions in his company.

Lars von Trier is regarded as a unique case in Denmark by the Danish film community, certainly by everyone I spoke to. Marianne Moritzen at the Danish Film Institute insists, 'when we're talking about directors and English language films, we don't talk about Lars, because he is special' (Moritzen 2004, pers. comm., 8 September 2004). Trier's profile as an international auteur is guaranteed, it seems, regardless of what language his films are in. Nimbus, I think it is fair to say, had hoped that the same would be the case for Thomas Vinterberg, and the reception of *It's All About Love* could be read as something of a test of Vinterberg's critical and international profile as much as it was of the film itself. It is significant that Vinterberg's project after *It's All About Love* was another English-language film set in the USA but written by Lars von Trier (*Dear Wendy*, 2005, see figure 3). This collaboration was, I think, a meaningful attempt to continue the positioning of Vinterberg in the international arena. Indeed, both *Dear Wendy* and Lars von Trier's second 'American trilogy' film, *Manderlay* (2005),

performed fairly poorly at the Danish box office in 2005, attracting ticket sales of 14, 826 and 21, 329 respectively (Danish Film Institute 2005). The Danish English language films made at Filmbyen do not meet expectations of mainstream Danish national cinema (performed in Danish with a recognised Danish cast and identifiably Danish subject matter), which is perhaps one reason they struggled to sell well at home. Additionally, they could not easily be positioned as 'national' cinema which poses a potential problem for marketing films emerging from a small nation abroad. Should all of these English language films thus inevitably be categorised as 'international' films?



Figure 3. Bill Pullman (Sheriff Krugsby) and Jamie Bell (Dick Dandelion) in *Dear Wendy*

Image from www.dfi.dk/dfi/undervisning/dearwendy/4.html

It might be useful to consider again the discursive traditions surrounding the idea of internationalism in cinema as the idea that films which do not fit preconceived ideas of what looks and sounds like national cinema must be international would appear to be a pretty derivative conclusion. With respect to European films, internationalism is a feature

frequently evoked in the critical reception of auteur film directors, as a sign of their universal currency, and in the commendation of perceptible or anticipated film movements or new waves. It is important to note that often the internationalism of these subjects is punctuated by references to the national contexts from which they emerged – Lars von Trier as Denmark's *enfant terrible* or Dogma '95 as the crest of Denmark's new wave. Internationalism in these contexts is also associated with exhibition at film festivals which are key markets for selling 'art films' films worldwide and for raising the profile of films made outside Hollywood even if at the same time it is Hollywood distributors who are organising the publicity of a number of these films. As we saw in chapter 5, there is a discursive emphasis at film festivals on notions of authenticity which is another feature of the art cinema discourse so often appealed to on behalf of films not in the English language (and American 'independent' films) as a way of differentiating them positively from Hollywood. At the same time, popular Hollywood cinema has pre-eminent international status due to its business practices and circulation.

Recently, an alternative conceptualisation of non-Hollywood cinema produced and consumed internationally has arisen in the idea of 'transnational' cinema, which is distinct from the national and from the international but influenced by both. Transnational cinema, as Mette Hjort describes it, is, unlike national cinema, a practical reality not a projected vision. Hjort describes transnational cinema as narratologically characterised by 'newfound tolerance for cultural hybridity' (2005: 161) and, in the case of Danish production, it is a cinema practice which has arisen from the continued interest from Northern European countries in collaborating professionally with one another. In Hjort's assessment, the popularity of the English-language Nordic co-production *I am*

Dina (dir. Ole Bornedal, 2002) indicates that Scandinavian audiences will 'invest in transnational Nordic identities' if they cannot experience 'national' identification watching a co-production (2005: 178).

I am Dina, a Norwegian-Danish-Swedish co-production, is a heritage drama set in Norway and featuring well-known actors from each of the countries represented in production which succeeded to draw sizable crowds from each of these countries in spite of the film being acted in English (in Denmark it sold 260, 551 tickets in 2002, Danish Film Institute 2003b). For Hjort, this example suggests Nordic audiences will accept a local film where all the characters speak in 'accented' English, in a kind of fantasy of complete linguistic comprehensibility across language groups (2005: 188). While, for me, Hjort overemphasises aspects of cultural commonality (and, the suggestion is, artistic affinity) amongst co-producers and audiences in transnational contexts using *I am Dina* as an example, her discussion does flag up some interesting points about linguistic and cultural convergence and differentiation in the Nordic countries. For example, she argues that it is harder for audiences to be supportive of a film made by local companies in which native English speakers are presented as normative (2005: 188). Interestingly, Hjort evokes the same theme of loyalty regarding audiences which Jensen communicated to me, a conviction that audiences will respond well to the promise of cultural or aesthetic familiarity based on their prior experiences of similar products and some knowledge of and investment in the production context. In the case of *I am Dina*, Hjort says, audiences in Scandinavia were guaranteed an experiment in pan-Nordic culture as signified by the setting, story, genre and actors but also, perhaps, enhanced by some public

acknowledgement of the production background and by the use of English as a cultural-linguistic leveller.

In an otherwise carefully considered article on Danish-produced English-language films, Jack Stevenson (2003), an American critic living in Denmark, asks 'why are talented directors from non-English-speaking countries so infrequently able to infuse their "crossover" films with the same uniqueness and originality that characterize their native-language works?'. By setting up the persistent problem of the non-profitability of the films in this way, Stevenson reveals not only his negative assumption that filmmakers who are not native English speakers cannot be successful with English-language products but he also implies that films made in the language of the producing country (and, in this case, defined as 'non- English-speaking') are, *by virtue of their linguistic content*, more inventive than English-language films. By contrast, he suggests, films not made in the producing country's native language are inauthentic, impure even. Clearly, Stevenson's assessment is only supportable in the context of foreign markets showing subtitled versions – there can be no 'unique' linguistic differentiation for a Danish-language film screened in Denmark or exhibited abroad in dubbed versions. Stevenson's opinion seems to support the idea that the calculated production of crossover cinema entails greater financial risk, particularly as larger budgets are often deployed so that the films can look 'more mainstream' and because, without a clearly predefined exhibition sector in mind, the films are harder to market.¹⁰

Along similar lines to Stevenson, Hjort (1996) suggests that drawing attention to 'Danish cinema' and engaging in a 'politics of recognition' is only possible if the films produced in Denmark are somehow distinctive and thus recognisable (or, perhaps,

recognisably Danish?). A recent publication featuring articles on Danish film seen from abroad (France, Japan, U.K. and USA) suggest that Dogma and Lars von Trier have been most decisive in drawing reactions towards Danish films by international critics and audiences (Toftgaard & Hawkesworth 2003). Profile and packaging is all-important for European films seeking both national and international audiences. With regards to both the domestic market and international audiences, the question for distributors, exhibitors, critics and audiences alike looking at the Danish English-language films was 'what on earth should we do with *this sort* of national cinema?'

In a European context, transnational cinema might be understood as a more positive formulation of co-productions and their consumption than appeared in the early 1990s with the term 'Europudding'. While the notion of an 'international' cinema is more concretely associated with art house exhibition, the transnational can perhaps be associated with the concept of the crossover film and a greater variety of possible exhibition and reception contexts. At its point(s) of consumption, transnational cinema transcends territoriality and straightforward national identifications. In terms of production, 'transnational' entails recognition of the creative implications of international collaboration, rather than their effacement, and sensitivity towards the possibility of cultural reformation occurring in the process.

One could criticise the Danish experiment in producing films in English by arguing that it reinforces the perception that films in minor languages are unable to count as popular international cinema. The practice appears to concede defeat to the presumption that 'foreign language films' are, by definition, films not in English, that they have limited sales potential and that they are a minority interest. An issue here is the

apparent legitimisation of English as a prestige language and, centrally, a commercial language (hence the oft seen criticism from film fans describing European filmmakers as having 'sold out' to Hollywood). In some ways, the experiences of Vinterberg, Scherfig and Kragh-Jacobsen replicate a common career trajectory demonstrated by so many European filmmakers whereby directors 'progress' to working in English-language productions (usually Hollywood) once they have experienced international recognition.

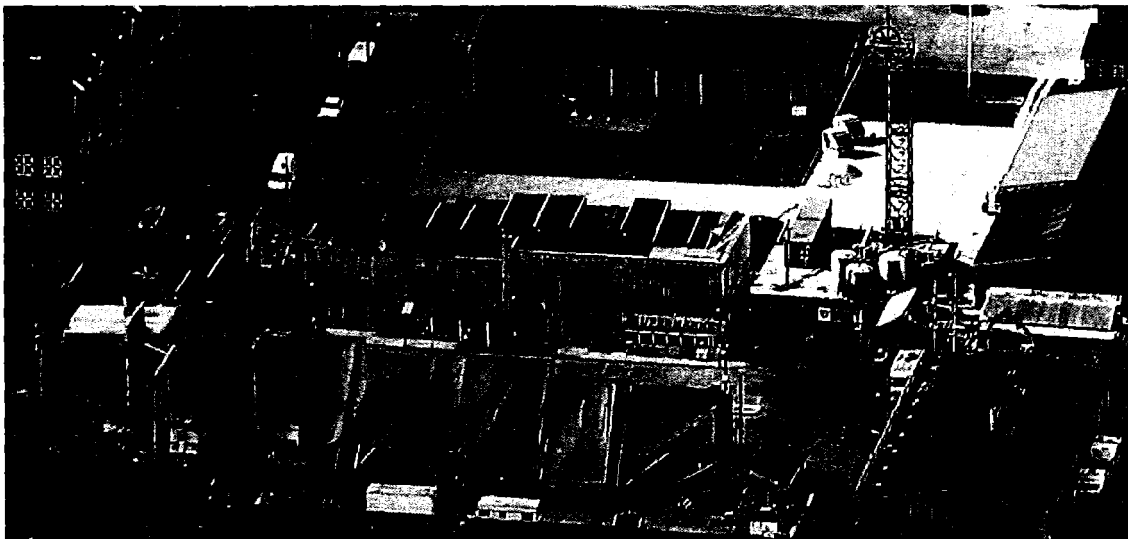


Figure 4. Small-town Americana in the heart of Filmbyen. The set of *Dear Wendy*.

On the other hand, by entering into co-production agreements with other small nations in Europe, these Danish filmmakers can be seen to resist the monopoly Hollywood companies hold on English-language filmmaking. By filming in English in Denmark and using Filmbyen as a production location (indeed, most of *Wilbur* and *Dear Wendy* were filmed here, see figure 4), the filmmakers remove the desirability for Hollywood to remake the films, resist their assimilation into the Hollywood system and

respond to the economic needs of the indigenous production companies which have supported (and benefited from) their careers. One can argue that the Filmbyen companies attempted to defy the opportunism of American-led monopoly capitalism and to correct the imbalance of power in the cultural economy between native speakers of (American) English and those linguistically marginal. While there were economic reasons for the experiment in English-language filmmaking and the films produced were conceived as potential crossover successes, by filming in the 'coloniser's' language, the Danish filmmakers did create a 'minor cinema' which tested the boundaries of European cinema's marketability outside the conceptual limits of the national and the art house.

Chapter 7

Educating the Citizen-Consumer: Foreign-Language Films and the 'Europa Cinemas' Network

In this chapter I will examine how the art cinema discourse which has dominated approaches to European foreign-language films in the UK fares in today's changing and increasingly visible European Union. Throughout the thesis I have been cautious with my use of the term 'European cinema' because I believe it to be, on a theoretical level, somewhat troubling. As I suggested in chapter 4, it is something of a wonder that this term gained currency in academic film studies at all in the UK given the repression or, at least, the deliberate avoidance of studies on European narrative cinemas amongst the intellectual vanguard of the 1970s. There may be a relativist argument which says that European cinema is no more problematic than any other category in film studies. However, I still think it is important to recognise the politics attached to constituting the European in cultural (as much as other) spheres. Although it is not an aspect which I have discussed in detail in the thesis, I acknowledge that the growth of interest in so-called postcolonialist criticism (by writers such as Homi Bhabha, Edward Said and Gayatri Spivak) in European and American universities has made it difficult to justify the siphoning off of 'Europe' as a culturally or even geographically self-contained teleological reality.

I am quite aware of the influence critiques of Eurocentrism have had on my own framing of 'European' cinemas and at times, in this and other projects, I have

experienced this as a significant struggle in terms of justifying the 'European' focus of the research to myself. Nonetheless, I consider it to be a positive development that it is now difficult to avoid the increasingly pressing and dynamic problem of Europe as an enterprise of ideological construction. I have worked with the principle that our relationship to the term 'European' requires defamiliarisation, a distancing which will allow us to see how and where the concept is used, before we can attempt to address the question of classification. One way of doing this, I have been suggesting, is by examining instances in which European cinema is positioned as 'foreign-language films' as part of a discursive tradition which commodifies 'uniqueness' in films (language, culture, aesthetic innovation) as well as supposedly 'universal' characteristics (treatment of the human condition, quality) in the name of art.

This chapter is primarily concerned with the European Commission's communications on cinema and language and I want to suggest ways in which the policies in these cultural areas might be complementary. I will be discussing how European cultural policies, including directives on cinema, reflect the European polity's aspirations for an integrated Europe. I will argue that European policies on cinema do pay consideration to language difference in 'European cinema' and that this implies the development of an ethics of cinema consumption. Taking education in cinemas as a focal point, this chapter will discuss the extent to which cinema exhibitors in Scotland who receive European subsidies can be seen to engage with the cultural aims of policy-forming bodies such as the European Commission.

Examining policies on funding European cinema is one way of revealing how the definition of a 'European' film might be ideologically circumscribed. 'European cinema'

exists at least in as far as regulated subsidies have been provided for the creation and continuance of such a venture and it is correctly assumed that the primary purpose of making European funding available is to sustain film businesses in Europe rather than to fulfil cultural ideals. Bill Grantham has argued that the European Union's audiovisual support programme, MEDIA Plus, has made explicit its industrial reasons for the provision of subsidies in a communication which states that '*exploiting* European cultural diversity' will help to sustain the audiovisual industries in Europe (MEDIA Plus COM [1999] 658 final, cited in Grantham 2004: 189, my emphasis). If there are cultural benefits attained as a result of this programme, Grantham suggests, then these are accidental (2004: 188). But, as we saw in chapter 5 – and this is a point that Grantham also concedes – identifying *cultural* reasons for cinema subsidy is essential in the context of the international agreements taking place in the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Without appeals to culture, subsidies for audiovisual services would be ruled invalid because distortive to trade. However, with the exponential increase over the last decade of a range of cultural directives from the European Commission one has to wonder whether recourse to discourses on the cultural importance of cinema has really solely to do with the industrial benefits of subsidised cinema or whether it might also reflect a wider ideological plan with deliberate cultural consequences.

In order to explore that last proposition, we need a broad understanding of who or what the European institutions are and what sort of engagements they have with cultural fields and with cinema. The two central organisational bodies which provide subsidies for cinema culture in Europe are the European Union and the Council of Europe. The European Union has its origins in the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)

which was principally established in 1951 to aid the economic and industrial regeneration of post-World War II France and Western Germany. In 1958 the European Economic Community was formed with the signing of the Treaty of Rome (the EC Treaty, 1957) by nations which were already members of the ECSC (France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands & Luxemburg). This Community grew in successive waves of national accession and consequently adapted to new economic challenges and ambitions.¹ It was not until the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty (1992), which named the 'European Union' and created the goal of a single European currency, that 'culture' was officially recognised as an aspect of integration. Subsequent amendments of this Treaty on European Union (Treaty of Amsterdam [1997] and Treaty of Nice [2001]) have expanded the cultural dimension of the Union. The Union currently has a membership of 25 states following its largest expansion in 2004 which integrated ten new members including former communist states from East Central Europe. The European Commission provides legislation for the European Union, regulates competition within the EU and negotiates international trade agreements on behalf of the EU. The European Parliament, which is democratically elected, has control of the EU budget and can amend or veto policy produced by the Commission but it cannot create policy at the outset.

The primary focus of this chapter is on documentation produced by the European Commission for the European Union but it is important to acknowledge that the Commission's cultural rhetoric frequently corresponds with that produced by another European institution, the Council of Europe (COE). John Coleman attempts to distance the Council of Europe from the European Union in his book *The Conscience of Europe* (1999). Coleman's book features a statement from a former Head of Economic and Social

Affairs in the COE who names the EU as 'the single most divisive factor in Europe' (in Coleman 1999: 83). In Coleman's opinion, the EU is 'based on commerce and greed' while the Council of Europe 'appeals to the heart through the idea of the European family' (1999: 33, 22). When the Council of Europe was established in 1949 it had a strong cultural mandate from the start. In contrast to the Coal and Steel Community, the COE saw the 'reunification' of Europe after the war as a process of generating positive, aspirational social values for people who had experienced the divisive effects of warfare and the Holocaust. With the formation of a new Europe with a social conscience in its sights, the COE immediately drew up a convention on Human Rights (1950) which led to the establishment of a European Court of Human Rights. The COE currently has 46 member states.

The European Union claims to support 'liberty, democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law' (EC 1997), however the 'fundamental freedoms' have been granted to citizens in order to assist the Union's economic aims through the '[f]ree movement of persons, goods, services and capital, and freedom of establishment' within the EU (EC 2003c: Article 4:1). By contrast, the Council of Europe's backing of democracy and international co-operation is supposedly a reflection of its desire to enhance solidarity and social cohesion in Europe rather than economic competition (COE 1999: Articles 2 & 3). On the face of it, the different histories of the two institutions and the discourses which have emerged from their particular contexts seem rather obviously divergent – the one primarily concerned with economic growth, the other with human rights. And yet, the two 'communities' continue to operate in a similar fashion with respect to constructing a European imaginary; not

only do they often employ the same vocabulary to describe a pan-European culture but they also share many similar cultural objectives, particularly in terms of educating people to identify with their transnational visions. There is also a degree of collaboration in culture sectors, as exemplified by the Europa Cinemas network which, while controlled and majority funded by the EU, has had its aims and objectives agreed upon by both the European Commission and the Council of Europe (Eurimages 2004).

The convergence of both institutions' proclaimed cultural values has become evident since the EU increased its cultural agenda. While it is significant that the Council of Europe speaks of its value system in terms of *rights* (see COE 1997: 165) whereas the EU discusses its values in terms of an 'attachment to principles' (EC 1997), that is to say, *obligations*, both institutions seem to be in agreement as to what at least some 'European' values might be. The themes of cultural heritage, linguistic diversity, cultural exchange and citizenship are priority areas shared by both institutions' directives on culture. Within the institutional contexts of the European Union and the Council of Europe, 'European cinema' definitively exists at a policy level, as does 'European identity'. The idea of a European cinema which has the potential to communicate European identity is of interest to these institutions in as far as it may assist in promoting their objectives (that is to say, its appeals to citizens of the member states to identify with the European project) in order that their ambitions for European economic and/or social integration be realised.

In a sense, the COE and the EU's initiatives in the field of cinema are complementary in that they achieve a balance of provision, with the one focused on production and the other on pre-production and distribution. The COE's cinema fund, Eurimages, dedicates nearly 90% of its budget to supporting co-productions whereas the

EU's MEDIA programme currently supports development, distribution and promotion of 'European audiovisual works' under MEDIA Plus (2001-2006). Significantly, MEDIA Plus aims to dedicate almost 60% of its funds to distribution, which includes the objective to 'stimulate transnational distribution and exhibition of European films by encouraging co-ordinated marketing strategies' (EC 2000e: Article 3b). Unlike most national policies, then, the European Union is not focused on directly aiding the production of European films.

The Europa Cinemas network, supported by the EU and the Council of Europe, was established to enable pan-European initiatives in cinema exhibition. It has the objectives of increasing the programming of 'European non-national films' by establishing quotas and encouraging cinemas to create special initiatives for young audiences. 'European non-national films' are classified as films which are exhibited in a country which was not its majority producer and so, in this context, will often be received as 'foreign language films'. To be incorporated into the network a cinema must abide by quota targets for the screening of European films, publicise its membership of the network, participate in European international initiatives and their co-financing, establish an internet connection and organise initiatives for young audiences centred on European films. Each Europa Cinemas member must ensure a minimum of 35-50% of screenings they arrange are of European films with 20-30% constituting 'European non-national films' (exact percentages are dependent on the number of screens the cinema holds). The participating exhibitors receive financial support in the region of €15,000 for a single-screen cinema to €50,000 for a 15 screen multiplex. It is expected that one third of this subsidy will be allocated to initiatives for young audiences. The participation of the

Europa members is evaluated with reference to detailed reports on programming activities and admissions which are completed by the exhibitors and monitored by the network's directors who represent various countries.²

Membership of Europa Cinemas offers the opportunity for representatives from the member cinemas to interact (network) and discuss their experiences of what is in most cases still regarded as specialised or independent cinema exhibition. Meetings are held annually in popular European tourist destinations, cities such as Paris, Rome and Prague (Gerstenmeyer 2004, pers. comm., 23 April 2004) which are renowned for their embodiment of architectural and artistic heritage. These meetings can be seen as an effort to maintain a sense of belonging in the network. The idea of the network influences policy making across sectors in Europe as networks constitute the organising structure of the European institutions from the macro to the micro levels. Networks have become the basis for European 'civil society' which is described in COE literature as 'an interface between the individual and the State... private action for public good' and is representative of 'a capacity to share values' - a point returned to time and time again in European cultural policies as imperative for European integration (Fisher 1998).

Networks are established through and for processes of exchange but in Europe such exchange often takes place with the objective of achieving harmonisation, directing members of a network towards synchronising their activities in the interests of communality. 'Harmonisation' is the EU's term for preparing member states to agree on common policies, including the single currency, foreign and security policy and, increasingly, educational and cultural policies. Institutional narratives have a key role to

play in this process in that their visibility may encourage members of a network to integrate the narratives' messages into their own organisational discourses.

Common to all EU Treaties and policy recommendations, however, is the assurance that the Union's activities will normally complement rather than replace those of the member states. The so-called 'principle of subsidiarity' ensures that the EU will not act on matters that should be effectively resolved at national, regional or local levels. At times, the decision may be taken that the Union's course of action would be more appropriate than that offered at a local level, and a process of negotiation must begin. With this in mind, Bo Stråth has described the European polity as 'the transformation of dissent into compromises by means of the symbolic co-ordination of norms and values' (2000: 17). This pattern is, indeed, given value in the draft Constitution's statement that Europe is 'united in its diversity' (EC 2003c: preamble). 'Unity in diversity', as I will discuss, has been devised as a slogan for mobilising positive identification with European integration but it is also, in a sense, a reassurance for nation states of the limitations of the EU's supranational capabilities, with 'diversity' allaying fears of European homogenisation (see Kronenthal 2000).

The European Commission utilises an ideologically laden vocabulary in policy documents and publicity. In the cultural policy documents produced by the Commission it is the values of liberal democracy and humanism which are most frequently evoked and associated with an ethics of 'European' identity. Charlotte Linde (2001) has explained how narratives can both aid in the daily tasks of an organisation and provide material for its institutional memory. Specialised vocabulary may be generated within an organisation to compliment discourses which can 'deal with contested or contradictory

versions of the past' and create a palpable vision of the future as envisaged by the organisation's management (Linde 2001: 218). European institutions, like all organisations, create narratives for themselves as a means of establishing points of identification for their current and potential members. In its cultural policies the EU emphasises themes of cultural heritage, linguistic diversity, citizenship and cultural exchange. These themes constitute central components of the European Commission's institutional narrative but are passed off as inherently or naturally 'European' cultural principles. The degree of success which policy initiatives can lay claim to with respect to promoting the institution's value system to the public arguably depends on the effectiveness with which the cultural policies are implemented at a local level. It is with this in mind that I will later examine whether cinema exhibitors in Scotland who receive European funding can be seen to perform 'European' institutional narratives in their work or not.

The concept of 'unity in diversity' has been especially prominent in the European Commission's policy directives.³ It has been used to 'brand' the EU as it undergoes rapid expansion and integration processes while at the same time effectively being a slogan which negotiates the growing tensions in Europe between the local and the global and the internal and the external. 'Unity in diversity' has been devised and promoted by the European Commission with a view to its potentiality for encouraging co-operative trends of production and consumption in a heterogeneous or, rather, cosmopolitan 'single market'.⁴ It is, I feel, a concept that is centrally motivated with respect to generating a European politics of consumption and, because of this, its apparently paradoxical formula

(unity/diversity) actually works to complement the EU's economic ambitions and to support market principles.

Diversity is an important concept for cultural policy in Europe as it is the principle by which financial subsidy for cultural production, conservation and promotion is justified (see EC 2000c). Subsequently, provision of support for culture may affirm the status of the funding institutions as beneficent and justify their legislative authority. The idea of an 'ethical' political administration, in the sense of there being moral responsibility attached to governance, is nothing new; as Toby Miller and George Yudice explain, 'governmentality' (Michel Foucault) has long been central to the actions of Western states in the area of culture. They argue that modern capitalism's requirement for citizens 'fit to perform' expanded from the provision of health care by the nation state to include education and, by association, culture – including language regulation. While the state appears to be acting justly, in the best interests of citizens, it can foster a 'collective public subjectivity' and encourage productivity (Miller & Yudice 2002: 15). Culture and economics are, then, intertwined in the ethics informing the concept of 'unity in diversity'. Notions of diversity can be argued to counterbalance the potentially alienating effects of globalisation, while the concept of economic unity guarantees the viability of international capitalist enterprise and consumption.

In semantic terms, 'diversity' seems far less unbridgeable than 'difference' and this is another reason why it is employed so widely in the contemporary mosaic construction of a European culture. But 'diversity' also supports market principles, placing the citizen in particular spheres of interest and consumption and seeing an individual's identity as a variety of complementary identifications. At the same time, the

community, in the sense of a group of individuals with common interests and values, is a basic unit of the EU. So, while the principle of diversity is called upon to justify all major initiatives in the audiovisual sector, always implicit in its use is the motivation of unity. The EU's directives in the cultural field of cinema do, I believe, show a distinct rhetorical engagement with the 'unity in diversity' principle and this has important implications for how we might understand European subsidised cinema exhibition and, by extension, the consumption of 'European cinema'.

Two major strands of the European cultural narrative communicated in European Commission recommendations for cinema are *heritage* and *democracy*, and notions of unity and diversity underpin both. Cinema was conceived in the EU in terms of a 'common cultural heritage' (EC 1994). The EU resolution on the first century of the cinema (EC 1994), which encourages the celebration of the Lumière centenary, describes cinematographic works as both artistic legacy and 'witness to the history of humankind'. It calls for the co-ordinated preservation of cinematographic material in member states' archives as well as greater support for film festivals. Films are conceived as cultural documents and, thus, heritage. Additionally, the resolution asks that the 'cultural, technical and economic exchanges' made possible by cinema production in Europe be recognised as significant achievements and so suggests that enterprise should also be celebrated.

While the coming together of notions of 'art' and 'enterprise' is arguably common to acts of cinematographic *production* worldwide, or at least the discourses surrounding them, the aforementioned resolution does not explicitly acknowledge this. Instead, the resolution would seem to suggest that artistic enterprise embodies a process which

reflects a specifically European ethos of communality, integration and union – no matter how anachronistic or ahistorical this may seem – and this is something to be recognised not only in the processes of cinema production but also, and centrally, at the point of consumption. '[I]n the interests of continuing dialogue with contemporary film-makers', the resolution specifies, it wants to see European cinema heritage should be 'disseminated' and 'promoted' in cinemas and at festivals.

A subsequent resolution on the preservation of cinematographic works frames cinema heritage as an *inheritance*, representing 'the richness and diversity of the European cultures' (EC 2003e). The central organising principle for cultural policies has shifted here from a monolithic conception of history and culture to a notion of plurality, indicating that the European narrative has adapted to its expanding demographic, but this resolution is also more explicitly geared towards an ethics of consumption. Indeed, the MEDIA Plus programme principally aims to improve the competitiveness of the European audiovisual sector through the creation of a varied market catering to consumers' supposed demand for choice. MEDIA Plus now aims to preserve 'European audiovisual heritage' through the digitisation of films and the establishment of networks, suggesting increased public access to archival material, once notoriously difficult to permit (EC 2000e). In addition, another proposal on film heritage from the Commission has stated that cinema is 'a crucial element for learning about the past and for *civic reflection* upon our civilisation' (EC 2004c: 14, my emphasis) thus placing cinema in a sphere of consumption which will facilitate, if not exactly encourage, participation with the European polity.

Unlike some other forms of cultural heritage, which may emphasise unity through appeal to a pre-modern, and pre-citizen, past, cinema is described in European policy as a heritage of and for citizens. Alex Warleigh and Richard Bellamy explain how 'the EU both complements and interacts with the activities of the member states, making the possession of dual or even multiple citizenships of different kinds both necessary and coherent' (2001: 4). But it is crucial to recognise how fundamentally 'citizenship refers to the identification of citizens with institutions' (Edye 2003: 94) and how the European directives on citizenship reveal the assumption that a loyal citizenry can be created through the positive and co-ordinated induction of citizens into institutional narratives.

While a full discussion of citizenship is beyond the reach of this chapter, it is important to note the growing importance of citizenship education in Europe. The introduction by the European institutions of a formalised conception of citizenship in various sorts of secondary legislation is the most obvious tactic for harmonising people's relationship to the notion of Europe (see Warleigh 2001; Roche 2001). 'Europeans' need to be convinced *as citizens* of the usefulness of the Union's (inter)cultural dimensions if they are fully to engage with the Commission's recommendations on how cultural products should be produced and consumed.⁵ Indeed, I would go so far as to suggest that the development of citizenship education and of a politics of consumption are interrelated in the EU context and one of the cultural fields in which this could potentially emerge most clearly is in cinema exhibition.

The next MEDIA programme, starting in 2007, will be part of the European Commission's new citizenship drive which the Commissioner for Education and Culture has said aims to support further democratisation of the audiovisual market at the point of

consumption (see Reding 2004). It has been announced that efforts to harmonise European cultural programmes in the EU mean that the next package of cultural policies drafted by the Commission will be designed to complement previous initiatives and, regardless of the field the policy is directed at, will be focused on 'transnational mobility' and 'intercultural dialogue' (EC 2004b:11) ⁶, but arguably a citizenship ethic also informed earlier audiovisual directives, albeit less explicitly articulated as such.

The audiovisual documentation produced by the European Commission implies, I believe, an address to an ethically-minded citizen-consumer who is aware of their democratic rights and responsibilities in the European context. With this model consumer in mind, the EU Commissioner for Education and Culture, Viviane Reding, has announced that the audiovisual sector should be led by the principle of democracy. Democracy, she says, ensures that producers are guaranteed freedom of expression (2001b) *and* that consumers are offered choices (2004). Democracy is also, of course, about participation and the 'democratic ideal' is reflected in the European parliament not only by the multiplicity of nations and language groups represented but also by the equality between the European languages which is in place to ensure (theoretically) that every member has the opportunity for full participation (Zarate 1997: 7).⁷ One of the resolutions in MEDIA Plus is to 'support the linguistic diversity of European audiovisual and cinematographic works' (EC 2000e: Article 3). This involves a commitment to offer subsidies for language translation ('dubbing, subtitling, multilingual production and international sound tracking') and to raise the level of funding from 50% to 60% for projects that are seen to 'contribute to the enhancement of European linguistic and cultural diversity' (EC 2000e: Annex).

While linguistic diversity is seen to conserve the specificity of regions, enhancing the local, the learning of European foreign languages is now being promoted as essential for successful European integration because facilitating exchanges and co-operation within the single market. The EU named 2001 the *European Year of Languages* to instigate initiatives that would make language learning more visible and accessible. The Commission has since announced in its action plan for promoting language learning and linguistic diversity (2004-2006) a new language policy of 'mother tongue plus two foreign languages' with the objective of making foreign language proficiency 'a basic skill for all European citizens' (EC 2003f). The 'plus two' stipulation is important for it represents an encouragement that people learn languages other than English. For most European Union citizens, English is the obvious second or third language but the Commission (2005) is adamant that 'English is not enough':

Multilingualism is essential for the proper functioning of the European Union. Increasing citizens' language skills will be equally important in achieving European policy goals, particularly against a background of increasing global competition and the challenge of better exploiting Europe's potential for sustainable growth and more and better jobs.

(EC 2005)

The action plan for language learning and linguistic diversity also conveys the importance of language skills for citizens wishing to develop freedom of movement and 'the entrepreneurial spirit' while reiterating the advantages offered by the Union's 'common home' in the form of the free mobility of citizens, capital and services. Language skills, it asserts, are essential for developing the competencies required 'to be

effective in the global market place', particularly intercultural knowledge gained through exchange with other cultures and awareness (EC 2003f). The many educational exchanges supported by the *Socrates* programme of the EU, such as *Comenius* (for schools) and *Erasmus* (for university students), subscribe to this notion that the intercultural, but also *European*, potential of Union members can be realised by promoting citizenship, foreign languages, and cultural proficiency.

Language learning has been described as 'a condition for cultural exchange' by the European Commission (European Union 2006) and so has relevance for citizenship initiatives that encourage intercultural participation in European democratic life. The Council of Europe set out a European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992) to protect lesser known languages from the effects of linguistic imperialism and language death (see Crystal 2000). An interpretation of the Charter's stance on language given in a COE publication views language 'as a threatened element of Europe's cultural heritage' (Hans Krueger in COE 1998: 9). This description of minority languages as indigenous 'European' languages appears somewhat blinkered given the reality that some minority languages will be immigrant languages. A further description of the Charter as recognising 'the equal dignity of all Europeans' (Philip Blair in COE 1998: 15) suggests, worryingly, that 'human rights' in the realm of language in Europe actually applies solely to speakers of recognised indigenous European languages.⁸ However Eurocentric initiatives to support language difference in the European Union are, they nonetheless help to sustain an image of European cultural intervention as benevolent. So long as Europe is seen to 'set globalisation within a moral framework anchored in solidarity and sustainable development' (European Convention 2006), European citizens' anxieties over

the damaging effects of global capitalism can be a key area through which their loyalty to 'Europe' (the bounds of which are in themselves unclear) can be mobilised.

It is significant, I think, that the Commission has recommended the reproduction on DVD of 'archival material with subtitles in the maximum number of languages of the European union' (EC 2004c: Article 14b) as it suggests subtitles have value as a tool both for preservation and for facilitating democratic access to culture. This directive affirms the necessity of democratic linguistic translation in creating a European audiovisual heritage and language itself is here regarded as an intrinsic part of cultural heritage in Europe. The idea that subtitles might represent an ethical mode of translation is another reason why the EU might wish to be seen to encourage subtitling. Subtitles preserve the source language rather than deny it. Not only do subtitles communicate speech but they also communicate the position of the audiences requiring/reading subtitles as *foreign and at work*. This 'work' can be read positively, as a dialogic encounter with another language and its translation, or, more pessimistically, as a negative experience where subtitled films are perceived as boring or 'too much work'. Subtitles question who may be called *foreign* and in relation to whom as viewers must somehow negotiate a location for themselves in relation to the other (language) culture presented before them by listening, reading, and watching.

The benefits of using subtitled films as tools for learning foreign languages has been discussed in an issue of the EU's culture and education magazine, *Le Magazine*, which claims that the watching of foreign language films and television and listening to foreign radio stations is the second most popular way of practicing one's language skills in Europe (the first is going abroad on holiday) (EC 2002a: 22). The article stresses that

subtitles could be more widely employed as the audiovisual translation method of choice if only citizens were more aware of the positive impact watching subtitled films and programmes would have on improving their foreign language skills. The special place of subtitled audiovisual material for facilitating language learning has also been reiterated in the action plan for promoting language learning and linguistic diversity (2004-2006) (EC 2003f).

Although the MEDIA programme offers support for dubbing, the European Commission clearly favours subtitling as a method of language translation in the audiovisual domain. As I have discussed, there are ideological reasons why the support of subtitling might be seen as good policy in the EU with expected cultural and economic benefits. However, as we have seen in the course of this thesis, certain exhibition practices and critical discourses have traditionally predetermined notions of what constitutes 'European cinema' and have influenced the circulation and availability of European films. The tradition of exhibiting subtitled foreign-language films in metropolitan 'art cinemas' has ensured that those European films travelling outwith their main country of production are normally marketed and distributed to an 'art house' audience, a process which, as I discussed in chapter 6, European filmmakers have to negotiate in their appeal to international audiences. What is more, the consumption of subtitled films can carry with it a reputation of prestige (or elitism, depending on the viewer's position) particularly in countries like France, Germany and the U.K. where the subtitling of films and television programmes is uncommon (see Danan 1999a).

Thus far I have established what I see to be the main concerns of cinema policy in the European Union. Cinema is treated in the European Commission's documentation as

a cultural area which can support the Union's 'unity in diversity' branding and encourage civic engagement with the European polity by representing a culturally and linguistically diverse European heritage. The Commission posits an ethical citizen-consumer whose engagement with, in particular, *subtitled* European cinema reflects the European Union's democratic principles and intercultural aspirations. In the remainder of the chapter I will discuss how far these ideological justifications for cinema subsidy and promotion produced by the Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture actually translate into practice by those in Scotland who are recipients of European funds for cinema exhibition.

In Scotland there are currently five cinemas which are part of the Europa Cinemas network: the Belmont (Aberdeen), Dundee Contemporary Arts (Dundee), the Filmhouse and the Cameo (both Edinburgh), and the Glasgow Film Theatre (Glasgow). I will be focussing here on two cinemas, the Glasgow Film Theatre (GFT) and Dundee Contemporary Arts (DCA).⁹ Although aspects of their ethos towards cinema are shared and both receive subsidies from a range of Scottish and European organisations, the DCA and the GFT are quite different with respect to their histories and audiences and so make for an interesting comparison with regard to their common network membership. I will briefly sketch out some background information on these cinemas before discussing their activities and relationships to European cinema.

The GFT was built in 1939 as the Cosmo, purpose-built to be the first cinema outside London to specialise in 'continental' films. In 1974 it reopened as the Glasgow Film Theatre having been sold to the Scottish Films Council (now Scottish Screen). The GFT's Art Deco architectural design and 'Café Cosmo' (built in 1991) testify to its past

life and history; according to its own publicity, the GFT 'has been lovingly restored and transformed into a two screen picture palace, retaining the 1930s luxury and style with all the modern technology you would expect in a top cinema' (GFT 2004: 4). The GFT is the primary centre for exhibiting foreign-language films in Glasgow and is regarded by the EU's Scottish MEDIA Antenna (a representative of the MEDIA programme which assists local film and television professionals with applications for EU funding and networking opportunities) as highly professional and 'self-sufficient' in this regard (Valentine 2004, pers. comm., 16 April 2004). Indeed, the GFT's Head of Cinemas, Allison Gardner, also runs her own distribution company, an occupation which requires a high level of international mobility and exchange. The GFT is located in central Glasgow close to the Glasgow School of Art and the relatively new Centre for Contemporary Arts (CCA) whose small cinema the GFT programmed for a while. The appearance of an eighteen-screen Cineworld multiplex cinema a few streets away, which also exhibits selected foreign-language and American 'independent' films, is an ever-present reminder of competition. However, while the Cineworld chain has put another Glasgow city-centre cinema out of business (an Odeon), in what seems to be a gesture of goodwill, Cineworld is in dialogue with the GFT about its print-buying and programming activities which enables the GFT managers to plan their programming and business strategies better.

In contrast to the GFT's traditional building, the DCA cinema is located within the Dundee Contemporary Arts Centre, the construction of which was completed in 1999. As well as two cinemas, the centre houses a large print studio, the University of Dundee's Visual Research Centre, art galleries and a large café-bar. The establishment of the DCA, I am told, has had a substantial impact on the Dundee economy, providing creative jobs

and attracting visitors from around Scotland and beyond. According to the DCA's Cinema Director, Thomas Gerstenmeyer, prior to the establishment of the DCA the only place exhibiting foreign-language cinema in the area was the small Stepps Theatre, located in Dundee's central library and holding five screenings per week.

The DCA and GFT cinema programmes are similar in a number of ways. Looking over their programmes from Spring/Summer 2003 to Spring 2004, some common trends are visible, such as: participation in European film festivals; co-operation with European modern language institutes; organisation of special events such as post-screening discussions with directors, artists or representatives from local organisations; directors' seasons and screenings of cinema 'classics' (this happens to a lesser extent at the DCA where such screenings are distinguished from the main programme as 'Cult!'); American 'independent' cinema; the occasional Bollywood screening; and screenings of other films from outwith Europe and the USA shown on the festival circuit, in particular during this period films from Japan, South America, the Middle East and Canada. This list is by no means exhaustive as the two cinemas, and in particular the GFT, participate in a vast range of activities, developing numerous affiliations as they do so. Crucially, there is evidence of the GFT and DCA in dialogue with each other, notably in their shared participation in the Italian and French film festivals which were both founded in Scotland and involve the circulation of film prints around participating cinemas in the UK to promote French and Italian national cinemas.

Although they recognise how their particular programming choices might lead them to be categorised as 'art house' cinemas, both exhibitors are aware of the elitist connotations this label entails, the background to which I discussed in chapter 3, and are

keen to disassociate their cinemas from it. As the GFT's Head of Cinemas, Allison Gardner, attempted to explain,

[the GFT is] elite in the sense that you are aiming for the top of the cinema culture but... what you are trying to do is let everybody who wants to to be able to experience that and it's hard when you say 'elite' because it makes it sound as if it's a snobby club for people and that's the opposite of what GFT is trying to do. I mean, we are really trying to broaden all the communities who use us and we are working really hard to do that... all art house cinemas suffer from the same problem, 'oh that's only, you know, rich middle class people who go there' but it's just not true.

(Gardner 2004, pers. comm., 29 April 2004)

This suggests that breaking away from its exclusive image and widening its audience appeal is not easy for the GFT despite any amount of effort; still, the range of activities and events run by the GFT shows that an energetic sense of optimism prevails.

Thomas Gerstenmeyer (2004, pers. comm., 23 April 2004) describes the DCA approach to programming as a balance between satisfying the subsidisers by showing foreign-language films, and, by screening 'the best of Hollywood', ensuring the cinema does not run into deficit. The provision of English-language films at the DCA is used as a way of 'lowering the threshold' to attract audiences not only to the cinema but also for the Centre as a whole. Gerstenmeyer emphasises that

[the DCA's] cultural remit... means an awful lot because it's not just about foreign-language cinema, it's about family-oriented cinema, it's about the future audience. It's kids' films and all that sort of thing, especially little kids. It's sort of

lowering the threshold barrier for people to appreciate what film as art can be, what it is.

(2004, pers. comm., 23 April 2004)

While the DCA subtitles most of its foreign language films, all foreign language screenings for children were, at the time I spoke to Gerstenmeyer, dubbed into English, possibly because of the objective to encourage very young children and their families into the cinema and because most children's screenings are animated films. In Autumn 2005 and 2006, however, the DCA was host to 'Discovery: Scotland's International Film Festival for Children and Young People' and screened subtitled films which would be 'read' by actors for the benefit of young children.¹⁰ With the odd exception of some animations, it is rare for the GFT to screen a dubbed version of a foreign-language film even for screenings aimed at children. Despite a slight difference in approach, attracting young audiences is, however, regarded as vitally important for both cinemas in their efforts to secure an audience for the future.

Foreign-language European films suffer particularly badly in terms of attracting school-age audiences in the UK and in other countries because of their under-promotion relative to Hollywood cinema, the difficulty of certification, and a resistance to subtitled films and cinema environments that do not conform to the multiplex standard. Dundee Contemporary Arts runs a programme of children's films at the weekends which include European animated films (dubbed into English) as a means of offering 'an alternative'. DCA also works with schools in training teachers to introduce 'film appreciation' into school activities (Gerstenmeyer 2004, pers. comm., 23 April 2004). Jennifer Armitage, the Education Manager for the GFT, told me that the GFT regards everything it does as

having 'educational value' and takes its motto 'Cinema for All' (figure 1) as company policy in this respect (Armitage 2004, pers. comm., 29 April 2004).

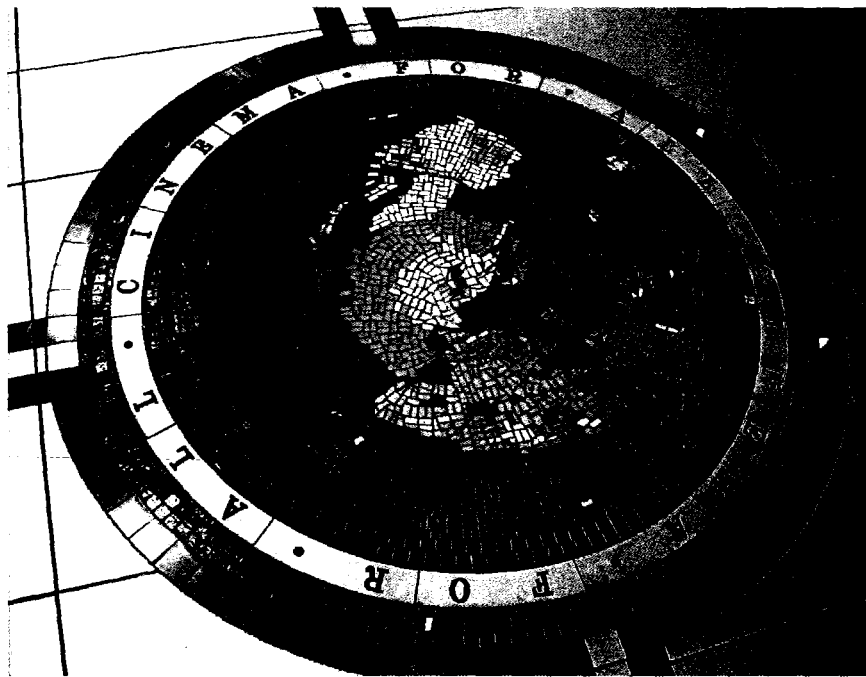


Figure 1. Cinema For All.

A mosaic on the floor of the Glasgow Film Theatre foyer depicting Glasgow at the centre of the world. By Todd Garner. Photo courtesy of GFT.

The GFT offers a range of activities for various age groups which are designed to complement the cinema programme, including discussion groups, film quizzes, special screenings for the deaf and hard of hearing and for parents with babies, film studies evening classes and kids' clubs. The GFT's Saturday morning Zoom Club, which ran at the time I conducted my interviews with the cinema staff, offered free screenings and workshops to 8 - 12 year olds who held a 'Euro 26' card (a pan-European youth card for under 26 year olds) and was funded through Glasgow City Council and the National Lottery New Opportunities Fund. The Zoom Club aimed to 'challenge the young people

and introduce them to non-mainstream cinema' (GFT 2003: 4), which included foreign-language films, 'for their benefit as much as ours' (Armitage 2004, pers. comm., 29 April 2004). In June 2004 Zoom Club was superseded by Take 2, funded by Glasgow City council, which entitles Young Scot (the Scottish version of the Euro-26 card for 12-18 year olds) and Kidz card holders (a Glasgow initiative for 5-12 year olds) plus an adult guest (for children under 8 years) free admission to a Saturday morning film. The programme contains one 'European' film and one 'British' film each month (Armitage 2006, pers. comm., 7 March 2006) amongst Hollywood current releases and films recommended in the British Film Institute's 'Watch this!' list (see BFI 2006).

There are obvious parallels to be drawn here between this and the film appreciation tradition; the notions of non-Hollywood cinema having an inherently educational value, the encouragement of children from lower socio-economic groups (implicit, in this case, but all the same accomplished) with the rationale that they will benefit most from an induction into cinema appreciation, the links with school teachers, and the conviction that young people will be 'challenged' by the films on offer in a way that they wouldn't in another setting. Furthermore, Gardner at the GFT was keen to communicate the public-service role played by the GFT where the staff regard themselves as curators: 'we are just here as caretakers; it is not our cinema, you know, lots of people have been before us and people will come after us' (Gardner 2004, pers. comm., 29 April 2004). But in contrast to the early specialised cinemas in Britain which I referred to in chapter 3, including the GFT's incarnation as the Cosmo, these cinemas have had to adapt to meet the demands of an increasingly competitive cultural economy where children and teenagers feature large as consumers. The importance of securing

young audiences for the future has required the pulling up of the old art house/regional film theatre sensibilities for scrutiny. Foreign-language films can no longer be considered the domain of the 'intelligent filmgoer' when the uninitiated are such an essential audience to entice. And yet, the importance of initiating the new audience in some sort of structured manner still seems to hold water for many cinemas in the UK who exhibit subtitled films and also with the organisations which support such initiatives.

One of the most striking ways that the induction of young audiences in Scotland into foreign-language films is attempted is by approaching European films as tools for learning about foreign-languages and cultures. The GFT and the DCA both offer screenings of subtitled European films for schools which are designed to focus the children's attention on the linguistic aspects of communication by framing the films in the context of language learning. Reflecting the traditional French and German biases of British modern languages education, the GFT works in partnership with the Goethe Institute and Alliance Française to assist teachers in structuring lessons around cinema. Study packs, aimed at a range of school year groups and levels of skill, have been generated by the GFT and Alliance Française for school screenings that take place at the French Film Festival.¹¹ These are written in a combination of French and English and contain tasks for the pupils to complete. Successful completion of the study packs is dependent on the pupil's close attention to the film that the lesson is based upon.

People who experience life in a foreign-language culture are thought to develop intercultural competencies such as autonomy, self-confidence, curiosity, tolerance and flexibility (Murphy-Lejeune 2003). The French film study packs promote these skills in a number of ways. One pack, for *Le Vache et le Président* (The Cow and the Boy, dir.

Philippe Muyl, 2000), requires the pupils to carry out internet research into the French tourist industries and consider the merits of each website and also to discover information about the French president, a character in the film. It also encourages pupils to debate systems of monarchy and republic, in French or in English depending on language proficiency, thus making pupils more aware of their own civic and political context. Another pack asks pupils to read French reviews of the film and discusses elements of filmic representation such as how a mood or emotion is conveyed by a character's actions (*Le Papillon* [The Butterfly, dir. Philippe Muyl, 2002]). The study packs introduce pupils to specialised vocabulary and colloquialisms encountered in the films and also acknowledge that while subtitles help the audience to understand what is being said they are not necessarily equivalent to what is said (packs for *Le Papillon* and *Moi Cesar* [I Cesar, dir. Richard Berry, 2003]). I find this formal introduction to subtitles and their limitations interesting because it can be seen as encouraging awareness amongst the pupils of the subtitling apparatus and encouraging them to negotiate the translation process and their relationship to it (which will likely change in the course of studying the language on screen).

The study packs for modern language school classes make an engagement with language a condition of meaningful encounter with foreign-language films thus implying that the consumption of foreign language films is a distinctly interactive, intellectual process. But I think it is interesting that both the GFT and the DCA, through their programming ethos and educational initiatives, manage to complement the aims of the European institutions in the field of culture by valuing notions of artistic and social heritage, linguistic and cultural 'diversity' and democratic participation. The educational

initiatives at the GFT and DCA focus less on the importance of learning cinema heritage, however (as might have been the case in the old film appreciation film society circles) than they do on building competent, curious spectators who will actively engage with the cultural representations in films and who have been encouraged to find intellectual stimulation in subtitled films.

In as far as the cinema exhibitors I have described seem engaged in an ethics of cinema consumption which in many ways complements the directives written by the European Commission, we have not moved too far away from the European institutions and, perhaps, their influence. Having said this, it is important to bear in mind that the educational activities which I have discussed were not initiatives devised by the European Commission or the Council of Europe but have mostly arisen out of local collaborations. As my final example of an event centred on European films, then, I would like to refer to a MEDIA initiative established for cinemas with young audiences in mind called *Cinedays*. The Europa Cinemas network was a major participant in *Cinedays*, a pan-European celebration of European films, and this being the case the GFT and the DCA have been obliged to contribute in some way to the event. The Europa Cinemas members were expected to promote *Cinedays* for one week in 2002 (15-24 November) and a fortnight in 2003 (10-24 October). *Cinedays* was described in MEDIA reports as being 'built on partnerships – between countries, the Commission, MEDIA Desks and Antennae, TV channels, radio stations, cinemas, film institutes and festivals,' echoing the importance of networks in its publicity (UK MEDIA Desk 2003).

In 2002, *Cinedays* was also described as '*European Film Heritage Week*' and had the explicit mandate 'to give the people of Europe and in particular young people, the

chance to discover or rediscover masterpieces of European cinema and to become more familiar with their film culture' (UK MEDIA Desk 2002). The 2002 event also had a contemporary twist, again linking heritage with enterprise, in that it incorporated publicity for another EU Education and Culture initiative – *Netd@ys*, established in 1997 as 'the multimedia bridge between education and culture' (EC 2000a). In 2002, *Netd@ys* had a 'theme of images' to complement the launch of *Cinedays* (EC 2002a). *Cinedays* 2003 was not advertised as a Heritage Week, but was to consolidate the focus given to film history in 2002 by 'remind[ing] Europeans of the richness of their cinema, while at the same time getting young people interested in the films, cultures and histories of their neighbours' (EC 2003d: 9). Glossy publicity leaflets were provided for audiences at both years' events to be distributed in cinemas. Prominent in the 2003 publicity were endorsements by Viviane Reding and famous European directors.

In an interview concerning the establishment of *Cinedays* 2002 and the appropriateness of the term 'European cinema', Jean-Michel Baer (EU Director of Audiovisual Policy & Culture) insisted that harmonisation was not a MEDIA aim. Yet he also stated that

[w]hat we want is to promote the circulation of films, shared understanding with regard to heritage, exchanges, and mutual enrichment... there is a common approach to cinema amongst Europeans, a common conception, a certain standard, a real inclination towards discovery and difference.... These are the characteristics of European cinema.

(Baer 2002)

Even without reference to Baer, I think it is clear that *Cinedays* is one example of an effort to harmonise the EUROPA CINEMAS network through the instigation of a project with strong 'European' and citizenship dimensions. What Baer's statement reproduces are dominant EU discourses on cinema culture that support more general efforts by the Commission to encourage the mobility of skilled and supportive citizens and shift the European imaginary 'beyond the confines of the 'Nation State' to the concept of 'community'' (Council of Europe 2006).

The MEDIA Antenna Scotland newsletter (September 2003) announced that by 'becoming partners' in *Cinedays*, the GFT, DCA and the Filmhouse (Edinburgh) would 'creat[e] awareness through screening films, holding discussions and celebrating European cinema'. However, Gerstenmeyer described *Cinedays* 2003 as 'a flop' for the DCA for the reason that 'it's not a brand. People don't know it... and it doesn't filter through the publicity what it actually is' (2004, pers. comm., 23 April 2004). Similar sentiments were expressed at the GFT, with the Education Manager, Jennifer Armitage, saying 'it doesn't feel like [*Cinedays*] is part of a European festival. I don't think anyone really knows what it is' (2004, pers. comm., 29 April 2004). These statements can be considered ironic given that the purpose of *Cinedays* was supposedly to emphasise the importance of promotion for European cinema (see Baer 2002).

The education in cinemas which I have described appears to be informed by an ethics of consumption which complements that envisaged by the European Commission. I would suggest however, especially given the reactions of the DCA and the GFT to *Cinedays*, that this may have more to do with more local influences and collaborations (local authorities, schools, language centres) and the traditions that inform the exhibitors'

approach to education in cinemas (film appreciation, liberal humanism) than it has to do with the cinemas actively engaging with the European discourses on cinema, culture and civic responsibility. Having said that, through their participation with the Europa Cinemas network, including the interaction this implies with other cinema exhibitors across Europe each year, and with the increased impact of European-level directives on national and local cultural and educational policies, the possibility of the exhibitors acknowledging a distinct 'European' influence on their work may not be far off.

One might argue that the embrace of the 'European narrative' would be an appropriate development for cinemas exhibiting foreign-language films in the sense that it is circumscribed by an ethics of consumption which is assumed to have positive social effects. One way of enhancing the cultural and economic growth of European cinemas is through securing audiences who also invest in the liberal and democratic values promoted by European institutions and who also have an appreciation for the concept of linguistic diversity. Attachment to these values is considered not only important for the film industry but also for encouraging citizen participation in a newly Europe-centric democratic social and economic life. As ethical citizen-consumers, audiences might feel motivated to engage in 'intercultural' experiences with respect to the subtitled film, now less easily consumable as a 'foreign' film because of the processes of cultural exchange entailed. Such a celebratory conclusion would unproblematically affirm the interventions of the European polity into cinema exhibition.

The audiovisual directives and initiatives I have discussed already support the aims of the European institutions by performing actions that value notions of artistic and social heritage, linguistic and cultural diversity and democratic citizenship. This trend is

set to continue and I suspect that language and citizenship issues will become more prominent in the European audiovisual sector as the EU's cultural influence expands. Far from being contradictory, in the 'European' imaginary the concepts of unity and diversity, and heritage and democracy, are designated vocabularies for mapping out Europe's cultural borders and the civic responsibilities of those consumers supposedly contained within them. The notion of citizenship in this context is, however, a stumbling-block to my enthusiasm. The implication that a competent spectator for European films is also a citizen, invested in supporting the European project in all its cultural, social and economic aspects, circumscribes too forcefully the political 'ethics' of watching with subtitles.

Chapter 8

The Language Problem and Cinema: Themes, Limitations and Findings

This work covers a range of contexts in film criticism, theory and practice which are relevant for understanding the ways in which European cinema has been positioned and approached with respect to language. I have chosen to look at how discourses inflect patterns of film consumption and reception and how institutions develop and respond to these movements. By examining discourses, and thus interpreting certain processes of rhetorical construction, it has been possible for me to identify instances of convergence between film theorising and film criticism, including their respective projects of analysis and evaluation, and to consider the dialectic at work between critical discourse and practice in cinema. This thesis has not featured textual analysis as a method. This choice was made to stress the importance of researching institutional contexts and to give a greater focus on 'writing on film' than is usually allowed. This research has been principally about processes of consumption, which are politically, culturally and economically inflected, rather than the notion of spectatorship.

I began in chapter 2 by describing the emergence of discussions on foreign-language films in trade papers and cine-journals. I illustrated how spoken language and its translation were defined as problematic during the transition to sound period by both theoreticians and industry observers. Speech became implicated in discourses of foreignness, which included both the foreignness of Europe as a market (from the American perspective) and the foreignness versus the universality of American English in

cinema (from the British and American points of view). Language difference at this time was an ideological challenge for cinema as well as a practical one and was seen, by all accounts, to contradict claims for cinema's universal and international appeal.

While much of the rhetoric used was the same, the industry's and the cine-enthusiasts' understandings of a language problem were, however, different. Hollywood saw the issue primarily in economic terms (the loss of markets after sound) whereas many writers for *Close-Up* had concerns of a theoretical nature (mature film art threatened by speech). The solution proposed for the first problem was to ensure Hollywood took the lead in the technological transition by generating a discourse of confidence in the sound film and by developing translation practices for, and ahead of, Europe. The second worry was answered by efforts to sustain an international culture of film appreciation wherein a common understanding of what constituted film art would be able to circumvent the language issue.

In chapter 3 I described how the mark of foreignness which language represented in European films exhibited in Britain could be transformed into a commodity in the treatment of such films as a cinema of distinction. As a result of the development of film appreciation culture, I argued, European foreign-language films were framed as 'quality' or 'art' cinema, which impacted upon public perceptions of subtitled films. Foreign-language films, particularly of the 'Continental' (French) variety, had become invested with an aura of sophistication which resonated positively with some audiences and deterred others. Importantly, I suggested that some of the pleasures associated with watching foreign-language films were conceptually linked by cineastes to ideas on the viewer's cultural (and linguistic) proficiency and critical competency.

The reaction against film appreciation culture and its canons in Britain problematically emerged concurrent with a valorising of translated European theory and the instigation of a new critical pantheon of 'authors'. Looking at the influential journal *Screen*, I discussed in chapter 4 how European film theory was domesticated within the British academic context, although not without resistance. This case study also revealed some interesting but unexamined connections between modern language scholars and the development of academic research on European cinema. As a result of the critical tradition of negating language difference in cinema, however, language and translation were not a focal point for the studies of European cinema which appeared in the 1990s and I have suggested that this was a missed opportunity.

In this first three-part section of the thesis I investigated why it should be the case that the issues of language difference in sound film and the translatability of cinema have been critically neglected while, at the same time, the idea of language as a structured mode of communication has been taken up in critical discourse as a metaphor for cinematic expression. In this section I traced two main discourses on language in cinema which have emerged since the development of sound cinema in the late 1920s. One discourse uses language as a metaphor to describe cinema as a pre-eminent mode of formal representation, as in 'the language of cinema' or 'cinematic language', and in doing so often proposes that cinema is a universal form of communication freed from logocentrism. The other, related discourse, reasons that language difference in cinema is divisive and limits the export potential of films not in the English language. The first discourse conceives of cinema as primarily a visual medium, communicating through artistic conventions that are culturally non-specific, or attributable to an international

cinema culture; the second sees cinema as a culturally inflected medium, reflecting mostly nationally specific approaches to visual representation and storytelling. These may appear to be very different positions but, as I hope the research has made clear, they represent the two sides of a spinning coin which is used in the critical exchange of discourses on 'foreign' films.

The case studies in this thesis have been written to illustrate that there are dominant discursive elements in debates on language with respect to European cinema which have permeated throughout the critical history of the sound film. In the second section of the thesis I examined some contemporary discussions and practices related to the issue of language in cinema within a European context. In the course of reading these chapters it should be evident that certain of the themes on language which I identified in the earlier case studies have persisted.

A central theme which arose in both sections of the thesis is the conflation of the linguistic and the cultural in cultures of cinema consumption. From the treatment of the European actor as an accented foreigner in classical Hollywood sound cinema to the synonymous use of the terms 'foreign film' and 'foreign-language film', the perception of linguistic difference has been shown to be frequently subsumed by discourses on other cultural differences and vice-versa. This fusion can be linked to the discourses on consumption that occur around subtitled European cinema in the specialised cinema vein which imply that watching a European film involves an ethics of consumption. I have suggested how this ethics implies that language and cultural representation are one and the same thing, each being equally educative and both involving a degree of intercultural flexibility and awareness on the part of the viewer. This ethical dimension is reflected

perhaps most boldly in the way in which 'European cinema' has been celebrated in the name of peace-making and international co-operation.

In chapter 5 I examined how this celebratory humanist ideology could be used as a defence for European cinema by looking at the rhetoric used during the GATT negotiations. I discussed why arguing for a 'cultural exception' and the distinctiveness of European cinema in the global capitalist sphere was an important tool for resisting the advance of free trade in cinema and I suggested that language difference could be used to justify the cultural exception for European national cinemas in contrast to Hollywood cinema, seen as representative of global English. The chapter showed how film festivals continue to validate subtitled films as artistic, 'original versions' in a manner that recalls not only the cultural exception argument but also the attitudes fostered by the film appreciation cultures which flourished across Western Europe after World War II and supported the growth of international festivals in Europe.

Chapter 6 continued the debate on European cinema's 'exceptionality' by examining how an engagement with international promotional strategies has affected the production of some Danish films. I described how Danish producers in Filmbyen created a profile for Danish-language cinema with the Dogma concept and then attempted to use the momentum gained from the success of the Dogma films to sell a more expensive English-language product with the aim of 'crossing-over' domestic and foreign, and popular and art house markets. Chapters 5 and 6 demonstrate how language is acknowledged by cinema practitioners as an issue for European cinema – linguistic specificity deserves protection but it is also seen to create problems which put European cinema at a disadvantage. It is worth noting that when I have introduced this thesis topic

to people working in cinema, including film producers, directors and exhibitors, I have encountered unequivocal acceptance of the suggestion that there is a 'language problem' in European cinema and agreement as to the importance of approaching some cultural explanation of how and why this conception occurs in cinema practices and film reception.

In the final research chapter I argued that there was still an ethics of consumption at work in the international distribution and exhibition of European cinema and that this may influence the way European films are perceived. This ethics is something which I feel is being developed and supported by the European Commission and also by cinema exhibitors in Scotland who receive European funding. I concluded, however, that being able to identify broad principles shared across these institutions should not be misinterpreted as a reflection of the successful implementation of European cultural policies in European-sponsored cinemas. Even if the attitude of a cinema in Glasgow to subtitled European films complements European Commission rhetoric this does not mean that a game of follow-the-leader is in play. Rather, these examples reflect how organisations with different agendas are engaged with traditional discourses which have shaped the categorisation of European cinema and the role of language and translation within it over time.

As closing testimony to the relevance of language issues to cinema cultures, it may be worthwhile putting on record a couple of anecdotes. The first is a personal encounter I had at the 2005 Edinburgh International Film Festival during an extended interview and Q & A with the young, upper-class Mexican director Carlos Reygadas and the lead actress of his second feature film *Battala en el cielo* (Battle in Heaven, 2005).

The film features in the lead male role Marcos Hernández, a 'non-actor' who had been Reygadas' family's driver and who also plays the role of a chauffeur in the film. A member of the audience questioned why Hernández was not present at the festival in Edinburgh. Reygadas responded that Hernández had disliked the Cannes Film Festival and was uncomfortable with the glamour and publicity of the festival atmosphere. A palpable air of tension spread around the auditorium; thinly veiled accusations of class discrimination emerged from the audience - how did Reygadas know Marcos Hernández had not liked Cannes? Was he given the opportunity to come to Edinburgh or had this been denied him? Reygadas pointed to Hernández's reticence and silence at Cannes as evidence of his discomfort in the festival forum. Murmurs from the floor ensued. It was at this point that the director of a prestigious distribution company specialising in foreign and 'art' films intervened: 'from the point of view of the distributor,' he said, as if it were the last word on the subject, 'it makes no sense to bring an actor over to a festival if they can't speak English'.

The second story concerns the televised acceptance speech made by the German director of *Der Untergang* (Downfall, dir. Oliver Hirschbiegel, 2004) on receipt of the BBC 4 World Cinema Award. Hirschbiegel said that the film (depicting the last days in Hitler's Berlin bunker leading up to Germany's defeat in World War II) had performed especially well in the UK where it was shown subtitled. The director took advantage of the award platform to make a plea that UK audiences continue to support foreign-language films which, a *Time-Out* movie blogger remarked, 'might have been more convincing if Hirschbiegel hadn't just returned from the States where he has been making the Nicole Kidman-starring big-budget blockbuster *The Visiting!*' (Tilly 2005).

From the cosmopolitan distributor who views a non English-speaking actor as a hindrance to film promotion at festivals to the film director who sees the success of their German-language film in an English-speaking country as a significant opportunity for all subtitled films exhibiting in that territory, the ways in which people experience language and its potential to signify difference and foreignness is an issue still patrolling the parameters of cinema cultures today as in the past. Why is lack of proficiency in the English language cited by a distributor as reason to exclude an actor from promoting a Spanish-language film internationally? Is there really a conflict of interest at work when a German director asks that British audiences see foreign-language films when he is working on an English-language Hollywood movie? What sort of ideological assumptions on the place of language in cinema are revealed by each of the speakers?

These anecdotes demonstrate the continuing relevance of language issues for contemporary film practitioners as well as the need to address in a critical fashion the ways in which language is viewed in relation to the business of cinema and its production, promotion and consumption. The conflation of linguistic and cultural difference in attitudes towards European cinema can be understood in relation to the rejection of foreign-language films as well as their support. There remains a preconception amongst some that cinema in a different language is 'foreign', unfamiliar and thus undesirable. The consumption of foreign-language cinema has as much, or more, to do with the cultural and historical situation of audiences as it does with the film texts themselves.

The persistence of the term 'European cinema', despite reservations around the politics of its use, has often surprised me. Like 'world cinema', 'European cinema' is as conspicuous for what it leaves out as for what it includes. It is a flexible term in that it has been appropriated to refer to many varied configurations of cinematic output. For example, within the schema 'Europe', 'national cinemas' may be grouped and named according to their geographical proximity – such as 'East Central European cinema' (Iordanova 2003) or 'Eastern European cinema'. However, 'European cinema' often refers implicitly only to cinema produced in the west of Europe and, more frequently than not, it is sub-categorised into national configurations. It is important to note that, while discussions on the meaning, the canons and the future of *European* cinema have proliferated, so has the national persisted. In part this is because the idea that cinema can be a representation or even a reflection of national life and a touchstone for national identity has not been significantly transformed in light of transnational European contexts. Only recently have we seen positive critical engagement with the idea of transnational cinema in terms of production (co-productions) and consumption (regional and diasporic audiences) (see Ezra and Rowden 2005, and Vitali and Willemsen 2006).

European cinema has, for a long time, been regarded as national cinemas in spite of the numerous instances in film history of international co-operation in film production. The centrality of nationhood to perspectives on European cinema and language cannot be overlooked. Although some of the discourses I explore communicate idealist conceptions of international unity and 'European' identity, these often remain in tension with the political (and, to some considerable extent, cultural) reality of Europe as one divided into nation states. Increasingly, discussions on the governance of the nation state and the

effect this has on cinema cultures are appearing not only in transnational approaches to cinema but also in regionalist and global accounts.

Regionalist conceptions position the national either by arguing against its applicability or viewing it as part of a network (of comparable nations, as in Dina Iordanova's work on Balkan [2001] and East Central European [2002 and 2003] cinemas). Global approaches to cinema may utilise the idea of national, state influenced cinemas to describe the contents of 'world cinema' (such as in the authoritative *Oxford History of World Cinema* [ed. Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, 1996]) or take a new Marxist approach to global capitalism which sees the nation as an agent of, as well as to some extent superseded by, economic globalisation (as with *Global Hollywood/2*). An increasing amount of research on European cinemas specifically addresses contemporary political circumstances in Europe, often in relation to the European Union, and the influence of policy on film production (for example Iordanova 2002; Jäckel 2003; Wayne 2002). This growth area of research acknowledges the primary role of politics in shaping European cinema institutions and producers' and consumers' relationships to these. I see at least some of the work within this thesis as a contribution to this field.

Tim Bergfelder has written on the merits of approaching 'European cinema' from a supranational perspective which would emphasise aspects such as the transnational distribution and reception of European films and international production agreements over and above perspectives on indigenous, national cinemas. From such a vantage point, he argues, 'one might reconceptualize a history of 'European' cinema rather than a history of 'cinemas in Europe'' (2005: 329). Although I support the idea of approaches to "European" cinema, with the inverted commas signalling the imaginary nature of the

object in question, contrary to Bergfelder, I am not opposed to the term 'cinemas in Europe' owing to a semantic point concerning the word 'cinemas'. I have described a number of 'cinemas' in the thesis but seldom will these be recognisable as collections of films. For me 'cinema' denotes the range of practices aligned to the production and consumption of films. Cinemas, then, are as much about film cultures (of production, distribution, exhibition and reception) as they are about aesthetics and canons. In fact, in my research, 'cinemas' are about the dynamics between film cultures and film products.

Lacking a better alternative, I have chosen for the most part to use the term 'European cinema' in the thesis. It is not ideal and in some senses the notion of 'European cinemas' might be preferable as it at least acknowledges plurality in the interactions that take place in the film cultures of Europe. The word 'cinemas' should not be read here as necessarily denoting a collection of 'national cinemas' in the sense that Bergfelder understands it. Rather, the term 'European cinemas' is closer to his idea of a transnational perspective on cinema in Europe which considers the context of reception to be as important, if not more so, as that of production for understanding the parameters of the term.

One might reasonably cast suspicion onto book (or thesis) - sized publications purporting to describe any such entity as the monolithic-sounding, canon-driven 'European cinema'. Creating *The European Cinema Reader* (ed. Catherine Fowler, 2002), for example, appears to suggest that European cinema can be laid out as a coherent field of scholarly enquiry with its own fixed theoretical canon when, clearly, that has not been the case. Yet, despite the seemingly prescriptive form of the collection, Catherine Fowler states in her astute introduction that

[t]he first observation of this European cinema reader is that outside of the critical field there is no 'European cinema'. Like the notion of 'Europe', that of 'European cinema' must refer to a space which relies on discourse to create its identity...

(2002: 1)

The aim of Fowler's *Reader* is to map out a *critical* territory for European cinema – how it has been discussed, debated and evaluated by critics and theorists alike. It is from such a perspective that I have approached European cinema in the thesis. Thus the idea of 'European cinema' alters subtly throughout this manuscript, adjusting with the chapters' changing contexts, which furthermore I think reflects the construction and use of the term historically.

The choice of research objects and sources in each chapter reflect a certain predisposition on my part to address my own experience of European cinema and its critical circumscription and as such are weighted towards describing the British context. The formation of the thesis in case studies has, to a large extent, determined the relevance of certain forms of cinema and attitudes towards film consumption over others. Certain types of cinema have been overshadowed in as far as the thesis concentrates on those foreign films most frequently engaged with (and canonised) in criticism, some which have been celebrated specifically for their aesthetic qualities (the Soviet montage films, the various national 'new waves' - including Dogma in Denmark) and others which have, for various reasons over time, proliferated in the UK art house exhibition context (French, German and Italian 'national' cinemas).

A study of the language problem which integrated a full discussion of popular European cinemas might well have yielded some interesting information on the different modes of translation for European films associated with particular markets. It may have explored the dubbing of foreign-language horror films, for example, and the acceptability of that practice in comparison to the subtitling of films for the art house. I might have discussed instances in which expectations of translation choice are reversed to allow the exhibition of an 'art film' in a popular context or of a low-budget genre film in a specialised cinema. It would have been interesting to see whether or not sound recording and language translation still have a role to play in perceptions of popular 'low grade' products, as they undoubtedly did with the 'Spaghetti' Westerns (see Nowell-Smith 1968). However, I chose to leave these interesting examples aside in order to tackle, firstly and unashamedly, the familiar European art cinema paradigm. Literature curiously continues to appear on European art cinema at a time when the term itself is most unfashionable. This fact lends weight to the argument that the idea of Europe, and of art cinema, is currently not only a familiar subject but is an established topic.

The idea of Europe is referred to increasingly as reality and less frequently as only an ideal. Criticisms of the European Union as a model are perhaps (and unfortunately) weakening with the expansion of the 'fortress' and the strengthening of a 'European' agenda on the world political scene. It is now a good time to take stock of the situation and to consider how 'European cinema' has been and continues to be shaped in criticism, but it is equally important to look beyond these shifting parameters. It is doubtful, after all, that European cinema can still be considered the most important cinema outside Hollywood, as it was in Europe and America through much of the twentieth century.

David Desser (2005) argues that the attentions of (Anglo-American) cinephiles have shifted away from Europe and have become fixed on the 'pan-Asian' cinemas which are now easily accessible to enthusiasts largely as a result of internet DVD sales and VCD movie piracy. Desser's argument that cinephilia has merely shifted continents in its attentions is somewhat complicated by the location of the 'new cinephilia' in the private sphere of home entertainment, rather than the public spaces of cinemas and festivals, and amongst digital prints and tape, rather than film. These developments suggest that something other than a transposition of attentions has occurred in western cineaste cultures. At this moment the cinephile revolution is happening at home, not in the cinemas, and film enthusiasts are emerging from and being sustained by internet chat-rooms and online fan publications.

We need to take care over how we categorise apparently new bursts of interest in films from a range of cultures. Toby Miller has argued in his preface to a 'world cinema' reader that "'World' is not so much a sign of cosmopolitan relativism... as it is a sign that [there exist] affluent audiences equipped to enjoy a *mélange* of difference under the jurisdiction of a small number of corporate conglomerates' (in Badley *et al.* 2006: xi). While Miller seems perhaps prematurely pessimistic about the present economic situation in cinema and how audiences respond to it, he is justified in his warning to scholars not to quickly embrace categories on the grounds of their convenience or seeming familiarity. Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto has confronted in particular the origins of the concept 'Asian cinema', currently in popular use in North American and European film criticism and academia. His analysis echoes my own thoughts on the adoption of the term 'European

cinema' amongst British scholars in the late 1980s and, I think, accurately reflects the current situation. He says,

[t]he idea of Asian cinema has partly been embraced in the search for an alternative to the form of essentialism that has informed the historiography of national cinemas. One effect of such essentialism has been a polarisation, within film studies departments, between, on the one hand, the centre – Hollywood and one's own national cinema – and, on the other, the cinemas of the rest of the world.

(Mitsuhiro 2006: 255)

Thomas Elsaesser concluded his recent volume of studies on European Cinema (2006) by suggesting that 'world cinema' be instated as a category within which European cinema might coexist with other non-Hollywood film cultures. Although he attempts to approach the term 'world cinema' cautiously, acknowledging a possible 'neo-colonialist' problematic whereby the expression could emerge as just 'another name for a cinema that "others" the other', Elsaesser still skirts around the issue of placing European cinema in a position of equivalence with other historically less privileged and less visible cinemas. One senses that what Elsaesser is trying to do in his argument in favour of 'world cinema' is to substitute the increasingly unfashionable (and, one might even go so far as to suggest, obsolete) category 'European cinema' with something more cosmopolitan and politically 'right on', which is not the same as to say it is politically desirable. Elsaesser's world cinema is presented as a hold-all answer to the 'problem' of our growing awareness of a greater range of cinema cultures, which includes ways of consuming films, and which can incorporate transcontinental and diasporic contexts. He

finds the term useful because he believes it can transform the classification of 'European cinema' while leaving it intact:

[i]t is as if European cinema first had to learn to be world cinema, with all the dangers of self-othering this entails, before it can be (once more?) European, that is to say, before it recognizes its part in the process of becoming a stranger to its own identity, while no longer understanding this identity only "face to face with Hollywood"

(Elsaesser 2006: 511)

I have grave doubts about the usefulness of this romantic description of what is, effectively, only a category, a way of grouping disparate objects with some rationale of coherence. 'European cinema' to my mind does not exist personified in the metaphors of learning and self-recognition. Having said it may be necessary 'to jettison the concept of identity' vis-à-vis European cinema, Elsaesser has invested the term with an identity of its own.

By charting historically some instances where the idea of language has been an area of contention in European cinema we can see that the critical treatment of language in cinema, as a metaphor and as actual speech, has had some impact on conceptions of certain groups of films. Most notably, we can see in the case studies which inform this thesis that notions of language applied to European cinema have reinforced the idea of its difference to Hollywood – as a narrowly conceived cinema which formally 'speaks a different language' and as a 'diverse' cinema of many languages.

I hope to have demonstrated that 'European cinema' is a critical category whose meaning and importance has shifted according to various institutional agendas and, thus,

is an invention. Language has been hidden in the European cinema imaginary, always there but seldom assessed. I have tried to uncover how approaches towards language and translation in cinema have impacted upon the dimensions of this classification and, in particular, to understand how attitudes towards cinema consumption affect cinema reception. Reception cultures in turn feed back to the lived experience of consumption and probably beyond that also, transforming the ideologies which inform cultural production and policy. It is only in making ourselves aware of critical problems such as the discursive treatment of language in cinema that we will be able to assess fully the rhetorical dimensions of cinema reception and, perhaps in future, the impact of our own work on the cinema cultures we attempt to deconstruct.

Notes

1. Introduction

1. In a speech given at the Copenhagen Think Tank conference, which launched a consultation on European film policy and funding initiatives, David Puttnam referred to the early 1900s saying '[i]t was a period of incredible entrepreneurial energy in Europe, a time when we had the confidence to draw on stories, rooted in our *own* culture and export them to audiences all over the world - but it was also of course a time when there was no *language* barrier to a film's success' (2006).
2. I should add, though, that completely dismissing textual approaches and particularly those addressing the place of language and its translation in cinema, would be tantamount to throwing the baby out with the bathwater. I have explored subtitles at a textual level elsewhere (Munro 2002). There is some interesting work now emerging which analyses spoken language in film and which should help to further readdress the imbalance in film studies which sees the image favoured over the soundtrack (see, for instance, Beach 2002 and Abecassis 2005).
3. Mark Betz (2001) has made further inroads into the prejudiced logic informing insistence on the 'original version'. He discusses the example of post-war European co-productions which were directed by established auteur

filmmakers and featured polyglot casts acting in their own languages but were shot without sound and then dubbed into a single language of choice. Betz points out that in these cases, which include in his list films directed by such canonised directors as Fellini, Visconti, Bertolucci, Pasolini, Varda and Buñuel, although there is no 'original' soundtrack, art film audiences insist upon subtitled versions of these films and accept the revoiced soundtrack as 'authentic'.

4. There may be links between this opinion and the work of translation scholar Lawrence Venuti (1995). Venuti is known for his insistence on the political desirability of translation strategies which 'foreignise' rather than 'domesticate' the translation. He proposes that translators resist altering the source text's cultural specificity in order that the consumers of the target text will feel more 'at home' with the (translated) foreign text. The technique of 'foreignisation' increases the visibility of the translator and their work and thus highlights their involvement in intercultural communication. Abé Mark Nornes' term 'abusive subtitling' (1999) supports Venuti's propositions by suggesting that subtitlers disrupt the conventions of subtitles, be inventive with their language use and revel in moments of untranslatability.
5. For example, G.W. Pabst's film *Kameradschaft* (1931) which brought together French and German actors in a border-town mining disaster scenario. *Der Blaue Engel* (The Blue Angel, dir. Josef von Sternberg, 1930) which was made in two versions, German and English, using the same lead actors featured in the English version Marlene Dietrich as an English-speaking

entertainer performing in Germany and courted by a school teacher (the

German actor Emil Jannings) who is shown giving an English lesson.

Jannings, who had had a successful international career in silent films, is

reputed to have faced a considerable set back with the coming of sound

because he wasn't considered a proficient English speaker.

6. For a specific critique relating to the resistance in film studies to addressing the history of European co-productions, particularly in the analysis of 'European art cinema', see Mark Betz (2001). In my secondary reading I have largely relied on publications outwith the tradition of film analysis and I have found certain industry-focused studies particularly insightful. They include *The International Film Industry: Western Europe and America since 1945* (Thomas H. Guback, 1969), *European Film Industries* (Anne Jäckel, 2003), *The Politics of Contemporary European Cinema* (Mike Wayne, 2002), *The State of European Cinema* (Angus Finney, 1996), *Developing Feature Films in Europe* (Angus Finney, 1996) and *Budgets and Markets. A study of the budgeting of European film* (Terry Ilott, 1996). These are books which are self-professedly very much of their time, and could be considered to have a limited shelf life in that respect (indeed, Thomas Guback's book is out of print), but they provide fascinating perspectives on the political pressures on European cinemas.
7. In considering the relationships between language, screen translation and ideology in film, my approach has been directed by work which tackles the subject of the global dominance of Hollywood cinema, its place in European

cinema cultures and the status of European films as 'foreign' cinema, particularly in British and American markets and in direct contrast to Hollywood films. A number of important publications have emerged in this topic area over the past decade. Significant examples include *'Film Europe' and 'Film America'* (eds. Andrew Higson & Richard Maltby, 1999), which I discuss in chapter 2, *Hollywood and Europe* (eds. Geoffrey Nowell-Smith & Steven Ricci, 1998), *Sure Seaters* (Barbara Wilinsky, 2001), *Foreign Films in America* (Kerry Segrave, 2004), *Global Hollywood/2* (Toby Miller *et al.* 2001/2005) and *Exporting Entertainment* (Kristin Thompson, 1985). *Global Hollywood* was particularly influential in motivating me to address the question of Hollywood (and its wherefore) in relation to European film industries. The persuasiveness of the study encouraged my already present conviction that the textual analysis of films was not the best means by which to address questions of the 'language problem' in Europe, an issue itself so heavily contingent on who defines the 'problem' and why in relation to politics, economics and processes of consumption rather than according to considerations of textuality and spectatorship.

8. Barbara Klinger (1997) has argued in favour of conducting historical research on film reception with a view to compiling a 'total history', where the researcher works with both synchronic and diachronic material and has exhaustiveness in mind as an ideal aim. Klinger finds it problematic that most film historians limit their research to a synchronic approach which usually results in films being considered only from the perspective of their original

release. A diachronic account of film history is important, Klinger advances, because it attempts to account for 'the impact historical context has on meaning' and the changing relationships between films and societies over time (1997: 113). Although the texts I refer to in the thesis are not films but mostly written source materials, I have attempted to work with both the synchronic and the diachronic dimensions which could usefully inform a historiography of discourses on language and translation in European cinemas. While ambitious, Klinger's premise is, I feel, worth attempting ('even if impossible to achieve', as she says [1997: 108]) and my structuring of the thesis into historically situated case studies dating from the 1920s to 2006 reflects this.

2. Sound Motives

1. In a study outwith the '*Film Europe*' anthology, Richard Maltby and Ruth Vasey (1994) conclude that a lack of central co-ordination and the 'problem' of language difference in Europe impaired the Film Europe project's potential irreparably.
2. As this is a general overview of conclusions reached in '*Film Europe*' and '*Film America*', I have only referenced those pieces of information that have been directly paraphrased or quoted from specific articles.

3. In 1930, Bell Telephone Laboratories, Inc. in New York completed a sizable facility for the research of sound in motion pictures. Its resources were made available solely for the development of the sound film and included a recording studio with sound monitoring room, film-processing plant, photographic laboratories, and a film vault for storage (JSMPE March 1931). This is just one example of the many substantial investments made in America in order to develop and capitalise on the new technology.
4. On this point it is interesting to consider Rick Altman's (1992b) description of the development of sound in Hollywood cinema as one moulded to establish spatial relationships both in the diegesis and between the audience and characters. The sound track is for Altman the primary tool for visual identification in the classical Hollywood cinema, grounding the spectator who might otherwise be vulnerable to feelings of precariousness brought on by a dizzying image track.
5. Donald Crafton's (1997) account of the American transition to sound film suggests three distinct areas of emphasis on the voice judging from critical commentary on talkies: 'quality', 'naturalistic' and 'hybrid' phases. The 'quality' argument approached the voice as an article apart from the performer's body that could be tuned to an ideal specification, often by training the voice to a stage player standard. The desire for 'naturalism' in the voice soon followed with audiences finding the 'quality' voice too stilted and distant. A 'hybrid' phase, presumably aided in its creation by improvements in sound reproduction technology, was characterised by clearly enunciated

vocals that carried 'the everyday spontaneity, ease, and colloquialism of American (not British) English' (Crafton 1997: 447).

6. The perceived unity of the actor's voice and body has been an instrumental feature in the development of the sound film according to Mary Ann Doane's essay 'The Voice in Cinema' (1980) and Kaja Silverman's book *The Acoustic Mirror* (1988). Their psychoanalytically-inflected studies intend to uncover the illusion of cohesion promoted in dominant modes of cinematic address by revealing the importance of voice synchronisation in maintaining fantasy. They believe the voice is carefully fastened to its speaker (synchronised) in order that the separation of voice and body that film production and exhibition employ remain hidden, along with other potentially disruptive tricks of the trade. The voice, attended to and supported by other elements constituting the soundtrack, is read as reproducing a 'sonorous envelope' that facilitates the cinematic capacity for 'restoring all phenomenal losses', thus disavowing absence and lack in the (male-centred) cinematic apparatus (see Doane 1980; Silverman 1988). But without recourse to psychoanalysis there is clearly evidence to support the claim that early sound film practitioners deliberately focused on perfecting the illusion of voice-body unity in the sound film.
7. Alastair Phillips (2002) makes the same argument with specific reference to French actors in Hollywood. I have also further examined some performative aspects of the European actor in Hollywood with reference to Marlene Dietrich's career. This research was presented as a conference paper at 'Contemporary Cultures', an interdisciplinary postgraduate conference held at

the University of Edinburgh, 6 March 2004. Another case in point might be Greta Garbo.

8. This is quite a different view from the (heavily critiqued) one offered by Scott Olson (1999) which argues that Hollywood cinema displays a narrative transparency that is instantly adaptable to and meaningful for any reception culture. On the contrary, I would suggest that Hollywood presentational codes and conventions are promoted, normalised and learnt.
9. A useful summary report of this phenomenon is given by Nigel Playfair (1929).
10. Noel Carroll (1988b: 7-9) distinguishes between a 'silent film paradigm' (characterised by critical work from Eisenstein, Kuleshov, Pudovkin, Munsterberg, Balazs and Arnheim) and a 'sound film paradigm' (Bazin and followers) for medium specificity theorising (7-9). The silent theorists, for whom Carroll takes Rudolf Arnheim to be exemplary, aimed to distinguish film from other expressive acts, in particular photography, by arguing that film could 'creatively reconstitute reality, rather than only slavishly copying it' (1988b: 90). This position stands in contrast to the Hollywood discourses I have discussed on the desirability of realism in the talkie. It is striking, though, to see how Bazin champions realism as the key effect of cinematic representation, albeit a particularly stylised realism. I would agree with Carroll (1988b: 170-1) that Bazin was likely influenced by the formal changes occurring in cinematography and the shaping of drama in film as a result of the dialogue film.

11. The Swiss location was Territet from 1927-31 and then Burier by Lake Geneva in the homes of Kenneth Macpherson, a Scot, and his wife Bryher (born Annie Winifred Ellerman), daughter of an English shipping magnate, one of the richest men in Europe. Bryher's family wealth paid for the publishing side of the magazine and presumably also for the experimental film projects directed by Macpherson and often starring key contributors to *Close-Up*. For further information on the Bryher-Macpherson publishing group *Pool* see Cosandey (1996) and Donald, Friedberg & Marcus (1998).
12. While there was a critical discourse on universalism with respect to the silent film, the reality of film distribution and reception did not always bear this ideal out. Essays in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari: Texts, Contexts, Histories* (ed. Mike Budd, 1990) illustrate the various kinds of identification possible with *Caligari*, including the mobilisation of the film's 'Europeanness' as opposed to its 'Germanness' and awareness by audiences of its national context which suggest silent films were not uniformly received as 'open' texts. Elsewhere, it has been argued that in the pre-sound era nationality served a 'branding' function with American films representing the highest quality brand internationally across Europe (Bakker 2005: 42).
13. It is interesting to note the involvement of Pabst in this movement. Pabst was a favourite hero in *Close-Up*, renowned for his intelligent and atmospheric films and respected for his politics. His first sound film, in German, explored the terror of war (*Vier von der Infanterie* [Westfront 1918], 1930) and it was a little later followed by *Kameradschaft* (Comradeship, 1931), a multilingual

French-German co-production which depicted miners from both countries working together to rescue people from a mining disaster.

14. The *Close-Up* canon is prescriptively laid out in 'Films recommended by *Close-Up*', a list of recommendations supposedly published due to a demand from readers asking what films they should see (Vol. 2 No.2 Feb 1928: 76-8; Vol 2 No.3 March 1928: 76-80; Vol.2 No.4 April 1928: 58-63; Vol. 2 No. 5: 86-95). *Close-Up* issued a plea that readers demand to see the director's cut of *Jeanne Ney/Revolution* (Die Liebe der Jeanne Ney, dir. G.W. Pabst, 1927) after rumours of a commercial edit in Berlin, with the dramatic addendum '[a]t the moment of going to press we hear Revolution has already been mutilated in England' (Vol. 2 No. 2 February 1928: 4).
15. Martin Stollery notes that from the time of the Film Society's inception in 1925 until the end of 1931, 59 full-length films were shown of which three were Japanese, five from Hollywood and 51 from Europe (2000: 27).
16. On this point see also London correspondent Robert Herring's piece 'London Looke Backe' which gives, in the English context, quite an unprecedented defence of 'the charm of the American language' as opposed to the 'stage English' which he suggests needs translation (1930:459). For a contemporary manifestation of the argument Howard makes on Hollywood's 'democratic' qualities see Richard Maltby (1998 and 2004).
17. A few *Close-Up* articles do discuss the talking picture directly and at length, if only to dismiss it. For example, Dorothy Richardson, who was concerned with disciplining audiences into quiet, uninterrupted appreciation even before the

sound film (see 1927a) writes a piece showing her indignation that talk now comes from the screen as well as from the woman selling concessions (1932).

3. Film Criticism, Specialised Cinemas and Subtitles

1. There will also be, of course, key differences in the ways in which cinema institutions across Europe emerged historically and politically and, particularly, in the ways in which organisations were handled during and after World War II.
2. Having said this, the letters that the supposedly avant-garde magazines (*Close-Up* and *film art*) printed suggest a socially stratified readership varied in gender, class and location. Furthermore, these magazines published material that was directly addressed to their 'provincial' audiences.
3. Essays were written by Paul Rotha, Andrew Buchanan, Mary Field, R.S. Lambert and C.A. Lejeune.
4. The principle that the student of film should use active film practice as a means of increasing their technical vocabulary and awareness of film production was, of course, later to transfer into formal education, firstly in the art and technical colleges and then in the universities and, most recently, schools.

5. For a detailed discussion of the middlebrow, its relationship to the avant-garde and the popular and its connection to film criticism in an American context see Taylor (1999).
6. For example, photographs of 'Four Directors', Claude Autant-Lara, Max Ophüls, Abel Gance and René Clair (in Vol. 25 No. 2, 1955); of Soviet film makers Mark Donskoi and Sergei Youtkevich (in Vol. 26 No. 1, 1956); and of 'Castellani, Fellini, Maselli' under the heading 'New Italian productions' (in Vol. 26 No. 3, 1956/7).
7. Harrington (1948); Huff (1945, 1947, 1948); Leyda (1947); Noble (1948, 1949); Stern (1944, 1945, 1947); Weinberg (1943, 1946); Wootten (1948).
8. However, *Critics' Choice* seems also to have had the function of advertising the NFT programme. 'Choices' are predominantly English language films, but foreign fare is introduced by the back door in the NFT listings which came as part of the pamphlet's sixpence package.
9. In 1950, *Sight and Sound* readers were even invited to satirise the critics' style in a competition which asked participants to write short reviews in the manner of Gavin Lambert, Caroline Lejeune, William Whitebait and others (in Vol. 19 No. 5: 224). The winner's review, of *Letter from an Unknown Woman* [dir. Max Ophüls, 1948] in the style of C.A. Lejeune, appears in Vol. 19 No. 7 (1950: 303).
10. Mr Crone's letter was met with an amusing reply from another Manchester film society member, reminding Mr Crone of Manchester's 'liberal tradition': 'we neither measure the brows of the people attending film Society shows,

nor yet their confections. Similarly, we do not ascertain the erotic temperature of members before the performance' (Anon 1950).

11. Lucy Mazdon (2004) discusses the tourist appeal of the Cannes film festival (as 'une fête touristique') and its connotations of 'social high life' in her essay on Cannes which describes its hybrid, transnational and mythical form.
12. With many thanks to Christophe Dupin for a far more reliable translation than I could have managed of this and the previous figure.
13. Janet Thumin (1991) notes an alignment in 1940s British popular film criticism of French cinema with 'high culture' which had already, by the late 1950s, shifted to the perception that 'Continental' films were sexually explicit. On the connotations between European films, sex and 'exploitation' marketing in the 50s and 60s see Geraghty (2000: chapter 6), Schaeffer (1999: 332-7) and Stafford (2001).
14. Janet Staiger (2000) has argued that the categories of 'art' and 'not art' were particularly important for debates over the effects of English-language films with violent and sexually explicit content at this time.

4. European Cinema Studies?

1. Nowell-Smith (1973) makes an important point with regards to the methodology of empirical research into 'history of ideas' – that such research

is 'always open to correction... on the basis of further knowledge' (94). I have based my history of *Screen* on conclusions which I have reached reading its contents contextually and I have taken guidance from earlier studies of the journal and the intellectual positions it engaged with. I recognise that this work is neither complete nor closed off and that my own assessments, a small part of a larger picture, are also 'open to correction'.

2. SEFT had its own publication, *Screen Education*, which was incorporated with *Screen* in 1982. The forced merger of *Screen* and *Screen Education* in 1982 does not appear to have been a happy one. There is the implication in one editorial that *Screen* and *Screen Education* had entirely different vistas – the one international and theoretical, the other national (parochial, even) and pedagogical. The editorial states that the 'new Screen' has 'struggled to become more accessible' (for its *Screen Education* audience, presumably) but admitted that the area of 'education' (pedagogy) was being neglected (Simpson, Skirrow & Watney 1983:2).
3. But even regardless of the personal aspects, Bordwell's and Carroll's arguments are still, I think, compelling ones for new film students today who may feel frustrated and even disenfranchised by a theoretical legacy which is taught but often not adequately explained. Speaking personally, my own experience as an undergraduate with *Screen* material was one of fascinated immersion, through which I appropriated tools for masquerading academic competence, followed by regret as a graduate student for having done so. On discovering the 'post theory' line, I felt a little as if my previous education had

betrayed me; thus enlightened, the 'SLAB' theory (Bordwell's ironic description of the confluence of Structuralism, Lacan, Althusser and Barthes) simply didn't make sense any more. The forcefulness with which I encountered this break was, in retrospect, largely a result of my lack of awareness of the social, political and historical reasons involved in making theoretical decisions in the first place.

4. At this point a BFI Members' Action Committee was formed. They issued a manifesto demanding the resignation of all BFI governors and the restructuring of the Institute. Amongst their proposals were a halt to the spread of the Regional Film Theatres, a review of NFT programming, less emphasis on preservation and more on access to materials in the Film Archive, and the fostering of a more coherent but democratic Institute which would support greater emphasis on research. See BFI Members' Action Committee (1971) for fuller details.
5. An altered approach to the meaning of culture had also been developed in Britain in the work of E.P. Thompson, Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart who were to be influential figures in the formation of cultural studies (Hall 1980 a:16). The cultural studies school which was established at the University of Birmingham in 1964 can be regarded as divergent from *Screen* from the point of view of its considered critique of the journal which emerged after the Centre's Media Group made a project of familiarising itself with *Screen* material (see Hall 1980b and Morley 1980). However, prior to the internal rifts that occurred over its theoretical and educational commitments,

Screen was basically in tune with what the cultural studies scholars set out to achieve in as far as both were concerned with interpreting culture as a signifying practice.

6. The problem of who these people were and what class identification and status they held is certainly worth consideration both with respect to these journals and *Screen* but is out of the reach of this study.
7. The French 'Langlois affair', in which the director of the Cinémathèque Française, Henri Langlois, was removed from his position by government in February 1968 only to be reinstated after protests was described in *Cahiers du Cinéma* as a precursor of the May events (Harvey 1978:14). *Cahiers'* anti-establishment attitude to this episode might be compared to *Screen's* opposition to the suppression of the Education Department and *Screen's* activities by the BFI.
8. Of course, there was also discussion on Roland Barthes and Christian Metz in *Screen*, two influences very much part of the French intellectual circle in the late 1960s through *Tel Quel* which Jean-Louis Comolli and Jean Narboni were apparently admirers of and which *Cinéthique* was linked to through the publisher Editions du Seuil (Lellis 1982:72).
9. As a reflection of its commitment to ideas allied to action, *Screen* translated the Project 16 proposal for the Estates General of the French Cinema (1968) in which some prominent *Cahiers du Cinéma* contributors and film directors proposed to set up a public sector film industry in France based upon autonomous production units and abolition of censorship (Alis et al 1972/3).

10. *Cahiers* also had its own post- '68 translation project. Between February 1969 and January-February 1971, it translated fifteen extracts from Eisenstein's writings, marking out its commitment to dialectical materialism and a critique of bourgeois film culture (Browne 1990:2-3).
11. *Screen*'s relationship to avant-garde filmmaking is a fascinating and complex one, partly because of the range of institutions and individuals involved in the interaction, albeit mainly in a concentrated geographical area (London). There is much material in *Screen* which would be useful for teasing out the history of *Screen*'s intervention (real or imagined) into alternative cinema practices. Articles by Peter Wollen (1976), Claire Johnston (1980, and with Willemen 1974 and 1975/6) Colin MacCabe (1974; 1976) and Paul Willemen (see references above to Johnston) may prove to be particularly illuminating. *Screen* also published articles by avant-garde filmmakers Peter Gidal (1979) and Malcom Le Grice (1979/80). John Ellis' article on the BFI Production Board (1976/7) and the hostile responses it engendered from the Independent Filmmakers' Association and Peter Wollen (1977) are also interesting reference points for this topic as are Sylvia Harvey's interviews on *The Other Cinema* (1985, 1986). The BFI Production catalogues (listing 1951-1980) and the booklet on the Production Board edited by Alan Lovell (1976) are further sources worth mentioning, not least because of the volume of commentary in the catalogues written by *Screen* contributors. Christophe Dupin's PhD thesis (2005) also contains useful points of reference for understanding the avant-garde traditions in the UK and their relationship to state institutions.

12. Earlier, an opposition to the *Movie* tradition of criticism lead Sam Rohdie (1972/3) to rather unfairly attack Victor Perkins' *Film as Film* which prompted Perkins to assess Rohdie's editorship as characterised by 'a premature commitment to a complex of ideas whose applicability to the cinema is at best highly problematical and at worst (as formulated in the translated *Cahiers* editorials) obscure and contradictory' (1972/3: 146)
13. The BFI Monograph/BFI television monograph series published by BFI/BFI Educational Advisory Services (1973-82) was a significant and influential public screen education outlet for *Screen* and SEFT.
14. I acknowledge Mark Betz as the source of this information which is taken from the evidence compiled in his Little Books appendix (8/9/05 unpublished).
15. *Cahiers du Cinéma*, I suspect, was highly influential in guiding the *Screen* cinematic canon. George Lellis sees a shift in the *Cahiers* canon after 1965 away from Hollywood cinema and towards the new cinema movements in Europe, Asia and South America (1982: 68) and it would be interesting to compare the objects of *Cahiers du Cinéma*'s affection with those of *Screen*'s analysis.
16. Because of the subject positioning line, curious contradictions emerge such as that between the lack of agency at the site of consumption assigned by the theorists to the viewing subject and the promotion of agency at the site of production with hope of developing an anti-illusory cinema. There was also the problem of *whose* 'alternative' cinema this actually was at both points of

reference. For example, the fact that the Marxist Other Cinema in London was generally frequented by middle class audiences is acknowledged in Sylvia Harvey's (1985) history of the Other Cinema.

17. One issue of *Screen* was devoted to publishing papers from the Brecht event (Vol. 16 No. 4, Winter 1975/6) and proceedings from the events in 1976 and 1977 were printed in special publications, 'Psycho-analysis/Cinema/Avant-Garde' (*Edinburgh '76 Magazine*, No. 1) and 'History/Production/Memory' (*Edinburgh '77 Magazine*, No. 2) along with select bibliographies which were effectively reading lists.

5. Film festivals, Film Industries

1. The studies which I refer to in this instance I do not regard as interchangeable despite being characterised by a desire to understand European cinema in relation to Hollywood. They have provided the basis of evidence for this account and include Guback (1969); Mazdon (2000); Nowell-Smith & Ricci (1998); Miller (1998); Miller *et al* (2001 & 2005) and Segrave (2004).
2. By 1966, the EEC ensured that import quotas arranged by member states would not apply to the products of other members, while screen quotas were to include films made in EEC countries, thus expanding the previously national allowance (Guback 1969: 98).

3. A later prominent example of the inevitable address by film festivals to political circumstance would be the attempt by the Berlinale in 1968 to hold a debate with students (and a suggestion by Wim Wenders to transfer all screenings to the suburbs for free public exhibition) after Cannes was closed down in respect of the protests being held in May of that year. Smaller scale examples of the ways political debate is integrated into festivals appear to occur each year, at press conferences and specially organised seminars.
4. In the 1950s European film festivals were also castigated for their commercialism and critics were quick to criticise the programming choices of the major festivals. The institutionalisation of Cannes with the opening of the Palais des Festivals (1949) seemed only to underline the fact that '[m]uch was said at Cannes about encouraging film art; much was done to stimulate commerce' (de la Roche 1949/50: 24). There was also some anxiety that the 'mushroom' growth of film festivals across Europe was affecting the quality of programmes offered by even the competitive festivals (see Anderson 1956c).
5. In 2001-2003 the MEDIA grants tended to support smaller festivals without a huge industry orientation. These often had themes or specialised in showing certain types of film (e.g. documentaries, shorts) and they were located in regions that did not have major film festivals such as the Scandinavian and Benelux countries and some applications from East Central Europe.
6. See Dobson (1996) and Lane (1990 & 1993) for information on the Italian government-appointed Biennale's contentious involvement with the Venice

Film Festival and Dobson (1995), Goodridge (1999) and Shackleton & Tutt (1996) for reports on European festival bids for Hollywood presence. Julian Stringer writes that room has been made for Hollywood films at the London Film Festival by staging retrospectives of 'classic' and 'rediscovered' American films. He suggests that this kind of redressing of Hollywood films as a unique cultural heritage has encouraged opportunism by Hollywood studios in the area of DVD distribution and thus that the London Film Festival's Hollywood retrospectives 'emphasise[-] the logic of the commercial agenda over cultural and educational agendas' (2003:95). London is different from the A-List, trade-focused festivals in that it is a roundup 'festival of festivals', screening mostly UK premieres of films that have had their international outing elsewhere and, like the Edinburgh International Film Festival held a month before it, encourages public attendance. I would suggest that what Stringer describes as being an uncomfortable even incongruous element at the London film festival, a usurping of the 'cultural' by the 'commercial', is in fact a structuring element of the major film festivals, given that they provide and encourage trade facilities at the same time as they reward creative merit. This is not a contradiction in the sense of a binary opposition between 'art' and 'commerce', but it is rather a negotiating process with repercussions for the way the film business in Europe operates and is conceived.

7. These included an article on why Swiss filmmakers would be 'pushing for change' at Locarno after problems over national subsidies emerged concurrent

with exclusion from the EC MEDIA programme (Jacques 1994) and an assessment of Italian film law one year on from the 'maddalena 93' protests against outdated audiovisual legislation that had taken place at the Venice Film festival (Lane 1994). In addition, there were reports on the difficulties experienced by San Sebastian and the International Film Festival of Flanders in securing films because of competition for product amongst festivals. Both festivals were responding to the scarcity of high profile 'international' cinema by prioritising domestically produced films and reaffirming their uniqueness, although San Sebastian also wanted better relations with the Hollywood Majors to raise the festival profile (Bojstad 1994; Balmforth 1994).

8. GATT disagreements had tended to fall between the EC and the US anyway, as poorer countries are marginalized in the negotiations. Trade disputes between the US and other nations, such as Japan, have traditionally been reconciled outside of the treaty through bilateral agreements (Davis 1993:14).
9. The European Commission is a non-elected, governing institution within the European Union (formally referred to as the European Community [EC]) which legislates for the European Union independently of the Union's member states. To avoid confusion, I will refer to the European Community with the abbreviation 'EC' and I will refer to the European Commission in full or simply as 'the Commission'.
10. There have been calls by the European film industry for the Academy to revise its selection criteria for foreign language nominations as their rules

have been perceived as inflexible and out-of-touch with the reality of film co-production. See Farrow (1991); Bahiana (1993a & b); Minns & Tutt (2002).

11. Who 'Europeans' are in this case is both open and unclear. The Council of Europe states that the Convention on Cinematographic Co-production is open to 'member States of the Council of Europe and the other States Parties to the European Cultural Convention, as well as for accession by non-member European States', but the EFA does not specify whether it will only consider films (co)produced by states that have ratified the convention.
12. The EFA also runs 'Master Classes' for established filmmakers and an exclusive networking and creative exchange event ('A Sunday in the Country') and it has become involved in the Berlinale Talent Campus for young aspirant film professionals. International interest in the European Film Awards is currently such that, in addition to the support received by the EFA from various German funding bodies (principally, the national lottery) and the EU's MEDIA programme, the awards are also patronised by a range of international organizations, including Hollywood corporations (all information from European Film Academy 2006). Patronage changes each year, it seems. In 2004 the organizations involved in funding the awards included the Eurimages programme, the Nordic Film and TV fund, the Spanish film institute (ICAA), Sony Pictures Entertainment, and Universal Pictures, none of whom appear on the list of patrons for the 2005 awards.

6. English-Language Films and the Global Cultural Economy

1. Despite recent complaints from the Danish press that all Danish films now look the same, cinema produced in Denmark is diverse, not homogenous. One of the reasons for limiting the scope of this chapter to looking at only a couple of contemporary strategies for increasing the international sales potential of films produced in Denmark is the range of activity occurring in Danish film production at any one time. The strategies I have selected for discussion were of special interest to me and particularly fitting for the thesis, but I could equally have paid attention to other practices that have contributed to sustaining a strong (inter)national film business for Denmark. I might have examined in detail co-productions and subsidies, for instance, or children's and youth films, animation feature films, popular family comedies, representations of America, the selling of remake rights, Danish language action movies, the Danish star system, and so on. Publications in English appear to reflect the bias in interest outside Denmark in aspects of Danish film production that have been able to make a significant international impression, articles on Dogma '95 and on the activities and opinions of Lars von Trier are particularly favoured topics.
2. For further information see statistics provided by the Lumiere database
<http://lumiere.obs.coe.int/web/search/> [last accessed 1 April 2006]

3. A brief historical overview of the functions of manifestos in cinema is supplied by Scott MacKenzie (2003) who considers the role of Dogma alongside its ironic reflection on previous, modernist film manifestos.
4. In support of this assessment, Thomas Vinterberg related to me that he felt on behalf of fellow filmmakers there was 'a great need, all over the world' for the Dogma concept as '[i]t is very irritating to be part of the most conservative and false art form of all, and it is a very difficult and heavy process to make a film' (Vinterberg 2000, pers. comm., 29 August 2000). His assessment was principally based on his experience working to meet certain expectations of what cinema should be with limited resources.
5. It may be unfair to raise this issue here without proper analysis and I have not discussed this matter widely with personnel at Zentropa. Zentropa's internship scheme is highly competitive and considered prestigious by those who apply and are accepted, despite the first six months (of a three year programme) being unpaid. Anecdotal evidence suggests, though, that in Denmark – as in many European countries – what constitutes fair pay for people entering the film industry is a sensitive issue.
6. Zentropa does not however appear to replicate a traditional corporate top-down management structure. Although the directors and writers it employs, with the exception of Lars von Trier who founded Zentropa with Albaek Jensen in 1991, are freelance, the company has an in-house team of producers. The Zentropa producers are, at the time of writing, free to choose their own projects and artists to work with, provided that they can convince the finance

department of the viability of a project in terms of domestic and foreign sales (Munro/Aalbaek Jensen 2004).

7. A PhD has been written on the subject of the National Film School of Denmark by Heidi Jørgensen at Syddansk University (2004). On this topic see also Dorph Stjernfelt 2004.
8. For further discussions of the institutional functions of the auteur figure see Bordwell (2003); Caughie (1981); Corrigan (1991: chapter 4); and Grant (2000).
9. The subject matter of *Brødre* may also have had something to do with the popularity of the film in non-metropolitan areas of Denmark. The film focuses on the impact war has had on a Danish soldier returning from Afghanistan where he was imprisoned. In Denmark most recruits to the armed forces are from provincial areas and this may explain some of the film's popularity outside the cities. My thanks go to Lars Kristensen for making this point.
10. Trust Film Sales, which handled the sales of *Skagerrak*, *It's All About Love* and *Wilbur* have as their first market a network of distributors who are interested in buying subtitled films for art house exhibition. Reflecting this approach to sales, the publicity material distributed by Trust at festivals and markets for feature films uses the director as a selling point for the films. The material is very visually oriented in presentation, but the pictorial elements are accompanied by directors' biographies and often directors' 'statements' on their film. This being the case, I think it would have been more difficult for Trust to sell the English-language films well had the directors not already

demonstrated their popularity amongst art house audiences *and* their crossover potential.

7. Educating the Citizen-Consumer

1. Accession by states to the European Community/European Union has been as follows: UK, Ireland and Denmark in 1973; Greece in 1981; Spain and Portugal in 1986; Austria, Finland and Sweden in 1995; Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus in 2004.
2. For more information on the Europa Cinemas network see Jäckel (2003:82) and www.europa-cinemas.com
3. For a critique of the 'unity in diversity' concept in relation to European audiovisual policy see Eleftheriotis 2000.
4. Political theorist Ulrich Beck distinguishes between two types of 'cosmopolitanism'. The first represents 'the values of an acknowledged, lived diversity', which Beck supports. The other is an 'elitist, idealistic concept that serves as an ideological spearhead for the imperial designs of transnational elites and organisations' (2005: xv). It should become clear in the course of this chapter that my interpretation of the concept of cosmopolitanism as it arises in the European Union context lies somewhere between Beck's two.

5. The concept of 'intercultural education' in the Council of Europe is said to refer to the fostering in educational policy of programmes of language, history and 'education for democratic citizenship' (COE 2003). The COE regards its own recommendations on education for democratic citizenship (EDC) as intrinsic to developing an awareness of human rights in Europe. The centrality of EDC to European cultural life as envisaged by the Council of Europe is reflected in a declaration which states that EDC should be an essential component of its education, culture and youth policies (COE 1999: Article 14). This declaration establishes a number of aims for the Council of Europe's EDC programme including its conception as a process of lifelong learning and participation which will strengthen social cohesion, instil amongst citizens 'a culture of human rights' and prepare people 'to deal with difference knowledgeably, sensibly, tolerantly and morally' in a multicultural society (COE 1999: Article 11). The Council of Europe made 2005 its 'European year of citizenship through education' but the European Union has not been far behind in recognising the usefulness of citizenship education for its own agenda.
6. These are phrases I have seen used frequently in the contemporary contexts of citizenship and language education: for example, Byram & Zarate (1997); Fennes & Hapgood (1997); Guilherme (2002); and Osler & Starkey (2005).
7. Having said this, the working languages of the European Commission are English, French and German with English taking precedence for practical reasons. A study from the mid-1990s concluded that within EU institutions

99% of business was being conducted in English or French (New Language Planning Newsletter, Vol.9 No. 4 [June 1995] cited in Kronenthal [2000]).

8. Similar points on the rhetorical limits of language protection in Europe have been made elsewhere by François Grin (2003) and Talal Asad (2002).
9. The reason for my selection is mostly practical. The Belmont and the Cameo are both owned by the same busy London-based exhibitor, Picturehouses, and I have experienced difficulties in obtaining any detailed information on their activities and programming structures. A programmer for the Filmhouse in Edinburgh, James MacKenzie, kindly answered some queries by email but was not available for an interview on the subject of Europa Cinemas. The Cinema Director of the DCA, Thomas Gerstenmeyer, and the Head of Cinemas (Allison Gardner) and Education Manager (Jennifer Armitage) of the GFT did take time to discuss their jobs and perspectives with me in person and so I am especially grateful for their co-operation and input.
10. This festival did not acknowledge any direct European-level funding in its programme. It was sponsored by a number of local institutions, including the Scottish Arts Council, Scottish Screen, Scottish Enterprise, the BFI, BBC Scotland and Dundee City Council, a number of whom receive European subsidies.
11. The study packs I have seen are for use with the following films: *La Vache et le Président* (The Cow and the Boy, dir. Philippe Muyl 2000), *Monsieur Batignole* (dir. Gerard Jugnot, 2001), *Le Papillon* (The Butterfly, dir. Philippe Muyl 2002), *Moi Cesar* (I Cesar, dir. Richard Berry, 2003).

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