



**Culture versus Commerce**  
**New Strategies for the Internationalization**  
**of Catalan Cinema**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis analyses the potential of Catalan cinema to become a national cinema as the current political climate, with a significant part of the population claiming a Catalan state, indicates the relevance of this examination. Catalan cinema is currently considered a regional cinema, however Catalonia has been defined as a nation with its own language and culture, and therefore Catalan cinema may come to reflect this reality. This work also considers the problems and possibilities for Catalan cinema to attain international impact.

This thesis analyzes the distinctions between regional, national and international cinemas in the context of world cinemas and of the relationship between cultural identity and the economic demands of the industry. Some regional cinemas can be seen as national because of the cultural and historic social context in which they develop and this gives them the scope to become international in their own right. The thesis analyzes the policies and international agreements developed to protect the domestic industry against the economic imperatives of a global market, particularly in relation to the predominance of Hollywood films in the international film market and the measures — and theoretical approaches upon which they are based — that nation-states and the European Union undertake to protect their film production and to ensure that it reaches their own audiences, but also is distributed internationally. Specifically, this work explores co-productions and film festivals as mechanisms of internationalization for domestic production.

In order to provide a new framework that balances cultural identity and economic performance for the Catalan film industry, this thesis examines the national models followed by the Spanish, British and French film industries, which have addressed the dual nature of cinema — cultural and commercial — in different ways. It provides case studies of French and British cinemas as different types of national cinema — both present in Catalan cinema — and analyzes Spanish cinema as the film industry where the Catalan cinema currently operates.

The thesis identifies the problems and opportunities — both cultural and economic — that Catalan cinema must face in order to become a national cinema and to develop an independent and successful film industry, as well as the importance of achieving an international level to accomplish this objective. Finally it proposes a number of recommendations for the internationalization of Catalan cinema and for the elaboration of policies to accomplish this objective.

**Key words:** cinema, national cinema, Catalonia, film industry, cultural value.

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## **Introduction: Cinema as a commodity, and source of cultural value and identity**

In this work I study Catalan cinema both as a film industry and as a source of cultural value and I aim to explore to what extent it can be considered a national cinema. Catalan cinema is currently considered a regional cinema, part of Spanish cinema, given Catalonia is usually thought of as a region of Spain; however the fact that Catalonia has been defined as a nation by Catalans themselves, with its own language and culture, and the current political climate, with several Catalan parties advocating an Independence Referendum, indicate the relevance of examining its potential as a national cinema. Therefore, I explore and assess whether Catalan cinema should differentiate itself from Spanish cinema in order to become a national cinema in its own right, and I examine the problems it will have to address — some of which it shares with Spanish cinema — such as the financing of its film industry, the preference of domestic audiences for Hollywood productions and the need to develop production and distribution strategies to compete in the global market. In this thesis I aim to argue that cultural value can provide an added value to Catalan cinema that helps to engage both domestic audiences (who may feel close to the stories) and international audiences (who may enjoy the universal relevance of the stories). That is to say, local culture can promote cinema's internationalization in both the industrial spheres (through commercial and economic success) and in culture (promoting and making it available abroad).

In this work, I aim to analyze the academic debates surrounding regional, national and international cinemas in the context of the relationship between cultural identity and economic demands of the industry, such as the 'cultural exception' and the US cinema penetration in world markets. One of the aims of this thesis to provide a new framework for the Catalan film industry that balances cultural identity and economic performance. Specifically I will explore to what extent Catalan administration funding would be useful for Catalan cinema in terms of internationalization. I will examine the national models followed by the Spanish, British and French film industries, which have



addressed the dual nature of cinema — cultural and commercial — in different ways. While the focus of my research is Catalan filmmaking — a regional cinema that aspires to become a national cinema in its own right — it is necessary to contextualize the Catalan industry within European film industries, especially with Spanish, but also with British or French nationally-specific filmmaking. I choose to analyze British and French cinemas for the purposes of comparison because they represent two different models of national cinema, especially in relation to the tensions between a regional and a national cinema: the British film industry has, to a large extent, followed a model of competition with Hollywood productions, while French cinema is possibly the best world representative of a cinema 'd'auteur'. These two models will provide two different paradigms to compare with Catalan cinema, and enable me to analyze to what extent Catalan cinema has followed each of them and even deviate from them, as well as to show its differences and how it might develop in the future. Spanish cinema, will be examined in order to determine to what extent Catalan cinema can be considered as a regional variety of Spanish cinema, and to what extent Catalonia is developing a cinema identifiable as 'Catalan'.

Both Catalan and Spanish authorities and legislation acknowledge the importance of the film industry in cultural and economic terms. One of the main objectives of the 2010 Catalan Law of Cinema was to regulate and coordinate the audiovisual and cinema activities developed in Catalonia in order 'to provide this economic and cultural sector with the strategic role that it deserves as a motor of economic progress and an element of cultural cohesion and social transformation' [my translation] [(...) para otorgar a este sector económico y cultural el papel estratégico que le corresponde como motor de progreso económico y como element de cohesion cultural y transformación social] (Boletín Oficial del Estado (BOE) 191, 7 August 2010). Spanish legislation has also acknowledged the importance of cinema in the cultural and economic sectors: official Spanish government legislation declared in 2007 that 'Spanish films and audiovisual activity constitute a strategic sector of our culture and our economy' (Boletín Oficial del Estado (BOE) 312, 29 December 2007, Cinema Law 55/2007). The document laid the groundwork for tax incentives designed to enable 'the sustainable production of culturally Spanish films'. What the Spanish

government calls 'our' culture is of interest in various ways to financiers, producers, distributors and audiences well beyond national borders. It also has implications for how regional cinemas within Spain relate to Spanish cinema as a whole, highlighting the tensions between the idea of 'national' and 'regional' cinema. Paradoxically, the 'strategic sector of our culture and our economy' has in large part become dependent on foreign capital and global enterprise, with foreign actors performing Spanish or Catalan identities in culturally Spanish or Catalan films directed by foreign filmmakers.

Culturally national filmmaking, whether it involves new or traditional national identities, tends to circulate, in general, within national niche markets, although just occasionally, as with *El laberinto del Fauno*<sup>1</sup> (*Pan's Labyrinth*, Guillermo del Toro; Spain, 2006), *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* (Woody Allen; Spain, 2008), *Celda 211* (*Cell 211*, Daniel Monzón; Spain, 2009) or *Pa negre* (*Black Bread*, Agustí Vilallonga; Spain, 2010), they cross over into the mainstream. Therefore it should be understood as a niche practice within the global film business, a means of maintaining difference and distinctiveness in a market saturated with products (Gournay, 2002). Of course, as the *Bond* (UK) and *Resident Evil* (France) or *REC* (Spain) and *Torrente* (Spain) franchises demonstrate in their different ways, it is a well-developed niche, which can become surprisingly pervasive and indeed lucrative, thereby demonstrating, once again, the paradoxical relationship between national themes or subject matter, transnational production arrangements and international audiences. In that sense, I examine the potential of Catalan cinema to become international while maintaining and developing its distinctiveness.

For some filmmakers, a country as a geographical territory, its history, literature and the contemporary national scene are simply sources for film stories, characters and settings (Everett, 2005, 10). But other filmmakers have a genuine commitment to telling stories that involve the nation, its characters and cultural heritage. Even if this involves the expression and dissemination of national culture, it is still dependent on raising production funds, which often

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<sup>1</sup> Film titles will be given as: Original title (official translated title) the first time they are mentioned in every chapter and with the official translated title thereafter.

brings in foreign co-production partners and distributors, and includes addressing audiences in markets beyond their own country.

In this thesis I point out that throughout the 2000s, various strategies were adopted by filmmakers, producers, distributors and governments to enable the production of culturally specific British, French, Spanish or Catalan films. The tax incentive schemes trialed by some governments, for instance, were just one strand in a wider set of fiscal initiatives and cultural policies designed to enable such activities. Indeed, this period saw a gradual reinvention of national film policies and the mechanisms for putting those policies into practice, following the dismantling of the previous system in the 1980s. The allocation of Lottery funding for film production and the establishment of the now-defunct UK Film Council, for example, were central objectives of the new UK national policy, objectives that gradually came to be understood as providing what the then Minister for Culture called a 'bulwark against the homogeneity of globalization' (Jowell, 2003).

By the 2000s, Spanish film policy was intended as a means of ensuring cultural diversity: cinema was to be a space for creating and maintaining diverse representations of Spanish nationality. The response to globalisation was not simply about resisting it, or constructing it as a problem; on the contrary, regional and national film policies in Spain were also designed to encourage inward investment from global Europe and to enable transnational cooperation.

Production strategies designed to make possible the creation of culturally national films were not limited to funding arrangements. Also vital were the ways in which filmmakers worked with particular types of material, in many cases reworking subject matter or cultural products already strongly associated with the national culture of the country. Hence, there was a strategy of securing the rights to adapt to cinema particular types of national fiction; in the case of Catalan cinema from Manuel de Pedrolo to Mercè Rodoreda, and from Josep Carner to Quim Monzó. Another strategy was the identification of iconic national characters as subject for biopics, from royalty and the aristocracy, to pop stars and film stars, and from medieval heroes to literary figures.

If it has become difficult in some respects to distinguish filmic Spanishness or Catalanness<sup>2</sup> on the basis of national differences from other cinematic national or regional identities, yet there are certain ways in which Catalan cinema does insist on its national or regional distinctiveness. The Catalanness of Juan Antonio in *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* depends on cultural association or alignment with Spain as much as it does on cultural differentiation, moving between the regional and national. That is to say that, in various ways the film taps into well-established traditions of Spanish and Catalan cultural identity (such as the Spanish long-haired lotharios with guitars and Gaudi's buildings in Barcelona) that are indeed distinctive from each other and from other types of national cinema. Culturally Spanish and Catalan filmmaking depends to a great extent upon the exploitation of brands already identified and recognised as Spanish or Catalan, as part of the Spanish and Catalan cultural heritage. But certain established, iconic and canonical Spanish and Catalan brands also have a global presence, and in some ways therefore become global brands, as with Quijote or *REC*. There are, for instance, Miguel de Cervantes Institutes in Argentina, Australia, Brazil and the US, as well as Cervantes websites in Chinese, German and British, amongst others. In order to trace this argument, I develop the concept of national filmmaking as an enterprise that combines the dimensions of the local, transnational and global and I explore the ways in which the regional can become international. I propose a strategy document in order to promote the internationalization of Catalan film as such, in which I identify a niche practice that is representative of various versions of Catalanness because it provides elements of diversity and difference within the global film business.

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<sup>2</sup> The Real Academia de la Lengua Española (RAE) defines Spanishness as 'quality of Spanish' or as 'genuinely Spanish character'. (RAE: <http://lema.rae.es/drae>). In a similar way the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines Britishness as 'the state or quality of being British' or 'of embodying British characteristics' (Oxford English Dictionary <http://www.oed.com>) Spanishness, Catalanness or Britishness will refer to those qualities, characteristics or traditions that are generally identified as Spanish, Catalan or British respectively.

## **1. Research framework**

This research explores both the potential and limits of the Catalan film industry and the cultural value of its productions in order to configure a national cinema, in line with the national aspirations of the country, especially relevant in the current political climate where a significant portion of the population wants independence from Spain. The background against which Catalan cinema has developed from EU policies in cinema will be established, followed by examination of the models of national cinema of two European countries, UK and France, and then an analysis of the Spanish film industry within which the Catalan film industry currently has to operate. The work is structured in different chapters starting from the general overview and following with the examination of the particular models above mentioned, to end with an in-depth analysis of Catalan cinema. This structure is designed to provide a framework of different types of national cinemas and their operations in order to study the cultural identity and economic performance of the Catalan film industry in comparison with the other models analysed.

First, I contextualize the research, defining the relationship between cultural and commercial value, identity and cinema on the one hand, and exploring the concepts of national and regional cinema on the other. This contextualization concludes with a review of EU film policies. Chapter 1 consists of a study of the relationship between the national and regional cinemas and their different places in the international arena. This is relevant to the status of Catalan cinema, which is currently regional but which, I will argue, is capable of becoming a national cinema, independent from Spanish cinema, able to reach international audiences in its own right, and therefore to showcase and promote Catalan culture and heritage, and Catalonia as a nation. First, the international policies and agreements that have been put into place to balance the cultural value of national cinemas with the economic imperatives of the film industry and its global competitiveness will be analysed. There will be a focus on the pre-eminence of Hollywood films in the international markets including the implications for national cinemas. Then an examination of the relationship between the European nation-state cinemas and the EU policies on national cinema will follow. Finally, there will be a discussion of the specifics of the

cinemas of nations without states and their possible role as national cinemas because this is the current situation of Catalan cinema, and one which may change (I will address this in formulating my model). In order to define a new model for Catalan cinema, I will in this thesis examine different models of European cinema to identify those elements which are most appropriate for developing Catalan cinema as a national cinema.

Therefore in Chapter 2, I examine British and French cinemas, both from the perspective of their cultural and commercial values, because elements of both these models already exist in Catalan cinema. I also study the influence of these cinemas at regional, national and international levels, especially in the framework of the EU. Finally, I critically analyze two films, one from each country, as case studies in globally successful film-making. My aim is to determine the factors that create the cultural content needed for commercial success and the methods employed for the internationalization of films in the different markets, with a view to assessing whether these elements can be translated into a new model for Catalan cinema. Chapter 3 consists of a similar study of the Spanish film industry for the purposes of comparison with the British and French cinemas and to set the context for the study of Catalan cinema. Spanish cinema provides the current framework for Catalan cinema and I explore whether this framework should be retained in the future if Catalan cinema does become a national cinema (and therefore whether/ or how far using the same perspective, the Catalan film industry as a regional cinema with its own language, can be seen as distinct from these other national cinemas). My aim is to identify the limitations of the current funding and production model for Catalan cinema (provided by the Spanish film industry) and to indicate how or where the model can be changed or developed in order for Catalan cinema to develop its potential for international success and recognition (in anticipation of it becoming a national film industry). Finally, in Chapter 5, having made critical evaluations of these models of European cinema, I propose a new framework for the internationalization of Catalan film (especially if it is to become a national cinema) as well as making a number of recommendations for the elaboration of policies to accomplish this objective.

## **1.1. Aim and Objectives**

### **Aim**

To explore to what extent state — i.e. Catalan administration — funding would be useful for Catalan cinema in terms of internationalization, and to present a new framework of production for consideration.

### **Objectives**

-To examine the interrelationship between cultural identity and industrial demands, analyzing the distribution of film grants based on cultural, regional or national criteria, and identifying the origins of the resources used by different screen agencies.

-To examine the historical development of official film policies and funding criteria in the UK, France, and specially Spain and Catalonia, focusing in particular on debates surrounding cultural value.

-To define, with reference to Catalan cinema, the economic problems related to film grants and internationalization; in comparison with the Spanish, UK and French industry.

-To identify the role played by cultural representation in the development of film projects, with specific reference to Catalonia as a regional cinema.

## **1.2. Methodology**

The approach will be based on an initial literature review and statistical data collection from European, national, and regional public entities in order to examine the relations between the film industry, the national culture and the economy.

In order to establish a framework for the analysis of funding models in relation to other cultural criteria such as quotas I investigate primary and secondary sources about European, national and regional cinemas, grants and policies. In particular information from Catalan institutions related to cinema such as the

Institut Català de les Empreses Culturals (ICEC, Catalan Institute of Cultural Companies) will be scoped.

A comparative critical analysis of case studies of films associated with the different national cinemas under scrutiny will be undertaken: from Spain, *Cell 211* directed by Daniel Monzón, (2009) and *Pan's Labyrinth* directed by Guillermo del Toro, (2006) and from Catalonia, *Vicky, Cristina, Barcelona* directed by Woody Allen, (2008) and *Black Bread*, directed by Agustí Villaronga, (2010). These will be compared with cases from the UK, *The King's Speech* directed by Tom Hooper, (2010) and France, *A Prophet (Un prophète)* directed by Jacques Audiard, (2009). This analysis will establish the internationalization of films in different markets and define the importance of cultural content for commercial success. The selection of films is based on both film success (box office, DVD sales, festival awards) and the cultural value (traditions, identities, characters) within them that might be aligned with a national cinema. The critical monitoring includes analysis of economic and cultural factors among others, specifically focusing on elements of textuality, cultural identity and commercial success, in order to assess the evolution of a culturally valued film product. The contribution of these films to the definition of a national cinema, in order to determine what Catalan cinema needs to become a national cinema, will be discussed.

A critical analysis of Catalan cinema, focused on identifying the available grants offered, their aims and criteria and the regulations or policies considered to be the most viable in the challenge to propose a single framework of support for the internationalization of film in Catalonia, will be developed.

To develop the claim that Catalan cinema can become national and international, I construct a set of recommendations based on an investigation of academic sources, policy statements and statistical data that will indicate how national films with recognized cultural value can be internationalized in the highly competitive global market dominated by economic interests.



## **2. Cinema as a commodity, and source of cultural value and identity**

There is a widespread general tendency to evaluate movies for their commercial success, but in film, as happens with written texts, the significance of a work may have little to do with market outcomes. There are films that, despite their box office success, have been relegated to oblivion, while others, more modest in their revenues, have survived because of their historical and cultural significance, their impact on audiences, or their transformative nature in relation to previous modes of filmmaking. Examples in Spanish cinema are *Viridiana* (1961) by Luis Buñuel and *El espíritu de la colmena* (*The Spirit of the Beehive*, 1973) by Víctor Erice. Consequently, cultural industries are different from other industries because the success and significance of their products cannot be measured solely in commercial terms. In fact, cultural impact may well prevail over commercial considerations in the long run as the above examples of Spanish film success show.

*The Libro blanco de las industrias culturales en Cataluña* (*White book of cultural industries in Catalonia*), (2002) defines cultural industries as the set of activities linked to the commercial field of cultural production and distribution that belongs to the audiovisual, press, radio, television, publishing, music, theatre, visual arts and multimedia sectors. Cultural industries play a central role in contemporary societies because of the influence that their products have on the way we understand the world we live in. Bustamante and Zallo (1988) highlight the social and ideological role of reproduction and they define cultural industries as:

The set of branches, segments and ancillary activities of production and distribution of goods and services with symbolic content, conceived by a creative work, organized by a capital and ultimately destined for consumer markets with an ideological and social function of reproduction. [my translation] [un conjunto de ramas, segmentos y actividades auxiliares industriales de productoras y distribuidoras de mercancías con contenidos simbólicos, concebidas por un trabajo creativo, organizado por un capital que se valoriza y destinadas finalmente a los mercados de consumo, con una función de reproducción ideológica y social.] (Bustamante and Zallo, 1998, 26)

David Hesmondhalgh analyses the role that cultural industries play in the development of personal and collective identities and states that:

Films, TV series, comics, music, video games and so on provide us with recurring representations of the world and thus act as a kind of reporting. Just as crucially, they draw on and help to constitute our inner, private lives and our public selves: our fantasies, emotions and identities. They contribute strongly to our sense of who we are, of what it means to be a woman or a man, an African or an Arab, a Canadian or a New Yorker, straight or gay. (Hesmondhalgh, 2007, 3)

He also points out the economic importance of cultural industries and considers that they are increasingly significant sources of wealth and employment in many economies (Hesmondhalgh, 2007, 6).

The paper 'Las industrias culturales y creativas: un sector clave de la nueva economía' (Cultural and creative industries: a key sector of the new economy), published by the IDEAS Foundation highlights the dual nature of cultural industries, as an economic sector with innovative potential and the driving force of economy, and as a vector of cultural diversity:

are sources of innovation, create jobs and act as interface between the different sectorial activities. Moreover, they are a source of competitive advantage that cannot be reproduce elsewhere, key in the development of non-technological innovation and powerful motivators of technological innovation, factors of the local and territorial development and driving force of industrial transformation. Cultural industries promote pluralism and cultural diversity and are instruments to promote (national) identity. (Fundación Ideas, 2002)

With reference to the cultural principles underlying the defense of cultural products in the face of market interests, Lluís Bonet highlights the following: the strategic value of culture as diffuser of symbolic and communicative standards;

culture as the basis of cultural identities and therefore of national identities; the positive effects of culture, both social and economic, in developing creativity, self-worth and a positive image of people and territories; and finally, the necessity of preserving the collective cultural, historical or natural heritage (Bonet, 2009).

The film industry is a cultural industry and as such, has a dual nature, both commercial and cultural. Defending the cultural value of films is not trivial: if left in the hands of the big producers and in the hands of distributors there is little doubt that market interests would prevail at the expense of cultural value. Consequently, in the absence of some kind of government intervention, mainstream cinema, which is defined here as predominantly American, will continue to increase its presence in movie theatres and other media while independent films and the national cinema of many countries will be under pressure to find their own space in relation to the mainstream.

Part of the problem lies in the difficulty of defining what has cultural value. In fact, film is not considered by many as a means of dissemination of culture, but rather as mere entertainment. In contrast literature, in the form of published books, mainly novels, while also having a recreational component, is recognized for its value as transmitter of ideas and knowledge. Thus, the cultural factors represented in films are sometimes undervalued in relation to the market elements. From the beginning film was an art form that required large investments and Hollywood's success (and also that of Bollywood) has shown the strength of a system based on industrial principles that certainly has been strengthened by the opportunities offered by the global market. However, it is necessary to take into account that for most people today audiovisual media represent their dominant cultural experience, and it seems that this trend will only increase (Harvey, 2006, 1). Consequently, the value of films as vehicles of culture cannot be overlooked when considering the market value of cinema.

Clearly, any study of film should take into account these two perspectives. On the one hand, cinema is a strategic cultural sector due to its huge potential to represent and communicate the cultural values and lifestyle of the society that

produces it from different perspectives. On the other, the industrial character of the cinema industry cannot be underestimated. Given the significant economic and logistical resources required for its productions and the economic benefits it can generate, cinema is an industry, and as such investors expect to get revenues from their investments. As Julius Klein, director of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce of the United States, said in 1929:

It has been proved unquestionably that our films, presenting to other people an idea of the comforts and conveniences of American life, are helping to sell countless other American products (Klein, 1929)

That is, in uniting these two areas, cinema has a great potential to raise awareness and promote a country's lifestyle and values (what used to be termed cultural imperialism), a fact which in turn contributes to the export of its products.

### **3. The rise of cinema and the debate about Hollywood and national cinemas**

By the 1920s, debates about the influence of film on the economy, politics and culture of a country had already begun. There was concern about the influence of film, and US films in particular, upon different sectors of society, and voices were raised warning of the impact of films on young people and also on women, as some felt that films could threaten their traditional role in society. In particular, the homogenization of mass culture, promoted by US films, was considered a threat by European elites. As Richard Maltby and Ruth Vasey note, the Hollywood film industry presented itself less as a geographical territory than an imaginative one. It was a territory that deliberately made itself available for assimilation into a variety of cultural contexts (Maltby and Vasey, 1994: 69) through stories that appealed to audiences from very different cultures. Although this could be done by other film industries and, in fact, most of them try also to reach international audiences, none of them have succeeded to the same degree as Hollywood. European governments, in their attempts to protect their film industries and cultural identities from the homogenization that US

cinema was offering, promoted the concept of national cinema as a form of differentiation.

However, despite the long domination of US cinema, from the time of the origins of cinema and until 1914, the outbreak of World War One, the French film industry was the largest in the world followed at some distance by Italy and Denmark. In fact, the invention of film was based on the success of the cinematograph, patented by the Lumière brothers in 1895. Initially cinema was developed as a small-scale, artisanal sector until the French manufacturer of gramophones, Charles Pathé, transformed it into a horizontally and vertically integrated industry. But both French and Italian film industries soon began to rely on exports for profit and their main market was the US, where only a third of the films were produced domestically (Nowell-Smith, 1996, 24). After the First World War, the United States established itself as a leading exporter and the film industry, already an important sector of world trade, was naturally affected. Sales of US films in Italy, France, Spain and the UK increased rapidly and in the latter, in 1916, Hollywood films represented between seventy-five and ninety percent of all films displayed (Thompson, 1985, 67). The emergence of the American film industry began then during World War I and is based on the appearance of a number of 'independent' production companies in Hollywood and in the consolidation of a concept of film as a visual story somewhere between art and industry (García, 2003, 201).

If the figures are examined, the success of US cinema penetration into other — external — markets is unquestionable. In the European Union, despite protective measures for national cinemas, in recent years the market share of American films has come to represent almost sixty percent, rising in some countries to three quarters of all the films exhibited and rarely less than forty percent. Conversely, the presence of European films in the US market is incidental with market shares that do not exceed five percent. The presence of American cinema is also very high in other European countries such as the Russian Federation, where the share of American films is around sixty-three percent. In the Canadian market US cinema exceeded eighty-six percent and in Australia it accounted for eighty-one percent. An interesting exception is India's

film market where domestic productions monopolize over ninety-two percent of all exhibits (Focus 2012. World Film Market Trends).

This special situation of the film industry led to the development of the concept of 'cultural exception', which appeared on the international political scene in the multilateral negotiations on services trade in the Uruguay Round (1986-1994), under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Cultural exception is based on the assumption that:

Cultural goods and services, for their relationship to culture, are of a particular nature that goes beyond mere business. They convey ideas, values and ways of life that express the cultural identity of a country and reflect the creative identity of individuals. (UNESCO, 2002, 43)

Supporters of cultural exception advocate a differential status for cultural services in the policies governing international trade. The European Communities — that is, the name of the European Union in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) — proposed to exempt the audiovisual sector from the guiding principles of international trade, while the US was opposed to any kind of exception for cultural reasons. This dispute between the US and some European countries over the protection policies of the latter, concerning their national cinemas, dates back to the 1920s. The concept of cultural exception is a continuation of the old tension in the film industry, based on the high penetration of US film production in European markets at the expense of domestic production.

Cultural exception has been interpreted in different ways by the various actors who have contributed to its popularity. For many European countries and other countries around the world such as Canada or Australia it has represented a defense against alleged US cultural imperialism and resistance to the massive penetration of US cultural products in other countries. However, in the *UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* (2007), sponsored by France and Canada, it was replaced by the new concept of cultural diversity, which could be threatened if public policies

were not able to protect it from the global spread of cultural content and the power of large multinational companies to choose the products they offer to different markets (Arcos, 2010).

With the approval of the 2007 UNESCO *Convention*, the European Union was able to strengthen its position. This convention is based on the principle of the dual nature of cultural works, as economic and cultural products, and their role as vectors of knowledge and national identity; consequently, they cannot be treated like other products. The signatory states have the right to develop the necessary measures to defend their cultures, using the mechanisms for resolving disputes provided by the convention. Nevertheless, the impact of this legal instrument in the WTO negotiations is not yet known since the US has not ratified the Convention.

Film production and distribution have become global processes involving the participation of companies, workers and the funding of different nations. When films are presented through multinational channels there are inherent risks in managing the cultural value on offer. International co-productions are aimed at very different audiences (in national identity, cultural values, traditions, age, education, sex) and must offer stories whose significance reaches a global audience. This requirement may lead to an oversimplification of content, a homogenization that can exclude any in-depth analysis of local specifics, focusing simply on the commonplace. Thus, the dominance of Hollywood cinema and the increasing globalization of film processes pose a threat to national productions that aim to reflect the specificities of their culture, customs and history.

The construction and projection of national identity through cinema have led to intense debates ranging from a focus on national contexts to more global approaches. These have highlighted new dimensions in the relationship between national identity and its popular, visual culture. But, how can we define identity in relation to concepts such as nation and culture? Identity is certainly a complex concept that is multifaceted. To define it comprehensively disciplinary approaches taken from different fields of knowledge are followed: psychology,

biology, sociology, geography, class, gender. Moreover, factors such as feelings and especially, ideology should be considered. For Louis Althusser (1969) an individual's identity and ideology are determined even before birth and developed through the education they receive from birth transmitted by family, school and society in general. Thus the individual becomes the product of a particular culture and inherits an ideology and identity that are reproduced, and therefore perpetuated. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman note that the construction of identities is a 'phenomenon that arises from the dialectic between the individual and society' (Berger and Luckman, 2001, 240). Individual identity can then be analysed in relation to nation and culture. National identity can be defined as a set of beliefs, traditions and practices shared by a community called nation, distinct from other groups. However, as Stuart Hall notes, national identity is in reality cross-cut by deep internal divisions, and unified only through the exercise of different forms of cultural power (Hall, 1992, 68).

The growing popularity of cinema as mass entertainment demonstrates its power to communicate images, ideas and ideologies to a large number of people. Cinema shows how people of a certain nationality, age, class, gender, race, and political affiliation behave and also how they are perceived by others. That is, as Jean-Luc Comolli and Jean Narboni say, 'every film is political, in as much as it is determined by the ideology which produces it' (Comolli and Narboni, 1999, 754).

For Ruby Cheung and D. H. Fleming 'cinema emerges as another cultural product that reproduces the 'reality' of its embedding ideological framework and apparatus' (Cheung and Fleming, 2009, 2). That is, the reality that film conveys is that which the society that produces it perceives as 'real' and this reality is determined by the culture and values prevailing in that society. Comolli and Narboni (1999, 754) note that the dominant ideology tells us that the film deals with the 'real' and reconstructs 'reality' but they point out that film — as a product of an economic and ideological system — also inadvertently reproduces its own conditions. Reality is thus an expression of the dominant ideology and films are transmitters of this ideology:



Seen in this light, the classic theory of cinema that the camera is an impartial instrument which grasps, or rather is impregnated by, the world in its 'concrete reality' is an eminently reactionary one. What the camera in fact registers is the vague, unformulated, untheorised, unthought-out world of the dominant ideology. (Comolli and Narboni, 1999, 755)

As Althusser argues,

ideologies are perceived-accepted-suffered cultural objects, which work fundamentally on men by a process they do not understand. What men express in their ideologies is not their conditions of existence, but how they react to their conditions of existence; which presupposes a real relationship and an imaginary one. (Althusser, 1969, 38)

Althusser, following Lacan's theories, considers that it is not possible to comprehend the "Real conditions of existence" because of the use of language; however a deep analysis of society, economics and history can allow us to understand the ways we use and recognize ideologies. Comolli and Narbone, building on Althusser's theories, note that the making of a film is determined by the necessity to reproduce things not as they really are but as they appear reflected by the prevailing ideology. Thus, they conclude: 'the film is ideology presenting itself to itself, talking to itself, learning about itself' (Comolli and Narboni, 1999, 755).

Thus, cinema is a transmitter of the ideologies and cultural values of the society that produces it because cinema draws on narratives which illustrate these values, sometimes questioning them, at other times reinforcing them. Cinema is also a transmitter of national and regional identities for it reflects and analyzes through its stories the customs and experiences of a country, and helps the viewer to reflect on them, to see them from different perspectives and even to project them in the future. In the case studies, I analyze how films are used to criticize certain regionally or nationally distinct social and political situations, as

in *A Prophet* or *Cell 211*, and how they depict the historical and cultural heritage of a society, as in *Pan's Labyrinth* or *Black Bread*.

However, the cultural component of cinema may be threatened by the homogenization brought about by the high penetration of US cinema and the need to find commonplaces in international co-productions, a fact that makes necessary the development of government policies that help national and regional cinemas to survive in a highly competitive global market. Only with this support may cinema continue to be a means of transmitting cultural values and expressing identities. As Tessa Jowell noted in a seminar in March 2005:

The danger we face is a gradual homogenization of culture. The rich mixing of cultures which has always marked Europe could be replaced by a market driven, bland, one size fits all arts scene which benefits no-one except the accountants. Government spending can keep innovation alive and it can ensure that the public has a real diversity of art to choose from. (Jowell, 2005)

#### **4. Theorizing 'regional' and 'national' cinemas**

As Ian Jarvie argues, 'discussions of national cinema presuppose certain ideas about culture, social organization, nation state and land' (Jarvie in Hjort & Mackenzie, 2000, 76). Hobsbawm sees the nation as a creation of the nineteenth century, following in the wake of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. He considers that initially nationalism was an inclusive, mass-democratic and political movement but, in the last third of the nineteenth century, it became a more 'divisive, small-scale, right-wing nationalism that appealed to language and ethnicity with the spate of national mythologies, symbols, rituals and histories that serve the ruling elites to control the recently enfranchised masses' (Hobsbawm, 1992: Introduction, 1-13 and chap. 7, 163-92).

Following Benedict Anderson, the nation can be defined as the mapping of an imagined community with a secure and shared identity and sense of belonging, on to a carefully demarcated geo-political space. For Anderson nationalism

creates nations in a world of human mortality and linguistic diversity because the dissemination of books and newspapers in vernacular languages develops large reading publics that 'imagine' themselves as nations, that is, as 'sovereign, finite, cross-class political communities' (Anderson, 1983, 6-8). As Higson argues, in this sense, 'those who inhabit nations with a strong sense of self-identity are encouraged to imagine themselves as members of a coherent, organic community, rooted in the geographical space, with well-established indigenous traditions' (Higson in Hjort & Smith, 2000, 64). Thus, national identity is not only based on living in the defined geopolitical space of a nation but on the experience of belonging to a community, with its traditions, characteristics and particular discourses.

For Ernest Gellner the nation is a product of nationalism, which in turn is an expression of modernity's need for 'high cultures'; for 'only in a mobile, literate, modernizing society where much work is semantic and linguistic culture is needed to bind together uprooted and anonymised populations in large cities, do nations and nationalism become necessary [...] to create mass loyalties and cohesion' (Gellner, 1983, 42-46).

In recent years, there has been a change in how the concept of the nation-state is perceived. The state is a geographical and political unit while the nation refers to a cultural and/or ethnic entity. The nation-state implies the coincidence of both; that is, it can be defined as a geographical and political unit where people share a common culture. However, the concept of the nation-state has undergone a process of erosion as a result of the globalization process. Higson proposes the concept of 'transnational' as a 'means of describing cultural and economic formations that are rarely contained by national boundaries' (Higson 2000, 58-60).

Consequently, the concept of national cinema has become a more complicated category to define because nations are no longer perceived as bounded entities. As Mette Hjort and Duncan Petrie suggest, in current film studies references to concepts like 'globalization', 'international', 'transnational' and 'regional' are increasingly ubiquitous and indeterminate (Hjort and Petrie, 2007).

Higson says that nation-state cinemas are rarely specific autonomous cultural industries and, indeed, the film industry has traditionally operated on a regional, national and transnational basis (Higson in Hjort & Smith, 2000, 67). However, as Berry notes, nation states continue to proliferate, and domestic disputes are still taking place and film policies being developed in national terms (Berry in Vitali and Willemsen, 2006, 148-57). Thus Hjort and Petrie argue that: 'Innovative ways of understanding national elements must be part of the critical shift that is currently occurring in film studies' (Hjort and Petrie, 2007, 1).

In the same sense, Andrew Higson argues that:

The debates about national cinema need to take a greater account of the diversity of reception, the recognition that the meanings an audience reads into a film are heavily dependent on the cultural context in which they watch it. (Higson in Hjort & Mackenzie, 2000, 68-69)

The role of cinema in the economy, politics and culture has been widely debated since the 1920s when the idea of national cinema first arose. The birth of cinema in the late nineteenth century coincided with the development of the nation-state and soon became part of the implementation strategies of national consciousness (Berthier and Seguin, 2007, 3). It is true that, at first, the concept of nationality was not of particular importance when classifying a movie. The first European production companies like Méliès, Gaumont and Pathé produced films for their affiliates in the United States that circulated like any local production. But, if on the one hand, cinema was an exceptional vehicle by which an idea of the US as nation could be produced that allowed a cultural, political and economic community to be constructed, on the other hand, foreign production companies settled in America became competition for domestic producers and were not always well received. These factors contributed to the differentiation between 'domestic' and 'foreign', which together with the attempts to create a unified market for US film industry, led to the rise of the concept of 'American cinema' and to government support in order to protect its industry.

In Europe during the two World Wars, cinema became an ideal medium for propaganda and, consequently, underwent political manipulation, especially in totalitarian regimes such as Spain or Italy, which further tightened the link between film and nationality. In countries like Britain and France nationalism was more cultural than political; the concept of nation was already established and cinema did not have a direct implication in the construction of national identity as it did in the US, but served to extol cultural and social values and to strengthen national consciousness. In several European countries in which increased nationalism and totalitarian regimes took hold — Italy, the Soviet Union, Germany and Spain — the political and propagandistic role of cinema had a major relevance (Forbes and Street, 2000, 26).

As Berthier and Seguin suggest, cinema, like other arts, belongs nowadays to a *national heritage* (Berthier and Seguin, 2007, XVI). When we talk of 'national cinema' we can refer simply to the domestic production of films, but also to a set of works related by style and themes that directly address national issues such as identity, traditions and prevailing discourses. Sometimes this concept refers to a number of films of a certain quality, produced by the domestic market, that have a certain cultural value for an elitist audience. However, the question of nationality in relation to film has certain practical problems arising from the very nature of the medium.

Traditionally, nationality has been defined in relation to the film's place of production. However, the growing use of a range of physical and political territories in the making of films together with the transnationality of many productions makes this concept impractical in determining the cultural origin of a film. Other criteria have been developed such as the *politique des auteurs* of French cinema that follows the nationality of director of the film; this can be useful in some cases but not in many others involving directors or actors of various nationalities. The language in which the film is shot, its relationship to certain aesthetic trends or certain specific film genres are also factors that have been used to determine the nationality of films (Berthier and Seguin, 2007, xvi).

However, it is clear that with the current modes of production and finance, the factor of transnationality in film significantly complicates the assignment of cinematographic works to a particular nationality. Thus, current Spanish or Catalan cinema, like French or German cinema, cannot be understood in isolation from the rest of Europe. Moreover, film co-productions between Spain and Latin-American countries — which address the transnational issue in the context of a more extended linguistic historical and cultural community — blur national borders in a way that differs from European cinema and which involves new definitions of the concept (Berthier and Seguin, 2007, xviii).

A further problem with the concept of 'national cinema' is related to the nature of the nation. Scannell and Cardiff define nation as:

An imagined community that attempts to supersede loyalties to other communities such as those based on class, religion and gender and thereby marginalizes and displaces identities based on those other sources. (Scannell and Cardiff, 1991,10)

Thus, support for national cinemas as a strategy to compete with Hollywood cinema makes sense from the perspective of nation-states, but from the perspective of multiculturalism or the national as an historic-cultural and not merely political fact the question of 'national cinema' acquires other connotations. Catalonia is a nation from a cultural and historical perspective but it does not have its own sovereign state, although it has its own government and administrative institutions. As the critic, Albert Moran has noted, 'National populations are marked by a multiplicity of cultural communities to which individuals belong in varying degrees: there is no such thing as a single national cultural identity' (Moran, 1996, 10). The state, by contrast, is more singular and monolithic and demands certain affiliations.

That is to say, national cinema built as a unifying and homogenizing apparatus of a country's population can ignore cultural differences within national borders. Nation-building has an internal as well as an external aspect and, as Ian Jarvie argues, following Weber:

The internal aspect was the presence in most nations of social mobility, residual regional and ethnic identities, and other phenomena which did not easily fit the nationalist model of the unified nation and its monolithic culture. (Weber, 1979 quoted in Hjort and Mackenzie, 2000, 85).

The uniformity that the concept of 'national cinema' can imply is particularly relevant to regional cinemas as occurs in the case of Catalonia, where the Spanish language and traditions have been promoted while the Catalan culture and language have traditionally struggled against the dominance of Spanish culture. The issue of the marginalisation of a regional culture by a national one is one reason for developing a proposed new framework for Catalan cinema.

In the current geopolitical arena two clearly opposing trends coexist: on the one hand is the process of globalization promoted by large nation-states and multinational conglomerates leading to the homogenization of cultural and social values, and on the other, communities worldwide are intensely opposed to any submission to an imposed national identity. In the same way that cinema is used by nation-states to preserve and promote their culture, these regions with their own cultures, distinct from the nation-state to which they belong, use this medium to express their idiosyncrasies and dramatise their demands.

This is the case in Catalonia which, after the homogenizing Franco era, saw the emergence of what can be considered the foundations of a national cinema in the 1970s. Franco, after his victory in the Civil War, imposed a centralizing and unifying discourse in which the different national cultures of Spain had no place. In the sixties, a few dissident cultural spaces came about and provided the possibility for the emergence of an independent film culture located mainly in Madrid and Barcelona (Molina-Foix, 1977, 22-7). There was no clearly defined movement but rather a group of directors and producers (such as Jacinto Esteva, Pere Portabella, Antoni Padrós) who used films to analyze political and social issues. After the death of Franco, social pressures for political and cultural liberalization created a more favorable environment for the development of regional cinema. The regions that had established film cultures and stronger

nationalist movements before they were suppressed by the Franco regime (that is, Catalonia, the Basque Country and, to a lesser extent, Galicia) were the ones that developed more film activity. As Barry Jordan and Rikki Morgan-Tamosunas suggest:

In the so-called 'historic nationalities', alongside other cultural activities, filmmaking would play an important though uneven role in the recovery of national identities through the reconstruction of nationalist consciousness and the affirmation of political and cultural difference. (Jordan & Morgan-Tamosunas, 1998, 157)

As happens when 'national cinema' is mentioned, attempts to analyze the concept of 'regional cinema' reveal a number of issues. Regional cinemas may refer to regions within a nation-state that on the grounds of their history, ethnicity or other reasons develop a 'differential fact' which distinguishes them from the rest of the national population. But these cultural communities can also belong to different countries, as with the Kurdish people who are divided between Iraq, Turkey and Iran. Thus, the first problem is to delimit not only a geographic region but a cultural community and differentiate it from the communities defined univocally by a nation-state. In Spain, for example, we talk about Catalan, Basque or Galician cinema but not of Aragonese, Castilian or Andalusian cinemas, because these regions do not think of themselves as nations. But, what proves the existence of a Catalan cinema? Can we clearly define a Catalan cinema? What criteria should be used?

Regarding the first question, we can argue that for a defined regional cinema to exist, two circumstances are needed: first, a regional community with a sense of nation or of distinctiveness in relation to the nation-state to which it belongs, and, secondly, a political administration that can support the development of the regional cinema. In fact, taking the case of Spain, one could probably refer to an Aragonese, Castilian or Andalusian cinema in the same way as one can refer to a Catalan or Basque cinema, at least from a legal perspective. However, it is the consciousness of the nation, of being a distinct community from that of the nation-state, that makes especially relevant the definition and delimitation of



regional film industries. Thus, labeling a movie as Catalan has implications for how the public will see and understand its messages and for the dissemination of the particularities of the Catalan community internationally.

To define Catalan, Basque, or Scottish cinema is a complicated issue involving both legal and cultural factors. Spanish Film Law (BOE 312, 29/12/07) clearly defines the requirements for a film to be considered Spanish. Article 5 states that to have Spanish nationality the 'productions must be made by Spanish production companies or by production companies from any member state of the European Union established in Spain, which is in possession of a certificate of Spanish nationality, issued by the competent body' [my translation] [(...) las obras realizadas por una empresa de producción Española, o de otro Estado miembro de la Unión Europea establecida en España, a las que sea expedido por órgano competente certificado de nacionalidad Española]. This requires the fulfillment of a number of requirements, some mandatory, others possibly containing exceptions. These requirements are mainly focused on the nationality or residence of the companies and workers who are part of the production and, also, on the fact that the film is shot in one of the official languages of the Spanish state, although this is not a compulsory prerequisite.

Legally, for a film to be considered Catalan it must meet two requirements: to have the Spanish nationality certificate and for the producer to be located in Catalonia. Any film that meets these two conditions may qualify for grants to film production from the Department of Culture of the Catalan Government through the Catalan Institute for Cultural Companies (ICEC). Obviously, there are lines of grants that, when deciding the distribution of funds allocated to film production, give value to those works shot in Catalan. However, as happens with national productions, what legally defines a film as Catalan regarding the financial contributions of the administration is not the representation of national culture in the film but its commercial status. Thus, legally, it is quite easy to define what makes a film Catalan; however, culturally, the question is much more complicated.

In the case of regions within nations with their own languages such as Catalonia in Spain, Wales in the UK or Quebec in Canada, the language factor may be useful to define the nationality of a film but this does not apply to other regional film industries, such as Scottish cinema, that share the language of the nation-state to which they belong. Additionally, stateless nations with their own language, as in the case of Catalonia, are usually bilingual, which means that the state language cannot be left out of the cultural experience of the region. Regardless of the language, the theme of the film can be another useful criterion for assessing its cultural nationality. However, this approach is not exempt from difficulties for in the global world in which we live cultural permeability is high and therefore it is not easy to disentangle from the multiple cultural facets those themes that are specific to a cultural community. As Higson notes:

Borders are always leaky and there is a considerable degree of movement across them. It is in this migration, border crossing, that the transnational emerges. Seen in this light, it is difficult to see the indigenous as either pure or stable. On the contrary, the degree of cultural cross-breeding and interpenetration, not only across borders but also within them, suggests that modern cultural formations are invariably hybrid and impure. (Higson, 2000, 61)

In fact, the boundaries between the national and regional are not clear, and neither are the boundaries between the national and international. Global markets promote co-productions as a mechanism for dealing with competitiveness but also, in a sense, for the sake of cultural diversity. Moreover, directors and film producers often work in different countries with multicultural teams. For example, the film *Evita* (1996) is a Hollywood production, directed by Briton Alan Parker, about a woman who is a legend in Argentina. Furthermore, the distribution and reception of films easily transcend national borders and, when that happens, they are not necessarily understood in the same way by the peoples of diverse countries or regions with very different cultural backgrounds (Higson 2000, 58-63).

To conclude this section, I briefly analyse a kind of cinema that has developed as a mix of cultural expression and resistance to oppression and that can be considered an alternative type of national cinema. It brings about different considerations of how the cultural value of cinema can contribute to the expression of ideas and social aspirations.

This cinema is far from being an homogeneous reality; however, during the eighties it was named by several western critics as 'Third Cinema'. This name comes from a manifesto (*Towards a Third Cinema*) written in the late sixties by two Argentinean filmmakers, Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino, members of the Grupo Cine Liberación. This group generated a movement in Latin American cinema of opposition to neo-colonialism, seen as a capitalist system underlying the Hollywood model of film (First Cinema) that exalts bourgeois values in order to entertain a passive audience. It also criticized European art-house cinema (Second Cinema) for being too personal.

Following this movement, it was argued that cinema should be an instrument for expression and for social and political criticism, a mechanism of opposition and resistance. As Fernando Pino Solanas and Octavio Getino point out:

Cinema, like culture, is not national by the mere fact of being raised within certain geographic boundaries, but for fulfilling the particular needs of liberation and development of each community. Nowadays, the dominant cinema in our countries, constructed from dependent infrastructures and superstructures, roots of all underdevelopment, cannot be anything but a dependent cinema, and consequently, a cinema alienated and underdeveloped. (Getino and Solanas, 1969)

Soon the label 'Third Cinema' became, in the hands of western theorists (Burton 1985, Willemsen 1987), a way to catalogue film practices throughout the Third World<sup>3</sup> where, despite their diversity, there was a common denominator of

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<sup>3</sup> The term 'Third World' was originally coined during the Cold War to distinguish those nations that remained non-aligned with either the West (NATO) or the East, the Communist bloc. Due to the fact that many of the 'Third World countries' are extremely poor, it became a stereotype of underdevelopment and has been often used in a pejorative way. Nowadays the term is often

resistance to western powers and the aim to reassess and reinvent their cultural identities.

Willemen points out that this cinema has a 'culturally specific yet historically analytic mode of cinematic discourse' (Willemen, 1978, 8), and Croft notes that its radical vision clearly distinguishes it from the whole of Third World film production, characterized by comedy, action cinema, musical, melodrama and romance (Croft in Vitally and Willemen: 2006, 48). This cinema, it is argued, offers a re-conceptualization of national cinema. For example, Jim Pines and Paul Willemen says: 'It became a means of disaggregating the congealed stolidity of a British film culture unwilling to recognize in its midst a plethora of ethnic, gender, class and regional differences' (Pines and Willemen, 1989 in Croft, Vitally and Willemen, 2006, 48).

Thus, national cinemas of many countries are forced to compete domestically and internationally in an arena dominated by blockbusters produced by large conglomerates, a challenge that they can only meet because the state protects domestic production (the survival of French cinema in relation to American cinema is explained by protectionist policies with reference to national cinematography and the same is true of Bollywood in India). In addition, other regional film industries defined as Third Cinema (such as the Cuban revolutionary cinema or the Brazilian Cinema Novo) make proposals of protest against cultural homogenization and in defense of their cultural values.

Hjort and Petrie highlight 'the emergence of regional networks and alliances that are providing transnational alternatives to the neo-liberal model of globalization driving contemporary [global] Hollywood' (Hjort and Petrie, 2007, 17). In recent

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used to describe the developing countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America and Oceania but more politically acceptable terms are 'Emerging World', 'Global South' and 'Developing Countries'. I choose to use the term 'Third World' only for its linguistic relation with the term 'Third Cinema', which clearly links these two concepts.

decades opportunities to produce films outside the major studios and government agencies have increased, among other factors, through technological development which has given many groups, previously marginalized in this sector, the opportunity to explore alternative models of filmmaking. Thus, globalization, at least in relation to cinema, does not have to be synonymous with 'Americanization' and indeed the cinema of small nations and regional cinema can bring a different perspective to social and cultural global dynamics.

## **5. Film policy in the European Union**

The Green Paper of the European Commission (2010) on the potential of Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) recognizes the important role that these industries may have in the implementation of European market competitiveness globally. Following the words of President Barroso, the Commission noted: 'If Europe wants to remain competitive in the changing global environment, it should establish the right conditions for creativity and innovation to flourish in a new business culture' (European Commission, 2010)

The Commission highlights the potential of cultural industries in relation to growth and employment and provides a set of guidelines for these companies to take advantage of cultural diversity, globalization and digitization for development. Among these are government financial support for innovation, support for local and regional development as a springboard for internationalization, and the channelling of the impact of cultural industries into other economic and social contexts.

Thus, one of the objectives of the EU is to 'exploit the cultural sector as a catalyst for creativity and innovation in the context of the Lisbon strategy for growth and employment' (European Commission website, 2010). In fact, the audiovisual sector (broadcasting, television and film) represents more than one million jobs in the European Union and is the primary source of information and entertainment for Europeans. As a cultural and creative industry, the film industry has a great capacity for innovation and dissemination of content and,

therefore, can contribute significantly to improve the competitiveness of European companies in the global sphere.

Obviously, EU policies relating to the film industry are not only important from an economic perspective, but also in relation to the cultural value of its products. Cinema is a medium that captures and projects ideas and identities; the role it can play in the construction of the European Union cannot be denied. It seems that we are at a moment of impasse in the European project; Europe is not sure where it is going and Europeans do not know what it means to be European. In this situation, where it is necessary to re-think the European project, cinema provides a unique way to analyze and raise awareness of the diversity and complexity of Europe, mixing myth and legend with realism and identity. A European identity is more complicated than a French, German or Catalan identity; it is vaguer, more inchoate than any strongly defined national or regional identity. European identity must share a place in the minds of Europeans with national identities and unite them if the European project is to succeed. Thus, since the early eighties, the EU identified the importance of the audiovisual sector in relation to the construction of a new identity space to cover all EU countries. But also one of the objectives of the EU is to protect cultural diversity within its borders, so that all nations and communities are able to develop and disseminate their cultural projects, reflecting their identities and values. Thus, EU policies in the field of cinema are not only relevant in relation to the economic sector, but also in relation to the cultural value of cinema.

The institutions and major international agencies in the coordination and development of the European audiovisual are: the Commission (primarily through the Directorate General for Information, Communication, Culture and Audiovisual), the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. In the economic trajectory of European audiovisual policy, three stages that outline the contradictions inherent in the European audiovisual project and that mirror the tensions between the cultural and economic values of the cultural products can be defined (Sierra Caballero, 2002, 16):

1. 1981-1984 – Integrative phase

2. 1985-1993 – Stage of liberalization of EU cultural policy
3. 1993- Today – Stage of technological and industrial convergence oriented by the program objectives of the construction of the European Information Society and the increasing role of networks and telecommunications operators.

EU policy in film is characterized by an inherent conflict between two objectives that are not necessarily compatible: the economic logic of market integration and the preservation of cultural diversity. On one hand, the establishment of a European internal market includes the film industry for its economic nature; on the other, in its capacity as cultural sector, cinema tends to avoid the uniformity inherent in an integration process. These two facets of cinema — cultural and industrial — cause a complex relationship between national laws, which seek to protect their cultural values, and free-market philosophy, a cornerstone of the EU.

Despite the lack of specific regulations in the European treaties, the audiovisual sector has been significantly affected by the integration process and, although EU audiovisual policies have tried to combine the cultural and industrial aspects of the sector in promoting competitiveness and respecting cultural diversity, these two elements are not easy to reconcile. In a 2003 Communication the Commission stated that the audiovisual policies of the EU are aimed at:

promoting the development of the audiovisual sector in the Union, notably through the completion of the internal market for this sector, while supporting paramount objectives of general interest, such as cultural and linguistic diversity. (European Commission, 2003)

However, while recognizing the cultural value of films, it is difficult to draw a clear dividing line in the dual nature of the film industry; consequently the EU law is fully applied to all cultural products and activities.

EU interventions in the film industry are based on both the financing of various projects and the implementation of a quota system to control state aid to the

sector. Union support to European films has huge importance for the sector in economic terms. However, this support for the film industry cannot be understood solely from an economic perspective, as cinema is an important transmitter of ideas, ideologies and identities, with great influence on other media and, therefore, it plays an important role in global geopolitics. As stated in the founding EU Treaty regarding the cultural sphere, the fundamental objectives of the EU are: to contribute to the flowering of the cultures of Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and to highlight the common cultural heritage (article 167) (European Union, 2007)

In the European treaties there are no specific measures for the audiovisual sector but, with the approval of the Maastricht Treaty (1992), cultural policy acquired a legal basis. Article 87 states that:

Save as otherwise provided in this Treaty, any aid granted by a Member State or through State resources in any form whatsoever which distorts or threatens to distort competition by favouring certain undertakings or the production of certain goods shall, in so far as it affects trade between Member States, be incompatible with the common market. (art 87,1)

The Treaty allows several exceptions, however, such as 'aid to promote culture and heritage conservation where such aid does not affect trading conditions and competition in the Community to an extent that is contrary to the common interest' (art 87, 3 d). Article 151 provides a basis for action to promote, support and complement the activities of the Member States, respecting their national and regional diversity and emphasizing the common cultural heritage. The principles of intervention in the area of culture are complementarity and subsidiarity, but excluded from the scope of the article's application are any actions towards the harmonization of the legal and regulatory provisions developed by the Member States. As we have seen, this leads to a double contradiction: on the one hand, national legislations develop measures to protect their cultural products and correct market failures, while at the European level a free market is established; on the other, there is a clash between the



integration and homogenization involved in the free market process and the preservation of cultural diversity.

It is generally accepted that in order to protect cultural diversity the intervention of government authorities is required, a fact that contradicts the theory of the free market. However, the EU recognizes that to maintain the plurality of the cultural offer in its territory it is essential to support production, for without the support of the States and of the Union itself many countries and regions could not develop a national film industry. Thus, the film industry is given a special status with respect to the common rules of industrial competition, and it accepts intervention through subsidies to adjust to market forces. These do not take into account cultural values, as they are introduced to achieve more desirable results, creating opportunities for films with markedly national or regional components or independent films to be made and distributed in a market dominated by big productions aimed at the general public.

At the same time, European authorities take special care that subsidies for the cultural sector, completely prohibited for other products, do not alter the free market economy, a cornerstone of the EU. The Commission is responsible for ensuring the compatibility of state subsidies with the free market criteria. In the *Cinema Communication* of January 26 2001 the Commission established several evaluation criteria for state subsidies to cinematographic and other audiovisual works and these have been revised with subsequent communications (2004, 2007, and 2009). The purpose of these criteria is to determine whether state subsidies to cinema are compatible with community law so as to promote cultural creation without altering the conditions of competition and trade to an extent that is contrary to the common interest.

In fact, it is worth pointing out that the subsidy policy of the EU and Member States has a number of detractors who argue that financial aid may be essential to maintain local production but that it disables the link between supply and demand. As film expert, Terry Ilott, noted:

It may be a useful and even essential thing to subsidize local production. But subsidies provide the film-maker with a phantom audience, whose 'attendance' can boost the revenues of a film as if by magic. Far from addressing the needs of this 'audience', the European film-maker, naturally, treats it with contempt. (Ilott quoted in Finney, 1996, 115)

At the European Union level, support is channeled through financial assistance from programs such as Media (that promotes European cinema in the stages of pre-production, distribution and promotion) or the i2i audiovisual initiative (that encourages the development, distribution and promotion of European audiovisual works) and by the quota mechanism, *Television without Frontiers Directive*. This is based on two basic principles: the free movement of European television programs within the internal market and the duty of broadcasters to devote, whenever possible, more than half of their transmission time for European works ('emission allowances'). Furthermore, the Audiovisual Services Directive (articles 16 and 17) provides a general legal framework for the production and distribution of European audiovisual works, including films and TV movies. Among its objectives is the protection of cultural diversity and to increase the competitiveness of the European film industry, especially regarding the American film industry (European Commission – Audiovisual and Media Policies).

In fact, the economic and commercial policies of the EU are, in the audiovisual sector, in constant conflict with the measures used by member states to protect their cultural heritage. These tensions are particularly pronounced in the area of competences, and demonstrate how controversial the power structure within the Union is. This controversy is particularly clear in the Commission's competence in checking film subsidies established by the member states. In general, state aid is considered incompatible with the common European market as it affects trade between member states, and free competition may be distorted by favoring certain productions. Consequently, it is prohibited by Article 87 of the EU Treaty, as we have seen. Although culture is still a competence of member states there is not a general exception for cultural subsidies in the Treaty. However, Article 151 of the Treaty requires the Commission to take into account

the cultural diversity of the States in all their actions, opening a debate on where to draw the boundary between the Commission's jurisdiction to control member state aid to their film industries and the competence of member states to protect their cultural heritage.

A clear example of these tensions can be seen in Catalan Film Law, approved by the government in January 2010, which includes, among other resolutions, the obligation to dub or subtitle in Catalan fifty percent of copies distributed in more than fifteen movie theatres in Catalonia. This regulation does not affect films whose original language is Spanish or Catalan and those from other European countries whose distribution is less than sixteen copies (unless they are subtitled, in which case the subtitles should be also fifty percent in Catalan) - the rest are affected from the second copy. In March 2010, the Commission expressed doubts about the compatibility of the Cinema draft bill of Catalonia, which was then in the parliamentary stage, with the EU Treaty. Specifically, the Commission questioned the requirement for distributors to dub or subtitle fifty percent of film copies in Catalan to respect the linguistic balance considering that the law could have a potentially discriminatory restrictive effect on the activities of European film producers (European Commission, 2012).

The Catalan government justified this law as a way of protecting and promoting the Catalan language, an obligation contained in the constitutional and statutory EU legal system that provides protection for official languages as integral elements of the common cultural heritage. However, the Commission argued that the film provisions of articles 17 and 18 of the Catalan Film Law violate the obligations under Article 56 of TFEU since the obligation to dub or subtitle into Catalan implies incurring new translation costs, thereby affecting the free movement of European films. These films would be at a disadvantage compared to films in Spanish, for which such costs are not incurred. Thus, paradoxically, in trying to protect and promote the Catalan language, the Catalan government has developed a law that, according to the European Commission, benefits the film distribution of films in Spanish over those in other EU languages, generating unfairness in terms of trade contrary to the Union treaties. As a consequence of the Commission's arguments, the Catalan

government amended the law to adapt it to the proportionality criteria established by the laws of the EU.

Traditionally state aid to the film industry is aimed primarily at promoting a national film culture. However, in recent years, the contribution of the film industry to the national economy is increasingly valued. States recognize the importance of film and television production in terms of employment and tax revenue, and consequently implement their support to the development of this sector. This fact highlights the difficulty of defining the extent to which, by subsidizing the film industry, the states are protecting their culture or providing an 'unfair' assistance to an industry. In addition, the international arena is increasingly important and neither the EU nor member states want to stay out of the global scene.

The European Council participates in the promotion of European cinema through various projects such as Eurimages (a fund for co-production, distribution and exhibition of European cinematographic works), the European Audiovisual Observatory (a centre to obtain and disseminate information on the audiovisual industry in Europe) and the Cross-border Cultural Project of cinema. It also organizes forums to discuss policies related to cinema. The Council shares the objectives of promoting creativity and diversity in cinema and, consequently, supports the cinematographic European model that values creativity over commercial success, and makes the States focus their aid on production rather than distribution. It also assumes the importance of implementing policies at European level to be effective in achieving the goals of diversity and creativity (Council of Europe, 2008). Although these various measures are having some positive effects, there are also some areas that need to be implemented.

In the forum organized by the Commission, *Shaping Policies for the Cinema of Tomorrow* (Krakow, 11-13 September 2008), cinema policies in relation to their impact on the diversity of cultural identities and expressions were discussed, and the result was a series of observations and recommendations for member states, among which are: to develop film policies that cover all aspects related

to film production in order to increase the audience for European films; to improve cooperation and co-distribution frameworks as these practices contribute to cultural diversity and transnational circulation of films; and to promote the distribution and circulation of European films (for example, through support for dubbing and subtitling, since language is a barrier to distribution) (Council of Europe, 2009)

To sum up, EU policy on film is marked by two contradictions: the homogenization of the integration process conflicts with the objective of cultural diversity and the subsidies of the member States to their national cinemas is in opposition to free market EU policies. These tensions have very tangible effects on the policies of both the Union and the member states that seek to achieve their respective goals, which are not always compatible.

In the following chapter I analyze the relationship between cultural identity and commercial value that is at the core of film production at the national, regional and international levels with the aim of fulfilling the first objective of this work: to examine the interrelationship between cultural identity and industrial demands. This will consist of analyzing the distribution of film grants based on cultural, regional or national criteria, and identifying the origins of the resources used by different screen agencies. Then I study the policies and international agreements developed by the nation-states and the European Union to protect the domestic industry against the economic imperatives of the global market, mainly in relation to the penetration of Hollywood films into their markets. This analysis is necessary to contextualize the need for state funding for Catalan cinema in order to develop a model of cinema, independent from Spanish cinema and capable of internationalization.

# **Chapter 1. Overview of international, national and regional film industries**

In this chapter I study the relationship between cultural identity and the commercial value that defines film production at the national, regional and international levels with the ultimate aim of presenting a model for Catalan cinema in chapter 5 that shows it as independent of Spanish cinema, and therefore capable of internationalisation. This chapter responds to the first objective of this work and forms the justification for the case study analysis (of Britain, France, Spain and Catalonia) in the following chapters. First, I analyze the situation of film in the global arena and, specifically, the policies and international agreements of each country or region developed to protect the domestic industry against the economic imperatives of the global market. Then, I study the influence of Hollywood in the international film market and the measures — and theoretical approaches from which they are derived — that nation-states and the European Union take to protect their domestic film production and to ensure that it reaches their own audiences, as well as being distributed internationally. Specifically, I explore co-productions and film festivals as mechanisms of internationalization for domestic production. These analyses set the framework for the second objective of this work, developed in the following chapters; that is, the studying the historical development of official film policies and funding criteria in the UK, France, and especially Spain and Catalonia. Finally, I examine the particularities of the cinemas developed in nations without a state to show how they try to find a voice among the more prominent cinema of nation-states and global market homogenization flows. The strategies developed by minor cinemas to gain visibility are important in defining a framework for the study of Catalan cinema, which is currently a regional cinema but aims to reach the international level.

## **1.1. The film industry in the global era**

Sinclair explains the importance of the cultural industries as follows:

The cultural industries then are those which produce goods or services which are [...] somehow expressive of the way of life of a society, such as film or television [...]. They are industries which give form to social life in sound and image, words, and pictures. They offer the terms and symbols with which think and communicate about patterns of social difference, the aspiration of groups for recognition and identity, the affirmation and challenging of social values and ideals, and the experience of social change. (Sinclair 1992, 3-4)

Thus, cultural industries are not like other industries because they have objectives that are not limited to economic benefits. As we have seen, the relationship between industry and culture plays a central role in the perception of audio-visual products and cinema in particular. This duality creates tensions and disputes between international free market advocates and the supporters of protectionism for cultural products. Such disputes reflect the interests of the parties involved and thus the United States is contrary to 'cultural exception' because the free flow of cultural products benefits its economy and, given the success US films have with audiences around most of the world, they are also an excellent means of disseminating US culture and lifestyle. (Although despite being supposedly the highest representative of free trade and fair competition, the US has hundreds of anti-dumping measures to block imports when prices are 'unjustly' established) (Miller et al., 2005, 256).

By contrast, for European countries and many others, penetration of US products into their markets poses a threat to local production and, consequently, they support international, regional and national agreements that help them to protect their cultural products. In 1993, a large group of artists, intellectuals and European producers signed a petition, reported in major continental newspapers, supporting cultural exception under the GATT agreement, as they argued that culture is inalienable and therefore not a commercial product (Van Elteren, 1996, 47). Meanwhile, numerous US critics argued that the intended protection of culture was, in fact, a protection of industry (Kessler, 1995: 563-611 cited in Miller et al. 2005, 55). As previously stated, this situation continues to lead the market of cultural products through

the concept of cultural diversity advocated by UNESCO and supported by the European Union and many other countries, where the United States is not included.

Scott Lash and Celia Lury argue that the logic of culture has changed with the transition to a global cultural industry in recent decades (Lash and Lury, 2007, 3). According to these authors, in the decades following World War II, culture was still a superstructure, and both domination and cultural resistance were developed through ideologies, symbols and representations. In this framework cultural entities were still unusual. However, in the last two or three decades, culture has undergone a fundamental change and, at present, cultural objects are found in all areas, such as information, communication, branded products, entertainment. Thus, cultural institutions are not the exception but the rule (Lash and Lury, 2007, 3-4).

Given the importance of cultural products in today's society the number of international agreements that regulate this market is not surprising. Today, cultural products invade virtually all spheres of our society and have enormous political, social and economic influence. New technologies in film, television and the Internet have made possible the dissemination of cultural products in a relatively cheap and widespread way. Among the richest countries, where most of the population can expect to spend some income on leisure, an intense battle to achieve a market share in these products is taking place. In the poorest regions of the world, entertainment is not obviously a priority but even in these less developed countries television, radio and mobile usage has experienced a significant increase, underscoring the importance of communication to human communities (Standage, 2005: 123 cited in Harvey, 2006, 4).

Consequently, market regulation of these products has implications for many other human activities. By far, globally, the greatest focus seems to be on the high penetration of American culture and industry into other markets. Cultural diffusion has always been international, but the speed and depth of its processes appears to be increasing (Mann, 1993, 119). More than a decade ago Eric Hobsbawm pointed out 'the global triumph of the United States and its



way of life' (Hobsbawm 1998, 1) and while the US' era of being a global superpower may be already over, with other economies taking over, US cultural dominance, especially in cinema, still stands.

The film industry too is drifting towards a more global trend so that the relevance of 'national cinema' appears to be declining with the growing importance of 'international cinema'. As Miller et al suggest, 'display texts are designed to transcend the linguistic and other cultural boundaries' (Miller et al. 2005, 257). In fact, cinema as an industry is not a national but an international business where different nations compete for a market share, although not always on the same terms.

Hence, on the one hand, national cinemas must compete in their own territory with wildly popular Hollywood movies; on the other, major producers and distributors control the films being made and how, when and in what circumstances they are distributed, obviously following a commercial criterion that often ignores products with a more local or personal character. As Miller et al suggest, the meaning of globalization for national cinemas focuses on concern for a cultural flow dominated by the US, according to the principles of cultural imperialism, on the international expansion of capitalist production and clusters, and on attempts to govern the chaotic and divided circulation of signs across cultures (Miller et al., 2005, 254).

In economic terms, the global film industry is growing due to increased productivity, the opening of new markets and the introduction of new media platforms. The compound annual growth rate in the film industry has increased between 7.5 and nine percent since 1985 (Illot, 2009 quoted in Finney, 2010, 5). This growth reflects the prominent position occupied by film and entertainment in consumer tastes. However, as Finney notes, the economic crisis that began in 2007, rising unemployment and the subsequent change of priorities for consumers who begin to value savings over leisure, is likely to affect the film industry in the near future (Finney, 2010, 5).

Nevertheless, new technologies are changing the film industry and these changes offer opportunities for independent and national cinemas. In recent years the film industry has had to face the challenges posed by digitization and the internet. Digitization has enabled the creation of spectacular special effects, the computer-generation of characters that seem 'real', and 3D film production. In addition, the capacity of movie theatres to receive digital broadcasts significantly reduces production and distribution costs. Digital technology has also had a major impact on independent cinema. Thanks to lightweight digital cameras and digital editing programs, movies can be made for a few thousand euros. One such example is the horror film *Paranormal Activity* (Oren Peli, 2009) which, with a cost of less than US \$15,000, became a commercial success (Quart and Auster, 2011, 5). The internet represents a significant potential for the film industry thanks to its high capacity for broadcasting and advertising, especially for independent cinema, and a threat in losses through piracy. As Finney argues, 'changing technology and user demands are radically challenging the established 'Windows' structure so favored by the Studios and other leading gate-keeping distribution incumbents'. Moreover, he convincingly points out that the change in the international film industry can also be seen in another aspect: local audiences and communities ask for 'culturally specific stories that explore their own communities' (Finney, 2010, 4-5). This is evident, for example, in TV format sales, where a format is sold globally for local production to preserve cultural specificity.

The international film industry, therefore, is currently facing two major challenges. First, it must manage the tensions between the free market and the willingness of many people to preserve multiculturalism in the face of the homogenization exemplified by so-called American cultural imperialism. Second, it must manage new technologies and their implications in a global sphere. Regarding multiculturalism, it is worth noting the diversity of the different nationalities involved in the Hollywood industry (producers, directors, technicians, actors), and the fact that this industry is becoming aware that it must address the multicultural nature of its audiences in order to maintain commercial success. For example, within the US, Hollywood is trying out ways to reach Hispanic audiences — the second largest language group in the

country and the one more likely to go to movies — such as ‘developing more nuanced marketing, finding ways to make mainstream films more inclusive and providing something different from mass-appeal blockbusters by making movies targeted to Hispanics’ (Breeanna, 2011).

Moreover, Hollywood majors are focusing on international audiences, realising that they represent an increasing share of their revenues, by delivering products with storytelling that can be understood by all kind of audiences, leaving aside the subtleties of dialogue that can be difficult to translate or understand. China, for example, is becoming an important market for American films, while Hollywood’s answer, as David Hancock points out, is casting Chinese actors such as Jackie Chan or Joan Chong Chen in their films (Brook, 2013). On the other hand, methods of communication and partnership are converging and nations may feel threatened by corporate control (Miller et al., 2005, 256).

The ‘UNESCO Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions of 2005’ (UNESCO, 2005) proposed several strategies to encourage cultural diversity among which are: the promotion of international cooperation, education and public awareness, information sharing and transparency, participation of civil society and development cooperation. The UNESCO 2009 paper *Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue* states that

Policies aiming to foster cultural diversity in communication and cultural content contribute to the flourishing of pluralism and the free flow of ideas. But also point out that three challenges must be met if communication and cultural content is to contribute to cultural diversity: those represented by the requirements of innovative content, expanded access and balanced representation. (UNESCO, 2009)

Thus, innovative content production must ensure the integration of cultural diversity in the cultural sector with emphasis on local content. Expanding access involves taking measures to reduce the digital divide and improve the access of creators of innovative content to cultural production and distribution

networks. Finally, the UNESCO paper says that 'cultural diversity requires a balanced representation of the different communities that live together in a particular country, [...] in accordance with the principles of the freedom of expression and the free flow of ideas' (UNESCO, 2009, 166). These ideas have special relevance to and support the aims of communities such as Catalonia that are seeking to develop and promote their cultural specificities, avoiding homogenization with and assimilation into the dominating culture of the nation state (in this case Spain) to which they belong.

We live in an era in which both cinema and television can reach global audiences. In this situation, the idea that audiovisual products should be accountable to local audiences as well as to the shareholders of large corporations that control the media is, at the very least, problematic (Miller et al., 2005, 257). For the first time, trade between corporations exceeds trade between states, and liberalization implies that huge capitalist monopolies outside nation states converge and collaborate. In these circumstances, the question is: what is the role of states in the management of cultural issues? Pierre Bourdieu offers a model of global culture that contrasts the non-interventionist policy of the United States with the cultural nationalism of France, and calls for a different system in which the state focuses not on the support of capital but on the expression of popular will (Bourdieu, cited in Miller et al., 2005, 257).

However, as Anne Jäckel argues, the fact 'that most countries in Europe continue to implement some form of protection for their national film industry indicates that films are considered far too socially important to be left to market forces' (Jäckel, 2003, 1). Through the development of cultural policies at the national level and through regional and international treaties, states can maintain and publicize their cultural heritage. Of course, there is always the question of how any intervention or support to the cultural sector can be limited to the promotion of culture, according to the tenets of cultural diversity, or to what extent this intervention benefits the cultural sector as an industry, in direct opposition to the ideals of free market and free competition.

The world film industry is determined by the tension between the economic and cultural hegemony of American cinema and the desire of other nations and regions to find their place in this context. As has been noted, the issue is not limited to a purely economic competition to achieve higher market shares but focuses on cultural identity and national values. Therefore the defense of cultural diversity in the face of ideals of free competition is a dispute that seems endless.

### **1.2. Hollywood film industry: influence and scope**

The American film industry is a massive exporter. Hollywood produces between forty and ninety percent of the films shown in most of the world. The proportion of the Hollywood share of the world market has doubled since 1990, while the European film industry is one ninth of what it was in 1945. The market share obtained by Hollywood in most European film markets has been between thirty and eighty percent in the last seventy years (Nowell-Smith, 1996, quoted in Nowell-Smith and Ricci, 1998, 1) while the penetration of European films into the US market is nothing more than marginal. However, as Nowell-Smith argues, the exchange of ideas and knowledge has been mutual:

European audiences have eagerly lapped up the imagery and values present in American movies and other culture goods [...] and European film-makers have taken many lessons from Hollywood in film style, content and narrative economy. But the American Cinema also draws heavily on European cultural models. (Nowell-Smith, 1996, quoted in Nowell-Smith and Ricci, 1998, 1)

The world market is crucial for the cinema and its related industries of the United States. In 2012, the thirty-two percent increase over the preceding five years was due to growth in several markets, including China and Russia (Motion Picture Association of America, MPAA) (MPAA, 2012). However, the pre-eminence of the US manufacturing industry is being threatened by several Eastern countries and other competitors. To maintain its leadership the US industry depends on the development of areas such as biotechnology,

computer software for telecommunications and production of television programs, movies and music.

Hollywood, meanwhile, has embarked on a thorough campaign of spending more than the competition. While the average cost of feature films in France, Britain, Australia and Italy barely grew between 1990 and 1997 (remaining well below \$10 million), the average cost of a feature film in the US increased from \$26 million in 1990 to \$53 million in 1997 (Miller et al., 2005, 255). In 1999, Hollywood spent \$8,700 million, a total that far exceeded the combined costs of all other national cinemas (European Audiovisual Observatory, 1998; Film Production and Distribution, 2000).

However, the success of Hollywood films does not rely only on the huge investments in production, marketing and distribution. In fact, its stories and aesthetics have done a great deal to engage the public. Quart and Auster note that:

In the act of either displacing or stylizing social reality, Hollywood was able to create vital and reverberating images, characters, and dialogue that granted a great deal of insight into the culture. It succeeded in helping to shape the consciousness of its audience by creating mythic landscapes and urban scapes [...] and archetypal figures like the gangster, private eye, and femme fatale. The link between Hollywood and its audience is a reciprocal one (Quart and Auster, 2011, 5).

Most Hollywood movies follow a number of stylistic and narrative conventions — linear narrative, temporal and spatial coherence, a well-defined conclusion, a main character with whom the audience can empathize — and usually reinforce the *status quo* and social values.

During the 1950s and early 1960s, Hollywood film production proved to be commercially successful mainly thanks to the musicals, historical epics, and other films that made the most of the larger screens, wider framing and improved sound. However, by the late 1960s, audience rates were rapidly

decreasing, causing financial problems to the studios. At the same time, European art films, especially the French New Wave, were doing well in US; in an attempt to recapture the audience, the studios supported the work of several young filmmakers such as Martin Scorsese, Stanley Kubrick, Francis Ford Coppola, Robert Altman and Woody Allen, allowing them to make their films with relatively little studio control. These directors considered film as an artistic medium and introduced styles and subject matters (such as sexuality and psychological analysis of relationships) that set them apart from the aesthetic characteristics of the classical period to the point where their work was considered the 'American New Wave'.

The success of American films has been thoroughly analysed by several critics. Ian Jarvie highlights two factors that have influenced the international success of American filmmaking: on the one hand, 'American film had stars, distinct genres and diffuse qualities that connect to the positive image of America in the minds of so many'; on the other hand, is the business strategies of its industry, such as the direct control of distribution or the partial ownership of theatres, which allowed a rapid expansion both domestically and abroad (Jarvi, 1998, 44 cited in Novell-Smith and Ricci, 1998).

Meanwhile, Argos adequately attributes the hegemony of US cinema to three factors. First, the heterogeneous population of the country induces Hollywood producers to provide texts that reach all its audiences, which opens the doors to a universal understanding. Second, the USA has always maintained a strong interest in 'exporting the political model, the free competition and the cult of the self-made man', fundamental values of US culture. Finally, the author highlights the aggressive business strategy of the US industry both in its own market and in international markets (Argos, 2000, 19-21).

Miller et al., point out further factors that explain the domination of Hollywood cinema, namely the

higher production values, film poster behavior, the fact that cultural imperialism manufactures taste transference more than technology or

investment, and that American values are at the epicenter of transcendental modernity, setting social and individual problems through love, sex and goods. (Miller et al., 2005, 192)

However, there are more elements to be taken into account. Miller et al. focus on analyzing this hegemony as a result of four specific actions of the Hollywood industry: first, as contingent to the Hollywood rebuttable control over the 'New International Division of Cultural Labour' (NICL), by exploiting the national cultural labor markets; secondly, using international co-productions to reproduce a commercial culture that benefits Hollywood; thirdly, through the use of intellectual property rights as a coercive strategy to protect its screen commerce; and finally, by the control exercised over the conditions and possibilities of cultural work, i.e. the sale of their film products (Miller et al., 2005, 192).

Hollywood cinema is dominated by six distribution companies (the 'majors') whose headquarters are in Los Angeles but which have operating systems scattered throughout the world allowing them to maintain the largest share of the global film market. Angus Finney identifies two Hollywood distribution strategies that help achieve this success. An economic approach is applied vertically to control how products are distributed: first cinemas, then DVD, followed by pay TV broadcasts, and finally open TV broadcasts. Movies are not released in the next medium until exploitation of the previous one has reached its limit. In addition, the majors apply a horizontal approach, acquiring the rights to all the possible areas where the film can be exploited (Finney, 2010, 4).

In terms of distribution and exhibition, Steinbock argues, Hollywood has experienced four phases. In the first phase, which lasted until the end of the forties, there was strong integration between the three sectors that define the film industry (production, distribution and exhibition) so that studios were the owners of the movie theatres where their productions were exhibited. This minimized the need to promote films. In the following decade, with the declaration of the antitrust law, the major studios decided to dissociate from the movie theatres. This situation meant that power was concentrated in distribution



and marketing acquired relevance to the sector. With the advent of television and the competition it represented to movie theatres, production companies focused on providing technical innovations (such as widescreen or 3D) to attract the public. Since the eighties, deregulation initiated a reintegration process (Steinbock, 1995: 109-10) and marketing and audience research became important tools in promoting films. Hollywood also began to use the increasing mass-market of national television to ensure a quick recovery of their investments and to make profitable its failures on the big screen (Miller, 2005, 193). For example, in 2007, the major Hollywood studios had combined revenues of \$42.3US billion, of which about one-tenth came from American cinemas; the rest came from DVD sales, multi-picture output deals with foreign distributors, pay-TV and network-television licensing (Epstein, 2010).

Hollywood cinema was created following commercial criteria and has clearly treated films as products to be sold, which means that audience preferences are the main criterion to follow, in order to obtain the largest possible profit margin. European cinema, on the contrary, seems to give much more credit to the cultural importance of cinema and European states support their film industries through grants and other financial mechanisms that allow the making of films that would not be economically viable otherwise.

In relation to the cultural aspect, Miller et al., point out that:

The development of cultural imperialism thesis during the sixties argued that the United States, as leader of world exports for screen, was transferring its dominant value system to others, with a corresponding decrease of the vitality and position of local languages and traditions that threatened national identity. (Miller et al., 2005, 47)

After World War II this cultural imperialism responded to the consolidation of the position of the United States as a world power. However, as Alex Primo argues, in recent decades American cultural hegemony has become more closely related to the control of news agencies, advertising, market research and public

opinion, the screen trade, technology, telecommunications and security (Primo, 1999, cited in Miller et al., 2005, 47).

In this sense, criticisms of cultural imperialism have focused on US control over the world's media, international technology and infrastructure, on the export of US products for screen and American control over distribution systems, on the role of international news agencies, on the flow of television programs and on the question of local values versus corporate interests (Miller et al. 2005, 48). Broadly speaking, three geographically distinct forms of response to cultural imperialism can be distinguished. African, Latin American and Middle Eastern countries focus on the participation and control of local democracy; Western Europe is committed to a pan-Europeanism that counters the homogenizing forces of Americanization; and, finally, the countries of Central and East Europe are trying to develop civil societies with privatized media (Mowlana, 1993, 66-67, in Miller et al., 2005, 47).

Thus, with a combination of business and economic strategies that maximize control over markets and the development of cinematic texts in different media able to reach more diverse audiences, the US and Hollywood in particular, has been able to control the world film market. Meanwhile, other nations are trying to compete with Hollywood by developing different strategies to support their film industries. In the next section I study these strategies and analyze how they have influenced the development of national cinemas.

### **1.3. European cinema and the cinema of nation-states**

I start this section by exploring to what extent it is possible to speak of European cinema as a common film industry, both from cultural and commercial perspectives, able to compete with Hollywood productions, or whether it can be seen as merely the sum of its nation-states' cinemas. Then I explore how the European Union (EU) itself and nation-states film industries develop different strategies to compete with Hollywood and how those strategies shape their national cinemas with reference to case studies. I study *The King's Speech*, a successful British film in terms of audiences and revenue, thought for an international market but that invites the audience to consider the concepts of

'nation' and 'national identity' in relation to Britain, its institutions and traditions. The French film *Un prophète (A Prophet)* treats themes very current in nowadays France, such as ethnicity, and can be understood as a critique of the justice system. This is intended to provide contextual information for the study of Catalan regional cinema in following chapters, as to how it might become a national cinema and compete with Hollywood.

The concept of Europe is a key and controversial issue in the contemporary political landscape. Europe, and how it is governed, has undergone a major transformation since World War II. Europe is less divided than it has been throughout its history, much richer than it has been at any other stage of its development and seems to have prospects of a harmonious economic and social development of its regions. Europe, like any country or community, can be seen from two perspectives: from outside and from within. From an external perspective, Europe is an entity — indeed, the geographical, cultural and linguistic diversity tends to be relegated to a single concept of what Europe is. From within, sometimes Europe is conceived as a synonym for Western Europe or the European Union, but where its borders lie, what it means to be European, who is in and who is out are questions that have always been debated. Europe constantly struggles to overcome its differences, recognizing a shared past to create a common destiny. Nonetheless, the nature of Europe remains ambiguous, its mode of governance uncertain and views on its future development are diverse and contradictory. Decision-making in the EU is still dominated by nation-states and Europeans have not yet developed a common identity comparable with their own national identity.

As Steve Marsh and Hans Mackenstein point out, the EU is facing an increasingly multipolar international scenario and needs to consolidate its strategy as a relevant international actor (Marsh and Mackenstein, 2005). Applying this idea to cinema, Thomas Elsaesser's words are relevant:

Cinema today contributes to cultural identities that are more inclusive and processual, more multi-cultural and multi-ethnic, more dialogical and interactive, able to embrace the 'new Europe', the popular star and genre

cinema, as well as the diaspora cinemas within Europe itself. (Elsaesser, 2005, 9)

During the first fifteen years of cinema, France dominated European cinema, with the Pathé and Gaumont production companies. In the 1920s, the German industry tried to create an European cinema with France and Britain, but soon Hollywood became the dominant force. The years following World War II until the eighties saw the development of different national cinemas and the trends and art-house films that have since defined European cinema. Western European cinema has established its identity through three characteristics: its most iconic directors are recognized as auteurs (Ingmar Bergman, Jacques Rivette), its styles and themes have defined a nation's self-image, and its new trends have meant political as well as aesthetic renewal (neo-realism, New Wave, New German Cinema, the British renaissance) (Elsaesser, 2005). However, as Elsaesser argues:

European cinema does not (yet) exist: the gap between Central/Eastern Europe and Western Europe remains as wide as ever, and even in Western Europe, each country has its own national cinema, increasingly defended as a valuable treasure and part of an inalienable national patrimony. (Elsaesser, 2005, 14)

As we have seen, Hollywood cinema is very pervasive in Europe; it dominates the European market and increasingly the cinema of the rest of the world. The presence of European cinema in America is, however, quite insignificant; it only occupies a small niche market and its place is determined by the same companies that control the distribution of US films in Europe. European films that succeed in Hollywood are shot in the English language, and some films that have been successful in Europe, have been remade in English for the American market (as happened with *Abre los ojos (Open your eyes)*, 1997, and its American remake *Vanilla Sky*, 2001).

Occasionally, American production companies invest in foreign films that are considered to have some potential for the American market. Subtitling and

dubbing are not very acceptable to American audiences or to British ones, as is demonstrated by the way such films are released only on the art house circuit rather than on general release. It seems that these methods to make films understandable to all audiences are accepted only when there is no alternative and the American audience has anyway enough choice from films shot in English. Thus films made in other languages do not do well in the US market: a 2010 *LA Times* article explains that according to [boxofficemojo.com](http://boxofficemojo.com), of the nearly 1000 foreign-language films released in the USA since 1980, only twenty-two have grossed more than \$10 million, with more than seventy percent of them taking in less than \$1 million (Horn and Lewis, 2010). However, as Novell-Smith argues, this does not mean that they cannot have a market. In fact, DVDs and videos have allowed Americans to enjoy films that have not reached their movie theatres. In this way, European and also Asian cinema have found a way to reach, if not the general public, at least a variety of minorities and niche audiences, such as students or ethnic minorities, interested for various reasons in these films. However, this type of diffusion does not carry a media interest and its existence continues to be marginal (Novell-Smith and Ricci, 1998).

Nonetheless globalization also brings opportunities for the European market in relation to Hollywood. As Peter Lev argues, globalization of cultural work makes art-house cinema an Euro-American genre in terms of labor, finance, marketing and management, not to mention that a considerable part of Hollywood is in foreign hands (Lev, 1993).

Now, given that we have analyzed to what extent we can speak of an European cinema we have to consider how the European Union itself and the film industries of nation-states develop different strategies to compete with Hollywood and how those strategies shape their national cinemas. At the EU level, when we define European cinema, the national seems to have become a second-order concept in the sense that it is generally considered only according to the legislative and economic measures undertaken by the EU to promote the audiovisual industry and the preservation of its heritage. In films, references to the national, regional or local function more like advertisements of memorable

and stereotyped past events than as examples of lifestyle or as promotion of touristic locations. Many of the films that put their emphasis on the local (*The Full Monty*, Peter Cattaneo, 1997; *Billy Elliot*, Stephen Daldry, 2000, *Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios* (*Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*), Pedro Almodovar, 1988, *Goodbye Lenin*, Wolfgang Becker, 2003; *Le fabuleux destin d'Amélie Poulain* (*Amélie*), Jean-Pierre Jeunet, 2001) do so to gain access to international markets. They exploit national stereotypes, and the historical and cultural heritage for which the country is known abroad, thus appealing to international audiences. For example, Almodovar's film *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* depicts the stereotypical Spanish figure of Don Juan, a legendary libertine whose story has been told by many authors. That is, national cinema that addresses the national seems to have come close to Hollywood in its preference for works addressed to a variety of audiences (Elsaesser, 2005, 82).

French cinema, from the *nouvelle vague*, has a long and successful film tradition. German cinema does not seem to have managed to maintain the prestige that the New German Cinema acquired in the seventies, nor to have overcome the gap between the two Germanies. British cinema in the last twenty years has seen commercial success frequently (*Four Weddings and a Funeral* by Mike Newell, 1994; *Trainspotting* by Danny Boyle, 1996; *The Full Monty* by Peter Cattaneo, 1997; *Shakespeare in Love* by John Madden, 1998; *Billy Elliot* by Stephen Daldry, 2000; *The Queen* by Stephen Frears, 2006; *The King's Speech* by Tom Hooper, 2010) often in open competition with Hollywood. This circumstance can be attributed in large part to the fact that its films are in English and, therefore, have greater acceptance in international markets and particularly in the US market. However, national cinemas do not seem to find their own unique selling point, nor has European cinema as a whole found a broader market there beyond traditional art-house cinema.

In this context, nations feel threatened by different scenarios that limit the expression of a national cinematography able to reflect the national culture while also reaching a global audience. Among these challenges are:

-The pre-eminence of American cinema in the global audiovisual market, with the cultural invasion that this entails.

-Corporate control, to the extent that unelected and remote elites move or instruct local 'accountable' politicians.

-The challenges (and opportunities) posed by the digital revolution.

-The definition of a national or regional cinema and the determination of the role to be played by these identity concepts in society, in an increasingly globalized world where relationships and the challenge of the international interference are constantly growing.

-The development of solid national and regional film industries able to compete in international markets.

In the West, as I have argued, national film production is usually defined in relation to Hollywood to the point where American cinema is considered more an international than a national cinema. As Paul Willemen points out, any film that is not in English has become an example of 'world cinema', something reserved for intellectuals and other culture vultures (Willemen, 1994, cited in Vitali and Willemen, 2006, 29). In this scenario, producers of many national cinemas that have to operate in a context dominated by Hollywood production use different strategies: avoiding direct competition by targeting a particular sector of the population; offering films that somehow criticize Hollywood cinema; competing directly; ignoring Hollywood cinema; benefiting from the support of State grants and quotas; and through promoting regional cinemas whose culture or language allows them to distance themselves from the cinemas of nation-states to which they belong.

Thus, European countries face the crisis caused by the success of Hollywood cinema by developing regulatory measures to support domestic production, both through protectionist measures relating to imports of foreign films and

through financial support to domestic production. This state support of cinema is justified both by economic reasonings — employment and industry — and by cultural arguments — to reduce American influence in national cultures (Moran, 1996, 7). In fact, these protectionist measures — limiting imports and offering financial support to local industries — started in some European and Latin American governments during the 1930s. In other parts of the world, such as Australia and New Zealand, they were not established until the sixties or seventies but the overall pattern is clear: national or regional governments around the world have been involved to a greater or lesser extent in the protection and development of their film industries.

The economic control of large corporations — which in the case of the film industry means the US majors<sup>4</sup> — largely determines the distribution of films so that the majors get agreements that privilege their productions at the expense of domestic production. As Litman points out, both within national territories and in the international arena distribution is highly concentrated (Litman, 1998, 22-23). As examples of this concentrated power Miller et al., highlight the case of the British film *Riff-Raff* (Ken Loach, 1990), which was removed from movie theatres, despite the commercial success it was having, to show *Backdraft* (Ron Howard, 1991), which had been a failure in the USA (Miller et al., 2005, 194). Finney, similarly, explains that *Damage* (Louis Malle, 1993) was replaced after a week of screening, despite being a box office success, by an American movie purchased through a reservation system (Finney, 1996, 70).

To meet these challenges, regional and national cinemas cannot rely solely on their economic capacities. It is generally recognized that there must be a critical intervention by the state, one that recognizes that culture is too important to be exposed in competition with international markets. Thus, as exemplified by the case of co-productions which will be discussed later, state provision is essential to maintain a diverse audiovisual culture by working locally, nationally and regionally. Of course there are theorists who criticize such interventions.

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<sup>4</sup> The largest film production and distribution Hollywood conglomerates



Marvasti explains that the neoclassical reactionaries consider that state aid, made in the name of cultural sovereignty, is hindering the flow of the free market and creating disadvantages for other nations because such interventions stifle innovation and, therefore, contribute to US dominance (Marvasti, 2000, 99-115 cited in Miller et al. 2005, 68). However, even in the United States, probably the main advocate of the free market concept, state intervention is considerable. The US film industry has received aid in the form of tax credits, representation from the State and Trade Department, foreign exchange subsidies and oligopolistic practices of domestic buying and foreign selling that close the market to imports claiming cultural tastes (Miller et al. 2005, 68).

Thus, governments of different countries develop measures that protect the productions of their national film industries. These measures focus on a quota system in movie theatres and television for their domestic production, on various subsidies for the production and distribution of films, and on exhibition at various international film festivals to generate a significant number of synergies among film industries around the world, highly beneficial to the internationalization of national cinemas. Moreover, bilateral or multilateral agreements with other countries are established to promote access to their markets for domestic products.

The policy of subsidies and exhibition quotas for nations or European regions for their cinemas, allows producers to develop more local projects than they would be able to undertake if they did not have access to this protection but, as has been noted, these measures sometimes collide with the free market economic logic governing European Union integration. EU policies support the implementation of measures aimed at the preservation of cultural diversity and the Commission closely monitors the implementation of the quota and subsidy policies to ensure that these measures do not distort the free movement of goods, a cornerstone of the EU system. However, the EU also provides several financial aids through various projects to enhance the development of an European cinema that can compete globally.

Film festivals and co-productions are two mechanisms, supported by the EU and different nations and regions globally, which are used by almost all actors in the film industry to promote production, generate synergies and share risks. What follows is a discussion of these mechanisms that promote multiculturalism and the internationalization of cinematographic works.

### **1.3.1. Film festivals**

International film festivals can be considered as a network of exchanges in which producers, distributors, directors, purchasing managers of television, critics, journalists and film fans gather to see new works, exchange ideas and make business contacts. Sassatelli defined festivals as 'social events held regularly in which, through a multiplicity of forms, degrees and coordinated series of events, all members of a community participate directly or indirectly' (Sassatelli, 2007). Clark highlighted that these events are not an end but a means to implement a strategic project (Clark, 2008).

As Elsaesser points out, the festival circuit condenses all forms of cinema not immersed in the global Hollywood network (Elsaesser, 2005, 88). Film festivals are events where culture and industry come together and through various synergies mutually benefit each other. In this sense, and according to the framework of the meeting *Film Festivals: Looking into the Future*, organized by the Mapfre Foundation, the General Director of ICAA (Instituto de Cinematografía y de las Artes Visuales, Film and Visual Arts Institute), Susana de la Sierra, recommended that film festival organizers seek synergies with private sponsors because public funding, although 'necessary', must not be 'the only' source of financing and will not be sufficient for festivals to survive (Fundación Mapfre, Sala de prensa, 2012). At the same meeting, the Director of the Cultural Institute of the Mapfre Foundation, Pablo Jiménez Burillo, said that 'festivals are essential to the development of the international film industry' (Fundación Mapfre, Sala de prensa, 2012). Ivan Giroud, former Director of the Havana Film Festival, argued in this sense that these cultural events 'make a circuit of festivals where cinema is moving, the whole industry and all the business. Festivals allow the existence of independent cinema, and that independent films circulate and are seen' (Fundación Mapfre, Sala de

prensa, 2012). Bertha Quintero, Director of Arts of IDARTES (Instituto Distrital de las Artes), from Bogota, highlighted the educational aspect of these events: 'festivals also help to educate the public: children and youth, who will be responsible of the future of cinema' (Fundación Mapfre webpage, 2012).

As is apparent from these quotations, some significant ideas about film festivals were put forward in this meeting: festivals as ways of finding private financing for films as well as reaching international markets, as windows for independent cinema to reach audiences, and as opportunities to educate the public. All these factors make film festivals a useful mechanism both to foster cinema as an industry, help to generate the business synergies that can make it self-sufficient, and as cultural value, allow independent films to enter the market.

In Europe, film festivals have become an essential factor for the sector, and have significant effects on other elements of film industry and culture such as authorship, production, exhibition and distribution, cultural prestige and recognition. The reasons are many but among them changes in urban management, structural changes in economic production, the weight of cultural industries as generators of wealth and employment and the influence of globalization processes (Quinn, 2005) can be highlighted. Countries recognize the importance of festivals to promote their production and provide support programs for the organization of festivals and for the participation of national producers in them.

The annual film festival was invented in Europe just after World War II and during the forties and fifties their cultural prestige and economic value were established. As Janet Harbord noted:

The origins of European film festivals are marked by two different discourses. One is a broad historical project of rebuilding Europe, [...] a consolidation of Europe as a significant player in a global economy. On the other hand, the festival represents an attempt to separate out national cultures, to distinguish certain practices. (Harbord, 2002, 64)

Among the major European festivals are those taking place in Venice, Cannes, Berlin, Rotterdam, Locarno, Karlovy Vary, Oberhausen and San Sebastián. Many of these cities, like Venice, Cannes and San Sebastian compete to attract cultural tourism. Others, such as Oberhausen and Rotterdam, are industrial cities seeking to become cultural centers. The latter has succeeded in becoming a bridge between Asian cinema and European audiences. In others such as Berlin, the festival had a distinctly political origin. The Berlin Film Festival was created during the Cold War to show East Berlin and the entire Soviet bloc the glamour of western cinema and way of life. In contrast, the Leipzig documentary film festival showed films from Eastern Europe, Cuba and Latin America to strengthen 'socialist' cinema as part of their anti-imperialist struggle.

Also, in countries outside Europe, film festivals have in many cases had political connotations. The main film festival in South Korea, Pusan, was created as a counterpart to the successful Hong Kong International Film Festival. It was highly important in the generation of a national cinema and became the platform for access to other Asian cinemas during the nineties. The Toronto festival also had political connotations because it united Anglophone and French cinema against a common enemy: Hollywood (Elsaesser, 2005, 84-85).

Festivals, in general, play an important role in the development of their host city as a cultural centre, and are very relevant in economic terms information technology seek highly cultural environments for their headquarters with the aim of attracting the skilled workers they need to generate innovation and maintain the competitiveness of their products. As Harbord says:

Festivals advertise cities, set them in competition, region against region, global city against global city. [...] Festivals are implicated in the structure, design and use of cities, are part of the fabric of city life and its annual calendar. (Harbord, 2002, 63)

Festivals cannot be financed only by selling tickets and with subsidies from public institutions; the organizers seek sponsors in local, national or

international companies to complete the festival budget. This gives companies the possibility of presenting their products and services to millions of potential customers. Consequently, it is no wonder that such events have proliferated in recent years. Many small towns also decide to organize a film festival to promote themselves as tourist and cultural centers, sometimes choosing specific themes for their festivals like the Sitges Film Festival, which focuses on horror and fantasy. Also noteworthy is the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah, dedicated to independent cinema. This was founded by Robert Redford in 1983 to show the public the work of young artists who did not have many opportunities to reach an audience.

According to Janet Harbord, in film festivals four different discourses intersect:

- Independent film makers and producers that circulate in catalogues, press releases, interviews and other texts.
- Media representation, particularly the press, that provides a commentary on events, on controversies, spectacles and the 'new'.
- The business of purchase, price and copyright, through legal transactions and contracts, in verbal discussion, reported partially in the trades press. The commercial discourse also appears in logos evidencing sponsorship.
- Tourism and the service industry, the local press releases, brochures, advertisements and guide books that provide an intertext between the filmic event and the location. (Harbord, 2002, 60)

That is to say, film festivals are an arena where different stakeholders in the film industry come together and interact in ways that benefit them all. Independent film makers gain access to the publicity they need and have the possibility of selling their film exploitation rights, which facilitates the financing of new films. For investors these events represent a business opportunity and for the venue where the festival takes place there are significant economic benefits.

Among the different film festivals strong competition takes place to achieve the highest possible prestige, offering the attraction of the location, international accessibility, best calendar dates or the most interesting films. However, while

they compete, at the same time festivals complement each other, creating a network of events through which all those who are part of the film industry, in one form or another, can develop relationships, publicize their offerings, make acquisitions, establish networks for future projects. In this way

each festival thus contributes to the global network effect, offsetting the negative consequences of competition with the positive effects of familiar format and recognition value, while giving innovative programmers the opportunity to set trends, or to come up with concepts taken over by others. (Elsaesser, 2005, 87)

The success of a film at the box office and its international distribution depend largely on how it is received at the festivals in which it participates. For independent cinema, film festivals represent the gateway to commercial markets. As Ignacio Redondo highlights:

It will make no strategic sense to postpone the commercialization of the film until the shooting has finished. During this period, it is convenient to generate a climate of interest among distributors, broadcasters, public ... In order to do this, one must study over the calendar which markets and festivals can be used to gradually spread the new film. [my translation] [No tendría sentido estratégico posponer la comercialización de la película hasta la finalización del rodaje. Durante este periodo, es conveniente generar un clima de interés entre los distribuidores, difusores, público... Para hacer esto, hay que estudiar sobre el calendario que mercados y festivales se pueden utilizar para promocionar gradualmente la nueva película] (Redondo, 2000, 59)

The general public only knows what is happening through the different media (print and television mainly though, of course, the Internet has become increasingly important as a disseminator of information and festival organizers also use this communication tool), which are their sources of information. Film producers use these events to ensure media coverage of their productions, a very significant factor in relation to the subsequent distribution and exhibition

process. Festivals bring together the media that inform the public about the winning films, not only nationally but also internationally. The San Sebastián Film Festival 2011, for example, was covered by 592 media and sixty-eight international television and radio channels.

Festivals provide an efficient framework for films to be internationalized through contacts established between producers and distributors, and through contracts arising from these meetings. Through this network of festivals a constant contact is established between the regional and the international, which promotes a continuous flow of information and ideas. In fact, this network is a real global platform, both a 'market' to foster economic agreements and a boost to an emerging cultural scene where ideas are exchanged and trends developed.

### **1.3.2. Co-productions**

Since the 1950s international co-productions have been a common way of operating for the European film industry. The globalization of markets and the support of European institutions have contributed to strengthening this mechanism so that Western Europe is the world region that undertakes the most co-productions (about thirty percent of films produced annually) (Observatorio Audiovisual Europeo, 1998).

Co-productions generate a clear synergy between the economic strategies and the multicultural relationships generated in this type of collaboration. As noted by Miller et al:

Co-production determines an important socio-spatial transforming axis in audiovisual industries, as an area in which the free market economy that blurs the boundaries meets the cultural initiatives that seek to define boundaries, away from the unstable sign of the nation. (Miller et al, 2005, 143)

Thus, from an economic perspective, for producers participating in an international co-production the fact that the film is recognized in each of the

participating countries is a major stimulus, for that gives them access to all grants and benefits provided by the national legislations of the participant countries. Moreover, they represent an increase of the potential market, both in the countries involved and in third countries related in some way to the participant countries. In addition, the sharing of financial resources implies the advantage of spreading risk and allows producers to participate in projects that they could not otherwise do for themselves. Furthermore, co-productions generate a number of creative and technical skills in which all participants can learn from one another. Finally, the fact that the films co-produced are recognized as national productions in two or more countries gives the work a cultural value in several nations. Thus, co-productions are a phenomenon that has been understood as a marketing strategy — in particular, as a way to compete with the American market — as well as a way to promote national identity and multiculturalism.

Lluís Bonet and Carolina González indicate that the main factors influencing the adoption of co-production as a marketing strategy:

are linked to the oligopolistic dominance of distribution by large U.S. companies and the small size of the respective domestic markets. The combination of both features makes difficult the repayment of a film in its own market and consequently reduces the availability of private finance for film production. Furthermore, the evolution of the industrial scenario has created the need for closer relations between cinema and the other sectors of the audiovisual industry, especially television and video, given the value chain and the existing interdependence among the different exploitation media of the audiovisual work. Consequently, film producers seek to join forces in order to get some advantages in front of the significant increase in audiovisual demand. In this context, the old instrument of film co-production has tended to establish itself as an effective collaborative mechanism for financing and marketing films in other markets. [my translation] [(...) están vinculados a los oligopolios de distribución por grandes empresas estadounidenses y el pequeño tamaño de los respectivos mercados nacionales. La combinación de ambas



características hace difícil la viabilidad de una película en su propio mercado y, por lo tanto, reduce la disponibilidad de financiación privada para la producción de películas. Por otra parte, la evolución del escenario industrial ha creado la necesidad de estrechar las relaciones entre el cine y los otros sectores de la industria audiovisual, especialmente la televisión y el vídeo, dada la cadena de valor y la interdependencia que existe entre los diferentes medios de explotación de la obra audiovisual. En consecuencia, los productores de películas tratan de unir fuerzas con el fin de obtener algunas ventajas frente al aumento significativo de la demanda audiovisual. En este contexto, los instrumentos tradicionales de coproducción ha tendido a consolidarse como un mecanismo de colaboración eficaz para la financiación y comercialización de películas en otros mercados] (Bonet and González, 2002)

Regarding the relationship between co-productions and national identities it should be noted that they represent both an opportunity to export and disseminate the 'national' as well as a blurring of this concept. On the one hand, they represent a clear cultural exchange and, in principle, are beneficial to both parties; on the other hand, it is clear that in this type of collaboration there is a need to work with stories that are effective in countries with different cultural references, which may imply a need to avoid cultural idiosyncrasy, hardly understandable for people from other countries. However, they can be very helpful in reflecting cultural characteristics — such as language, historical facts and popular traditions — common to certain regions. For example, co-productions between European countries can highlight cultural facts that are considered common symbols such as a common past embodied in, for example, Greek and Roman antiquity; and, in the same way, the South American countries and Spain may develop different levels of 'understanding' both at the cultural and historical levels. Miller et al highlight the cultural exchange that takes place at the local, national, regional and international levels in international co-productions:

The international co-production in the screen industry requires taking into account the cultural and national origin. As a practice of international

cultural collaboration, co-production destabilizes national measures of cultural identity, while it reframes them in a language of treaties that struggles to find national descriptors that help to preserve cultural value. Co-productions determine a shift of transformation in the cultural scale, from local to national and regional to global. (Miller et al, 2005, 143)

The concept of co-production is based on the nationality of the films, which is determined by a certificate of nationality issued by the competent administrative entity. International film co-production agreements, which may be bilateral or multilateral, are agreements between two or more states that are aimed at encouraging and developing their respective film industries and promoting cultural diversity. In order to do so, they develop legal mechanisms that harmonize their film policies to facilitate economic exchanges as they try to protect their cultural identity. However, as noted by Miller et al, this identity aim happens at the nation-state level, regardless of supranational cultural affiliations (and, it may be added, regardless of the subnational ones):

As a clear legacy of the formation of modern nation-states, treaties measure cultural specificity from national borders, a demarcation that needs to bend the intranational cultural diversity under an exclusive sign of unity, which excludes supranational cultural affiliations that cross borders. (Miller et al. 2005, 120)

Spain has ratified several multilateral agreements, among which are the European Convention on Cinematographic Co-production, of 2 October 1992, (ratified by Spain in 1996) and the Ibero-American Film Integration Agreement, of 11 November 1989, with the 'Latin American Agreement of Cinematographic Cooperation' (ratified by Spain in 1992). These agreements apply mainly to multilateral co-productions although also to some bilateral ones when there are not specific agreements between the two participating countries. Besides, bilateral agreements cannot contradict the terms of multilateral agreements. Spain has bilateral agreements with several European and South American countries and others around the world including Canada, Morocco, Tunisia and Russia. France has the largest number of agreements (forty-seven) with

countries around the world. Britain currently has nine agreements signed with France and several Commonwealth countries (Australia, Canada, India, Jamaica, New Zealand and South Africa).

European audiovisual policy is aimed at developing a common strategy among the different national cinemas. Through programs such as Media or Euroimages co-production among the different European countries is encouraged. The Media Programme is developed through a series of initiatives to stimulate the European audiovisual sector and is particularly aimed at promoting transnational projects. It offers monetary support in three areas: training initiatives for audiovisual industry professionals, development projects (films, television drama, documentaries, animation and new media), and distribution and promotion of European audiovisual works.

Eurimages is the pan-European investment fund for multinational co-productions. It was established in 1989 within the Council of Europe and has worked in tandem with the EU. It was created with the goal of generating networks between countries with little film production and those with a more developed film industry. This institution can be joined by EU members but also by other European countries such as Turkey. The fund is financed by contributions from member states according to their economic status. In general, these funds have helped to support the production, distribution and exhibition of European films in Europe but have received criticisms that highlight their failure in reducing structural inequalities or have had poor success in transcending the European market to reach international audiences (Wayne, 2002, Jackel, 2003, Miller, 2005).

The nation-state remains the most important player in the global political sphere but, as previously stated, the large financial corporations increasingly control global economic processes. In this context, nations are forced to seek alliances to achieve their goals: through international treaties that seek to establish a legislative framework to protect their interests, and through the development of policies to support their cultural industries. These, although theoretically aimed at preserving the national cultural heritage, are also a support to the industrial

sector and, in the case of co-productions, set legal regulations for their production companies to benefit from the advantages of this type of agreement. Moreover, they encourage the participation of their cultural industries in international forums, such as festivals or film awards, to publicize their productions and promote their status as a national cinema in the global arena. As Dimitris Eleftheriotis notes in relation to the European Union:

In the new millennium, the challenge facing directors, writers, producers and national and transnational policy makers is the survival of European cinema through the establishment and development of transnational partnerships and the production of films that may effectively cross cultural and national borders. (Eleftheriotis, 2001, 48-49)

#### **1.4. Cinemas of nations without state**

As noted by Jon Juaristi 'virtually all of the world's population lives, in the early third millennium, under some variant of this form of business organization known as the national state, which is itself the more or less achieved product of nationalism' (Juaristi, 2000, 8). There is a great diversity of analytical theories, often contradictory, about the concepts of state, nation, nation-state and nationalism, and this highlights the complexity of these phenomena. For the purpose of this thesis, these concepts will be evaluated and their basic differences explained.

For the German jurist, Hermann Heller, the state is, according to the classic definition, a 'unit of rule, independent outside and within, which acts in a continuous way, with its own means of power, and clearly delimited in the personal and in the territorial' (Heller, 1980, 142). Max Weber defined the state as an

association of institutional domination that has tried, successfully, to monopolize, within a territory, legitimate physical violence as a means of domination and, to this end, has reunited all the material means in the hands of its leader and has expropriated all civil servants who before

possessed them in their own right, replacing them with its own supreme hierarchies. (Weber, 1979, 92)

There have been many definitions of the concept of nation. Some historians, such as A. D. Smith or Ernest Gellner, consider the nation as a community with a shared culture. Smith defines the nation as a 'human community with its own name associated with a country that has common myths of its ancestry, shares historical memories, one or more elements of a shared culture and a certain degree of solidarity, at least among their elites' (Smith, 2004, 28). To Ernest Gellner the nation is a group of individuals who 'share the same culture, understanding by culture a system of ideas and signs, associations and patterns of behaviour and communication' (Gellner, 2003, 20). Others like Benedict Anderson see it as a political community: [nation] is 'an imagined political community inherently limited and sovereign' (Anderson, 1993, 23).

Thus, the state is a form of social, economic, political and administrative organization that regulates the coexistence of a group of people in a given territory, while the nation refers to a human group with the conscience of a community that shares a common culture and a clearly defined collective project, with a common past and a projection into the future. The nation-state combines these two concepts for it provides the state with a population subject to its government by cultural homogenization acquired through an ideological construction of symbols, myths and traditions. In this framework, the nations without state refer to those groups with a sense of community based on a common history and culture that lack the political structures of an independent sovereign state and are not internationally recognized as such. Stateless nations are integrated into major nation-states: these dominant nation-states encompass a number of regionalities.

Stateless nations highlight the tensions and contradictions between the concepts of nation and state. As Juaristi noted 'not few of the current States are experiencing more or less severe crises arising from the need to conform to supranational structures, from the challenge from within by irredentist

movements or from both factors combined' (Juaristi, 2000, 8). In the same sense, Sklan says:

The great monolithic empires and nation-states are breaking up into ever smaller independent nation-states. The Chechnyans in Russia, the Serbs, Croats and Muslims in former Yugoslavia, the Basque separatist in Spain, the Eritreans in Ethiopia have all fought battles of fierce intensity over a notion of identity based on a complex of ethnic, geographic, political, linguistic and cultural affiliations. (Sklan in Moran, 1996, 234)

These tensions between nation, nationalities and state, and the participation of nation-states in supranational organizations are reflected in cinema, both in the texts of the films and in the formation of different national film industries. Cinema has been widely used as an expression of cultural identity and as an element of resistance to oppression (e.g. *Loin de Vietnam, Far from Vietnam*, a 1967 film with contributions from Godard, Alain Resnais and others, features scenes from the front lines of protests for and against the war; *Ice*, a 1969 Robert Kramer film about a group planning to strike back against a fascist regime or *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance*, a 1993 feature-length film documentary, which explains the Oka Crisis, a land dispute between a Mohawk community and a small town in Quebec). Cinema provides a series of texts and images that allow a community to imagine itself as a nation and contributes to the discourse of resistance in the face of the elements that threaten its existence.

In addressing the question of cinemas of nations without a state, there must be recognition of the different ways in which they are presented: as national identities in diaspora, as nations without a state belonging to a nation-state such as Catalonia or the Basque Country, and as national communities belonging to several states such as the Kurds. There are nations without state, such as Catalonia and the Basque Country, which despite being part of a nation-state and dependent on it in many ways, have a certain degree of political and economic autonomy that allows them to develop cultural policies to express their cultural values. Other communities such as the Kurds are spread among

several states (in this case Iraq, Turkey and Iran). Communities 'in diaspora' as Afro-Caribbeans, despite not having a 'national' culture, develop feelings of community based on a shared origin and common experiences. Clearly, these situations are all very different and have, in relation to the development of a national cinematography, very different processes that I will roughly outline in order to determine to what extent it makes sense to label as 'national cinema', cinemas of nations without state.

As Shapiro points out, cinema has always been related to 'the cultural articulation of the nation-building and sustaining projects of states' (Shapiro, 2004, 142). However, Rosen notes how, in this sense, works on the subject have tended to ignore the historical, cultural and geographical diversity of states in order to provide certain unity to national cinemas: 'Not only is the political geography designated by state borders divisible into different regions and even 'nations' but also "national" characteristics spill across state borders both culturally and economically' (Rosen, 1996, 390). In this sense, it can be argued that perhaps the term 'national cinema' is not the most appropriate one to refer to cinema produced by a state. Stephen Crofts warns against the widespread tendency to consider the cinematography of a nation-state as representative of its entire people and notes the homogenization that this approach may involve (Crofts, 1993, 60-65).

The cinema of nations without state that are part of a nation-state face the homogenization processes intrinsic to the concept of nation-state, defining and developing an identifiable own cinematography. Croft argues that given the homogenizing discourses of nation-states: 'It is not surprising that ethnic and linguistic minorities have generally lacked the funds and infrastructure to support regional cinemas or national cinemas distinct from the nation-states which enclose them' (Crofts in Vitali and Willemen, 2006, 52). However, the fate of these cinemas is very diverse. Marvin D'Lugo says, and this is the approach I am taking, that Catalan cinema is 'something like a national cinema' (D'Lugo, 1991, 131). And Quebecois cinema has achieved some global relevance since the early sixties due to the presence of numerous productions in internationally renowned festivals. They are mainly auteur films (directed by Denys Arcand,

Manon Briand and Gilles Carle among others) that reflect the social issues and the cultural diversity of the region (Lizarraga, 2007, 99-123). However, cinemas such as the Welsh have not acquired significant relevance (Crofts in Vitali and Willemen, 2006, 54).

The success of these regional cinemas depends on several factors. The nationalities that have some degree of self-government can develop and implement comprehensive cultural plans that enable them, although always within the legal framework imposed by the State, to develop their own cinema. The cinemas of Catalonia, the Basque Country or Quebec are facing the same challenges as the cinemas of nation-states but with the added difficulty of distinguishing themselves — locally, nationally and internationally — from the cinema of the nation-state as a whole.

Other cinemas from nations without state do not have a political and administrative framework that supports them and develop more as cultural and ideological movements. Regarding the influence of cinema (and photography) in the African-Caribbean culture 'in diaspora', Stuart Hall points out that images

provide a way of imposing an imaginary coherence on the experience of dispersal and fragmentation, which is the story of all diaspora caused by force. [...] these arts represent Africa as the common mother of these communities, the common denominator on which relies a shared cultural identity, so that no one that sees the underlying stories of migration and slavery can fail to understand the crack of separation, the 'loss of identity', which has been essential in the Caribbean experience, only begins to heal when these forgotten connections are put in place once again. (Hall, 2003, 351)

This cinema, then, is presented as a means of resistance and reconstruction of an identity in opposition to the dominant cinematic representation of the West.

This chapter has explained how the relationship between cultural identity and commercial value defines film production at the national, regional and



international levels. In the next chapter I will analyse the case of British and French cinemas and compare the different ways of dealing with the tensions between the cultural and the commercial aspects of their respective film industries in order to develop a framework for the analysis of Catalan cinema and its potential to become international.

## Chapter 2. Commercial contexts: British and French film industries

In this chapter I examine the commercial contexts of the British and French film industries at three levels: as national cinemas, as part of the European Union and in terms of their projection in the international arena. British and French cinemas represent two different models of national cinema that have to be addressed in any work that studies the issues surrounding the development of a national cinema: the British film industry has, to a large extent, followed a model of competition with Hollywood productions, while French cinema is possibly the best representative of a cinema 'd'auteur'. These two models provide a context of types of national cinemas within which to analyse Catalan cinema, and to establish to what extent it has followed each of them. As I argue in chapter four, Catalan cinema has developed a sound cinema 'd'auteur' with names such as Marc Recha, Jaime Rosales, Albert Serra and the return of Pere Portabella. However, the last decade has also witnessed a renewal of industrial cinema with films such as *Salvador* (Manuel Hueriga, 2006) and *Mapa de los sonidos de Tòquio* (*Map of de Sounds of Tokyo*, Isabel Coixet, 2009). It is also worth mentioning the relevance of Catalan horror cinema, which can be placed somewhere in between these two models with personal works that aim to attract wider audiences such as Jaume Balagueró's films *Darkness* (2002) and *Rec* (2007) or José A. Bayona's *El orfanato* (*The Orphanage*, 2007).

In this chapter I focus my analysis on how British and French film industries have negotiated the tensions between the commercial and cultural value of films by examining the actions that their governments have undertaken to protect and support them, as well as the cultural values and national identities that have been associated with their cinematic production. I analyze two films, one from each country in order to exemplify these issues. From British cinema I study *The King's Speech*, a 2010 film directed by Tom Hooper that became a great success both among British audiences and also internationally. From French Cinema I analyze *Un prophète* (*A Prophet*), a 2009 film directed by Jaques Audiard, in which the main character is a young Maghrebin who speaks

Arabic and French. This film was a big success in France and won a number of prestigious film prizes.

This analysis fulfils the second objective of this work: to examine the historical development of official film policies and the funding criteria in the UK and France, which I do through the study of primary and secondary sources on UK and French grants and policies. It also intends to present different national contexts to fulfil the third objective: that is, to define the economic problems related to film grants and internationalisation with reference to Catalan cinema and in comparison with the Spanish (chapter three), UK and French industries. The various cinemas come under different funding structures because of the way they are defined (e.g. regional vs. national). In chapter four, I argue that Catalan cinema needs to be considered as a 'national' cinema more than a regional cinema and I analyze how this stance may affect state grants and aids to Catalan film industry.

As we have seen, the film industry differs from other industries in that its cultural products have a historical, national, linguistic and social significance that cannot be reduced to a mere commodity (Hoskins et al., 1997, 3). David Hesmondhalgh says that these industries emerge at the crossroads of symbolic creativity and economic market activities (Hesmondhalgh, 2007). As Anne Jäckel points out this is particularly evident in the European context where there is a long tradition of state support and where national contexts still define industry practice and determine cultural policy (Jäckel, 2003, 1). The fact that in most European countries each state takes an active role in protecting and supporting its national film production indicates that cinema is considered far too important, socially and culturally, to be left to market forces, though since cinema is also costly to produce, without state financial support many films could not be made.

José Enrique Monterde argues that the European production of cinema of the last fifteen years is organized under one of three main models (Monterde in Font and Losilla, 2007, 117):

- a model that imitates the blockbuster model of Hollywood
- a cinema with national resonances with little capacity to reach international markets
- a cinema 'd'auteur' that has some capacity to reach the international market but with little commercial significance.

Works such as *Le Cinquième élément* (*The Fifth Element*, 1997) by Luc Besson or *Los otros* (*The Others*, 2001) by Alejandro Amenábar fall into the first category: they do not have any cultural elements that can be described as European or as French or Spanish. The actors, the language of shooting (English), the theme or the stylistic proposals are more related to Hollywood than to Europe. Under the second model we have films that reflect the historic and literary heritage of the country and are attractive for national audiences and at the same time aim to reach international markets, films such as *Le Fabuleux destin d'Amélie Poulain* (*Amélie*, 2001) by Jean-Pierre Jeunet or *The Queen* (Stephen Frears, 2006). But in this group there are also many films that do not reach international markets probably because they address themes or traditions that are barely comprehensible for foreign audiences; an example is the Torrente series of films from Spain. Finally, the third model describes the survival or renovation of the cinema 'd'auteur' with films by directors such as Chabrol, Tavernier, Frears, Almodóvar, Greenaway or von Trier (Monterde in Font and Losilla, 2007, 117).

As Sarah Street argues, the question of identifying a national cinema is complex and contentious. Street acknowledges that there is a British film industry with relatively clearly defined economic boundaries and methods of classification but British films do not necessarily involve themes that can be considered specifically British. Nevertheless there are British films that participate in establishing nationhood as a distinct, familiar sense of belonging which is shared by people from different social and regional backgrounds (Street, 1997, 1).

Several critics point out that British cinema is identified as belonging somewhere between European and Hollywood models (Anderson, in La Valley

,1972; Houston, 1963; Williams, 1996), that is, it hybridizes blockbusters and cinema 'd'auteur'. Jim Leach notes that 'British filmmakers have sought to emulate both the popularity of Hollywood and the cultural status of art cinema, but critics often feel that their films do not fit comfortably in either category' (Leach, 2004, 2). Probably in relation to this lack of a clear direction for British cinema, film director François Truffaut made his famous claim in 1962 that 'there is a certain incompatibility between the terms 'cinema' and 'Britain'' (Leach, 2004, 2). He added that the futility of British cinema is the result of national characteristics such as the British countryside, the subdued way of life or the stolid routine, that are anti-dramatic in a sense. Leach highlights the pertinence of questions such as why certain films become popular and why British audiences prefer Hollywood films to their own national cinema. As he points out 'it is clear that spectatorship and citizenship are intricately related but also that this relationship is highly complicated' (Leach, 2004, 88).

Conversely, the case of French cinema is quite different. Susan Hayward points out that in France by the 1920s calls were already being made for a truly national cinema as a defence against American hegemony (Hayward, 1993, 5). And Phil Powrie says that of 'all the World Cinemas, it is perhaps French cinema that matters most in the struggle against Hollywood domination' (Powrie, 2006, 1). Powrie attributes this fact to different causes: an issue of quantity, as generally French production per year is higher than any other European country; an historical issue as cinema has its most obvious origins in France; but more significantly a political issue such as cinema matters more to the French than it does to most other European countries for it helps to define something indefinably French in the face of 'Americanisation' (Powrie, 2006, 1). In this sense T. Jefferson Kline argues that:

what finally separates French cinema from Hollywood and other national cinemas and defines it can be discerned not only by the totality of films produced and shot on French soil, nor by the history of the various movements and genres that have occupied French filmmakers (such as le Film d'Art, Impressionism, or Poetic Realism), but rather this very Gallic tendency to 'think (...) to turn ideology into theory' (Christine Lagarde,

Ministry of France, 2007) and to write (inject) theory into every cultural artifact they produce. (Kline, 2010, 3)

As we can see, the British and French film industries differ considerably in the way they understand cinema. While the British film industry seeks to compete with Hollywood in making films that aim to reach international audiences, the French film industry is much more concerned with maintaining and developing its own cultural heritage. In the next section I analyze in depth the tensions between cultural values and commercial interests in both film industries.

## **2.1. The United Kingdom and French film industries: definition and quantification, cultural identity and commercial value**

### **2.1.1. British Cinema**

It is increasingly difficult to define the boundaries of national cinemas. Many British films have been made with 100 percent US financing although they can convey British cultural traditions (*Shakespeare in Love*, John Madden, 1998; *Shadowlands*, Richard Attenborough, 1993) and since Britain joined what was then called the European Community in 1973 (now known as the European Union), the European context has become more important for British culture (Leach, 2004, 4). Moreover, John Hill suggests that the economic and technological developments of the last decades have pushed British filmmakers toward the art-cinema model traditionally associated with other European nations (Hill, 1999, 29). Leach points out that in the British context 'the relations between popular culture and national traditions are highly volatile and constantly shifting according to social and political circumstances' (Leach 2004, 88).

As I have noted, Stephen Crofts identifies different production strategies of national cinemas in an environment dominated by Hollywood cinema. According to Hill the most significant strategy for British film has been in imitating Hollywood, in competing with Hollywood productions in the domestic market and in differentiation from Hollywood (Hill in Murphy 1997, 247). However, he points out that competition as the most relevant strategy of British film since the

period of imitation (Alexander Korda, Rank, EMI, Goldcrest) has been, with the exception of some isolated successes, doomed to failure since Hollywood has a clear advantage in its competitive systems of production, distribution and exhibition. Commercial British film competing with Hollywood in the domestic market was viable from the 1930s to the 1970s through a system of quotas and other forms of state support. However, when audiences fell in number from the 1950s, films produced for the domestic market began to decline and, from the 1970s, even the most box-office successful films struggled to recover the investment in domestic theaters.

Unlike other European countries, by the 1970s British cinema had not yet fully developed into a cinema 'd'auteur' or an art cinema able to produce films radically different from those of American cinema. It was not until the 1980s that this type of cinema appeared in British film production, characterizing this decade and the next. Art film is a cinema valued for a complex storyline that emphasizes the director's own vision to the detriment of a straightforward narrative, or for creative freedom and the use of unusual cinematic resources. It is a cinema in general more complex than commercial cinema, one which is distant from typical Hollywood production and that targets a demanding and educated audience. In the case of British art cinema, the concept is relevant to the 'realism' of Ken Loach and Mike Leigh, the aesthetic experiments of Derek Jarman and Peter Greenaway and to cinema that draws from literary or theatrical sources such as the Merchant Ivory films (Hill in Murphy, 1997, 247).

This change of strategy, from competition with Hollywood in the domestic market to differentiation from Hollywood, implies a certain development of national cultural values in film production and, as Hill says, 'achieves much of its status as national cinema by circulating internationally rather than nationally' (Hill in Murphy 1997, 247). Art film can be economically more viable than most commercial films; however, in the case of British cinema, many of the films that have enjoyed some success have earned higher revenues in other countries than in the domestic market. An example is *Riff-Raff* (1991) by Ken Loach that, by the time it won the European Film Award for best film, had been seen by more people in France than in Great Britain (Hill in Murphy 1997, 247). In the

same way, heritage cinema has been a big success among international audiences, especially American audiences, to the point that some of its films (like *Sense and Sensibility*, Ang Lee 1995) have been released earlier in the US than in Britain (Hill in Murphy 1997, 247).

In this regard, some scholars argue that these types of national cinema, both art cinema that attracts European audiences, and heritage cinema that is well received by the American public, failed to connect with the large national audiences that British cinema enjoyed in the past. The fall in national audiences has implied that domestic film production increasingly depends on the revenues from international markets and on television, for both revenues and financing. This relationship between cinema and television influences how cinema is consumed and also the type of films that are considered 'national'. Furthermore it has also influenced production and career development: for example, both Loach and Leigh made highly acclaimed TV plays before establishing a film career.

The change in British cinema in the 1980s can be treated as a change in strategy to compensate for a decline in audience. The British cinema of World War II was considered the epitome of national cinema, not only for its subject and spirit but also because of the high audience figures obtained. In 1946, annual cinema admissions reached a record of 1,635 million, but from that year there was a steady decline which reached its lowest point in 1984 with sales of only fifty-eight million. In the following years there was some recovery but with lower rates than those achieved in 1974 (Hill in Murphy 1997, 247). Although theatre attendance has experienced a significant decline, watching movies is more popular than ever thanks to television and video. In Britain, TV penetration in homes has been particularly strong and the BFI figures (BFI, 2011) show that films released in theatres had considerably higher audience numbers when they were scheduled on television or viewed on video. This implies that the audience for television and video films is certainly more representative than that which goes to the movies. In fact, viewers over forty-five years of age, who represent a very small percentage of cinema goers (eleven percent in 1990), are major consumers of television movies. We can deduce from this that, although some



authors consider that British cinema is in decline, the number of people who see domestic movies is even higher than at the highest point of British cinema. Hill points out that 'the national audience is in fact a series of audiences, which are often addressed in different ways. At the same time, the representations which British cinema then makes available to them have themselves become much more complex and varied' (Hill in Murphy 1997, 250).

James Leggott argues that 'if the health of a film culture can be measured by way of its visibility, range and budding talent, the British cinema seemed to be in good shape in the early days of Gordon Brown's premiership as there was an impressive variety of domestic production that achieved considerable success' (Leggott, 2008, 5). However Leggott points out that despite this apparent buoyancy (partly bolstered by Academy Awards for *The Queen* and the *Last King of Scotland*) the question remains as to what extent this tendency towards high-profile sequels and remakes (such as *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*, a 2004 film directed by Beeban Kidron, sequel to the 2001 film *Bridget Jones's Diary*, or *West is West*, directed by Andy DeEmmony, a comedy-drama film sequel to the 1999 comedy *East is East*) 'was emblematic of a reflective turn in the wider culture, offering a space for some kind of interrogation of Britishness past and present' or, on the contrary, 'spoke of a lazy attempt to revive former glories' (Leggott, 2008, 6).

As we have seen, many films made in Britain today require funding from US production companies and therefore it is hard to say what a 'British film' is. Nevertheless, during the last decade British cinema has produced some successful films that can be considered 'British' because they have been produced by well-known British media companies such as Film4, Granada TV, and the British Film Council — with substantially smaller budgets than those of Hollywood films — and/or the cast, writer, and director are all British. Examples are *This is England* (Shane Meadows, 2006), *The Queen* (Stephen Frears), Danny Boyle's *28 Days Later* (2002), Daniel Barber's film *Harry Brown* (2009), *Slumdog Millionaire* (Danny Boyle, 2008), *An Education* (Lone Scherfing, 2009) and *The King's Speech*. Although differing widely in theme and style all these films represent and analyze British culture and society in some way and

therefore can be considered constituents of a British 'national cinema'. *This is England* is a semi-autobiographical film that tells the story of a young boy who joins a group of skinheads in 1983 and provides a realistic vision of the social situation of unemployment and misery during the Thatcher years. The same year saw the release of *The Queen*, a film that shows the Royal family just after the death of Princess Diana and the way Queen Elizabeth dealt with the aftermath. British actress Helen Mirren offers a portrayal of Elizabeth, for which she won the Best Actress Oscar. *28 Days Later* is a zombie film that offers impressive dark shots of deserted London and Cillian Murphy's performance made him a star in Hollywood, leading to his appearances in supporting roles in his first Hollywood films: *Cold Mountain* (Anthony Minghella, 2003) and *Girl with a Pearl Earring* (Peter Webber, 2003). In 2005 he appeared in *Batman Begins* (Christopher Nolan, 2005) and in *Red Eye* (Wes Craven, 2005), winning wider recognition. *Harry Brown* gives a very realistic and brutal portrayal of Britain. Set in a council estate in South London it portrays a gang of youths that terrorise the neighborhood. The main character Harry Brown is played by the British icon Michael Caine. In 2008 *Slumdog Millionaire* by the British director Danny Boyle won eight out of the ten awards for which it was nominated at the 81<sup>st</sup> Academy Awards, including Best Adapted Screenplay. The film is not set in Britain but in the slums of Mumbai and yet it is a British film nonetheless: the director and the screenwriter, Simon Beaufoy, are British, as well as the main star Dev Patel. Finally, I want to mention *The King's Speech*, a 2010 film directed by Tom Hooper that I analyze later in this chapter.

In the 2012 report to the Government by the Film Policy Review Panel 'A Future For British Film. It begins with the audience' (Film Policy Review Panel, 2012) the authors state:

British film is going through something of a golden period. A run of really good, successful, British-made and British-based movies has been taking not just British cinema audiences but many others around the world by storm.

They highlight the astonishing success of films like *The King's Speech* (Tom Hooper, 2010), *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (Chris Columbus, 2001), *The Inbetweeners Movie* (Ben Palmer, 2011), *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* (Tomas Alfredson, 2011), *Shame* (Steve McQueen, 2011), *Wuthering Heights* (Andrea Arnold, 2011), *We Need to Talk about Kevin* (Lynne Ramsay, 2011) or *Johnny English Reborn* (Oliver Parker, 2011) and point out that at the same time as British independent productions have been enjoying a run of success: 'Britain has also continued to be the destination of choice for many foreign studios to make their movies, with well over £1bn of production investment in 2010 alone'. Then they ask a relevant question: 'How do we secure greater consistency in the quality and success of British film?' They summarize the answer in two sentences:

- To nurture and sustain the conditions to encourage all kinds of film production, from the micro-budget to the blockbuster.
- To ensure a synergy between strong inward investment trends and the potential for a more consistently successful British film sector.

We can argue that these objectives allow the British film industry to be more creative. Blockbusters are usually expensive to make and it is important for the industry that the revenues compensate the investment. Micro-budget films, on the contrary, allow experimentation as the possible economic losses are more affordable. The combination of the two has provided the British film industry with the success it needs without compromising its innovative capacity.

The report also highlights the relevance of the audience for filmmakers. It argues that consumer research has shown that there is a strong appetite for British-made movies amongst cinema-going audiences in the UK, but the percentage of movies actually seen by the overall audience in UK cinemas that could be described as British remains far too low. To turn around this situation, the report says, filmmakers have to understand and think about their audience, at the same time as they strive to express their creativity.

The last three decades had witnessed a gradual reinvention of British national film policies and the mechanisms for putting those policies into practice following the dismantling of the previous system dominated by the UK Film Council in the 1980s. The allocation of Lottery funding for film production and the establishment of the UK Film Council were central plans of the new UK national policy to avoid the homogeneity of globalisation. The disappearance of the UK Film Council, and the integration of its functions and support for the film industry into the British Film Institute (BFI) on March 2011 implies a 'real opportunity for the sole, focused leadership of British film — cultural, creative, commercial, educational and representative — to be brought together in the single entity of the BFI' (Film Policy Review Panel, 2012).

The British Film Institute operates at two levels: on the one hand it supports new talents and on the other, it tries to compensate for the structural deficiencies of the market and has developed a very active sales program. The funding budget focuses on promoting creative talent so that directors and producers can experiment with new ideas rather than just creating products for the market. Many young directors such as Jane Linfoot, Bram Schouw or Adrian Sitaru who have benefited from these grants, have made it into the general market after their first productions.

Another government agency that invests in film production is British Screen Finance, which administers the European Production Fund and represents the most relevant government agency in stimulating film production. This organization invests in the production of various films whose successes report significant benefits. The policy followed by BSF is to invest the minimum in making a movie, with relatively hard loan conditions. In addition, the agency has developed a major program of co-production, largely by economic imperatives. As state subsidies are fairly small, co-production becomes the only mechanism by which to cover the costs of production for many films (Finney, 1996, 127).

A further important source of financial support for the British film industry comes from The National Lottery. The amount awarded<sup>5</sup> is dedicated to all activities related to cinema: production and development, exhibition, training and distribution. The Lottery also helped to finance the UK Film Council (UKFC), a public entity established in 2000 by the Labour Party in order to develop and promote the film industry. In 2008, it had distributed more than £160m from the Lottery among 900 films. The Conservatives abolished the agency in 2011 and most of its functions were transferred to the British Film Institute (BFI).

A typical UK independent film receives investment from a number of sources: equity, Lottery, film tax relief, pre-sales, distribution, TV, bank loans and so on. Film investors spread the risk over a number of films rather than putting all their money into one or two productions per year. In that way the losses made on most films will be compensated for by profits from the few but lucrative hits (Film Policy Review Panel, 2012). The chart below shows the distribution of funding for independent UK films supported by UK Film Council Lottery grants in 2009:

	Source of funding	% of total
1	Non Statutory Tax	1
2	Film Tax Credit	13
3	UK National and Regional	1
4	UKFC Lottery	18
5	EU State	4
6	Other State	1
7	Broadcast Licence	4
8	Broadcast Equity	8
9	Other Equity	5
10	Bank	10
11	Bank Distribution Advance	15
12	Distribution	20

<sup>5</sup> Twenty-eight percent of lottery revenue goes toward 'good causes', along with all unclaimed prizes. The National Lottery Distribution Fund (NLDF) is responsible for the distribution of money to 'good causes'. Currently fifty-four percent is given to arts – including cinema - sports and heritage via government agencies.

Many of the most successful UK independent films (such as *The King's Speech*, 2010 or *The Inbetweeners Movie*, Ben Palmer, 2011) have received Lottery funding and/or public service broadcaster support, as well as low budget UK film tax relief, which highlights the importance that public funding has for the industry, especially for independent producers.

The BFI is the national body in charge of qualifying films as British. Films can qualify as British in one of three ways. They must meet the requirements of one of the following:

- The Cultural Test
- One of the UK's official bilateral co-production treaties
- The European Convention on Cinematographic Co-production

Amanda Nevill, director of the BFI, argues that although the British film industry is worth a respectable £4.5 billion per year to the British economy and although it generated an overseas trade surplus of more than £900 million in 2009, from the point of view of public policy it is the *cultural* contribution of film that matters most. She explains that under European Union competition law, government financial support is permitted primarily so that 'national and regional cultures and creative potential are expressed' (European Commission, 2001). As a consequence British films which have access to film tax relief must pass a Cultural Test covering cultural content, cultural contribution, cultural hubs and cultural practitioners. Also, selective funding for film production and distribution, such as Lottery funding, must be directed to cultural purposes (Northern Alliance and Ipsos Media CT, 2011).

Defining a film as British under the Cultural Test provides a number of advantages such as eligibility to apply to the BFI Film Fund and eligibility to apply for UK film tax relief. To apply for the Cultural Test, there must be one film production company (FPC) that is registered with Companies House and within the UK corporation tax net. The Cultural Test is a points-based test where the project needs sixteen of a possible thirty-one points to pass. It comprises four sections covering the categories below:

<p>Cultural content (up to sixteen points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Film set in the UK (up to four points)</li> <li>• Lead characters British citizens or residents (up to four points)</li> <li>• Film based on British subject matter or underlying material (up to four points)</li> <li>• Original dialogue recorded mainly in English language or in a recognised regional or minority language<sup>6</sup>. (up to four points)</li> </ul>
<p>Cultural contribution (up to four points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Film represents/reflects a diverse British culture, British heritage or British creativity</li> </ul>
<p>Cultural hubs (up to three points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studio and/or location shooting/ Visual Effects/ Special Effects (up to two points)</li> <li>• Music Recording/Audio Post Production/Picture Post Production (up to one point)</li> </ul>
<p>Cultural practitioners (up to eight points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director (one point)</li> <li>• Scriptwriter (one point)</li> <li>• Producer (one point)</li> <li>• Composer (one point)</li> <li>• Lead Actors (one point)</li> <li>• Majority of Cast (one point)</li> <li>• Key Staff (lead cinematographer, lead production designer, lead costume designer, lead editor, lead sound designer, lead visual effects supervisor, lead hair and makeup supervisor) (one point)</li> <li>• Majority of Crew (one point)</li> </ul>

The Cultural Test establishes to what extent a film can be considered 'British' by simply giving points in different categories (workers, language, theme, etc.).

<sup>6</sup> The UK has six indigenous minority languages under the Council of Europe's Charter for Minority or Regional Languages: Scottish-Gaelic, Welsh, Irish, Scots, Ulster Scots and Cornish

Another way of acquiring British nationality for a film is through co-production. Currently the UK Government has nine active bi-lateral film co-production agreements with Australia, Canada, France, India, Israel, Jamaica, New Zealand, the Occupied Palestinian Territories and South Africa. The UK signed a treaty with Morocco in December 2009 and a treaty with Brazil on 28 September 2012 but they will be subject to constitutional procedures in both countries before they can be ratified and come into force. The aim of these co-production agreements is to encourage cross-cultural collaboration between film makers from both countries. Qualifying as a British film under one of the UK's official co-production treaties provides a number of advantages such as, again, eligibility to apply to the BFI Film Fund and for the UK's film tax relief.

The UK has also ratified the European Convention on Cinematographic Co-production. This is designed to encourage multi-lateral film co-productions between three or more signatory countries, and to allow for bi-lateral co-productions between signatory countries where no bi-lateral agreement exists.

Obtaining a European Certificate of British Nationality (formerly known as EC Certificate) from the BFI may give producers more opportunities to exhibit their production in Europe. Some EC countries have quotas on the number of non-EC films exhibited in their countries, so a European Certificate of British Nationality can help filmmakers qualify for screen quotas and get their film shown. The BFI issues European Certificates of British Nationality ("European Certificates"). For a film to qualify for a European Certificate it must be made by a company registered in an EEA State<sup>7</sup>, an original recording of the film must be in one of the UK's recognized languages<sup>8</sup> and, in general, the director, scriptwriter, any composer and other personnel must be British nationals or residents. Or it has received final approval as an official co-production under

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<sup>7</sup> The EEA, European Economic Association, comprises of the following states: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

<sup>8</sup> The UK has six indigenous minority languages under the Council of Europe charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Scottish-Gaelic, Welsh, Irish, Scots, Ulster Scots and Cornish)



one of the UK's film co-production agreements, or under the European Convention on Cinematographic Co-Production, and the artistic and technical contribution of EEA State(s) is not less than thirty percent (as per Article 4 of the 1963 directive.)

Tax relief is a mechanism used by the BFI to foster film production. For films with a total core expenditure of £20 million or less, the film production company can claim a payable cash rebate of up to twenty five percent of UK qualifying film production expenditure; for films with a core expenditure of more than £20 million, the film production company can claim a payable cash rebate of up to twenty percent of UK qualifying film production expenditure. Tax relief is available for British qualifying films. Films must either pass the Cultural Test or qualify as an official co-production. To access UK tax relief, films must be intended for theatrical release and must reach a minimum UK spend requirement of twenty five percent including those made under official co-production treaties. This is a mechanism that attracts investors for the film industry and consequently promotes production.

A 2011 report<sup>9</sup>, 'how film contributes to the culture of the UK', asked a number of questions about attitudes to British film and the related notions of Britishness in film. The report involved a mixture of qualitative and quantitative research with paired depth interviews to explore themes and language, an online survey of 2,036 respondents, representative of the UK population aged fifteen to seventy-four years, seven case studies featuring films named by respondents as having significant effect on UK society or attitudes and supplementary telephone interviews exploring the themes of Britishness and artistic value. Overall, there was strong support from British citizens for British film and filmmaking with only comparatively minor variations across age, gender and ethnicity. The report reveals that eighty four percent of the population is interested in film and that the public are keen to see more British films made,

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<sup>9</sup> Opening our eyes: How film contributes to the culture of the UK, July 2011, is an evidence-based report prepared for the BFI by Northern Alliance and Ipsos Media CT. It involved a mixture of qualitative and quantitative research, the main element of which was an online survey of 2,036 respondents, representative of the UK population aged fifteen to seventy-four years. The research presents a democratic assessment of film in the UK, outside of expert, critical and industry polls.

with seventy eight percent in favour of public funding for film. Most people agree that British film is an important part of British culture but over half who were interviewed felt there are too few British films shown. Seventy percent said that they were personally interested when British film stars or films won awards and over three-quarters agreed that when British films or films stars win international awards, it helps to foster a sense of national pride. People also said they want to see films that are representative of all the nations and regions of the UK. In supplementary interviews respondents described what in their view makes a film British; two elements were dominant: cast (“actors are the thing that make it most British”) and story. Interviewees also highlighted humour (“a sort of dark humour”) and authenticity (“gritty, more like real life”) as British values.

Nowadays, British cinema is seeking ways of developing a more coherent film industry that encompasses all kind of films, from the blockbusters able to directly compete with Hollywood productions to independent films that help to reflect the diversity of British society and culture. At the same time, the film industry is trying to develop ways of collaboration between the public sector, the industry and wider film stakeholders in order to become financially stronger and more self-sufficient.

### **2.1.2. French Cinema**

French cinema seems to be very important for French people. As Phil Powrie argues this may be an issue of cultural specificity (Powrie, 2006, 1) much more than it is for British or Italians. The French led the fight to obtain an exemption for films in the GATT negotiations on the early 1990s and they coined the term ‘the seventh art’<sup>10</sup>. Moreover, the French state supports the French film industry to a point that is not often matched in other countries. That may partly explain why French national cinema retains a strong identity and world presence. In

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<sup>10</sup> The first six arts (architecture, sculpture, painting, dance, music and poetry) were described by German philosopher Hegel in his work ‘Lectures on Aesthetics’, written between 1818 and 1829. Ricciotta Canudo, an Italian film theoretician, proposed in 1911 to name cinema as the ‘seventh art’ arguing that cinema synthesizes the spatial arts (architecture, sculpture and painting) with the temporal arts (music and dance).

fact, French cinema is sometimes seen as an alternative to the world preeminence of Hollywood cinema because it is different from Hollywood productions and yet successful in reaching international audiences. French films offer a different way of presenting society and culture and this fact attracts specific audiences from other countries, mainly through film festivals and independent art circuits.

The relationship between French and US cinema is rather difficult to define. On the one hand American cinema has influenced French cinema in various ways: the post-war police films of Jean-Pierre Melville and the New Wave; the ephemeral genre of the French western; Luc Besson's films that are American-style genres (action films, science fiction films) but made mainly with French money, and with some Gallic inflections, as for example Jean-Paul Gaultier's eccentric costumes for *The Fifth Element* (1997) (Powrie, 2006, 1). On the other hand, US cinema remade French films from early on such as *The Long Night* (Anatole Litvak, 1947), *Fanny* (Joshua Logan, 1961) or *The Woman in Red* (Gene Wilder, 1984).

French cinema is not genre film in the sense that the US cinema is. Of course there are genres in French cinema like comedy, historic films or police films but French cinema cannot be analyzed by using categories since many of the best known films would be excluded (Powrie, 2006, 3). The authors of *Cahiers du cinéma*, a magazine founded in 1951, described French cinema history as a sequence of movements each with their representative directors. *Cahiers* was the film magazine that coined the concept of 'the politique des auteurs', literally meaning the 'auteur policy', promoting a vision of cinema as an art, and films as expressing the worldview of talented artists. This concept associates the work of the film director with that of the literary author in the sense that a film is considered the personal creation and vision of the director. Thus, the director became the author of the work to the detriment of other team members. *Cahiers* and the concept of 'la politique des auteurs' were the foundations of the New Wave.

To understand how French cinema has developed this concept and why it is so important for French people we have to look at its history. Richard Brody indicates that the modern history of French cinema can be seen in terms of its protection and advancement by the French government. Immediately after the Second World War, France imposed quotas on the importation of US films and reserved a certain number of weeks per screen for French films. In the late fifties, the then Minister of Culture, André Malraux, introduced a series of measures intended to promote the production and distribution of French movies not just as commercial ventures but as works of art that would be fundamental to France's cultural heritage (Brody, 2013). Among the measures that benefited the New Wave first and foremost, were a selective funding system in the form of loans against box-office receipts, tax deductions for experimental and art film theatres, and increased funding for the French film school IDHEC (Institut des hautes études cinématographiques) and the French Cinémathèque (De Baecque, 2012, 131).

The French New Wave became one of the most prominent film movements and its films and directors (Jean-Luc Godard, François Truffaut, Éric Rohmer, Claude Chabrol) acquired international prestige. This movement has had an important influence on world cinema since the 1960s and has left an important legacy for the following generations of directors, both in France and abroad. *Cahiers du Cinéma* established an intense film dialogue comparing and contrasting *auteurs* and supported the work of French directors such as Jean Renoir, Roberto Rossellini, Max Ophüls or Jean Cocteau by focusing on the film's *mise en scène*. The New Wave directors were considered a group for they worked together and exchanged ideas, screenplays, technicians and even actors. They made films with relatively small budgets and established a personal tone and certain themes in their films. There was a preference for natural shooting locations and natural light. The critical legacy of New Wave directors — that of the *auteur* as the key element in movie production — is the image that French cinema has marketed to the world since the end of the fifties. There is also a commercial French film industry that makes movies for the wider French public but which does not generally reach international distribution.

Since the 1980s, the pressure of globalizing economic forces and stronger competition from Hollywood blockbusters has led French governments to assume the need to boost the international presence of French cinema. A report on film exportation strategies by the director of the French film board (Centre National de la Cinématographie, CNC), stated the importance for French cinema of securing a significant share of the global market through improved exportation schemes and careful preplanning for productions aimed at the international market (Wallon, 1994, 19). There were some legislative changes to allow French films to target global audiences such as new tax incentives for high budget films, usually co-produced (Danan, 1996, 78), which augmented the number of high budget films from three in 1988 to twenty-two in 1997 (CNN, 1998).

For Oliver Bomsel, Professor of Economics, the financial system of French cinema, which was established in the 1980s, has to be modernized. In an interview with the French newspaper *Libération*, Bomsel explains that after the Second World War the aim of French cinema was to create an image for France, in the light of Hollywood's preeminence (Bomsel, 2013). This acknowledged the disadvantage that the Francophone cinema market demand is five times lower than the Anglophone market, which means that the potential for investment by American producers is considerably higher. This handicap led to the need for financial support from the state. However, Bomsel argues that the emergence of new technologies that allow for quicker and easier ways of distributing audiovisual productions have made the French system of film subsidies obsolete (Fanen, 2013).

Created by law in 25 October 1946, the CNC (From 2009 Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée) is a public administrative organization, set up as a separate and financially independent entity that comes under the authority of the ministry of culture and communication, and acts as the regulatory body that provides support for the film, broadcast, video, multimedia and technical industries and promotes distribution of film and television to all audiences. It is also responsible for the preservation and development of film heritage. The CNC is comparable with the BFI as they both develop policies and support

systems to the audiovisual sector of their countries. They are both members of the European Film Agency Directors (EFADs), an informal network of the heads of the national public film bodies in the European Union member states, established in 2001. This institution promotes support for audiovisual products as they consider them 'not just another commodity, but the first ambassador of our values and identity as well as a key driver for growth' (EFADs, 2001).

The CNC has introduced a policy to support the promotion and distribution of works, as well as opening access to a wide audience in cinemas, through a system of special grants: distribution to cinemas, CNC financial aid for exhibitions, selective support schemes for the creation and modernization of cinemas, special systems to support distribution of art house and little-known films, non-commercial distribution to film clubs and support for associations such as grants to national and international festivals. The CNC directly subsidizes the major international festivals (like *FIPA*, 'International Festival of Audiovisual Programs and the Cannes Film Festival'). It also helps finance the organization of major national awards (like the award for best scriptwriter or Sopadin award). The CNC is also responsible for developing the export and promotion of French film and television abroad by funding Unifrance film international and TV France international.

In respect of European and international actions, The Directorate of European and International Affairs is in charge of defining and implementing multilateral policy for the film and broadcasting sector, whether European (European Union, Council of Europe) or international (WTO, OECD, UNESCO, etc.). It is also responsible for aiding exports, promoting French films abroad, assisting in prospecting for foreign markets and providing aid for foreign distribution. It works closely with Unifrance Films International, an association essentially funded by the CNC in charge of promoting French cinema abroad.

French cinema has, especially since the Second World War, a long tradition of co-productions, in particular with Italy (Powrie, 2006, 1). The Directorate of European and International Affairs prepares, negotiates and monitors bilateral co-production agreements and assists and participates in the functioning of

Eurimages. In addition it runs bilateral cooperation schemes with countries that have emerging film production sectors. Furthermore, it jointly runs and funds the Fonds Sud Cinéma with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and supports training schemes for foreign professionals and various festivals or professional seminars. France has signed bilateral co-production agreements with more than forty countries<sup>11</sup> (CNC-accords internationaux). In 2010, fifty-eight foreign movies were co-produced by French companies and in 2011, sixty-five foreign films were made (Film France, 2012, 9), which demonstrate the success of these cooperation schemes.

The CNC participates in the study and preparation of regulations and controls the application made by the different film, television, video and multimedia industry actors. The principal regulatory and compliance control missions performed by CNC are: approval of feature film investments and production, operating license, regulating the heritage of films, film rating commission meetings and secretariat, keeping public records of film and television and regulating film-television relations. The CNC issues the film certification that allows a film to be eligible for financial support. To obtain the certification a production needs an investment approval, which can be mandatory or optional, depending on the nature of the funding requested and a production approval, which is mandatory for all films and which takes place after the film has been produced.

Most countries in Europe, such as Britain or Spain, have some form of protection for their national film industry, which indicates the cultural importance attributed to films, but probably the French movie industry has the strongest support from the State because, under French law, a film is not considered a product but an artistic piece of goods. The French State mainly grants French nationality (and thus financial support) according to the citizenship of its filmmakers, for they consider that an artistic work does not directly possess any

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<sup>11</sup> Germany, Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, India, Ivory Coast, Denmark, Egypt, Spain, Finland, Georgia, Great Britain, Greece, Guinea, Hungary, India, Israel, Italy, Iceland, Lebanon, Macedonia, Morocco, Mexico, New Zealand, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Czech Republic, Romania, Senegal, Serbia, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, Venezuela.

other nationality than that of its creator. Thus, for a movie to qualify for state support the creators have to be French or European and the film must be produced or co-produced by a French film company, which cannot be owned or controlled by non-European stockholders. The language in which the film is shot will be one factor among several others fixing the level of state support the film will be able to enjoy, but it is not a compulsory condition to be eligible for support. French regional languages count as French (Film France, 2012, 30) similar to British regional languages that have the same value in the cultural test than English language.

According to French law, a film must score a minimum of fourteen out of eighteen points to be eligible for the state support system on the following scale:

Authors and directors (six points)	Direction	three points
	Script- and screenwriters	two points
	Other authors (music...)	one point
Actors (six points)	Principal role	three points
	Secondary role	two points
	Fifty percent of other fees	one point
Creative collaboration (four points)	Photography	one point
	Sound	one point
	Editing	one point
	Set design	one point
Technical industries		two points

Operating like the British Cultural Test, French law also has a point system that focuses especially on the nationality of the director and main actors. To obtain points, authors, actors and crew members must either be of French nationality, come from a European Union state or, in the case of co-productions, from a country with which France has a co-production treaty. Foreigners qualifying as resident in France are treated as French citizens. The last point in the actors' group is awarded if European actors get more than fifty percent of all the



working days (excluding the two leading roles). Technical facilities must be established in France or on the territory of a European state.

There are several financial sources for French film producers. A huge proportion of the money invested in film production in France comes from TV channels. This is due to several regulations that make it compulsory for TV channels to invest in French films. The three free-to-air networks (TF1, France Télévisions – France 2 & 3, M6) have to invest 3.2 percent of their turnover in pre-buys and co-productions of French-qualified films, with at least 2.5 percent of the turn-over (75 percent of the available money) for French-speaking ones. The networks are allowed to choose the films they will invest in and they have to do so before first day of principal photography. French law also fixes investment obligations for pay-TV movie channels. They have to invest nine percent of their turnover in pre-buys of French-speaking movies and twelve percent in European movies. As the channels are free to choose what films they invest in, domestic commercial French-language projects intended to draw good ratings in prime-time slots are very sought-after, but TV channels also invest in a few French qualified foreign-speaking movies, generally by top European filmmakers that can be aired in prime-time slots after wide releases (for example Pierre Morel's *Taken* (2008) with Liam Neeson or *From Paris with Love* (2010) with John Travolta) or in high-level 'auteur' films that can attract media interest in festivals, such as films from well-known directors like Lars von Trier, Ken Loach, Michael Haneke, Billie August, Alex de la Iglesia or Danis Tanovic (Film France, 2012, 9).

Qualified film producers or distributors receive automatic subsidies in proportion to the film's success at the French box office, in video stores (a percentage of VHS and DVD sales turnovers) and in TV sales (a percentage of broadcasting rights sales). The percentage awarded varies according to the score obtained in the scale to be eligible for the state support system; that is, according to the degree of 'Frenchness' of the film. The money goes directly into the CNC account of the French producer or distributor, and they have to reinvest it in French-qualified movies; which implies that the money will be available for the producer's next French-qualified movie.

Introduced in 1985, SOFICAs (Société pour le Financement du Cinéma et de l'Audiovisuel, Company for the financing of films and audiovisual works) are public limited companies. They act as investment funds whose sole activity is the financing of films and audiovisual works approved by the CNC. Their capital-raising has been facilitated by tax benefits offered to their shareholders. In 2011, the SOFICAs invested 36,43 million euros in 104 movies (Film France, 2012, 42).

The most important French grant, widely known as the 'Avance sur Recettes', is a refundable grant awarded to around fifty-five projects every year chosen at the script stage for their cultural values by a committee of members of the creative community (producers, directors, distributors, writers, publishers, critics). It was created by André Malraux, the Minister of Cultural Affairs, by two decrees of 1959. Its aim is to encourage creativity in cinema and support original and quality projects and, despite some debate about how the grants are allocated, this mechanism has made possible the production of quasi-amateur films. This grant mechanism is central to the CNC financial support to French film and is considered a symbol of the cultural exception of cinema. Only French-speaking (or France regional languages) projects are eligible. In 2011, the total budget for this mechanism was 20.28 million euros (Film France, 2012, 42).

Since 2009 France has established a system of tax rebate for international productions (CNC, 2011) that amounts to twenty percent of eligible costs of foreign movies and TV productions shot in France, providing that they comply with a set of requirements. It was created because France and French characters appeared very frequently in many foreign films and TV series, but due to the fiscal incentives of other countries, these films were shot outside of the country (Film France, 2012, 12). Among eligible costs are wages and compensation for French and European authors, actors, technicians, and labourers, and related social contributions; expenses incurred in hiring technical companies and other providers of cinematographic and audiovisual creation services, transportation and catering expenses that are incurred strictly for the

needs of producing the work and depreciation amounts. The tax rebate can be granted to works that have a minimum spend of one million euros of eligible expenses in France and, for a live action work, have at least five days of shooting in France. It can total a maximum of four million euros by work. The works that benefit from tax rebate must include elements related to French culture, heritage, and territory, accordingly to a cultural test specific to each genre (live action or animation). Since its implementation, the TRIP has already been granted to thirty-nine foreign productions, including films from famous directors such as Clint Eastwood, Chris Nolan, Woody Allen, Martin Scorsese and Jackie Chan (Film France, 2012, 9). This scheme has successfully helped elevate French cinema internationally although it also has a number of critics of its financial viability who note that films are too expensive, most of the high-budget films are money losers and the subsidy system only benefits a minority of producers and directors.

In an article entitled 'French Actors Are Paid Too Much!' (Maraval, 2012), published by *Le Monde* on 28 December 2012, producer Vincent Maraval (a founder of the production and distribution company Wild Bunch) points out that most of the high-budget films made in France were money-losers (in 2012 *Les Seigneurs*, *The Wanderers* by Olivier Dahan, *Astérix & Obélix: Au service de Sa Majesté* (*Asterix and Obelix: God Save Britannia*) by Lauren Tirard, *Sur la piste du Marsupilami* (*On The Trail of the Marsupilami*) by Alan Chabat, *Stars 80* by Frédéric Forestier, among others). He argues that 'films are too expensive', whether they are films intended for the widest market or art-house films addressed to a more specific public. For Maraval the culprit of this situation is what he calls 'the miracle of the system of financing of the French cinema' (Maraval, 2012): on the one hand, direct subsidies from public TV channels, regional funding or advance on receipts; on the other, and more significantly, the indirect subsidies that French cinema gets through the mandatory investment by private TV channels.

Maraval explains that because television programmers need to compete in the widest market, they are at the mercy of celebrity actors and as they have the obligation to invest, they often have to cope with bad deals. This situation differs

considerably from other national models: in Britain, although TV channels invest in cinema, there is no obligation to invest; Spain does not have a star system and actors, even those most in demand, do not get huge salaries. In the US, majors are independent economically and the huge salaries of celebrity actors are mainly related to box office revenues of their films. Because television's financing plays a bigger part in budgets than direct subsidy, even art-house films, except for those at the very lowest budget range, are subject to the same constraints so the producer argues that the 'famous system of aid for the French cinema only profits a minority of parvenus' (Maraval, 2012). For Maraval there is a clear solution: to limit actors' salaries for films made with mandatory TV investments. Actors who demand higher earnings should be paid solely by private funding in response to their 'commercial value'.

Maraval's position is clearly controversial, because the critics disagree: Jean-Michel Frodon, formerly a critic at *Le Monde* and editor of *Cahiers du Cinéma*, commented on Maraval's article at [www.blog.Slate.fr](http://www.blog.Slate.fr) (Frodon, 2012) and argued that despite some films losing money, a lot of money circulated inside the French film industry that year and he said that French actors and actresses 'are not rich thanks to public money'. Frodon points out that government strategy since the mid-90s has focused on increasing funding as its central objective. Moreover, an even more grave abuse of the system is committed by producers themselves with the overproduction of films, the number of which 'has more than doubled in fifteen years' (Frodon, 2012) due to the system of subsidy. However Frodon notes that the system, despite its abuses, has produced a remarkable set of movies of great artistic merit. Also Serge Toubiana, the head of the Cinémathèque Française (and also a former editor of *Cahiers du Cinéma*), warned against Maraval's somewhat simplistic approach and said that, although it is true that French films are too expensive, Maraval's words attack the whole system of film financing, 'which underpins its 'cultural exception': the requirement imposed on public and private TV channels to participate in the financing of films' (Toubiana, 2012). This dispute clearly shows the difficulties of establishing a state support system to protect the cultural values of cinema without interfering on the industrial side of it.

As I noted earlier, French cinema matters a lot to French people for its cultural value and the power it has to project French culture around the world. The French are particularly proud of their culture and identity and the universal values (*égalité, fraternité, liberté*) that they have traditionally supported and spread to the world. Nowadays, many feel threatened by a globalization often equated with Americanization and try to counteract it. Consequently, the state provides an array of financing mechanisms to boost film production. The result is that French film production is very high (with an average production between 2005 and 2011 of 239 films per year, which situates France as the sixth world producer) (UNESCO, 2013) and its presence worldwide in the sphere of cinema is considerable with a 7.3 percent of the world box office revenues, which situates French cinema in the fourth position behind US, Japan and China (UNESCO, 2013). However, in recent years the financing system of the French film industry has given rise to many controversies over its objectives and results. Nevertheless, Enric Garandeau, the current director of the CNC stated in a 2013 conference:

Contrary to what has been said and written here and there, rarely has French cinema been so creative, brilliant, radiant, efficient and effective: we can speak of a Renaissance. For over four years we have gathered more than 200 million audiences in our theaters, more than 140 million tickets were sold in the world for our films in 2012, we have a market share for our films of more than forty percent in France and often we are number three in the foreign box offices (after the American cinema and the cinema of the concerned country). [...] Our producers finance a quarter of European cinema, and both in production and distribution we can say that we are the first partner of author cinema of the world [my translation] [Car contrairement à ce qui a pu être dit et écrit ici et là, rarement le cinéma français n'aura été aussi créatif, brillant, rayonnant, efficace et performant: on peut parler d'une Renaissance. Depuis plus de 4 ans nous réunissons plus de 200 millions de spectateurs dans nos salles de cinéma, plus de 140 millions de billets ont été vendus dans le monde pour nos films en 2012, nous avons une part de marché pour nos films de plus de 40% en

France et souvent une place de numéro 3 dans les box offices étrangers (après le cinéma américain et le cinéma du pays concerné [...]) Nos producteurs finacent un quart du cinéma européen, et en production comme en distribution on peut dire que nous sommes le premier partenaire du cinéma d'auteur dans le monde] (Garandeau, 2013).

## **2.2. Case studies: *The King's Speech* and *A Prophet***

In this section I analyze two films, one British and one French, in order to exemplify the differences and similarities between the two industries. The British film, *The King's Speech* directed by Tom Hooper (2010) and the French film, *A Prophet* directed by Jacques Audiart (2009), were two successful films both in terms of revenue and with critics. I also choose these two films because they show the distinctive national characteristics of each national cinema. Both won numerous prizes in their respective countries, Britain and France, and abroad and probably represent the best that their respective national cinemas have to offer in their financial and cultural successes: both in the box office and in transmitting national cultural and social values. *The King's Speech* conveys a great deal of 'Britishness' through its theme, a part of British history — it is set in pre-Second world War England — through its British cast and director and through the inspiring story of overcoming adversity that links with the British attitude towards the war. *A Prophet* is not a story about France but it treats themes such as ethnicity that are very current nowadays in France. Its main character is a Maghrebin young man who speaks Arabic and French, and who has had a difficult childhood. The film can be understood as a critique of the justice system for its story is about the transformation of a weak and unlucky boy into a hardened criminal.

### **2.2.1. *The King's Speech***

Year: 2010

Country: United Kingdom

Director: Tom Hooper

Producers: The Weinstein Company, UK Film Council, Momentum Pictures

Screenwriter: David Seidler

Actors: Colin Firth (King George VI of Britain), Helena Bonham Carter (Queen Elizabeth), Geoffrey Rush (Lionel Logue)

### **Inspiring British history**

*The King's Speech* is a historical drama that tells the story of King George VI, father of Queen Elizabeth II, widely known as Bertie (Prince Albert of York), before his accession to the throne. Following the abdication of his brother due to his love for an American divorced woman, Prince Albert assumed the royal role although he did not feel suited to for it as he suffered from a severe stammer. At the time he made the speech about the onset of war (the one at the end of the film), a quarter of the world's population belonged to the British Empire and the Second World War was about to start. The King's leadership was necessary, much of the world would be listening to his rhetoric, especially the Nazi regime, and he needed to show firmness and clarity, an impossible task for a man with his condition. However, with the help of an unorthodox speech therapist, Lionel Logue, with whom he develops a strange but important friendship, the King later manages to overcome his disability and by his more confident speechmaking he inspires the British people through the hard times to come.

The film invites the audience to consider the concepts of 'nation' and 'national identity' reflecting a period when the nation was about to enter a long, debilitating war. In this respect this work follows a range of British films that have explored British national identity over the years (Jeffrey Richards in the thirties, Charles Barr in the Ealing comedies, 1947-1957, and Raymond Durnat in the prewar period). *The King's Speech* carefully represents the historical period in which it is set despite some minor inaccuracies. The film is shot mostly indoors and many spaces where the action takes place are long and narrow, a rare thing in historical drama, which typically emphasizes the majesty of royalty by panoramic shots and spatial amplitude. Possibly, this focus on more enclosed space reflects the difficulties and anguish of the King in achieving a fluent style of speechmaking to produce a fluid discourse. Neither is the film original in its presentation of a memorable speech, highlighting traditional British virtues to lift the morale of a group or society. Other films such as *In Which We*

*Serve* (Noël Coward, 1942) and *Henry V* (Laurence Olivier, 1944) have done the same. Consequently, the film is in line with other films that have treated British nationalism as linked to royalty and highlighted similar assumed British values.

The film explores the relationship between the nobility and the national identity. These are two concepts that for the British are clearly related — at least from an historical point of view as some would argue that nobility is irrelevant to contemporary British identity. The film analyzes this relationship, representing nobility not as a class with more power than others, but as a symbol of British power:

King George VI: If I'm King, where's my power? Can I form a government? Can I levy a tax, declare a war? No! And yet I am the seat of all authority. Why? Because the nation believes that when I speak, I speak for them. But I can't speak. (*The King's Speech*)

The gap between nobility and the common man is reflected in the relationship between the King and his therapist, Lionel Logue, portrayed by Geoffrey Rush. The class difference between both men results in a power struggle, because, although they have the same aim, they want to succeed on their own respective terms: Lionel Logue (to King George) 'My castle, my rules'.

The film is also 'British' in terms of director and cast. The director, Tom Hooper, was born in London in 1972. His father, Richard Hooper, was deputy chairman of Ofcom and his mother, Meredith, was an Australian author and academic. He grew up in London and went to Highgate School where he was inspired by ex-RSC actor Roger Mortimer who taught drama. His first success, when he was only fourteen years old, *Bomber Jacket*, won a runner-up prize in a BBC young film-makers competition. He decided against film school in favour of reading English at Oxford, where he directed some plays. He shot commercials and worked on TV soaps (*East Enders*, *Byker Grove*) and period dramas (*Love in a Cold Climate* and *Daniel Deronda*). Hooper made his debut as a feature film director with the South African drama *Red Dust* (2004). In 2009 his next feature



film, *The Damned United*, was released. The film was an adaptation of David Peace's novel *The Damned Utd*, a fictional version of the forty-four turbulent days that English football manager Brian Clough spent as manager of Leeds United. Work on Hooper's next film, *The King's Speech*, began in the same year.

The film also constructs British style and character through its actors, who are well known British performers. The main actor, Colin Firth, is a famous English film, television, and theatre actor. He has received an Academy Award, a Golden Globe, a BAFTA and the Screen Actors Guild Award. In the late eighties he was identified with the 'Brit Pack' of new young British actors who had found success in Hollywood. He became a household name following his portrayal of Mr. Darcy in the 1995 television adaptation of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. He had lead roles in films such as *The English Patient* (Anthony Minghella, 1996), *Bridget Jones's Diary* (Sharon Maguire, 2001), *Shakespeare in Love* (John Madden, 1998), *Love Actually* (Richard Curtis, 2003) and *A Single Man* (Tom Ford, 2009), among others.

The film was a success in terms of prizes and recognitions and also commercially, both in the UK and abroad. It won four Academy Awards for Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor and Best Original Screenplay, and received twelve Oscar nominations, more than any other film in that year (2012). It was also the winner of seven awards at the 64<sup>th</sup> British Academy Film Awards for Best Film, Outstanding British Film, Best Actor, Best Supporting Actor, Best Supporting Actress, Best Original Screenplay and Best Music and was nominated for fourteen BAFTAs, more than any other film. It won the Best Actor award at the 68<sup>th</sup> Golden Globe Awards and was the winner of the 2011 Goya Award for Best European Film from the Academia de las Artes y las Ciencias Cinematográficas de España (Spanish Academy of Cinematic Art and Science). The film was also a success from a commercial standpoint: with a cost of seven million pounds, it was the highest earning film -- in the UK and Ireland -- on its opening weekend, competing with films such as *127 Hours* (Daniel Boyle) and *Black Swan* (Darren Aronofsky). It took in £3,510,000 from 395 cinemas. It earned over £3 million for four consecutive weekends, the first film to do so

since *Toy Story 3* (Lee Unkrich, 2010). After five weeks on UK release, it was hailed as the most successful independent British film ever. In North America it made 138 million dollars and more than four hundred million dollars worldwide (Gant, 2011).

This film is also a good example of how the UK state support system for film production promotes films that are culturally relevant for the country. *The King's Speech* was made with the support of the National Lottery through the UK Film Council Development Fund and the support of the UK Film Council Premiere Fund. The UK Film Council invested £1 million of public funds from the UK lottery into the film. In March 2011 *Variety* estimated that the return could be between fifteen and twenty times that (Dawtre, 2011). Tanya Seghatchian, head of the UK Film Council's Film Fund said that 'The King's Speech represents a great validation for the UK film industry as a whole and an amazing legacy for the UK Film Council' (Macnab, 2011). The Council's merger into the British Film Institute means that the profits are to be returned to that body.

### **2.2.2. A Prophet**

Year: 2009

Country: France

Original title: Un Prophète

Producers: Lauranne Bourrachot, Martine Cassinelli, Marco Cherqui, Pascal Caucheteux

Director: Jacques Audiard

Screenwriters: Thomas Bidegain, AbdelRaoufDafri, NicolasPeuffaillity Jaques Audiard

Actors: TaharRahim (Malik El Djebena), Niels Arestrup (César Luciani) and Aded Bencherif (Ryad)

### **Politics and identity**

The success of this film is supported both by the number of prizes it has won in different festivals and awards in France and abroad (nomination for Best Foreign Film in the 82nd Academy Awards, winner of the Grand Prix in the

Cannes Film Festival of 2009, winner of Best Film Award in the 53rd London Film Festival, winner of the Louis Delluc Prize 2009, winner of BAFTA 2009 Best Film Not in the English Language, nominated in thirteen categories of the César Prizes, of which it won in nine — including best film, best director, best actor and best secondary actor —, winner of the prize for Best Film in the 13th British Independent Film awards), and for the box office results: with a cost of twelve million euros, the global revenues were more than twenty million euros. Moreover, in 2010, *Empire* magazine listed the film in position sixty-three of 'the 100 best films of World Cinema'.

This film describes the story of Arab Malik el-Djebena (Tahar Rahim), a nineteen-year-old Arab-French man who has spent most of his life in juvenile detention for minor offenses. Now, as an adult, he has been sentenced to six years in prison for assaulting a law enforcement officer. He is sent to the brutal prison of Brécourt where two antagonistic groups coexist: the Corsicans and the Muslims, with the former controlling life in prison due to their connections with the guards. Malik seeks only to serve his sentence without incident although he has no future prospects and no opportunity for any study or support outside the prison. However life in prison soon turns nasty. The leader of the Corsicans, Cesar Luciani (Niels Arestrup), has plans for him, not only with respect to life in prison but also for his criminal activities in the outside world. The Corsican gang that rules the prison asks him to murder a fellow inmate to avoid his testimony in court. The ageing gang leader warns Malik 'Now that you're in on it, if you don't kill him, I'll kill you'. Malik is not a murderer and seeks help from a guard just to understand that Cesar is right: it is kill or die. Malik is aware that to survive his prison sentence he needs protection and that he has no choice but to cooperate. Once he passes the test — in one of the most brutal and realistic scenes in the film —, he enters a world of violence, drugs, murder and kidnapping. Malik learns fast and despite being an outsider to the Corsicans on account of being Arab, he climbs the hierarchical organization of the prison as the years pass, and begins to establish his own criminal empire.

The director, Jacques Audiard (1952), is a French film director, who began his career in film not as a director or screenwriter, but as an editor. He twice won

both the César Award for Best Film and the BAFTA Award for Best Film not in the English Language, in 2005 for *De battre mon coeur s'est arrêté* (*The Beat That My Heart Skipped*, 2005) and in 2010 for *A Prophet*. Peter Bradshaw indicates that in this film, Audiard creates a relentlessly brutal but thrilling picture (Bradshaw, 2010), drawn from real life, but with a supernatural atmospheric *mise en scène*. The film combines a crude hyperrealism, bluntly visualized by the brutality of murder, with dream sequences where the protagonist is haunted by ghosts and memories that seem to emphasize his special status, a man with charisma, capable of being a sort of a 'prophet' to those who know him. These two elements are integrated into the main narrative line: the struggle for survival. Ryan Gilbey points out that it may be a cliché to feature a dead person conversing with the living, but when Malik receives counsel from one of his own victims -- Rayeb, the prisoner he is forced to murder -- Audiard seems to liberate this crime genre with the suggestion of something spiritual and equivocal (Gilbey, 2010). Rayeb's execution is sloppy and insecure, Malik whimpers in a corner while his victim suffers and dies. Malik carries the guilt of this murder with him through the rest of his journey. The film combines high cinematic quality in terms of technical competence and a distinctive aesthetics, with a theme that can attract the average viewer: the prison film that reflects the struggle for survival. This film enjoyed a similar success in France as *Celda 211* (*Cell 211*) had in Spain.

The protagonist, Malik, of Maghrebin origin, speaks Arabic and French but does not seem to identify with any of the groups present in prison. He is not a Corsican but he enters this group becoming a pariah among those of similar origin to his own. The actor who plays Malik, Tahar Rahim (1981) is also a French actor of Maghrebin origin. He was born in Belfort, France, but his family is originally from the region of Oran, Algeria. Rahim is multilingual and has an ear for accents, having played in Corsican and Arabic languages in addition to French films in *A Prophet*, and in Scots Gaelic in his role as the Seal Prince in Kevin Macdonald's *The Eagle*. Audiard explained that his objective 'was to present actors and faces, those of Arabs and Africans, that you don't usually see in French cinema, and which had never been seen before in a genre film' (Rohter, 2010).

Throughout the film the character of Malik develops from a weak, illiterate young man without objectives in life to a powerful man, respected and with a strong personality and undeniable charisma despite his cruelty when the film ends. Probably the main interest of the film lies in this transformation, as the film is a character-driven narrative that can be understood by any audience, regardless of nationality. Audiard and his co-writer Thomas Bidegain slowly show how Malik develops, physically and psychologically, during the course of his sentence. The camera seems to capture Malik's thought processes as he realizes that looking and listening can be more useful in prison than force.

The film is based on a terrible paradox: the transformation of a young person without malice into a cruel criminal because of his time in prison. As Audiard put it 'the story of *A Prophet* depicts someone who reaches a position that he could never have attained had he not gone to prison. Here lies the paradox' (Sonyclassics, 2009). The film invites the viewer to think about the absurdity of the penal system and expands from the particular case of Malik into an indictment of it. During his six year sentence Malik commits crimes that could lead to many more years in prison and the contacts he makes inside enable him to create a drug-dealing business on the outside.

Audiard shows the social aspect of the prison system and he even analyses the shifting ethnic composition of organized crime. In a scene in the film the Corsican leader, Luciani asks: 'Am I crazy or are they multiplying?', referring to the Arabs exercising on the yard. Ethnicity is an important issue in the film and it ultimately influences Malik's goals and actions. This film seems to give greater status to those who lack an identity within a dominant culture — in this case the dominant white French culture — and analyses origins and alternative ethnic identities currently present in today's French society. In an interview (Sonyclassics, 2009) for the Cannes Film Festival Audiard said:

We wanted to create heroes out of people that we didn't know, that didn't already have an iconic representation in cinema. Arabs are a good example. In France the tendency in cinema is to represent them in a

naturalistic or sociological fashion. So instead, we chose to do a pure genre film, in the manner of a western that spotlights people we don't know and transforms them into heroes.

Consequently, Audiart develops Malik's character into a controversial leader who overcomes the position that his ethnic origin seems to reserve for him (even when he follows Luciani's orders with little hesitation, he is treated by the Corsican gang leader as a "dirty Arab") with the desire to gain power rather than be a victim. Malik chooses to assume control in prison rather than find a way to avoid crime and eventually re-enter society, probably because inside the walls he has provided himself with an identity, while outside he would become an invisible man again. In that sense, Audiard denounces the lack of identity that some ethnic minorities seem to have in contemporary French society. In the last scene, a new Malik enters the yard with his fellow Muslim prisoners. Luciani attempts to approach Malik by crossing the invisible line that divides the Corsican from the Muslim prison population but is given a firm punch in the stomach by one of the Muslim prisoners. Malik is now powerful and respected.

Asked if the scriptwriters root for Michael Corleone in the *Godfather* films Audiard answered:

I think so, even if he is a monster. People have difficulty swallowing the fact that Malik is a survivor — but I think that's because he's an Arab character. They're not used to seeing Arabs come out on top and they don't like it, not in France, anyway. Oh, it's fine for them to cheer for [Jacques] Mesrine (he is referring to France's most notorious criminal ever, recently embodied by [Vincent] Cassel in a two-part, César-winning film) because he's played by an actor everyone thinks is cool. But Tahar, they don't know him, he's an Arab and, sad to say, this is still a problem. Good. I hope it pisses them off. That's the point. (Solomons, 2009)

But Audiard also develops a real-life story, in which the characters are constantly facing extreme situations. They live in an environment that demands they follow strict codes, where domination and subservience is the predominant form of relationship both inside and outside the prison. As the viewer watches

Malik's hard journey, s/he is forced to empathize with individuals and actions that would normally be considered despicable, and discover the humanity in characters that are not only immoral, but horrific.

With *A Prophet*, Audiard turns many of the conventions of prison films upside down. For example, Malik survives and prospers in prison through intelligence not intimidation. Asked if he had the desire to decompartmentalize French cinema with his film, Audiard said that:

It's inherent in the project. (...) after *The Beat That My Heart Skipped*, I wanted to work with unknowns. This idea went hand in hand with the feeling that cinema should have a strong social inscription that if it doesn't recount the world as it is, as it plays out, then what use is it? When I say that, it's not a polemic, it's just my way of registering fiction into what would seem to be reality. I think that in France today, cinema is incredibly reductive on this point of view. I don't know of which reality French cinema speaks of. Therefore, the film was to break down this idea of casting as much as it was to take into account the fact that the world changes and that heroic figures must evolve. In my mind there are new mythologies to build on new faces and new routes to follow (Magazine Film London, 2010).

With this film Audiard fulfils his aim of extending the boundaries of French filmmaking and develops a social and political criticism depicting the uneasy relations of French society with generations of Arab immigrants and their descendants while allowing at the same time other more oedipal interpretations. In this sense is very different from the *King's Speech*, an uplifting film that reflects some of the topics of British culture but does not reflect contemporary British society.

### **2.3. Regional, National and International value**

In the last fifteen years, the world of film has changed almost beyond recognition. The advent of digital filmmaking has made possible innovations considered out of reach not so long ago, such as astonishing visual effects or

micro-budget movies. Digital projection has enormously increased access to movies for all audiences, with an explosion in home entertainment and multi-platform-viewing possibilities. As John Adams, Professor of Film and Screen Media Practice at the University of Bristol points out in an article at [www.jmpscreenworks.com](http://www.jmpscreenworks.com), 'digital technologies create the possibility of a paradigm shift in the creative and commercial potential of film' (Adams, 2012). The widespread use of the internet has made distribution of contents (both legitimate and illegitimate) much easier and quicker. And around the world, a new and growing cinema audience in countries such as China, India and Brazil is becoming interested in international film productions. This situation poses many challenges to national cinemas but, at the same time, opens up many opportunities. Nowadays national cinemas are part of an international market, characterised by a cross-border flow of talent and a global circuit of festivals and awards (UIS, 2012). In this context both Britain and France try to implement their film policies in order to take advantage of the opportunities that globalization and the new technologies have to offer while, at the same time, overcoming the problems that they introduce, and they have to balance the cultural value of cinema with its significance as an industry in the economy of their respective countries. As we have seen, the French film industry enjoys active government support in the form of grants and quotas in favour of French films; as a result the industry is healthy, especially in the domestic market. In Britain, cinema attendance has dropped and there are some concerns about British people's preference for Hollywood blockbusters over its own cinema. However, a number of films have had considerable international success in the last years and government protection in the form of lottery funds has allowed the development of an art cinema that can be considered more culturally 'British'.

Nevertheless, both countries are seeking ways to foster their film industries, both from an economic standpoint and as vectors of culture. In 2011, the British Minister of culture set up the Film Policy Review Panel whose mission was to prepare a report (Film Policy Review Panel, 2012) to the Government to identify barriers to growth in the British film industry. The main objectives of the review were: to provide greater coherence and consistency in the UK film industry, to



determine how best to set policy directions for increased Lottery funding, to identify ways to develop and retain UK talent and to increase audience demand for film, including independent British film.

The study acknowledges the important contribution to the economy of the cinema exhibition sector: industry investment and popular films have been responsible for the recent success of the UK exhibition sector, with 169.2 million admissions in 2010 and £1.2bn generated in revenue.<sup>12</sup> But it also points out that ‘the value of the sector needs to be understood in social and cultural as well as economic terms, for alongside local libraries and post offices, cinemas offer a communal space, enjoyed by a wide cross-section of local residents, particularly in deprived and rural communities’ (BFI, 2011).

The panel proposed a number of recommendations, mainly addressed to the BFI, including the following:

- To connect the widest possible range of audiences throughout the UK with the broadest and richest range of British films and films from around the world. This recommendation responded to the fact that investment is being made in British films which are being seen by too small a percentage of the UK public and that Britain has one of the world’s greatest film heritage collections, little seen by UK audiences.
- To explore with industry partners the possibility of developing and launching a British film ‘brand’ to build a stronger and more compelling proposition for British film at home and abroad.
- In response to the valuable role played by film in British communities (as a means of drawing communities together through their mutual enjoyment of cultural experiences; as a means of enriching a sense of local identity through locally produced content or content featuring local subjects or interests; and as a catalyst for social action across other

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<sup>12</sup> This figure includes net box office receipts, net concession revenue and screen advertising receipts.

agendas locally and regionally) the panel recommended that the BFI introduce a strategy which develops a UK-wide film network, based on the existing CAVN, to offer cultural experiences, collaborative programming, creative practice and talent development and to provide direct funding for the co-ordination of clusters of local cinemas and film societies across the nations and regions of the UK.

- In response to the need for film education and training the panel recommended the BFI co-ordinate a joined-up UK-wide film festival, to promote independent British and specialised film and maximise value for money, utilising a mix of public funding and private investment and sponsorship. Moreover, it asked the BFI to co-ordinate a new unified offering for film education which brings together making, seeing and learning about film in an easy and accessible way, available in every school across the UK and supported by an online platform.
- Taking into account that television is still the single most important platform for film consumption in the UK, the panel recommends that the Government initiate immediate discussions with each of the major broadcasters — the BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Channel 5 and BSkyB — with the aim of developing commitments to support British film, or if this approach proves unproductive, then the Government should look at legislative solutions, including new film-related licence requirements.
- The Panel recommended as well that the BFI produce and implement a robust, cohesive international strategy for UK film to encompass new and emerging markets; this should include opportunities for greater engagement with Europe; and also with existing co-production partners as well as other territories offering creative commercial collaboration.

The recommendations of the panel focus both on film as a cultural value, for its capacity to bring together different communities and acknowledge diversity, and

as an industry that has to use the opportunities that the domestic, European and International markets offer.

By contrast, in the last few years, French policies in film have been strongly focused on attracting international investors. French cinema, from its earliest days, has developed co-production agreements with other countries and its policies in cinema are focused upon promoting co-productions and in gaining foreign investors for the French film industry through mechanisms such as the tax rebate for International Productions designed for foreign companies making part or all of a film in France. Out of the 272 movies qualified by the CNC in 2011, sixty-five were foreign productions with a minority French co-producer.

The Industry Report: 'France Welcomes Foreign Film Production' (IFA, 2011) gives a promising picture of French cinema and of France as a location for shooting:

France showcases productions from around the world. [...] As a location, it provides significant support for cinema and audiovisual productions, and as a major film producer, making around 200 feature-length movies a year, France boasts a pool of expert technicians trained by FEMIS (the French national elite film school) which has a widely recognized reputation for excellence around the world. The French film industry is unrivalled in Europe and continues to go from strength to strength. [...] The tax rebate for international productions shot in France has strengthened the country's position in the sector since its introduction in 2009. The number of foreign feature-length shooting days has doubled in two years.

In fact, with nearly 200 million tickets sold every year, including more than seventy million for French-qualified films, the French film industry is among the top of the world's film industries, both for foreign and domestic titles (Film France, 2012). As David Appia, chairman and CEO of the Invest in France Agency (IFA), argues 'every film represents an opportunity to make foreign audiences more aware of the rich, diverse and attractive heritage of France' (IFA, 2011).

However, as has been identified in the discussion of French film, there is currently controversy about the way that Government support is allocated in the film industry. As Richard Brody points out, the 'cultural exception' is the way that France defines the protection of its cinema against the demands of free-trade agreements which imply the free access of Hollywood movies to its market. But the notion of the 'cultural' is dual for it combines an artistic element with a popular one: that is, there are works that convey and export to the world French culture and heritage and there are mass-market films that play a major role in sustaining the film industry as a commercial enterprise. This raises the problem of where to allocate the money available. Some critics of the grant system have pointed out that many, if not the majority, of films that receive public finance are money losers, which means that they do not attract sufficiently big audiences. Of course, an obvious answer is that steering funds toward the production of meritorious works of art that do not perform as well in the market as they might alone justifies an interventionist policy (Brody, 2013). However, both in France and in Britain there is an increasing interest in linking the aims of film policies with the interests of audiences.

The analysis of the 2010 UIS' Survey on Feature Film Statistics' (UNESCO, 2012) points out that the language in which a film is shot is a relevant aspect of its internationalization. English remains by far the most dominant language in film production. In 2009 it was used in one-quarter of all films (1,201 films). Yoruba (from Nigeria) was the second most common language in films (540 films, eleven percent), followed by Spanish (367, eight percent), French (300 films, six percent), Russian (253 films, five percent) and Hindi (235, five percent). These six languages account for sixty percent of all films made in 2009. However, looking only at the top twenty world films, English makes up an even greater proportion of the films listed. English is the major language of origin for the most visible and frequently viewed films in most countries.

Consequently for a film to be shot in English represents a clear advantage in terms of internationalization. In this respect, it is not uncommon for directors who aim for big international audiences to shoot their films in English rather

than in their national languages. Films such as *Taken* (2008) or *From Paris with Love* (2010) by Pierre Morel or the Spanish film *The Impossible* (Juan Antonio Bayona, 2012) more easily reach international audiences because they use English rather than French or Spanish. The success of films in the international market is relevant for the performance of the film industry of a country in economic terms even if it is not in cultural terms.

Whether at the national, regional, European, or international level, the challenge and problems in developing public film funding strategies lie in achieving a subtle balance between cultural aims and economic considerations. This is true not only for Britain and France but also for other countries. One of the big questions facing Europe's film industry is how and in what form it should compete in the global market. The analysis of British and French cinemas in this chapter has provided examples of two different models and given insights into their strengths and the problems that they are dealing with. British cinema has to engage more with its domestic audiences and encourage through governmental policies all kinds of film production to promote creativity and hence a cinema that can be considered 'British' and therefore conform a 'national cinema'. France, with a well developed national cinema based on cinema 'd'auteur', has to seek ways of developing a more financially independent film industry.

The models of cinema discussed in this chapter will be drawn upon in the following chapters to analyze Spanish and Catalan cinemas with a focus on the tensions that the dual nature of cinema, cultural and economic, brings to the development of policies aimed at promoting these national cinemas in the domestic markets and abroad.

## Chapter 3. Spanish cinema

In this chapter I plan to analyse Spanish cinema following the same approach and objectives that I used in the previous chapter on British and French cinemas, in order to compare Spanish cinema with the models that these other countries provide. This will enable me to critically analyse the model used in Spanish cinema with a view to ascertaining its potential value for a Catalan cinema and in order to establish what elements of Spanish cinema, as well as those of British and French cinemas, would appear in a new model for Catalan cinema that I aim to propose in this dissertation. Moreover, the Catalan film industry currently operates within the film industry of the Spanish state and to understand how it works, its problems and the possible solutions, it is necessary to analyse first the Spanish film industry as a whole. This will make possible a study of the particularities of Catalan cinema and its similarities to and differences from Spanish cinema.

First, I aim to study the relation between cultural and commercial value in Spanish cinema: it is necessary to examine what has been understood by 'Spanishness' and how Spanish cinema reflects and constructs it, as well as addressing the debates that have arisen in relation to the financing of the Spanish film industry and how they relate to and contextualise the cultural value that it provides. This analysis will establish to what extent the cultural value attributed to cinema in Spain respects the particularities of Catalan culture and to what extent state funding for cinema benefits or discourages the existence of an independent Catalan film industry.

The second section is dedicated to the study of the internationalization of Spanish cinema and the importance it has for the Spanish film industry, as well as the role of co-productions and film festivals as mechanisms for promoting this internationalization. Then I examine the role of film funding bodies of Spain in cofinancing other Ibero-cinemas and entering into collaborative coproduction relationships with Ibero-American countries and discuss how this type of collaboration acts as a bridge between European and Ibero-American cinemas. This section concludes with an overview of the future of Spanish cinema based

on the challenges that it will have to address to sustain its international reputation as well as the opportunities for increased funding, audiences and revenues from which it may profit.

In the final section I analyse two Spanish films: *Celda 211 (Cell 211)* and *El laberinto del fauno (Pan's Labyrinth)*, in order to give concrete examples of how 'Spanishness' is represented and constructed in cinema and how the Spanish film industry operates in the global market. I chose these two films because they have been successful in Spain and abroad and both are films that domestic and foreign audiences can easily associate with Spain.

### **3.1. Spanish cinema's cultural identity and commercial value: definition and quantification**

[Spanish] National cinema, still seen as cultural capital, national patrimony, and a unique cultural product tied to national identity, is nevertheless forced to rethink and renegotiate certain 'outdated' notions of Spanishness and national specificity. (Pavlovic, 2009, 183)

In 1896, a year after the Lumière brothers recorded *Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory*, often referred to as the first real motion picture ever made, Eduardo Gimeno Correos shot *La salida de misa de 12 de la iglesia del Pilar de Zaragoza (Leaving the Midday Mass at the Church of Pilar in Zaragoza)*, now considered the first Spanish film. Since then, Spanish cinema has reflected the transformation of a society that has evolved into something different from the clichés that have traditionally characterized it: from being a backward and traditional society until the fifties, Spain is now perceived as a modern country with a presence at all the international film forums.

Núria Triana-Toribio claims that there are three points worth noting in the concept of the Spanish 'nation':

- it was one of the oldest and most established political units in Europe
- ideas of the nation came to it slightly later than the rest of Europe

- the nineteenth century was the era of successful nation building in Europe, whereas in Spain it was an unqualified failure (Triana-Toribio, 2003, 4).

Álvarez Junco (1996, 89-91) points out the various reasons for this failure of nation building in Spain, such as the constant political crises in the Spanish state throughout this period, the rulers' reluctance to promote a nationalizing process because to do so might undermine their position of power, but most of all, the lack of modernization of the Spanish state, for modernization is a basic condition for nation building (Hobsbawn 1990, 10, Gellner, 1983, 58-62).

Spain's pre-Civil War film industry was uneven in terms of productivity and creativity, permanently menaced by foreign competition, diminished by constant interference from a moralistic church, lacking support from a government that seemed indifferent to it and suffering from a lack of investment that was symptomatic of the lack of progress in the country as a whole. Consequently, the tale of early Spanish cinema is not one of industry, but of visionaries, pioneers, craftsmen and rebels (Stone, 2002, 14). When modernization finally came about (from the sixties onwards), the Castilian-centered Spanish identity was contested by nationalist movements from Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia (Álvarez Junco, 1996, 89-91).

The ideological agenda of the Franco regime was based on a fundamental appeal to the values of the past: it looked into the remote past in order to create a myth for the present, developing an image of splendour from Spain's cultural and colonial 'Golden Age'. This appeal to ancient traditions allowed the disseminators of the Francoist mythology to find legitimation in the very weight of that tradition, by constructing a 'powerful sense of continuity with a certain historical moment which remained as "utopian" and "eternal"' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 1998, 17). The values that the Franco regime wanted to revive were those of respect for national and religious unity, family morality, paternalistic social and industrial relations, and so on. In relation to cinema, Barry Jordan and Rikki Morgan-Tamosunas note, 'the regime did not exploit the propagandistic possibilities of cinema through a systematic programme of



propaganda cinema but the political climate and censorship ensured that the myths of the Spanish cinema were those of the regime' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 1998, 17).

In regard to post-war cinema, Virginia Higginbotham points out that:

The major genres of Spanish film during the first two post-war decades include the *cine cruzada*, or Civil War films, historical extravaganzas, *cine de sacerdotes* (priests), or religious films, and the folklore musicals. All these film genres presented Spain as it was in the past. They upheld and reinforced the traditional views of Church and Fascist state to which Franco's victory gave the force of law. These genres all had a common goal of reassuring Spaniards that, notwithstanding Civil War, their country's values and institutions had not changed. (Higginbotham, 1988, 18)

What is striking in the case of Spain, Marsha Kinder argues, is the crucial role played by the mass media in the process of refiguring the nation after Franco's death. Kinder points out how Almodóvar's films during the 1980s and 1990s enabled the director to perform a radical sex change on Spain's national stereotype. Taking the works of filmmakers such as Jaime de Armiñán (*Mi querida señorita, My Dearest Señorita*, 1971), Vicente Aranda (*Cambio de sexo –Sex change*, 1977) or José Juan Bigas Luna (*Bilbao*, 1978), Almodóvar established a new cultural stereotype for a liberated socialist Spain: from the macho matadors and gypsies of the Andalusian *españoladas* to an 'outrageous libertarian array of transgressive sexualities, including gay couples, transsexuals, bisexuals, lesbians, and liberated women' (Kinder, 1997, 3). And in doing so, Almodovar changed the idea of what it meant to be Spanish both in Spain and abroad.

Spain's membership in the EU, as Pavlovic points out, changed the status of Spanish film, both inside and outside the EU. The 1990s saw a change in film markets with new production, distribution and exhibition strategies based on international festival circuits for art cinema, and the promotion of co-production

agreements in order to facilitate financing and distribution. Spain was especially vulnerable in this competitive international market and both the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) and the Partido Popular (PP) film policies adopted more aggressive market criteria such as tying state subsidies to the highest-grossing films, thus encouraging the production of more marketable products. In the 1980s and 1990s the growth of private-sector television networks had a huge impact upon the Spanish film industry, because TV became one of the main film industry clients with thirty-five percent of film budgets coming from the sales of films to television (Pavlovic, 2009, 182).

Carlos F. Heredero considers that during the 1990s there were many changes in Spanish cinema such as a substantial group of new directors, policies and industrial practices. Moreover, this cultural critic points out the metamorphosis in the sociological profile of the cinema's audiences, changes in the relationship between the industry and the media and the innovative approaches of its creators to reality. These changes continue to the new century with a revived interest in Spanish cinema historiography, both in Spain and abroad (Heredero, 1999, 11-27).

Tatjana Pavlovic et al also acknowledge that in the 1990s a younger generation of filmmakers took over the Spanish film scene, moved to mass culture films that explored narrative mechanisms and played with generic conventions rather than engaging with cultural, social or political realities. These critics take as an example Santiago Segura's *Torrente* series that illustrates the radical transformation of Spain's audiovisual cultural industry, for it fits in perfectly with the consumption practices of Spanish youth, whose objects of consumption are primarily comic books, hard rock and video games (Pavlovic, 2009, 185). The *Torrente* films, although they cannot be considered a quality cinema — their sense of humor is coarse and rude and their characters are rather stereotypical — are definitely an all-Spanish product in the sense that they are highly unlikely to be exported. They are so typically Spanish that they are unlikely to be understood abroad, as their jokes and cultural references rely heavily on Spanish stereotypical low culture. However, the success that the films have had among an audience that is generally more interested in American blockbusters

than in its own cinema is remarkable. The films have grossed more at the box office in their years of release than the Hollywood blockbusters on show at the moment, a fact that is not common in the Spanish film industry. The films have received some criticism for the depiction of a repulsive protagonist — a racist, misogynist and corrupt ex-policeman — but they have also won praise for their reevaluation of popular film genres such as *españoladas* (Pavlovic, 2009, 186).

Nevertheless, Burkhard Pohl and Jörg Türschmann note that the success of films based on Spanish history implies that a national cinema continues reaffirming its presence in Spain. Moreover, the successes of Spanish cinema among foreign audiences confirm that the promotion of a national cinema is worthwhile and profitable. These authors argue that academic audiences abroad have always been fascinated by Spanish directors as representatives of a cinema 'd'auteur' that 'either developed an European aesthetic or was a committed and antifascist cinema' (Pohl and Türschmann, 2007, 15-16). And as Pavlovic argues, the new political framework of the EU, the pan-European market, and the infrastructural and structural changes driven by the globalization of the media 'prompted a creative repackaging of the representation of Spanish national culture for the global audience and the world market' (Pavlovic, 2009, 183).

In 1982, José Luís Garci won the first Oscar awarded to a Spanish film as Best Foreign Language Film for his work, *Volver a empezar* (Begin the Beguine). This fact marked the beginning of a new era in which there was a huge opening-up of Spanish cinema abroad. Since the 1990s, several Spanish directors have had success among foreign audiences: in 1994, Fernando Trueba won the Oscar for Best Foreign Film for *Belle Époque* (1992) and other directors of the same generation such as Bigas Luna, Vicente Aranda or Almodóvar himself acquired some recognition abroad. That same year marked the lowest point in Spanish film production and the screen quota for Spanish film reached a minimum. However, coinciding with its growing impact in international markets Spanish cinema is increasing its presence in domestic theatres. In 2000 Almodovar won the Oscar for the Best Foreign Film for *Todo*

*sobre mi madre* (*All About My Mother*, 1999) and in 2005 Amenábar did the same with *Mar adentro* (*The Sea Inside*, 2004).

Ignasi Guardans acknowledged in 2009, when he was director of the ICAA (Institute of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts), that 'it would be catastrophic for Spain's collective identity if only a few filmmakers, even the best in the country, had the enormous social power associated with audiovisual creation in their hands, employed in the service of a single world vision'. Guardans argued that a culture needs the capacity to represent itself to the rest of the world through the audiovisual medium, which provides a way to tell its own stories, to give an account of its history and its particular way of looking at things. For that reason he defended the need for a government intervention that allows the preservation of cultural diversity 'rectifying the inevitable homogeneity of goods and services towards which unfettered market forces tend to lead' (Guardans, 2009).

### **3.1.1. Spanish cinema laws and support policies**

The Institute of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts (ICAA) is an entity that belongs to the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport. It encourages, promotes and manages the Spanish film and audiovisual activities in the three aspects of production, distribution and exhibition. It develops legislation, signs co-production agreements with other countries and establishes support policies through grants. It also recovers, restores, preserves, researches and disseminates film heritage and contributes to the training of film professionals. The ICAA maintains relations with international organizations and foreign institutions in order to promote Spanish cinema abroad. At the same time it cooperates with the Spanish autonomous governments to develop their own regional cinemas and promote cultural communication between regions in this sector. Among its objectives are the achievement of an acceptable market share that allows the maintenance of the whole Spanish film industry and the boosting of the internationalization of film and audiovisual Spanish products. The Spanish Academy of Arts and Cinema (Academia de las Artes y las Ciencias Cinematográficas de España) also plays a significant role in promoting Spanish cinema both at the national level and abroad. It analyzes the situation

of the film industry and Spanish cinema and promotes scientific, artistic and technical cooperation both among its members and similar institutions in other countries. It grants the Goya annual awards that have acquired international prestige since their creation in 1987.

State support continues to be a major source of funding for the Spanish film industry. Other protection mechanisms are screen quotas and dubbing licenses, which have been sources of funding in different forms since the 1940s. As Peter Besas has pointed out, subsidies, exhibit quotas and dubbing licenses for foreign films issued only when Spanish films are also released, 'had been and continue to be the three financial crutches that have enabled the Spanish "industry" to survive' (Besas, 1997, 241-259).

In 1982, Pilar Miró was nominated General Director of Cinematography by the new socialist government. She developed a new law for cinema (*Ley Miró*) that renewed the institutional structures of Spanish cinema inherited from the Franco regime: abolition of political censorship, creation of the Institute of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts (ICAA), agreements with TVE, etc. Miró practiced a more interventionist approach, establishing a grant system that financed up to fifty percent of the production costs among other aids. The law received some criticism because it allocated the majority of economic resources to film projects, that is, to films that were not yet in the shooting phase. The revenues of most films in the box office were not sufficient to repay the grant received. Conservative critics argued that the *Ley Miró* did not succeed in building a solid industrial network and that it artificially increased the wages of the professional film workers, creating an economic disequilibrium in the sector. On the other hand, the defenders of the law, mainly from the left wing sector, pointed out that Spanish cinema was gaining recognition in national and international film festivals and that its quality had never been so high. However, low exhibition revenues and low TV audiences indicated a limited interest among Spanish people for their own cinema (see Table below). When in 1996, the PP came to power it reduced grants to film projects to a minimum and focused on the most successful films. This way, they argued, it is the market that decides which directors will receive grants for their next film.

### Market share (% of revenues) in Spanish theatres

	Spain	United States	European Union (*)
1999	14,35	64,22	33,26
2000	10,03	82,7	62,21
2001	17,87	62,21	31,55
2002	13,66	66,07	26,46
2003	15,77	67,24	25,56
2004	13,43	69,74	27,2
2005	16,73	60,14	37,28
2006	15,47	71,22	27,25
2007	13,5	67,5	30,3
2008	13,18	71,71	25,99
2009	15,55	71,57	27,64

\*Including Spain Source: ICAA Boletín informativo 2009  
[http://www.mcu.es/cine/docs/MC/BIC/2009/01.Introduccion\\_Graficos\\_Evolucion.pdf](http://www.mcu.es/cine/docs/MC/BIC/2009/01.Introduccion_Graficos_Evolucion.pdf)

On 28 December 2007, the Spanish Parliament approved the Ley 55/2007 de 28 de diciembre, del Cine (Cinema Act) (BOE 312, 2007). This law is aimed at bolstering the promotion and development of the production, distribution and screening of films and audiovisual works, and the establishment not only of terms that favour their creation and dissemination but also of measures for the preservation of film-making and audiovisual heritage. Apart from the tax incentives applicable to the film-making industry, some of the main incentives included in the Cinema Law, which are to be granted by ICAA, consist of subsidies which vary in amount depending on the beneficiaries. These are for script-writing and project development, cultural and non-regulated training projects, the amortization of full-length motion pictures and short films, the distribution of films and movie theatres. The most controversial amendment requires that, in order to be considered a Spanish production, seventy-five percent of a film's cast must be either Spanish or from another EU member state, and that, in any case, the director must be Spanish or European. This last requirement has been the subject of discussion, as previously a film could be considered a Spanish production as long as seventy-five percent of the cast were Spanish or European independent of the director's nationality. This fact

can be considered as representing a turn towards the French model of 'politique d'auteur'.

It is also worth noting the new screen quotas system, which imposes the screening of a specific percentage of European films, but also introduces a measure of flexibility, as they are to be calculated on the basis of schedules and not of days in production. Another measure that can be highlighted is the fact that TV channels are obliged to invest five percent of their gross income in the production of European films. Finally, it is worth mentioning the rule requiring the creation of a specific fund for cinema in the co-official Spanish languages. The maximum funds available for this project will be eleven million euros per year, provided by the State Budget as well as by the budgets of each autonomous community with its own language.

Ignasi Guardans, Director General of ICAA in 2009-10 noted in relation to the state support to cinema that:

In Spain we are going to modernize our system, with the aim of trying to improve the balance between the vital public support for the type of cinematographic work that will always have smaller appeal, and the need to promote a stronger and more stable film industry than the current one, which would produce movies that are capable of winning over the public in the digital era both inside and outside Spain, equaling or bettering the quality and the internal market shares of countries against which we can measure ourselves in other spheres. (Guardans, 2009)

In fact, cinema is also a powerful industry that, as Guardans says, 'transforms the creativity of a few into the employment of many' (2009) and the Cinema Act of 2007 expressly mentions this commercial dimension.

Critics of the grant system used in relation to the film industry have appeared in Spain just as they have done in Britain or France, as has been stated in Chapter Two. Of course, not all films need state support to be produced; those of a more commercial nature can find funding in the form of pre-sales of

exploitation rights and bank loans, which can be paid with government grants for commercial exploitation once they are realised. But experimental films or those of a cultural nature generally need government financial support to be produced, and most of them probably will not obtain enough revenues to repay the loans. The allocation of grants has generated an intense debate about how this should be done and to what extent; in particular the allocation of state funds to films that perform very poorly in theatres has been repeatedly criticized by various political parties as well as by some media.

To answer these critics, Carlos Cuadros, who managed ICAA's direction after Guardans, has pointed out that, compared to any other industrial sector, the film sector is one of the least subsidized, both relatively and globally: in 2011, the film fund reached eighty million euros, and the total budget of the entire ICAA was 106 million euros, 'much less than the grants of a single line of aid of other Ministries' (Europa Press, 2011). However, the current director of ICAA, Susana de la Sierra, defends more 'industrial or more economic logic' for film industry based on tax rebates that will have to be reinvested in films. She argues that this is not a new model but a development from the 2007 Cinema Law (Martínez, 2012). Nevertheless, the combination of public and private funding in film production continues to be necessary to produce quality films.

### **3. 2. Spanish cinema at the regional, national and international levels**

#### **3. 2. 1. The internationalisation of Spanish films**

A Symposium held on 16 December 2010 in Madrid and organized by the Federation of Audiovisual Producers of Spain (FAPAE), between exhibitors, distributors, broadcasting representatives, advertising agencies, the director of the ICAA, Carlos Cuadros, and opened by the Minister of Culture, Ángeles González Sinde, concluded that Spanish cinema was doing well in internationalizing its productions although there was scope for improvement. Gonzalez Sinde stressed the importance and value of the work of independent producers and encouraged them to find their own space and defend their personal view of 'our' cinema (García, 2010).



Fernando Salazar, vice president of ICEX (Spanish Institute for Foreign Trade) pointed out the 'excellent' image of a country that cinema can convey, which is especially important for an audiovisual power like Spain, the seventh production country in the world and the third in Europe (García, 2010). According to the data Salazar provided, in 2009 the audiovisual sector had sales abroad totalling eighty million euros, although this only represents three percent of total production. The vice president of ICEX acknowledged that 'we have a lot of room for improvement. Exports are our lifeline. Foreign markets are the great hope of our companies' [my translation] [Nos queda mucho margen para mejorar. Las exportaciones son nuestra tabla de salvación. El Mercado exterior es la gran esperanza de nuestras empresas.] (García, 2010). Also Miguel Ángel Benzal, CEO of SGR (Mutual Guarantee Society) stressed the importance of the internationalization of audiovisual projects and noted that 'the image of Spanish cinema outside is much better than here' (García, 2010). Thus internationalization is very important for the Spanish film industry, both in terms of broadening the market and as a way of promoting the image of the country abroad.

There are several agencies and programs that promote the internationalization of Spanish cinema and help Spanish film production companies reach new markets at the same time as they try to promote Spanish culture through the dissemination of Spanish cinema heritage. The AECID, Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, supports the Spanish Film Abroad Program that promotes and exhibits Spanish cinema through cultural institutions and actors abroad: cultural programming for embassies and consulates, cultural centres, OTCs, universities, Cervantes Institutes, and so on (Nicolau, 2011). It is worth mentioning also *Madrid de Cine* -- Spanish Films Screenings, the international showcase for promoting Spanish Cinema, organized and subsidized by the ICAA and the ICEX. Over three days this event offers a unique business space for international buyers, Spanish producers, sales companies and international media: all have the opportunity to view the latest releases of Spanish cinema as well as to interview Spanish film directors, actors and producers.

The data presented at the press event in the framework of *Madrid de Cine 2012* proves that Spanish films continue to be more successful abroad than at home. Spanish films screened internationally in 2011, grossed 185 million euros at the box offices and were seen by more than thirty million viewers. Box office receipts in 2011 more than doubled 2010 revenues, which were ninety million euros. Box office receipts of Spanish films in 2011 in domestic theaters totaled ninety-three million euros. That means that revenues abroad were 98.9 percent higher than in Spain. During 2011, 110 Spanish films were shown abroad, an increase of 20.9 percent compared to the previous year (ninety-one films). Europe is the continent where Spanish films have achieved the highest revenues, with forty-five percent (accounting for 62.3 percent of the total global receipts); followed by the US, with 31.5 percent which is double the 2010 percentage; Latin America is almost three points higher, 18.1 percent and Oceania (4.1 percent) and Asia (1.3 percent) present similar percentages to the previous year. The countries where Spanish films obtained the highest revenues are in this order: the US/Canada, with fifty million euros; France with almost twenty two million euros; Italy with fifteen million euros; Germany with 14.8; Brazil with 12.2; and Mexico with almost eight million euros (Madrid de Cine, 2012). Therefore, it can be said that Spanish cinema has reach the international level, mainly in European countries, but the figures are considerably lower than those from other countries such as Britain, whose films grossed abroad the same year around 4.5 billion euros (BFI, 2011).

The EU has several ways of promoting and supporting the national cinemas of European countries, both within the Union and outside it. With an overall budget of 755 million euros for the period 2007-2013, the MEDIA program works with the aim of supporting the European audiovisual industry to create quality products and help companies to compete with Hollywood films that have been invading the screens of European countries for many years. Through MEDIA, the European Commission has designed supporting mechanisms for the audiovisual industry as complements to national subsidies. Among other things, the program provides aid for the training of professionals in three areas: script writing and the creative aspect of the audiovisual work, looking for stories and a common narrative that will attract the public and reflect European cultural

diversity; the training of entrepreneurs, managers, producers and distributors; and finally, training in new technologies. Also MEDIA supports global audiovisual projects for film and television as well as distribution. In fact, almost sixty percent of the overall budget goes to aid theatrical distribution, television broadcasting, festivals, online distribution, and promotion. Since its inception in Spain in 1991, two international training projects have been established: one with the Rights Management Association of Audiovisual Producers (EGEDA), which offers courses in business management in Mexico, Brazil and Argentina; and the MEDIA Business School, which provides a range of courses in the Ibero-American region recognized by MEDIA International. There are also projects relating to exhibitions that seek to establish distribution channels between Ibero-America and Europe.

### **3. 2. 2. Co-productions**

Nowadays up to forty percent of feature films produced in the five main European film-producing countries (France, UK, Germany, Italy and Spain) are co-productions. In the 1950s, the Spanish authorities promoted co-productions with other countries and in the period between 1950 and 1975 up to forty percent of film production was in the form of co-productions. The main co-production partners were France, Argentina, Germany, USA, Mexico and the UK (Cuevas, 1976, 165-205). However, from the end of the 1970s the formula experienced a period of crisis that was not overcome until European programs such as MEDIA (1987) and Euroimages (1989) promoted and consolidated co-productions in Europe. Spain has also entered into international agreements with other Ibero-American countries to promote co-production among them, such as the IBERMEDIA program. In its role as a 'cultural bridge' between Europe and Ibero-America, Spain can reinforce its position as a co-production partner (Chavarrías, 2004, 12).

As we can find on the website of the MECD - Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte (Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport), ICAA is the body that manages co-productions between Spanish and foreign producers. Spanish producers engaged in international co-production will submit the co-production project for approval to the ICAA and the relevant agencies of the regional

governments. Upon approval of the project, the film will be considered Spanish and the foreign producers may access the ICAA grants for film production, distribution and exhibition in the same proportion as that of the participation of the Spanish co-producer. The proportion of participation in a co-production generally ranges from twenty to eighty percent of the cost of the film. In multilateral co-productions the participation cannot be less than ten percent and cannot exceed seventy percent of the total cost. The technical and artistic contributions of each co-producer as well as the indoor and outdoor shooting should be proportional to their economic participation in the film.

The table below shows that the percentage of co-productions of feature films in the last decade ranges from 24.1 percent in 2011 to 41.6 in 2002 with a mean of 28.9. In the last few years there has been a decrease in this percentage although not in the total number of co-productions. This is due to a steady increase in the number of only Spanish films during the last decade.

### Evolution of Co-productions (2001-2011)

	Co-productions	Spanish only	Total	% Co-production
2001	40	66	106	37.7
2002	57	80	137	41.6
2003	42	68	110	38.1
2004	41	92	133	30.8
2005	53	89	142	37.3
2006	41	109	150	27.3
2007	57	115	172	33.1
2008	49	124	173	28.3
2009	51	135	186	27.4
2010	49	151	200	24.5
2011	48	151	199	24.1

Source: ICAA Statistics <http://www.mcu.es/cine/MC/CDC/Evolucion/GraficosEvolucion.html>

### 3. 2. 3. Spanish and Latin-America cinemas

The most relevant co-production projects continue to be those maintained with Latin-American countries. These relationships started back in the 1940s in the founding of the Hispano-American Cinematographic Union in 1948 with the aim of encouraging the exchange of films and cinematic imports. The co-production projects, especially with Mexico, started in the 1950s under the Franco regime. However, in about the mid-1980s there was a decrease in the number of co-productions with Mexico while at the same time those with Argentina were augmented. An example is José Sacristán's *A Place in the World* (*Un lugar en el mundo*, 1992) which reflects the cultural convergence of both countries.

The Conferencia de Autoridades Cinematográficas de Iberoamérica (CACI) is a regional international organization established on 11 November 1989, with the signing of the Ibero-American Film Integration Agreement. Its purpose is to contribute to the development of cinematography in the visual space of Latin American countries and the integration of those countries through a fair share of the regional film industry. In the 1st Article of the Ibero-American Agreement for

the Integration of Cinematography, the signatory countries,<sup>13</sup> which included Spain, agreed to 'contribute to the development of the film industry within the audiovisual sector of Ibero-American countries and to the integration of the signatory countries through an equitable participation in the regional cinematic activity' (Convenio de Integración cinematográfica Iberoamericana, 1989, 1). Among its objectives were: to support initiatives, through the film industry for the cultural development of the peoples of the region, to harmonize film and audiovisual policies of signatory countries, to resolve the problems of production, distribution and exhibition that may arise, to preserve and promote the filmic heritage of the signatory countries and to expand the market for film products in the region (CACI, 2013). These objectives are achieved through the development of different programs such as IBERMEDIA and the collaboration of the film industry with the cultural governmental entities of the member countries.

In November 1997, the CACI set up the Ibero-American Fund IBERMEDIA (IBERMEDIA, 2013) on the basis of the decisions taken by the Heads of State and Government of the member states in a summit held in Margarita, Venezuela, on the implementation of a program to encourage co-production of feature films and television programs in the Spanish and Portuguese languages, film projects, distribution and promotion of films in the regional market and the training of professionals for the audiovisual industry. Through the AECID, Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, Spain is working on this process of Ibero-American regional integration and is the principal donor.

Among the objectives of IBERMEDIA are: to promote the integration of Latin American companies in audiovisual supranational networks; to support the development of co-production projects submitted by independent Latin American producers; to increase promotion and distribution of Latin American films and to promote training and exchange of professionals in the Latin American audiovisual industry (IBERMEDIA, 2013). This collaboration has been rewarded by the many awards won by films that Spain has co-produced with

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<sup>13</sup> Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Spain, México, Nicaragua, Panamá, Perú, Venezuela, Dominican Republic and Brazil

other Ibero-American countries such as *El hijo de la novia* (*Son of the Bride*) directed by Juan José Campanella in 2001, a Spanish-Argentinean co-production, and Guillermo del Toro's *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006), a Spanish-Mexican co-production. Both films achieved nominations for Best Foreign Language Film at the Oscars. Since its inception, IBERMEDIA, which receives approximately forty percent of its funding from the ACEID, has supported 379 audiovisual projects, awarded 348 financial grants to cinematic co-productions, 209 grants for the distribution and promotion of Ibero-American film, 168 scholarships to students and professionals and sixty-two direct grants to academic institutions (Nicolau, 2009) making this program a successful mechanism in promoting the cooperation between Latin America countries in cinema production and distribution.

### **3. 2. 4. Film festivals participation and organisation**

Film festivals are one of the main mechanisms that Spanish cinema, like other European national cinemas, uses to promote itself domestically and abroad. They offer a platform for art-house cinema with small budgets to reach their audiences and they are probably the best way to present new works to international markets.

In 2011, the ICAA supported around eighty film festivals in Spain (MCU, 2011). Among them were: Donostia-San Sebastián International Film Festival, Málaga Film Festival of Spanish Cinema, Valencia International Film Festival Young cinema, FANT 2010 Bilbao Fantastic Film Festival, Lleida Latin-America Cinema Festival, Mecal Barcelona Short Film Festival, REC Tarragona International Film Festival and the Valladolid International Week of Cinema. Susana de la Sierra, the current director of the ICAA, acknowledges that there is not enough money to subsidize all the festivals that take place in Spain and that it is better to give more money to fewer festivals than to give little to more (Martínez, 2012).

The ICAA also provides support for the participation of Spanish films in international film festivals. In 2011, this extended to more than fifty film festivals such as: Berlinale, Berlin International Film Festival; Sundance Film Festival,

Utah; Tribeca Film Festival, USA; DIFF Delhi International Film Festival, India; Pantalla Pinamar. Argentine European Film Encounter, Argentina; Guadalajara Film Festival, Mexico; BIFF Brussels International Fantastic Film Festival; Cannes International Film Festival.

### **3. 2. 5. The Future of Spanish Cinema**

Spain has received, after France and Italy, the greatest number of Oscars of all the foreign film industries. It has also received acclaim in Europe, winning more than twenty awards from the European Film Academy since it was created. In addition, many Spanish film professionals are called upon to work as judges at festivals all over the world. Pedro Pérez, President of the Federation of Spanish Audiovisual Producers Associations, points out that 'no other country's film industry, apart from that of the U.S. has received such universal recognition and achieved what ours has in recent years' (Pérez, 2009).

In an article about Spanish cinema titled 'Spanish Cinema, shared language and culture', Beatriz Beeckmans and Carmen Giner point out that the key to the success of Spanish cinema lies

in the mastery of the professionals in both artistic and technical areas. This talent has received international acclaim and enabled our professionals to jump ahead of other film industries. A partnership that has already paid off and which is evident in the large number of co-productions and exchanges that take place with other countries, especially from the Ibero-American region, as a result of our traditional historical and cultural links. (Beeckmans, 2009, 8)

But, despite the successes of Spanish cinema, critics have identified issues that need to be addressed in order to consolidate the Spanish film industry and make it a competitive economic sector both at the national level and abroad. First, as Beeckmans and Giner note, following the results of a survey by the Ministry of Culture about the cultural habits of the Spanish people, there is still a problem with the Spanish public's perception of domestic productions: these critics explain that foreign films are thought of more highly and do better at the



box office than Spanish productions (Beeckmans, 2009). In fact, Spain is the fifth largest market for Hollywood films (Pavlovic, 2009, 182) that are clearly preferred by Spanish audiences. In this respect, Pedro Pérez states that 'Spanish cinema is not as in tune with its audience as it could be' (Pérez, 2009). Pérez points out the contradiction implied by the significant success that domestic dramatic series, mini-series or made-for-TV movies have among the Spanish public, while the same scriptwriters, directors, actors and producers are unable to compete with foreign films in movie theaters. Álex de la Iglesia, former President of the Spanish Academy of Cinema, has said in an interview (Campos, 2012) that television and media groups do not find Spanish cinema profitable, although film makers have to invest a percentage of their budget in film production, and they continue to generate a negative opinion of Spanish films. However, he also acknowledges that directors and producers have not been concerned to find out what the public wants; neither have they worried about having a self-sufficient funding system, a market or making competitive products (Campos, 2012).

Another issue to be addressed is the economic aspect of the Spanish film industry and the role played by subsidies to cinema. Cinema is not only an industry but a disseminator of culture which means that there is a common interest in producing films that, even if they do not perform well in theatres, provide a way of promoting and making Spain known abroad; as Pérez puts it 'a particular way of looking at things which, as a launching pad, will achieve greater penetration for all Spanish products' (Pérez, 2009). Nevertheless, finding new ways of financing so that the film industry will rely less on state support should definitely be on the agenda.

As in France, the Spanish film sector is also aware of the economic significance of providing an interesting location for film shooting. At the meeting of 'The Economics of filming in Spain', held at the Ministry of Culture at the behest of the ICAA and the Spain Film Commission, Susana de la Sierra highlighted the extraordinary economic impact of audiovisual filming in the territory: shooting represents a revenue of four euros for each euro invested. She also recalled the 'repercussions for the brand Spain and the tourism industry of the country'

(MECD, 2013). For his part, the President of the Spain Film Commission, Carlos Rosado, said that the main objective of the Film Commission's Films is the promotion of Spanish territory regarding the international audiovisual industry 'because we know that over thirty percent of the production cost of a film stays in the territory where the film is shot and a shooting, in addition to the clear economic effects, involves intangible effects such as enhancing the image of the territory where it takes place and contributes to the development of tourism industry' (MECD, 2013).

The participants in the II Permanent Seminar held on the audiovisual industry in Spain in Madrid in 2011 (Fundación José Ortega y Gasset, 2011) concluded that public intervention in the audiovisual industry will have to take various forms, even promoting a change in the way aid is considered. After seventy-one years of protectionist policies in cinema based on non-returnable grants which have not led to the consolidation of an industrial production network in Spain, the film industry has had to seize the opportunities brought about by digital change in order to promote the development of the audiovisual industries. The protection system has to aim at the production and distribution of new content. The seminar's participants also acknowledged that, although the measures taken in France, the UK and Spain are very positive because they protect intellectual property rights on the Internet, they do not prove effective in fighting piracy. However, they also warned that only an international norm such as the one in the ACTA treaty under negotiation can oblige content providers to eliminate the products non-authorized by its owners. Pérez has also expressed his concerns about this issue: '[piracy] threatens not only our industry, but places at risk all legal business based on the downloading of content' (Pérez, 2009).

As has been stated, there are several issues that have to be taken into account when looking at the future of Spanish cinema. To begin with, the system of state support to film industry has failed to develop an industrial network able to compete, both in the domestic and in the international market, with Hollywood productions. A further matter to consider is how Spanish people respond to their own cinema, especially in competition with Hollywood cinema which continues

to attract greater audiences than national productions. Finally, the Spanish film industry has to take into account the challenges and opportunities that the new technologies such as the Internet or mobile phones bring about. All these questions should be addressed if the Spanish film industry wants to compete in the international market at the top level.

### **3. 3. Case studies: *Pan's Labyrinth* and *Cell 211***

To conclude this chapter I analyze two films — *Pan's Labyrinth* and *Cell 211* — as examples of successful Spanish cinema. *Pan's Labyrinth* is a 2006 Spanish/Mexican film directed by the Mexican film director Guillermo del Toro. The film is a mixture of fantasy and reality and tells a story set in Spain five years after the Spanish Civil War, during the first years of Franco's dictatorship. *Cell 211* is a Spanish film directed by Daniel Monzón — a director, scriptwriter and actor from Palma de Mallorca — that takes place in a Spanish prison and provides harsh criticism of the state system. Both films can be identified as representing a national Spanish cinema, because their themes, locations or actors can be easily recognized as such by both domestic and international audiences.

Both films have also been widely recognized for their quality by critics and audiences and have won several prizes at national and international levels. Thus by certain international standards, they are among the best that Spanish cinema currently has to offer. *Pan's Labyrinth* received universal critical acclaim and in the US the film managed to escape the movie ghetto of art-house aficionados and native speakers and grossed more than \$20 million in revenues, making it the most successful Spanish-language film of all time. *Cell 211* has also been received very well in the international market with comments such as 'the cast is uniformly strong, Monzón's direction riveting' (O'Sullivan, 2010), and lead actor Luis Tosar's work has been unanimously acclaimed.

#### **3. 3. 1. *Pan's Labyrinth***

Year: 2006

Country: Spain, Mexico, USA

Original title: El laberinto del Fauno (The Labyrinth of the Faun)

Director: Guillermo del Toro

Producers: Estudios Picasso (co-production), Tequila Gang (co-production), Esperanto Filmoj (co-production), Sententia Entertainment (produced in association with), Telecinco (presented in association with), OMM (unaccredited)

Scriptwriters: Guillermo del Toro

Actors: Ivana Baquero (Ofelia), Sergi López (Vidal), Maribel Verdú (Mercedes), Doug Jones (Fauno/Pale Man); Ariadna Gil (Carmen)

### **Fantasy and the Civil War**

*Pan's Labyrinth* is a co-production between Spain and Mexico that confirms the potential of these types of collaboration projects among Ibero-American countries. The Spanishness of this film is basically provided by the background historical moment against which the story takes place but the story itself is an auteur's vision from a Mexican director who plays with his interest in fantasy — a genre that has been extremely commercially popular in cinema of the last decade, and which has helped Del Toro to achieve international success — and in the Spanish Civil War as a war between brothers. Consequently it may be easily related to Spain but at the same time it presents stories that are not specifically Spanish and that can interest a broader audience.

The film is a dark fantasy tale with sources both in mythology and literature, Pan is a character of Greek mythology whom the Romans renamed the Faun. Son of the god Hermes and the beautiful nymph Dryope, he was born with horns and goat legs. Due to his monstrous appearance, bad temper and voracious sexual appetite Pan was finally exiled into Arcadia, surrounded by satyrs and other fantastic creatures of the woods. Over time, medieval Christianity made Pan a cult version of Satan himself. The Pan that appears in the film is straight out of the stories written by Welsh author Arthur Machen in the late nineteenth century.

This fantasy storyline is blended with the real world where the film deals with a traumatic episode of Spanish history, the Spanish Civil War and its consequences. In 1944, when the story occurs, the Spanish Civil War has been

over for five years but small groups of guerilla rebels continue to fight against the fascist dictatorship led by Francisco Franco. Captain Vidal fights against the rebels living in the forest outside the village of Navarra. Ofelia, a ten-year-old girl, travels with her mother Carmen, newly wedded to Captain Vidal and heavily pregnant with his child, to live with Vidal's stepfather at the mill where the militia is stationed. During a stop on their way to the mill, Ofelia discovers an old stone sculpture at the edge of the woods on which she sees a strange stick-like insect which she believes to be a fairy. It follows her to the mill and leads the girl into an ancient labyrinth nearby, where she meets the faun.

The underlying story of the film, to which the fantasy level is correlated, shows the situation in Spain just after the Civil War. It is a human drama that reflects the two Spains that confronted each other in the war. Comparing *Pan's Labyrinth* with his previous movie, *El espinazo del diablo* (*The Devil's Backbone*, 2001) that takes place during the Civil War, Del Toro said:

*Devil's Backbone* was a movie that tried to create a microcosm of the Spanish civil war. I'm always doing this stupid experiment. I said I'm going to do a microcosm of the Spanish civil war through a gothic romance with a ghost. That sounds very logical, you know. But I guess it's not as far-fetched as doing an anti-fascist fairytale. In trying to do that, I chose that war because it was a household war. People that shared beds, shared dining tables and shared lives ultimately killed each other. I tried to use an orphanage as the classic haunted building of gothic romance and use the ghost story to prove the same thing that I wanted to prove in *Pan's Labyrinth*, that the only real monsters are human. And the only thing you have to be afraid of is people, not creatures, not ghosts. (Kermode, 2006)

As we can read about 'Guillermo del Toro Bibliography' from the *Fantasy Book Review*, Guillermo del Toro was born in 1964 in Guadalajara Jalisco, Mexico and was raised by his Catholic grandmother. He is a film director, screenwriter, producer, and novelist. Del Toro got his first big break when *Cronos* (1993) won nine academy awards in Mexico, and also won the International Critics Week prize at Cannes. Following this success, Del Toro made his first Hollywood film,

*Mimic* (1997). In his filmmaking career, he has alternated between Spanish dark fantasy films such as *The Devil's Backbone* (2001) and *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006), and more mainstream American action movies, such as *Blade II* (2002) and *Hellboy* (2004) (Fantasy Book Review, 2013). In both markets — niche/art house and mainstream/blockbuster — he has acquired an international reputation. He explained that when he finished *The Devil's Backbone*, he screened it in Toronto on September 9 2001 but the events of September 11 changed the way he saw cruelty and kindness:

We got rave reviews, lots of applause, people telling me 'great movie!' blah blah blah. Then I take a plane cloaked in my petit bourgeois happiness at how well my film was received, landed in Los Angeles and then September 11 happened. That was when I realized that (a) I don't know shit, and (b) whatever I had to say about brutality and innocence had just changed. It changed so much over the course of the year that I had to make a movie that structurally echoed *Devil's Backbone*, and that you could watch back to back. *Devil's Backbone* is the boy's movie. It's the brother movie. But *Pan's Labyrinth* is the sister movie, the female energy to that other one. I wanted to make it because fascism is definitely a male concern and a boy's game, so I wanted to oppose that with an 11-year-old girl's universe. (Kermode, 2006)

Del Toro, then, relates his interest in making *Pan's Labyrinth* to the impact that the events of September 11, 2001 in New York had on him. He felt that he had to rethink all the ideas he had previously held about the good and evil in human behaviour. In this film, which Del Toro sees as the female version of his previous *Devil's Backbone*, he opposes the brutality of a war between brothers to the innocent world of an 11-year-old girl. The contradictions that Del Toro explores in this film — brutality versus innocence and the feminine versus the masculine — go beyond the contingency of a specific historical moment or a particular place. This is highlighted by the fantasy element that works as an allegorical means to discuss history. These themes address all kinds of audience and consequently one can deduce that the intention of this film is not

only to explore issues related to the Spanish Civil War and how Spanish people dealt with them, but to explore human behaviour and especially its worst side.

The film was a success both from a commercial standpoint and in terms of critics and awards. With a budget of around fourteen million euros, *Pan's Labyrinth* grossed eighty-three million euros worldwide. In Spain alone it grossed almost nine million euros and it is the fourth highest domestically grossing foreign film in the US where it has generated almost fifty million euros from its DVD sales and rentals (Boxofficemojo). *Pan's Labyrinth* was first presented at the 2006 Cannes Film Festival and then in the London Fright Fest Film Festival later that year. Its first general release was in Spain in October 2006, followed by a release in Mexico nine days later. It won Goya awards for Best Cinematography, Editing, Makeup, New Actress (Ivana Baquero), Original Screenplay, Sound and Special Effects and eight of Mexico's Ariel awards including Best Movie and Best Director. It also won the 2006 Academy Awards for Best Art Direction, Best cinematography and Best Makeup and nominations for Best Original Score, Best Original Screenplay and Best Foreign Language Film and BAFTA awards for Best Film Not in English, Costume Design, and Makeup and Hair.

### **3. 3. 2. Cell 211**

Year: 2009

Country: Spain, France

Director: Daniel Monzón

Producers: Canal + España, Canal +, La Fabrique 2, La Fabrique de Films, Morena Films, Sofica Europacorp, Sofica Soficinéma 4, Telecinco Cinema, Vaca Film

Scriptwriter: Jorge Guerricaechevarría, Daniel Monzón

Actors: Luis Tosar (Malamadre), Alberto Ammann (Juan Oliver), Antonio Resines (José Utrilla), Manuel Morón (Ernesto Almansa), Carlos Bardem (Apache), Marta Etura (Elena)

### **A powerful critique of the political system**

*Cell 211* is based on a novel with the same title by Francisco Pérez Gandul, which chronicles the development of a riot in a high security prison. What Pérez Gandul is telling us and what the film conveys is that the system that governs us is capable of doing anything to perpetuate itself. The film explores the experience of Juan Oliver, a thirty-year-old officer who has come to his new post in prison one day earlier than necessary because he wants to make a good impression at his new job. While making a tour of the prison, a riot breaks out, and through suffering an accident he ends up unconscious. He is rushed to the empty but visibly haunted walls of cell 211. The inmates of the high security cell block hijack the penitentiary and the prison officers flee, aware of the violence that is to come, leaving Juan to his own resources. When Juan awakens, he immediately realizes how dangerous his situation is and in order to survive he pretends to be a prisoner. Juan develops a dialogue with the violent leader of the riot, Malamadre, and the two begin a partnership, Malamadre fully believing that Juan is a new inmate. Juan's job from that moment onward is to prevent a raid by the paramilitary forces arrayed on every rooftop, waiting for the go-ahead to attack. Negotiations go smoothly until the rioters take three Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) prisoners (O'Sullivan, 2010). The state machine uses this situation to take advantage of the crisis management and not only leaves Juan to his fate, but a brutal police crackdown which occurs at the doors of the prison, murders Elena, his pregnant wife (Pérez Romero, 2009). The film combines the tone of a thriller, maintaining a gripping tension throughout, with an in-depth political analysis. In fact, the political discourse of the film is so critical that it can be classified as political cinema.

Enrique Pérez Romero argues that *Cell 211* is a symptom that confirms the powerful undercurrents of dissatisfaction that exist in Spanish society' (Pérez Romero, 2009). The film depicts a state with clumsy, bureaucratized, and ineffective security that operates through deception, manipulation, betrayal, violent repression and, if necessary, torture and murder. The film has ramifications beyond Spain when it reaches the terrible conclusion that not only is the system not there when you need it, but that it pushes the individual



towards its margins, forcing him to act against it and getting rid of him if deemed appropriate for its survival.

The director, Daniel Monzón was born in Palma de Mallorca in 1968. Before working as a director he was a film journalist and critic in newspapers and the radio. He also worked for Spanish public television as assistant director in 'Días de cine'. He wrote the script of *Desvío al paraíso* (*Shortcut to Paradise*, 1994) with Santiago Taberner and in 2000 he directed his first film, *Heart of the Warrior* for which he received a Goya award nomination in the New Director category. Then he directed *El robo más grande jamás contado* (*The Biggest Robbery Never Told*, 2002) and *La caja Kovak* (*The Kovak Box*, 2007), a thriller for which he won the Audience Award at the Lund Fantastic Film Festival (Sweden). In 2009 he released *Cell 211* for which he won a Goya award for the best director.

In an interview with *El Mundo* newspaper Monzón explains that he tried to avoid 'commonplaces' of prison films that have nothing to do with the reality of prisons and instead experimented with a dry and straightforward approach. He explains that the film is not critical of the party in power but of power itself and of a system that is designed to protect the individual, but when its own survival becomes an issue does not care about the individual (Domínguez, 2010).

The film is very similar to Jacques Audiard's *Un prophète* (*A Prophet*, 2009) but whereas Audiard's work is a very striking analysis of the current prison situation in Europe and ponders the consequences of some current schemes of western society that are reflected in the word of prisons, *Cell 211* provides a strong critique of the Spanish political system specifically. As in Audiard's film, *Cell 211* develops a thorough analysis of leadership through the relationship between Juan, Malamadre and Apache. Malamadre represents the charismatic leader who easily gains the support of fellow inmates while Juan is the true leader who pulls the strings behind the scenes via his privileged relationship with Malamadre. Apache is the frustrated leader whose only ambition is to impose his will by whatever means necessary. The film's narrative is character-driven as well as political, and the characters constitute a universal element that can

appeal to international audiences, but even the political issues within this film are accessible to audiences outside Spain.

The film has gained praise both in Spain and among foreign critics. Peter Bradshaw stated in *The Guardian*:

Here is a big, brash, violent, and even slightly outrageous high-concept prison movie from Spain, well plotted with some neat narrative switchbacks, and pitched with gusto at a commercial market — rather than the loftier stratum at which Jacques Audiard was aiming with his *A Prophet*. It looks ripe for an English-language remake, and has already been sold to Hollywood. (Bradshaw, 2011)

Film critic Lee Marshal highlights the potential of the Spanish film industry producing other films of the quality of *Cell 211*:

Majorcan director Daniel Monzon's fourth film shows that there is plenty of life in the Spanish genre industry — at least as long as it continues to come up with tasty, confident, products like prison mutiny drama *Cell 211*. The audience appeal registered at the film's Venice and Toronto festival screenings has been confirmed in Spain with an opening weekend of more than \$2m — encouraging news for independents. (Marshal, 2009)

Tim Robey, from *The Telegraph* considers that 'the jail-siege potboiler *Cell 211*, which swept Spain's film awards, has a premise that's pure Hollywood', and announces that a remake is already bubbling up (Robey, 2011). In this sense it can be said that this film, like Del Toro's, is taking a Hollywood or mainstream popular genre (here action thriller combined with the prison movie) and producing a version that is both distinctively national and internationally attractive.

*Cell 211* was presented in several film festivals both national and international such as the 23<sup>rd</sup> International Film Festival of Helsinki, the London Spanish Cinema Film Festival, the 58th San Sebastian Film Festival in 2010, the Sitges

Film Festival, 2009, the Hong Kong Film Festival of 2010 and the Venice Film Festival. The film won numerous prizes and recognition both in Spain and abroad such as eight Goya Awards in 2009 including: Best Film, Best Director, Best Actor (Luis Tosar) and a total of sixteen nominations, two nominations for Best Script and Best Actor in the European Film Prizes of 2010; the Fotogramas de Plata 2009 for Best Film and Best Actor (Luis Tosar) and XIX Premios de la Unión de Actores for Best actor (Luis Tosar) and Best Secondary Actor (Carlos Bardem).

With a production budget of 3.5 million euros, *Cell 211* was a box-office success. In its opening week (6 November 2009), 221.212 people viewed it in 220 theatres and it gained 1.391.838 euros in revenues (Labutaca). In total it has grossed more than twelve million euros and more than two million viewers in theatres.

### **3. 3. 3. 'Spanishness' in Spanish Cinema**

One of the main objectives of Spanish cinema institutions and film producers is the internationalization of Spanish films. The Spanish film industry has to be competitive in the international market if it wants to have a place in the global film scene. Nowadays, one of the main obstacles for national cinemas is the preeminence of Hollywood films. Previous chapters of this thesis have examined the different strategies that countries use to compete with Hollywood that go from differentiating themselves from it to imitating it: Spanish cinema has examples of both. The Torrente series, for example, consists of all-Spanish films, which are hardly exportable but have had a lot of success in the domestic market. On the other side of the spectrum, *Lo imposible* (*The Impossible*, 2012), directed by Juan Antonio Bayona, seems like a Hollywood film and has been successful both domestically and abroad. The two films analysed above are somehow in between: they offer a historic or political background that relates the films unequivocally to Spain but at the same time they have universal themes, such as the representation of brutality versus innocence or the injustices within a political system, that can be understood by audiences abroad. Probably, they are types of films that better combine the cultural value that national cinemas seek to export with the economic success needed to

develop and maintain a strong film industry. This is relevant to Catalan cinema as is the way it should go for international success.

Clearly, the challenge facing Spanish cinema is to build up a competitive film industry while developing an easily recognizable national brand, one able to disseminate Spanish culture and a Spanish way of life. Catalan cinema shares these challenges with Spanish cinema and at the same time has to differentiate itself from Spanish cinema as a whole if it wishes to be a national cinema in its own right. In the following chapter I analyze Catalan cinema, in terms of both the cultural and economic sectors, paying special attention to its relation to Spanish cinema and its possibilities of reaching international markets while offering an insight into the specifics of Catalan culture. The Catalan language is an important element of differentiation from Spanish cinema and in the next chapter I analyze the role that it plays and the possibilities and challenges surrounding it, in order to assess the importance of language in the new model I will propose for Catalan cinema in Chapter 5.

## Chapter 4. Catalan cinema

In this chapter I examine the problems and opportunities that Catalan cinema must face in order to become a national cinema and to develop an independent and successful film industry. There are a number of issues that need to be considered first. As the previous chapter has outlined, Catalan cinema needs to differentiate itself from Spanish cinema if it wants to become more international and distinctive, perhaps as a national cinema in its own right, and so Catalan language can play an important role in differentiating this cinema from Spanish cinema. However, Catalan cinema also shares the problems that have been identified in relation to Spanish cinema: the financing of its film industry, the preference of domestic audiences for Hollywood productions and the need to develop production and distribution strategies to compete in the global market.

The first part of this chapter is devoted to the analysis of the relationship between cultural identity and commercial value in Catalan cinema. First, I outline a brief history of Catalan cinema and its relationship to Spanish cinema. Then, I explore to what extent it is possible to define a Catalan identity and what that means for the concept of regional cinema. Finally, I analyze how the legislation of Catalan cinema aims to promote cinema in the Catalan language and the opposing market interests that consider that dubbing movies has an additional cost and no effect in attracting more viewers. In the second part of the chapter, I explore the situation of Catalan cinema in relation to Spanish cinema as a whole and its promotion at the international level. Finally, I examine its potential for internationalization and the problems it has to face; and analyze as case studies two Catalan films: *Vicky, Cristina, Barcelona* (2008) and *Pa negre* (*Black Bread*, 2010). I chose these films for their domestic and international success and because they represent two different types of films that can reach the international level and export Catalan culture and heritage: *Vicky, Cristina, Barcelona* as a co-production with elements of Catalan culture but also with foreign elements such as the directors or some actors; *Black Bread* as a film that can be considered completely Catalan: the story, the director, the actors, the language. I explore to what extent these films may be considered 'Catalan', what they signify for Catalan cinema and how this

signification might change if Catalan cinema were to become more independent of Spanish cinema, as I will propose in Chapter five. Specifically, I argue how international collaborations such as *Vicky, Cristina, Barcelona* can help the Catalan industry to reach an international level and how the characteristics and success of *Black Bread* suggest that Catalan cinema can be thought of as a national cinema.

#### **4.1. Catalan cinema, definition and quantification: cultural identity and commercial value**

##### **4.1.1. Brief history of Catalan cinema**

As we find in Generalitat de Catalunya's website in the article 'Cinema during the Republic', Catalan cinema underwent a significant phase of growth between 1931 and 1936. The Second Republic and the restoration of the Generalitat de Catalunya contributed to the development of a substantial film industry in these years. The Great Depression of 1929 and the transition from silent to sound cinema made things difficult for the industry but nevertheless Catalonia managed to be at the forefront of Spanish cinema in many respects. The third main production company in Spain came from Barcelona: Orphea. Founded in 1931, Orphea was the first company to make sound films in Spain with *El gato montés* (The Wildcat) (Rosario Pi, 1935). The company also produced *El Cafè de la Marina* (Navy Cafe) (1934), the only film directed by Domènec Pruna, presented as the first film in the Catalan language. The film was a failure in terms of audience and investors stopped risking money on national conscience cinema that tried to promote the idea of Catalonia as a nation as well as the Catalan language. Despite this fact, production continued steadily. On the public side, the Catalan Minister of Culture of the Republican government, Ventura Gassol, established a Cinema Committee with the aim of expanding Catalan film industry throughout the country. A School of Cinema was set up and a pioneering cinema course was offered at the University of Barcelona: 'Una cultura del cinema. Introducció a una estètica del film' [Cinema culture. Introduction to film aesthetics] (1931). The future was looking bright for the development of an autonomous cinema, independent from the Spanish film sector. However, the dream came to an end with the outbreak of the Civil War

(18 July 1936), a tragic period characterized by the spread of propaganda documentaries. When the war broke out, cinema was mobilized, especially on the Republican side (360 Republican films were produced, compared with ninety right-wing films), and cinema purely for entertainment purposes gave way to news production and propaganda documentaries. The objective was to raise the people's morale and alert foreign powers to the dramatic situation that Spain was experiencing (Generalitat de Catalunya, 'Cinema during the Republic').

When the Civil War came to an end on 1 April 1939, the Franco dictatorship undertook the reorganization of Spanish and Catalan cinema according to ideological criteria based on creating a national and religious unity and urgent industrial needs. Catalan cinema managed to recover, especially in commercial terms, despite censorship and the economic problems of the post-war period. Catalan and other 'regional dialects' were banned and Spanish dubbing was compulsory for foreign films. These measures aimed to promote Spanish language in the country but also to protect Spanish cinema from foreign production. Production in Madrid was far more subsidized than production in Barcelona: consequently, in 1944, while there were fifty-five production companies located in Madrid, Barcelona had only eighteen (Generalitat de Catalunya, 'The long post-war'). However, as Epps points out "echoes and traces of that *other* tongue, Catalan" were present in some Catalan films such as Iquino's *El tambor del Bruch* (*The Drummer of Bruch*, 1948) in the form of a sentence in Catalan that can be understood as a expression of a 'Catalan national alternative' (Epps in Labanyi and Pavlovic, 2013, 53).

Despite the circumstances, Catalan cinema survived, for it was oriented to commercial success and the economic recovery of investment. Making films that were profitable implied that Catalan cinema did not depend on the allocation of resources decided by the central government that favoured Madrid. This commercial success explains the appearance of new directors like Manuel Blay, Joan Fortuny, Francesc Gibert, Pere Pujades, Ramon Quadreny, Gonzalo Pardo or Alejandro Ulloa, and the consolidation of the *film noir* with titles like *Apartado de correos 1001* (PO Box 1001) (Julio Salvador, 1951), *El cerco* (The fence) (Miguel Iglesias Bonns, 1955) or *Manos sucias* (Dirty hands) (José

Antonio de la Loma, 1956). Barcelona produced twenty-five percent of Spanish cinema and managed to produce a few Catalan language films such as *La ferida Iluminosa* (Light wound) (Tulio Demicheli, 1956) or *Verd madur* (Green ripe) (Rafael Gil, 1960), adaptations from Catalan literature that were finally released in 1967. It is also worth mentioning the production company Estudis Balcázar. Created in 1964 in Esplugas de Llobregat the company catered for the Spanish and Italian demand for 'spaghetti westerns'. This cinema town hosted the shooting of around seventy films during a period of almost nine years, most of them co-productions with Italy and other countries attracted by the low production costs and thus contributed to the economic success of Catalan films.

Generalitat de Catalunya website points out that during the 1960s, and despite a certain loosening of censorship, the Francoist dogma of unity and territorial indissolubility meant that the Spanish language was privileged at the expense of the other languages used in Spain, Catalan included. This was specially evident in film production where only a few films were allowed to be shot in Catalan (Epps in Labanyi and Pavlovic, 2013, 51). Nevertheless, a growing openness to other countries allowed the artistic and cultural movements of the city of Barcelona, always in the forefront of culture, to receive cultural influences from other countries, especially from Europe. These movements rejected the centralised and picturesque filmmaking that was developed in Madrid and searched for new and modern forms of expression (Generalitat de Catalunya, 'Barcelona School'). Rosaling Galt points out that for the Barcelona School filmmakers, the institution of art was entirely associated with the Francoist state, and they therefore avoided participating in its structures or producing its supposedly autonomous cultural products (Galt, 2010, 494).

Ricardo Muñoz coined the term 'Escola de Barcelona' in the magazine *Fotogramas* to define this movement that aimed to approach cinema in a new way, despite the fact that the group was never a school as such. The films from Escola de Barcelona, influenced by the French 'Nouvelle Vague' and the British 'Free cinema', were closer to the avant-garde than to traditional classic cinema in that their directors rejected the homogeneous filmmaking coming from Madrid



and tried to find new ways of expression (Generalitat de Catalunya, 'Barcelona School'). Galt indicate that Cultural and intellectual spaces are circumscribed, besieged and transformed in the 60s and 70s, and the avant-gardes must be understood as negotiations of this territory. In Barcelona, avant-gardist forms mixed uneasily with art cinema, exploitation, and the global claims of Third Cinema. In France, Italy, and Poland theoretical debates on Marxism and culture linked the project of engaged cinema to the contested direction of the European left. It is this rich mulch that accounts for the incoherence but also the complexity of the European avant-gardes (Galt, 2010, 499). Other members of the Escola de Barcelona were Vicente Aranda, Jacinto Esteva, Joaquim Jordà, Carlos Durán, José M. Nunes, Ricard Bofill, Jorge Grau, Pere Portabella, Jaime Camino, Llorenç Soler, Gonzalo Suárez, Roman Gubern and Juan Amorós (Generalitat de Catalunya, 'Barcelona School').

As we find in Generalitat de Catalunya's website in the article 'Barcelona School' this aim to differentiate their cinema from the style of the cinema made in Madrid was extended not only to the content and form of the films but also to methods of production. Plots were intellectualized to develop an experimental angle and clearly, though not directly, showed opposition to the Franco regime. In economic terms, most of the films were either self-financed or financed through a co-operational system. The most significant films of this movement were: Jacinto Esteva and Joaquim Jordà's 1967 *Dante no es únicament severo* (*Dante is not only severe*), which may be considered as the manifesto of the Escola de Barcelona, because of its experimental bias. The film consists of a prologue, six sequences and an epilogue put together with internal contradictions and no linear plot. It experiments with light, colour, sound and atmosphere. The aim of the film was to demonstrate that cinema, and art in general, could be more creative and free than the stereotypical and politically correct cinema promoted by the Franco regime, and to open up more experimental ways of making films. Examples of these films are José M. Nunes' *Biotaxia* (José M. Nunes, 1967), *Nocturno 29* (Nightly 29) (Pere Portabella, 1968), *Las crueles* (*The cruel ones*, Vicente Aranda, 1969) or *Aoom* (Gonzalo Suárez, 1970). The Escola de Barcelona started to disintegrate in the early 70s, due to the commercial failure of these films, which were not understood by the

general public in Spain, but its film directors continued to work and the significance of their outputs has been recognized in the last few years, both domestically and abroad<sup>14</sup> (Generalitat de Catalunya, 'Barcelona School').

The end of Franco's dictatorship and the subsequent transition period (1975-1986) put an end to censorship and opened up the possibility for Catalan cinema to be developed as a national cinema, an objective that was not fully fulfilled as I will explain later on. Nevertheless, films could be shot in Catalan — although commercial reasons often dictated that they were shot in Spanish — and Catalan culture and historic heritage could be recovered from the repression of the Francoist era. A debate about what Catalan cinema was meant to be (which found a significant forum in the Congress of Catalan culture held on 8 December 1976) took place with two opposing sides that reflected the recurring tension in cinema between the demands of culture and industry. For some, Catalan cinema was cinema in Catalan and with 'Catalan' subject matter; for others it was simply the cinema produced in Catalonia — regardless of its subject matter, genre, or language.

In 1981, the Generalitat undertook the management of the cultural sector in Catalonia and created the *Servei de Cinematografia* with the aim of increasing aid to the sector. When this body was established, the controversy about what constituted Catalan cinema was temporarily dropped because the administration put a strong emphasis on linguistic normalization, bigger than on the development of a strong and independent film industry. Consequently, the funding of this cinema was basically public, thanks to the television channels — TVE and, from January 1984, the Catalan channel TV3 — and the subsidies of the *Institut del Cinema Català*<sup>15</sup>, with the presence of small- and medium-sized producers who were looking for immediate profit from their films. The Catalan language becomes an important element in Catalan cinema, which tries to recover historical heritage from Catalan perspectives or from the perspective of Civil War defeat, in films such as *La ciutat cremada* (*The Burnt City*, Antoni Ribas, 1976), *Las largas vacaciones del 36* (*The Long Holidays of 1936*, Jaime

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<sup>14</sup> For example the MOMA did a retrospective cycle of Pere Portabella work's in 2007.

<sup>15</sup> Now *Catalan Films & TV*

Camino, 1976), *Companys, procés a Catalunya* (*Companys, Catalonia on Trial*, Josep María Forn, 1979). These years also witnessed several screen adaptations of literary works in films such as *La plaça del Diamant* (*Diamond Square*) (Francesc Betriu, 1982), *La senyora* (*The Lady*) (Jordi Cadena, 1987), *L'escort* (*The Escort*) (Antoni Verdaguer, 1987) or *Si te dicen que caí* (*If They Tell You I Fell*, Vicente Aranda, 1989), which engaged with the values of local culture.

Catalan cinema in those years did not show any unified artistic criteria, genres or styles. It ranged from social, political or historical analysis — *The burnt city* (Antoni Ribas, 1976), *La veritat sobre el caso Savolta* (*The truth about the Savolta case*, Antonio Drove, 1979) or *Diamond Square* (Francesc Betriu, 1981) — to the spectral evocation of Francoism and the end of the Republic — *The long holidays of 1936* (Jaime Camino, 1976), *Raza, el espíritu de Franco* (*Race, Franco's spirit*, Gonzalo Herralde, 1977) and *Companys, Catalonia on Trial* (Josep Maria Forn, 1979) — and the portrayal of the most recent cultural events — *La Nova Cançó* (*The New Song*, Francesc Bellmunt, 1976) or *Ocaña, retrat intermitent* (*Ocaña, an intermittent portrait*, Ventura Pons, 1978) — to the sexual explicitness of *L'orgia* (*The orgy*, Francesc Bellmunt, 1978) or *Bilbao* (Bigas Luna, 1978). Other genres present in Catalan cinema were 'quality literary' cinema — *L'obscura història de la cosina Montse* (*The dark story of cousin Montse*, Jordi Cadena, 1978), *Bearn o la casa de les nines* (*Bearn or the toy house*) (Jaime Chávarri, 1983) — costume cinema — *El vicari d'Olot* (*The Olot Vicar*, Ventura Pons, 1981) or *film noir* — *Putapela* (*Shitty dosh*) (Jordi Bayona, 1981), 'Barcelona Sud' (*Barcelona south*, Jordi Cadena, 1981). Consequently, Catalan cinema of the 'Transición' was characterized by the creation of government entities that established the objectives, laws and financial support systems for this sector and by the lack of any clear criterion to define it (Generalitat de Catalunya, 'Cinema of the transition').

As is explained in the document 'Contemporary Cinema' (Generalitat de Catalunya), the showing of *Mones com la Becky* (*Monkeys like Becky*), directed by Joaquím Jordà and Nuria Villazán at the Sitges Film Festival in 1999, initiated a series of key changes to the existing philosophy of what could be

considered as Catalan cinema. It was the first time that a feature film promoted by a university was admitted to a film festival and this endeavour turned the documentary into a starting point of new experimental forms. Joaquim Jordà was one of the theorists of the *Escola de Barcelona*; consequently this film was linked with the experimentation carried out in it and initiated a significant wave of documentary and author film production in the 1990s: *Més enllà del mirall* (*Beyond the Mirror*, Joaquim Jordà, 2003), *La leyenda del tiempo* (*The legend of time*, Isaki Lacuesta, 2006), *Aiguaviva* (Ariadna Pujol, 2004), *Pas a nivell* (*Level crossing*, Pere Vilà, 2007), *En construcció* (*Under construction*, José Luis Guerin, 2000).

Parallel to the development of the documentary, has been the consolidation of a cinema 'd'auteur' of short films, many of which received good reviews in the foreign press. Marc Recha (*Pau i el seu germà*, *Pau and His Brother*, 2001), Jaime Rosales (*Las horas del día*, *The Hours of the Day*, 2004; *La Soledad*, *Solitary Fragments*, 2007) and Albert Serra (*Honor de Cavalleria*, *Knights of honor*, 2006; *El cant dels ocells*, *Birdsong*, 2008) have presented their works at the Cannes Film Festival and become known as directors in festivals all over the world. Horror films also have a firm grounding in Catalan cinema. In fact, Catalonia hosts one of the biggest fantastic cinema festivals in the world, the Sitges Film Festival. Quite significantly, Jaume Balagueró released *Els sense nom* (*The unnamed*, 1999) and *Monkeys like Becky* at this festival. Since then, he has opened up new ground in the English-speaking market with *Darkness* (2002), a film shot in English that despite very negative reviews and very little promotion did fairly well in terms of revenue grossing over \$34 million worldwide, well above its \$10.6 million budget (IMDb: *Darkness*). His biggest success to date is a zombie film, shot as a mock TV reality show, *[REC]* (2007), co-directed with Paco Plaza, which was followed by an American remake and sequels. This film was widely acclaimed by the critics worldwide and made more than \$32 million with a budget of \$1 million (IMDb: *REC*). Catalan horror has generated other internationally renowned films like *El orfanato* (*The orphanage*, José A. Bayona, 2007).

Aside from the impact of contemporary Catalan cinema in foreign countries — via documentaries, cinema ‘d’auteur’ and horror films — there has been a revival of commercial cinema. The main factor in this has been the consolidation of an ambitious industry like Mediapro, producer of films such as *Salvador* (Manuel Hueriga, 2006) or *Mapa dels sons de Tòquio* (*Map of the sounds of Tokyo*, Isabel Coixet, 2009), both winning awards at Cannes. The international influence of Catalan cinema during the early years of the 21st century is a brand new phenomenon. Never before — not even in the golden years of the *Escola de Barcelona* —, has Catalan cinema been so highly praised by specialized critics from all over the world. However, there is still the question of whether Catalan cinema can be considered a national cinema, independent from Spanish cinema. This question still persists because Catalan cinema does not seem to have found a particular form of expression that differentiates it clearly from Spanish cinema. In next section I discuss to what extent Catalan cinema has reflected Catalan cultural identity and how it has combined this cultural aspect with the need for economic survival.

#### **4.1.2. Identity, cultural value and economic impact of Catalan cinema**

In order to label a film as Catalan from a cultural point of view, it is first necessary to define what the Catalan identity is. In today’s multicultural and changing society this is becoming increasingly difficult. As Comas notes, each person can have a concept of his or her identity as Catalan, but to define a collective Catalan identity is more complicated. He argues that to consider, as some do, Catalan identity as a collective sentiment, a common view of the world, a language, culture, particular lifestyle and similar behaviours is more a desire than a reality (Comas, 2010, 23). However, Catalan nationalists are actively looking for ways of redefining Catalan identity. Jordi Pujol, former president of the Generalitat, argues that Catalan nationalism has been a movement since the nineteenth century, where the identity self consciousness of the population (language, culture, artistic trends, heritage and sentiment) and the project of a modern country, economically powerful and open to social, political and cultural currents of Western Europe, have come together (Pujol, 2012). The Generalitat of Catalonia explains Catalan identity as follows:

Catalan culture has developed its own unique and universal identity over the centuries. The innovative flair, creativity, capacity to absorb different influences, co-existence and tolerance values have shaped a culture that is both national and cosmopolitan. Traditionally, art and thought trends seep into Catalonia as a result of the country's geographic location, open to the Mediterranean and European countries, and also due to the leading spirit and attraction created by Barcelona (Gencat).

Therefore, it can be argued that despite the complexities of defining Catalan identity, Catalan society and its institutions are actively developing and redefining the concept in order to provide a collective idea of what it means to be Catalan. Marcer and Buffery (2011, 11) argue that the debate about the different social, cultural and political models for Catalonia –and other Catalan speaking areas – is plural and open, and while some focus on independence as the solution to protect Catalan culture, others consider that decentralization and more leadership as well as a more direct participation in the EU institutions is the path to follow.

Matilde Obradors notes that the studies of authors like Balló Espelt, Lorente (1990), Oltra i Costa (1990), Gubern (1995) and Riambau (1992) show that Catalan cinema is the product of a historical path that has led to a lack of cultural identity or quality, and consequently it has become marginal. The general causes she defines are:

1. Catalan cinema was not part of the official culture and was introduced at a late stage in the Manifest Groc (1928) that led to the inauguration of Orpheus in 1932, during the Republican Generalitat. What seemed a starting point for the development of Catalan cinema collapsed with the failure to establish an Statute of Autonomy and the country's entry into an endless dictatorship.
2. Marginalization was consolidated during the Francoist regime with the imposition of a strong ideological censorship that preserved religious and ideological dogmas and represented a pessimistic and repressed view of life leaving few possibilities for artistic innovation.

3. Leftist intellectuals who are not in exile waived cinema as artistic expression and those who made films abandoned their political beliefs and turned to experimentalism as the only mode possible in a situation of strong censorship.
4. The economic protectionist system from the State safeguarded censorship. When subsidies ended the already damaged industry collapsed.
5. Self-censorship was imposed by screenwriters to fight official censorship.
6. Producers and entrepreneurs treated film-making as a business endeavour, without taking into account the cultural aspects (Obradors, 2005).

These points mirror the different historic periods studied in the previous chapter. The Civil War and the Franco dictatorship put an end to what could have been the beginning of a Catalan national cinema sponsored by the Republican Generalitat. The centralist bias of the regime did not allow the development of a cinema that could be labeled as Catalan, and in the sixties the intellectuals of the Escola de Barcelona turned to experimentalism in order to avoid censorship without really contesting the political ideology of the regime. The use of the Catalan language in cinema was reduced by the Franco regime but also by the commercial interests of producers.

In her Doctoral thesis, *Creative practice in the cinematographic context of Barcelona*, Obradors (2003, 68) rightly says that historically Catalan cinema has not reflected its own identity. She points out that is not because Catalans are not good storytellers for there is a strong narrative capacity concentrated in the theatre but, so far, the Catalan public has not identified itself with the films made in their country. Although, this is true to a certain extent, it is also true that Catalan cinema has produced films based on Catalan history or literary works and it has been innovative in many ways.

Obradors argues that the film sector is undergoing a vicious cycle that prevents the implementation of strategies that require time to get results, and thus the different participants in the film industry seem to go their own way without establishing the necessary synergies to create a national cinema. That is, cinema focuses more on entertaining audiences than in promoting innovation and creativity (Obradors, 2003, 69). She acknowledges that Catalan cinema

must overcome the two positions of its directors: film deconstruction and classical narrative cinema. Those who turned back to 'well done' movies (Hollywood), she argues, are the 'good children', while those who returned to the model of deconstruction cinema — developed by Godard, Resnais or Tarkovsky — are the 'bad boys'. Both schools have rigid canons but both are responsible for film regeneration in Catalonia. Obradors claims, quite convincingly, that above all Catalan cinema must overcome the fact of making products to show that it is able to correctly follow a model. Catalan cinema directors have thus to collectively move past proving they can make movies, for only then will the cinema be able to develop its own identity. Finally she notes (Obradors, 2005, 6) that currently there is the beginning of a renewal of Catalan cinema driven in many cases by home-grown directors and occasionally by exceptional producers such as Paco Poch, but ultimately there is not a specific restructuring of the sector.

In this sense, Joel Joan, former director of the Academy of Catalan Cinema, argues that Catalans are beginning to identify themselves as protagonists of their own stories and points out that there is a huge amount of talent within the Catalan film industry (Omnium cultural, 2009). For Joan, Catalonia is a cultural space at the forefront of many areas such as literature, cuisine and also cinema, although often this appears under the brand 'Spain'. He considers that Catalan cinema has a significant international potential and it is time to capitalize the talent of the sector in the development of its own industry (Omnium cultural, 2009). As Joan argues, the growth of Catalan cinema in recent years is due in part to producers such as Filmax, which produce mainly in English and are growing in the DVD sales market. He also acknowledges that there is more film culture than before and a film school, ESCAC that excels in training professionals (Gorina, 2013). In this respect, Nuria Vidal, delegate of Berlin Film Festival in Spain, points out that the School ESCAC (Escola Superior de Cinema i Audiovisuals de Catalunya), created in 1994, has become a reference for the outside world in terms of cinema education (Gorina, 2013). Many important film talents such as Juan Antonio Bayona and the Pastor brothers have studied there.



It is not easy to define a national cinema. Concepts like 'globalization', 'international', 'transnational' and 'regional' are increasingly ubiquitous and indeterminate and, consequently, the concept of national cinema has become a complicated category. However, film policies still exist in national terms. Spanish Film Law clearly defines the requirements for a film to be considered Spanish: article 5 states that to have Spanish nationality the productions should be made by Spanish production companies or by production companies from any member state of the European Union established in Spain, which are in possession of a certificate of Spanish nationality. In a similar way, for a film to be considered Catalan it must meet two requirements: to have a Spanish nationality certificate and a producer located in Catalonia. Any film that meets these two conditions may qualify for grants to film production from the Department of Culture of the Catalan Government, through the *Institut Català de les Empreses Culturals* (Catalan Institute for Cultural Companies, ICEC).

In this respect, Àngel Comas (2010, 21) states that Catalan cinema is produced or co-produced by companies that have head offices in Catalonia and also cinema made by directors born or trained in film in Catalonia. He points out that this view is shared by the majority of the Catalan film industry and the Catalan administration although there is always the question of how much the use of the Catalan language should be a requisite for receiving grants from the Catalan administration. However, Comas considers that language is a way of transmitting culture but not the only one, particularly in cinema where images have more value and are more efficacious than words (Comas, 2010, 21). In fact, as Epps argues, the majority of films produced in Catalonia before, during and after the Franco regime are in Spanish and therefore 'it would be foolhardy, historically speaking, to take the Catalan languages as an "essential" sign of identity', although he argues that it would be the same mistake to 'discount it as "inessential"' (Epps in Labanyi and Pavlovic, 2013, 66).

In the documentary *Cinemacat.cat* (Antoni Verdaguer, 2008), film director Llorenç Soler notes that 'to make a cinema only in Catalan is a reductionist concept'. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the debate between Catalan cinema and cinema in Catalan is still taking place. For Comas the Catalan

administration has used cinema as a tool of linguistic normalization instead of respecting it as an art form. In this respect, it has financed the dubbing of American productions into Catalan instead of promoting a national and different cinema in whatever language. Comas notes that to translate a film in Catalan is quite expensive because for the Catalan market only ten or twelve copies of a film will be distributed (while for a film translated into Spanish usually there are one or two hundred copies) and that has an effect on the quality of translation. Verdaguer notes that a film should always be seen in the original version to really appreciate the work of the actors (L'acció, 2009). On the other hand, Joel Joan, former director of the Catalan Academy of Cinema, points out that the marginal presence of the Catalan language in film is due to the fact that it is very difficult to watch Catalan films dubbed or subtitled in Catalonia and so the practice of the exhibitor or creator is to follow the general trend: therefore there is a need to promote cinema in the Catalan language (Bellsolà, 2008). He thinks that language provides a film with an identity seal and gives as an example the film *Los otros* (*The Others*), which despite having a Spanish director, Alejandro Amenábar, and an original Spanish script that was later translated into English, is difficult to identify as a Spanish film (Bellsolà, 2008). For producer Luis Miñarro, Catalan cinema enjoys a diversified production that ranges from commercial works such as *The Orphanage* (Juan Antonio Bayona, 2007) that are distributed worldwide, to a cinema 'd'auteur', which is small and very specialized compared with the rest of the country. The development of this cinema 'd'auteur' is due to the existence of independent producers who do not follow the Spanish star system and have an international aim in mind. Miñarro argues, quite rightly, that these works have achieved acceptance in Film Festivals where the language of the film is not an issue; here, on the contrary, Catalan gives them an added value (Omnium cultural, 2009).

Epps argues that Catalan cinema has been dismissed by some critics (usually writing from outside Catalonia) who have consigned it to a marginal position in relation to Spanish cinema despite the fact that the latter is 'inconceivable without Catalonia and, more specifically, without the industrial infrastructure that in the early twentieth century made Barcelona a veritable motor of cinematic production'. This author considers that even with the re-establishment of the

Generalitat and other Catalan institutions, mononational attitudes in Spain and international market forces continue ‘to leave little room for so-called “minor” languages and cultures, consigning them, often as not, to a realm of echoes, traces, and fragments (Epps in Labanyi and Pavlovic, 2013, 66).

In the economic area, the Catalan film industry has been affected by the economic recession, which has led to budget cuts in state and regional government financial aids. To worsen the situation a recent increase in VAT to twenty-one percent for cinema goers has worried the sector, which expects a decrease in demand. To respond to this scenario, Catalan authorities are seeking new ways of financing. An example is the tax on ADSL (Asymmetric digital subscriber line) providers that the Catalan government is preparing. Ferran Mascarell, the Generalitat’s culture commissioner, explained that the idea is to levy a French-style tax with a view to allocating the funds raised to Catalan audiovisual production (Cia, 2014). In response to ADSL providers and users complains the Catalan government has lowered the tax payable by broadband providers on each ADSL connection from the 2.50 euros a month originally planned to 0.25. The regional government hopes to raise around 20.5 million euros a year from this fee and use it to improve and encourage the Catalan film and television industry. The main operators (Telefónica, Ono, Orange, Vodafone and Jazztel) have expressed a strong opposition to the fee as they are already paying out five percent of their earnings to finance the Spanish and European audiovisual sectors. However, the Catalan government points out that this sort of tax already exists in France, Britain and Germany. Ferran Mascarell says “it is necessary to strengthen and help one’s own audiovisual production, as is the case in other European countries when they invoke the cultural exception to defend, in a positive way, their cultural and linguistic legacy” (Cia, 2014).

The cultural and economic values of Catalan cinema are promoted and protected by several organizations that have been created in the last few decades for that purpose. The Catalan Film Academy, as is explained on its website, was created with the aim of being a voice for the Catalonian film industry. The Academy joins both creative and productive branches of

filmmaking, artistically and scientifically. Its aims are to merge both creative and technical professionals of Catalonian productions and give an identity to their film productions; to unite all branches of the Catalonian film industry; to promote Catalonian film industry and make it more prestigious in the media and to audiences; to contribute to the internationalization of the Catalan film industry; to participate in the writing and approval of official legislation about filmmaking and intercede in the film industry's political subventions (Catalan Film Academy founding principles). The Academy has organized and participated in discussions, debates, presentations, tributes, inaugurations and has joined the network of national academies (Spanish, Galician, Balearic, etc.) in promoting all types of exchanges. At the international level it has also promoted links with foreign film academies and established collaboration projects. Every year the Catalan Film Academy recognizes the work of film directors, actors and other professionals in the sector with the Gaudi Awards. Created with the aim of promoting the best Catalan films both domestically and abroad, these awards and the publicity they generate helps the film industry to increase film revenues and contribute to making Catalan culture known abroad.

The Institut Català de les Empreses Culturals (ICEC) is an administrative body that since 2000 has worked for the promotion, development and implementation of the cultural sector in in Catalonia. The ICEC allocates around ten million euros per annum to promote the Catalan audiovisual industry, focusing on all stages of the value chain. ICEC funds are complemented by aid from the Ministry of Culture as well as with grants from supranational bodies such as MEDIA, Eurimages and Ibermedia. ICEC supports the Catalan audiovisual industry throughout the value chain, from the development of projects, their production, promotion, distribution and exhibition (ICEC, 2013). It promotes Catalan culture but it has also the clear objective of contributing to the development of the industrial sector because of the relevance that it has to the economy of the country.

#### **4.1.3. Catalan film Law**

The Catalan Law of Cinema, which came into effect on 16 January 2011, provides a new framework for the creation, production, distribution and

marketing of films in Catalan. One of the main aims of this law was to establish that fifty percent of films exhibited in theatres in Catalonia should be dubbed or subtitled in Catalan, excluding those shot in Spanish and European films with less than sixteen exhibition copies (unless they were subtitled, in which case the subtitles should be also fifty percent in Catalan). It also includes the requirement that DVDs be distributed with the option of Catalan in the dubbing or language menu.

As previously stated, in March 2010, the Commission questioned the requirement that distributors dub or subtitle fifty percent of film copies in Catalan in order to respect the linguistic balance, as it considered that the law could have a potentially discriminatory restrictive effect on the activities of European film producers. The Catalan government justified this requirement in order to protect and promote the Catalan language, arguing that the constitutional and statutory EU legal system provides protection for official languages as integral elements of the common cultural heritage. However, the Commission answered that the provisions of articles 17 and 18 of the Catalan Film Law violate the obligations under Article 56 of TFEU since the obligation of dubbing or subtitling into Catalan implies incurring new translation costs. This will affect the free movement of European films, putting them at a disadvantage to films in Spanish, for which there is no need to incur such costs. Thus, paradoxically, in trying to protect and promote the Catalan language, the Catalan government has developed a law that, according to the European Commission, benefits the distribution of films in Spanish over those in other EU languages, generating unfairness in terms of trade contrary to the Union treaties.

As Ferran Mascarell, former chief of the Culture Department of the Catalan government explains, the law is being revised in several ways. First, it will have to be adapted to EU recommendations. Secondly, the new preeminence of digital cinema makes some aspects of a law designed for analogue cinema obsolete: it makes no sense any more to speak in terms of copies (in analogue cinema each copy increased the cost of subtitling) because subtitling in digital copies can be reproduced as many times as needed without further costs. In relation to the digital era, the law should also take into account the decreasing

number of cinema goers and the increase in the number of films consumed through the internet. Finally, there is the aim of increasing the levels of presence of Catalan language in cinema. To that end the Government of Catalonia has reached an agreement with the Hollywood majors (Llopart, 2013): to increase dubbing to twenty-five percent of films in 2014 and to thirty-five percent in 2017 (Ara.cat, 2011).

Film director Antoni Verdagué says:

The new law of cinema has many interesting things. I sincerely believe it will be very difficult to get 50% of Catalan and Spanish. Distributors, exhibitors and the majors will oppose. They are private companies and understand it as any ordinary business, not as part of a cultural fact; it will be difficult to convince them to make a change (L'Acció, 2009).

Clearly, in the Catalan government's aim to make dubbing or subtitling of fifty percent of films distributed in Catalonia compulsory, two opposing interests are at work. On the one hand, the Government's objective is to promote the Catalan language in cinema, on the other, market forces see it as an unnecessary expense. Mascarell argues that if the presence of the Catalan language in the press, radio or books is not below thirty percent, it should be the same for cinema (Llopart, 2013). Such arguments and debates show that the question of the viability of cinema in Catalan is still dominant in the construction of a 'Catalan national cinema.'

#### **4.2. Catalan cinema at the Regional, national and International levels**

Many experts — such as Joel Joan or Ángel Quintana — consider that Catalan cinema has its own personality despite its heterogeneity (Cardenas, 2009). The distance from the centre of political decision-making and from the Spanish television industry, the fact that Catalonia has its own language and culture, and the aim of Catalan authorities to define a common identity have all helped develop a national cinema. Film production in Catalonia has a long tradition and, along with Madrid, the region has been one of the driving forces behind cinema in Spain. In fact, nearly half of Spanish film production comes from

Catalonia or has the participation of Catalan companies and professionals (Gorina, 2013). Catalan companies produce or co-produce about eighty feature films a year (see Table below).

### Feature films produced or co-produced by Catalan companies

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
78	74	74	96	80

Source: ICEC - Departament de Cultura de la Generalitat de Catalunya

[http://www20.gencat.cat/docs/CulturaDepartament/SSCC/GT/Estadistiques/Estadistiques%20Culturals\\_WEB2.pdf](http://www20.gencat.cat/docs/CulturaDepartament/SSCC/GT/Estadistiques/Estadistiques%20Culturals_WEB2.pdf)

For film director Mar Coll, what is in crisis 'is the traditional, industrial way of filmmaking and perhaps in Spain and Catalonia more than in the rest of the world' (Besalú and Ciaurriz, 2012). This happens in the first place, because there has been a decrease in cinema goers, which has directly affected the income available for production. However, there are other ways of consuming movies that also end up generating profits. Coll argues that there is a crisis of production because the Catalan film industry has heavily relied on state and regional grants and financing of television, but with important cuts to the cultural sector 'it is increasingly difficult to make films' (Besalú and Ciaurriz, 2012). On the contrary, Alfons Gorina argues that 'Catalan filmmaking is experiencing one of the greatest moments of its history'. He points out as examples the recent success of movies such as *Lo imposible* (*The Impossible*, Juan Antonio Bayona, 2010) or *Las aventuras de Tadeo Jones* (*Tad, The Last Explorer*, Enrique Gato) that had strong Catalan participation, as well as the decision of the Spanish Film Academy to select for the Oscars a film made entirely in Catalan: *Black Bread* (Agustí Virallonga) (Gorina, 2013). Catalan cinema has in the past few years had a significant presence in film festivals abroad and Catalonia hosts several international film festivals as well as an array of small film festivals that focus on specific topics. Moreover, Barcelona has become an appealing setting for film shooting and has attracted directors and producers from around the world such as Woody Allen or Indian filmmaker Zoya Akhtar.

#### 4.2.1. Catalan cinema at festivals

Two obvious examples of the international interest in Catalan cinema are the showcasing of Catalan and Balearic cinema in Berlin and the Catalan film series

in Cambridge. The Katalanische Filmatage was organised by the Institut Ramon Llull, responsible for promoting Catalan culture and language outside the country with the aim of presenting work from recent years. Six films were chosen: *Blog* (Elena Trapé, 2011), *Máscaras* (*Masks*, Elisabet Cabeza and Esteve Rimbau, 2009), *El perfecte desconegut* (*The Perfect Stranger*, Toni Bestard, 2011), *La Mosquitera* (*The Mosquito Net*, Agustí Vila, 2010), *Mientras Duermes* (*Sleep Tight*, Jaume Balagueró, 2011) and *Guest* (José Luís Guerín, 2010). Nuria Vidal, delegate of the Berlin Film Festival in Spain, explains that the films were chosen because they are representative of Catalan film tradition and culture (Gorina, 2013).

The Cambridge Film Festival is one of the biggest film festivals in the UK. It shows an international selection of films that have debuted in some of the most renowned film festivals; all films are open to the public. Seven Catalan films, that represent Catalonia from a cultural point of view, were presented at the Catalan showcase: *Barcelona (un mapa)* (*Barcelona (a map)*, Ventura Pons, 2007), *Gràcies per la propina* (*Thanks for the tip*, Francesc Bellmunt, 1997), *El pont de Varsovia* (*Warsaw Bridge*, Pere Portabella, 1990), *Black Bread* (Agustí Virallonga, 2010), *V.O.S* (Cesc Gay, 2009), *La nit que va morir l'Elvis* (*The Night Elvis Died*, Oriol Ferrer, 2010) and *Un cos al bosc* (*The Body in the Woods*, Joaquim Jordà, 1996). Ramon Lamarca, coordinator of the Catalan showcase at the festival, acknowledged the importance of *Black Bread* in catching the attention of Cambridge organizers. He explained that 'all the films attracted a large number of spectators' and that the presentation also had a large audience who listened to a talk about the relationships between Catalonia and Spain (Gorina, 2013).

Every year Catalonia hosts an array of prestigious film festivals such as the Sitges Film Festival or the Barcelona International Auteur Film Festival. For many years, the Sitges Cinema Festival, dedicated to horror and fantastic cinema, was the only Catalan festival enjoying a worldwide reputation. It was inaugurated in 1968 at the first International Week of Fantasy and Horror Movies (Generalitat de Catalunya, 'Cinema festivals in Catalonia'). Today it is one of the main film festivals in the world in terms of film showing and public



attendance, and is an important meeting point for audiences, directors, actors, producers and distributors. It screens fantasy films from all over the world and has a significant international media impact. Sitges has been the springboard of many international names of the fantastic and horror genres, such as Alex de la Iglesia. The commercial success of horror films has made the existence of this festival possible but it is also true that, without Sitges, the increase in indigenous fantastic cinema production would have never been developed in the last few years. The festival is organized through a Foundation, with representatives from the Sitges Town Council, the Generalitat de Catalunya and other institutions, associations and public and private companies. Most of its resources come from private sponsors who consider it an excellent platform for advertising their brand, and from the collaborating institutions that support it as a relevant cultural event.

The Barcelona International Auteur Film Festival began in 2011 and presents an international panorama of the finest contemporary cinema 'd'auteur', combining the discovery of emerging new talents with internationally established directors. It has a customary Catalan author section that this year includes films such as *La Lapidation de Saint Etienne* (Pere Vilà, 2012) and *Et dec una nit de divendres (I Owe You a Friday Night)*, Dimas Rodríguez, 2013).

The International Week of Colour Cinema of Barcelona was created in 1959 and was run for most the most part by the late critic José Luis Guarnier. It exhibited many censored films during the Franco dictatorship and became an oasis of freedom that gathered many types of audiences. In 1986 it was interrupted to give way to the Barcelona Cinema Festival (Generalitat de Catalunya, 'Cinema festivals in Catalonia'). Films and filmmakers that ran until 1990, promoting the creation and application of a manifesto in defense of filmmakers' copyrights and setting up an economic award for investment in the next production. Barcelona, since the beginning of the 1990s has been host to many minor festivals with a specific topic such as the Asian Cinema Festival (BAFF), Docsbarcelona International festival of documentary cinema, Musical documentary cinema festival (IN-EDIT), Independent cinema festival L'alternativa, African Cinema Festival, Gay and Lesbian cinema festival or

MECAL, a shortfilms festival. This trend of small film festivals has nowadays spread throughout the Catalan territory, including: the Girona Film Festival, the International Festival of Film Noir at Manresa or the two Lleida festivals dedicated to Latin-American cinema and animation films (Generalitat de Catalunya, 'Cinema festivals in Catalonia').

#### **4.2.2. Catalonia: a film set**

Many studies have appeared, especially since the 1990s, that analyze the potential and real impact of fiction cinema as a tourist promotion mechanism. See Riley and Van Doren (1992), Kim and Richardson (2003), Hudson and Ritchie (2006). Films like *Dances with Wolves* (Kevin Costner, 1990), *Crocodile Dundee* (Peter Faiman, 1986), *Before Sunrise* (Richard Linklater, 1995), *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy (Peter Jackson, 2001, 2002 and 2003), *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* (John Madden, 2001), among many others, have been able to encourage tourism in their respective locations (Aertsen, 2011).

Since the end of the 1990s the Council of Barcelona and the Generalitat of Catalonia have actively supported the shooting of big productions in Barcelona since it represents an important source of revenue: for each euro committed by administrations to a shooting there is a direct impact of 5.25 euros (which comes from what producers spend in hotels, hiring workers, presents) plus an indirect impact of 15.25 euros (Benvenuty, 2013) (which comes from the expenses of tourists that decided to visit the city after watching the movie). Films such as *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* and the 2011 Bollywood blockbuster *You Don't Get Life a Second Time (Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara)* which was also shot in Barcelona, have contributed significantly to increased tourism in the city. The Indian film tells the story of three Indian friends who travel to Spain, and included shooting on the Costa Brava and in other towns outside Catalonia such as Pamplona: it reportedly increased Indian tourism to Barcelona by 66.7 percent (Benvenuty, 2013).

In 2000, the Council of Barcelona and the Generalitat of Catalonia signed an agreement in order to attract filmmakers from all over the world and The Catalunya Film Commission was created. It was the first body in Spain

especially devoted to attracting filmmakers from all over the world to shoot in a specific location. It coordinates all the film shooting that takes place in Catalonia and provides producers from around the world with the information and orientation necessary for locating and filming in Catalonia, contacting producers, providers, Catalan professionals as well as requesting the necessary permits for filming in Barcelona. In 2011 Catalonia was the region where the most filming was done of all the Spanish territory, with 2.300 productions. In 2012, 2136 productions were shot in Barcelona and thirty-nine of them were feature films (Canto, 2013).

It was Pedro Almodóvar who started promoting Barcelona as a shooting location with *Todo sobre mi madre* (*All About My Mother*, 1998) a film that starts in Barcelona's Tibidabo amusement park. The film won an Oscar, a Golden Globe, a Cesar, a David and the award for best director at the Cannes Festival, and it represented a huge promotion for the city of Barcelona. In 2002, *L'auberge espagnol* (*The Spanish Apartment*, Cédric Klapisch), with Audrey Tatou, depicted a group of Erasmus students in Barcelona, and the film *Perfume: Story of a Murderer* (Tom Tykwer, 2006) converted Barcelona's Gothic neighborhood into 18<sup>th</sup> century Paris. In recent years directors such as Allen, J.A. Bayona, Steven Soderbergh, Alejandro González Iñárritu, Villarronga, Fernando Trueba, Jaume Balagueró, Paco Plaza, Almodóvar, Alejandro Amenábar, and Isabel Coixet have used the territory as a film set. Some of the latest shoots are: *BCN 3D* by Manuel Hueriga, *Mindscape* by Jorge Dorado, *Tres bodas de más* (*Three Many Weddings*) by Javier Ruiz Caldera, *Ayer no termina nunca* (*Yesterday Never Ends*) by Coixet, and *Grand Piano* by Eugenio Mira (Canto, 2013).

For Catalan as well as foreign filmmakers Catalonia offers a landscape with mountains and beaches, vineyards, humid forests, Romanesque, Gothic and Baroque churches, modernist buildings and Barcelona, a world-renowned city. On top of these natural and urban sets, Catalonia provides first-rate international communication infrastructures and a powerful industrial network of service providers (Canto, 2013). Furthermore, the city provides well-trained professionals, which is one of the advantages that the Barcelona-Catalunya

Film Commission presents at the commercial events that are part of the most important film festivals such as Berlin or Cannes.

Catalonia also offers infrastructures for interior shooting such as the Parc Audiovisual of Catalonia, located in Terrassa, thirty-five kilometers from Barcelona, this is one of the most outstanding industrial complexes of audiovisual production in the south of Europe. Films such as *Grand Piano*, *El Cuerpo* (*The Body*, Oriol Paulo, 2012), *The Machinist* (Brad Anderson, 2004), *Los ojos de Julia* (*Julia's Eyes*, Guillem Morales, 2010) or *The Pelayos* (Eduard Cortes, 2012) were filmed here (Canto, 2013).

In the economic domain, Barcelona offers film companies reductions in fees for the use of public spaces and the BFC will mediate with relevant bodies to get discounts (<http://www.bcncatfilmcommission.com/ca/qui-som>). However a problem for the sector is that the policies of the Treasury Ministry do not match the fiscal incentives given in many European countries. France, for example, offers important grants to films shot in its territory (Benvenuty, 2013).

#### **4.2.3. Future of Catalan cinema**

One of the issues that Catalan cinema is currently addressing today, as we have seen, is the development of Catalan law regarding cinema and the use of Catalan language. On the one hand, film companies are reluctant to dub or subtitle into Catalan for it represents additional costs (although digital technology will overcome part of the problem). In this respect, it seems that Catalan language will probably be a way of defining a film as Catalan, if not legally at least culturally. Obviously that is not to say that films shot in Spanish or in English will not be able to be considered Catalan but language probably is going to play an important role in the construction of a Catalan national cinema. The double awards that the Gaudi Awards have for Best Catalan Film: Best Film in Catalan language and Best Film in non-Catalan language highlight the tensions that the issue of language brings to the definition of a national cinema.

In terms of industry, Catalan cinema enjoys a sound infrastructure of production companies and highly-skilled professionals that can compete at the national and

international level. However, the financing of the industry relies heavily on state aid, which threatens the ability of the sector to grow, especially in times of economic crisis when subsidies are cut down. With the number of cinema goers decreasing steadily, new ways of making revenues from films, such as the internet, have to be developed or implemented. In this respect, the situation of Catalan cinema is comparable to those of other European countries such as Spain, the UK or France where the film industry also relies heavily on state subsidies. A further problem that the Catalan film industry has to address, and which is shared with the Spanish film industry as a whole, is that the Catalan public does not value domestic cinema as highly as Hollywood productions: as the table below shows, in the period 2006-2010, more than a third of all films exhibited in Catalonia came from the US.

**Total of films exhibited in Catalan theaters by nationality of main production company. 2006-2010**

Year	Catalan	Spanish (except Catalonia)	EU (except Spain)	USA	Rest of the World	Total
2006	98	128	294	368	97	985
2007	121	109	316	385	103	1034
2008	137	104	240	359	88	928
2009	136	102	250	362	80	930
2010	141	88	198	341	70	838

Source: IDESCAT -<http://www.idescat.cat/cat/idescat/publicacions/cataleg/pdfdocs/eac10.pdf>

In terms of the internationalization of Catalan cinema there are some issues that have to be considered. Firstly, there is the need to differentiate it from Spanish cinema as a whole, offering a product that has its own specific characteristics, which is the aim of the Academy of Catalan Cinema; and secondly, the film industry has to develop productions and distribution strategies that allow it to compete in the international market.

In next chapter I propose a new framework for the internationalization of Catalan film as well as a number of recommendations for the elaboration of policies to accomplish this objective. The case studies that I analyse below will exemplify different ways in which Catalan cinema can reach the internationalization of its films.

#### **4.3. Case studies: *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* and *Black Bread***

*Vicky Cristina Barcelona* is one of Woody Allen's series of films with cities as co-stars. He has also filmed in London (*Match Point*, 2005), Paris (*Midnight in Paris*, 2011) and Rome (*To Rome with Love*, 2012). The film is a Spanish – US coproduction shot in Barcelona, Oviedo, Avilés and NewYork. Barcelona becomes almost a character in the film, which represented a huge promotion for the city as a tourist location. However, despite the fact that it has become a unique and high-impact way of showing Catalan landscapes and culture to the world it is controversial to define it as Catalan cinema.

*Black Bread*, on the contrary, can possibly be defined as one of the great successes of Catalan cinema. Unlike Allen's film, it has a Catalan director, most of the actors are of Catalan origin and it was shot in Catalan. The film won thirteen of the fifteen Gaudi Awards and nine Goya Awards from the Spanish Academy. Then, it was chosen to represent Spain in the 2011 edition of the Oscars. It was the first time that the Spanish Academy had chosen a film in the Catalan language (or in any language that was not Spanish) to compete for the Oscars. I chose this film because it can be defined as a Catalan film and for its success, both domestically and internationally.

Both films represent an important contribution to the spread of Catalan culture and historical heritage, although in very different ways that I examine and compare in this final section.

##### **4.3.1. *Vicky Cristina Barcelona***

Year: 2008
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Country: Spain, USA

Language: English, Spanish

Original title: Vicky Cristina Barcelona

Director: Woody Allen

Producers: The Weinstein Company, Mediapro, Gravier Productions, Antena 3 Films (in association with), Antena 3 Televisión (in association with), Televisió de Catalunya (TV3) (in association with)

Scriptwriters: Woody Allen

Actors: Rebeca Hall (Vicky), Scarlett Johansson (Cristina), Chris Messina (Doug), Patricia Clarkson (Judy), Javier Bardem (Juan Antonio), Penélope Cruz (Maria Elena).

### **A promotion of Barcelona and Catalan culture worldwide**

In this film, Allen shows the city of Barcelona from the point of view of two North American visitors, pointing out its most emblematic elements (Gaudí, popular festivals, the Rambla), to the extent that the third character is the city of Barcelona itself, whose architecture and cuisine are sunnily photographed as if for some tourist promotion (Bradshaw, 2009). Vicky and Cristina decide to spend the summer in Barcelona. Vicky is completing her Master's in Catalan Identity, which she has become interested in through her great affection for the architecture of Gaudí<sup>16</sup>. Cristina has spent the last six months writing, directing, and acting in a twelve-minute film which she then hated, then broke up with yet another boyfriend, so she is longing for a change of scenery. When a distant relative of Vicky's family who lives in Barcelona offers a place for both girls for July and August they decide to travel there. The two best friends have been close since college and share the same tastes and opinions on most matters, but strongly disagree in the subject of love. Vicky is grounded and pragmatic, in matters of love she does not want to suffer or fight. She looks for men that are serious in relationships and give her stability so she becomes engaged to Doug because he is decent and successful and understands commitment. Cristina, on the other hand, accepts the suffering that comes with deep passion and is resigned to put her feelings at risk. In Spain they become enamored with the same painter, unaware that his ex-wife, with whom he has a tempestuous

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<sup>16</sup> Voice over in Vicky Cristina Barcelona

relationship, is about to re-enter the picture. Vicky returns home to have her grand wedding to Doug and to lead the life she envisioned for herself, before that summer in Barcelona. Cristina continues searching. Allen displays in the film some of the better known Spanish and Catalan clichés — Gaudí, Miró, long-haired lotharios with guitars... — while at the same time presenting Catalan culture as distinct from Spanish.

As Allen explains in the film's Production Notes, *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* is a film that is indelibly linked to its location. Allen explains that when he began writing the script, he wasn't thinking of anything other than creating a story that had Barcelona as a character: 'I wanted to honor Barcelona, because I love the city very much, and I love Spain in general. [Barcelona] is a city full of visual beauty and the sensibility of the city is quite romantic. A story like this could only happen in a place like Paris or Barcelona' (Hopscotchfilms, 2008). The film certainly has proved to be an efficient way to promote Barcelona. As Luis Benvenuty explains in *La Vanguardia*, the most common comment of spectators in the New York opening of *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* was 'this summer let's go to Barcelona' (Benvenuty, 2013).

The film has been a success in terms of international recognition and has won numerous prizes such as the 2008 Academy award to Best Secondary Actress (Penélope Cruz), the 2008 Golden Globe to Best Comedy or Musical films, the 2008 BAFTA prize for Best secondary actress (Penélope Cruz), the 2008 Goya prize for Best Secondary Actress (Penélope Cruz), the 2008 National Board of Review for Best Secondary Actress (Penélope Cruz), the 2008 Gaudí prizes for Best Film in non Catalan Language, Best Secondary Actress and Best Original Music. The film has also been a commercial success: with a budget of around twelve million euros, it has grossed more than eighty million euros globally (boxofficemojo: *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*).

As Aersten points out, this film is a clear example of a transnational film: a Spanish-American production, written and directed by an American film-maker who is probably most valued in Europe than in his own country, with a technical team from both countries, and a cast of Spanish and American actors who



were already well known internationally. All these ingredients make the film work as an advertising campaign of international scope. In addition, the film stands as an exemplary model of the integration of the promotional campaign in the narrative: from the title of the film (which already includes the name of the city promoted) to the plot, which deals with the experiences of two young American tourists visiting Barcelona, justifying the tour of the city that the film offers (Aertsen, 2014).

However, despite the setting and the fact that one of the producers is Mediapro, a Spanish film company with headquarters in Barcelona; it is somewhat controversial to consider it a Catalan film. It is shot in English and the director and the main actors are North-American. The two Spanish cast members, Javier Bardem and Penelope Cruz, are not Catalan. Moreover, the plot of the film has nothing to do with Catalan culture or historical heritage. Nevertheless, the participation of the Catalan film companies in productions such as *Vicky, Cristina, Barcelona* brings benefits to the industry and to the promotion of the region. The investment of Mediapro in this film implies a backing for films of recognized quality that are at the same time commercially viable and successful. In terms of defining a national Catalan cinema it can be argued that this type of product does not make an impact, but in terms of promoting an industry and a country at the international level, co-productions with other countries bring several advantages that the Catalan film industry should take into account.

#### **4.3.2. *Black Bread***

Year: 2010

Country: Spain, France

Language: Catalan, Spanish

Original title: Pa negre

Director: Agustí Villaronga

Producers: Massa d'Or Produccions

Scriptwriters: Emili Teixidor (novel), Agustí Villaronga (adaptation)

Actors: Francesc Colomer (Andreu), Marina Comas (Núria), Nora Navas (Florència), Roger Casamajor (Farriol), Lluïsa Castell (Ció)

### **A Catalan film**

Set in the harsh post-war Catalan countryside, the film follows the experience of Andreu, a child who belongs to the losing side, when he finds the corpses of a man and his son in the forest. The authorities want to frame his father for the deaths and Andreu tries to help him by finding out who truly killed them. In this search, Andreu develops a moral conscience against a world of adults fed by lies. In order to survive, he betrays his own roots and ends up finding the monster that lives within him. *Black Bread* is a historical film with literary roots that combines a more or less realist portrayal of Catalan society after the Civil War with a fantasy universe, full of myths and ghosts, much in the vein of *Pan's Labyrinth*.

The director, Agustí Villaronga is an actor, scriptwriter and director born in Majorca, in 1953. He studied Geography and History in Barcelona and after works as an actor for several years. He did several short films before making his debut as director in 1987 with the film *Tras el cristal (In a Glass Cage)*, which received several awards at the Berlin film festival. In 1997, Villaronga directed *99.99*, a horror film that won some awards at fantastic cinema festivals. In 2000, he came back with a more personal project *El mar (The Sea)*, a story set in Mallorca about three former childhood friends, traumatized by the violence they experienced during the Spanish Civil War, that are reunited ten years later as young adults in a hospital for tubercular patients. This film explores the key elements of Villaronga's work: childhood, sexual awakening, homosexuality and violence. It was not until 2010, however, with *Black Bread*, that Villaronga finally achieved wider appeal. He followed *Black Bread's* success with *A Letter to Evita*, a TV miniseries co-produced by TV3, which recounts a real episode in the life of Eva Peron while visiting Spain in the late 1940s.

Agustí Villaronga comments:

Black Bread is about the moral devastation of civilian populations in times of war. Although it features characters from among both the victors and the vanquished living together in close quarters, this is not a film about a clash between winners and losers. It is, rather, a fine-grained study of those characters' emotions. Only through their feelings do we begin to discern, far from the battlefield, the war's terrible consequences. (Villaronga, 2010)

*Black Bread* can be considered the epitome of Catalan cinema. Practically everything in it is Catalan: the director, most of the actors, the producers, the settings, the language and the theme. It is based on the eponymous novel by Emili Teixidor with some elements of other of his works such as *Retrat d'un assassi d'ocells* (*Portrait of a bird killer*) and *Sic Transit Gloria Swanson*.

As Villaronga explains, it was a small film that was not supposed to attract a lot of attention but people liked it and talked about it to others who went to cinemas to see the movie to the point that it was in theatres for eight months (Truax, 2012). The success of the film in the Goya Awards and the fact that it was chosen to represent Spain at the Oscars meant a considerable increase in the number of viewers, abroad but also in Catalonia itself, making the film a commercial success. All in all, *Black Bread* can be a fair representative of Catalan cinema at its best: a quality product that showcases Catalan culture and history through a compelling story able to attract the public and the critics alike. The influential critic Enric Juliana has said that the film is a proof of the 'imminent emergence of a dynamic and intelligent cultural Catalan industry in a moment of discouragement and disorientation' [my translation] [(...) inminente eclosión de una industria cultural catalana dinámica e inteligente en un momento de desaliento y desorientación general.] (Juliana, 2011) and Ángel Quintana has argued that *Black Bread* show that it is possible to make a Catalan film without complexity and able to attract audiences (Quintana, 2011).

The film represented Spain at the 84<sup>th</sup> Academy Awards being the first Catalan-language film to do so. It won the 2011 Goya Awards for Best Picture, Best

Director (Agustí Villaronga), Best Adapted Screenplay (Agustí Villaronga) Best Actress (Nora Navas), Best Secondary Actress (Laia Marull), Best Art Direction (Ana Alvar González), Best Breakthrough Actor (Francesc Colomer), Best Breakthrough Actress (Marina Comas), Best Cinematography (Antonio Riestra) and five more nominations. It also won the 2011 Gaudí Awards for Best Film in Catalan Language, Best director, Best Screenplay, Best Actress, Best Supporting Actress, Best Supporting Actor and eight more prizes.

#### **4. 4. Conclusion**

In this chapter I have discussed Catalan cinema with regard to its cultural value and as a film industry. I have studied the issues that arise when labeling a film as Catalan and I have discussed, particularly, the role that Catalan language can play, as well as in the development a national Catalan cinema able to represent Catalan culture and history. In terms of Catalan cinema as an industry it has been stated that Catalonia has a sound infrastructure of production companies and highly-skilled professionals that can compete both within the Spanish market and internationally, but its reliance on state aids for finance is slowing its capacity to grow and it needs to focus on international markets to develop its full capacity. The comparison of the two films studied in this section reflects the issues that Catalan cinema is dealing with. *Black Bread* can be considered Catalan cinema and its success shows that the Catalan film industry can make products that combine cultural value with commercial success. However, this film was financed mainly through state grants and its revenues abroad do not match its success in festivals and awards. In that sense, the Catalan film industry has to find ways to internationalize productions in a more effective way. *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*, although not a Catalan film in terms of director, cast or even theme, is a co-production that promotes Barcelona and its architecture and allows Catalan production companies to collaborate with their US counterparts in a product that reaches international audiences. The combination of films that can define a Catalan cinema with the participation in international projects can help to internationalize a Catalan cinema, as the next chapter elaborates.



## **Chapter V. Recommendations for the nationalization and internationalization of Catalan cinema**

In chapter four I discussed possibilities for the development of a national Catalan cinema able to represent Catalan cultural and historical heritage and to achieve an international platform from which to accomplish this objective. In this chapter I offer a number of recommendations for the elaboration of policies to accomplish these objectives. These will be presented to the cultural sector and producer associated with Catalonia. First I summarize the problems and strengths of Catalan cinema in particular as well as the opportunities and challenges that cinema in general is facing in the new digital era. Then, I list the specific objectives that Catalan cinema has to address in order to become a recognizable brand in the international arena and to consolidate a substantial film industry. Finally, I propose a number of recommendations.

As I previously discussed, the concept of national cinema presupposes ideas about culture, social organization, nation state and territory. National cinemas tend to be identified with nation-states but nations also exist without states, as is the case of Catalonia. Consequently, the concept of national cinema is difficult to define and there is a blurred boundary between what can be labeled as 'national' and what should be considered 'regional' cinema. As I have argued in chapter four, despite it not being straightforward to define what Catalan identity is, Catalan society and its institutions are actively developing and redefining the concept of identity in order to provide a collective idea of what it means to be Catalan: that is to say, Catalan society already considers itself a nation in its own right and therefore aspires to develop culturally as such. In this sense, Catalan cinema can be considered a national cinema or, at least, to have the potential to become one. However, Catalan cinema has to differentiate itself from Spanish cinema if it wants to establish itself as a cinema recognizable at the international level.

Spanish cinema, as discussed in previous chapters, is already international but for Catalan cinema it is difficult to achieve both national and international status

if it is perceived as regional. Internationalization is important for Catalan cinema both in terms of industry and culture: internationalization serves to expand markets for films and can provide growth opportunities for small film-producing regions such as Catalonia; in terms of cultural value, internationalization brings about the possibility of promoting historical and cultural heritage as well as opportunities for co-production agreements.

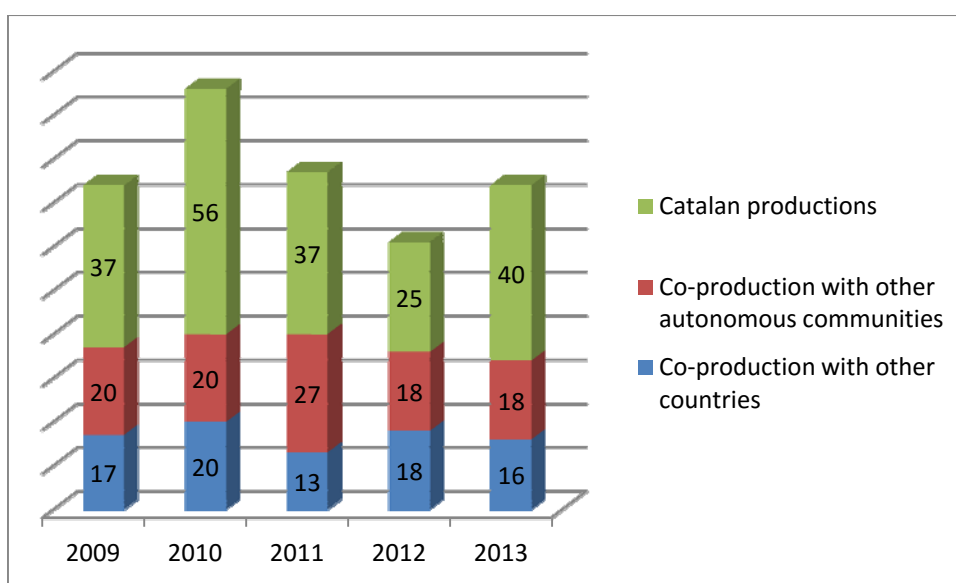
In the last two decades film production in Europe has been increasing steadily. The major economic powers of the continent have taken the lead but other nations have also contributed actively to the expansion of the film industry. This trend is well reflected in the statistics of the twenty-seven EU countries, which in the period 1995-2008 increased their film production from 624 to 1165 feature films (José i Solsona, 2010:1), almost double pre-1995 production numbers. In this period, Spain's number of productions surpassed countries such as Germany and Italy, and Spain the second highest European film producer behind France. The Catalan film industry has made a major contribution to this expansion as the table below shows (European Audiovisual Observatory, 2009).

Country	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Germany	63	75	118	145	139	151
Italy	75	103	83	102	109	146
France	97	145	187	164	184	196
Spain (including Catalonia)	59	98	141	150	172	173
Europe 27	624	797	940	1064	1075	1165
Catalonia	9	23	41	72	77	68
%Cat/EU	1.44	2.89	4.36	6.77	7.16	5.84

USA	631	683	699	673	656	520
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The percentage of Catalan films within the EU has increased steadily from 1.44 percent in 1995 to 5.84 percent in 2008. With reference to this phenomenon, *Cahiers du Cinema- España*, in an article about Spanish cinema, highlighted several films, most of them made by Catalan filmmakers or produced by Catalan companies (Losilla, 2010).

The table below shows Catalan feature film production from 2009 to 2013:



Source: ICEC, 2014

In the last few years, Catalan cinema has had several successes such as *Pa Negre (Black Bread)*, *Heroes* (Pau Freixas, 2010), *Bruc* (Daniel Benmayor, 2010), *Eva* (Kike Maillo, 2011) or *Floquet de neu* (Andrés G. Schaer, 2011). *Black Bread* achieves a balance between a fantastic yet disturbing plot and an episode from local history and, therefore, represents the possibility for a commercial cinema based on historical reconstruction and literary adaptation. In fact, historical films, which draw on more or less contemporary Catalan history, are one of the favorite areas of more commercial Catalan cinema. This is also the case with *Bruc* and *Heroes*. However, the factor that accounts more for the health of Catalan cinema is the diversity of genres and types of films that are made nowadays in Catalonia.



In general terms, it can be said that, today, there are two trends in Catalan cinema. On the one hand is a genre cinema which aims to appeal to all audiences (for example, *Los últimos días* (*The Last Days*, 2013, by the brothers David and Àlex Pastor). Catalan filmmakers are part of a generation that accepts the influence of Hollywood cinema as a source of their own creativity. Moreover, they aim to reach cosmopolitan audiences. In the film *The last days*, the Pastor Brothers adopt the visual style of directors such as Steven Spielberg, combining suspense, adventure, sensitivity and special effects, depicting an apocalyptic Barcelona. Some of these films are shot in English (*Mama*, Andrés Muschietti; *Unknown* (Jaume Collet-Serra, 2011) with the aim of reaching international audiences (Roca, 2013, 30-31).

On the other hand, there is cinema 'd'auteur' — discussed in chapter two, mainly with reference to French cinema — aimed at a more specialized audience. Genres such as documentary, fantasy and animation are the sources of important successes in Catalan cinema. A new generation of documentary filmmakers such as Isaki Lacuesta, Carla Subirana, Edmond Roch, Joan López-Lloret, Carles Bosch, Llorenç Soler, José Luis Guerin, Joaquim Jordà, Marcel Barrera, Neus Ballús, Eva Vila, Francesc Relea, Albert Solé, is helping to make the Catalan film industry stand at the forefront of this type of film production.

However, despite the occasional successes of Catalan cinema, there are a number of issues that need to be addressed in order to position the Catalan film industry at a competitive international level, which is an important factor for establishing a strong film industry in the global market. As Gorka Knör, director of the ICEC (Catalan Institute of Cultural Companies), states in the 2012 ICEC's Report:

paving the way toward internationalisation is to become a strategic element for the competitiveness of cultural and creative enterprises in Catalonia (ICEC Dossier, 2012).

The increases in film production and the successes achieved by many films are no doubt factors that are encouraging for the growth of the entire sector. Nevertheless, Catalan cinema needs to establish itself in the international market as a brand instead of being a set of independent success stories; otherwise it will be even more difficult to develop a recognizable national cinema. Moreover, the establishment of Catalan cinema as a brand implies that the success of some Catalan films can benefit from the commercialization of other Catalan productions.

The question of whether Catalan cinema is a national cinema is a controversial one. As has been stated, some film critics consider that Catalan cinema is 'something like a national cinema' (D'Lugo, 1991, 131) but nevertheless it has to be considered a regional cinema if compared with national cinemas such as British or French or Spanish because it lacks the necessary cohesion in its aesthetics and stories to be identifiable as such.

A 2013 ICEC (Penteo, 2013, 43) study of the audio-visual Catalan sector revealed that more than half the Catalan audio-visual companies think that current sector performance is bad or very bad and only 10.2 percent consider that it is good or very good. These companies point out several challenges that the sector is facing: lack of finance, the actual market dimension of the business, current fiscal legislation, lack of internationalization, the structure of the industry, current law for the sector, piracy, low performance of the business in the internet, lack of innovation and adaptation to the digital environment or the professional competences in the sector. Consequently, the companies, in order to improve the performance of the audio-visual sector, propose to implement the following: attract private investment; facilitate access to bank loans and access to the international market; introduce changes in legal provisions; open new lines of business; promote joint initiatives in the sector; attract talent and promote technological adaptation (Penteo, 2013, 64-68). As I have made clear, Catalan cinema shares the problems identified in this thesis in relation to Spanish cinema and European cinema in general: the financing of its film industry, the preference of domestic audiences for Hollywood productions,

and the need to develop production and distribution strategies to compete in the global market.

In terms of cinema as a cultural sector there are also issues that have to be considered. As I pointed out earlier, Catalan cinema has to differentiate itself from Spanish cinema if it wants to establish itself as a national and recognizable cinema. The Catalan language can play an important role in developing an element of differentiation but some other strategies will be needed to reach both national and international audiences.

In the next section, I summarize and briefly discuss the main problems that Catalan cinema is facing nowadays and the strengths that it presents.

## **5. 1. Problems and strengths of Catalan cinema**

Defining the problems and strengths of a cinema is not a straightforward matter. What has to be taken into account is that in any aspect of cinema the problems and strengths are interrelated and often are a question of degree. Consequently, this division should not be taken too strictly but is adopted simply as a tool for analysis.

### **5.1.1. Current problems of Catalan Cinema**

#### Cultural Identity and a National cinema

It is not clear to what extent Catalan cinema may be considered a national cinema. Nowadays it is still a regional cinema but the fact that Catalonia is defining itself as a nation — even with aspirations to become a state, independent from Spain — and the fact that it has its own culture and language and an administration that strongly supports them, indicates that Catalan cinema has the potential to become a national cinema. However, although some experts consider that Catalan cinema has its own and well-defined personality, Catalan cinema has not consistently reflected a Catalan identity, for several reasons; historically, this was due to the repression of the Franco regime (1936-1975). In any case, it is clear that, nowadays, Catalan society and its institutions are actively developing and redefining the concept of Catalan identity — and how it is reflected in social, economic, political and cultural areas

— in order to provide a collective idea of what it means to be Catalan. To become a national cinema — and it can be argued that this is already happening at the political level — Catalan cinema must find ways to reflect Catalan identity in its narrative, aesthetics and genres. The Catalan language could be an important factor in developing a Catalan national cinema in the sense that it provides an element of differentiation mainly in relation to Spanish cinema as a whole. However, there are different views on that matter that highlight the tensions between the commercial and cultural aspects of the cinema.

On the one hand, some consider there is insufficient use of the Catalan language in Catalan cinema in the sense that, despite Catalonia being one of the few stateless nations of Europe with its own film production since 1897, most of its productions are in Spanish, not in Catalan. Nowadays, the majority of films produced in Catalonia, both by Catalan companies alone or in coproduction, including many made by Catalan directors, are shot in Spanish or English. When a copy is distributed in Catalan this is due to government grants for dubbing as distribution companies do not want to assume this expense in the way they do in other countries with more or less a similar population size to Catalonia — for example, the Czech Republic or Hungary — as they consider that it is enough to translate them into Spanish (Mir, 2009). Moreover, despite the fact that the government of Catalonia finances dubbing and subtitles it does not decide which titles or how they are distributed: these decisions are taken by producers or distributors, for the most part multinational companies. Furthermore, Catalan film schools and faculties of communication also shoot film works mainly in Spanish and English. Only around ten percent of films exhibited in Catalonia are dubbed into Catalan, and the number of films with subtitles in Catalan is also very low.

This situation has been partially changed with the The Catalan Law of Cinema (16 January 2011), which provides a new framework for the creation, production, distribution and marketing of films in Catalan. One of the main aims of this law was to establish that fifty percent of films exhibited in theaters in Catalonia should be dubbed or subtitled in Catalan. This law caused a great

deal of controversy because distribution companies did not want to assume the expenses as they did not find any commercial benefits in doing so; but finally the Government of Catalonia reached an agreement with the Hollywood majors to increase Catalan dubbing of the films they exhibit in Catalan cinemas.

As stated in chapter four, some directors consider that the Catalan administration has used cinema as a tool of linguistic normalization instead of respecting it as an art form and argue that it has simply financed the dubbing of American productions into Catalan instead of promoting a national and different cinema in whatever language. It is clear that the Catalan language should play a significant role in the development of a Catalan national cinema but the fact that Catalan society is bilingual and that the English language is nowadays the language of global communication should also be taken into account when considering whether Catalan cinema can become more than a local cinema.

Another important aspect that has to be taken into account in order to develop a national cinema is that it is necessary to have a framework of contextualization and analysis that allows scholars, film workers and the public to understand cinema in social, historic, political and cultural terms. Catalan cinema, in comparison with national cinemas, has very little scholarship dedicated to its analysis. However, in comparison with other cinemas, such as British or French, there is a similar lack of scholarship on Spanish cinema, so this does not necessarily suggest that Catalan cinema is a regional cinema (Romaguera i Ramió, 1995, 71-88).

## Audiences

Distribution of cinema screenings in Catalonia by production nationality, 2011		
	Audience	%
Catalonia*	1.489.431	7.4
Rest of Spain	1.476.184	7.3
European Union	2.987.599	14.9
United States	13.727.114	68.3
Rest of World	419.495	2.1
TOTAL	20.099.823	

\*Catalan productions included within the rest of Spain.  
Source: ICEC, 2012

Catalan audiences still prefer Hollywood films over domestic productions. As the table above shows, the audience for Catalan films only represents 7.4 percent of the total audience for films shown in Catalonia, while US films account for 68.3 percent. These figures show a clear lack of connection between the Catalan film industry and its consumers in Catalonia. If the Catalan film industry aspires to reach an international audience it is clear that it first has to reach its own national public.

In a market where the major producers and distributors control the films being made as well as how, when and in what circumstances they are distributed, (following a criterion of financial revenue that often ignores products with a more local or personal character), it is necessary that Catalan audiences engage with their own cinema for cultural as well as commercial reasons. This includes dubbing in Catalan so that the language becomes part of its distinctive identity as a cinema because the majority of films produced in Catalonia, both by Catalan companies alone or in co-production, including many made by Catalan directors, are shot in Spanish or English.

### The professionalization of the Catalan film industry

Catalan film directors such as Pau Freixas and Lluís Galter complain that the Catalan film industry is suffering from a lack of professionalism in terms of production and they point out, for example, that directors have to write their own scripts because there are not enough professional scriptwriters (Freixas and Galter, 2001). In a global market where competitiveness is high, any industry that aspires to establish itself as an international brand has to become professional in all aspects of its sector: from the skills of its labour force to the technical elements of shooting and production. Creativity, innovation and professionalization are important elements in the development of a strong industrial film sector which is able to compete in the international arena.

Moreover, the Catalan film industry needs to adapt itself to the new digital technologies that have changed the paradigm of the audio-visual sector in several ways. They imply new ways of production, and may require new professional profiles to which film production companies will have to adapt. In distribution and exhibition they have made possible the wide dissemination of audio-visual products in a relatively cheap way, increasing the consumption of all products in digital formats. Moreover, they have promoted to an unprecedented degree the creation of social networks – such as Facebook or Twitter – that often play the role of the critic, together with the media. In this scenario there is a need to rethink business models and adapt them to the new consumption trends and habits of the population as well as to address the problems such as piracy that they bring about that, clearly, damage film production companies.

### The financing of Catalan cinema

The current situation of economic recession (since 2008), which affects both public and private sectors, has led to several budget cuts in state and regional administrative bodies' financial aid for the film sector, in Catalonia as well as in Spain and in other countries. Catalan producers can obtain grants, as I explained in chapter four, mainly from two bodies: from the ICEC, the Catalan Institute for Cultural Industries, which allocates more than ten million euros per

year to promote the Catalan audiovisual industry; and from the ICAA, the Spanish Institute of Cinema and Audiovisual Arts, which also offers several types of grant for audiovisual production, distribution and exhibition. The ICAA has reduced the budget for grants from 55.7 million in 2012 to 50.84 million in 2013, representing a cut of 8.8 percent (Peirano, 2013). The ICEC budget for the audiovisual sector was in 2011 18.8 million, in 2012 11.85 plus 3.50 million in loans (ICEC, 2011 and 2012)

Furthermore, the recent increase in VAT to twenty-one percent for spectators has caused concern in the film sector, which anticipates a considerable decrease in demand. Moreover, the economic crisis has also affected private investment as investors are more unwilling to assume risks. This situation needs to be counteracted by developing new financing tools and strategies for film production and exhibition that increase investment in cinema. In fact, the Catalan government, as was argued in chapter four, is looking for new sources of revenue such as the tax on ADSL providers with the aim of raising around twenty million euros to help the audiovisual sector.

The financing of Catalan cinema is aggravated by the fact that the Catalan film industry suffers from a considerable lack of cohesion. The audio-visual sector in Catalonia is highly diversified, with many small and medium-sized companies and few big companies all competing in the local market. Moreover, the sector presents low levels of cohesion among the subsectors that constitute the value chain (production, distribution and exhibition). Consequently, for the most part, Catalan film production companies do not seek to internationalize their products and services and some of them do not have the expertise or the financial resources to create expansion.

In addition to the financial and structural problems, the audio-visual sector also considers that there are too many administrative difficulties regarding permissions and organisational facilities to shoot in Catalonia, a situation that has to be addressed by developing legal provisions that facilitate production, distribution and exhibition both domestically and for the purposes of internationalisation.



### **5.1.2. Strengths of Catalan cinema**

The Catalan film industry is a dynamic industrial and cultural sector that actively seeks ways to improve its performance and overcome the problems that the declining economic situation has recently brought about. It is a consolidated sector with a long tradition and substantial expertise. There is a consensus in the sector about the quality of creativity and talent in the industry as well as about the quality of the film schools and training. The value of Catalan professionals in the sector is recognized by critics and specialists and their contribution to productions that have been awarded important prizes. This is substantial even at the international level. However, there are few possibilities for young people to showcase their talents – in finance, development and content – and to access the decision-making levels of audio-visual companies and institutions due to the complex organization of the production companies.

The Catalan audio-visual sector has shown its capacity for experimentation and innovation in developing new productions, experimenting with new techniques and formats and is at the forefront of some genres in cinema such as documentary and animation; all of these factors can be models for good practice.

For the most part, companies in this sector are located in Barcelona province (90 percent) (Penteo, 2013), especially in Barcelona city. This can facilitate collaboration and the creation of clusters, which can be very important for developing internationalization, especially taking into account that, as I previously said, one of the problems of the Catalan film industry is that the audio-visual sector in Catalonia is highly diversified, with many small and medium-sized companies and low levels of cohesion among the production, distribution and exhibition sectors.

Through the Corporació Catalana de Mitjans Audiovisuals ([www.ccma.cat](http://www.ccma.cat)) Catalan public television and radio channels contribute strongly to audio-visual production, especially in fiction, documentaries and animation. The mission of this body is to promote the Catalan language and culture and to consolidate the

Catalan audiovisual industry. This support and a focus on technological innovation contribute to the strength of Catalan film industry. However, recent public budget cuts are affecting its capacity to support the film sector.

Chapter four stated that, since the end of the 1990s, Catalan administrative institutions have promoted the shooting of films in Catalonia, since it represents a source of revenue and promotes tourism in the country. The creation of the Catalonia Film Commission, which aims primarily to attract filmmakers from all over the world to shoot in Catalonia, was an important step toward consolidating Catalonia as a shooting location.

In short, Catalan cinema has to address three main problems in order to become a national cinema recognizable at the international level: first, it has to find and establish a specific identity while connecting with its local audiences; then it has to find new and more efficient ways of financing and finally it has to become a more professional and cohesive sector. It will also be important to capitalise on its strengths such as its creativity and entrepreneurship and the potential of Catalonia as a shooting location. In next section I develop several objectives that Catalan cinema will have to attain for internationalization.

## **5.2. Targets for Catalan Cinema**

In this section I summarize the targets that Catalan cinema should set itself to overcome its weaknesses and maximise its strengths in order to develop a sound industry that can compete in the international arena and, at the same time, contribute to the spreading of Catalan culture and values.

### Cinema in terms of industry

Culture means economic development and, as such, it needs to be backed by a strong business framework, especially in industries such as cinema where more investment and technical support are required. The film industry is an important contributor to the wider economy and, in that sense, the development of a stable Catalan film industry will benefit not only the sector but the country as a whole, both in economic and cultural terms. It is necessary to reinforce the

industrial framework of Catalan cinema with new formulas for funding, a new dialogue with domestic audiences, aids to export and so on.

In order to do so there are a number of goals to accomplish:

- To connect with audiences
- To use the opportunities that the new digital technologies provide as well as counteract the problems that they cause
- To find new ways and strategies of funding
- To implement new strategies of production, distribution and exhibition

#### Cinema as a cultural value

As has been discussed, the value of film can be understood not only in economic terms. By contrast cinema provides social and cultural values as well that have to be taken into account both by private and public institutions in the sector. In that sense, the following targets can be set:

- To make Catalan cinema a recognisable brand
- To invest in talent and innovation
- To promote research, knowledge and heritage
- To establish a Catalan network of cinema institutions that promotes synergies and collaboration strategies among them with the objective of promoting Catalan cinema as a national cinema in the international level.

To Internationalize Catalan cinema: in a world that is becoming dominated by global markets, to reach an international level is a key goal of the development of strong industries. Internationalization promotes competence and, consequently, quality, innovation and creativity. From an economic standpoint it provides a wider market in which to sell cultural products. In a cultural sense, it promotes diversity and knowledge as it implies working with and for people of different cultures. Furthermore, it gives the opportunity to showcase the nation's culture and values and interest others in its cultural heritage. The Catalan film industry should aim to internationalize its products both for economic reasons

and as part of its responsibility as transmitter of culture; this is also an aim of a national cinema.

### **5.3. Issues and recommendations**

The main challenge to the Catalan film industry is to improve the promotion and commercial success of its products, both in the domestic market and abroad. In order to accomplish this goal I propose a number of recommendations in four areas from the starting point of the filmmaking process to the marketing and distribution of films both domestically and abroad: funding and Catalan film institutions, talent and research, digital technologies, and audiences, branding and internationalization.

#### **5.3.1. Funding and Catalan film institutions**

Financing is important to develop a quality cinema as it allows producers and directors to use the best possible production techniques and professionals and, therefore, to make the film more competitive. Consequently, in the present circumstances, it is necessary to find new ways of financing that can compensate for the cuts in state contributions to the sector and promote private investment.

Half of the financial resources for Catalan film production come from Catalonia itself, a fifth comes from the rest of Spain and three of every ten euros invested come from abroad. During the period 2002-2007, co-production with other countries represented 29.71 percent of the investment while for the rest of Spain it was 35.07 percent (José i Solsona, 2010). The Catalan film sector is financed by both public and private resources. The public funding comes from the Spanish government (through the ICCA, Ministry of Culture) and from the Catalan government (through the ICEC, Department of Culture) but since the beginning of the financial crisis total government expenditure (both Spanish and Catalan) on culture (as well as in other areas) has been decreasing. Specifically, the economic crisis has meant that grants for cinema production, distribution and exhibition have decreased considerably in the last few years. TV channels have to contribute five percent of their profits to film production, but the economic crisis has also had an impact on earnings, as companies spend

less money on TV advertisements and, consequently, less money is going from TV towards film production. Moreover, in 2012, VAT for cultural products was increased from eight to twenty-one percent, which affected sales in the sector and, consequently, private investment. These factors are making the financing of Catalan cinema increasingly difficult. One problem that the film industry faces is the amortization of its films in cinemas. In fact, only a small fraction of films make enough revenues from box-office tickets to be profitable. Consequently, other sources of revenues become necessary to amortize the money invested.

Government and private film institutions already play a key role in the development of Catalan cinema. The creation of the Catalan Institute for the Cultural Companies (ICEC) represents a significant step forward in articulating the necessary reinforcement of the Catalan cultural industrial framework.

The main objective of government cultural and film institutions such as ICEC, is to preserve Catalan national cultural identity; however, they also aim to consolidate an economic sector. In fact, public institutions should focus on addressing the tensions between the cultural and industrial aspects of cinema. In that sense, these institutions should balance the requirements of the film industry with the value of cinema as a transmitter of cultural heritage. In order to do this it is important to develop flexible and integrated strategies and policies so that the sector can respond to changing external conditions.

### Recommendations

#### 1. To promote private investment in the sector

This can be done in different ways such as by governmental film tax incentives aimed at both the local and international film industries or developing internet crowd-funding, which has already been successful in the production of several films such as *Veronica Mars* (Rob Thomas, 2014) and *Wish I Was Here* (Zach Braff, 2014). Moreover, in order to promote risk assumption by the industry itself, it is necessary to implement financial mechanisms that favour the reinvestment of grants received.

## 2. To promote co-production projects

As the table below shows, the number of co-productions with other countries decreased between 2007 and 2011. Co-productions are not only a way to attract foreign investment and share risks but also to open up opportunities for the internationalization of a film. In that sense, co-production projects should be promoted both by public institutions and the film industry itself.

Catalan full-length film production 2007-2011					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Catalan production and co-productions	29	20	37	56	41
Catalan co-productions with other autonomous communities	17	29	20	20	26
Catalan co-production with other countries	29	25	17	17	13
Total	75	74	74	96	80

Source: ICEC, 2012

## 3. To support film production

There are different ways to support film production such as the creation of a special tax or through the development of credit mechanisms in the manner of the French *avance sur recettes* (advance paid to the producer against box office receipts in the domestic market). Moreover, a standardized structure of investment that focuses on continuity between projects rather than on specific projects should be developed. Public and private Catalan television channels should also play an important role in promoting, showing and financing cinema. To that end, government initiatives should be taken to ensure that public television can afford to support film production.

## 4. To improve the image of the sector by creating a global brand that includes all the Catalan film companies.

This measure is necessary to facilitate the sector's access to private investment. Moreover, the development of a 'good practices' framework for entities and agents in the sector will allow a better business relationship with financial agents to be established.

5. To create an independent body that coordinates the actions of all governmental and private institutions in the film sector.

The coordination and integration of the sector and the generation of the necessary synergies is a key factor in the development of a strong industry able to compete in the global market.

6. To publish a comprehensive annual paper that analyses, both qualitative and quantitatively, the performance of the Catalan film sector.

In order to implement effective policies, government bodies need adequate information on production, distribution and exhibition figures and results. The private sector can also benefit from this data.

7. To elaborate legal policies aimed at fostering the development and internationalization of the film sector.

In this respect public cultural institutions (ICEC<sup>17</sup>, Consell de l'Audiovisual de Catalunya<sup>18</sup>) should bring together legislators with producers, directors, distributors and so on in the film industry in order to gather information about the needs of the sector. In particular, it is necessary to remove administrative impediments and difficulties in the internationalization of domestic production. Policies should also facilitate foreign investment in the Catalan film sector and the realization or co-production projects.

8. To develop funding strategies and grants balanced between production, distribution and activities related to the promotion of film culture.

Grants and financial aid should be restructured in order to maximize their beneficial effects. In that sense, they should aim to support projects with enough quality to reach the public and to implement the distribution and exhibition strategies to ensure that all subsidized films reach the audiences.

9. To invest in innovation, both in technical and cultural aspects of the film industry.

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.gencat.cat/cultura/icic/>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.cac.cat/>

#### 10. To create a 'Catalan film quality stamp'

This stamp will be given to those quality films that contribute to the development of a Catalan cinema. To have this stamp will provide some benefits in grant and financing terms.

#### **5.3.2. Talent and Research**

As Benhamou says, the work of creative art is at the heart of the formation of economic value in cultural productions (Benhamou, 1996, 6). In all cultural activities, the talent of the creative worker is a key factor in development. In that sense, the training of cultural workers is very important to the sector. In Catalonia there is a considerable tradition of valuing the prestige of artists and cultural workers and the training offered by film production schools is of a high standard. Moreover, two-thirds of Catalan audio-visual companies consider that creativity in the sector is good or very good and seventy percent also value technical and auxiliary workers' skills and experience highly (ICEC, 2013). And, clearly, talent and innovation benefit film production in terms of efficiency in the use of resources and quality.

However, there are some issues to be considered. There is a need to match skills training in the film sector to market demand, and the speed of change and innovation in production techniques suggests that skills training should be flexible and continuous in order to follow new developments in the sector. Moreover, film schools and film production companies should work together to make the transfer of talent and skills from one to another more efficient.

Cinema, like other arts, now belongs to a national heritage. When we talk of 'national cinema' we can refer simply to the domestic production of films, but also to a set of works related by style and theme that directly address national issues such as identity, tradition and prevailing discourses. Sometimes this concept refers to a number of films of a certain quality, produced by the domestic market, that have a certain cultural value for an elitist audience.



In February 2012 the new Film Archive of Catalonia was opened with the objective of preserving Catalan film heritage and to contribute to its dissemination, ensuring that access does not intercede in the conservation of fragile materials. In that sense, original documents have a restricted access that should be compensate with access to copies.

As stated in the “Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on film heritage and the competitiveness of related industrial activities” ([www.eur-lex.europa.eu](http://www.eur-lex.europa.eu)):

*Film heritage is an important component of the film industry and encouraging its conservation, restoration and exploitation can contribute to improving the competitiveness of that industry.*

#### Recommendations

11. To encourage professional development in all areas of filmmaking: screenwriting, directing, sound, animation, production, and so on. In that sense, continuous professional and skills development is becoming increasingly important for workers in the film industry due to the speed of technological developments.

12. To promote and value creativity and innovation in film schools.

13. To increase communication between film schools and film production companies with mechanisms such as internships, career sites, support to amateur activities, collaboration in projects and so on.

14. To develop exchange programs between Catalan film schools and other Spanish, European and international universities with film production courses.

15. To preserve the Catalan film heritage and promote research in Catalan film studies.

The heritage of Catalan cinema should be preserved and be made available and accessible to the public as a means of promoting knowledge of its

achievements. In order to do so film heritage should be digitized and archived to avoid its becoming inaccessible in a digital world. As I have argued, in order to develop a national cinema it is necessary to have a framework of contextualization and analysis that allows scholars, film workers and the public to understand cinema in social, historic, political and cultural terms and Catalan cinema has very few studies that develop this critical framework. Consequently, there is a need to foster this area of academic research and develop a solid corpus of film studies courses that address the different aspects of Catalan cinema. In the UK, for example, the British Association of Film Television and Screen Studies (BAFTSS) promotes the recognition of film studies as central to understanding the culture, society and economy of a country and many of the main UK universities offer film studies degrees.

16. To promote the dissemination of the Catalan cinema heritage.

Catalan audiences prefer Hollywood productions over their own national films. To counteract this situation, it is important to raise the profile of Catalan cinema with the domestic audience. This can be done in different ways, such as retrospectives in film festivals or on television, creating internet forums about Catalan cinema where filmmakers and film lovers can engage in a dialogue, or making old films available to the general public by releasing DVD editions and promoting sales through newspapers, for example.

### **5.3.3. Production, distribution and exhibition**

New digital technologies are changing the ways in which the film industry operates, not only in production but also in distribution and exhibition. This situation creates new uncertainties and difficulties in the relationship between traditional and new models of production and between old and the new forms of cultural expression. Such a transformation implies major adjustments on various levels: education, finance, industrial relations, public policy, and so on. The Catalan film industry should take advantage of the new opportunities offered by the new technologies but it can also truly innovate, opening itself to the fundamental changes produced by the new technologies.

In production, digital technologies allow making a documentary or a short film with a digital camera and editing software. This facilitates production and the proliferation of low cost films (less than half a million euros).

Cinema commercialization is directly affected by the digitization of the cultural industries (Bustamante, 2003). The number of cinema goers is decreasing while, at the same time, consumption of video on demand (VOD) is rapidly increasing. Technological advances allow for films to be seen on multiple platforms at a user's convenience and to provide audiences with other features such as interviews with the directors and actors on the making of the film. Moreover, the internet allows the public to have better access to filmmakers and production companies by giving comments on and opinions about the films on forums or blogs.

New technologies have a particularly strong influence on how youth gain access to culture. The study 'Cultura i joventut' (Culture and youth) (Ribó, 2010) realized by the Secretaria de Joventut de la Generalitat reveals that young people (15-29) are using the Internet massively, with a strong increase in consumption: in 2001, 74.5 percent of youth were Internet users, in 2006 the figure increased to 94.6 percent. The figures are much lower for the adult population but still 52.7 percent use the Internet. This fact suggests that the Internet is a powerful platform to inform and engage people in cinema and a way of selling the product.

However, the new technologies also bring some challenges to cinema: piracy, the possibility of a decrease in the professionalization of the sector, the risk of being left behind in the application of new technologies, the fact that films have to compete with other appealing entertainments offered by the new technologies such as games.

The audio-visual sector in Catalonia has almost 1700 companies; however, only 800 of them have more than one employee worker. In the period of economic crisis many audio-visual Catalan companies have disappeared but many others have been created. The Catalan audio-visual sector has many young

companies (more than a third were created in the last four years), most of them in Barcelona, forming a highly concentrated sector with a clear local orientation. However, there is a lack of mid- and large-sized production companies having good relations with the television or distribution sectors, which are well integrated in the main business groups in culture and communication (although large groups such as Lauren, Filmax or Media Pro have been increasingly involved in film productions). The investment of companies from other sectors (videogames, internet, mobile phones, advertising, design, photography, technology, etc) in production and the commercialization of audio-visual content has also increased. Moreover, various strong editorial groups are also investing in film production. Within the audio-visual sector the activities with a larger concentration of companies are fiction and documentary production and post-production.

The type and quality of products made by a company (its trajectory) is a key element in shaping its image in the market. Consequently it is necessary to consider project research and development as key elements for the positioning of the company in the market. In Catalonia, cultural companies are increasingly aware of this fact; however, in sectors such as the audiovisual, production costs and typically precarious resources largely limit the efforts dedicated to these questions. Hollywood movies, which represent the main competition for Catalan films at domestic cinemas, have budgets up to ten times higher than European movies, and production costs of films tend to increase year after year. Consequently, the quantity of resources needed for a film to succeed competitively in national and international markets is also constantly increasing. Moreover, the limitations on commercialized audiovisual products in the big markets have a negative impact in the sector's capacity to obtain resources for production. That implies the need for improving the diffusion of audiovisual products both in domestic and in global markets.

The Catalan film industry produces on average nineteen full-length films per year; however, they have very irregular distribution. Its main challenge, therefore, is to improve the promotion and commercial success of its projects, both within the domestic market as well as throughout Spain and the rest of the

world. In order to consider how that might be done several factors should be taken into account, such as the many possible forms of film exhibition -- cinema, TV, DVD, internet, mobiles phones, tablets, and so on -- and the need to know who the potential audience is in order to develop the best possible sales strategies.

A further question to be considered is the lack of synergy between the different areas of the film industry: production, distribution, exhibition, marketing, and so on. The separation of public support between these areas in the grant system has not encouraged these sectors to work together; but this is becoming a basic requirement for competition in the global market.

### Recommendations

17. Public and private film institutions should establish a Research & Development Fund for digital innovation in the film sector and come together to develop strategies to take advantage of the possibilities that the new digital technology allows. In order to obtain the income for the fund it will be necessary to develop new financial mechanisms such as the lottery funding in Britain.

18. To grant loans (through the Catalan Finance Institute) for the digitisation of cinemas.

19. To establish synergies with the cutting edge technological sector in order to acquire the vision needed for securing a cutting-edge position in the use of new technologies. The ICEC can coordinate and promote collaborations between the two sectors.

20. To collaborate with film schools to encourage the development of new professional skills and profiles. The new technologies require specific skills. In this sense new professions will take shape and those employed in the creative industries around cinema production will need to acquire new skills. Moreover, new ways of organizing the work of cultural creation and production require multidisciplinary teams. The Catalan film industry should collaborate with film

schools in order to accomplish this objective. For example, Creative Skillset in UK is a company that identifies skills gaps in the creative industry and advises on training. It manages a range of training funds raised from the industry and Government aimed at delivering solutions for skills development. Creative Skillset participates in the development of qualifications for the competitive benefit of the Creative Industries and offer realistic careers information for those entering the industry.

21. To promote Catalan cinema by creating social digital platforms. Public and private film institutions should create social digital platforms that promote Catalan cinema such as the BFI Player, a video-on-demand platform aimed at audiences that enjoy a more specialised film. It will be available from October 2014 and will offer new distribution opportunities making film accessible to the widest possible audience across the UK.

22. To reorganize the sector and develop an integrated framework in order to acquire the necessary business volume to compete in a globalized environment.

This can be done with the creation of an audio-visual companies cluster, led by the industries themselves, with a physical and virtual environment to develop their activities. The high number of audio-visual companies located in Barcelona can facilitate this initiative. The main aim of the cluster would be to promote the joint competitiveness of the sector. It should also foster the optimization of existing resources (film sets and other infrastructures, productions, and so on), to promote the sharing of resources and the management of infrastructure. Furthermore, it should promote collaboration between the different private companies in the sector: for example, through the promotion of distributors' investment in film production by developing financial or grant systems for joint ventures between producers and distributors. Another way of increasing business volume would be to enhance synergies among the different companies in the film industry — through meetings and encounters organized by public institutions such as the ICEC — and in the cultural sector as a whole. The success of a play for theatre, for example, can contribute to the dissemination of its content by being adapted to a book or to a movie.

23. To develop strategies to promote films in a more efficient and inexpensive way.

The cost of film promotion impedes many small companies from marketing their films effectively. There is a need to offer financial help in marketing as many films that have received grants for production do not even reach cinema theaters. However, due to the current cuts in the government budget, new, less expensive, forms of marketing should be explored. For example, using internet social networks or TV programs dedicated to cinema.

A further way to promote Catalan films, especially at the international level, will be to relate Catalan cinema to the 'Marca Barcelona'. This is an initiative of the Council of Barcelona that registered the name of the city as a brand to support quality products and services developed in the city.

24. To find new ways of exploiting a film.

For the film industry to be as self-sufficient as possible it is important to find ways to make film products profitable exploiting all the possible sources of revenue. For example, selling marketing products such as posters, DVDs with extra features and so on.

25. To establish commercial agreements between the film industry and technological devices (DVD, tables, TVs), producers, sellers and with telecommunications operators.

In a market where the new technologies are changing the ways in which people are consuming cinema, the film industry cannot remain oblivious to this fact. To establish collaborative agreements with these industries can enhance possibilities of product exploitation and, consequently, increase revenues. It can also help to market film productions in a more affordable way.

26. Catalan public television channels should engage in the promotion of Catalan films and in the screening of Catalan cinema.

This can be done through direct publicity (advertisements) at affordable prices or indirectly in programmes dedicated to cinema.

#### **5.3.4. Audiences, branding and internationalization**

The study 'Cultura i joves II' ('Culture and Youth') undertaken by the Secretaria de Joventut de la Generalitat reveals that the number of cinema goers in Catalonia has decreased since 2001. The young (15-29 years old) go to the cinema twenty-six times per year, a decrease of 13.4 points (from 24.3 percent to 10.9 percent). And 8.2 percent have not gone to a cinema in the last twelve months. Among the adult population, this figure is much higher: 38.5 percent. In terms of cultural consumption (cinema, theatre, concerts, libraries, museums) cinema-going is the area with the biggest decrease (Ribó, 2010). The DVD and Blu-ray market have also decreased in terms of sales (SGAE, 2011)<sup>19</sup> as people watch more films on television and on the internet. According to the latest CIS barometer on new technologies (CIS, 2012), 41.8 percent of Internet users use the Internet to download music, movies and videos, and 14.4 percent for watching TV. However, the figures for online consumption of films are still very modest, although its growth is exponential.

As I previously highlighted, a key issue concerning the nationalisation of Catalan cinema is that Catalan audiences prefer Hollywood blockbusters over Catalan films. This is a trend common to Spanish cinema and other national cinemas such as British cinema. These countries deal in different ways with the problem, as stated in chapter two, British cinema, in general, tries to compete with Hollywood with films aimed at international audiences. In contrast, Spanish cinema has concentrated more on films with topics and themes specifically for domestic audiences. Catalan cinema, in order to become a national cinema, needs to develop strategies to connect with its domestic audiences but, at the same time, it has to reach the international level telling stories with projection of universal themes, in a way appealing to different audiences.

New technologies are allowing audiences to watch films on many different platforms. This fact poses a challenge to cinema exhibition but, at the same

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<sup>19</sup> The SGAE reports a decrease of 71.8 percent (from 292.8 million euros in 2001 to 82.5 million euros in 2011 <http://www.anuariosgae.com/anuario2011/home.html> (Data for the Spanish market)



time, brings new opportunities for the industry that should be exploited. There are films that will never be shown on screen but which may attract an audience through other media or technological formats. Therefore, innovative distribution strategies should be supported in order to maximise consumer choice.

Consequently, in terms of audiences there are two aspects that need to be addressed. On the one hand, it is necessary to promote cinema as an entertainment and cultural experience in any media but, especially, in terms of cinema-going. On the other, it is necessary to engage domestic audiences with Catalan film production.

But it is really important for the film industry to know their customers in order to develop models that engage them in the experience of going to the cinema. The study 'Cultura i joves II' published in 2010 only provides information to the year 2006, and this lack of information can make it more difficult for the film industry to appropriately address its potential costumers. Cinemas have traditionally attracted the public by their large screens and superior viewing experience, and that attraction will probably remain central to the cinema of the future; however, as it is becoming more and more possible to enjoy high image quality at home or in any place that has access to the new digital technologies, cinemas will have to offer an experience that will no longer be about movies alone.

In order to create new audiences for Catalan films — both at cinemas and in other media — policy interventions are necessary. In that sense, education is a key element in increasing film audiences because education can provide information about Catalan film heritage and, in doing so, to promote an appreciation for it.

In order to become a national cinema, Catalan cinema has to be a recognisable brand. That is to say, it has to define itself in terms of genres, aesthetics, social and national values, focus and so on.

In general terms, nowadays, there are two trends in Catalan cinema: a genre cinema, clearly influenced by Hollywood cinema, aimed at all audiences; and a

cinema 'd'auteur' aimed at a more specialized audience, with genres such as documentary, fantasy and animation. In these senses, Catalan cinema seems to be half-way between the British cinema aiming to compete with Hollywood blockbusters in the domestic market and the French cinema 'd'auteur' which completely ignores Hollywood films. And, in fact, this can be a good basis for a strong Catalan film industry with films able to reach international audiences and, at the same time, reflect Catalan culture and values.

The Catalan language should play a significant role in defining Catalan cinema as a national cinema for language plays a major role in preserving the symbolic space of expression and identity of a country; however, it is important that the language does not become a limitation for filmmakers, that is to say, although the use of Catalan language should be promoted, it should not be considered an indispensable element for a film to be considered Catalan.

For Catalan cinema to become international filmmakers have to take into account the double role of cinema as an industry and as a cultural product. On the one hand, the Catalan film industry has to sell its products in order to become as self-sufficient as possible. On the other, Catalan cinema has to become a recognizable and prestigious brand as a national cinema. These two strategies can actually reinforce each other, because if Catalan cinema becomes a recognizable brand with some prestige it will be easier for Catalan film producers to sell their products. In this sense, as John Hill points out, a national film industry adds value to the national economy in terms of 'the creation of jobs, attraction of overseas investment, export earnings and general knock-on effects for the service industries and tourism' (Hill in Petrie, 1992, 10). Conversely, the success of Catalan film products in the international market will contribute to making Catalan cinema a recognizable national cinema brand, which will benefit the dissemination and conservation of Catalan cultural heritage.

Two-thirds of Catalan audio-visual companies do not internationalize their products or services. Up to 35.35 percent of them are seeking ways to initiate this process but almost thirty percent do not intend to do so. In the case of

companies that internationalize their products, around thirty-three percent of their revenues come from abroad (outside Spain). There are several ways in which Catalan audio-visual companies internationalize their products: the most common formula is co-production agreements (twenty-three percent), followed by agreements with international distributors (22.8 percent) or with local partners (22.1 percent), with the support of public or private entities (9.0 percent) and finally through branches of the company (6.2 percent) (Penteo, 2013).

Regarding the areas where Catalan audio-visual companies internationalize their products, the European Union is the clear primary objective (forty-four percent), followed by Latin America (22.8 percent), North America (18.3 percent) and Asia (11.6 percent) with a mere 3.3 percent for the rest of the world. However, the future perspectives of internationalization show a different picture with increasing interest in Latin America (32.8 percent) and North America (23.4 percent) to the detriment of the European Union (29.4 percent) (Penteo, 2013).

In order to internationalize film production there are some factors that Catalan audio-visual companies see as necessary (Penteo, 2013, 68):

- having professionals with experience in product internationalization
- establishing contacts with possible partners in foreign countries
- gaining some knowledge about potential foreign markets
- acquiring the assistance of public entities and of social and commercial organizations (such as the Cambra de comerç)
- gaining access to public grants and financing

Conversely, they also highlight some problems that can make the process more difficult:

- the economic climate
- administrative procedures
- normative restrictions
- the Catalan language

It has to be noted that not all companies agree on the paths to and difficulties in achieving internationalization. What can be an advantage for some is a

disadvantage for others. However, the above list reflects the opinion of the majority of Catalan audiovisual companies (Penteo, 2013).

### Recommendations

27. To study, enjoy and discuss Catalan cinema at schools.

Teaching is a social barometer in the sense that the developments in teaching a particular subject gives an idea of the importance that society attributes to that subject. In the same way that schools try to promote reading literature as an enjoyable activity and, at the same time, enhance the culture of students, the idea is to promote viewing films, both as a pastime and as a cultural activity. As happens with reading literature, the development of the habit of watching cinema when young makes more likely to enjoy it as well in adulthood.

One way to develop an interest in Catalan cinema is to include it as a subject in the school curriculum or, at least, as an extracurricular activity in primary and secondary schools. It is not necessary that the films studied in these courses should all be Catalan, as it would be useful to contextualize Catalan cinema in the European framework. In the UK, for example, Film Education was a charity supported by the UK Film Industry that promoted — until recent closure — the use of film within the curriculum. They offered schools free resources that covered a wide range of curriculum areas such as film clips, teacher's notes and a number of diverse activities. They also ran a series of events such as the National Schools Film Week that offered free film screenings to school children in cinemas across the country.

28. To introduce differential pricing on tickets for students.

If watching cinema is a cultural activity that individuals learn to enjoy from childhood, it is clear then that the youth sector is a very important one for the film industry, not only for what they may consume today but because they will be the consumers of tomorrow. In that sense it is helpful to address their specific situation and demands; for example, the cost of cinema tickets. There has been considerable debate surrounding this issue following the increase in VAT for cultural products. François Colbert says that consumers can be relatively indifferent to price changes (providing that price intervals remain

within what they see as acceptable levels) (F. Colbert, 2000: 166-178) but groups such as students or senior citizens may benefit from lower prices.

Another way to promote cinema among the young is to create a cinema card for students and young people that offers them significant discounts in all cinemas in Catalonia as well as other offers or possibilities. An example of such an initiative is the successful Catalan public television (TV3) Club Super 3 Card. It has its own website and offers games, competitions and activities in order to encourage audience engagement with the channel. For the film industry it is important to promote cinema among youth as they will be their future main costumers. To do so it could develop price strategies to attract them to cinemas, this can be financed by both distributors and exhibitors.

29. To organize screenings of Independent Catalan films across Catalonia.

This can be done in Civic Centres, libraries or other appropriate locations. It will be a way to allow independent filmmakers who are not able to reach cinemas to present their products to the domestic public and engage them with Catalan cinema. It can be coordinated by the ICEC and also supported by the local administration. The screening can be followed by debates and encounters with directors, actors and other workers on the film, which will engage the public with this type of cinema that has more difficulties in reaching the commercial circuit.

30. To implement publicity and marketing strategies to encourage potential audiences to view films

As has been noted, the Catalan public seems to have a preference for Hollywood blockbusters but that may be, in part, because they are more accessible and highly advertised. Many Catalan films are simply unknown to the Catalan public because the high cost of marketing and promotion does not allow small companies to reach all the population and some of these films do not even achieve cinema exhibition. In this sense, there is a need to find inexpensive ways of promoting Catalan films such as using social media and the Catalan public TV and radio channels to inform potential film viewers about films that do not have adequate budgets for widespread marketing and promotion.

31. Promote and partly subsidize the creation of film groups and societies that actively promote Catalan film heritage

Catalan social associations seem to be doing very well in many areas. One example of the influence that such groups can have in society are Omnium Cultural or the Assemblea Nacional Catalana that work towards Catalan independence. Independently of one's position on that matter, their success in the demonstration of September 11, 2012 and in the Via Catalana of September 11, 2013 should be acknowledged. The tradition of these popular associations in Catalonia suggests that film associations could in the future play an important future role in supporting Catalan cinema in Catalonia.

32. To enhance the experience of cinema-going

Going to the cinema now attracts fewer people than ever before. There are two main reasons for this: there are many new ways of watching movies that can be more convenient and cheaper; prices have risen with the VAT increase for cultural products. This can be a deterrent, especially for families.

To attract people into a cinema it is necessary to make the experience something more than just watching a movie. One aspect will be to use newer technologies (3D technology, for example) that are not yet available for domestic use. In that sense, there is a need to modernize cinemas and to create structural and financial mechanisms to allow them to keep up with the fast speed of technological developments.

However, it will also be important to promote the community aspect of cinema-going. The success of the new social media shows that people want social connectivity and community links: going to the cinema used to provide this feeling of a shared experience. Consequently, to recreate the community aspect of film-viewing could improve audiences at cinemas. That means to further enhance the experience of going to the cinema by integrating it with other related activities before or after the showing of the movie: conferences, debates, theme parties and so on.

33. To promote films that can reach local and international audiences and, at the same time, reflect Catalan landscapes and culture. In this sense, filmmakers should develop stories that can be understood and appreciated by audiences of different backgrounds and cultures while at the same time reflecting local traditions and idiosyncrasies as well as national features, such as the film *Black Bread*.

34. To promote cinema 'd'auteur' as a way of developing more personal and idiosyncratic films that can contribute in the configuration of a recognisable aesthetic for Catalan cinema.

35. To promote exchanges, co-productions, and promotional strategies with the artists and cultural institutions of other Catalan-speaking territories,<sup>20</sup> with the aim of reinforcing a more integrated film sector.

36. To promote Catalan language in films as a component of Catalan culture. The fact that Catalan is a minority language can be seen as a problem in reaching international audiences, which obviously can be overcome by dubbing the films, but it can provide Catalan cinema with a very specific and recognisable characteristic that subtitling will respect.

37. To concentrate resources in quality films.

One of the problems of the Catalan film industry is that many films do not even reach local audiences. This may be due to the fact that they have not been adequately promoted or distributed but also because they are not interesting enough for the public or they are lacking in quality. As government aid — both Catalan and Spanish — is rather limited it should focus on productions that have sufficient narrative potential to interest audiences.

38. To run an annual festival to promote Catalan cinema internationally.

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<sup>20</sup> Valencia, the Balearic Islands, and Andorra (where Catalan is the sole official language), all have governmental and private institutions that support Catalan language and culture. There are also other territories where Catalan is spoken: the French region of Roussillon, the city of Alghero in Sardinia and the Western Strip of Aragon in Spain.

Such an event will have the double objective of boosting sales of Catalan cinema outside the country and attracting specialist global media coverage. Moreover, it will bring together professionals from the film industry — sales agents, producers, directors and actors — with the media and possible investors and buyers.

39. To establish an annual calendar of cinema festivals in order to promote Catalan films internationally and facilitate the attendance of small and medium film companies at these events.

International film festivals can be considered as a true network of exchanges in which producers, distributors, directors, purchasing managers of television, critics, journalists and film fans gather to see new works, exchange ideas and make business contacts. Moreover, the festival circuit condenses all forms of cinema not immersed in the global Hollywood network. Catalan cinema should take advantage of the benefits that international film festivals offer by developing its own circuit of film festivals.

40. To establish relationships with other countries at a governmental level in order to cross-promote national production.

This can be done in a number of different ways such as:

- showcasing Catalan cinema/films in festivals
- programming cinema seasons on public television
- seasons in national film institutes to include conferences and the presence of filmmakers and actors.

41. To establish a platform for Catalan production companies to develop common marketing strategies focused on different international audiences.

One of the current limitations of the Catalan film industry is that it consists of small and medium size companies. In order to make the industry competitive at the international level the different companies in the Catalan film industry sector should work together in marketing and promotional strategies.

42. To generate talent with international status by promoting the participation of local professionals in international projects.



43. To take advantage of the leadership and specialization of the Catalan film industry in certain areas such as animation to increase Catalan penetration in international markets.

The film industry nowadays is characterized by a growing variety of content and formats and a progressive diversification of distribution channels due to new technologies. These developments imply both opportunities and challenges to the industry. The Catalan film industry, as happens with the European industry, is dominated by American production but receives government intervention and support. Moreover, Catalan audiences prefer Hollywood productions over their own national films. Regarding the funding mechanisms of cinema it is clear that the current economic situation has led to a decrease of both private and public investment. All these questions have to be addressed by the competent authorities in collaboration with film producers, distributors and exhibitors in order to develop a strong film industry able to compete in the international market. Catalan cinema has demonstrated that it is able to be creative and innovative, and can offer quality products, but some of these do not even reach the local audiences they should.

#### **5.4. Summary**

In this chapter I have made a number of recommendations for the nationalization and internationalization of Catalan cinema. Among them I want to highlight the importance of engaging Catalan audiences with their own cinema, and the need to restructure the industry to work in a more efficient way to establish synergies and share targets in order for the cinema to compete in the international market. This should be done by developing a close collaboration between the governmental bodies — such as ICEC — and film producers and distributors. This is a set of proposals that might be addressed and possibly implemented over the next fifteen years.

## Conclusion

This work has aimed to examine the conditions that create and reinforce a national cinema and it has explored the character or distinguishing features of French, English and Spanish cinemas as potential models for Catalan cinema. Moreover, it aimed to show that cultural value can provide an added value to Catalan cinema that helps to engage both domestic audiences (by their closeness to the stories) and international audiences (by the specificity of the stories), to argue that state funding would be useful for Catalan cinema in terms of internationalization, and to present a model of a new framework that might be implemented.

In order to develop this model I established four objectives:

1. to examine the interrelationship between cultural identity and industrial demands, analyzing the distribution of film grants based on cultural, regional or national criteria, and identifying the origins of the resources used by different screen agencies;
2. to examine the historical development of official film policies and funding criteria in the UK, France, and specially Spain and Catalonia, focusing in particular on debates surrounding cultural value;
3. to define, with reference to Catalan cinema, the economic problems related to film grants and internationalization in comparison with the Spanish, UK and French industry;
4. to identify the role played by cultural representation in the development of film projects, with specific reference to Catalonia as a regional cinema.

In relation to the first objective, this thesis has argued that cultural industries, such as the film industry, have a dual nature: they function both as an economic sector with innovative potential and as a vector of cultural diversity. They are sources of innovation, create jobs and act as interfaces between the different types of sectors and activities; they are a source of competitive advantage and key in the development of non-technological innovation; they are powerful motivators of technological innovation, factors of local and territorial

development and driving forces of industrial transformation. Moreover, they can promote pluralism and cultural diversity and can be instruments to promote (national) identity. They are not like other product industries because they also have cultural objectives and therefore their success is not limited to economic benefits.

However, this dualism creates tensions between international free market advocates such as the United States and supporters of protectionism for cultural products such as European countries, where penetration of US films poses a threat to local production. Consequently, countries such as Britain, France or Spain initiate and support international, regional and national agreements that help them to protect their cultural products. This thesis has examined the interrelationship between cultural identity and industrial demands in relation to the film industries of Britain, France, Spain and Catalonia and has identified the origins of the resources used by the different screen agencies of those countries over time. All of them have created specialized governmental bodies and agencies dedicated to the development of financing mechanisms to support their domestic film production industry.

In relation to the second objective (to examine the historical development of official film policies and funding criteria in the UK, France, and specially Spain and Catalonia) I can conclude that both British and French industries rely to a large extent on the financing mechanisms that their respective government film bodies and agencies develop to help the film industry. In the UK, the allocation of Lottery funding for film production and the establishment of the British Film Institute (BFI) were crucial in avoiding the homogeneity of globalisation: the BFI funding budget focuses on promoting creative talent so that directors and producers can experiment with new ideas rather than just creating products for the market. In France, there are several financial sources for French film producers: a huge proportion of the money invested in film production in France comes from TV channels, the SOFICAs (*Société pour le Financement du Cinéma et de l'Audiovisuel*, a company for the financing of films and audiovisual works) finances films and audiovisual works approved by the CNC (Centre National de la Cinématographie) and the most important French grant, known

as the 'Avance sur Recettes', is a refundable grant awarded to around fifty-five projects every year. Spain has also recognized the importance of cinema both in terms of industry and culture and therefore acknowledges the need for government intervention that allows the preservation of cultural diversity. The Institute of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts (ICAA) promotes and manages Spanish film activities across production, distribution and exhibition; it promotes Spanish cinema abroad and cooperates with the Spanish autonomous governments to develop their own regional cinemas and promote cultural communication between regions in this sector. Subsidies, exhibition quotas and dubbing licenses for foreign films issued only when Spanish films are also released are the three financial tools that have enabled the Spanish film industry to survive.

Catalan cinema receives grants and funding directly through the ICAA as part of the Spanish film industry but the Catalan administration has also created its own film entities such as the Catalan Institute of Cultural Companies (ICEC) that supports Catalan cinema in the same way that the ICAA supports Spanish cinema. Moreover, the cultural and economic values of Catalan cinema are promoted and protected by several institutions — such as the Catalan Film Academy — that have been created in the last few decades with that aim. Therefore, the Catalan film industry has institutional support within the Catalan administration that is comparable to that of other national cinemas.

The third and fourth objectives of this thesis (to define, with reference to Catalan cinema, the economic problems related to film grants and internationalization; in comparison with the Spanish, UK and French industry and to identify the role played by cultural representation in the development of film projects, with specific reference to Catalonia as a regional cinema) are focused on Catalan cinema, its problems and strengths in relation to its potential to become a national cinema and to its internationalization; as well as the role played by cultural representation in the development of film projects with specific reference to Catalonia as a regional cinema. The central argument is that although Catalan cinema is currently a regional cinema, it is capable of becoming a national cinema as Catalonia has its own culture and historical heritage, as well as many of the

administrative institutions of a state. I started by analyzing the academic debates concerning regional, national and international cinemas in the context of the relationship between cultural identity and the economic demands of the industry in chapter one. Chapter two studied British and French national cinemas and analysed key films because they represent two different models of national cinema that are already present in Catalan cinema. The British film industry has, to a large extent, followed a model of competition with Hollywood-style productions addressed to the mainstream market while French cinema is possibly the best representation of a cinema 'd'auteur'. Catalan cinema combines these two models in that it has developed a sound cinema 'd'auteur' with names such as Marc Recha, Jaime Rosales, Albert Serra and Pere Portabella but, at the same time, it has also experienced a renewal of commercial cinema with films such as *Salvador* (Manuel Hueriga, 2006) and *Mapa dels sons de Tòquio* (Map of the Souds of Tokyo, Isabel Coixet, 2009). Moreover, Catalan cinema has developed some niche markets such as horror cinema with names such as Jaume Balagueró (*Darkness*, 2002; *Rec*, 2007) or José A. Bayona (*El orfanato*, *The Orphanage*, 2007), who directed quite personal works aimed at wider audiences, as well as a significant wave of documentary production since the 1990s with works such as *Tras el cristal* (*In a Glass Case*, Joaquím Jordà, 2003) or *La leyenda del tiempo* (*The legend of time*, Isaki Lacuesta, 2006).

However, can Catalan cinema be considered a national cinema, independent from Spanish cinema? To apply the concept of Catalan identity to Catalan cinema can be complicated for, as has been pointed out, Catalan cinema has historically become marginal due to several causes such as the Franco regime and its ideological censorship which did not allow the development of a cinema that could be labeled as Catalan and the lack of commitment by producers and entrepreneurs to the cultural aspects of cinema. In this sense the use of the Catalan language in cinema was limited both by the Franco regime and by the commercial interests of producers. I have argued that in order for Catalan cinema to become a national cinema and to develop an independent and successful film industry, it has to differentiate itself from Spanish cinema. As this chapter establishes, many experts such as Joel Joan, former director of the Catalan Academy of Cinema, consider that Catalan cinema has its own, well-

defined character: this is due to factors such as Catalonia's distance from the centre of political decision-making and the Spanish television industry; having its own language and culture; the aim of the Catalan authorities to define a common identity; and the long tradition of film production in Catalonia making the region, along with Madrid, one of the driving forces behind cinema in Spain. However, Catalan cinema is still part of Spanish cinema both in terms of industry and culture. Moreover, it shares the problems of Spanish cinema — and other cinemas — such as the financing of its film industry, the preference of domestic audiences for Hollywood productions and the need to develop production and distribution strategies to compete in the global market. As chapter four establishes, the main challenge for Spanish cinema is to build up a competitive film industry while developing Spanish cinema as an easily recognizable brand, able to disseminate Spanish culture and way of life. Catalan cinema also needs to foster the competitiveness of its film industry in order to reach the international market but it faces in addition the challenge of differentiating itself from Spanish cinema if it is to be a national cinema in its own right.

In this respect, the Catalan language can and should play an important role in construction of a national Catalan cinema. There is some debate over the extent to which the Catalan language should be a criterion for considering a film Catalan, and some critics point out that the Catalan administration has used cinema as a tool for promoting the Catalan language instead of respecting it as an art form. Clearly, language is a way of transmitting culture but not the only one and Catalan cinema should not be defined exclusively by the use of Catalan. Nevertheless, the Catalan language should be seen, not as a problem for international audiences, but as a cultural element that can add a further element of interest to Catalan films. In this sense, Catalan cinema 'd'auteur', independent from the Spanish star system, has achieved acceptance in film festivals where the language of the film is not an issue and the Catalan language may give films an added value for some viewers. However more important than the question of language, Catalans need to be protagonists in their own stories and Catalan history, literature and arts should be represented in cinema.

To accomplish the aim of this thesis I presented in chapter five a number of recommendations addressed to the film industry and to the Catalan government film institutions; these are aimed at strengthening the industry, increasing its potential as a national cinema and fostering its internationalization. In order to strengthen the economic value of the Catalan film industry I argue that it is necessary to connect with audiences, to maximise the opportunities that the new digital technologies provide as well as to counteract the problems that they cause, to find new ways and strategies of funding and to implement new strategies of production, distribution and exhibition. The recommendations propose ways of accomplishing these objectives; some are addressed to the Catalan administration and others to the film industry (producers, distributors and exhibitors).

To promote Catalan cinema as a good of cultural value and in order for it to become a national cinema it is necessary to make Catalan cinema a recognizable brand and to invest in talent, innovation, research, knowledge and heritage. I recommend establishing a Catalan network of cinema institutions, in the way that Britain has done, that will develop synergies and collaboration strategies with the aim of promoting Catalan cinema as a national cinema at the international level. As I have argued, internationalization is important for Catalan cinema both in terms of industry and culture: commercially, it serves to expand markets for films and can provide growth opportunities for small film-producing countries; in terms of cultural value, it increases the potential for promoting historical and cultural heritage. In relation to the internationalization of the Catalan film industry I have analyzed the participation of Catalan cinema in international film festivals — such as the Katalanische Filmatage in Berlin and the Catalan showcase at the Cambridge Film Festival — and in co-productions have discussed the promotion of Catalonia as a film location. I conclude that the presence of Catalan films in international film festivals is especially relevant to the development of Catalan cinema as a recognizable brand by international audiences and to the promotion of Catalan culture and heritage. Moreover, through festivals, Catalan cinema ‘d’auteur’ and more niche cinema genres such as horror and documentary films have the potential to reach worldwide audiences interested in a cinema beyond the mainstream. Consequently, I have

recommended that Catalan government and private film institutions should promote the inclusion of Catalan films in such festivals and argued that Catalan film institutions should encourage the development of a circuit of international film festivals in Catalonia as a way of promoting their own cinema both among Catalan and international audiences.

The promotion of Catalonia as a shooting location is also relevant for Catalan cinema because feature film is an effective mechanism for promoting tourism and an important direct source of revenue. I analyzed the film *Vicky, Cristina, Barcelona*, as a good example of how a location, in this case Barcelona, can become a character in a film and influence people's choice of holiday destination. Although it is somewhat controversial to consider this film a Catalan film, these types of co-productions provide many advantages due to the synergy between the economic strategies and the multicultural relationships that they generate. In terms of financing they encourage sharing risks and attracting foreign investors, commercially they represent an increase of the potential market, and culturally they promote mutual knowledge and diversity. Consequently, co-production should be promoted as a means of increasing the potential market for Catalan films as well as to spread Catalan cultural heritage.

However, the focus of public intervention should be in promoting films such as *Black Bread*, because, as the analysis showed, it can be considered the epitome of Catalan cinema. Everything in it is Catalan — the director, actors, language, location and theme — but it is of interest to international audiences because the story about the moral devastation of civilian populations in times of war appeals to human behavior and emotions. *Black Bread* is a good example of how Catalan cinema can reach an international level and be successful in economic terms as well as being a vector of culture and heritage.

I believe that the recommendations proposed in this thesis are realistic and can be accomplished in a period of fifteen to twenty years. It is true that the financial aspects may present difficulties, especially taking into account current economic circumstances, but with the development of the financial mechanisms that I propose and the likely improvement of the Catalan economy in the next two decades, Catalan cinema should be able to implement these recommendations



and reach international markets as well as fulfilling its potential as a national cinema.

Currently, there is an intense social debate in Catalonia, and in Spain, about Catalonia's separation from Spain's benefits and risks. The current director of the Catalan Academy of Cinema, Isola Passola, tries to convince Catalans about the benefits of becoming an independent country in her new documentary *L'endemà. Respostes per a decidir* (2013, *The day after. Answers to decide*). She does not address specifically how independence will affect the Catalan cinema industry and it is difficult to predict how, if it happens, this will affect the film industry and if and how it will improve its potential to become an international industry.

Advocates for independence argue that Catalonia will be better off in economic terms being an independent state; if this is true, the Catalan film industry can surely benefit from it. More financial support for the sector will improve production, and perhaps more importantly, distribution and marketing. On the other hand, of course, there are those who think that the Catalan economy will suffer a great deal: an exit from the euro, debt downgrades and the Bloomberg Business fight of banks and other businesses are possible consequences of independence. This scenario will have, no doubt, a negative impact for the film sector, as well as for the rest of the economy.

In terms of its potential to become a national cinema, independence will provide a better scenario for Catalan cinema to find its own voice and develop itself without the interference that being part of Spanish cinema supposes, and being a nation-state will allow Catalan policy makers to elaborate the best possible strategies and policies to preserve and foster cultural diversity and, in cinema, to become international.

However, independence is neither compulsory for Catalan cinema to develop a national cinema nor to reach the international level. In a Europe full of different nationalities, many of which do not have their own state, regions have, or should have, opportunities to develop and disseminate their own cultural

heritage. And Catalonia can find a better understanding, both in economic and cultural terms with Spain. In that sense, the recommendations I propose can and should be implemented in either possible political scenario.

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## Films' Technical Specifications

**Title:** *The King's Speech*

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**Directed by:** Tom Hooper

**Country:** UK, Australia

**Language:** English

**Year:** 2010

**Runnig time:** 118 min.

**Genre:** Historical drama

**Rating:** Not suitable for under seven years old

**Cast:** Helena Bonham Carter, Colin Firth, Guy Pearce, Michael Gambon, Geoffrey Rush, Timothy Spall, Jennifer Ehle, Derek Jacobi, Anthony Andrews, Eve Best, Dominic Applewhite, Max Callum, Filippo Delaunay, Tim Downie, Freya Wilson, Mark Barrows, Harry Sims, Sean Talo, Anna Reeve Cook, James Currie, Dick Ward, Mary Robinson, Naomi Westerman, Jasmine Virtue

**Screenplay:** David Seidler

**Web:** [www.kingsspeech.com](http://www.kingsspeech.com)

**Distributed by:** DeA Planeta Home Entertainment

**Produced by:** See Saw Films, Bedlam Productions

**Budget:** 15.000.000,00 \$

**Casting:** Kharmel Cochrane Nina Gold Robert Sterne

**Co-producción:** Peter Heslop, Simon Egan

**Executive Co-producción ejecutiva:** Deepak Sikka

**Artistic Department:** Amy Merry, Camise Oldfield, Corina Burrough, Douglas Ingram, Emma Weaver, Eva Onsrud, Rebecca Walker

**Publishing Department:** Gareth Spensley, Siobhan Boyes, Tim Drewett, Tony Tromp

**Music Department:** Gerard McCann, John Barrett, Maggie Rodford, Sylvain Morizet, Terry Davies

**Artistic director:** Netty Chapman

**Production design:** Eve Stewart

**Special effects:** James Davis III, Mark Holt

**Visual effects:** Anthony Webb, Audrius Urbonavicius, Duncan Holland, Fawnda Denham, Hanuman Patel, Marc Hutchings, Pratik Kalbende, Rick McMahon, Sanjiv Naik, Suchita Suryamurty, Thomas M. Horton

**Fotography:** Danny Cohen

**Screenplay:** David Seidler

**Make-up artists:** Catherine Elizabeth Smith, Frances Hannon, Karen Cohen, Kristyan Mallett, Nana Fischer

**Editing:** Tariq Anwar

**Music:** Alexandre Desplat

**Production:** Emile Sherman, Gareth Unwin, Iain Canning

**Executive production:** Mark Foligno, Paul Brett, Tim Smith

**Sound track:** Andie Derrick, Andre Schmidt, Catherine Hodgson, Catherine Thomas, Forbes Noonan, Jim Goddard, John Midgley, Lee Walpole, Martin Jensen, Matthew Skelding, Mike Reardon, Nick Foley, Paul Hamblin, Peter Burgis, Philip Clements, Virginia Thorn

**Wardrobe:** Alison Beard, David Otzen, Jenna McGranaghan Jenny Beavan Linda O'Reilly, Marco Scotti, Tim Aslam

**Title:** *Pan's Labyrinth*

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**Original title:** El laberinto del fauno

**Directed by:** Guillermo del Toro

**Country:** US, Spain, Mexico

**Language:** Spanish

**Year:** 2006

**Running time:** 118 min

**Genre:** Drama, War, Fantasy

**Rating:** Not suitable for under eighteen years old

**Cast:** Ivana Baquero, Sergi López, Maribel Verdú, Doug Jones, Ariadna Gil, Álex Angulo, Manolo Solo, César Vea, Roger Casamajor, Ivan Massagué, Gonzalo Uriarte, Eusebio Lázaro, Francisco Vidal, Juanjo Cucalón, Lina Mira, Mario Zorrilla, Sebastián Haro, Mila Espiga, Pepa Pedroche, Ana Sáez, Chani

Martín, Milo Taboada, Fernando Albizu, Pedro G. Marzo, José Luis Torrijo, Íñigo Garcés, Fernando Tielve, Federico Luppi, Chicho Campillo, Pablo Adán

**Distributed by:** Warner Bros. Pictures

**Produced by:** Estudios Picasso, Esperanto Filmoj, Tequila Gang, Telecinco, OMM, Sententia Entertainment

**Thanks to:** Alejandro González Iñárritu, Jesus de la Vega

**Animation:** Angie Jones

**Casting:** Cristina Perales, Macarena Pombo Sara Bilbatúa

**Executive co-production:** Edmundo Gil

**Music:** Brian Howard, Chema Ruiz, Marc Blanes Matas, Miguel Sanchez

**Production design:** Eugenio Caballero

**Special Effects:** Aleix Torrecillas, Ángel Alonso, Arturo Balceiro, Carlos Ortega, César Abades, David Martí, Javier Aliaga, Joaquin Vergara, José M. Meneses, Jose Manuel Rodrigo, Juan Serrano, Montse Ribé, Nelly Guimaras, Óscar Abades, Pablo Perona Navarro, Pau Loewe, Raquel Guirro, Reyes Abades, Sergio Sandoval, Xavi Bastida

**Visual Effects:** Aaron Kupferman, Aaron Singer, Adam Stern, Akira Orikasa, Alex Friderici, Alisa Loren Klein, Bernadette Couture, Bernardo Rodriguez, Brian Openshaw, Chris LeDoux, Chris MacKenzie, Chris Pinto, Cory Redmond, Danny Torres, Dariush Derakhshani, David Ebner, Debi Lyons, Derek Krauss, Desi Ortiz, Domenic DiGiorgio, Doug Cram, Eddie Soria, Edward Irastorza, Emilio Ruiz del Río, Everett Burrell, Fernanda Plana, Grzegorz Jonkajtys, Jason Thielen, Jeff Barnes, Jen Cantwell, Joseph Hoback, Josh Heeren, Kirk Cadrette, Krishnamurti Costa, Lance Ranzer, Laura Maynadé, Leigh van der Byl, Lindsay Anderson, Mag Sarnowska, Melissa Widup, Michael Kaelin, Michael Kennen, Mike Bozulich, Motassem Younes, Neil Lim Sang, O.D. Welch, Patrice d.S. Saenz, Phillip Giles, Richard R. Reed, Robert Stromberg, Robert Tesdahl, Ron Friedman, Ruben Rodas, Ryan Bozajian, Scott Krehbiel, Soo Youn Han, Steve Dellerson, Steve Hutchins, Szymon Masiak, Tina Wallace, Toby Newell, Todd Widup, Tom Williamson, Tracy Nicole Irwin, Vange Ingan, Vicki Galloway-Weimer, W. Kale Whorton, Wendy Hulbert

**Fotography:** Guillermo Navarro

**Screenplay:** Guillermo del Toro

**Make-up artists:** Arjen Tuiten, Blanca Sánchez, Carmen Picazo, David Martí, Elvira Guijarro, José Quetglás, Mar Paradela, Martha Marín, Sandra Tejedor

**Editing:** Bernat Vilaplana

**Produced by:** Alfonso Cuarón, Álvaro Augustín, Bertha Navarro, Frida Torresblanco, Guillermo del Toro

**Title:** *Cell 211*

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**Original title:** Celda 211

**Directed by:** Daniel Monzón

**Country:** France, Spain

**Language:** Spanish

**Year:** 2009

**Running time:** 110 min

**Genre:** Drama, Action

**Cast:** Carlos Bardem, Luis Tosar, Antonio Resines, Marta Etura, Manolo Solo, Luis Zahera, Alberto Ammann, Jesús Carroza, Félix Cubero, Manuel Morón, Vicente Romero, Jesus Del Caso, Fernando Soto, Juan Carlos Mangas

**Web:** [www.celda211.com](http://www.celda211.com)

**Distributed by:** Paramount Pictures

**Produced by:** Morena Films, Vaca Films, Telecinco Cinema, La Fabrique de Films, La Fabrique 2

**Budget:** 5.700.000,00 \$

**Adaptación:** Daniel Monzón, Jorge Guerricaechevarría

**Casting:** Eva Leira, Yolanda Serrano

**Directed by:** Daniel Monzón

**Production design:** Antón Laguna

**Special Effects:** Jordi Morera, Juan Serrano

**Visual Effects:** Thorsten Rienth

**Fotography:** Carles Gusi

**Editing:** Cristina Pastor

**Music:** Roque Baños

**Original novel:** F.P. Gandull



**Produced by:** Álvaro Augustín, Borja Pena, Emma Lustres Gómez, Juan Gordon

**Sound track:** Patrick Ghislain

**Wardrobe:** Montse Sancho

**Title:** *A Prophet*

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**Original title:** Un prophète

**Directed by:** Jacques Audiard

**Country:** France

**Language:** French

**Year:** 2009

**Running time:** 150 min

**Genre:** Crime, Drama

**Cast:** Alaa Oumouzoune, Niels Arestrup, Adel Bencherif, Gilles Cohen, Tahar Rahim, Salem Kali, Pascal Henault, Sonia Hell, Reda Kateb, Jean-Philippe Ricci, Jean-Emmanuel Pagni

**Screenplay:** Jacques Audiard, Thomas Bidegain

**Web:** [www.aprophet.ca](http://www.aprophet.ca)

**Distributed by:** Alta Films

**Produced by:** Why Not Productions, BIM Distribuzione, Chic Films, Page 114

**Budget:** 12.000.000,00 €

**CASTING:** Geneviève Acien, Julie Gouet Richard Rousseau

**Artistic Department:** Anne Pelosi, Boris Piot, Lionel Mathis, Pascal Leguellec

**Publishing Department:** Frederic Jupin, Isabelle Julien

**Visual Effects:** Vincent Frei

**Fotography:** Stéphane Fontaine

**Original Screenplay:** Abdel Raouf Dafri, Nicolas Peuffaillit

**Male-up artists:** Alexandra Bredin, Alice Robert, Frédérique Ney

**Music:** Alexandre Desplat

**Produced by:** Martine Cassinelli

**Sound track:** Cyrille Richard, Dominique Eyraud, Jean-Paul Hurier, Marc Doisne

**Wardrobe:** Ariane Daurat, Isabelle Pannetier, Olivia Lahougue, Paulette Ribot  
Virginie Montel

**Title:** *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*

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**Original title:** Vicky Cristina Barcelona

**Directed by:** Woody Allen

**County:** US, Spain

**Year:** 2008

**Running time:** 96 min

**Genre:** Drama, Romance

**Cast:** Rebecca Hall, Scarlett Johansson, Javier Bardem, Penélope Cruz, Christopher Evan Welch, Chris Messina, Patricia Clarkson, Kevin Dunn, Julio Perillán, Juan Quesada, Richard Salom, Manel Barceló, Josep Maria Domènech, Emilio de Benito, Maurice Sonnenberg, Lloïl Bertran, Joel Joan, Sílvia Sabaté, Jaume Montané, Pablo Schreiber, Carrie Preston, Zak Orth, Abel Folk

**Web:** [www.vickycristinabarcelona.com](http://www.vickycristinabarcelona.com)

**Distribution Company:** Mediapro

**Produced by:** Antena 3 Televisión, Gravier Productions, Mediapro, Antena 3 Films

**Budget:** 15.500.000,00 \$

**Thanks to:** Deborah Alexander, Peter Schneider

**Casting:** Anabel Pereda, Cristina Font, Julie Schubert Juliet Taylor Luci Lenox Patricia Kerrigan DiCerto Pep Armengol, Sandra Sánchez

**Co-production:** Helen Robin

**Executive co-production:** Charles H. Joffe, Jack Rollins, Javier Méndez

**Artistic Department:** Marina Pozanco

**Publishing Department:** Elise DuRant, Harry Muller, Jorge Ortiz Yus, Kate Rose Itzkowitz, Michael P. Whipple, Scott Kordish, Tim Stipan

**Artistic direction:** Iñigo Navarro

**Production design:** Alain Bainée

**Visual Effects:** Bora Jurisic, Dragan Miokovic, Ella Boliver, J. John Corbett, Randall Balsmeyer, Vadim Turchin

**Fotography:** Javier Aguirresarobe

**Screenplay:** Woody Allen

**Make-up artists:** Ana Lozano, Eva Quilez, Jesús Martos, Manolo García, Robert Fama

**Editing:** Alisa Lepselter

**Production:** Gareth Wiley, Letty Aronson, Stephen Tenenbaum

**Executive production:** Jaume Roures

**Sound track:** Giles Khan, Jay Peck, Joe White, Jorge Adrados, Lee Dichter, Peter Glossop, Robert Hein, Shaun Mills

**Wardrobe:** Sonia Grande

**Title:** *Black Bread*

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**Original title:** Pa negre

**Directed by:** Agustí Villaronga

**Country:** France, Spain

**Language:** Catalan

**Year:** 2010

**Running time:** 108 min

**Genre:** Drama

**Rating:** Not suitable for under twelve years old

**Cast:** Sergi López, Marina Gatell, Eduard Fernández, Laia Marull, Roger Casamajor, Pep Tosar, Joan Carles Suau, Mercè Arànega, Lluïsa Castell, Eva Basteiro-Bertoli, Francesc Colomer, Nora Navas, Elisa Crehvet, Jordi Pla, Marina Comas, Jesús Ramos, Jesus Ratera

**Distribution Company:** SAVOR

**Adapted by:** Agustí Villaronga

**Production assistant:** Roser Vila-Abadal

**Casting:** Anabel Pereda Pep Armengol

**Artistic Department:** Anna Pujol Tauler

**Publishing Department:** Enric Sebastià, Laura Sanchez, Quique Cañadas

**Production design:** Ana Alvargonzález

**Visual Effects:** Quico Noizeux, Sandra Picher

**Especial Effects:** Jaime Fortea

**Fotography:** Antonio Riestra

**Make-up artists:** Alma Casal, Satur Merino

**Music:** José Manuel Pagán

**Original novel:** Emili Teixidor

**Produced by:** Lluís Ferrando

**Executive production:** Isona Passola

**Sound track:** Dani Fontrodona, Jaime Puig, Ricard Casals

**Wardrobe:** Mercè Paloma