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**The rise of art cinema in postwar film
culture: the exhibition, distribution, and
reception of foreign language films in
Britain 1945–1968**

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Submitted for the qualification of Doctor of Philosophy
Birkbeck University of London
Department of Film, Media and Cultural Studies 2018

I declare that the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

MARGARET O'BRIEN

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Abstract

The rise of art cinema in postwar film culture: the exhibition, distribution, and reception of foreign language films in Britain 1945–1968

This institutional and cultural history seeks to restore the foreign language art film to its influential position in postwar British film culture. Its central argument is that the elevation of a group of mainly European directors and films to the newly autonomous field of cinematic art reached its heights in the 1950s and 1960s. Three main factors which drove this process are explored: firstly, changes in society related to education and social mobility that created new audiences; secondly, changing economic and cultural contexts, especially the film festival, whereby European productions were able to challenge Hollywood; and thirdly the construction of new institutional frameworks through publications, distribution companies, cinemas, and film societies.

A further argument is that film critics, who were increasingly promoting the ideas of personal authorship inflected by national histories, provided audiences with analytical tools for their readings of art films, thus becoming key agents in the construction of intellectual discourses which separated the art film from Hollywood studio production.

The period also saw the combination of sexual explicitness in the 'serious' art film with an increasing number of continental X films being sold on their sexual titillation. This study investigates how and why these two trends sometimes met in the same spaces of distribution and exhibition, and how the overlapping identities of 'sex' and 'art' were negotiated by censors, critics, and audiences.

The thesis presents a national picture through new research on local case studies across the UK, mapping the impact of art films outside, as well as within, London and exploring how the particularities of place shaped audiences and programmes. Finally, an analysis of the findings from *Cinema Memories*, a project conducted for this thesis, provides fresh insights into the reception of foreign language films.

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Notes on film titles and terminology

Film titles

By and large, I have attempted to refer to films under a generally accepted English language release title, since most foreign language titles were translated into English with a few exceptions, for example *La dolce vita*, *L'avventura*, and *Hiroshima mon amour*. Other films were premiered in London with the foreign language title, and then distributed more widely with the English one, for example *Les Diaboliques* became the *Fiends*, or *Un homme et une femme* became *A Man and a Woman*. Sometimes, films were re-named, usually to make them more sexually suggestive, for example Buñuel's *La Joven/The Young Girl* was re-titled *Island of Shame*. Where there was more than one accepted title I have tried to point these out in the text. All feature films mentioned in the text are also listed in the filmography where the UK release title is shown first, along with the original language title, with the exception of Russian, Bengali, Greek, and Japanese films. Alternative titles are also listed where relevant, although I have not listed American titles.

Terminology

Many of the terms employed in this thesis have fluid meanings, both within the chronology of the narrative, and subsequently. Examples include 'specialised', 'art film', 'author', 'auteur', 'cinophilia', and many more. I have, by and large, attempted to use the contemporary language of the primary sources, including words like 'serious films' or 'the provinces', terms which are no longer used today but were in common currency until the mid 1960s. Where key words like 'continental', 'auteur' or 'art film' are characterised by changing connotations I have engaged with these in the text or footnotes and explored their meanings in context. Certain terms which have entered academic discourse more recently, like 'minority film culture', 'consecration' or 'artistic field' have similarly been explained in the text.

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Introduction

Aims and objectives

Through a history of how Britain's cinema culture reacted to and engaged with the postwar influx of foreign language films, my thesis seeks to explain how and why the foreign art film reached its pre-eminent position by the late 1960s. The narrative tracks stages in the creation of a new cultural infrastructure which included publications and international festivals as well as new locations and networks for distribution and exhibition, and, within those contexts, traces the development of an art film discourse with the 'auteur' or creative director at its centre.¹ Logically, however, the field of investigation has been broadened to look at how the overlapping discursive categories of 'art' and 'sex' in foreign films were represented and interpreted by critics, distributors, exhibitors, censors, and audiences alike.

Between 1945 and the end of the 1960s foreign language art films assumed a pivotal role in British film culture, and the analysis of their growth and diffusion is at the core of this thesis.² The main argument of my thesis is that the elevation of a group of films from mainly European countries to become an autonomous artistic field developed rapidly after the War and had consolidated that position by 1968. This process was driven by three main factors. Firstly, social changes especially rises in educational levels, changing leisure habits, and age structures all enabled and promoted opportunities for foreign art cinema to flourish in Britain. Secondly, new economic contexts created spaces for the distribution and exhibition of foreign films. These new contexts included an expansion of European film production to rival that of Hollywood, the creation through European co-productions of the big budget international art film, and the promotion of low budget auteur films for global niche markets. And all of these developments were promoted through the networks of the new international film festivals. Thirdly, the 1950s and 1960s saw the wider acceptance of film as an art form within a hitherto indifferent and sceptical culture, assisted by the development of an infrastructure of specialist institutions like the BFI, art cinemas, and film societies. Meanwhile, intellectual discourses evolved which established film as a legitimate and serious artistic medium through ideas of creative authorship and the promotion of the autonomy of film as art in opposition to commercial Hollywood studio productions that were represented as producing mere

¹ The terms auteur came into use in France from the mid 1950s but did not become commonly used in British film culture until the 1960s. However, the idea of the director as author went back to the 1920s and was becoming increasingly common in critical circles in Britain in the 1950s.

² The relative numbers of foreign language films were small. According to *Monthly Film Bulletin* In 1945, 38 foreign language films were registered, compared to 329 from the US and 104 British. Numbers rose steadily, reaching 93 in 1957 compared to 281 from the US and 107 British. The peak year was 1963 with 223 foreign language films (including 93 co-productions) compared to 115 from US and 100 British.

entertainment, inferior products for mass markets.³

The term 'foreign language film' also carried the overlapping connotations of, on the one hand, increasing sexual explicitness and, on the other, an artistic style which bore distinctive directorial marks. The two aspects of this dual identity were often defined in opposition to each other, as in high art versus entertainment, sexual frankness versus sensationalism, or artistic integrity versus commerce, yet they were also inescapably linked in ways that are analogous to the public debates surrounding the so called *Lady Chatterley* trial. By bringing these two trends into conversation with each other, this thesis aims to open up a more nuanced debate about a period of British film history when cinematic sex and art often occupied the same artistic, discursive, and institutional spaces.

A secondary aim of this thesis is to move beyond traditional emphases on the metropolis and its specialist cinemas, thus redrawing the map of foreign film culture across Britain. London, with its dense concentration of distributors, cinemas, intellectuals, and audiences, and its position as the nodal centre of the business and cultural networks of international film, was to remain the central spatial signifier of art cinema. But, my thesis will also construct a more densely populated and geographically diverse map of the places of exhibition, a map which shows differences in programming practices in local contexts.

The remapping will highlight samples of film societies, independent cinemas, and small chains as significant locations in a new cartography for foreign film culture. Any nationwide analysis of art film culture must re-assess the importance of the film society movement. By the late sixties, it had 550 registered groups with over 50,000 members, each one functioning within a locally specific cultural setting for screenings, discussion, and the sharing of film criticism.⁴ And some film societies in the major cities of the North of England and Scotland wielded significant cultural power. The histories of both the Glasgow and Edinburgh film societies, dating back to the early days of the 1920s, for example, reveal that the Glasgow Film Society helped to shape the programme and ethos of the Cosmo cinema. And the Edinburgh Film Guild became the intellectual home of the British Documentary Movement as well as the locus of an international festival which took its cues, not from London, but directly from a wider international orbit.

The thesis also aims to reveal how small independent cinemas and chains of

³ For a similar tri-partite approach see Baumann, 2007, 1-7.

⁴ A number of recent academic studies of film societies have re-examined their cultural importance. See the PhD thesis of Melanie Selfe, 2007, *The Role of Film Societies in the Presentation and Mediation of 'Cultural Film' in Post War Nottingham* and Richard MacDonald's book, 2015, *The Appreciation of Film* which emphasises the role of volunteer film societies as cultural sites of both alternative exhibition and of education, precursors of Film Studies in Higher Education.

cinemas outside of the West End of London in, for example, Oxford, Kemp Town, Dundee, and Finchley, exemplify how the specificities of place, with their particular relationships and social settings, can also represent the wider national picture.⁵ Some of these cinemas combined a commitment to art films with more popular programming which was designed to appeal to wider local communities. Others exploited the association of foreign auteurs with sexual explicitness and showed these works alongside films sold solely on their promise of titillation. These included the new 'nudies' and X shockers featuring so called social problem films about prostitution, single parenthood, and even sexual slavery. A few small chains such as the Cinephones, run by the Jacey Group which owned cinemas in Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, Liverpool, and Edinburgh, programmed this mix of prizewinning art films with more salacious X rated 'continentals'. The Classic chain on the other hand, with its 87 cinemas by 1967, specialized in the revival of old films from the Continent, Britain, or Hollywood. The Classics were sometimes located in towns, such as Eastbourne or Chester, which had no other access to foreign films.

Theoretical frameworks: the field of art cinema

'The producer of the value of the work of art is not the artist but the field of production as a universe of belief which produces the value of a work of art as a *fetish* by producing the belief in the creative power of the artist' (Bourdieu, 1996 [1992]: 229). A whole series of agents and institutions are involved in the production of such value, and any sociological understanding of the field must attend to the activities in which they are engaged.

–Tudor (2005)⁶

My study uses theories derived from seminal investigations into the arts by Pierre Bourdieu to help explain the central role of foreign language films in the postwar growth of art cinema. In two influential works, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (1993) and *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field* (1996), Bourdieu redefined the notion of a field of cultural production by considering not only writers and artists but also publishers, critics, dealers, and galleries.⁷ Although he did not write extensively about cinema his theoretical frameworks for Literature and Art have been usefully adapted by film sociologists Andrew Tudor and Shyon Baumann.

Tudor's article, 'The Rise and Fall of the Art (House) Movie' utilised Bourdieu's models of the production of value in the field of art in a short historical/sociological

⁵ Two recent microhistories of the Phoenix East Finchley and the Phoenix Oxford exemplify this approach. See respectively Turvey, 2010, and Alison, Chan and Gennari, 2013.

⁶ Ibid., 127-132.

⁷ See Bourdieu 1993 and 1996.

study of the activities of the agents and institutions particular to cinema within British film culture.⁸ His discussion of the 1930s argues that this was the key decade in the early formation of a cultural infrastructure for the determination of a film's value as a work of art.⁹ Tudor's analysis made extensive use throughout of the notion of 'consecration', defined by Bourdieu as the monopoly of the power to consecrate producers or products, whereby certain directors and films are granted special distinction by a range of institutions and agents, such as festivals, critics, magazines, film societies, cinemas etc.

Baumann, whose book *Hollywood Highbrow* traced how some Hollywood directors came to be considered 'artists' and their films as art in the USA during the 1960s, followed a similar approach in his detailed analysis of the connected institutions for production and consumption. His discussion of a field specific discourse, in particular, provided a fruitful theoretical tool for my study. He argued that, as well as a structure of institutions, intellectual fields require a field specific mode of discourse, a specialized set of concepts, understandings, and a vocabulary for discussing a field's products in analytical terms, thereby providing the rationales for calling these products art.¹⁰

Thus, Baumann's research explores the development of certain critical discourses as crucial elements in the consecration of some Hollywood directors as artists in the 1960s. He offers a detailed content analysis of nearly 700 film reviews that revealed recurrent reviewing techniques which used common concepts and vocabulary. These included a knowledge of the works of directors, the demarcation of contrasts between 'serious' art films and mere entertainment, and the promotion of the idea that art films should not be 'easy' to appreciate. Baumann argued that during a period when film critics enjoyed much more influence than they do today, the vocabulary, concepts, and analytical techniques they made available to audiences were major contributions to the creation of the field's specific discourse.¹¹

My thesis will add extensive use of newspaper reviews and magazines in order to track the development of art film discourses which initially emphasised realism, humanism, an antipathy to Hollywood and, by the 1960s, moved on to fully fledged auteurism. These ideas became common currency for the growing audiences engaged with minority film culture. Furthermore there is no doubt that in an age when print communication remained so central, the influence of critics like Dilys Powell and C.A. Lejeune (both beacons of cultural opinion) was considerable, as was the

⁸ Tudor, 2005, 125-138.

⁹ Ibid., 127-132.

¹⁰ Baumann, 2007, 162.

¹¹ Ibid., 111-159.

influence of such film publications as *Sequence*, *Sight and Sound*, *Monthly Film Bulletin*, *Film*, and *Films and Filming*.

Using discourse analysis for these and other media, I will argue that critics and writers were leading agents in the formation of the field. They provided information, language, and concepts for the discussion of film, and were highly influential in the consecration of European auteurs as artists and their films as works of art in British film culture.

Also relevant and heuristic for my analysis of the extension of this model to localities beyond London are the spatial theories of cultural geographer Doreen Massey who challenged notions of space as bounded locations. Her work is characterised by the association of space with chains of meaning which, instead, associated spaces with openness, heterogeneity, and liveliness.¹²

Her formulation of 'power geometry', that is of connections between spatiality and mobility, which are both shaped by and reproduce power differentials, is used throughout this study as a way of explaining the cultural relationships between London and the rest of the country. Massey's designation of spaces and places as sites of social relations and simultaneity as opposed to stasis, localism, and insignificance has been productive in providing a framework for my analysis of the film society's role as active agent of cultural change. Local film societies usually lacked dedicated venues of their own, tending to find temporary meeting places in colleges, community centres, and other public places such as showrooms. Their survival and resilience supports Massey's view that space is not just about physical locality but encompasses interpersonal relations. Film societies at a local level simultaneously functioned as spaces for socialising, for intellectual discussion, and for watching films. At the same time they became engaged in a whole set of interactions beyond the local, operating in regional, national, and even global networks.

Massey's ideas of the spatial can also be productively applied at a global level to film festivals, the most significant nodal points for the circulation of international art films. The heterogeneity of festival practices encompassed many different and sometimes contradictory roles, with the festival operating simultaneously as site of pilgrimage and intellectual debate, marketplace, tourist destination, creator of new auteurs, and playground for the stars.

Finally, my thesis draws on the network theories associated with the writings of Malte Hagener whose book *Moving Forward, Looking Back: the European Avant-garde and the Invention of Film Culture, 1919-1939* suggested the institutions and

¹² Massey, 2005, 19.

global networks of the avant-garde can be seen as precursors of art cinema. His model of the different layers of activity at work in film culture provides a metaphor for the dynamic flow and distribution of energy operating between and within a network of nodes. His research revealed a system of networks, located in the cities of Europe which operated through clubs, cinemas, events, and festivals and whose activities led Hagener to move the emphasis away from the aesthetic features of the avant-garde towards its transformative energies in political, social, and cultural issues.¹³ Hagener emphasised the roles played by key players or agents in the networks, seeing them as 'attractors and dynamic structures', interconnecting the different layers of activity whether in exhibition, education, or publishing.¹⁴ My thesis also makes use of biographies to consider, not only the primary functions of the key figures in postwar art cinema, but also their roles within networks as multi-functional connectors between the different national and international layers of film culture. The interweaving stories of exhibitors (George Hoellering, Jim Poole, and George Singleton), of critics (Dilys Powell, Penelope Houston, and Richard Roud), and of distributors (Charles Cooper and Kenneth Rive), which feature in this thesis are a salutary reminder of the power of individual agency in cultural history.

Methodology and methods

The concentration in this thesis on historical and cultural settings as well as institutions, audiences, and critical receptions are aspects of New Film History which has finally become established as an accepted methodological approach in academic Film Studies. The term was introduced by Thomas Elsaesser in *Sight and Sound* in 1986 in a discussion of new film histories, including the seminal *Film History: Theory and Practice* by Robert Allen and Douglas Gomery.¹⁵ He argued that these works signaled a move away from research on film as text and towards increased attention to cinema as a social, cultural, economic, and political institution, often best approached through detailed local studies.¹⁶

Subsequently most of the published work using this approach to film history came from the USA, including Barbara Wilinsky's *Sure Seaters: The Emergence of Art House Cinema* (2001), Tino Balio's *The Foreign Film Renaissance on American Screens* (2010), and David Andrews' *Theorizing Art Cinemas: Foreign, Cult, Avant-Garde and Beyond...* (2013).

Recently, however, the methodologies of New Film History have become more common in British film scholarship as evidenced by the publication of two volumes,

¹³ Hagener, 2007, 16.

¹⁴ Hagener, 2007, 21.

¹⁵ Allen and Gomery, 1985.

¹⁶ Elsaesser, 1986, 246-251.

The New Film History: Sources, Methods, Approaches, edited by James Chapman, Mark Glancy, and Sue Harper (2007) and *The Routledge Companion to British Cinema History*, edited by I.Q. Hunter, Laraine Porter, and Justin Smith (2017). These collections of essays reveal the diversity of new work on the history of film, histories which employ a wide range of primary sources, both filmic and non-filmic, to analyse cinema as it was experienced within historical and cultural contexts.

However, if New Film History is now firmly established in this country, only rarely have its methodological approaches been applied to art cinema. The publication in *Screen* of an early historical/institutional approach by Steve Neale, *Art Film as Institution* in 1981, was an important moment in film scholarship. The article examined the rise of art cinema and auteurism in Italy, France, and Germany in the contexts of national, economic, and institutional developments, as well as postwar aspirations for national identity and changing values to do with censorship and sexuality.¹⁷ But Neale's intervention was not followed up by further studies. The long silence in the 1980s and 1990s has been explained by Mark Betz as a reaction of academia against art cinema which, from the 1970s, came to be regarded as outmoded, modernist, and elitist. Betz argued persuasively that the study of art cinema quite simply became unfashionable, overtaken in Film Studies by both the interest in popular Hollywood cinema and by what were seen as 'purer' forms of political/radical filmmaking.¹⁸

Recently, however, there has been a resurgence of academic interest in European art cinema. Mark Betz's *Beyond the Subtitle: Remapping European Art Cinema* (2009) explicitly engaged in the project of 'Recovering European Art Cinema'. He looked at subjects as disparate as subtitling and dubbing, co-productions and omnibus films on the one hand, and on the other hand the imaging of women in the contexts of modernization and decolonization, thereby challenging the limitations of traditional auteurist or national cinema approaches to European film.¹⁹ Geoffrey Nowell-Smith's *Making Waves* (2008), similarly concerned with the political and institutional contexts of art cinema, considered how the innovative cinemas of the 1960s expressed the spirit of the age in their political and aesthetic radicalism, supported by new audiences who were also inspired by ideas of liberation.²⁰ Lucy Mazdon and Catherine Wheatley in a pioneering study, *French Film in Britain: Sex, Art and Cinephilia* (2013), examined the discourses, debates and institutional contexts which have given French cinema its special and complex place in British film culture. These three books have provided important insights and approaches to my own work.

¹⁷ Neale, 1981, 11-39.

¹⁸ Betz, 2009, 21-25.

¹⁹ Betz, 2009, 45-179.

²⁰ Nowell-Smith, 2008, 1-14.

Sources

A wide range of primary sources, including the trade press, film listings, publicity materials, newspapers, and popular film magazines, as well as more specialist art film publications, have been consulted in my investigation. These have been used, often in the absence of other records, to construct a chronology of the exhibition and distribution of foreign films. *Kine Weekly*, *Monthly Film Bulletin*, *What's On*, *Film Review*, *Sight and Sound*, and *Films and Filming* have provided the scaffolding for the building of a framework for the narrative. And for further investigation, *Sequence* and *Movie* were added to *Sight and Sound*, *Contemporary Film Review* and *Film to Films and Filming*, and *Picturegoer* to *Kine Weekly*.

No research which has a UK-wide remit can claim to be comprehensive. One of the main challenges in writing an institutional history of foreign language films is the paucity of evidence, with few extant records of distribution and non-circuit exhibition, and even fewer of the audience. My analysis is, of necessity, structured around a group of case studies, microhistories which are geographically scattered, and usually selected because of the availability of archives or other primary evidence. The archives of two leading arthouse cinemas, the Academy in London and the Cosmo in Glasgow, along with that of The Manchester and Salford Film Society, have been invaluable for the construction of detailed studies. In other cases, for example university film societies, the absence of archival material meant that the narratives had to be pieced together from memories, film programmes, and student newspapers. My own collection of disparate film society programmes has provided invaluable comparative evidence, not only of the main features shown, but of the shared culture of serious film appreciation which was created through programme notes, shorts, discussions, and publications.

I have also made extensive use of the archive of the British Board of Film Classification (hereafter BBFC). The 1950s and 1960s saw the liberalization of censorship in the arts when British adults came to be considered capable of making their own choices, guided in the film world by the introduction of the X certificate in 1951. As well as records of censorship and certification, some BBFC files include reports and correspondence. These offer insights into the sometimes contradictory attitudes and values of one of British society's key cultural gatekeepers, as well as its working relationships with distributors, exhibitors, and marketing people, in the days before the final letter in BBFC stood for censorship and not classification.²¹

²¹ In 1984 the name was changed from British Board of Film Censors to British Board of Film Classification on the grounds that classification was the major part of its work.

Thesis structure

This thesis, an analytical history embedded in the social, economic, and cultural changes of the time, foregrounds the institutional, discursive, and locational infrastructures that actively promoted the development of art cinema. It is organised chronologically in order to map the evolution of the field of art cinema, to trace the growth through time of the relevant networks, and to explore the development of new discourses.

The chapters are organised into sub-historical periods which are divided according to developments in art film culture, both British and European. As with the division of history into decades, these breaks can seem somewhat arbitrary and should be considered alongside the similarities and continuities which the chapters also share.

The Prologue starts with major changes in the film industry, especially the coming of sound, as the background to a discussion of changes in film culture in the 1930s when, it will be argued, the infrastructures of the field of art film were formed.

Chapter 1, 1945 to 1952. The end of the War and the promise of a new era was marked in cinematic terms by the re-opening of Cannes in 1946. Through an examination of Cannes, Venice, and Berlin this chapter will explore the extent to which the film festival rapidly became the central node of circulation and publicity as well as champion of new film movements, especially neorealism. It will then consider the specific conditions in British film culture which created spaces for the relative success of French and Italian art films. The chapter will close in 1952, shortly after the introduction of the X certificate which allowed wider circulation of continental films, and also the year of the first *Sight and Sound* International Critics Poll, when *Bicycle Thieves* came first, a moment which signaled a new era in international cinema.

Chapter 2, 1953 to 1958. Chapter 2 will analyse the stages in the consolidation of an art film culture, when institutions of distribution and exhibition established in the 1930s were now operating within new industrial and cultural contexts. It will look beyond London to activities in Scotland and to the film society movement across the country, and it will examine the role of the BFI whose *Sight and Sound*, National Film Theatre and London Film Festival were becoming central nodes in the networks of art film.

Chapter 3, also 1953 to 1958, will concentrate on the discourses of stardom and authorship, exploring how they helped to shape the identities of foreign language films in the 1950s. Discussions of the reception in Britain of the Italian stars Silvana Mangano, Gina Lollobrigida, and Sophia Loren, and of Brigitte Bardot, will consider how far these new continental icons came to embody novel and appealing ideas of femininity in the postwar world. Finally, this chapter will analyse the reception of Luis

Buñuel, Robert Bresson, Federico Fellini, Ingmar Bergman, Akira Kurosawa, Satyajit Ray, and Andrej Wajda, to explore how the construction of discourses around individual creativity and their links to national identity were essential to the growing influence of the idea of the director as author.

Chapter 4, 1959 to 1962, will start with the arrival of *400 Blows* and *Hiroshima mon amour* and finish with the dramatic leap to second place in the International Critics Poll of Michelangelo Antonioni's controversial *L'avventura*. It will argue that this short period, which marks the rise of the French New Wave and new Italian cinema, represents a point of transition into modernist and full blown auteurist cinema. It will then look in detail at the local and variegated landscape of foreign film across Britain to show that the consolidation of the artistic field went alongside an increasing reliance on sex to sell continental films. The chapter will conclude with a comparison of exhibition in two cities, London and Manchester.

Chapter 5, 1963 to 1968, will explore how the proliferation of international art films, showcased in festivals during the 'high sixties', coalesced with new audiences and critical communities who embraced modernism and auteurism. A comparison of cinema exhibition in 'Swinging London' with the provinces will highlight the uneven geographical development of art films on cinema screens. However, an exploration of two other channels of transmission will lessen the disparity. The section on television will show that BBC2's *World Cinema* opened up a wide programme of foreign films to a large domestic audience. And the final section will explore the interweaving narratives of community and university film societies in order to show their continuing cultural significance.

Chapter 6 will present and analyse the findings of my *Cinema Memories* survey, designed to explore personal experiences of foreign films. My research has elsewhere drawn on memory through informal interviews with activists, professionals, and film enthusiasts whose experiences, insights, and knowledge have enriched both the processes of research and the final thesis.²² However, the *Cinema Memories* project is based on a broader and more systematic inquiry into that most elusive aspect of cinema history, the audience.

The project goes beyond research into pre-existing sources to create a new archive of memories through analysis of 172 replies to an online questionnaire.²³ My questionnaire sought specific factual information on, for example, educational background, cinemas visited, and memorable films and directors, as well as the qualitative experiences of the impact of particular films, cinemas, and film societies in

²² See Acknowledgments for the list of interviewees.

²³ The questionnaire was inspired by Jackie Stacey's book *Star Gazing: Hollywood Cinema and Female Spectatorship*, based on letters and responses from film fans. See Stacey, 1994, 244-254.

the 1950s and the 1960s. These memories support themes that run through the previous five chapters: that in terms of lifestyle, politics, and aesthetic preferences, foreign language films played a prominent role in the cultural history of a generation and of the era. The films, and the discourses around them, changed ways of thinking about film, shaping fashion, style, and behaviour more broadly and creating the 'cinophilia' of the 1960s.²⁴

The affective power of some of these films which, recalled after 50 years or more, are still able to evoke memorable images or bring back the intensity of emotional relationships, comes over strongly. Some respondents also describe the transformative impact of certain films which may have converted them to new styles of filmmaking, or perhaps turned them into Francophiles or Marxists. The replies also reveal that the communities of interest which coalesced around art cinema created the academics, teachers, writers, and media professionals as well as the cinephiles of later years. And these people became active in the formation of new film cultures in the 1970s and beyond.

²⁴ The term cinephilia has had changing connotations: from approval in the 1960s it was later negatively used by theorists such as Paul Willemsen and now enjoys positive connotations associated with film on the internet.

Prologue: the formation of the field in the 1930s

During the 1930s, then, we see the construction of film as art in the sense that individual agents, and then institutions, increasingly promote the concept of an artistically distinctive cinema, produced by individual artists, and made available through specialist exhibition outlets.

–Andrew Tudor (2005)¹

This prologue explores, within the contexts of major changes in the film industry, the prewar origins of the specialist cinemas, film societies, publications, and networks of critics and activists, and argues that these institutions and agents came to form an early infrastructure for the field of film as art.

New contexts: sound, the dominance of Hollywood, and continental imports

In the 1930s cinemagoing in Britain, famously described by A.J.P. Taylor as ‘the essential social habit of the age’, was rapidly expanding.² Admissions went up from 903 million in 1934 to 990 million in 1939 and the number of cinemas rose from about 4,500 to nearly 5,000. Hollywood dominated, with British films accounting for only 25% of the market.

Hollywood’s leadership of the world markets, a process started during the First World War, was accelerated by the coming of sound. In Britain, the talkies flourished after the success of *The Jazz Singer* in 1928, and the subsequent wiring for sound was more or less complete by 1931. Sound films had a disastrous impact on the international movement of films, returning most national cinemas to their own home markets. In Britain the result was a predominance of English speaking films, for example, in 1932, out of 641 registered films, 449 were American, 153 British, and 39 continental, 18 of them German.³ By 1939, according to Rachael Low, the cinematic landscape had been transformed:

... the ordinary filmgoer knew only the English speaking stars of British and American pictures. The ease with which they had previously accepted stories and personalities from many European countries was a thing of the past.⁴

A few foreign productions managed to survive. The Austrian musical, the so called Vienna Film, was popular in Britain in the 1930s. *Maskerade*, for example, with its expressive use of music, Viennese historical setting, and elaborate *mise en scène*, was released in over a thousand cinemas. The first French production of the sound era to achieve international success in 1931 was René Clair’s *Sous les toits de Paris*.

¹ Tudor, 2005, 129.

² Taylor, 1978, 313.

³ C. A. Lejeune, *Observer*, 15/1/33, 12.

⁴ Low, 1985, xv.

Advertised as all singing and all talking and only 25% dialogue, its expressive use of sound, striking art direction, and music made it a success without the need for subtitles or dubbing. Distributed nationally by Universal in Britain, it was followed by two more Clair successes, *Le Million* and *A nous la liberté*.

For a short while big enterprises like German production company, UFA, experimented with multi-lingual productions: the highly successful *The Blue Angel*, for example, was shot simultaneously in German and English. But after 1932, when dubbing was introduced, these expensive and complicated productions declined.

From the early days a distinction, based on cultural value, was made between dubbed and subtitled films, with most 'serious' film critics expressing disapproval of dubbing. When the dubbed version of *M* was shown at the Cambridge cinema in 1932, for example, C.A. Lejeune complained that there was a perfectly good subtitled copy in the country.⁵ Foreign films were more likely to be successful on the circuits if they were dubbed. Both *Le Roman d'un tricheur*, distributed nationwide as *The Cheat* and *Un carnet de bal* were dubbed and circulated around the country after long runs in their subtitled versions at the Academy and Studio One respectively.

From lagging behind German and Russian films in the early 1930s, French films became the new trend in the second half of the decade.⁶ By 1938, out of 52 continental imports, France led the way with 33 films, whilst Germany and USSR had declined to six each, and Austria to only one.⁷ The change was related to the political upheavals in Europe, but was also partly due to the popularity of the new French stars of the sound era like Raimu, Fernandel, and Annabella. A few high profile French films, like *The Cheat* and *Un carnet de bal* did get national distribution, as did the stylish and suggestive French comedy *La Kermesse héroïque* which, after an eight month run at Studio One, was distributed countrywide by Gaumont British, and was even shown on television in 1938.

Meanwhile, French films were doing well in London. According to Vincent Porter, by 1939 a Francophile cinemagoer could have seen about 110 feature films, 30 of them premiered at the Academy.⁸ French cinema was increasingly favoured by the critics, with C.A. Lejeune devoting two of her columns in the *Observer* in 1938 to its virtues and expressing the hope that 'spoilt, pampered London . . . enjoying the cream of modern cinema . . . will salute with some enthusiasm, France's coming of age'.⁹ Critics admired French films for their realism, fine acting, and quality direction.

⁵ *Observer*, 5/6/32, 14.

⁶ For a full account, see Mazdon and Wheatley, 2013, 17-47.

⁷ Aggregated from *MFB*, 1938.

⁸ Porter, 2010, 19.

⁹ *Observer* 16/1/38 and 12/6/38.

Grahame Greene in the *Spectator* described Renoir's *La Bête humaine* with Jean Gabin as 'more a director's than an actor's picture' and drew attention to the cinematic ways in which he used the everyday details of the railway station.¹⁰ Similarly, in his review of *La Femme du boulanger*, he praised the realism of the acting but was particularly impressed by Pagnol's direction where 'he planks (sic) his camera down in a Provençal village and shoots in brick and stone'.¹¹

For some audiences, in an age of strict censorship, the appeal of foreign language films was their representation of risqué subject matter. There were in fact many reasons why films might be rejected by the censor, ranging from cruelty to animals to bad relations between capital and labour, but it was the 'sordid themes' such as 'companionate marriage' which were often associated with foreign films.

Local authorities had retained the right to disagree with the BBFC and show or ban a film in their own area, which often meant extra publicity was given to controversial foreign films. The sexually explicit Czechoslovakian film *Ekstase*, first shown uncensored at the London Film Society and then in the provincial societies, also did well commercially in censored versions.

Some specialised cinemas

A small film audience which attended specialised cinemas and/or film societies, usually to see subtitled foreign films, was established in the 1930s. These cinemas became centres of minority film culture, with their own mailing lists, programme notes, events, and distinctive ambience which together signalled film as art. In contrast to the continuous programmes in popular cinemas, their timed programmes tended to have one main feature supported by shorts and documentaries. And the audience behaved differently, sitting in attentive silence. Ernest Dyer's article 'Cinema Pests', in *Sight and Sound* 1937, pinpointed the contrasts with popular cinema, humorously listing all the distractions; paper parcels of chips and toffees, cigarette and chocolate wrappings, the noise of conversation, and usherettes who giggle at the back and shine lights in your face. But for Dyer, the main nuisance was the constant coming and going which led him to conclude that 'Until the practice of continual admission is given up, there is little hope for intelligent cinema . . . a film needs seeing from the beginning as a play does'.¹²

The specialised cinemas were almost exclusively based in London where, as new venues for a new art, they became barometers of cultural taste and places for critics to view the latest continental films. By 1939 the number of foreign language cinemas

¹⁰ Greene, 1993, 288.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 300.

¹² *Sight and Sound* (hereafter S&S), vol.16, no.24, Winter 1937-38, 3-4.

in London had risen to seven. Three in particular, the Academy, Curzon, and Everyman, had networking functions and through the introduction, publicising, and distribution of key films, helped to establish the new minority film culture.¹³

The Academy in Oxford Street, described by Elizabeth Coxhead in *Close Up* as a community of like-minded people as much as a cinema, led the way.¹⁴ In 1931, its owner Eric Hakim had the idea of catering for the French speaking population of London by holding a one year French season, and before the year was up he invited Elsie Cohen to take over the management. Cohen introduced a policy of premieres and longer runs of new, subtitled films, turning a small cinema of 534 seats into London's flagship for foreign language screenings in the 1930s.¹⁵ Many films, including Sacha Guitry's *Le Roman d'un tricheur*, distributed as *The Cheat*, Willi Forst's *Maskerade*, and Jean Renoir's *La Grande Illusion*, aka *Grand Illusion*, were turned into classics by the Academy. Cohen, with her numerous press contacts, had a gift for promotion. Her charity premieres were attended 'by royalty and all London Society' including the Duke and Duchess of York for a midnight screening of *Kameradschaft* in 1932.¹⁶ And Cohen pioneered the subtitled film, starting with *Kameradschaft* with 70 titles, and followed by *Mädchen in Uniform* with 230. The latter was so popular that it got national distribution after a six month run.

The Curzon, built in 1934 with 496 seats, became the Academy's main rival. An unashamedly elite arthouse in Curzon Street, Mayfair, its modernist design was inspired by the simplicity of Parisian cinemas. (Figure 1). It was altogether more expensive and exclusive in atmosphere than the other continental cinemas in London. The opening film in 1934 was *Unfinished Symphony*, a British/Austrian musical drama about Schubert. Featuring the Vienna Boys Choir, it marked the debut of the Vienna film in Britain. The Curzon relied on presenting premieres of 'desirable' prizewinning films from the Continent such as *Pearls of the Crown*, *Trois valse*s and *Pépé le Moko*.

Jim Fairfax-Jones opened the Everyman on Boxing Day 1933 with Clair's *Le Million*, supported by a Disney cartoon, a Mack Sennett comedy, and a newsreel. With only 285 seats, the Everyman also had a members' film club, one of the first children's film clubs, and a gallery with modernist exhibitions by such artists as Klee, Nicholson, and Hepworth. A repertory cinema with continuous performances, the cinema, unusually, programmed seasons of directors, including in 1934 Clair, Hitchcock, Pabst, Lang and Lubitsch. In January 1937 the pioneering Surrealist and Avant-Garde season opened with a gala presentation which included Len Lye, Disney, and

¹³ The Academy closed in 1986 but the other two have survived as arthouse cinemas.

¹⁴ Coxhead, 1998, 296.

¹⁵ Cohen also took over The Berkeley, Mayfair as a foreign language cinema, April 1938.

¹⁶ Cohen, 1971, 10.

Fischinger, as well as the world premiere of *Zéro de conduite*.¹⁷

Exhibition of 'unusual' films in specialised cinemas was rare outside London.¹⁸ Hakim opened repertory cinemas in Leeds and Liverpool in the early 1930s, but they were not successful and were converted to news theatres. Other dedicated art cinemas were confined to the traditional university towns. The Scala in Oxford was one example. Located in the run-down Jericho area, it offered a new combination of foreign language programming for students in term time and English speaking fare for the local community in the holidays. By 1935 the Scala had screened *Kameradschaft* twice, *M*, and *Mädchen in Uniform* three times, and all the Clair films several times each. Other films echoed the programming of the London art cinemas, and included *Der träumende Mund*, *Liebelei*, *Morgenrot*, *The Testament of Dr Mabuse*, *Unfinished Symphony*, *La Maternelle*, *The Blue Light*, *Emil and the Detectives*, and *Le Petit Roi*.¹⁹

The Cosmo in Glasgow, opened in May 1939, was the second purpose-built 'arthouse' cinema in the UK. The idea was devised by George Singleton, the showman owner of the Vogue cinema chain and Charles Oakley, founder of the Glasgow Film Society and lecturer at the University of Glasgow. The opening feature was *Un carnet de bal*, signalling the intention of living up to its trademark tagline, 'Entertainment for the discriminating', by introducing Glaswegian audiences to continental, especially French, cinema.²⁰ Designed by architect James McKissack, the European modernist style of the upmarket Cosmo matched the internationalism of its programme.²¹ (Figure 2).

Film societies

The organisation traditionally credited with founding minority film culture in Britain is the London Film Society.²² Started by Ivor Montagu and Hugh Miller in 1925, it was based on the successful Stage Society which put on previously unseen, censored, or uncommercial works. As Montagu later explained, the aims of the Film Society were to enable discerning audiences to watch films under the best conditions, to pay for an orchestra and titling, and to get the newspapers interested. As films 'were in general disdained', an important objective was to convert artists and other opinion leaders to the importance of their worth.²³

The original council of the Film Society registered influential names to ensure

¹⁷ Howden, 1994, 38.

¹⁸ Some programmers, like Hakim and Montagu, used the term 'unusual' to describe what others called art, avant-garde or specialised films.

¹⁹ Chan, 2013, 34-45.

²⁰ Peter, 1996, 55.

²¹ Ibid., 53.

²² Henry K. Miller argues, however, that the role of the London Film Society has been exaggerated. See Miller, 2013.

²³ Montagu, 1972, 72.

respectability and cultural status, including Julian Huxley, H.G. Wells, and George Bernard Shaw. And the Sunday afternoon performances at the New Gallery and later the larger Tivoli Palace were cultural occasions for the wealthy intelligentsia of London. Between 1925 and 1939, a total of 495 films (about 100 features and the rest shorts) were screened in eight performances per year. Membership reached 2,500 in the early 1930s but declined thereafter, to below 1,000 in 1935, and to below 500 in 1939 when the Society closed.

The Society's eclectic programmes of main feature with shorts and programme notes established the prototype for other film societies. Premieres of foreign language films at the Film Society were numerous and films which got subsequent successful distribution included *Der träumende Mund* (Germany 1932), *Ekstase* (Czechoslovakia 1933), *Zéro de conduite* (France 1933) and *La Femme du boulanger* (France 1939).

The London Film Society famously pioneered Soviet screenings, including *Battleship Potemkin* and *Mother*, both of which were banned by the censor. Soviet films went on to be distributed through the small but active group of Workers Film Societies including the Manchester and Salford Society where the screening of *Storm over Asia* caused enormous political controversy. (Figure 3).

The Edinburgh Film Guild was also instrumental in establishing foreign language films as part of British film culture; not least because it published the journal *Cinema Quarterly* from 1932 to 1935, succeeded by *World Film News* until 1939, and went on to launch the first UK film festival in 1947. Started in 1930 by Norman Wilson and Forsyth Hardy, the Guild had 440 members in 1935. Sunday afternoon screenings showed many of the new films from Europe already introduced at the London Film Society, including *L'Atalante*, *Bonne chance*, *Der Schimmelreiter*, *We from Kronstadt* and *Son of Mongolia*. A repertory programme was introduced, where old favourites were shown, establishing the role of the film society in promoting the canon of classic films. Lectures and post-screening discussions were also offered. The Guild maintained a programme during the War and even held screenings in the blackout; by 1945 membership peaked at 2,500.

From the start film societies were associated with education. The societies of the elite universities were a breeding ground for film activists. The Cambridge Film Guild, for example, had the future documentarists Humphrey Jennings, Stuart Legg, and Basil Wright as members and the whole enterprise had an avant-gardist and left wing flavour. Films from the London Film Society were quite speedily screened at the Tivoli, later renamed the Cosmopolitan.

Other film societies grew out of the adult education movement. The Leicester Society met in Vaughan College, once the Working Men's College and now the Extra

Mural Department of University College, which had two 35 mm projectors, something of a novelty for non-cinema venues at the time.²⁴ One of the first film courses in the country, led by local journalist L. Cargill, was held here.

In the industrial cities the new film societies combined appreciation of the art of cinema with education and social reform. Tyneside, for example, was formed after a public meeting in Newcastle in December 1932 and within 12 months reached a membership of 800. Led by schoolmaster Ernest Dyer, who doubled up as film critic for the *Newcastle Evening Chronicle*, the Tyneside Society put on children's matinées and held exhibitions on art direction and costume design. Merseyside, set up by Unitarian minister Hemming Vaughan, became another hub of metropolitan social and educational activity, with over 1,000 members.

The number of film societies rapidly expanded in the 1930s, to include Birmingham, Leeds, Billingham, Manchester, Southampton, Ipswich, Bristol, Wolverhampton, and many more.²⁵ Most of them showed films on Sundays, using cinemas that were closed, although permission from the local watch committees was often difficult to obtain in the face of religious and political opposition.

Publications

A few books, which elevated film aesthetics and techniques to the realm of art and which directly or indirectly promoted the idea of authorship by the director, were influential in this period. Pudovkin's *On Film Technique*, translated by Ivor Montagu in 1929 was followed by Rudolf Arnheim's *Film* in 1933, and Raymond Spottiswoode's *The Grammar of the Film* in 1935. But it was Paul Rotha's *The Film Till Now*, first published in 1930, which established a canon of 114 silent films, mainly from Germany, the Soviet Union, and France. It shaped the tastes of the 1930s generation and beyond, and according to Forsyth Hardy, was 'in front of every film society secretary as he composed the season's programme'.²⁶

Spottiswoode and Rotha shared a disdain for popular Hollywood films, an attitude which was echoed by other 1930s film writers. *Close Up* (1927-1933), claimed to be the first English magazine 'to approach films from the angles of art, experiment and possibility'.²⁷ Addressed to an international audience, its contributors included some of the major figures in world modernist literature and film, such as Sergei Eisenstein, Gertrude Stein, and Dorothy Richardson. Many of the threads in *Close Up* were continued in *Film Art* (1933-1937) which was equally uncompromising in its dislike of

²⁴ Brown, 2012, 47.

²⁵ *World Film News* put the total number at 106 in August 1936.

²⁶ Hardy, 1992, 40.

²⁷ Donald, Friedberg and Marcus, 1998, 2. (First published as cover of *Close Up*, vol.1, no.4, October 1927).

Hollywood style film entertainment. Meanwhile *Cinema Quarterly* was set up in 1932 in Edinburgh. Closely associated with the criticism and practices of the British Documentary Movement, it also published articles by leaders of the literary world such as Graham Greene, Aldous Huxley, and T.S. Eliot. The newly formed British Film Institute (hereafter BFI) in 1933 had its own magazine, *Sight and Sound*, but at this early stage it was mainly an educational publication. *Monthly Film Bulletin* (hereafter MFB), its sister publication, was started in 1934 and rapidly became an essential reference point for film societies.

Newspaper critics like C.A. Lejeune of the *Observer*, Jympson Harman of the *Evening News* and Robert Herring of the *Manchester Guardian*, and magazine critics like Grahame Greene and Alistair Cooke were influential in promoting foreign language films. And the filmmakers of the British Documentary Movement were also prolific writers about international film. Basil Wright later claimed that, 'an immense amount of writing was done by about ten people', and he himself had a weekly column in the *Spectator*, a page in *Country Life* under a pseudonym, and wrote regularly for *World Film News*. He later looked back on the 1930s as a creative period when there was more of a feeling of progress, and you therefore put yourselves in the service of that progress. 'Everyone was in an experimental mood'.²⁸

Activists and networks

They consisted of a network of key players... who set up shop in a handful of key places...and they communicated via a handful of key network nodes.

—Hagener (2007)²⁹

Malte Hagener's description of the activists in his history of the European Avant-Garde, *Moving Forward, Looking Back*, can also be applied to the small coterie of filmmakers, writers, exhibitors, and distributors who promoted foreign films in Britain in the 1930s. The list of filmmakers/ writers/ activists included Ivor Montagu, Basil Wright, John Grierson, Paul Rotha, and Thorold Dickinson. Women were prominent in the movement too, and included Elsie Cohen, Mai Harris, C.A. Lejeune, Vera Llewellyn, and Olwen Vaughan. The latter is an example of the criss-cross of relationships in the networks of minority film. A talented programmer and tireless advocate of the art of film, she became Secretary of the new BFI in 1935, where she struggled to add film appreciation to its remit. She was linked into the nascent international network, representing the BFI at the foundation of the International Federation of Film Archives. During the War she used her flair for creating a social and artistic ambience to re-open the London Film Institute Society and to start *Le Petit*

²⁸ S&S, vol. 27, no. 6, 272.

²⁹ Hagener, 2007, 14.

Club Francais in Soho, a meeting place for the Free French in London and home to a network of filmmakers and critics, such as Alberto Cavalcanti, Anthony Asquith, and Dilys Powell.³⁰

Conclusions

This brief survey of the 1930s has shown that institutions and agents, such as specialised cinemas, film societies, magazines, critics, and distributors, created a new infrastructure for film as art which largely survived the War.

A characteristic of the new film culture of the 1930s, which continued after the War, was the separation of art and entertainment films into different places of exhibition, a separation which illustrated discursive, class, and other cultural divisions. The discourses at play in the formation of the field in the 1930s emphasised the distancing of art films from Hollywood entertainment in favour of connections with the established arts. Early discussions about the relative merits of subtitling versus dubbing can also be seen as expressions of class difference. They led to the restriction of subtitled films to specialist cinemas where the 'serious' ambience provided a more reverential context for art films than the mainstream cinemas which, in turn, were more inclined to show dubbed films.

The sex and art duality of foreign language films, a recurring theme of this thesis, was already apparent in the 1930s when the association of foreign films with more frank representations of sex was reinforced by the publicity generated by censorship decisions. The fact that the term continental was used as promotion for the more risqué foreign offerings in commercial cinemas and as the title for the 'serious' foreign film section in *Sight and Sound* in the 1930s, is indicative of this hybrid identity which was to become more pronounced after the War.

Significantly this prologue has revealed that the centres of foreign film culture established outside of London in the 1930s were more numerous and more culturally important than most histories have so far acknowledged. Hagener, for example, located his study of the avant-garde of the 1920s and 1930s firmly in what he called the modernist cities of Paris, Berlin, Amsterdam and London. In the UK this approach overlooked centres of lively film culture which included Glasgow and Edinburgh, the university towns, and the provincial cities of Manchester, Liverpool and Newcastle. These examples have set the scene for a more detailed re-mapping after 1945.

Finally, 1930s film culture provides an early model of networks of foreign film culture. A relatively small group of determined and energetic individuals like Elsie Cohen, Olwen Vaughan, C.A. Lejeune, Paul Rotha, Ivor Montagu, John Grierson, and

³⁰ Drazin, 2007, 235-244.

Basil Wright, acting in a system of networks, shaped the cultural landscape of art film. The ways in which these pioneers of the 1930s functioned collectively is echoed in the 1950s and 1960s when new networks emerged, whether through the international film festivals, or nationally through the BFI, specialist exhibitors and distributors, new publications, and film societies. These developments in the immediate postwar years will be discussed in Chapter 1.

Chapter 1: Out of the shadows of war: towards a new international cinema (1946-1952)

The experience rather restored my faith in cinema by making me realise that astonishing as it seems, through occupation and war and resistance and shortages of every kind, the motion picture all over Europe seems not only to have survived but to have taken on a new vitality, a new expressiveness for the new things that are now to be said.

–Iris Barry (1947)¹

This description of European cinema in the early postwar years by Iris Barry, curator of the first museum film library at the Museum of Modern Art (hereafter MoMA) in New York and US and representative on the 1946 jury at Cannes, chimes with my argument, that the War and its aftermath marked a profound cultural and social break in European society, a break which is fundamental to an understanding of postwar changes in film culture.

The rebirth and expansion of international festivals after the War is a major theme of this chapter and of my thesis as a whole. I will argue that in this period the role of the festival in the consecration of films, national cinemas, and new film movements, marked a distinctive new phase in non-Hollywood film history. The international networks of the festivals, which connected with the revived or new networks of distribution and exhibition in Britain, were beginning to create a revitalised infrastructure for the foreign film. Meanwhile, increased social mobility encouraged new audiences from the ranks of ex-service men and women and adult education in Britain. Finally, support for foreign art films was widespread amongst film critics whose contribution to the creation of new discourses around humanism and realism was crucial to the rebuilding of the field of art film.

This chapter opens with a discussion of *Rome Open City*, a landmark film which expressed the new vitality and expressiveness described by Barry, and which heralded the emerging neorealist movement in Italy. It moves on to an exploration of the new role of film festivals, exploring how the festivals were becoming central to the creation of art cinema as a cultural category, identified by difference from Hollywood, in its distinctively European production, distribution, and publicity systems. The third section discusses specifically British institutions, including new distribution companies and the re-opened specialist cinemas, which re-formed the infrastructure of art film in the immediate aftermath of the War. I will then consider how far the experience of war, the building of a more egalitarian state, and opportunities provided by adult education changed the social makeup of audiences for art films. Section five uses a range of

¹ Barry, 1947, 67.

reviews of Italian neorealist films to explore the discourses employed by British film critics in their consecration of 'quality' films from Europe. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the appeal of French films, the most numerous and popular of the foreign language imports. It explores the various connotations of Frenchness on offer, from the appeal of poetic realism to the bawdy delights of rural comedies, whilst a case study of the critical and popular success of *La Ronde* will analyse how it came to epitomise the very essence of French sophistication.

1.1 The reception of *Rome Open City*

Rome Open City, an Italian film about the resistance in Rome, provides a case study of the emergence of a new European cinema at the end of the War. It was significant in many ways: as the founding film of Italian neorealism, as a low budget, specifically European antidote to Hollywood, and as an early example of the influence of the festival on international distribution. It was a true zeitgeist film in that it bore witness to the searing impact of the Nazi occupation and more broadly stood in for the devastating effects of war across Europe.

Rome Open City first opened in September 1945. Renamed *Open City* in the USA, it was premiered in February 1946 at the World Theatre Cinema in New York where it ran for 21 months and, after going on general release, grossed \$5 million at the box office.² In September 1946 it shared the Grand Prix at the newly re-formed Cannes Film Festival with ten other films. By the end of that year it was successfully distributed in France and had become an international film.

The positive critical response concentrated largely on the film's realism. On its opening in the USA it was highly praised by Bosley Crowther, influential critic at the *New York Times*³ and by James Agee in *The Nation* who referred to 'the exalted spirit of the actual experience'.⁴ When the film was previewed to French critics in November 1946, Georges Sadoul, contrasting it with Hollywood, placed it firmly in the documentary tradition:

This work, made with almost no money and no means brings more to the cinema than two hundred recent Hollywood films, despite their unlimited capital and technical resources . . . a new realism is born which owes much to newsreels, the journalists' investigations, the work of the documentary filmmakers.⁵

² Rodney E. Geiger, an American GI in Italy at the Liberation, purchased the rights for \$20,000 and, as the story has it, took the print back to the USA in his duffel bag. The film was renamed *Open City*, connoting 'wide open', where anything goes. The lurid publicity including the tag 'Sexier than Hollywood ever dared to be' and fake publicity stills with two girls in an embrace, was typical of the way foreign films were marketed in Hayes Code America. See Balio, 2010, 40-42.

³ Ibid., 16-17.

⁴ Gottlieb, 2004, 167.

⁵ Forgacs, 2000, 9.

Rome Open City was made at a pivotal moment in European history. The events in the film took place in the early months of 1944. The police wore arm bands that proclaimed Rome an open city. This meant that by international agreement it could not be bombed or used for military operations. This agreement was not respected by the Germans, and the Nazi Occupation meant starvation, fear, and brutality. The film, based on actual incidents, tells the stories of a working class woman who is shot in the back, a Communist resistance leader who is tortured to death, and a priest who is executed, all for their roles in the resistance. The script took shape in 1944, shortly after the Allies entered Rome on 4 June. The film went into production in January 1945 when the Nazis still occupied North Italy. So, when it was first screened in Rome on 24 September 1945, the subject of war and resistance was 'still scorching' according to Dino Risi in *Milano Sera*.⁶

The cinematic style marked a break with established feature film conventions. It was not made in a studio and many scenes were shot on the streets and in the tenements of Rome. The location shooting, the use of amateur actors and citizen extras, the natural lighting, the authentic dialects of Anna Magnani and Aldo Fabrizi, and the newsreel style of shooting all contributed to the realism, and established the conventions of subsequent neorealist films

The raw immediacy of *Open City* was a reflection of actual conditions in Rome: Cine Citta, the famous Rome production studio had become a camp for displaced persons, and the city was suffering severe shortages and electricity cuts. The filmmakers were obliged to use odds and ends of raw stock, to work without viewing rushes, and to post-synchronize all sound.

When it was first shown to a group of Italian distributors, critics, and friends, some were less than enthusiastic.⁷ Its director, Roberto Rossellini, even claimed that, despite the Grand Prix, the Italian delegation at Cannes 'deeply despises the movie'.⁸ However, the film topped the Italian box office in 1945 and 1946. For the Italians, a defeated and disgraced nation, the depiction of Rome stood in for the sufferings of the whole Italian people, as did the courage and resilience of Pina, the strong mother figure played by Anna Magnani.⁹ The film was also symbolic of that brief historical moment when the contending factions of Left, Centre, and Church banded together to resist the Nazis. According to Martin Scorsese, 'Rossellini brought the plight of his country alive, he gave us both the tragedy of the war and the spiritual fortitude of the

⁶ Ibid., 9.

⁷ Brunette, 1996, 52.

⁸ Kezich, 2007, 81.

⁹ Landy, 2004, 91.

Italian people'.¹⁰ And, as Ruth Ben-Ghiat has argued, the international acclaim for the film helped to rehabilitate Italy and Italians from association with the dictatorship.¹¹

Open City was imported to Britain by Alexander Korda in 1947. It was premiered at his showcase cinema, the Rialto in the West End, where it ran from early July to late September. The publicity headlined the film as 'The International Prize-winning Drama', whilst the press book played up the real life drama of the production process:

Behind barred doors, in cellars and attics, in ravines and hills back of Rome and caves along the Tiber, they plotted their film.¹²

It was distributed nationally by Korda's newly amalgamated company, London Film Production/British Lion. The *Manchester Guardian* advertised the screening, the only foreign film in Manchester, at the Gaiety Theatre Manchester as early as 18 August 1947. But Lejeune recalled in her autobiography that *Open City* did 'no money business at the box office', and that Korda was dubious about the chances of that 'grim film' but thought that 'it served its purpose as a pathfinder for other Italian films'.¹³

1.2 Festivals: shaping the field of art cinema

At noon I was a bum and by two I was an international artist.

–Roberto Rossellini, Cannes (1946)¹⁴

The annual international film festival is a very European institution. It was invented in Europe just before the Second World War, but it came to cultural fruition, economic stature and political maturity in the 1940s and 1950s. Since then the names of Venice, Cannes, Berlin, Rotterdam, Locarno, Karlovy Vary, Oberhausen and San Sebastian have spelled the roll call of regular watering holes for the world's film lovers, critics and journalists, as well as being the marketplaces for producers, directors, distributors, television acquisition heads, and studio bosses.

–Thomas Elsaesser (2005)¹⁵

Elsaesser argued that festivals are the historical missing link in our understanding of European cinema. The festival, with its nodes, flows, and exchanges is the most important network for all forms of cinema not bound into the Hollywood global network. It is important because it functions simultaneously as global platform, cultural showcase, marketplace, competitive venue, and world body.¹⁶ Increasingly in the period 1946 to 1952, and even more as the 1950s and 1960s progressed, the

¹⁰ Forgacs, Lutton and Nowell-Smith, 2000. vi.

¹¹ Ibid., 31.

¹² BFI Press Book, *Open City*.

¹³ Lejeune, 1964, 221.

¹⁴ Beauchamp and Béhar, 1992, 28.

¹⁵ Elsaesser, 2005, 84.

¹⁶ Ibid., 83-84.

festivals played a central role in enabling the acquisition, distribution, and marketing of foreign films.

Iris Barry's account of the Venice and Cannes Festivals of 1946 for *Sight and Sound* evoked the extraordinary conditions in Europe just at the end of the War.¹⁷ Whilst on a trip to Paris in search of 'lost film treasures' for the MoMA Archive, she was asked by the American Embassy to represent the US on the international jury of the Cannes Festival. She decided to visit Italy as well and set off in a Renault across the Alps to Milan, and thence to Rome and the festival in Venice. She gave a vivid description of the trip through an Italian landscape littered with blown up bridges and burnt out German tanks, along roads dominated by lumbering oxen. When they reached Venice, the hotels were still full of allied soldiers. The cafés on the right of the Piazza were buzzing with lively discussion, whilst the left side, according to Barry, was not considered sufficiently intellectually chic.

Barry was the only woman on the jury at Cannes. They watched films in the afternoon and at night, ten to fourteen hours a day, seven days a week for three weeks. For her the festival was a test in international diplomacy. As a jury member, absenting yourself from films or social events was inexcusable. Most countries had sent ranking government officials to represent them, and politicians and bigwigs kept dropping in by plane. If the Polish delegate tottered to bed instead of going to the British shindig, or if Barry tried to avoid the hard seats of the Casino by skipping a film which she had already seen, offence was taken. Even in these early days Cannes was also a fair where films were being advertised and sold and where the news that Norway had bought *Maria Candelaria* from Mexico 'electrified the cafes'.¹⁸ According to Barry, the USA had not yet latched on to the potential importance of Cannes for Hollywood. There was no American film publicity office, no photographs, no government official, no lunch party or gala, and only three American journalists.¹⁹

The Cannes Festival was first created because of the increasingly overt pro-Fascist politicization of the Venice Film Festival in the 1930s. In 1937 *La Grande Illusion*, the favourite of the jurors, failed to win the top prize and in the following year, when the jury wished to award an American film, Berlin intervened and two propaganda films, the Nazi *Olympia* and the Fascist *Luciano Serra, Pilota* shared the Mussolini Cup. At this point the American, British, and French withdrew and started plans for a new international festival which opened at Cannes on 1 September 1939,

¹⁷ Barry, 1947. 65-67.

¹⁸ Ibid., 65. *Maria Candelaria* was later distributed by MGM as *Portrait of Maria*

¹⁹ For a discussion of the more political motives of the Americans, who did not want European competition, see Corless and Darke, 2007, 21.

but was cancelled after two days due to the outbreak of war.²⁰ The Festival re-opened in late September 1946, sponsored by the Cannes municipal authority which, like most subsequent festival hosts, wanted to attract more tourists. The first festival took place in a casino with 850 seats, with the participation of twenty one nations and the screening of fifty two features. The jury was genuinely international, with representatives from both east and west Europe and from Canada, USA, Mexico and Egypt. In these early days, and indeed up until 1972, films were nominated by their respective countries in proportion to their cinematic output. In 1946, the Grand Prix (precursor of the Palme d'Or) was awarded to eleven films including *Rome Open City*, *The Last Chance*, *Maria Candelaria*, and *La Symphonie pastorale*. The festival was more like a film forum than a competition and the organisers made sure that everyone went home with some sort of prize - Barry referred to the 'exquisite tact of the French hosts who awarded a prize to every country'.²¹

The specific problems facing European film industries in 1946 added weight to the significance of the re-opening of the Cannes Festival. The revival of film production and distribution in war-ravaged Europe was partly about economic reconstruction and partly about cultural identity. So, as well as re-asserting the importance of film as an expression of national identity and culture, Cannes was also about creating new channels of publicity and challenging the dominance of American distributors through an alternative network. This specifically European phenomenon came to revolve largely around the film festivals.²²

Cannes struggled to establish itself as an annual festival in the late forties. Funding was such a problem that the 1948 and 1950 festivals had to be cancelled for economic reasons. *The Third Man*, a fitting symbol of postwar reconstruction, won the Grand Prix in 1949 which was also the year of the opening of the Palais des Festivals (La Croisette) with its showcase cinema. Lindsay Anderson summed up the atmosphere of the place for *Sequence*:

The Palais des Festivals – splendidly sited on the front – is still swarming with workmen; intensive preparations with the flags of (nearly) all nations, flowers, floodlights. Séances will take place twice a day at 3pm and 9.30pm for a fortnight. I have missed the Gala opening (with a battle of flowers) by a day and the mayorial luncheon by an hour. There remain the films.²³

By 1951, when the Cannes Festival switched to the Spring, the festival was still dogged by the Cold War politics which saw the Eastern bloc countries boycott the

²⁰ Corless and Darke, 2007, 12-15.

²¹ Ibid., 65.

²² De Valck, 2007, 88-92.

²³ *Sequence* 10, New Year 1950, 184.

'international festival' in 1947 and 1949. Relations were still so strained that in 1951 *Four in a Jeep* was replaced at the last minute as opening film by *A Place in the Sun*, with Elizabeth Taylor and Montgomery Clift.²⁴ But glamour, it could be argued, was beginning to replace politics. Certainly, by the early fifties celebrity culture was a dominant characteristic of Cannes.

The top prizes at Venice were just as prestigious and also guaranteed international distribution. Venice winners of 1946, 1947, and 1948, such as *Paisà*, *Les Enfants du paradis*, *Panique*, *L'onorevole Angelina*, *Quai des Orfèvres*, and *Monsieur Vincent* were all subsequently exhibited in London in the prestige specialist cinemas. In 1949 the top prize, which came to be called The Golden Lion, went to Clouzot's *Manon*, although it was the runner-up film *Jour de fête* which became the international hit. The same happened in 1950 when *Let Justice be Done* was the winner but it was *La Ronde* with the Best Screenplay which became successful worldwide. In 1951 *Rashomon*, described by Catherine de la Roche as 'new in its form and manner', was the sensation of Venice, and won the Golden Lion.²⁵ It was brought to the attention of the festival organisers by an employee of Italia Film in Japan, but neither the Japanese government nor the production company Daiei were keen to show it, considering it unrepresentative of the Japanese industry. But RKO picked it up for distribution; it won the first American Academy Award for Foreign Film, and became an art cinema success. Japanese cinema thus entered the world of the international art film.

The special ambience of Venice in those early days was vividly described by Dilys Powell in the *Sunday Times*, starting with the notorious lack of organisation.

This soothing nonchalance about time and place never loses charm for the northern visitor: one of the entertainments at Venice was to watch foreign journalists scurrying in search of some conference, some desirable film billed or not billed but in any case not to be found at the expected time, or indeed hall. Once the programme has begun, however, there is nothing nonchalant about its reception. An English audience will sit doggedly silent through the documentary about mumps or the Swedish feature film about romance in the tool shed. A continental audience lets fly. At Venice it repeatedly broke into Blasetti's *Prima comunione* to clap a piece of acting or a comic climax: and a silly but I should have thought harmless *March of Time* about a photographer's model was indignantly booed.²⁶

²⁴ *Four in a Jeep* was the story of four military policemen, each a representative of the four occupying powers in Vienna. The preview upset the Soviets who argued that the Soviet soldier was presented as morally inferior. For a full discussion of Cold War sensitivities at Cannes, see Corless and Darke, 2007, 25-31.

²⁵ S&S, vol. 21, no.2, October-December, 1951, 90.

²⁶ *The Sunday Times*, 1/10/50, 4.

She went on to describe the same level of engagement at the glittering parties and awards ceremonies. When, at the final midnight reception, she announced Cocteau's *Orphée* the winner of the International Critics Award, the audience broke out 'in an equal measure into vociferous applause and dissentient whistles'.²⁷

The Edinburgh Film Festival was a much more serious affair. Edinburgh's influential film community was concerned that there was no room for cinema in the programme of the new Festival of Music and Drama. With no budget, and aware that Cannes and Venice were formidable rivals, Norman Wilson, Forsyth Hardy, and John Grierson decided on a festival of documentaries screened by invitation only. Highlights of the first Edinburgh Film Festival in 1947, which lasted just eight days, included the premieres of Rossellini's *Paisà* and Rouquier's *Farrebique*, both examples of the new documentary style European realism. Further steps towards the expansion of the Festival to include feature films came in 1948 with the premiere of *Germany Year Zero* and in 1949 with Tati's *Jour de fête*. The name of the Festival was then changed to the Festival of Documentary, Experimental and Realist Films.

The festivals came to reflect the divisions of the Cold War. When Communism took over in Czechoslovakia in 1948 the Karlovy Vary Festival became a Soviet sponsored alternative network and showcase for Eastern bloc films. The Berlin Festival, the result of a largely geopolitical decision by the British and Americans, was set up in 1951 to revive the West German film industry and to act as a showcase for American and other western film industries. It offered cheap tickets and outdoor screenings to all Berliners, including East Berliners, partly to provoke the USSR and East Germany. *Four in a Jeep* won the Golden Bear for drama in 1951 but tellingly by 1952, this time by audience vote, the prize was awarded to a Swedish film with the famous nude scene, *One Summer of Happiness*.

A cluster of new, smaller festivals including Locarno, San Sebastian, Knokke, and Biarritz were added to the list in the 1950s, creating a year-round calendar. According to *Sight and Sound*, these festivals, 'notable for their atmosphere of luxury, their classy clientele, the babel of international critics, the liberal talk of art' were proof positive of art cinema's coming of age at the beginning of the 1950s.²⁸

The establishment of the festivals, then, was a major new factor in the creation of the field of international art cinema. The festival system was not only to become the main cultural and economic alternative to the Hollywood system, but was to provide film culture in Britain with a diverse source of foreign language films, along with shared ways of talking about them.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ S&S, vol.18, no.71, January 1950, 24.

1.3 Patterns of distribution and exhibition

Art films were not the only foreign language imports into Britain. This section, after an overview of the overall context of films and filmgoing, looks at the range of foreign films on offer through new distribution systems and the diverse mix of exhibition spaces.

In 1946 cinema attendances in Britain reached an all-time high of 1,635 million, with a third of the population visiting cinemas (a total of 4,700) at least once a week.²⁹ For a film to be widely distributed it had to be given a release through one of the big three circuits, Odeon, Gaumont (both owned by Rank), or ABC which between them by 1948 owned about 1,000 cinemas; these were the bigger and 'better' cinemas which nearly always obtained the first run of the best films.³⁰ Another 1,000 cinemas were in smaller circuits, and the rest were independents. Audiences, by and large, watched British or American films.³¹ The table below shows the dominance of Hollywood, even during the brief crisis of 1947/48 when the British Government imposed a tax of 75% on American films. One result of this crisis was the imposition of a quota of 45% for British films, reduced to 40% in 1950.

Table 1: Registered films and countries of production 1946-1952

Year	Totals	USA	GB	Fr	It	USSR	Other + co-productions
1946	471 38 foreign	329	104	15		17	Denmark 1, Poland 1, Mexico 1, Switzerland 2, Sweden 1
1947	492 36 foreign	342	114	26	4	4	Poland 1, Switzerland 1
1948	488 29 foreign	272	110	20	4	1	Argentina 2, Germany 1, Sweden 1
1949	523 43 foreign	422	157	22	5		Germany 5, Sweden 6
1950	502 50 foreign	376	80	25	16		Germany 2, Sweden 1, Hungary 2, Poland 2, Switzerland 2
1951	547 48 foreign	414	85	21	12	3	Africa 1, Austria 1, Denmark 1, Germany 1 Co-productions: GB/Holland 1, France/Italy 1, France/Sweden 1, USA/France 4, Austria/USA 1

²⁹ *Government Social Survey, 1947*. See J.P. Mayer, *British Cinemas and their Audiences* for details of the 1943 *Wartime Social Survey*. Younger adults went to the cinema much more than older people, children went more often than adults, but not as much as young wage earners. Lower economic groups went more frequently, town dwellers went more than country folk, and women went more than men. Mayer, 1948, 251.

³⁰ Eyles, 2010, 81.

³¹ The pre-war figures of foreign language imports, mostly French, had climbed to 52 in 1938.

Year	Totals	USA	GB	Fr	It	USSR	Other + co-productions
1952	530 74 foreign	366	97	27	20	4	Sweden 1, Africa 1, Argentina 1, Denmark 1, Germany 4, India 2, Japan 2, Mexico 2, Poland 1, Spain 1 Co-productions: Italy/GB 1, Italy/USA 3, Japan/USA 1 USA /France 1, USA/Italy 1

Source: *Monthly Film Bulletin*.³²

The table shows that the small numbers of foreign language imports, mainly French and Italian, grew steadily to 74 in 1952. It also highlights the dramatic decline of Soviet imports due to the onset of the Cold War. From 1941 until 1947 the Tatler, Charing Cross Road, showed Soviet features supplied by the Soviet Film Agency. 17 Soviet features were imported in 1946. These included Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible*; *Girl Number 217*, a virulently anti-German film about Russian slave labour in wartime Germany; and *The Turning Point*, about the Battle for Stalingrad which shared the Grand Prix at Cannes in 1946. But geopolitical tensions solidified into Cold War very quickly. After 1946 Russian films remained largely excluded, until the nationwide success of *The Fall of Berlin* in 1952 which combined spectacular historical recreation with hagiography of Stalin.

By and large, the big distributors eschewed foreign language films. In 1946 Rank announced a new but short-lived policy of distributing French films, including *L'Éternel Réééetour / Love Eternal* and *La Symphonie fantastique*. MGM also had a brief period of showing foreign films, starting at the beginning of 1946 with the critically acclaimed *The Last Chance*, launched at MGM's flagship cinema, The Empire Leicester Square. *The Last Chance* was a multi-lingual film made during the War in Switzerland about the flight of refugees from Italy across the mountains. Like *Open City* it pioneered realist features, such as location shooting and the employment of actual refugees, a style which, along with its internationalist message, appealed to audiences in war-torn Europe. It was seen by 3 million people in Britain, according to *Picturegoer*.³³ In 1946 MGM also released the first Mexican film to be shown in Britain, the Cannes prizewinning *Portrait of Maria/Maria Candelaria*, directed by Emilio Fernandez and starring Dolores del Rio, with cinematography by Gabriel Figueroa. It was described in Maurice Speed's annual *Film Review* as beautiful but 'slow and extremely unusual'.³⁴

³² The totals until 1950 are Board of Trade figures published by country in *MFB*. Post 1950 the totals are my own aggregate of the *MFB* lists. Numbers by country are obtained from the *MFB* reviews. Variances of end of year dates account for discrepancies in totals.

³³ *Picturegoer*, 18/12/48, 17.

³⁴ *Film Review*, 1946, 146.

And, it was criticised for its 'obtrusive' dubbed dialogue by the *Monthly Film Bulletin*.³⁵

Alexander Korda's takeover of British Lion, the second largest British distributor, seemed a promising development for the wider distribution of foreign films. The Rialto, acquired and renovated in 1946, was to be the launching pad for both Korda's own productions and the best continental imports. The cinema had an upmarket appeal: the glossy programme with its image of the Ponte de Rialto advertised 'pre-war teas on the mezzanine' and offered 'the finest continental films to a discriminating audience'.³⁶ Films shown at the Rialto and distributed by British Lion/London Film Productions included *Les Enfants du paradis*, *La Belle et la Bête*, *Shoeshine*, *Panique*, *Les Portes de la nuit*, *The Well Digger's Daughter*, *Quai des Orfèvres* and *Le Corbeau*, as well as *Open City*. But distribution of foreign films through British Lion did not last: by 1949 Korda was in serious financial trouble and the project declined.

By the close of the decade new distribution companies were on the scene. *Kine Year Book* 1951 lists the number of films shown at the trade shows for each company in 1950: Films de France 9, Film Traders 7, Archway 5, Blue Ribbon 4, British Lion 1, and Montana 4.³⁷

Films de France was the sole distributor, in Britain and the Commonwealth, for a group of seven leading independent French producers. By 1951 its feature releases, advertised in the *Kine Year Book*, numbered 12 and included Cocteau's *Orphée*, Tati's *Jour de fête*, *The Wanton* with Simone Signoret, *Au-delà des grilles* with Jean Gabin and *Le Roi* with Maurice Chevalier.³⁸ These films achieved national distribution, albeit not on the main circuits. By February 1951 *Kine Weekly* reported that Films de France was releasing French newsreels, not only in the Monseigneur news theatres but also at the news cinema Cameo Charing Cross, the newly opened Continentale Tottenham Court Road, and at 'specialist kinemas' in some of the main towns.³⁹

Archway, a new distributor whose marketing strategies exploited the more sensationalist aspects of foreign films had a populist touch. In early 1951 Archway pioneered the dubbed film with the successful release of *Bitter Rice*, the English language version of *Riso amaro*, dubbed by American actors. Part steamy melodrama, part neorealist tract about female workers in the rice fields of North Italy, the subtitled version had a nine week run at the Rialto in the early 1950s, and was then distributed by Archway to eight or nine so called continental specialist cinemas. The dubbed release, however, achieved 1,400 bookings within a year, including spot

³⁵ *MFB*, vol.13, no.147, 36.

³⁶ British Film Institute Special Collections (hereafter BFISC), Cinema Ephemera.

³⁷ *Kine Year Book*, 1951, 40-53.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 47.

³⁹ *Kine Weekly* (hereafter *KW*), 8/2/51, 8.

booking in the Granada circuit, a success which Maurice Speed, editor of *What's On* and *Film Review*, compared favourably to the total of 81 bookings which the critically acclaimed *Vivere in pace* had achieved in four years.⁴⁰ The publicity for *Bitter Rice* played on the increasingly used sex appeal of continental films and, in particular, emphasised the allure of nubile new star, Silvana Mangano. Cinemas were encouraged to promote the film with a giant 24 foot cutout of Mangano, in tight shorts, stockinged legs and 'well filled jumper'.⁴¹ The sensationalist publicity for the film occasioned a long running debate about its appropriateness amongst managers on the letters page of *Kine Weekly*.⁴²

The success of *Bitter Rice* led to a further partnership between Archway and Lux Films, and the screening of four new Italian films at the 1,100 seat Marble Arch Pavilion; *Les Misérables*, *Fugitive*, *The Wolf of the Sila* and *Behind Closed Shutters*. This last film, notorious because it dealt with prostitution had many cuts, even with the new X certificate. These included images of the prostitutes on the streets, violence against the girls and a whole scene where they are rounded up and imprisoned.⁴³ Arthur Watkins, new secretary of the BBFC, concerned himself with the publicity, disallowing the advertising use of the term 'seXational'.⁴⁴ He also complained about lurid publicity for the film in Glasgow, despite having received assurances that 'you do not intend to countenance undesirable exploitation'.⁴⁵

These four films were dubbed, this time with English accents, and dubbing became common practice for Archway films which had their first run at the Marble Arch Pavilion before nationwide distribution. The company was so successful that regional offices in Manchester and Liverpool were opened in 1952.

The exhibition of foreign language films

The specialist cinemas of London re-established themselves after closure during the War. By 1945 the Academy and Curzon were both under new management. The Curzon was taken over by the Wingate family who continued to maintain its reputation as the most expensive and exclusive continental cinema in London. At the same time it became a testing ground for the wider distribution of more popular but 'quality' continental films like *L'Eternel Retour* and *La Ronde*.⁴⁶ The Academy, after being bombed and badly damaged in 1940, was re-opened under the new ownership of George Hoellering (Figure 4). An Austrian émigré, Hoellering came to London in 1937

⁴⁰ *Film Review*, 1952, 90-92.

⁴¹ Hine, quoted in Balio, 2010, 59-60.

⁴² *KW*, 21/6/51, 24 & 28/6/51, 45.

⁴³ Watkins to Gelardi, 19/10/52, BBFC file: *Behind Closed Shutters*.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 27/3/52.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Mazdon and Wheatley, 2013, 71-72.

with a distinguished background in the European film world, having produced *Kuhle Wampe* in 1932 and directed the Hungarian lyrical documentary *Hortobágy* in 1936. He was briefly interned when war broke out but was released to make Ministry of Information films. After the War he made *Murder in the Cathedral* in 1952, but then devoted himself full-time to the Academy where his distinctive programming made it the most prestigious art cinema in the country.

After the War both the Academy and Curzon with their respective distribution companies, Film Traders and GCT, continued to introduce London audiences to quality, subtitled foreign films. Films which ran for three months or more in these cinemas were obviously desirable bookings for specialist cinemas and film societies elsewhere, although other exhibitors complained about having to wait for films until the end of their London run. Films which ran for more than three months at the Academy included *Paisà* (November 1948 to March 1949), *Angelina* (March to May 1949), *Sunday in August* (January to April 1951), *Edward and Caroline* (October to December 1951), and *Casque d'or* (September 1952 to January 1953). Long runs at the Curzon included *La Symphonie pastorale* (January to April 1947), *Vivere in pace* (November 1947 to March 1948), *Four Steps in the Clouds* (June to September 1948) and *Monsieur Vincent* (September 1948 to February 1949). *Bicycle Thieves* ran at the Curzon for five months in 1950. But *La Ronde* broke all the records, showing at the Curzon from May 1951 to October 1952, with a total of 2,424 shows.⁴⁷

By 1952, there were again seven foreign language cinemas in London. The Cameo Poly was re-launched in May 1952 as an upmarket, first run cinema to rival the Academy and Curzon. But there were now other kinds of foreign language cinemas on the scene including the Marble Arch Pavilion which showed the more popular, sometimes sensational continental films which were often dubbed. The other newcomers were La Continentale and Berkeley in Tottenham Court Road set up by Kenneth Rive in 1948, devoted to foreign films including first run, usually those of his company Gala Film Distributors.

Outside of London the university towns of Oxford and Cambridge kept up their traditions of foreign language films. The Scala in Oxford, discussed in the Prologue, had created a successful model in the 1930s of catering for both students and, outside of term time, community audiences. After the War it continued to offer a mixed programme of British and American releases, revivals of cult classics, and old and new foreign films. By 1952 the programme was back to an average of 12 foreign films a term, including *Orpheus* (1950), *Bitter Rice* (1949), and *Edward and Caroline* (1951).⁴⁸

⁴⁷ All details from *What's On* listings.

⁴⁸ Chan, 2013, 64-79.

Elsewhere, by 1952 most of the main towns including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Cardiff, Manchester, Liverpool, Preston, Leicester, and Nottingham, all had cinemas which, to a greater or lesser degree, screened foreign language films.

But it was extremely hard to make a living from screening foreign language films outside of the metropolis, the provincial cities, or the university towns. Leslie Halliwell in his autobiography described how, in his home town of Bolton in 1947, a foreign language cinema was started, but only lasted a few months. The dingy Empire, the notorious fleapit off the Blackburn Road, was taken over by a Pole who had recently opened a continental cinema in Preston and who announced a programme of subtitled films. The Empire showed *Les Enfants du paradis* which Halliwell had recently seen at Manchester's Deansgate for 4/-, in contrast to the Empire prices which ranged from 4d to 1/6. It was followed by *La Fille du puisatier* advertised as *The Well Digger's Daughter*, *Quai des Orfèvres*, *La Femme du boulanger* and *Les Visiteurs du soir*. The audience, according to Halliwell, was mainly teachers, with a sprinkling of journalists and a few locals, down at the front. The latter seemed to enjoy the films but walked out during the long drawn-out climax of *Les Portes de la nuit*. The proprietor went bankrupt in the same year.⁴⁹

Another kind of programming, typical of small independent cinemas which showed a mix of cowboy, jungle adventures and horror, often included continental films, especially if their titles were suggestive. One such cinema was fondly described in a short piece, 'Fleapit Nights' by Laurence Edmonds in *Sight and Sound* in 1951.⁵⁰

Tucked away between a fried fish shop and a confectioner and tobacconist, and no more imposing than either . . . its name is as modest as its prices, which are low enough . . . to ensure a full house for its thrice weekly change of programme . . . If the stucco façade is faded, grimy and crumbling the interior is a setting even less apt for the impossibly fantastic events shown on a yellowing screen between 1.30 and 10.30 pm six days a week and 4.30 and 10.30pm on Sundays.

The 'fantastic events' included films from series like *Dracula*, *The Wolf Man*, *The Cat People*, *Tarzan*, and *Trigger* and 'exotic technicolour fantasies set in Cairo, Baghdad, Algiers and Istanbul'.⁵¹ The programme also included continental imports which the poster painter advertised in bright scarlet – proudly announcing for *Bitter Rice* POSITIVELY NOBODY UNDER 16 ADMITTED. These notices created the longest queues which included 'an awful lot of young-looking 16 year olds scratching among marbles and chewing gum for admission money'.⁵²

⁴⁹ Halliwell, 1985, 112.

⁵⁰ Edmonds, 1951, 87.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

This type of programming was replicated in small independents across the country, where foreign language films, of greater or lesser cultural repute, joined a mix of other non-circuit films, often chosen simply because they were cheap to hire. This mixed programming continued to be a feature of independent cinemas throughout the 1950s and the 1960s.

1.4 Changing audiences

This was something else the war had completed: the disestablishment of culture... "Culture", no longer the prerogative of a leisure class had lost its scarcity value.

—Harry Hopkins (1964)⁵³

There is little written evidence about the social backgrounds of those who went to foreign language films, but one *Picturegoer* article in 1948 did suggest that after the War things were changing.⁵⁴ Its author, Eric Goldschmidt, argued that foreign films were no longer just for intellectuals, as evidenced by the queues of 900 people in Oxford Street for two foreign language cinemas, presumably the Academy and Studio One. He conducted some impromptu interviews and discovered railway engineers, publicans, nurses, tailors, and housewives. Reasons for going to foreign films were varied: for example, a railway engineer and his girlfriend, a secretary, because they liked 'realistic' films and had seen both *Open City* and *Shoeshine*; a stonemason because he had been a soldier in France and had seen lots of French films there; and a hotel receptionist because she wanted to improve her French. However, when Goldschmidt went over to Mayfair to visit the Curzon queue for a matinée screening of *Monsieur Vincent*, the crowd was noticeably more middle class. A well-dressed lady who liked religious films (*Monsieur Vincent* was about St Vincent de Paul) was keen to emphasise her cultural credentials with references to 'Miss Lejeune' and the rarity value of the Curzon, since 'one gets to see such few worthwhile films these days'. Goldschmidt went on to argue that provincial audiences should have the same access to foreign films as Londoners. As an example of the potential for showing foreign films, he referred to a recent experiment in Birmingham when, after seven weeks of French and Italian films, the manager conducted a poll in which 71% said they had seen foreign films before; 93% enjoyed the films screened, and 91% said they would like to see more.

J.P. Mayer's books *The Sociology of Film* (1946) and *British Cinemas and their Audience* (1948) are rare early examples of qualitative studies of the cinema

⁵³ Hopkins, 1964, 245.

⁵⁴ Goldschmidt, 1948, 17.

audience.⁵⁵ Following a request for volunteers in *Picturegoer*, he published 60 'motion picture autobiographies' in *British Cinemas and Their Audiences*. Mayer gathered basic sociological information including occupation and parents' occupations. His respondents, who were 'mainly clerks or black coated workers', were asked a series of questions about the influence of films. Some did express a desire for more quality cinema, usually defined as *Citizen Kane*, or British films like *Brief Encounter*. Only one, a 36 year-old transport manager, whose film education was obtained at a London 'fleapit' cinema which showed silent classics, wrote extensively about foreign films. Here the early discourses of film as art were apparent, such as, 'there was a way of discriminating between films, and that was to find out who directed them', or 'a film should be treated like a symphony'.⁵⁶ A second respondent, a 21 year-old miner who went to the cinema 5 or 6 times a week and kept detailed notes, had seen only one French film, *Judas was a Woman* (English title for *La Bête humaine*). He thought it was 'magnificent' and along with *The Song of Bernadette* the best film he had ever seen.⁵⁷

Sue Harper and Vincent Porter have provided a rare audience analysis in their *Screen* article 'Moved to tears: weeping in the cinema in postwar Britain'.⁵⁸ The article is based on a Mass Observation survey of 1950 when volunteer respondents were asked whether they ever cried in the cinema, and if so, whether they were ashamed. Of the 318 replies, 193 were men and 125 women, most were under 50, and they were mainly a mix of the middle class and lower middle class, according to the Hutton Readership Survey classification of social class based on occupation.

The results showed predictably gendered emotional responses, with women crying at partings, unhappy children, cruelty to animals, death scenes, and refugees. For the men it was patriotism, self-sacrifice, and heroism, recognition of the little man, newsreels and documentaries, and war films that moved them to tears.

Furthermore, in terms of social class there was a marked difference between lower middle class and middle class social groups. In the lower middle class, for example, both sexes were emotionally moved by family relationships. The middle class on the whole did not like films produced for a mass audience and, according to Harper and Porter, were 'concerned with the artistic standing of film texts, only they considered

⁵⁵ Another was Mass Observation which in 1943 asked volunteer respondents for their six favourite films of the past year. 104 women and 116 men replied, about half of whom were regular cinemagoers. The most popular titles were *In Which we Serve*, *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*, *Desert Victory*, *Mrs Miniver*, *The Gentle Sex*, *Random Harvest*, *Thunder Rock*, *The First of the Few*, and *Bambi*. There were very few references to foreign films. See Richards and Sheridan, 1987, 220-291.

⁵⁶ Mayer, 1948, 125-127.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 124-127.

⁵⁸ Harper and Vincent, 1996, 152-173.

the consonance between a film's quality and their own cultural capital'.⁵⁹ It was mainly in reaction to foreign art films that they allowed themselves the luxury of crying, especially in relation to the music. The high profile *Bicycle Thieves* was mentioned most frequently by both men and women, whilst other respectable weepies included *Le Jour se lève*, *Les Enfants du paradis*, *Farrebique*, and *Monsieur Vincent*.

One strong influence on the democratization of culture in relation to class was the dramatic increase in adult education: between 1947 and 1950 the number of evening institutes doubled from 5,000 to 11,000, with a rise of student numbers from 825,000 to 1,250,000.⁶⁰ Both Melanie Selfe and Richard MacDonald in their PhD theses have stressed the links between the postwar film society movement and the growth of adult education, which promoted a hunger for self-improvement through culture.⁶¹ MacDonald, in his subsequent book *The Appreciation of Film*, developed the connection further, going so far as to claim that the special relationship of film societies and informal education together created a distinctive mode of reception.⁶²

The quest for self-improvement was supported by a new publishing venture by Allen Lane of Penguin Books. The sixpenny non-fiction Pelicans, recently described as 'a kind of home university for an army of autodidacts, aspirant culture vultures and social radicals . . . caused a revolution in reading habits'.⁶³ Robert Manvell's *Film* was one of the most successful Pelicans. Manvell, son of a clergyman with a background in adult education, had worked for the Ministry of Information during the War, organising screenings of documentaries and instructional films. This background influenced the approach of his book which was addressed to a broader social constituency than previous specialised film books. *Film* covered the formal aspects of filmmaking, which Manvell called the 'Essentials of Film Art', and also the social role of film where he voiced a missionary zeal for the cultural importance of cinema and its role in raising public taste and in shaping a new postwar world.⁶⁴

The success of *Film* led to the publication of a new film quarterly, using a book format, since no new journals could be started due to paper rationing. *The Penguin Film Review*, edited by Manvell, ran to nine quarterlies between 1946 and 1949 and had a regular turnover of 25,000, mainly film society members. It had a distinctively international flavour including a regular feature 'Around the World's Studios', as well as critical essays on the state of French, Italian, and Russian cinema as well as reviews of foreign films.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 168.

⁶⁰ Conekin, 2003, 11-12.

⁶¹ Selfe, 2007 and MacDonald, 2010.

⁶² MacDonald, 2016, 5.

⁶³ *Guardian*, 26/4/14, 14.

⁶⁴ Manvell, 1944.

Newspapers and magazines, all of which ran film reviews, were another source of informal education. After the War, the number and circulation figures of newspapers shot up, and by 1949 they sold a total of 60 million copies a week.⁶⁵ *Shots in the Dark*, a collection of film reviews by 19 critics from 1949 to 1952, showed the diversity of publications targeted at different political, class, and interest groups, including the now extinct *News Chronicle*, *Sunday Chronicle*, *Evening News*, *Daily Herald*, *Time and Tide*, and *Tribune*.⁶⁶

Dilys Powell and C.A. Lejeune were the two most influential opinion formers in the film world. Powell, film critic for *The Sunday Times*, was also active in the film society movement at home and on the festival circuit abroad as President of the International Federation of Cinema Critics. Lejeune's *Observer* reviews from the 1930s onwards were widely read and quoted, especially by film societies whose programme notes regularly included the reviews of Powell and/or Lejeune. Selfe, who argued that serious reading about film and membership of film societies went hand in hand, reported that the notes for the Nottingham Society's screening of *Les Enfants du paradis* consisted of Lejeune's positive review, a negative one by *The Times* film correspondent, and another piece by Forsyth Hardy in the *Filmgoer's Review*.⁶⁷

The increase in the number of film societies was dramatic, no doubt encouraged by Manvell's chapter in *Film* 'Why not start a film society?'. By 1947 the number of film societies affiliated to the BFI had doubled, within a year, to 106. By 1949 there were 203, and by 1952 the movement reached a total membership of 60,000.⁶⁸ Societies were supported by the re-established Federation of Film Societies in 1945 and the BFI's new Central Booking Agency which negotiated fixed terms for hire on behalf of the societies. The prewar urban city societies continued to have large memberships with 35mm projection, usually in cinemas. But the real change was the '16mm revolution' which enabled the growth of film societies in small towns or rural areas.⁶⁹ Previously restricted to Sunday screenings in cinemas, societies could now use church, community, and education buildings and, as a result, by 1950 nearly two thirds of film societies in England and Wales were 16mm with fewer than 150 members.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ Hopkins, 1964, 221.

⁶⁶ Manvell, Anstey, Lindgren, Rotha, 1951, 14.

⁶⁷ Selfe, 2013, 468.

⁶⁸ BFI Yearbooks, 1949 and 1952.

⁶⁹ MacDonald, 2012, 91-92.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 91.

1.5 Critical responses to Italian neorealism

The critical success of *Rome Open City* started a small but significant trend for Italian neorealist films. Table 1 shows 4 or 5 Italian films each year from 1947 to 1949, and then a dramatic rise to 16 in 1950, 12 in 1951 and 20 in 1952. This relatively small group of films attracted much attention from the critics.

John Ellis's employment of discourse analysis in his article, 'The Quality Film Adventure: British critics and the cinema, 1942-1948', although specifically about British films, provides a model for looking at the critical reception of Italian neorealism.⁷¹ Significantly, the reviews he discussed were regularly characterised by negative attitudes towards Hollywood. An anonymous writer in the *Evening Standard*, for example, referred to the 'puerile pulp, synthetic sex and Technicolor goo' of American films, whilst other reviewers commonly claimed that the films were aimed at the lowest common denominator of American audiences who, reputedly, had a lower mental age than their British counterparts.⁷² Ellis examined further patterns of language in the reviews around the categories of humanism, realism, organic unity, and authenticity. These were the qualities critics admired in the flowering of distinctively British films like *Henry V*, *Brief Encounter* or *Odd Man Out* during and immediately after the War but which, the critics argued, had become absent again by the late 1940s.

The following survey of reviews of five neorealist films *Rome Open City*, *Vivere in pace*, *Shoeshine*, *Paisà* and *Sunday in August* demonstrates that much the same criteria of judgment were carried over into reviews of foreign language films. Using the most common critical categories for both popular and serious publications, this informal survey focuses on negative attitudes towards Hollywood which are set against the realism, authenticity, and humanism of the neorealist films.

Generally, reviewers were supportive of the idea that foreign films had a leading cultural role. Stephen Watt's review in the *Sunday Express*, for example, described *Paisà* as 'one of the great films of our time' which 'should have an effect on the cinema'. And he exhorted his readers to see it 'even though most people don't see foreign films'.⁷³ His views were echoed by Milton Shulman in the *Evening Standard* who wrote '*Paisà* is a picture you must see even if you have never seen either an Italian or French film before'.⁷⁴

By far the most common reference in the reviews is to the difference between these films and the Hollywood or British studio film. Stephen Watts went into detail,

⁷¹ Ellis, 1996, 66-94.

⁷² Ibid., 87.

⁷³ BFI Press Cuttings, *Paisà*, *Sunday Express*, 17/10/48.

⁷⁴ Ibid., *Paisà*, *Evening Standard*, 14/10/48.

directly comparing *Rome Open City* to the artificiality of the use of back projection and artificial fights in studio films, and he added:

As films are always imitative I foresee a vogue for realistic films . . . Magnani is a real woman, not synthetic compared to Hollywood films . . . real and beautifully acted.⁷⁵

The Sunday Graphic agreed:

You may argue that . . . we have had enough films about the wicked doings of monocled Nazis in Occupatia. They came from Hollywood. *Open City* comes from Rome. They were false. *Open City* is true.⁷⁶

Dilys Powell also talked about the contrast in relation to *Paisà* which, she argued, brought to 'the picture of war a pity that is at once savage and tender and which is quite foreign to the studio-made film'.⁷⁷

Shoeshine, the second Italian film to open in London after the War, was directed by Vittorio De Sica and written by Cesare Zavattini. With its location shooting, use of non-professional actors, and documentary style, the film typically concentrated on the pressing social issues of war-torn Europe, in this case the plight of homeless children after the fall of Fascism. The film won international acclaim, including an Academy Award, and did well in Britain. After playing at the Rialto, it was distributed nationally by British Lion and reached an audience of three million, according to Goldschmidt in *Picturegoer*.⁷⁸ Again, many reviews praised it for standing apart from Hollywood. Fred Majdalany in the *Daily Mail* described its 'documentary truthfulness' and the 'disturbing picture' it created.⁷⁹ And Ross Shepherd wrote in *The People*:

Not an expensive star studded Hollywood or Denham epic . . . the actors speak only Italian . . . highbrow film critics will tell you it is a magnificent piece of cinematic art . . . a human documentary.⁸⁰

Sunday in August with a script by Sergei Amidei, writer of *Rome Open City* was directed by Luciano Emmer, a maker of art documentaries. It showed episodes in the lives of a cross section of Roman society on the beach at Ostia. Although it is now little remembered, the film was nominated for a BAFTA and was a success at the Academy, where it ran for three months in 1951. Paul Rotha's review of the film sought to define neorealism in terms of its difference from the studio system. His piece in *Public Opinion* is reminiscent of Grierson's famous definition of documentary as 'the creative treatment of actuality':

⁷⁵ Ibid., *Roma Citta Aperta*, *Sunday Express*, 6/7/47.

⁷⁶ Ibid., *Sunday Graphic*, 6/7/47.

⁷⁷ Ibid., *Paisà*, *The Sunday Times*, 17/10/48.

⁷⁸ Goldschmidt, 1948, 17.

⁷⁹ BFI Press Cuttings, *Sciuscia*, *Daily Mail*, 5/1/49.

⁸⁰ Ibid., *Sciuscia*, *The People*, 7/12/47.

Some people compare it to Carol Reed's *Bank Holiday*. The comparison is unhappy. Emmer's film breathes with natural instinctive warmth and realism. Reed's picture was a completely theatrical, studio minded approach. Untainted and uninhibited by studio complexes Emmer goes straight to reality and re-shapes it, moulds it, interprets it into his individual conception. The freshness and vitality of this approach would be hard to capture by a director brought up in studio conventions.⁸¹

A study of the reviews of the neorealist films confirms a strong commitment to humanism along with the notion of organic unity, as discussed by Ellis. At a time when the case for film as an art was still being made, film critics were keen to argue for its equal standing with the other arts in its raising of the human spirit and its questions about humanity. Humanist ideas, prevalent in attitudes to the arts since the Renaissance, of asserting the dignity and worth of individuals were evident in the reviews, as was the belief that a truly artistic film can represent general human values as they relate to the universal aspects of existence, like birth, death or love. Film writers like Manvell argued that the artistic treatment by the director, in other words the aesthetics of the film, should, if successful, unite form and content, and it is this organic unity which achieves excellence.⁸²

Manvell's programme note for *Paisà* at the Academy typically asserted the humanist position, along with the notion of artistic unity:

What matters is human nature pure and simple, whether Italian or foreign. The film is also bound by unity of artistic treatment, a style both objective and sympathetic, calm yet passion loving.⁸³

This sentiment was echoed by Richard Winnington in the *News Chronicle*:

It cannot be doubted that Roberto Rossellini's *Paisà* will stand as one of the few great comments on the Second World War to be made by the contemporary cinema. Episodes are unified by Rossellini's over riding insistence on the importance of the individual.⁸⁴

Ideas about realism and authenticity were also prominent in the reviews. For an audience which had been completely cut off from Italy, the images of devastation, occupation, and resistance must have registered with shocking directness. The realism of the representations of war and occupation was much commented on. Lejeune, in her review 'World in Shadow', said *Rome Open City* was not a story but an incident which had the 'sharpness of a newsreel if you can imagine a newsreel

⁸¹ BFI Press Cuttings, *Domenica d'Agosto*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 26/1/51.

⁸² For a rare discussion of humanist film criticism see Bywater and Sobchack, 1989, 24-47.

⁸³ BFI Press Cuttings, *Paisà*, Academy film notes, 12/10/48.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, *Paisà*, *News Chronicle*, 13/10/48.

created by a poet'.⁸⁵ Majdalanay commented that, although it had taken so long to reach England, it was still 'the most authentic seeming portrait we have yet had of what it must have been like to be occupied'.⁸⁶ Cyril Ray of the *Sunday Times*, who had seen the film in Rome two years previously, was impressed once more by this low budget film from the streets which was a 'truthful, compassionate picture of ordinary people'.⁸⁷

Positive reviews notwithstanding, the portrayal of the British in *Paisà* annoyed some writers who commented on the lack of recognition of the British role in Italy, with others taking offence at the perceived anti-British slant. Majdalanay, for example, commented that, 'Even so good a director as Rossellini is not above selling a little accuracy for a friendly dollar market'.⁸⁸ But most reviews praised the film for its emotional authenticity and realism, for example William Whitebait:

It is no exaggeration to say that *Paisà* with its warm, shifting episodes gives a greater and more heart rending sense of the totality of war than any other film'.⁸⁹

How central was the idea of authorship in the reviews and articles about Italian neorealism? Most reviewers, particularly in the broadsheets, made mention of the director's name but there was still little extended discussion of the director as author. Before the international success of De Sica's *Bicycle Thieves* the most well-known name in Italian neorealism was Rossellini, at first because of his war trilogy, the third of which, *Germany Year Zero*, in fact received only a lukewarm reception in Britain. *The Miracle* achieved notoriety because of censorship issues to do with blasphemy, while *Stromboli*, starring Ingrid Bergman, with whom he was having a scandalous affair, was not considered commercial enough and was refused full distribution by RKO. On the whole, reviewers at this time devoted more column inches to the actors, especially Anna Magnani and Aldo Fabrizi, who became quite well known in Britain, even making personal appearances at the specialist cinemas. There was often praise for the non-professionals like Lamberto Maggiorani, the lead in *Bicycle Thieves*, a metal worker who still carried with him, according to Winnington, 'the sour taste of unemployment' and for Enzo Staiola, the child who played his son in an 'adorable unforced performance'.⁹⁰

Richard Winnington of the daily *News Chronicle*, who was an early advocate of both neorealism and the director as author approach, praised De Sica's direction in *Bicycle Thieves*. He argued that the use of Rome as his studio, ordinary men and

⁸⁵ Ibid., *Roma Citta Aperta*, *Observer*, 6/7/47.

⁸⁶ Ibid., *Daily Mail*, 4/7/47.

⁸⁷ Ibid., *Sunday Times*, 6/7/47.

⁸⁸ Ibid., *Paisà*, *Daily Mail*, 15/10/48.

⁸⁹ Ibid., *New Statesman*, 25/10/48.

⁹⁰ Winnington, 1973, 104-106.

women as his players, his command over material and plot, and his paring down of incident and detail to the essential minimum, all made it the greatest film since *Le Jour se lève*.⁹¹

Winnington also paid tribute to the distinctive directorial style of De Santis in *Bitter Rice*:

His scene is in the rice fields below Milan, to which every year flock thousands of temporary women workers. His diffuse and sensational story is framed in a magnificently pictorial background, strewn with promiscuous and unrelated visual effects. The film has an uncontrollable sincerity.⁹²

These two films, *Bicycle Thieves* and *Bitter Rice* can be used as an illustration of the different spaces which foreign films could occupy in British film culture. A comparison of the reception of the two films supports the theories of Janet Staiger and others that context determines reading strategies, and that the different cultural status assigned to each film can be explained by the different frameworks of criticism, distribution, and marketing.⁹³

The press releases for *Bitter Rice* may have played up the realism of the rice field setting but the marketing, especially for the dubbed version of the film, was much more about the sex appeal of Silvana Mangano, as exemplified by the widespread use of the giant sexy cutouts. Furthermore, apart from Winnington, most reviewers found the mix of melodrama and documentary uncomfortable. They suggested that in this film the realism was sacrificed to sensation, especially after the dubbed version was released.

Bicycle Thieves followed a different route. Its initial release in November 1948 evoked a lukewarm response in Italy. It was not chosen for Cannes or Venice but did win prizes at the small, but artistically influential, festivals of Knokke and Locarno. But, after a positive reception in France, it went to the USA in December 1949 where it grossed \$1 million dollars and won the Academy Award. It reached Britain in early 1950, where it had a five-month run at the Curzon, won the BAFTA award, and was universally praised by the British critics. Its consecration as a leading art film was confirmed when it was chosen by the critics as best film by the *Sight and Sound* International Poll in 1952.

1.6 French cinema in British film culture

As Table 1 indicates, in terms of foreign imports French cinema continued to lead the way in British cinemas, returning to their pre-war levels, and reaching 27 films by

⁹¹ Ibid., 175.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Staiger, 1992, 49-79.

1952. According to Maurice Speed in *Film Review*, by 1951 in the eight cinemas regularly showing foreign language films in London, most of the films were French.⁹⁴ In addition, suburban cinemas regularly screened, often on a Sunday, a mix of revivals and more recent French films. French cinema, which had been kept alive by film societies during the War, continued to dominate society choices, as evidenced by the 33 programmes listed in *Sequence* in 1949. New films like the ultra-realist *Farrebique* and the fairytale *La Belle et La Bête*, were being shown alongside old favorites from the 1930s, like *La Kermesse héroïque*, *Un carnet de bal*, and *Poil de carotte* and the poetic realist revivals such as *Le Quai des brumes* and *Hôtel du Nord*.⁹⁵

Les Enfants du paradis inaugurated the French comeback in London. Opened in Paris in March 1945, and a huge success in France, this three hour historical costume drama had 1,500 extras, the largest set ever built for a French film, and an array of stars including Arletty, Jean-Louis Barrault, and Pierre Brasseur. Made during the Occupation in the Victorine Studios, Nice, by the successful team of Marcel Carné and Jacques Prévert, it was in many ways the antithesis of *Rome Open City*. But, as Jill Forbes has argued, it too was a film of the Occupation. In the context of strict censorship, the placing of Paris as a central character, the elevation of the ordinary people, and the spirit of carnival, can all be read as signs of covert defiance of Nazism.⁹⁶ It was certainly a big statement about French cinema, proclaiming its ambition to beat foreign competition, both German and American, at their own game with a distinctly French big budget spectacle film.⁹⁷

Alexander Korda acquired the British rights to *Les Enfants du paradis* for 25 million francs. The gala premiere, with the filmmakers in attendance, was held at the Rialto on 29 November 1946 where it ran for four months, recording 55,908 admissions in the first five weeks.⁹⁸ Maurice Speed reported in *Film Review* that 'it made an instantaneous and enormous success; huge queues waited hours to see it, records were made one week only to be broken by the next'.⁹⁹ For audiences, starved of continental fare, it was symbolic of the dawn of a new era. This respondent, in reply to the *Cinema Memories* questionnaire conducted for this thesis, saw it as part of the postwar cultural renaissance:

The first foreign language film I ever saw was *Les Enfants du paradis* . . . very soon after the end of the war. . . I was in the sixth-form and I saw it [at the Royalty

⁹⁴ *Film Review*, 1951, 92.

⁹⁵ *Sequence* 9, Autumn 1949, 140.

⁹⁶ Forbes, 1997, 71.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁹⁸ Eyles, 2014, 55.

⁹⁹ *Film Review*, 1947, 139.

cinema in Richmond] because it was a new and suddenly available experience. Like the Picasso/Matisse exhibition which took place at the V&A at about the same time it completely bowled me over and made me realise that beyond this island fortress in which I had been growing up during the war there was a world out there that I needed to know about.¹⁰⁰

The films of Jean Cocteau – poet, playwright and artist – embodied another aspect of the French poetic tradition which appealed in particular to British intellectuals. Already known in Britain for *L'Éternel Retour*, *L'aigle à deux têtes* and *Les Enfants terribles*, his version of *La Belle et La Bête* was hailed by *MFB* as true cinema, that would be anathema to 'those who regard realism and social purpose as the greatest and only virtues on the screen'.¹⁰¹

Cocteau's *Orphée* was another manifestation of the cinema's capacity to dream. A winner at Cannes, it came to the Rialto in 1950, was distributed by Films de France, and was generally well reviewed. Gavin Lambert's lengthy review in *Sequence* described its appeal as a reassertion of a romantic mood at an unfashionable moment: wonder, ritual, the power of illusion, and magic, are reinterpreted in a contemporary setting, which brings the myth closer and gives it a disturbing edge of reality.¹⁰²

Both *Les Enfants du paradis* and *Orphée* represented different aspects of what was seen as French cinema's poetic traditions. But, as Mazdon and Wheatley have argued, French cinema in Britain in the early 1950s in fact had multiple identities.¹⁰³ The success of *Au-delà des grilles/The Walls of Malapaga* at the new Cameo Poly, for example, with its star Jean Gabin and its working class Genovese milieu was one of several imports which harked back to the fatalistic poetic realism of the 1930s. By 1951, when Jacques Becker's *Casque d'or* (certificate X) ran at the Academy for over four months, British art film audiences had come to appreciate French films for their 'adult' treatment of sexuality and violence. The film, a doomed love story starring Simone Signoret in the apache (criminal) world of Belle Époque Paris, had been dismissed by French critics as a costume drama, but was much praised by British critics, especially Lindsay Anderson in *Sight and Sound*.¹⁰⁴

Why were French films so popular with certain segments of the British audience? Nicole Vedrès, French filmmaker and critic who wrote regularly for the *Penguin Film Review*, complained that French cinema, as exemplified by Pagnol and Guitry, was popular abroad partly because of the stereotyped notions they communicated:

¹⁰⁰ Anon, 2013, *Cinema Memories* survey.

¹⁰¹ *MFB*, 30/11/47, 161.

¹⁰² Lambert, 1950, 22-32.

¹⁰³ Mazdon and Wheatley, 2013, 82-95.

¹⁰⁴ Leahy, 2007, 72-77.

What the foreigner regards as characteristic in our films, is in fact the export variety of the French character – as with fashions in clothes – a character which, accentuated on purpose, is . . . more traditional than national, more picturesque than truly authentic.¹⁰⁵

A number of comedies could be said to portray these ‘traditional’ and ‘picturesque’ versions of Frenchness. At the more ‘respectable’ end these included the comedies shown at the Academy like *Fric-Frac*, *Antoine and Antoinette* and *Edward and Caroline*. Jacques Tati’s rural comedy, *Jour de fête* was also an unexpected success. Made on a shoestring budget this one-man slapstick comedy was first shown at the Edinburgh Festival and, after a run at the Cameo Poly, distributed widely by Films de France. Its success lay in its visual silent film-style gags, its gangly hero, and its simple reflections on the limitations of modernity.

Another French comedy, this time a sex farce, *Occupe-toi d’Amélie/Keep an Eye on Amelia*, came up against the censor. Based on a Feydeau play, and starring Danielle Darrieux, it portrayed the complex affairs of a Parisian cocotte. The problem for the British censor was that Amelia delighted in sexual relations with several men in a world where sexual intercourse between men and women was regarded as routine. It was denied a certificate in April 1950 but passed as an A by the London County Council (hereafter LCC), only to be shown on condition that the theatre specialised in foreign films. Two BBFC examiners who saw it at the Cameo Poly in November 1950 commented approvingly on the respectable middle class make-up of the audience.¹⁰⁶ In January 1951, when the X certificate was introduced, it was passed as an X.

The most popular comedy at the box office, however, was *Clochemerle*, a bawdy rural farce, involving Church and Army, about a mayor’s attempt to build a urinal as a memorial in his village. One of the first X certificates in 1951, it was released by Blue Ribbon and made money throughout the 1950s. It took the French authorities two years to allow it to go abroad. When it arrived in Britain it was largely despised by the critics, with *MFB* calling it a shoddy production and a second-rate Pagnol, ‘with the ever so Frenchness emphasised by an American commentator.’¹⁰⁷

But *La Ronde* was undoubtedly the French film of the era. It brought together many elements which British audiences associated with Frenchness - sophisticated wit, sexual freedom, stylish sets and costumes, and well known French stars. It had a big impact on London, and for Harry Hopkins, captured the cultural moment:

¹⁰⁵ *Penguin Film Review* 3, 1947, 82.

¹⁰⁶ Examiner’s report, 13/11/50, BBFC file: *Occupe-toi d’Amélie*.

¹⁰⁷ *MFB*, vol. 18, no.207, April 1951, 244.

While the British press was still spreading Dr Kinsey across its pages, London errand boys were whistling . . . *Love's Roundabout*, the dreamy theme song of the French film *La Ronde*.¹⁰⁸

It ran at the Curzon for an unprecedented seventeen months, to a total audience of 541,705, and then went on to 100 provincial cinemas. The reviews drew attention to the daring subject matter: *La Ronde* meaning the roundabout of love, sex, and infidelity. The critics praised the acting of a troupe of 11 top French stars (including Danielle Darrieux, Jean Luis Barrault, Simone Signoret, and Gerard Philipe), the wit, the fluid direction by Max Ophuls, and the music by Oscar Strauss. The reviews show that the popular press sometimes used the term French as a value judgment; for example *The Daily Mirror* dubbed *La Ronde* as 'Very French and very good' and *The Express* went even further, 'This film is French, in fact I do not remember having seen anything quite so French before, even in France'.¹⁰⁹

This 'very French' film could hardly have been more cosmopolitan. It was set in Vienna in 1900, based on the controversial Austrian play by Arthur Schnitzler, was directed by a German Jew who had become a naturalised Frenchman, and the composer was Viennese Jewish. It was shot on a modest budget, with stylised sets, in a French studio. A master of ceremonies, played by another Austrian, Anton Walbrook, set in motion a roundabout of lust and desire. Its sophistication and wit were used to justify the certificate for general release, and its popularity broadened the audience for foreign films.

Picturegoer ran a whole feature on the *La Ronde* phenomenon. The author, Derek Walker, claimed that the film which initially played to the usual Curzon audiences, 'the Mayfair clique, the intellectuals and the long haired types', soon attracted a broader audience. After three months, holidaymakers including Americans arrived and Welsh and other regional voices were heard. 'Youths with crew cuts and girls in jeans, speaking the twangy Cockney of Hackney and Pimlico flocked to see what they were told they shouldn't'.¹¹⁰

La Ronde marks a turning point in the attitudes of authorities and audiences alike towards the acceptability of risqué subjects in cinema. In fact, in the debates about the introduction of the X certificate, it was apparent that a new tolerance towards foreign language films had emerged. Seeing *La Ronde* in situ satisfied the BBFC examiners that all was well. One, who saw it with his wife in May 1951, reported a full house and an appreciative audience, with the biggest laughs for the Anton Walbrook scenes.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Hopkins, 1963, 196.

¹⁰⁹ BFI Press Cuttings, *La Ronde*.

¹¹⁰ Walker, 1952, 8-9 & 19. *Picturegoer*, 24/5/52, 19.

¹¹¹ Examiner's report, 16/5/51, BBFC file: *La Ronde*.

Another, in early 1952, declared it 'an outstanding film, original, witty and delicate'. He wrote that the Board took a risk in giving it the X, but that the audience grasped its humorous quality. Other readers' reports commented on the audience as 'good class', and 'discriminating, intelligent theatre types', not the 'Charing Cross Road smut hunters'. Both reported lots of laughter and people coming out with smiling faces.¹¹²

There were some voices of disapproval, however. *Picturegoer* quoted a Sunday newspaper headline, 'Would you let your daughter see this?', followed by advice to local watch committees to ban the film.¹¹³ A letter of complaint in the BBFC files from a Mr C.B. Nash, care of the English Speaking Union, referred to *La Ronde* as an unwholesome film, full of 'filth, lies and immorality' and expressed shock that it was allowed to be shown.¹¹⁴ The reply from Arthur Watkins, that the film was 'full of style and wit' which 'took place in a fantastic imaginary world', showed just how far attitudes had changed.¹¹⁵ Moreover, he added that it was screened in almost every European country, was acclaimed at the Venice Film Festival, and had aroused few complaints at the Curzon.

1.7 Conclusions

The Cannes, Venice, and Edinburgh festivals which ushered in a new wave of European films became key signifiers of art cinema after the War, and were central to the shaping of the field in British film culture. This chapter has shown how the festivals were bound up with the infrastructures of distribution and exhibition in the UK. A cluster of companies, including Film Traders/Academy and GCT/Curzon, now joined by Korda's British Lion and Films de France, distributed festival prize winners. These were introduced in London's newly re-opened specialist cinemas, and then circulated to selected art cinemas and film societies across the country.

This chapter has demonstrated, through a comparative study of reviews of the neorealist films of the period, the recurring discourses at play in the criticism of foreign films. Value judgments on films were based on the documentary realism of the film techniques, the humanist and universalist values they communicated, and the Hollywood-style studio techniques they rejected. Tellingly, in these immediate postwar years, which were simultaneously overshadowed by the horrors of war and invigorated by ideas of a new world order, the critics were more concerned with realist techniques and humanist stories than they were with ideas of authorship.

¹¹² Readers' reports, 9 & 22/ 5/51: BBFC file: *La Ronde*.

¹¹³ *Picturegoer*, 24/5/52, 19.

¹¹⁴ Nash to Watkins, 5/11/ 52, BBFC file: *La Ronde*.

¹¹⁵ Watkins, who had been in post as Secretary since 1948, had a more open policy and entered public debate about censorship. His class based views were revealed in *Penguin Film Review* where he was careful to make a distinction between the 'intelligent adult audience' and the average patrons of the Odeon or Granada. See Watkins, 1977, 61-67.

Another aspect of the cultural positioning of the foreign film in British film culture, its association with sex, became stronger in this period. The introduction of the X certificate in 1951 had wide ramifications for foreign language films. On the one hand, 'adult' films, like *Casque d'or* or *La Ronde* became much more acceptable and this increased interest in, and audiences for, the art film. The case study of *La Ronde*, the most popular foreign language film of the early 1950s, has shown that foreign language films, despite the subtitles, could and did appeal to a range of audiences. On the other hand, the X certificate encouraged some distributors and exhibitors to promote continental films exclusively through their association with sex. Archway's practices, for example, were a reflection of their assumptions about the attraction of foreign language films for working class popular audiences. They imported films with more sensational subject matter and publicised them on the basis of their sexual appeal, a tactic which, as I have shown, worked well with *Bitter Rice*. Their films were often dubbed and they would use the X certificate in the marketing as a positive selling point, an approach which continued throughout the 1950s and 1960s and which will be further explored in later chapters.

This closing date of this chapter, 1952, was the year of *Sight and Sound's* first International Critics Poll when 63 critics chose their Top Ten, including the classics *Potemkin*, *Le Jour se lève*, *Passion de Jeanne d'Arc*, *Le Million*, and *La Règle du jeu*. Significantly though, it was the new standard bearer for neorealism, *Bicycle Thieves*, which came top, a sign that postwar international cinema had come of age.

Finally, I have argued that the War and its aftermath, as well as stimulating new types of film production, also created a new social and cultural climate which was conducive to the growth of interest in foreign language films. Linked to education and a boom in reading, both related to aspirations for self-improvement, these cultural changes were to grow in importance as the 1950s progressed, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 2: Networks, institutions, and places: foreign films in a changing culture (1953–1958)

Alternating intellectual and what were then considered quite racy films, you might get one week *Summer with Monika* by Bergman, and the next would be a Russian war film and then you might have Brigitte Bardot *And God Created Woman*. So it was an extraordinary mixture.

—Anon. (2014)¹

This memory of the Tatler in Bristol is a reminder that lively film cultures were able to thrive outside of London and that foreign language films in the 1950s had both a sex and art appeal.

Drawing on the spatial theories of Doreen Massey, much of this chapter is concerned with this diversity of the spaces and places of foreign films. As discussed in the Introduction, Massey's work in cultural geography can usefully provide a model for the study of film culture in local communities. Her conceptualization of space as a set of interrelationships and interactions at all scales, breathes life into the histories of local places of exhibition. It also enables a re-assessment of film societies in particular as sites of constantly evolving encounter and exchange, interacting with local, national, and sometimes international networks.

The analysis of places, as constituted out of spatialized social relations and the narratives about them, is complemented in this chapter by an emphasis on networks, both literal and metaphorical. Hagener's metaphor of networks with their connections, nodes, and flows is deployed to investigate local, national, and international points of encounter. And his model of the totality of avant-garde networks of the 1920s and 1930s, as applied to the new international art cinema of the 1950s, demonstrates how the different 'layers' of 'horizontally connected' activity in distribution, sites of exhibition, magazines, and festivals relate to one another.² The case studies of distributors in the 1950s, for example Kenneth Rive and Charles Cooper, show how key individuals criss-crossed from one layer to another, performing a multiplicity of roles.

The opening section uses Bourdieu's influential work on cultural capital in *Distinction* to consider some cultural contexts of 1950s Britain which affected the growth of interest in foreign films, namely education, readership of the new specialist film magazines, and shifting attitudes to the representation of sex in films. Next, I look at the increasing, but still restricted, circulation of foreign language films in Britain within the context of developments in the international industry, the decline of

¹ Crofts, 2014.

² Hagener, 2007, 20-22

Hollywood exports, and the rise in continental productions. The third section looks at patterns of distribution and exhibition and explores how networks of relationships in the small foreign language sector of the industry operated in the spaces between the dominant circuits with their preponderance of British and Hollywood films. Sections 4 and 5 are devoted to the spaces and places of foreign films, from the specialist London cinemas to small chains and film societies, and from the NFT to local 16mm societies. Finally, the chapter considers Scotland where, it is argued, the 1950s can be seen as a golden age for foreign art films, with centres in the main towns and with Edinburgh operating as a British and international cultural hub.

2.1 Changing cultural influences

Education

For members of the new audiences of the 1950s, the magazines you read, the cinemas you went to, and the directors you could name might solidify into a sense of cultural superiority, at least for one segment of the audience. This section draws on Pierre Bourdieu's sociological theories to understand the social formation of this segment of the audience. Bourdieu's *Distinction*, based on empirical sociological surveys, foregrounded the relationships between economic and social conditions and lifestyles in 1960s France. He developed the idea of cultural capital, the distinctive form of knowledge in relation to leisure activities that people acquire through family and education, which, he argued, was just as much a marker of class difference as economic capital. Bourdieu categorized cinema, along with other new art forms, such as photography, as an aspirational leisure pursuit which attracted lower middle and some working class audiences, being more accessible, cheaper, and less steeped in class snobbery than the traditional arts, such as classical music and opera.

Education and cultural changes immediately after the War, as discussed in the previous chapter, provided new audiences for foreign films. By the mid 1950s the impact of the 1944 Education Act was producing further social mobility, to the extent that the children of mainly skilled manual workers now comprised half the grammar school population.³ And their presence was beginning to be felt in the universities where the proportion of working class students was rapidly rising. The working class intake of the redbrick universities, such as Nottingham and Birmingham, reached about a third, a proportion which compared favorably to Oxford, where working class students were 13% of the total, and Cambridge where they were only 9%.⁴

Oxbridge, did, however, attract an elite group of working or lower middle class

³ Hopkins, 1964, 162.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 168.

youngsters, like Joan Bakewell and Melvyn Bragg, for whom the foreign subtitled film was both a revelation and a badge of intellectual sophistication. The experiences of these two, later to become prominent in cultural life, illustrate the importance of film for many university students of the 1950s and exemplify Bourdieu's ideas of cultural capital. Melvyn Bragg, the son of a shopkeeper, was brought up in Wigton, Cumbria, and, like many of his peers, went to the local cinema two or three times a week. But he did not experience a subtitled film until he went to Oxford. His first viewing of *The Seventh Seal* at the Scala in May 1957 was an awakening which represented everything that was now different about his new life.⁵ Bragg also wrote about the revelation that film was an art, which, for him, leapt across the barrier which had previously separated cinema from the literary and other arts.⁶

Joan Bakewell, from Stockport, won a scholarship place at Cambridge in 1953. Like Bragg, the move from the narrow, self-contained world of home and school was a big culture shock. She described in her autobiography how, at that time, glamour resided in all things French, including Juliette Greco, whose style she mimicked, with tight black trousers, flat black pumps, and black polo neck sweaters. She joined the Cambridge Film Club where 'We were passionate about the films of Jean Cocteau, *La Belle et La Bête* and in particular *Les Enfants terribles* with its action – the passionate intensity of incest – set to the urgent sound of Bach.' And for her Cocteau's film *Orphée*, in which death is represented by a leather-clad motor cyclist, seemed the most avant-garde chic at the time.⁷

The expansion of adult education continued in the 1950s when provision by local authorities, churches, trade unions, WEA, and university extramural classes dramatically increased. MacDonald linked the growth of film societies directly to this expansion, arguing that they attracted a 'new generation of civic activists and educators . . . who identified with the aspirations of cultural improvement and purposeful recreation that a film society promised'.⁸ But film societies were apparently not immune to cultural snobbery, as Sylvia Tennant's article in *Film*, 'Miss Mitford Goes to the Pictures: A Beginner's Guide to Film Society Usage', indicated. She poked fun at aspiring film intellectuals in her use of the fashionable 1950s nomenclature of 'U' and 'non-U':

⁵ BFI Press Cuttings, *The Seventh Seal*, *Independent*, 19/11/94.

⁶ Bragg, 1993, 20.

⁷ Bakewell, 2003, 92.

⁸ MacDonald, 2012, 88.

The double feature is definitely non-U. Short films, especially Yugoslav documentaries about salt-mines are U. Any foreign film shown without subtitles is de facto U . . . All films made before 1910 are U. Russian films are mostly U, as are Spanish, Greek and Brazilian. Most Italian and some French films are U, a few British, and even fewer American (mostly Westerns).⁹

Reading about foreign language films

In the 1950s film magazines became important as discursive contexts for those who followed foreign language films. Newspaper critics, like Powell and Lejeune, were already respected and their judgments could be a deciding factor in the fate of a minority interest film. The 1950s also saw the growth of specialist magazines. Three new film magazines, *Continental Film Review* (hereafter *CFR*), *Films and Filming* (hereafter *F&F*), and *Film*, joined *Sight and Sound* in this period.¹⁰ The film magazines became nodes in the networks of film culture, providing news of foreign film productions and festivals, publishing film journalism and criticism, and promoting screenings and events.

Sight and Sound, with the *Sequence* group at its core, displayed a new critical edge in the first half of the 1950s. Its international reputation was enhanced by the International Critics Poll of 1952 and its active participation at festivals. By the time Gavin Lambert resigned in 1956, its readership had increased fivefold. Penelope Houston, who officially took over from Lambert in 1956, continued the commitment to foreign directors who had distinctive voices and cinematic styles, like Buñuel and Bresson.¹¹ By 1958, when new directors such as Kurosawa, Wajda, Bergman, and Ray were covered extensively, *Sight and Sound* had become a standard bearer for the new art cinema and had reached a total circulation of 16,500, of which over 10,000 was in Britain.¹² Its emphasis on foreign art films was so pronounced that a reader from Lancashire complained that it was 'particularly hard for those who live in the provinces for whom a foreign film is an event. Mizoguchi, Visconti, Kinugasa are just names'.¹³

Films and Filming, first on sale in 1954, was described by a reader in 1961 as 'a sensible magazine for intelligent film goers'.¹⁴ It was aimed at an audience which, according to *Film*, found '*Picturegoer* unsatisfying and *Sight and Sound*

⁹ *Film*, no. 14, November/December 1957, 26.

¹⁰ *Film* is discussed in 2.6 below.

¹¹ The obituary notice for Penelope Houston by David Robinson reveals that she was virtually in control for several years before his departure. See <<http://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/comment/obituaries/remembering-penelope-houston>>, accessed 12/03/17.

¹² Nowell-Smith and Dupin, 2012, 243.

¹³ *S&S*, vol. 26, no.1, Summer 1956, 54.

¹⁴ *F&F*, vol. 8, no.:3, December 1961, 5.

unintelligible'.¹⁵ Along with its sister publications by Hansom Books, including *Dance and Dancer* and *Plays and Players*, it was a popular, high profile magazine.¹⁶

From the beginning it was covertly addressed to the homosexual community in a decade when homosexuals were regularly imprisoned or 'treated' for breaking the law, the most notorious case being the sentencing of Alan Turing in 1952 to a kind of chemical castration. From the 1950s, the homosexual networking function of *Films and Filming* could be found in the personal ads, where coded words, like 'bachelor' and 'looking for similar', were used to put homosexuals in touch with one another. And, from the first issues, Vince was regularly advertising his men's fashion shop in Soho with a succession of good-looking male models (including Sean Connery), another coded message addressed to the hidden community of homosexual readers.¹⁷

The editor, Peter Baker, ran regular features such as Still of the Month, Personality of the Month, Come into the Studio and production news from Britain, Hollywood and 'Abroad'. His commitment to serious film journalism was shown through the commissioning of articles from guest writers, including directors and producers as well as critics. Articles were published on diverse areas of film such as censorship, which Peter John Dyer of the BFI covered in a major three-part investigation in 1957. Baker, in those early years, took issue with what he called the 'sex for X' mentality of some exhibitors. In one editorial, 'When X marks a dirty spot', he bemoaned the association of the X with 'empty shockers' like *And Woman . . . Was Created*, *The Daughter of Mata Hari* and *The Slave*, and he criticised so-called specialised cinemas for showing sexually sensational films at the expense of 'sensitive' films like *Pather Panchali* or *Kanal*.¹⁸

Continental Film Review, launched in 1952, can be used to illustrate the changing connotations of the description 'continental film' and to provide examples of the elasticity of the term in the 1950s. The title, which was in use as early as the 1930s, became much more widespread in the 1950s. *Klne Weekly* used it to describe foreign films in general and the more risqué foreign offerings in particular, but in *Picturegoer* it was the regular heading for reviews of all foreign films. It also became an increasingly popular name for cinemas which specialised in foreign films, starting with the French sounding Continentales in Tottenham Court Road and Brighton, and the Continentals in Coventry, Wallasey, and Bournemouth. As the 1950s progressed, the term was used more and more frequently to describe foreign films with the added suggestion of

¹⁵ S&S vol.24, no.3, January/March, 1955,161.

¹⁶ From 1955 *F&F* regularly claimed to have the highest circulation in its category, but gave no figures.

¹⁷ Giori, 2009.

¹⁸ *F&F*, vol.4, no.2, October 1957, 16.

'sex and x', especially in the marketing.

In the immediate postwar era, things continental also carried suggestions of glamour, sophistication, and modernity. This was articulated in the first editorial of *Continental Film Review* which was addressed to a potential market of readers emerging from postwar austerity into a new world of foreign travel, jazz, and wine drinking.

We like continental films, we like opera in Italy and jazz in Paris, we like nightclubs in Hamburg or the view of the Rhine from the Dragonfels, we like to buy records that remind us of pleasant times . . . This mag is for those who enjoy good continental films, have been to the Continent, are going to the Continent . . .¹⁹

In the early years there were regular articles on travel, Christmas in Switzerland, or various European wine and music festivals, as well as serialised versions of continental classics such as *Nana* and *Lovers of Lisbon*. The editor, Gordon Reid, reviewed new foreign releases and reported on the festivals and developments in international cinema. He published regular reports on foreign film studios and productions by film correspondents in various capital cities and ran articles on key directors and national cinemas. The more 'sexy' aspects of *Continental Film Review*, however, were what came to give the magazine its image. The front cover always featured a full page ad for a Gala release, and the copious illustrated ads inside emphasised the star and sex appeal of the films. The mainstream distributors of continental films were covered in editorial and news items, as well as in the majority of the ads. In the coverage of exhibition there was an attempt to offer a national spread, with listings of foreign films being shown across the country, news from film societies, and box ads for continental cinemas outside of London. As the decade progressed, the serialised stories and the travel and music articles declined and eventually disappeared. They were replaced by continental star calendars and sexy pinups. The juxtaposition of sex and art became the norm. The August 1956 issue, for example, published a sexy star calendar image of Virna Lisi posing in front of a bed.²⁰ This was closely followed by a scholarly, although unsigned, article 'Style and Theme' with reference to Buñuel and Bresson.²¹

Censorship and the mixed identities of foreign language films

Cultural attitudes to sex were changing in the 1950s. It was a period of contradictions, when old and new values co-existed but also chafed against each other. There were signs of new and more liberal attitudes, such as the 'shocking' revelations of the Kinsey Report about the sexual behaviour of women which were spread across the

¹⁹ *Continental Film Review* (hereafter *CFR*), November 1952, 3.

²⁰ *CFR*, August 1956, 9.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

pages of the British press in 1953.²² Censorship was relaxed in the bookstore and the theatre as well as the cinema. The ban on Zola's novels, for example, was removed and sales of his books increased, along with those of de Maupassant.²³ The publisher Paul Elek published both writers in his Bestseller Library, paperbacks with sexy covers, similar in style to the cinema advertising for French adaptations like *Nana*, *Gervaise*, and *Le Plaisir*. On the other hand, Britain was still a society weighed down by Victorian values. The Donald McGill saucy seaside postcards provide a very British case study of attitudes to sex. George Orwell had argued in 1941 that, like the music hall, they were popular because they lifted the lid off a widespread repression which only had meaning in relation to a strict moral code.²⁴ McGill was prosecuted as late as 1954 under the Obscene Publications Act by a local authority in Lincoln, the same year that five well-known publishing firms were prosecuted for issuing allegedly obscene novels.²⁵

Despite this uneven pattern, new and different spaces were opened up for 'continental' films which reflected different attitudes to sexual explicitness. As discussed in Chapter 1, the introduction of the X certificate in 1951 aided the enormous success of *La Ronde*, which BBFC Secretary Arthur Watkins described as 'witty and charming' despite being 'all about people sleeping together'.²⁶ *Rashomon*, another festival prizewinner, portrayed violence and rape but was also given an X certificate with no cuts. Both Watkins and his successor, John Nichols, who particularly liked Bergman and Japanese films, took artistic merit into consideration when granting certificates to allow distribution. They were more worried about the potent influence of cinema on working class youth, hence the high profile banning of *The Wild One* and the controversies over *The Blackboard Jungle* and *Rebel without a Cause*. However, the practice of imposing cuts on foreign X films was frequent. Film makers, critics, and *Sight and Sound* were incensed about what they saw as attacks on the artistic integrity of the filmmaker and on a film's narrative coherence, as a result of cuts.²⁷ Films as different as *Nana*, *Los olvidados*, *Gervaise*, and *Scandal at Sorrento* were all treated in this way.

The X certificate drastically limited a film's chance of a circuit booking. Ironically, however, the X helped the independent cinema owner: a letter to *Klne Weekly* in 1951 revealed that, whenever an X was shown, business went up by 25%.²⁸ As a result of X certification, a number of continental 'sensationalist' social problem films

²² Hopkins, 1964, 195.

²³ Ibid., 197.

²⁴ Orwell, 2000, 198.

²⁵ Hopkins, 1964, 197.

²⁶ S&S, vol.25, no.4, Spring 1956, 208.

²⁷ S&S, vol.26, no 4, Spring 1957, 171.

²⁸ *KW*, 11/10/51, 10, quoted in Chibnall, 2012, 35.

about prostitution, unmarried mothers, or drugs, with lurid publicity and taglines which flaunted the X certificate, were distributed. Later in the decade they were joined by the early nudist films.

Often these films occupied the same institutional spaces of distribution, exhibition, and publicity as the X films by admired directors. An interesting example of the intersection of art, sex, and censorship was the double bill, shown in 1958 at the Cinephone, of Kenji Mizoguchi's *Street of Shame* (X) and a nudist film, *Isle of Levant* (LCC A).²⁹ *Street of Shame*, about prostitution, was a Venice prizewinner and the first Mizoguchi film to be shown commercially in London. Kenneth Rive of Gala Films chose not to use the director's name on the poster, nor did he show credit titles in the screening of the film. It was promoted purely as a sex film with the tagline, 'Vice of the Orient exposed'.³⁰ *Isle of Levant*, a French film, shot in 'glorious sun tanned colour' was set in a nudist colony off St Tropez. It showed bare breasts and therefore was refused a certificate by the BFFC, but it was passed by the LCC and various other local authorities.

In the sometimes challenging business of selling foreign films in the 1950s, distributors and exhibitors contributed to the blurring of distinctions between 'sex' and 'art' films. The liberalization of censorship did provide a boost for foreign films, but their institutional and discursive contexts sometimes pushed them away from the mainstream, along with the sex film. This blurring and interchange between the discourses surrounding the sex film and the art film created a dual identity for the foreign film, a combination of artistic prestige with sexual explicitness, which was to continue to shape the image of the foreign film into the 1960s and beyond.

2.2 Shifts in the film industry

Kine Weekly, the main trade publication, not previously known for its interest in foreign language films, increased its coverage of foreign films in the 1950s, partly due to the increasing shortage of Hollywood product. In 1956 it even produced a special continental supplement with an article, 'European Product has Created a New and Different Audience', which discussed both the increase of foreign film imports and the widening range of their countries of origin. Most significant, however, was the rise in the number of UK cinemas which included foreign films in their offer. This new phenomenon was discussed in relation to screenings of French films, old and new. The rise was dramatic according to *Kine Weekly*: in 1952 the number of cinemas

²⁹ *CFR*, April 58, 4.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

showing occasional French films in Greater London was 115 and in the provinces was 376; by 1955 this had gone up to 219 in London and 1,200 in the provinces.³¹

The economic and social patterns of film production, distribution, and exhibition were taking new shapes in the 1950s. Hollywood's relationship with European cinema was changing. The Hollywood film industry underwent profound reversals, partly due to the anti-trust laws which weakened the big studios by separating production from exhibition, and partly due to the dramatic decline of audiences in the USA. As the 1950s progressed, it became apparent that Hollywood's stranglehold on European markets was loosening. Native industries, particularly in France and Italy, were gaining in confidence and the increasing number of film festivals was creating alternative distribution, 'auteur', and star systems. The new phenomenon of European co-productions, mainly Italian and French, following the French-Italian Co-production Agreement 1949, aimed at broadening the base of financial investment, enlarging the market, and pooling resources and personnel. In some cases, the bigger budget films attempted to rival Hollywood with high production values in the form of stars, lavish sets and costumes, and widescreen colour technology.³² Table 2 shows the overall figures for the import of co-productions to Britain, which rose from 6 in 1953 to 49 in 1957, and to 67 in 1960.³³ It also illustrates the decline in American imports, most dramatically between 1952, when 366 American films came into Britain, and 1955 when the number had dropped to 264.

Table 2: Registered films and countries of production 1953-1958

Year	Foreign language films	France	Italy	GB	USA	Co-productions
1953	67	21	18	112	341	Total 6: France/Italy 2, Italy/France/Spain 1, USA/India 2, USA/Mexico 2
1954	56	19	10	123	331	Total 17: France/Italy 3, France/Mexico 1, France/USA 1, GB/Italy 1, Italy/France 1, Italy/GB 1, Italy/USA 5, USA/ Austria 2, USA/Germany 1, USA/Italy 1
1955	93	37	24	114	264	Total 21: Italy/France 6, France/Italy 9, USA/Mexico 1, Austria/Yugoslavia 2, Italy/Japan 1, Italy/USA 2

³¹ KW, Continental Supplement, 5/7/56, 23.

³² Guback, 1969, 181.

³³ See Mark Betz, 2009, 76 for a table of figures. Total French co-productions in 1952 are 21, rising to 61 in 1957, and 79 in 1960, the same number as purely French productions. By 1960 the number of Italian co-productions reached 66 with 94 purely Italian films. But, as he points out, the figures vary from source to source.

Year	Foreign language films	France	Italy	GB	USA	Co-productions
1956	83	39	19	103	281	Total 22: Germany/Yugoslavia 1, France/Austria 1, Spain/Italy 1, France/Germany 1, Italy/France 8, France/Italy 10
1957	90	29	12	107	281	Total 49: GB/Egypt 1, USA/Mexico 1, Mexico/Cuba 1, Spain/France 2, France/Spain 2, Spain/Italy 2, USA/Spain 1, Japan/USA 3, France/East Germany 2, France/Japan 1, USA/Austria 1, Italy/USA 2, Italy/France 11, France/Italy 19
1958	89	38	10	115	273	Total 39: USA/Cuba 1, Germany/Denmark 2, Spain/Italy 1, France/Germany 1, Germany/Italy 1, Italy/Spain 1, Switzerland/Denmark 1, USA/Denmark 1, France/Mexico 1, USA/Italy 1, USA/Philippines 1, Mexico/USA 1, France/Italy 19, Italy/France 7

Source: *Monthly Film Bulletin* 1953-1958.

Note: This is an indicative table, not the complete list of foreign imports. The countries of the Eastern Bloc, for example, sent the following: USSR, 8 in 1953, 10 in 1954, 4 in 1955 and 1956, 1 in 1957 and 5 in 1958. Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia provided one or two a year, as did Poland, apart from 1956 when 5 Polish films were imported.

The problem of the reduction of American imports was coupled with a crisis of production and audience numbers in Britain. In her analysis of the state of the British film industry, 'Time of Crisis', in *Sight and Sound* in 1958, Penelope Houston pointed out that, in the five years since 1952, nearly 400 cinemas had shut down and total attendances between 1951 and 1957 had fallen by about 30% from 26.3 million per week to 17.8 million. The decline accelerated thereafter, with Board of Trade statistics for the third quarter of 1957 revealing a 20% decrease since the corresponding period of 1956.³⁴ The old cinemagoing habit was dead. Television, the new social habit, was becoming a major rival to the cinema. The Coronation in 1953 boosted TV viewing figures: it was estimated that over 20 million watched on about 2,700,000 sets. With the arrival of commercial TV in 1956, numbers rocketed to 10 million sets in 1959.³⁵ Other significant social factors, in addition to television, were related to the rise in living standards. People increasingly preferred, and could afford, motor cars, sport, records, and comfortable homes, and there was a greater variety of entertainment, such as dancing, outside the home.³⁶ The 1950s also saw the move

³⁴ S&S, vol. 27, no. 4, Spring 1958, 167.

³⁵ Vahimagi, BFI Screenonline, 2003-2014.

³⁶ S&S, vol. 27, no. 4, Spring 1958, 168.

away from a general family audience towards a diversification of the market. Increasingly the big companies made and marketed films which were big budget spectacles, using the new technologies of colour, widescreen, and surround sound. Smaller budget films were aimed at the more loyal youth audience - X rated horror films, for example, became popular in the 1950s. The introduction of the X stimulated increased imports of 'sexy' continental films whose X certificates were often used as a major selling point, a phenomenon which was central to the growth and spread of foreign films in Britain in the 1950s.

Table 3 gives some idea of foreign film exhibition in non-specialist cinemas in the Provinces, including Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland in 1956. It is taken from the regular Film Guide in *Films and Filming*, a selection of films of 'special interest to film enthusiasts', from 15 August to 30 September, 1956. 124 films were listed, of which approximately 69 were foreign language. This 'snapshot' does not include the common practice of screening foreign films on a Sunday or as the second feature in a double bill, where old foreign classics such as *Rome Open City* were cheap choices for exhibitors.³⁷ However, it clearly shows that X features (6 out of 9) with the better known glamorous European stars (again 6 out of 9), or else comedies from abroad, were the most popular choices.

Table 3: Foreign language films in the Provinces, August/September 1956

Film	Cert.	Nationality	Number of halls	Description (from <i>Film Review</i>)
<i>The Wayward Wife</i>	X	Italy	19	Gina Lollobrigida discovers that her lover is her half-brother, the woman becomes wayward!
<i>The Bed</i>	X	France/Italy	15	Portmanteau of four stories where the bed is the most important feature. Star casts include Martine Carol and Vittorio De Sica.
<i>M. Hulot's Holiday</i>	U	France	14	Tati's adventures at a small seaside resort. Highly visual.
<i>Light Across the Street</i>	X	France	14	Brigitte Bardot gives a kittenish performance as a sexy young girl whose husband is forced by illness into celibacy.
<i>French Can-Can</i>	A	France	13	The story of Moulin Rouge. Lavish technicolour film with Jean Gabin, directed by Jean Renoir
<i>Bread, Love and Jealousy</i>	A	Italy	11	Sequel to <i>Bread, Love and Dreams</i> , a rural comedy with neorealist touches, with Gina Lollobrigida and Vittorio De Sica

³⁷ The Forum Fulham Road, The Roxy Blackheath, the Globe Putney and the Regal Camberwell all advertised their 'Sunday continentals' in *CFR*.

Film	Cert.	Nationality	Number of halls	Description (from <i>Film Review</i>)
<i>The Beach</i>	X	France	9	A French prostitute takes a seaside holiday with her child and the locals discover her profession. Amusing and slightly satirical, with Martine Carol.
<i>Marcelino</i>	U	Spain	7	A small boy is brought up by Franciscan monks. A miracle occurs when he takes pity on the figure of the crucified Christ.
<i>Seven Samurai</i>	X	Japan	5	16 th century tale of samurai defending a village against brigands. Akira 'Rashomon' Kurosawa directs.

Sources: *Films and Filming* (September 1956) and *Film Review* (1956-57)

15 cinemas showed *The Bed* (the number of days is in brackets): Padstow Cinedrome, Aug. 13 (3), Faringdon Regent, Aug. 27 (3), Goldthorpe Picture House, Aug. 30 (3), Whitley Bay Picture House, Aug. 27 (6), Bawtry Palace, Sept. 17 (2), Bridgeton Premier, Sept. 3 (2), Bridgeton Royal, Sept. 5 (2), Colchester Cameo, Sept. 7 (2), Eastbourne Classic, Sept. 16 (4), Hednesford Empire, Sept. 6 (3), Ripon Palladium, Sept. 10 (3), Shanklin Playhouse, Sept. 6 (3), Tring Regal, Sept. 24 (3), Watford Empire, Sept. 10 (6), Lyme Regis Regent, Sept. 17 (2).

7 cinemas showed *Marcelino*: St Leonard's Roxy, Aug. 16 (7), Londonderry Rialto, Aug. 20 (6), Edinburgh Roxy, Aug. 27 (3), Hednesford Empire, Aug. 20 (6), Leith Alhambra, Aug. 27 (3), Omagh County, Aug. 29 (2), Liverpool Grand, Aug. 2 (3).

2.3 Networks of distribution and exhibition

Distribution, the hidden network of the film supply chain, sandwiched anonymously between the more glamorous areas of production and the shared cultural experience of exhibition, was arguably the most important factor in the success or otherwise of foreign films. Distributors of foreign films, whose aim was to release and sustain films in the marketplace outside of the vertically integrated structures of Hollywood and the British film industry, were essential connectors in the networks of foreign film culture. This section introduces some of the key players who acted, according to Hagener, as 'attractors and dynamic structures interconnecting the different layers and networks'.³⁸ Many of them survived a precarious business by combining distribution and exhibition, either formally or informally through partnerships.

Foreign language films opened in London, where the premieres attracted press coverage, and the cinemas were testing grounds for audience response, as Mazdon

³⁸ Hagener, 2007, 21.

and Wheatley pointed out in their discussion of the Curzon.³⁹ Table 4 of London cinemas below is adapted from Maurice Speed's annual *Film Review* which listed new foreign films, with descriptions, distributors, and where they were first shown. It covers the period Autumn 1955 to Summer 1956.

Table 4: Foreign language films opening in London 1956

Cinema	Film title (country, distributor when listed, date first shown)
Academy	<i>Marcelino</i> (Spain, Chamartin-Intercontinental-Films de France, Oct. 55), <i>Summer Manoeuvres</i> (France, Filmsonor-Films de France, Jan. 56), <i>Race for Life</i> (France, Ariane-Filmsonor-Cinetel, March 56)
Berkeley	<i>Their Last Night</i> (France, Gala-Cameo-Poly, Sept 55), <i>Hill 24 Doesn't Answer</i> (Israel, Sik'Or Eros, Nov. 55)
Cameo Poly	<i>The Fiends – Les Diaboliques</i> (France, Dec. 55), <i>The Light Across the Street</i> (France, Miracle, March 56), <i>The Card of Fate – Le Grand Jeu</i> (France, Gala, May 56)
Cinephone	<i>Fatal Affaire</i> (France, Astarte, Nov. 55), <i>Mon phoque – The Seal</i> (France, Astarte, Nov. 55), <i>The Wayward Wife</i> (Italy, Gala, Dec. 55), <i>Maddalena</i> (Italy, Gala, Jan. 56), <i>Spivs – I vitelloni</i> (Italy, Gala, March 56), <i>Nana</i> (France, Gala, April 56)
Classic Baker Street	<i>Twelfth Night</i> (Russia, Contemporary, April 56)
Continentale	<i>Millionnaires for a Day</i> (France, Regent, Oct. 55) <i>La P . . . Respectueuse</i> (France, Gala, Oct. 55), <i>Villa Borghese</i> (Italy, Gala, Dec. 55)
Curzon	<i>La strada</i> (Italy, Curzon Film Distributors, Nov. 55), <i>Frou-Frou</i> (France, Gamma-Curzon, Feb. 56), <i>Papa, Mama, the Maid and I</i> (France, Champs-Elysee, Cocinex and Lambor, April 56)
Gaumont Haymarket	<i>I Had Seven Daughters</i> (France, Consortium de Productions de Films-Cine Reportage-Francinalp and Faro Films, Nov. 55)
Marble Arch Pavilion	<i>Ulysses</i> Italy, dubbed in English and American (Lux-Ponti and Di Laurentiis-Archway, July 55), <i>Tempi nostri – A Slice of Life</i> (Italy, Lux-Cines-Lux Compagni, Oct. 55), <i>Les Clandestines</i> (France, Astarte, Nov. 55), <i>The Fruits of Summer</i> (France, Regent, Jan. 56), <i>Fire in the Skin</i> (France, Regent, March 56)
Paris Pullman	<i>Les Fruits sauvages</i> (France, Films de France, Nov. 55), <i>Bel Ami</i> (French, Synchro-Cine, Jan. 56), <i>Five Boys from Barska Street</i> (Poland, Jan. 56) <i>Le Rouge et le Noir</i> (France, Franco-London-Films de France, March 56), <i>Don Juan</i> (Austria, Synchro-Cine, April 56)
Queens Bayswater	<i>Bread, Love and Jealousy</i> (Italian Association, Dec. 55)
Rialto	<i>Oasis</i> (France, English dubbed, March 56)

³⁹ Mazdon and Wheatley, 2013, 71-72.

Cinema	Film title (country, distributor when listed, date first shown)
Royal Festival Hall	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> (Russia, Mosfilm-Gala, March 56)

Source: *Film Review*, 1956

Ali Baba, a Fernandel vehicle, was the only foreign language film to go straight into general release, and hence is not in this list. A French-German big budget production by director Jacques Becker, it was filmed on location in Morocco, in Eastmancolor and cinemascope.⁴⁰ Fernandel was far and away the most popular foreign star on the British circuits. The *Don Camillo* films, *Casimir* and *The Sheep Has Five Legs*, got complete or near complete releases, and others such as *The Baker of Valorgue* and *Village Feud* were widely released.

Les Diaboliques, premiered at the Cameo Poly and distributed by Films de France, got full circuit release as *The Fiends* through ABC where, like the previously successful *Rififi*, it was paired with a horror movie. Both of these releases followed the surprise hit *Wages of Fear*, winner of the Cannes Grand Prix in 1953. After a long run at the Academy in 1954, it was booked by Rank and given a general release. Peter Noble in *Film Review* put this down to the enthusiasm of audiences following a trial in some local Odeons.⁴¹ But Philip French attributed it to the fact that the Rank organisation was slow to invest in widescreens and, since most Twentieth Century Fox releases were in the new format, Rank found themselves short of product.⁴²

Italian sword and sandal epics, starting with *Theodora, the Slave Empress*, were popular in Britain in the 1950s. *Ulysses*, produced by Carlo Ponti and Dino Di Laurentiis, and written by a team of American scriptwriters, used action, lavish sets and locations, and the star pairing of Kirk Douglas and Silvana Mangano, to appeal to international audiences. It was apparently badly dubbed into English but had a long run at Marble Arch Pavilion and a reasonable national distribution by Archway.

The distributors

By the early 1950s Films de France had become a major distributor of the more popular French films and from 1954 even had reps in the main provincial cities. Their most complete nationwide release was *Wages of Fear* which showed in all the Odeons. It was followed by *Race for Life*, a sea drama with an internationalist message, which was premiered at the Academy and then screened nationwide in all Gaumont British cinemas. Films de France found national releases for an average of

⁴⁰ For further production details see Hayward, 2010, 91-96. She discussed the quality of the colour palette, the lavish sets and the documentary quality of the encounter with Africans and Arabs. The film was dubbed in Arabic largely because of the appeal of the Egyptian lead actress and dancer Samia Gamel.

⁴¹ *Film Review*, 1955, 90.

⁴² Philip French, 2008.

two features a year, including *Monsieur Hulot's Holiday* and *Mamselle Pigalle* aka *Mamselle Striptease*. Their list of non-French films, which included *Marcelino* from Spain and *Two Acres of Land* from India, also did good business in the small but growing art cinema network.

Miracle Films was founded in 1954. One of its main assets was its go-ahead publicity manager, Tony Tenser, formerly a cinema manager with ABC and later to become a well-known producer.⁴³ In 1955 Miracle secured the French thriller *Rififi* and the Fernandel comedy *The Sheep Has Five Legs*, both of which were shown on the ABC circuit. Miracle also picked up the early Brigitte Bardot film, *Light Across the Street*, which opened in March 1956 at the Cameo Poly and ran for three months. Bardot's *And Woman . . . Was Created* was an even bigger hit in 1957, obtaining an ABC release. Tenser exploited the notoriety of the new X certificate and turned it into a selling point; for example, the Miracle trade poster for an 'explosive' double bill of *And Woman . . . Was Created* and *Light Across the Street* had the titillating strapline '2 Bardots are seXier than 1'.⁴⁴ Tenser was also responsible for distributing the nudist film *Isle of Levant*. He turned the BBFC refusal of a certificate into advantageous publicity with posters announcing 'Refused by the censor'. After the film was rejected by Birmingham Council, Tenser ran an advertising campaign on the local buses, encouraging people to bus it to Walsal, where it did have a certificate. It ran in Walsall for twelve weeks.⁴⁵

Kenneth Rive was another flamboyant newcomer to foreign language distribution and exhibition. After opening the La Continentale and Berkeley cinemas in Tottenham Court Road and the New Classic in Hendon, he founded Gala Film Distributors in 1953 which was to become the biggest importer and distributor of foreign language films by the 1960s. In the mid 1950s he formed a partnership with Sir Albert Clavinger's Cameo Poly Film Distributors. Along with its association with Jacey Cinemas, Gala now had access to eight additional cinemas – the Cameo Poly Regent Street, the Cameos at Victoria, Charing Cross Road, and Piccadilly, the Cinephone in Oxford Street, Market Street in Manchester (renamed Cinephone), and Tatler in Bristol.

Table 4 includes seven films launched and distributed by Gala in 1955/6: *Their Last Night*, *Le Grand Jeu*, *The Wayward Wife*, *Maddalena*, *Spivs (I vitelloni)*, *Nana*, *La P . . . Respectueuse* and *Romeo and Juliet*. The diversity of the list, which includes an early Fellini, a Gina Lollobrigida vehicle and a Russian Ballet film, shows that Rive had a canny eye for the diverse potential of new audiences for foreign films. But

⁴³ See Hamilton, 2005, for a full biography.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 384.

⁴⁵ Sweet, 2006.

provincial distribution of foreign films was limited. According to the *Films and Filming* listings for September 1956 (which made no claims to be definitive), *La P . . . Respectueuse*, a version of the Sartre play about race in the US went on to four provincial cinemas and *Nana*, a Zola adaptation with Martine Carol, went to only six.⁴⁶ Rive had strong connections with the USSR: he travelled there in 1953 and, after a five year deadlock when Russian films were not imported, made a trade deal with the Soviets.⁴⁷ His distribution of Soviet ballet, opera, and classical music was given a high profile. *Trio Ballet*, with Galina Ulanova, world acclaimed star of the Bolshoi Ballet, was launched at the Rialto and subsequently attracted steady audiences, as did *Romeo and Juliet*.⁴⁸ Rive also distributed the earlier classics of Soviet cinema. He launched *Time in the Sun*, Marie Seton's reworking of the Eisenstein footage for *Que Viva Mexico!* at La Continentale in December 1953.⁴⁹ He premiered the Russian sound re-release of Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* in August 1955 and put on the first London season of East European films at the Classic Hendon in October 1954.⁵⁰ But in the end the most profitable films for Rive were his X-rated hits like *The Wayward Wife* which showed in 19 cinemas in September 1956. Released in an English language version, its popular appeal lay in the title, (a free translation of *La Provinciale*), its X certificate, and its glamorous star Gina Lollobrigida.

Kenneth Rive operated at the centre of a complex network of relationships. He had his own London cinemas, but also used his partnerships with other exhibitors to launch prestigious art films at the Cameo Poly, and star driven popular continentals, often with X certificates, at the Cinephone. As a distributor he worked across the country with the smaller circuits and the independents, as well as in the 16mm film society market. As an international businessman he had offices in Paris, South Africa, and Ireland, and his travels in search of film deals took him as far afield as Japan and the Soviet Union. His operations moved from the metropolitan to the provincial, the specialist cinema to the local continental, and the art film to the exploitation X. The films on offer from Gala illustrate the mixed appeal of foreign films and complicate any rigid model of the field of film as art.

Charles Cooper, another key player in the foreign film network who ran Contemporary Films is much easier to categorise as an active agent in the field of art film. He operated in a different set of contexts, starting from a background in the film

⁴⁶ *La P . . . Respectueuse* showed at Sheffield Wicker, Rotherham Cine House, Birkenhead Astor and Bradford Coliseum. *Nana* showed at Swansea Elyseum, Glasgow Cosmo, Bournemouth Continental, Sunderland Theatre Royal, Bradford Civic playhouse and Watford Empire. See *F&F*, September 56, 34 and 35.

⁴⁷ *CFR*, vol.1, no.9, July 1953, 3.

⁴⁸ There was a full page ad for *Trio Ballet*, with a picture of Ulanova in *CFR*, July 1954, 31.

⁴⁹ The film did not get a censor's certificate because the cuts demanded were deemed unacceptable. It did, however, get an LCC certificate.

⁵⁰ *CFR*, October 1954, 9.

society movement and left wing politics. Although documentary sources are lacking, his position within the international network of the Communist Party may well have helped in enabling the acquisition of films from Eastern Europe. In addition, his humanism and internationalism, eye for new talent, and friendships with directors like Ray and Wajda, all contributed to Contemporary becoming the most influential British distributor of foreign films by the 1960s. His partnership with Hoellering, and their festival networking, jointly enabled them to enjoy the position of trustworthy actors in the networks of the quality foreign art film.

Cooper, the ninth child of an East End kosher butcher, was active in the Communist Party and Kino, the 16mm distributor of early Soviet classics, from the early 1930s. In 1939 he went to the United States and worked for the International Labour Organisation, distributing foreign political films to immigrant communities. Deported in 1950, he and his wife returned to London where they started Contemporary Films, in February 1951, at a small office in Greek Street, which distributed 16mm films to film societies. A 1953 ad in *Continental Film Review* lists new releases which included three Hungarian shorts, re-releases of *L'Atalante* and *Zéro de conduite*, three music and dance films from the Soviet Union, the Hungarian *Erkel's Opera* and Cocteau's *Les Enfants terribles*.⁵¹ In 1954 he expanded the business to include 35mm distribution. George Hoellering, who was very particular about every aspect of film exhibition, refused to take Contemporary's first ever 35mm print, *Children of Hiroshima*, because of its 'poor quality', although it did go on to have a good run at the Marble Arch Pavilion.⁵² Cooper, nevertheless, formed a partnership with Hoellering in 1955 and the two went together to the festivals where they chose films to be distributed by Contemporary and launched at the Academy. This productive partnership lasted until Cooper took over the Paris Pullman in 1967. By the late 1950s and into the 1960s Contemporary was established as the main distributor of features from Russia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and Yugoslavia. Cooper continued to distribute the old classics like *Chapaev*, *Battleship Potemkin*, and *New Babylon*, films which he later argued had 'built the morality of a generation'.⁵³ He pioneered new films from Poland, including *Kanal* which became an art cinema hit, and others such as *Eve Wants to Sleep*, *The Last Day of Summer* and *Five Boys from Barska Street*. But his tastes were catholic and by 1958, when his catalogue listed 400 titles, he was the major distributor of world cinema, including films from Greece, Japan and India. Like other left wingers imbued with the postwar spirit of humanism

⁵¹ *CFR*, December 1953, 30.

⁵² Charles Cooper interview 2/10/95, British University Film and Video Council. Subsequent screenings of the film were at the Globe Putney, July, and the Newscine Aberdeen, August 1955.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

and internationalism, he believed that films were of particular cultural importance because they promoted respect for other cultures.⁵⁴

2.4 Spaces and places

This section is about the channels of transmission for foreign language films which operated in different places including the BFI, specialist art cinemas, community cinemas, and the new continental cinemas. As well as exploring the specificities of particular places, Massey's dynamic model of space and place is used to explain how these institutions related to each other and their locality and how they operated within the national networks.

The BFI

Sight and Sound under its new editors, Gavin Lambert and Penelope Houston, who came from the low circulation, but intellectually prestigious, film quarterly *Sequence* was transformed into a leader in the global art film network from the early 1950s. By the end of the decade, the NFT and the London Film Festival (hereafter LFF), both newcomers, had further increased the prestige of the BFI worldwide.

The NFT, opened in 1952 in the former Telekinema of the Festival of Britain, provided the 'shop window' for the BFI, so ardently campaigned for by Denis Forman.⁵⁵ It was an instant success, with BFI membership rising from 2,000 to nearly 18,000 within six months. Certain restrictions were imposed to keep the film industry, ever worried about competition, on side: it was only open on a membership basis, and films had to be shown in seasons with no advertising.⁵⁶ However, it was free from censorship and, importantly, was allowed to import films without paying duty.

The most popular early programmes were revivals of comedies and other silent classics, but an important strand of the programming was the 'World Cinema' series. In the early days, according to Richard Roud, the 'spirit of *Sequence* was well to the fore', with retrospectives of foreign directors which included René Clair in 1952, De Sica in 1953, and Buñuel in 1955.⁵⁷ Seasons of national cinemas started in 1954 with *Films from Asia* and continued with *Russian Panorama*, *Italian Neorealism*, and *Yugoslavian Scene* in 1956. The policy of surveys of national cinemas, which showed the old alongside new work, continued with seasons such as *Light in the Japanese Window* in 1957, *Report from Central Europe* in 1958, and *A Survey of Films from Sweden* in 1959, mainly featuring Ingmar Bergman.

From 1956 the NFT introduced a highly popular programme of documentaries

⁵⁴ Charles Cooper interview, 25/1/89, BECTU History Project.

⁵⁵ *NFT* 50, 2002, 75.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁵⁷ Roud, 2014, 54.

packaged together as Free Cinema by the 'Young Turks' of British cinema, Karel Reisz (also first Programme Editor of the NFT), and Lindsay Anderson. The series also presciently introduced new foreign work, including Polanski's short *Two Men and a Wardrobe* and early French New Wave with Truffaut's short *Les Mistons* and Chabrol's *Le Beau Serge* shown in September 1958. The latter two had been noticed by David Robinson at Cannes where they were shown out of competition.⁵⁸ The programme note by Lindsay Anderson summed up the attitudes of the *Sight and Sound*/NFT/Free Cinema grouping:

These directors are mostly not of the industry: they represent the irruption into actual film-making of a group of critics who, by their outspoken writing in the magazine *Cahiers du Cinéma* have established themselves as passionate lovers of the cinema, and sworn enemies of the conventional and uncreative. Their films are made with an absolute rejection of 'safe' commercial considerations. They are important and should be seen.⁵⁹

Something of the excitement engendered by new, unknown films is conveyed by these memories of one early NFT member:

In the 50s I was at Oxford and I hitchhiked down to London. . . I went over to the NFT (the first NFT) to see what was on. It was a film I'd never heard of, but I bought a ticket anyway. Before the screening, a male voice told us there would be no subtitles . . . so he would give us a brief synopsis of the story in advance. Thus I sat in the dark to watch a film I'd never heard of and with no idea what the characters were saying. The film was *Pather Panchali* – never before shown in Britain – and it confirmed for me in a single experience just what cinema was capable of at its very best.⁶⁰

1957 saw the official opening, by Princess Margaret, of a new, permanent NFT building under Waterloo Bridge, built with an LCC loan. The NFT was given a modernist look, from the abstract mural on the bridge to the décor of the members bar which became, according to Allen Eyles, 'the place to be seen for all young Bohemians'.⁶¹ And the art of film was taken very seriously: smoking and eating in the auditorium was prohibited, programme notes were given out, and headphone commentaries were provided when there were no subtitles.

The first London Film Festival began the day after the new NFT opened. Partly inspired by Dilys Powell, who supported the idea of a 'festival of festivals', it was sponsored by *The Sunday Times*. Significantly, of the 15 films none was British and

⁵⁸ Mazdon and Wheatley, 2013, 107.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Nick Bartlett, quoted in *NFT 50*, 2002, 75.

⁶¹ *NFT 50*, 2002, 19.

only one was American. The festival opened with *Throne of Blood* and other highlights included *The Nights of Cabiria*, *Kanal*, *The Seventh Seal*, and *The Unvanquished*. The programme booklet referred to the NFT's remit of providing members with outstanding world films and stated that the chief aim was 'to bring to London the most adventurous and distinguished films shown at the other European festivals throughout the year'.⁶² The strategy of promoting the distribution of some of these new films was successful according to the 1958 festival programme, which announced that over nine of the features had been purchased 'for screening to a wider audience throughout the land'.⁶³ Run in conjunction with the LCC, the 1958 festival showed 21 films, including eight from Eastern Europe, from a range of festivals which included Karlovy Vary, Edinburgh, Brussels, and Pula, as well as Cannes, Venice, and Berlin. London was now a centre of key films and key players in the network of international film festivals.

Both the NFT and the LFF exerted a huge influence on film culture. They introduced new directors and new films which were given publicity by the critics and sometimes picked up by the distributors. Through the curation of comprehensive seasons of directors and national cinemas they created an informal film studies culture. But the practices of both these London institutions highlighted what Massey calls 'power geometries', the system of cultural inequalities which deprived the regions of resources, films, and often cultural capital. It was this cultural imbalance which eventually led to the setting up of the Regional Film Theatres.

Cinemas old and new

The Academy – which already this year has brought *Pather Panchali*, *Aparajito* and *The Seventh Seal* – deserves enormously of us (sic) if we want the living cinema so obstinately denied by our own film makers.

–William Whitebait (1958)⁶⁴

The number of cinemas in London showing predominantly foreign films reached a total of ten in 1959.⁶⁵ The big three art cinemas of the 1930s, the Academy, Curzon and Everyman, were still going strong, with the Academy still retaining its status as the country's foremost arthouse cinema. The interior was given an extravagant revamp by designer and photographer Angus McBean in 1954, with crimson patterned walls in the auditorium, opulent mirrors in the entrance, and an ornate blue and gold scheme in the coffee bar. The cinema's Pavilion restaurant, also designed by McBean, was opened in 1956. With its Swiss chef and continental specialities like quiche lorraine, pâté de campagne, and scampi omelette, it was deliberately setting

⁶² *LFF Programme*, 1957.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 1958.

⁶⁴ BFI Press Cuttings, *Kanal*, *New Statesman*, 14/6/58.

⁶⁵ *Film Review*, 1960, 99.

itself apart from the usual cinema snack bar.⁶⁶ All these added up to a sense of cultural exclusiveness. Colin McArthur, who remembers the Academy of the 1950s and 1960s, recalls that the atmosphere was 'very much like that of the Cosmo, very hushed in comparison with the national chains and local fleapits. The hush indicated that the film experience was a serious business'.⁶⁷ The ambience and décor formed an essential part of the discursive surround to the film and helped to communicate cultural status.

The sense of the exclusiveness of the Academy was transmitted visually by its striking posters. Instead of the usual stills, the artist Peter Strausfield designed expressionist inspired lino cuts, with single images against a bold colour. These were a familiar sight on more than 300 underground stations where they adorned the platforms and escalator hoardings.

But, most of all, it was the Academy's adventurous programming which kept it in the lead. Hoellering introduced an impressive list of new international directors such as Bergman, Kurosawa, Wajda, and Ray to London in the 1950s. The supporting shorts to the new films were also part of the experience, and the cultural capital. For example, *The Spanish Riding School* and *Stained Glass at Fairford* by Basil Wright accompanied *The Seventh Seal* during its four-month run in 1958. The shorts were an essential component of the serious pleasure of the Academy experience.

The Cameo Poly, opened by Clavering and Rose in 1952 with the long running early X, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, set out to rival the Academy and the Curzon as an upmarket cinema for major foreign films. In 1956 its advertising claimed that it was 'now the Number One West End Continental Theatre', with three recent successes in one year, *French Can-Can*, *Les Diaboliques* and *The Light Across the Street*.⁶⁸ For a brief period in the mid 1950s the Cameo Poly was also the premiere house for Gala films and continued to launch hit films like *Mon oncle* and *Les Amants* in the late 1950s. The more titillating appeal of foreign language films was the mainstay of programming at other London Cameos at Victoria and Piccadilly. Cameo Poly's new sister cinema, the Cameo Royal in Charing Cross Road, showed more risqué films than the Cameo Poly, including almost every Bardot film. Bardot came over to open the cinema in October 1956 with the premiere of *Mamselle Striptease*, an innocuous rom com, cleverly retitled by Tenser from *En effeuillant la marguerite*, literally translated as *Plucking the Daisy*.

The new Paris Pullman opened in Drayton Gardens, well outside the West End, in

⁶⁶ BFI Special Collections (hereafter BFISC), Academy Cinema.

⁶⁷ Colin McArthur, email to the author, 10/06/15.

⁶⁸ *CFR*, June 1956, 27. The film was banned in France for its anti-colonialist stance. The publicity made much of this and its X rating.

November 1955 with *Les Fruits sauvages*. It was associated with a group of other suburban Pullmans in Herne Hill, Brixton and Lee Green which regularly showed foreign language films.⁶⁹ The first ads for the Paris Pullman in *Continental Film Review* traded on the cultural cachet of French language films with the tagline 'le cinéma d'élégance et luxe'. In February 1956 there was a full page ad for *Bel Ami*, an adaptation of the Maupassant novel, with a corrupt hero, a string of mistresses, and a backdrop of colonial war.⁷⁰ The ad quoted 12 reviews, including the *Jewish Chronicle*, which deemed the film 'worth the journey to the luxurious little Paris Pullman'.⁷¹ *Bel Ami* was in a double bill with *Five Boys from Barska Street*, the prize winning Polish film by Aleksander Ford. Other double bills in 1957 varied from international prizewinners like the Indian *Two Acres of Land* and the Greek *Stella* to more sexually suggestive offerings like *Island Sinner* with *The Wanton Countess*, the recut version of Visconti's *Senso*. Towards the end of the 1950s, with the cult of Bergman in full swing, the Paris Pullman showed some of his earlier films including *A Lesson in Love* and *Summer with Monika*.

An eclectic mix of foreign films at Gala's flagship premiere cinemas on Tottenham Court Road, La Continentale and the Berkeley, was a reflection of both Rive's international connections and his exploitation of the sex/x angle. Russian and East European films were well represented: *The Gala Festival* was premiered in 1953, the Bolshoi *Romeo and Juliet* in September 1955 and *The Anna Cross*, an adaptation of the Chekhov story, in February 1956. But X films, aimed at the 'adult' market, were a more frequent feature throughout the decade. These included some titles which straddled exploitation and art or cult appeal, for example *La P... Respectueuse* (aka *The Respectful Whore*) based on the Sartre play about race relations in the USA, *The Wicked go to Hell* a 'French noir', and the Swedish social issue drama *Unmarried Mothers*. This mix of 'adult' and art programming meant that Rive's cinemas lacked the cultural status of the Curzon or the Academy.

The Classic chain of repertory cinemas, which specialised in revivals, was important for foreign language films, both in and outside London. There were Classics in Baker Street, Chelsea, Hammersmith, Tooting Bec, and Croydon which showed a proportion of foreign films, both classic revivals and more recent (but not first run) films.⁷² Another Classic cinema, the Embassy Notting Hill, often showed foreign films usually as late night screenings which ran seven nights a week in the 1950s and

⁶⁹ Herne Hill lasted from 1953 to 1959 and Lee Green from 1955 to 1959. The Brixton Pullman is still going as The Ritzy.

⁷⁰ Hayward, 2010, 329 – 344.

⁷¹ *CFR*, February 1956, 31.

⁷² An ad for Classic Chelsea in *CFR*, June 1955 lists *Ore 9: Lezione di Chimica*, *The Truth About Our Marriage*, *Children of Hiroshima*, *Umberto D*, *Doctor in the House*, *Three Telegrams* and *Fatal Affaire*. Only *Doctor in the House* is English speaking. See *CFR*, June 1955, 30.

apparently attracted long queues. Classic launched the Vogue Continental in Stoke Newington in February 1953 with publicity which suggested the sophistication of its programme, with images of French style bistro, bottles of wine and a cancan girl. (Figure 5). Described in *Picturegoer* as a cinema 'which has gone all continental – right up to the no smoking rule', other differences from the mainstream included advance booking and separate performances.⁷³ The opening leaflet advertised double bills of continental films for seven day runs but by July *L'Ange de la nuit*, *Rashomon*, *Olivia*, *The Murderers are Amongst Us*, and *Senza pietà* were advertised for three or four day runs.⁷⁴ After a year Classic moved to a mix of foreign and English speaking screenings and sadly closed the Vogue in 1958 when the landlord put up the rent. Outside London there were Classics in all the major towns, including two Classic Continentals, in Southampton and Portsmouth, which almost exclusively showed foreign films.

Outside London

Outside London, foreign films had traditionally been restricted to cinemas in university towns like Oxford, Cambridge, and St Andrews. Some cinemas became local community providers of foreign films to mixed audiences, for example the Globe Cardiff, the Rex Portsmouth, the Tivoli Dundee, or the Rex Cambridge. The Scala in Oxford provides both an example of this mixed programming and an illustration of Massey's notion of space as a set of social relationships in a particular place. Both a local community cinema and a student haunt since the 1930s, there was a clear-cut division between term time, when foreign language films were shown, and holiday time when the films were entirely American or British. The foreign films were a mix of the recent art cinema hits and favourite classics. In November 1957, for example, *The Seven Samurai* (Japan 1954), *Rififi* (France 1955), *La strada* (Italy 1954), *Amici per la pelle* (Italy/France/Spain 1955), *A Girl in Black* (Greece 1956), and *Drôle de drame* (France 1937) were screened. There were definite recurring favourites led by Cocteau and followed by Kurosawa, De Sica, Clair, Carné, and from 1957 Bergman.⁷⁵

The following recollection gives a flavour of the Scala in the 1950s:

No snacks or hot drinks then (just cigarettes chain smoked) but, whether in a double seat or single seat, you usually ended up reclining more during the course of the programme as the thick pall of smoke from Gitanes or Gauloises threatened to obscure the top half of the screen. Witty catcalling was 'de rigueur' if the 'B' feature was laughable (it usually was!) Happy days . . .⁷⁶

⁷³ *Picturegoer*, February 1953, 18.

⁷⁴ Front page ad, *NFT booklet*, July 1953.

⁷⁵ Chan, 2013, 72-90.

⁷⁶ Jan Rae, quoted in Allison, Chan and Gennari. 2013, 72.

Various students recall the cinema as being something of a 'fleapit' with regular use of the 'flick gun' to freshen the atmosphere.⁷⁷ On the other hand, Mr Poyntz who owned the cinema did not allow either the sale of sweets or advertising. Like the Academy, however, it was the programming of a creative individual, Eric Bowtell who was also Secretary of the Oxford Film Society which screened at the Scala on a Sunday evening, which gave the cinema its identity as a leading light of art cinema in Britain.

The 1950s also saw the growth of independent continental cinemas in many of the larger towns e.g. the Continental Coventry, the New Victoria Nottingham, the Continental Wallasey, the Continental Bournemouth, the Continentale Kemp Town Brighton, and the Paris Brighton. Jacey, originally a chain of news cinemas, also went into the business of exhibiting continental films. Joseph Cohen, a Birmingham businessman and the head of the dynasty, took over the London Cinephone in 1953. The potentially 'popular' titles with star and/or sex appeal were premiered there, such as *Dangerous Woman*, December 1954, *The Wayward Wife*, January 1956, and *The Miller's Wife* with Sophia Loren, November 1957. The Tatler Continental Cinema in Bristol, started by Jacey in 1947, was typical of their image and was later described by Philip French, who was brought up in Bristol, as 'an arthouse cinema disguised as an exploitation flea pit'.⁷⁸ Jacey opened its Continental Cinema in Manchester in 1950 with a programme of quality foreign films and a string of guest stars including Anouk Aimée, Anna Magnani, Tati and Fernandel. It briefly reverted to being a news cinema and was finally relaunched as the Manchester Cinephone in 1955. The Birmingham Cinephone, which opened in 1956 with the screening of *Nana* and its star Martine Carol in attendance, was a grand civic affair, filmed for Pathé News. Most up to date of the Cinephones, it was re-opened in the modern style with a newly fashionable continental coffee bar. For a relatively brief period in the 1950s, the Jacey-owned cinemas showed a genuine mix of foreign films.

This 'mixed economy' of programming, so unlike the Academy or NFT, gave a sometimes contradictory image to the cinemas, but it also demonstrates the plural interrelationships and interactions described by Massey. The cultural mix in the Cinephones did not last, however. By the end of the 1950s, the films in the Jacey owned cinemas were increasingly the more disreputable sex films, a trend which continued in the 1960s.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 70 – 75.

⁷⁸ Quoted in Crofts, 2014.

2.5 Film Societies

The 1950s saw the strengthening of the national infrastructure of film societies. The British Federation of Film Societies, run by volunteers in the 1950s, provided support and advice, ran international conferences, and set up a network of regional organisations. Its magazine *Film*, started in 1954, with a healthy circulation of 13,000, was at the centre of the network. Its contents reflected the commitment to the practicalities of running a society, with regular items such as Newsreel (a roundup of individual societies which showed the rich multiplicity of activity) and reports of national and regional conferences, screenings, and events. The tone was distinctly non-metropolitan with frequent criticisms of the NFT for being an exclusively London, rather than a national, centre. More concerned with audience reactions than *Sight and Sound*, feedback from societies published in *Film* gave international understanding and broadening of horizons as leading reasons for the popularity of foreign films. The magazine was far from parochial: its international feel was enhanced by contributors like Lotte Eisner of the Cinémathèque Française, who occasionally reported on Cannes, or experts such as John Gillett and Marie Seton who wrote about Japanese and Indian film respectively. Seton also wrote about taking *Time in the Sun*, her reworked footage of *Qué Viva México!*, along with other Eisenstein extracts, around the film societies of France and Italy. Apparently 3,000 rowdy students at the Sorbonne were hushed by the Odessa Steps sequence, whilst, on another occasion almost the whole population of a small mountain village travelled by bus to Venice for a 10am Sunday morning screening of *Battleship Potemkin*.⁷⁹ Marie Seton's involvement in the global film society movement is an example of how international networks operated, and how film activists of the time were politically committed to the transformative power of film.

The map of film societies became more populated and more geographically dispersed in the 1950s, far exceeding the reach of foreign language cinemas. There was a big expansion in numbers: in October 1954, the first year of *Film*, there were 255 affiliated societies with a total of 40,000 to 50,000 members.⁸⁰ By the early fifties, the loss of access to commercial cinemas for Sunday 35mm screenings coincided with the growth of 16mm screenings. 16mm prints put more foreign films on the market, and the technology allowed film societies the flexibility of screenings in smaller venues e.g. village halls, gas showrooms, libraries, and schools. The supply of films also became easier: the BFI annual reports chart the increasing number of films booked for societies by the Central Booking Agency, which reached 6,967 in

⁷⁹ *Film*, December 1954, 19-21 and September/October 1955, 18-20.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, no.2, December 1954, 29.

1956 and almost 10,000 in 1962.⁸¹ By the mid 1950s Contemporary Films, along with its sister company Plato, had cornered the market in supplying film societies with 16mm films. Charles Cooper used the annual viewing sessions organised by the BFI in London to showcase films that were not getting much publicity in the national press. Gala and Connoisseur also made and distributed 16mm prints for film societies.

Two case studies

Film societies, with their nonspecific venues, are telling illustrations of Doreen Massey's assertion that space is most of all about social relations. Set in the network of the local community, part of both local culture and national cultural politics, they were involved in the flows of local to regional, regional to national, and even national to international. The following two case studies show the importance of local relationships and how they relate in different ways to the wider world of national and international film culture.

The roots of Manchester and Salford Film Society lay in the international working class movement. In November 1930, the Salford Workers Film Society announced a programme of Soviet films with the aim of using 'the mighty power of the Cinema to aid the workers to understand their subjective position in modern society and the coming emancipation'.⁸² However, support from factory workers 'did not materialise to any extent', wrote Reg Cordwell in the society's booklet *Twenty One Years*, which listed an impressive series of seasons of international screenings throughout the 1930s.⁸³ By the early 1950s membership had gone down from 1,400 in 1939 to around 500. The decline was attributed to rival societies, the power of the commercial cinema, films on TV and the perennial problem of finding the right venue. Various solutions were sought, including joint screenings with the Manchester Film Institute Society at the Regal Cinema, and the use of the Rivoli on a Sunday. The Society eventually fell back on 16mm screenings on a Saturday at a local theatre, the Green Room. It had a wobbly wooden floor, back projection onto a tiny screen, and only 80 seats, which meant three separate sessions at 2.30, 5.15 and 8pm.⁸⁴ Stalwart committee members in the 1950s included founding member, trade unionist Reg Cordwell, and Clare Brayshaw, chairman and one of the new breed of local professionals.⁸⁵ Tom Ainsworth, a local teacher who eventually served for over 50 years, did the booking and projecting, and his wife Marjorie served refreshments from

⁸¹ *BFI Annual Reports*, 1956 and 1962.

⁹¹ Announcement of first performance and application form, Manchester and Salford Film Society (hereafter MSFS) Archive, Working Class Movement Library (hereafter WCML).

⁸³ Cordwell, Reg, *Twenty One Years*, 1951, MSFS Archive, WCML, Box 11.

⁸⁴ See Win Pitt's account in the *Diamond Jubilee* booklet, 1990, MSFS Archive, WCML, Box 11.

⁸⁵ Clare Brayshaw was married to the Head of Design at the Salford College of Art. Along with a colleague who was the Head of Architecture, he advised on the design of the projection in the Green Room. See *Diamond Jubilee*, 1990, MSFS Archive, WCML, Box 11.

a little counter.⁸⁶

The Society had started the process of attracting a more middle class audience from the late 1930s. Ainsworth recalled that membership included professional people, among them many teachers for whom 'cinemagoing was somewhat vulgar', and that it was an intellectual and social meeting point, even 'a lonely hearts club.'⁸⁷ But the programming in the 1950s showed a high level of commitment to the international art film as well as film history, e.g. in 1955-1956 *Death of a Salesman*, *Orphée*, *Mädchen in Uniform*, *Pépé le Moko*, *Alexander Nevsky*, *Sawdust and Tinsel*, *Two Acres of Land*, and *Seven Samurai* were all screened.⁸⁸ In addition debates about history and theory took place in study groups and at occasional special Tuesday shows; in 1953-1954 for example, several avant-garde films were shown at the Gas Theatre.

Reigate and Redhill Film Society, by contrast, was one of the new 16mm societies.⁸⁹ Its constitution typically declared that it existed 'to give regular programmes of classic, experimental and foreign films which would not normally be shown in commercial cinemas'.⁹⁰ It was started in 1956 by a local school teacher, Paddy Whannel, who later headed BFI Education and became a prominent spokesperson for film education. The replies to Whannel's invitation to a launch event reveal the extent to which the film society was seen as a worthwhile extension of local community involvement and part of the local network of civic minded volunteers. Headteachers expressed interest as did the local education authority, the technical college and the WEA. Arts organisations, the Co-operative Women's Guild, the Trades Council, and the Conservative Club were all keen. The only negative response came from the Rotary Club whose members, according to the reply, took 'no interest in the cinema, commercial or otherwise'.⁹¹

The launch event, a free screening of *Umberto D* and a clip from *Battleship Potemkin*, attracted 230 people, although the number of members actually recruited was 120. The members were invited to make choices for each main feature in the season of eight programmes, from a selection drawn up by the committee. A mixed programme of British, Hollywood, and foreign films was on offer, always including a couple of comedies. The first season of eight films of which four were foreign language consisted of *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*, *Monsieur Hulot's Holiday*, *Rashomon*, *A Night at the Opera*, *Day of Wrath*, *Kind Hearts and Coronets*, *Miss*

⁸⁶ MSFS Archive, WCML, Box 11.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid., MSFS Prospectus, 1955-56, Box 9.

⁸⁹ Its papers, covered in cobwebs, were retrieved from a garage and donated to the author.

⁹⁰ Reigate and Redhill Film Society Papers, constitution, own collection.

⁹¹ N.A. Marlow to Paddy Whannel, 2/3/56, Reigate and Redhill Film Society Papers.

Julie, and Together.

By the second season, however, the society had fallen into difficulties. A letter from the secretary to Margaret Hancock, full-time voluntary secretary of the BFFS, in December 1958 expressed worries about money, pointing out that 'there is a limit to the number of jumble sales one can cope with'. Membership in the second year had gone down to 80 and was now 45. Problems, which seemed common to many 16mm societies, included screenings in a cold school hall with hard seats, bad projector and sound equipment, and old and worn copies of films.⁹² Reigate and Redhill Film Society, however, survived its late 1950s crisis, flourished in the 1960s, and lasted till the 1980s.

Members and programming

The appeal of foreign films with their glimpses of foreign countries and their people with their clothes, homes, ways of life and mental attitudes gives amusement, instruction, aesthetic pleasure, wide horizons and sheer delight.

—Mrs Rose Greaves, 1956⁹³

This letter to *Film* chimes with other voices of film society members from the 1950s who saw foreign films as opening horizons in an age when foreign travel was limited. *Film* provides other local glimpses of the social makeup and motivations of film society members. One article in 1958, 'The Film Society versus Marilyn Monroe. Are we preaching to the converted?', gave a breakdown of the membership of the film society of Radnor, a small country town in Wales, whose membership had fluctuated from 67 to 107. Occupations of the members were as follows: 56% professional (doctors, bankers, teachers, retirees and those of independent means), 18% business, 18% other and 8% farmers. Women at this time were categorised by the husband's occupation. The gender balance was 37% men and 63% women, and there was 'a strong balance on the side of maturity' with no one under 21.⁹⁴ A majority of women was also reported by the Tunbridge Wells Society where, out of a membership of 482, 305 were women, of which 120 were unmarried.⁹⁵

The middle class, though not the gendered, nature of film society membership was commented on in *Film* by those who campaigned for film appreciation as part of widening access to adult education. Mr White of Wigan and District Film Society, for example, wrote that they lost 40 or 50 members because of *Rashomon* and *Orphée* and that 'we are over weighted with representatives of the professional classes, the retailing bourgeoisie and the bohemian fringe of every small town'. In the spirit of

⁹² Miss Dalley to Margaret Hancock, 7/12/58, Reigate and Redhill Film Society Papers.

⁹³ *Film*, no.8, March/April 1956, 25.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, no.3, February 1955, 28.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 16, March/April 1958, 29.

inclusion and access, an editorial article in *Film* in 1958 supported film appreciation lectures and discussions, but also warned against the film society becoming, in Manvell's words, 'a clique of superior film fanciers'.⁹⁶

Programming policy was hotly debated in *Film*. In 1955 Peter Armitage, editor of *North West News* initiated a discussion about choices of films. He listed the most heavily booked films by 16mm societies. Films which attracted over 30 bookings were *The Little World of Don Camillo* (33), *Rashomon* (33) and *The General* (32). Films which attracted 20 or more bookings were *A nous la liberté* (29), *Miracle in Milan* (25), *Monsieur Hulot's Holiday* (22), *Bicycle Thieves* (21) and *Sous les toits de Paris* (20). Armitage pointed out that the composition of the top twenty changed little from year to year and programmers were drawing from a small group of films, suggesting a 'blind conformity to accepted critical judgments'.⁹⁷ His views were echoed by Lindsay Anderson in 1958 who berated film societies in general for turning down *Diary of a Country Priest* 'before Bresson became the rage'.⁹⁸ Philip Jenkinson, who then worked for Contemporary Films, later outlined the distributor's problems when buying minority films. He pointed out the difficulties of distributing foreign films without a West End opening and the blessing of the Lejeunes and the Powells. He reproached film societies for not booking the critically acclaimed *Five Boys from Barska Street* after its high ratings at the annual viewings. The enthusiastic response had encouraged Contemporary to produce a 16mm version; but sadly 'result, one booking'.⁹⁹

These debates show the range of opinions and interests within the film society movement, from those who espoused an avant-garde mission to those who were happy to screen the well tried classics. The brief reports sent in by film societies published in *Film* also show the diversity of local activity and varying attitudes of the organisers to film as art, ranging from Ilford which organised country rambles between film meetings to Cheltenham which, like several other film societies, ran a 'third programme' of the more difficult films. Merseyside also organised a Summer season of avant-garde and experimental films which was a sell-out and had to be repeated.¹⁰⁰

This brief survey, using Massey's theory of space to re-evaluate the cultural importance of film societies, has highlighted their roles as dynamic organisations operating within local cultures but with their own dimensions of multiplicity and simultaneity. It has also revealed, despite differing levels of commitment, the extent to which certain film societies were delivering sophisticated programmes of foreign language films.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 5.

⁹⁷ *Film*, no.6, November/December 1955, 5.

⁹⁸ Ibid., no.19, January/February 1958, 12.

⁹⁹ Ibid., no.18, November/December 1958, 15.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., no.16, March/April 1958, 6.

2.6 Scotland: a film culture of its own

This section concentrates on three cities, Aberdeen, Glasgow, and Edinburgh, each with a strong tradition of foreign language film culture.

Aberdeen

Sandy Hobbs, later to become active in trade union and Communist Party politics, became a cinema fan in Aberdeen in his early teens. He saw mainly Hollywood films but remembers *Wages of Fear* at the Odeon and a double bill of Buñuel's *Robinson Crusoe* and De Sica's *Indiscretion/Stazione Termini* at the Gaumont in 1954. He joined the Aberdeen Film Society, the Film Appreciation Group and the Scotland USSR Friendship Society, partly because it was the only way, in strictly Sabbatarian Aberdeen, of seeing films on a Sunday. He saw most of the classics including *Rashomon* and *Diary of a Country Priest* but his most vivid memory is of seeing *l'Age d'or* on a weekday at the Pre Nursing College. It was not the sort of film he was used to, but it made a lifelong impression on him.¹⁰¹ Membership of the Communist Party seems to have provided an alternative route into cultural sensibility for youngsters without formal education, an experience which Hobbs shared with other party members elsewhere, like John and Doris Minchinton in London.¹⁰²

Aberdeen boasted the largest per capita membership of film societies anywhere in Britain.¹⁰³ The Film Society and the Film Appreciation Group had a combined membership of 2,500, both offering 35mm screenings on a Sunday evening, in two of the town's major cinemas, the Majestic and the Gaumont respectively. The older Film Society offered the sort of programme to be seen in the specialist cinemas, e.g. in Autumn 1951 *Berliner Ballade*, about postwar Germany, *Jofroi*, a Pagnol film from 1934 and *Woman Trouble*, an Anna Magnani comedy. The Film Appreciation Group, which was more concerned with the aesthetic and historical side of film appreciation, also showed Anna Magnani, in a double bill of *The Miracle* and *Angelina*, as well as *La Grande Illusion* and *Les Parents terribles*. Additional 16mm screenings included *October*, *Storm over Asia* and *Birth of a Nation*. This apparently shining example of a lively foreign film culture was, however, qualified by William Thompson, the secretary of the Film Appreciation Group. He estimated that maybe only 500 out of the 2,500 took away the 'zest for the best'. As for the others, it was a pleasant way to enjoy entertainment on the Sabbath and perhaps also 'a minor exercise in snobbery'.¹⁰⁴

This account of Aberdeen film societies again confirms the element of cultural

¹⁰¹ Hobbs, 2011, 29-31.

¹⁰² MacDonald, 2016, 56-59.

¹⁰³ Scotland had a strong film society culture with its own monthly magazine, *Film Forum*, which reported 48 societies with a total membership of 14,000 in 1955.

¹⁰⁴ Young, 1954, 41 – 43.

snobbery involved in film appreciation. But it also reveals a lot about the complex social and spatial relationships specific to this place. The high membership reflects the pre-eminence of Aberdeen, the cultural centre or hub for the surrounding villages and towns of the North East of Scotland where the mental maps of some of the inhabitants included the cinemas of Aberdeen for film society films. And, as indicated by Sandy Hobbs, it also reveals the hold that the Presbyterian Church had on Sunday observance – no cinema, no pub, and no theatre. Finally, despite Thompson's reservations, it reinforces the claim for a serious film culture in Aberdeen.

Glasgow

Glasgow's art cinema, the Cosmo, opened by George Singleton in 1939, continued to operate throughout the War years with a programme which, despite the shortages, managed to include at least one foreign film a month. In one monthly programme in 1942, the Cosmo showed the Soviet *A Musical Story* and the classic *Le Roi s'amuse* along with *The Scoundrel*, *Love on the Dole* and *The Scarlet Pimpernel*. And Singleton was already conducting market research, with patrons being asked questions like 'Do you dislike American commentaries? Would you like a further series of French newsreels to be booked? Do you like Mr Cosmo's Music for Your Pleasure interludes?'¹⁰⁵ At the end of the War the Cosmo was one of the first cinemas to show *Nous les gosses*, the French film made during the Occupation along with *The Adventures of Baron Münchhausen*, the wartime German Agfa colour spectacular, as well as *Les Enfants du paradis*. In 1949 the tenth anniversary of the cinema was celebrated with Mr Cosmo's Plebiscite Month, a series of repeat feature films selected by patrons.¹⁰⁶

Dubbed 'the working man's university', the Cosmo in the 1950s was both high quality arthouse and community centre. The Glasgow Film Society, with over 1,000 members, screened at the Cosmo on Sundays at 2.30 and 7pm.¹⁰⁷ There were regular children's screenings and there was even a television transmission of the coronation in 1953.¹⁰⁸ Thousands were on the monthly mailing list, through which they received *Mr Cosmo's Monthly Bulletin*, written by film society chair Charles Oakley who also drew the cartoon illustrations of the iconic Mr Cosmo. The bulletin introduced the mainly foreign language films with quotations from the film critics interspersed with light-hearted comments from Mr Cosmo.¹⁰⁹ (Figure 6)

In 1953, in reply to a questionnaire, the manager listed the most popular recent

¹⁰⁵ Sutherland and Kenna, 1989.

¹⁰⁶ Scottish Screen Archive, Cosmo Collection.

¹⁰⁷ There were three other film societies in Glasgow: the Glasgow People's Film Society which screened at the Argyle, the University Film Society and the Catholic Film Society.

¹⁰⁸ Scottish Screen Archive, Cosmo Collection.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid,

films as *Souvenirs perdus*, *Caroline chérie*, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, *Rashomon*, *First Communion* and *Casque d'or*.¹¹⁰ According to another report in *Kine Weekly* audiences made sophisticated demands, asking for *Battleship Potemkin*, *Forbidden Fruit* and *Time in the Sun*. *Monsieur Hulot's Holiday* which ran for seven weeks in 1954 proved more popular than *Genevieve* which ran for two and *Doctor in the House* which ran for three.¹¹¹

The Cosmo's marketing tagline was 'Films for the discriminating' but it never had an elitist image. 'Cinema for all' was inscribed in mosaic in the foyer and the publicity insisted that 'no knowledge of foreign languages is necessary for the complete enjoyment of superb films'.¹¹² Singleton, a committed socialist and a successful capitalist, was another activist who operated across the layers of exhibition and distribution. From a humble background, by the 1950s he owned a string of cinemas including the grand Vogue in Govan which seated 2,500. He was President of the Cinema Exhibitors Association (hereafter CEA), 1957-1958, helped found the Citizens Theatre, and was instrumental in the setting up of the National Film School. Like Charles Cooper, he subscribed to the humanist idea that 'films should help to improve things in the world'.¹¹³ The commitment to world harmony was proclaimed in the sign outside with the two Os in Cosmo as globes and inside a large globe was placed above the entrance to the stalls.

The Tonic, in Battlefield Road, combined foreign films with more commercial fare in a novel way. A 550 seat cinema with only three staff - a doorman, a manageress/cashier/usherette, and a projectionist - the Tonic showed foreign films for half the week. Like most cinemas it had a change of programme mid-week: Mondays to Wednesdays were 'continental' days and the rest of the week was labelled 'otherwise' which in May 1953 included *Cave of Outlaws*, *The Forest Rangers* and *Francis Goes to the Races*. The Tonic's published programme suggested two kinds of entertainment, the continental films being on a separate page 'with screening times for those fastidious people who want to go in at the beginning'. Popular foreign films in 1954 were *Un grand patron*, *Le Voyage en Amérique*, *Miss Julie*, *Los olvidados*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Quixote*, *Edward and Caroline*, *Furia*, and *Rigoletto*. The management confirmed that Italian opera films were popular.¹¹⁴ The Tonic retained its position as Glasgow's second art cinema till 1962

¹¹⁰ Young, 1954, 39.

¹¹¹ *KW*, 29/5/54.

¹¹² Sutherland and Kenna, 1989.

¹¹³ *Ibid*

¹¹⁴ Young, 1954, 37.

Edinburgh

Like the Cosmo, the Cameo was a successful combination of arthouse and community centre and became a festival venue in the 1950s. Located in the working class area of Tollcross, the Cameo was a 'back court' cinema, built as part of a tenement block, with the flat roof doubling up as a drying green and a noisy football pitch for the children.¹¹⁵ When Orson Welles was delivering his two-hour festival lecture in 1953, the projectionist had to chase some noisy players away, according to Genni Poole, daughter of Jim Poole the proprietor. She remembers the 'strong personality' of the cinema which was run on traditional lines with its satin curtains, well lit screen, queues down the street, and the doorman in smart uniform. According to Poole, foreign films were popular with local audiences; they liked seeing different cities and cultures – stories and pictures which were completely different to the ones they were used to.¹¹⁶

Jim Poole came from a line of Victorian showmen who staged travelling myriorama shows, spectacular moving panoramas painted on cloth, with music, lighting and sound effects. The family moved on to owning cinemas, which is where Jim got experience as a projectionist and cinema manager. Poole fell in love with foreign films during the War when, as chief entertainments officer for ENSA, he organised mobile film shows, including *Battleship Potemkin*, in Egypt.¹¹⁷ He bought the Cameo, a derelict cinema, in 1947 and opened it in 1949, 'a controversial and risky experiment' according to Genni.¹¹⁸ *The Scotsman* quoted Poole's description of the Cameo in March 1949 as 'a cinema for the discerning' and his intention of showing 'Week by week carefully chosen films of artistic merit screened in an atmosphere that sets a new standard of cinema decoration and comfort'.¹¹⁹ He opened the cinema with *La Symphonie pastorale* well before it won a Grand Prize at Cannes, and shortly afterwards showed the first postwar German film in Scotland, *The Murderers are Amongst Us*. Tati was a regular favourite and visitor: Cameo audiences obviously liked him because *Monsieur Hulot's Holiday* ran for twenty eight weeks. From 1954 the Cameo was taken over for screenings and celebrity events by the Edinburgh Festival for three weeks each year. Speakers in the 1950s included Carl Dreyer, Michèle Morgan and Jacques Tati. The shared philosophy with the Edinburgh Festival meant that the sign on the frontage 'This is Living Cinema' was proudly displayed.

The Edinburgh Film Festival, launched by the prestigious Edinburgh Film Guild in

¹¹⁵ The auditorium filled part of the building's back court.

¹¹⁶ Genni Poole interview, 6/2/13.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, The films he showed had subtitles in diverse languages: one Gary Cooper film had Hebrew, Arabic, French, and German subtitles.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ *Edinburgh Evening News*, 7/1/14.

1947, was a non-competitive documentary festival. Built on the international prestige and social mission of the British Documentary Film Movement, The Guild didn't look to England for advice or leadership; it had its own set of international relationships.

By the early 1950s, when documentary was being challenged by new cinema technologies and by television, the Festival expanded its remit to experimental film. In 1954 it broadened still further and adopted the title Living Cinema with an all-encompassing mission statement on behalf of films of originality and imagination which used the creative powers of film.

The Festival operated without public funding but managed to assemble a substantial international selection of films. In 1954, for example, 170 films were chosen (30 features and the rest documentaries or shorts) from 210 submissions from 38 countries. Films which went on to get British release included the Festival's opening film *Windfall in Athens* and *Avant le déluge*, *Five Boys of Barska Street*, *Gate of Hell*, *Welcome Mr Marshall* and *Trio Ballet*. As well as three daily performances at the Cameo, other larger cinemas including the Caley and the New Victoria which seated over 2,000, were used for festival screenings.

In 1955, when De Sica was honorary president, the Edinburgh Festival attracted prominent European film makers, proof that it was a respected part of the international network. De Sica showed his new film *The Gold of Naples*, Jacques Tati attended the screening of *Monsieur Hulot's Holiday* at the Cameo and Carl Dreyer, accompanying his film *Ordet*, gave a challenging lecture against naturalism in the cinema. The Festival opened with Pabst's drama documentary *The Last Act*, aka *Ten Days to Die*, about the final days of Hitler. Japan was represented by *Children of Hiroshima* and *Ugetsu monogatari*, the first Mizoguchi film to be shown in Britain. *Jan Hus*, a socialist interpretation of the Hussites, was the first Czech colour film. *The Barefoot Battalion*, a Greek film about street urchins and their resistance to the Nazis during the War, combined Italian neorealism and French poetic realism.

In 1956 the Festival celebrated its tenth anniversary with a royal performance of Gene Kelly's *Invitation to the Dance*. Apart from Ray's *Pather Panchali* which, despite its Cannes award had still not opened in London, this was not an outstanding year for new films. Some reviewers were beginning to query the inclusion of commercial films like *Reach for the Sky* and *Lust for Life*.¹²⁰

The following year, 1957, when 400 films were entered and 181 selected, films which did become art cinema classics included *The Seventh Seal*, *Kanal*, *Le notti di Cabiria/Nights of Cabiria*, and *Un condanné a mort s'est échappé/A Man Escaped*. In

¹²⁰ *Quarterly of Films, Radio and Television*, vol. 11, no. 2, Winter 1956, 133.

1958 *Eve Wants to Sleep* had its British premiere at the Festival, as did Bergman's *Wild Strawberries*. Edinburgh's claim to be independent, and in some cases ahead of, London was proved by its promotion of Bergman in Britain. Between 1957 and 1961 the Festival hosted a total of five UK Bergman premieres.

By 1958, when the Film Guild handed over the running of the Festival to an independent council, the London Film Festival was on its way to taking over as the UK launch pad for festival winners abroad. It could be argued that by this time the distinctive voice of the Edinburgh Festival had become blurred, and that Living Cinema was too vague a category to replace its founding avant-garde mission. Its radical edge was not fully restored until a different era of new political priorities began in the 1970s.

2.7 Conclusions

The spatial and network theories of Massey and Hagener have provided the main frameworks for the discussions of networks, institutions, and places. Other aspects of foreign film culture, including the status appeal of foreign films, the role of political activists, and the sex and art duopoly, have also been considered in the contexts of social and cultural changes.

Examples of audience experiences support the idea that foreign language films had become a new source of cultural capital in the 1950s. For Bakewell and Bragg, beneficiaries of the social mobility created by their grammar school education, the impact of these films which were first seen at their respective Cambridge and Oxford film societies, was profound, even life changing. Rose Greaves' perspective from the Southampton Film Society was typical of many film society members who felt that foreign films were windows opening up a new, sophisticated, continental world. And Colin McArthur's description of the reverential hush which characterised the ambience of the Academy in London and the Cosmo in Glasgow, encapsulated something of the essence of the audience experience of the specialist cinemas. Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital does provide a useful tool for understanding the mild snobbery surrounding art cinema in Britain, but that is only a partial view of minority film culture. Much of the energy and drive of that culture in the 1950s came from the small group of activists featured in this chapter. They include Charles Cooper, Communist Party member and distributor who operated on the international stage, Paddy Whannel, projectionist turned teacher and film society activist, George Singleton, entrepreneur, cinema owner, and socialist, and Marie Seton, filmmaker, international speaker, and writer. These people propagated ideas which were based on a strong humanism, encompassing a belief in universal peace, the common interests of humankind, and a

curiosity about other cultures, all ideas which, this thesis argues, struck a chord with the new audiences of the postwar period.

This chapter has explored how the sex and art duopoly took hold in the 1950s when a number of new exhibition and distribution companies, including Gala, Miracle, and the Jacey chain, took advantage of the liberalization of censorship to offer the 'extraordinary mixture' of programming described at the opening of this chapter. The mix of sex and art was also evident in the range of publications explored in this chapter. *Continental Film Review* merits particular attention because, in its early years at least, it managed to survive through combining discourses which appealed to potential audience interest in travel, art, and sex.

The narrative strands in this chapter of class, sex, and art within the context of cultural change will also provide a background for the analyses of stars and directors in the same period of 1953 to 1958 which will follow in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Festivals, stars, and authors: the consolidation of the field (1953–1958)

A photograph of the opening ceremony of the first London Film Festival in October 1957 captures the essence of that cultural moment. It features Akira Kurosawa, Vittorio De Sica, John Ford, René Clair, British film pioneer GA Smith, Gina Lollobrigida, and Princess Margaret. (Figure 7) The presence of royalty suggests that the art of cinema was now well established, with the NFT as its most important national platform. The attendance of Lollobrigida is also significant. A glamorous symbol of Europe's challenge to the Hollywood star system, she stands centre stage, and, with her diamonds, designer gown, and long gloves, appears to claim parity with the princess beside her. The predominance of filmmakers indicates the growing status of the director as author and the new artistic standing of film.

The image also shows the new roles of the NFT and LFF in international film culture. By the mid 1950s, a regular calendar of European festivals had been established: Cannes in May, Berlin in June, Edinburgh and Locarno in August, San Sebastian and Venice in September. Now London in October was added to the calendar. The elevation of non-English speaking directors was evident in the LFF's first programme which opened with Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood*, followed by fourteen films, none of which was British and only one of which was American, signalling that foreign language films carried all of the kudos in British minority film culture.¹

Throughout the 1950s festivals increasingly functioned as international points of cultural encounter and as connectors in urban, national, political, tourist, and film industry networks. But this chapter concentrates on their influence on the discourses of cultural value, particularly in relation to stars and authors.

The festivals were the material manifestations of a European star system which successfully challenged that of Hollywood. Showcase for stars, fashion, and style as well as films, the publicity and news stories emanating from the festivals influenced the success of prize winning films in Britain.

Stars were important for raising the profile and the profits of foreign language films. But it was the discourses of authorship around directors which added serious cultural weight to the category of art film. In the 1950s festivals not only consecrated certain directors as artists, they familiarised audiences with the idea of the director as author, thus helping to create a film specific discourse which enabled the notion of film as art to gain cultural currency.

The chapter opens with two opposing views of the festival by André Bazin and

¹ As a festival of festivals, the LFF screened films already seen at previous festivals.

Robin Baker which illustrate its multifarious functions. It then moves on to consider the international reception of the Italian stars Silvana Mangano, Gina Lollobrigida, and Sophia Loren as new role models of femininity for the postwar world. This is followed by an analysis of Brigitte Bardot which explores the extraordinary popularity of her films worldwide and in Britain where they dominated the circuits, as well as cinemas which regularly showed foreign films. Her traditional but modern sex appeal and her Frenchness as selling points will be explored

Finally, the sections on directors Buñuel, Bresson, Bergman, Fellini, Kurosawa, Ray, and Wajda will look at the different facets of authorship they represented, the reactions of British critics and audiences, and what they contributed to the discourses of the director as creative artist.

3.1 Shaping the canon: festivals take root

Films and Filming featured a lengthy report by Peter Baker on the 1957 Cannes Festival.² This was the year when films which subsequently became major arthouse classics – *Kanal*, *The Seventh Seal*, *The Forty-First*, *A Man Escaped*, *Nights of Cabiria* – all won prizes. But Baker opened on a negative note:

Cannes in its tenth year will be remembered as the festival that insulted the art of cinema . . . It was only a matter of hours and we were learning more about Parfums Funel than Fellini, watching a hopeful young starlet named Jany Clair raise her skirts for a horde of photographers (until she had to slap them!) and being lured by cigarchewing salesmen to leave the Palais des Festivals for some side street bijou where we would be shown the latest guaranteed money-spinner . . . I was surprised that in such an atmosphere the jury had been able to function at all.³

Baker's description sums up the sometimes contradictory role of the festivals, and of Cannes in particular. The French film critic André Bazin also commented on these contradictions. From the early postwar years he was a regular member of the jury at Venice where he was much respected, partly because he championed neorealism there, even before it was recognised in Italy. He appeared to have a different attitude to Cannes and questioned its emphasis on surface glamour, pomp, and ceremony, asking, 'Why can't we have a serious geology as well as a flashy geography of our art?'⁴ The early selection procedures, whereby the nations themselves chose their entries infuriated him: it led to artistic travesties, such as De Sica's *Umberto D* being hidden in an out of competition showing in 1953, whilst two years later his much inferior Hollywood co-production, *Stazione Termini/Indiscretion*, was given a Gala

² *F&F*, July 1957, 11-13 & 31.

³ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁴ Bazin quoted in Andrew, 2013, 193.

premiere.⁵ But his attitude softened in the 1955 article 'The Festival as a Religious Order' in which he described the daily rituals of Cannes in terms of the monastic offices, where 'instead of lauds, matins, and vespers they had 'Dawn', 'Matinée', and 'Evening'.⁶ According to his biographer, Dudley Andrew, his attitude to Cannes was similar to his stance towards the Catholic Church: the hollow liturgy and pomp tested one's belief in the art, but you could still feel the glow of faith in the private screenings and murmurs of the critics.⁷

Venice remained the most artistically valued of the festivals and, despite the usual quota of starlets and glamour, had a weightier reputation with the critics. It was the Venice Festival which introduced Japanese, Indian, and East European cinema to the world in the 1950s. Here, major directors, rather than stars, gave press conferences and film historians gathered to organise archive screenings.

Cannes was the most prestigious festival, especially after the introduction of the Palme d'Or in 1955. In the 1950s, Jean Cocteau was president three times and celebrities such as Pablo Picasso, Grace Kelly, and Elizabeth Taylor visited. Cannes had the biggest international press contingent, with publicity focussing on stars and, increasingly in the 1950s, starlets. As Erlanger, one of the festival's founders wrote 'One shouldn't forget, in ensuring the success of the festival the primordial role of starlets in bikinis'.⁸ Cannes' location on the French Riviera made it a desirable destination, a pioneer of what is now called cultural tourism, a practice later sneered at by the young Truffaut who accused the festival of only being concerned with bringing paying customers into the hotels and casinos when business was poor.⁹

Berlin, a creature of the Cold War, was set up as a showcase for Hollywood and western film industries, and to provoke East Berlin and the Soviet Union.¹⁰ Entries from the Eastern Bloc were not even allowed, leading to the growth of the importance of the Karlovy Vary Festival in Czechoslovakia which positioned itself as the champion of Socialist filmmaking, as well as a showcase for films from the developing countries. The Cold War permeated all the festivals. Russia and its satellite states boycotted Cannes in 1952 and 1953, but the so-called Thaw which followed Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin in 1956 meant a new relationship with the western festivals. *The Cranes Are Flying*, for example, won the first Soviet Palme d'Or in 1958. With its formal experimentation and rejection of the normal conventions of Soviet patriotism, it inaugurated a new era in Russian art film.

⁵ Ibid., 194.

⁶ Bazin, 2009, 16.

⁷ Andrew, 2013, 194.

⁸ Quoted in Corless and Darke, 2007, 59.

⁹ Ibid., 53.

¹⁰ Elsaesser, 2005, 84.

To be awarded the Palme d'Or from Cannes, the Golden Lion from Venice, or the Golden Bear from Berlin put the seal of international success on a particular film, regardless of its budget or marketing power. Films which became internationally successful through awards in the 1950s included *Wages of Fear*, *Rashomon*, *Aparajito*, *Nights of Cabiria*, *Kanal* and *Wild Strawberries*. A festival prize awarded cultural capital and critical attention, created press publicity, and guaranteed international distribution. Prizes could also elevate and internationalize important stylistic tendencies such as Italian neorealism or the Polish School; they could promote co-productions, and even reinstate a maverick like Buñuel as an international auteur.¹¹

Festivals and the promotion of stars

The first question asked of those returning from Cannes, wrote Edgar Morin, was not which films you had seen, but which stars?¹² In the absence of Hollywood's publicity machine for grooming its stars, Venice and Cannes with their special locations, their ambience of glamour, and their annual dose of pomp and ceremony, provided European stars with sparkling publicity platforms.¹³ Bazin, continuing the metaphor of the monastery, described the rituals of the evening screenings where the press had places in the orchestra rows with a much coveted view of the stars, headed in 1955 by Lollobrigida. And he accepted her status, writing that 'religion needs such dramatic displays and gilded liturgy'.¹⁴

Edgar Morin, an early theorist of the star system, also used metaphors of religion and myth. His book *Les Stars*, first published in 1957, was an exploration of how stars operated as myths in societies where rapid technological and cultural changes were foregrounding the clash between tradition and modernity. He argued that the festival enhanced the mythical status of the star:

This life of play, this carnival life – disguised licentious, lavishing photographs, gossip and rumours like flowers and confetti – attains its fullness and mythic peak at the festivals. . . The star is wholly submerged in her image and is compelled to lead a cinematic life. Cannes is the mystic site of this identification of the imaginary and the real.¹⁵

According to Sophia Loren, Cannes was the big 'trampolino' to international stardom, but in fact festivals and stars were mutually reinforcing. The stars gave festivals publicity, photo opportunities, glamour and gossip, whilst the festivals gave

¹¹ Andrew, 2013, 192.

¹² Ibid., 50.

¹³ Corless and Darke, 2007, 78.

¹⁴ Bazin, 2009, 17.

¹⁵ Morin, 2005, 47-48.

stars awards and grand events, often in beautiful locations and venues. Lollobrigida, Loren, and Bardot, case studies in this chapter, were all well versed in the arts of using festivals to promote their stardom.

Auteur and nation

Festivals were also crucial to the consecration of specific individuals as auteurs. At the centre of an international network of experts and professionals who became the key instruments in creating the field of art cinema, bestowing prizes and publicity on their chosen favourites. And auteurs, as well as exhibiting creative genius, were also key signifiers of nation and national identity. In the 1950s, as in the Olympics, the films screened were preselected by their country of origin as official representatives. The name of the director above the title was both a mark of individual artistry and a symbol of nation, a personal and national product which anchored the art film to its country. That authors embodied national cultural values and characteristics can be seen in journalism and marketing materials. Sweden's so called 'obsession with gloom' for example was often employed to describe films like Bergman's *The Seventh Seal*.¹⁶ The authenticity of the native language of the European author was also important. In a Fellini film, both his name and the use of subtitles were marks of its Italianness. Ironically, this was despite the fact that from *La strada* onwards, his co-produced films often used non-Italian stars who were dubbed into Italian at post production stage and then subtitled in English. The subtitles themselves acquired cultural capital with arthouse audiences: they signified authentic nationhood and quality as opposed to the more downmarket dubbed genre films.¹⁷

3.2 Shaping the nation: new femininities and Italian stars

Far more than men, women (stars) were the vessels of men's and women's fantasies and the barometers of changing fashion. Like two-way mirrors linking the immediate past with the immediate future, women in the movies reflected, perpetuated, and in some respects offered innovations on the roles of women in society.

—Molly Haskell (1974)¹⁸

This section considers three Italian stars: Silvana Mangano, Gina Lollobrigida, and Sophia Loren. Their international success involved the projection of new images of femininity, part of the creation of a new postwar Italian identity. Within this reborn Italy the female stars, whose images were bound up with the new Republic, can be seen as marking a break with the overt masculinity of Fascism. At the same time these

¹⁶ BFI Press Cuttings, *The Seventh Seal*, *Evening Standard*, 6/3/58.

¹⁷ See discussion by Betz, 2009, 45-75.

¹⁸ Haskell, 1974, 12.

stars also represented a sexualization and commercialization of the female body, in the Hollywood style of American stars like Rita Hayworth and Marilyn Monroe. In other ways they were a challenge to Hollywood, emblematic of a new, more natural, and frank sexuality, their image not at first constructed on high glamour. They embodied the changing social and ideological values of continental Europe in the 1950s and appealed to a generation recovering from austerity and entering the new consumer age. They were also, at least at the beginning of their careers in the first half of the 1950s, strongly located in region and nation. Lollobrigida and Loren, the stars of so called 'rosy realism', projected the strength of Italian woman, proud and self-sufficient, operating in a specifically Italian, mainly southern milieu.

This discussion draws on Richard Dyer's concept of star image which is created not just intertextually through performance across films but extratextually through the whole apparatus of promotion, publicity, and commentary.¹⁹ The polysemy of the star as actress, off screen media celebrity, ordinary person, or mythical glamorous creature means that stars are open to multiple interpretations, can provide many meanings and pleasures, and can also embody ideological contradictions.

These contradictions were evident in *Bitter Rice*, the second postwar Italian film after *Open City* to achieve international commercial success. A hard hitting neorealist portrait of women workers in the rice fields of northern Italy, it showed their camaraderie and solidarity as well as the backbreaking labour. But it was also a steamy melodrama which introduced 19 year-old star Mangano to world audiences. Mangano was described by Masi and Lancia as an almost mythical image of resilience and vitality, 'Statuesque, standing sturdily on two athletic legs that rise strong out of the water of the rice fields, Silvana seems like a goddess of the lakes'.²⁰ And Marcia Landy took the idea of the body as message even further, arguing that Mangano was 'a harbinger of the union of neorealism with the cinema of the body' - she was returning the body and the gesture to the screen, using them to challenge traditional ideas of proper femininity.²¹

On the other hand, the film became a big international hit through the sensationalist promotion of its nubile young star. The American poster for the film featured the image discussed above, this time in colour, with the emphasis on the tightness of her sweater, the skimpiness of her shorts, and black stockinged legs, with the tagline 'Sexier than both Mae West and Jane Russell'. (Figure 8). Mangano became an international icon of the new cinematic eroticism. Her curvaceous femininity was expressive of the age and her looks and insolent style can be linked to

¹⁹ See Dyer, 1979.

²⁰ Masi and Lancia, 1997, 74.

²¹ Landy, 2008, 112.

popular magazines and photo romances of the emerging consumer society. Her pin-up poses in *Bitter Rice* as she lolled on the bed, and her trademark seductive dancing, provided a spectacular display of her legs and shapely body.

The Mangano films which followed earned a lot of money for Italy, but did not match the outstanding success of *Bitter Rice* in Britain. *The Wolf of the Sila*, first shown at the Rialto in 1950, was a melodrama of love, hate, and revenge set in Calabria. It was followed by *Anna*, premiered by Archway at the Marble Arch Pavilion in October 1952 in a dubbed version which, according to *MFB*, sounded like 'the BBC repertory company performing a Sunday afternoon matinée thus rendering its realism and passion absurd'.²² Mangano played a nightclub singer who, to expiate her sins, became a nun. Her chaste looks were undermined by the famous flashback dance sequence where, dubbed by Flo Sandon, Mangano sang *El Negro Zumbón* which became a big hit. Again, as in *Bitter Rice*, Mangano displayed her body in a flamboyant and defiant way. *The Wolf of the Sila* and *Anna* were reasonably successful, listed by *Continental Film Review* as showing in 22 cinemas in May 1954.²³ Unlike Lollobrigida and Loren, Mangano did not take numerous film parts in the 1950s. Her role in *Ulysses* (1954), the big budget Italo-American production, kept her international reputation alive but she was overtaken by the popularity of first Gina Lollobrigida, and then Sophia Loren.

Gina Lollobrigida, like most Italian female stars, got her start through beauty contests which were increasingly popular in Americanized postwar Italy and, like her arch rival Loren, she achieved fame by posing for photo romance magazines. She made her reputation on British screens in Blasetti's portmanteau film *Altri tempi* re-titled *Infidelity* where, in one of the stories, she co-starred with Vittorio De Sica. The film was launched at the New Gallery in April 1953. The distributor, Regent, chose to market the film with a sexy low cut image of Lollobrigida alongside the *Daily Mail* description, 'like a naughty postcard'.²⁴ *Infidelity* created the archetype of Lollobrigida as the *maggiorata* (well-endowed woman), a term used in the film by De Sica, who played the lawyer in her murder trial, as grounds for her innocence.²⁵ The costume design by Dario Cecci enhanced her protruding bosom, especially the stunning dress where a high neckline has an opening below, cut diagonally to accentuate the covered breasts beneath.²⁶

Just before the launch of *Infidelity* Lollobrigida appeared in René Clair's *Night*

²² *MFB*, vol.19, no. 226, November 1952,153.

²³ *CFR*, May 1954, 28-29.

²⁴ *CFR*, December 1953, 2.

²⁵ Masi and Lancia, 1997, 107.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 107.

Beauties/Les Belles de la nuit, first shown at the Rialto in March 1953. Local publicity in Britain focused on Lollobrigida's curvy charms, the *Finchley Press* calling on local topography to make the point that 'The curves of Gina Lollobrigida are more numerous and interesting than those of the Great North Road'.²⁷ The film broke house records at the seedy Rex Cambridge patronised by students where Leslie Halliwell was programmer. He used publicity stills of Lollobrigida getting out of the bath on the bumpers of local taxis proclaiming 'One of Camtax's *Night Beauties*' and at the rear, '*Night Beauties* at the Rex is a real bumper film'.²⁸

By 1955 Lollobrigida was an international star who had become the most important representative of Italian cinema, and indeed of Italy, abroad. Everywhere she went her fans went wild. It was difficult to control the crowds, not only in Venice, Cannes, Berlin and Munich but also in New York and Argentina.²⁹

She caused a stir in Britain too. As early as January 1954 *Picturegoer* ran a two-page spread on her achievements, which announced 'Hollywood has Marilyn Monroe but Europe has Gina Lollobrigida'.³⁰ By October 1954 she was the key emissary for Italy at the lavish Italian Film Festival in the Tivoli where *Bread, Love and Dreams* was premiered and where she was presented to the Queen. The Festival was considered such an important cultural event that the BBC devoted two programmes to it, an outside broadcast of the foyer covering the stars and the arrival of the Queen, and a second, longer programme with the stars and directors, fashion parades, and film extracts.³¹ In the same month *Picturegoer* had another big feature, 'Why all this fuss over Gina Lollobrigida?' It was admitted that so far she had not had a box office hit in the UK but her earthy, realistic performance in *Bread, Love and Dreams* was about to change all that. The key point was that she had become 'a trademark for the entire film business of Italy'.³²

The star personas of both Gina Lollobrigida and Sophia Loren in the 1950s can claim to represent aspects of the new Italian womanhood. This is especially true in the cycle of films dubbed 'neorealismo rosa' by left wing critics. These melodramas or comedies had some neorealist characteristics but were in a lighter vein and promoted optimism in the face of hardship and poverty. *Bread, Love and Dreams*, for example, is set in a poor, backward village, but its heroine is full of spirit and determination. Lollobrigida is a ragged farm girl with unkempt hair, a look carefully created to

²⁷ Turvey, 2010, 132.

²⁸ Halliwell, 1985, 169.

²⁹ For a full discussion of Lollobrigida's international celebrity status, see Buckley, 2000, 537.

³⁰ *Picturegoer*, 9/1/1954, 10-11. Monroe is said to have told her 'Do you know that they call me the Lollobrigida of America?'

³¹ Holmes, 2005, 182.

³² *Picturegoer*, 10/10/54, 10-11.

emphasise her earthy physical charms. She returned to the same role in *Bread, Love and Jealousy* in 1955. By 1956 Lollobrigida's *The Wayward Wife* was easily the most popular foreign language film in the provinces. It was listed in 19 halls in *Films and Filming* followed by *Bread, Love and Jealousy* which showed in 11.³³ She then moved on to more glossy international parts, to the annoyance of the distributor Kenneth Rive:

Trapeze is getting a million dollar much splendoured publicity treatment. Its female star is being postered worldwide. But don't lets forget who promoted Gina to where she is today: a determined corps of continental producers and distributors'.³⁴

By this time Sophia Loren was on the way to becoming a big star. Loren's rise to stardom is the classic 'rags to riches' tale, and her humble origins are essential to the mythology.³⁵ Poor and fatherless, she was injured in the Allied bombing raids on Rome, and then brought up in war-stricken Naples. Like Lollobrigida she joined the public arena through the beauty contest and photoplay magazines and entered the movies in 1952 under the tutelage of Carlo Ponti, a Milanese producer, who organised her career and eventually married her.

The De Sica directed film, *The Gold of Naples* (1954), which featured a comic story in which she played a beautiful pizza girl who cheated on her elderly husband, cemented Loren's stardom and created her early natural and unspoilt image. De Sica who, according to Gundle, was the real architect of her success, wanted to capture a dimension of Italy and Naples which predated American influence and Loren embodied joy, pride, and self-sufficiency along with an unabashed female sensuality.³⁶ The combination of Naples' picturesque poverty and Loren's luminous beauty created a hit film. Loren was immediately recruited for advertising campaigns including a new mozzarella called 'La Pizzaiola' and Lux soap 'used by nine out of ten stars'.³⁷

Picturegoer did not miss the burgeoning appeal of Loren. In March 1955, the first of a three part series about Loren 'The Girl who Turns Italy's Heads' claimed that she would be as famous outside Italy as La Lollo and Mangano. It reported that she was the most photographed woman at the London Italian Film Festival, where she was invited for her role in *Neopolitan Fantasy*. Four new Loren films to be shown in London were announced: *Woman of the River*, *The Gold of Naples*, *Too Bad She's Bad* and *The Sign of Venus*. The poverty of her background, her injuries in wartime air raids, and her phenomenal work schedule (9 films in the previous year) were all

³³ *F&F*, September 1956, 34-35.

³⁴ *KW Continental Film Supplement*, 5/7/56, 26.

³⁵ Gundle, 2004, 78.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 81

³⁷ Masi and Lancia, 1997, 113.

brought out. The third article paid tribute to De Sica, her frequent new co-star and mentor, who defined her Neapolitan grassroots image and insisted on her being allowed to dub herself rather than be dubbed by another actress or professional dubber.³⁸

In 1955 Loren's rivalry with Lollobrigida reached new heights when she took over the latter's role and acting partner De Sica in the *Bread, Love* series. In *Scandal in Sorrento* she played Donna Sofia, a gorgeous fishwife and braggart. Like her other Italian comedies that came to Britain, the films were launched at the Continentale or Berkeley and distributed to independent cinemas in the provinces by Gala. An ad for *The Miller's Wife* which appeared on the back cover of *Continental Film Review* in 1957 shows what selling points the publicists thought important at the time: Loren, in enticing pose, is given top billing above her co-star De Sica, the director Camerini is not billed at all, but cinemascope and colour are highlighted.³⁹

Like Lollobrigida, Loren started a Hollywood career which made her a top international star in the second half of the 1950s, when images of her beauty adorned the front covers of magazines across the world. But she did come back to play an entirely Italian character again in De Sica's *Two Women* in 1960, a mature, dramatic role as the mother who is the victim of the horrors of war. Her performance stole the show at Cannes in 1961 when, at the end of the screening which 'brought down the house' she appeared 'looking like eighty billion dollars'.⁴⁰ Her performance won her an Oscar, the first star of a foreign language film to receive this honour.

In summary, the appeal of these three 'love goddesses' rested on an overt sexuality combined with an earthy image born out of neorealism, a complex fusion which was located in the particular context of postwar Italy by feminist film historian Giovanna Grignaffini :

Human beings and the landscape are then, in turn, represented as *operators* of a new national identity and physical characteristics, bodies and gestures restored to an immediately legible *transparency* also become landscape . . . And a film like *Bitter Rice*, and more generally the cinema of the 1950s, refers precisely to a femininity understood as *naturalness*, body 'of the earth' in harmony with the landscape.⁴¹

She spelled out the generous appeal of these film stars:

³⁸ The voices of Italian actors were usually dubbed. Lollobrigida was dubbed until *The Wayward Wife*.

³⁹ *CFR*, July 1957, back cover.

⁴⁰ Vincent Canby, quoted in Beauchamp and Béhar, 1992, 179.

⁴¹ Grignaffini, 1988, 121

The female body, intact and uncontaminated by the look of Fascist ideology, a creature of the earth, rich with joyous sensuality, generous in its proportions, warm, and familiar: a body-landscape along whose outline you could read the future of a nation that had to start again from scratch.⁴²

3.3 Bardot: barometer of change

Brigitte Bardot first attracted the world's attention in 1953 at Cannes. Eighteen years old and a long haired brunette, she had only a few small film roles to her credit. One of these was *Act of Love* with Kirk Douglas, who famously posed on the beach with the bikini clad starlet. The pictures hit the world's press. She caused even more of a stir on USS Midway during the Hollywood stars' traditional visit to America's Sixth Fleet where the French photographers made sure that Bardot was next to Gary Cooper. *Paris Match* breathlessly reported:

Her raincoat slipped from her shoulders, she emerged in a tight fitting teenager's dress . . . Then the Midway was engulfed in a single shot of lightning and a crash of thunder: thousands of flashbulbs and shouts of admiration that exceeded in volume all the previous acclaims put together.⁴³

The essence of Bardot's celebrity appeal was her popularity with the mass media, her youthfulness and modernity, and her daring but 'natural' sexuality. Her tussled long blonde hair, casual clothes and adolescent pout appealed to the generation which came of age in the 1950s. At the same time, as Ginette Vincendeau has pointed out, her appeal was also old fashioned:

Bardot uniquely combined the 'new' (iconoclastic sexuality, agency, new looks, the insolence of youth) and the 'old' (the object of desire who knew exactly how to strike a pin-up pose or model for a sexy photo), a dichotomy as well as an ability to reconcile opposed values that are the foundation of her 'myth'.⁴⁴

Bardot appeared in 17 films between 1952 and 1956, but it was *Et Dieu . . . créa la femme...* (*And Woman... Was Created* in Britain) which rocketed her to international stardom. In this film Bardot emerged as a signifier of modernity, hence the enthusiasm expressed by Truffaut and the other young critics of the nascent New Wave:

⁴² Ibid., 123.

⁴³ Beauchamp and Béhar, 1992, 166.

⁴⁴ Vincendeau, 2013, 54.

As far as I'm concerned, after seeing three thousand films over ten years, I can't stand the saccharine and stilted love scenes of Hollywood films, nor the filthy, bawdy and no less fake ones of French cinema. This is why I am grateful to Vadim for filming his young wife engaging in everyday movements in front of the camera, innocent gestures, such as playing with her sandal, and less innocent ones such as making love in broad daylight – that's right! But just as real. Rather than imitating other films Vadim has attempted to forget cinema and "copy life," true intimacy...⁴⁵

Strikingly shot in CinemaScope and Eastmancolor on location in St Tropez and directed by Bardot's husband Roger Vadim, the film was released in 1957 to huge commercial success, not least because it projected the fully fledged BB persona. As Juliette, a nubile young orphan in pursuit of sensual pleasure, she made illicit love on the beach, shook her blonde, tumbling locks, and danced provocatively to the mambo. These images were very controversial. Most French stars dressed and delivered their lines in a very formal manner, but Bardot dressed casually and delivered her lines in a childlike slow monotone. Even more controversial was the guilt-free sex. The French censors met repeatedly to decide on cuts: some scenes were truncated and the sex scene on the beach was significantly cut. The fascination with Bardot's frank displays of sexuality seemed to be at its most intense in the USA where priests, censorship committees, and the Legion of Decency all called for the banning of the film. However, it became the most successful foreign film to date in North America, particularly amongst youth and student audiences and began a new drive for European penetration of the American market.

And Woman. . . Was Created set off six or seven years of 'Bardomania'. The success of the film resulted in a six picture deal with Columbia Pictures, including *La Parisienne* and *Come Dance with Me/Voulez-vous danser avec moi*, both marital comedies with scenes devoted to putting her body on display. But her talents were also used in a comedy aimed at the family market in 1959, *Babette Goes to War*, which was hugely popular. Her other two big successes were in a different register: *Love is My Profession* (1958) directed by Claude Autant-Lara and *The Truth/La Vérité* (1960) directed by Henri-Georges Clouzot were both 'serious' melodramas which at the same time made full use of the 'erotic spectacle' of Bardot's youthful body.⁴⁶

All these films were international successes. But Bardot's off screen life as a mass media celebrity attracted as much, if not more, attention. Her numerous affairs, her marriages and pregnancy, her attempted suicides, all attracted salacious media coverage. France's biggest export, she was now much courted by the Cannes

⁴⁵ Truffaut, quoted in De Baecque, 2012, 134.

⁴⁶ For a full discussion of the critical reception of these films see Vincendeau, 2013, 62–68.

Festival. In 1957, instead of attending Cannes, she threw a rival party for the press in the Nice studios where she jumped, braless, out of a cardboard box in jeans and tee shirt. The event emptied Cannes of journalists and celebrities.

In Britain, Bardot first became a name in 1955 when she played the love interest opposite Dirk Bogarde in *Doctor at Sea*, the second of the Rank Doctor comedies. In her first appearance as a nightclub singer she wore a low cut dress, and there was also the proverbial Bardot shower scene, on this occasion extremely modest. Her performance won her a favourable mention in *Picturegoer*: 'for sheer enchantment there's little Brigitte Bardot: the prettiest and sauciest girl the French have sent to British studios since Odile Versois'.⁴⁷ The tabloid press also covered Bardot's arrival and made much of her pertness and French ways. A special offer in *Reveille* which enabled readers to piece together a life size pinup of Bardot in her undies caused the magazine to sell out overnight.⁴⁸

The person largely responsible for the early success of Bardot in the UK was Tony Tenser of Miracle Films, who later claimed credit for creating the term 'sex kitten'. Miracle distributed *The Light Across the Street*, the story of a sexy young girl married to an impotent man, which was so successful at the Cameo Poly in March 1956 that it ran for three months. Despite its X certificate, the censor insisted on a series of cuts including a man ogling Bardot's breast, points of view shots of the same, a scene in bed where her husband threatens violence, and an 'almost' glimpse of the naked Bardot as she plunges into water.⁴⁹ Even with these cuts some local authorities were horrified. The Bromley Highways and Buildings Committee promptly banned the film, but all that local residents had to do was take a short bus ride to the next Odeon in Eltham Hill.⁵⁰

And Woman... Was Created was a huge hit in Britain. Tenser used this re-titling because 'you could upset people using God in a title', although the tagline 'But the devil invented Bardot' carried the real message.⁵¹ There was some heated debate between the censor and Miracle about cuts. Phil Kuttner of Miracle pleaded for the retention of the 'sheet scene' where Bardot is shielded but obviously naked. But Watkins prevailed, writing sarcastically, 'You will, I know, get over this disappointment extremely quickly and adjust yourself through the natural buoyancy of your temperament to the success which the film is bound to have, even as certificated by

⁴⁷ *Picturegoer*, 16/7/55, 16.

⁴⁸ Crawley, 1975, 40.

⁴⁹ Exception form, 30/1/56, BBFC file: *Light Across the Street*.

⁵⁰ Thorne, 2011, 50.

⁵¹ *Independent*, 20/12/07 at <www.independent.co.uk/news/obituries/tony-tenser-film-producer-and-distributor-who-dubbed-bardot-a-sex-kitten-766205.html>, accessed 22/12/14.

the Board'.⁵² It ran at the Cameo Royal for three months from April 1957 and then obtained a full national release through ABC, who paired it with *Quatermass 2*. Press response was mixed, most reviews concentrating on the sex. Lejeune in the *Observer* said she was beginning to feel sorry for Bardot as she could not believe that she preferred to be presented as a striptease artist.⁵³ The *Daily Worker* echoed this view, calling the film 'a crude piece of calculated pornography'.⁵⁴ Gordon Reid in *Continental Film Review*, on the other hand, seemed to enjoy the fact that Bardot upset his male equilibrium.⁵⁵

Love is My Profession had a darker theme, the story of a married and respectable middle aged lawyer played by Jean Gabin who falls for a call girl which leads to tragic consequences. The attitudes of the censor showed the fear of Bardot's influences on the young, and the sensitivities of the time about issues like prostitution and abortion. After much negotiation, the X certificate was granted in September 1958, once a list of cuts had been made, which included Bardot's bottom, her bloodstained neck and breast, references to sex being worth 100,000 francs, and subtitles suggesting late period, pregnancy, and abortion.⁵⁶ The BBFC files also provide an example of the censor concerning himself with publicity, with a letter to Miracle forbidding them to use a censored shot of the naked Bardot for publicity purposes.⁵⁷ There is also a note in the file about the full sized plaster model of Bardot on a turntable in the foyer window of the Cameo Royal. Dressed only in a bikini bottom, her hands are clasped over her breasts and leg irons are attached to one leg. The author commented, with some degree of understatement, 'It is, I think, a good example of misleading publicity'.⁵⁸

Bardot stands apart from other major female stars of the fifties. She was completely different from Martine Carol, the sexiest and the highest paid French female star of the early to mid 1950s. Carol's erotic persona, created in 'naughty' costume films like *Madame du Barry* or *Nana* belonged to the boudoir and the salon rather than the beach.⁵⁹ Nor can Bardot's style be compared to Lollobrigida and Loren who, despite their earthy neorealist image in the films, adopted all the trappings of glamour, like the jewels, the fur, and the Rolls Royces in public.⁶⁰ Rather, Bardot's youthful appeal in the 1950s prefigured the New Wave heroines of the 1960s like Anna Karina and Jeanne Moreau. Her image made her, akin to the gamine style of

⁵² Watkins to Kettner, 1/2/57, BBFC file: *And Woman was Created*.

⁵³ *Observer*, 17/3/57, 13.

⁵⁴ Quoted in Vincendeau, 2013, 36.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ BBFC file: *Love is My Profession*.

⁵⁷ Watkins to Kuttner, 11/9/58, BBFC file: *Love is My Profession*.

⁵⁸ BBFC file: *Love is My Profession*.

⁵⁹ Vincendeau, 2013, 33.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 84.

Audrey Hepburn and the more bohemian image of Juliet Greco, 'a new kind of girl' whose trench coat, tussled hair, and ballet flats were, according to Harry Hopkins, much imitated on the streets of Britain.⁶¹

The discourses at work in the publicity and journalism around all four of these stars in Britain showed that there was a deliberate attempt to construct specifically European feminine images to rival the sex symbols of Hollywood. Furthermore, these European stars were creatures of a specifically European and highly regarded institution, the film festival. The association of the actresses with region and nation was also important, for example Bardot's image connoted Mediterranean beach culture and the early Loren was associated with the lower classes of southern Italy. Their polysemic identities also embodied ideological contradictions. Was Bardot sex kitten or modern woman? Did Mangano represent Italianness or Americanization? However, despite the rival discourses around the (usually) male auteur, all four women are proof that female stars, rather than male directors, can often construct themselves as the main determinants of narrative, iconography, and style in the gendered world of filmmaking.

3.4 Auteur cinema and its high priests

It was the critics at *Cahiers du Cinéma* who led the way in the elevation of the author to the status of individual creative artist. Godard put it forcefully in 1958:

The cinema is not a craft. It is an art. It does not mean teamwork. One is always alone; on the set as before the blank page. And for Bergman to be alone means to ask questions. And to make films means to answer them. Nothing could be more classically romantic.⁶²

The idea of authorship in cinema was not new, but it was given eloquent new expression by Alexandre Astruc who coined the term camera pen in 'The Birth of a new Avant Garde: La Caméra- Stylo' in 1948. He argued in his article in *L'Ecran Francais* that film was a language like literature through which the artist expresses his thoughts and obsessions.⁶³

Then in 1954 Francois Truffaut, a young unknown, wrote his controversial article 'A Certain Tendency in French Cinema'.⁶⁴ It was mainly a polemical attack on the traditions of the so-called cinema of quality and of literary adaptations. He went on, with his fellow *Cahiers* critics, to develop the *Politique des Auteurs*, according to which the director, as opposed to the cinematographer, writer or producer was elevated to

⁶¹ Hopkins, 1964, 436.

⁶² Godard, 1972, 76.

⁶³ Astruc, 1948, in Vincendeau and Graham, 2009, 31-36.

⁶⁴ Truffaut, 1954, in Vincendeau and Graham, 2009, 39-63.

the status of sole creator of the film. Furthermore, the author's whole body of work needed to be studied in order to detect themes and style, and even to understand seeming failures.⁶⁵ *Cahiers du Cinéma*, the most prominent journal of European cinema and the most committed to ideas of authorship, controversially discovered new Hollywood auteurs but also remained faithful to a few European ones including Ophuls, Renoir, Bergman, Buñuel, and Bresson.

Whilst the auteur theory was a largely French phenomenon, and the term auteur was not widely used in Britain until the early 1960s, the category of the director as author and its surrounding discourses was becoming increasingly dominant in British film criticism during the 1950s, with the European director as the main claimant to that title. *Sight and Sound* and the National Film Theatre shared some of the approaches of the young critics of *Cahiers du Cinéma*. In fact the director as author approach had been adopted early on by the *Sequence* group of Lindsay Anderson, Gavin Lambert, Karel Reisz and Penelope Houston. By the mid 1950s, now in control of *Sight and Sound* and involved in programming and filmmaking, they continued their espousal of favoured authors with in depth articles, interviews, and screenings. The names of Bresson, Buñuel, Kurosawa, Mizoguchi, Ray and Rossellini appeared regularly in a decade when the analysis of the personal vision of the director, as expressed through cinematic techniques, was seen as the highest form of criticism.

Luis Buñuel and Robert Bresson were both awarded canonical status. Buñuel had made two controversial avant-garde surrealist films, *Un chien andalou* and *L'Âge d'or* in the late 1920s. He made *Land without Bread* in his native Spain in 1933 and documentaries for the loyalists during the Civil War, which drove him into exile, first in the USA and then in Mexico, where he made melodramas and comedies. In 1951 the Director's Prize at Cannes for *Los olvidados* re-established him as a world class filmmaker. One of the first X certificated films in England, it ran at the Academy for two months in 1952. In an early auteurist piece for *Sight and Sound* in 1954, Tony Richardson accorded him the highest artistic status alongside his countrymen Goya and Picasso, stating that 'The cinema's prophets are few and lonely; none more formidable than the Spaniard Bunuel'.⁶⁶ A year later Richardson's survey of Buñuel's *oeuvre* formed the basis of an NFT season which combined the early surrealist works with the more recent Mexican films: *Los olvidados*, *El*, *Subida al cielo*, *The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, and the new *The Criminal Life of Archibaldo de la Cruz*.⁶⁷

Bresson was also venerated. His third feature, *Diary of a Country Priest*, won the

⁶⁵ De Baecque and Toubiana, 97-102.

⁶⁶ S&S, vol.23, no 3, January/March 1954, 125-130.

⁶⁷ *NFT World Cinema Series*, July-August, 1955.

International Prize at Venice in 1951, but it was not publicly shown in Britain until 1953. An adaptation of the Bernanos novel, Bresson literally transcribed chunks of the first person narration of the novel as a voiceover. According to André Bazin this was 'written reality' which treated the written text as a kind of parallel material reality.⁶⁸ What came to be Bresson's trademark authorial characteristics - location shooting, simple and stark cinematography, and use of off screen sounds - were all there. Most striking of all was his use of amateurs or beginners as actors who were asked simply to speak the text rather than act it out.

It was widely, and, on the whole favourably reviewed, with words like 'ennobling', 'inspiring', 'profound' and 'pure' recurring. William Whitebait's review in the *New Statesman* was typical of the response of the 'serious' critic.

Bresson makes films in his own time and after his own heart. This film presents his talents in its purest, most dramatic form. There can be no question that Bresson's is an art as fine and untouched as the screen has known.⁶⁹

Diary of a Country Priest was, however, acknowledged as difficult arthouse fare. Dilys Powell praised the Curzon, because 'To show this beautiful film takes courage'.⁷⁰ The Curzon programme which included a German short on woodcarving and a nature film from Hungary, was described by the *Evening Standard* as 'the longest and most superior in the West End . . . unremitting but recommended'.⁷¹ It played for less than a month but came to the Everyman in December 1953. It was screened at the film society viewing weekend, but initially was not a popular film society choice.

Bresson's next film, *A Man Escaped*, a true account of a wartime break from a Gestapo prison, was first shown in Britain at the French Film Festival which ran single screenings of the film at the Gaumont Haymarket, Cosmo Glasgow and Cinephone Birmingham. It won Best Director at Cannes in 1957, the Richard Winnington Award at the 1958 London Film Festival, and was eventually distributed by Films de France.

Sight and Sound adopted a reverential tone when discussing the film. A translation of Roland Monod's account of working with Bresson in *A Man Escaped* was featured in *Cahiers du Cinéma* in its Summer 1957 edition. The actor revealed that when the dialogue was directly recorded in the studio the actors simply aped Bresson's delivery of the lines: they were there simply to give him 'the raw material of our appearance, our voices, above all our faces'.⁷² And Gavin Lambert's review in the

⁶⁸ Bazin, 1967, 136-141.

⁶⁹ BFI press cuttings, *Diary of a Country Priest*, *New Statesman*, 25/4/53.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, *Sunday Times*, 19/4/53.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, *Evening Standard*, 16/4/53.

⁷² S&S, vol. 27, no. 1, Summer 1957, 31.

same issue located the drama of the film, not in the escape story, but in the representation of man's inner life conveyed through slow, 'pathetically improvised physical effort.' He described the face of the escapee as a mirror which 'reflects the loneliness, vision, occasional despair and ascetic humanity which lies at the heart of this extraordinary film'.⁷³

3.5 Brand name authors: Fellini and Bergman

As discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, two key texts have shaped understandings of how authors and art cinema operate together. Bordwell's 'The Art Cinema as a Mode of Film Practice' (1979), reprinted in *Poetics of Cinema* (2008), was a largely aesthetic study which concentrated on a set of formal characteristics to do with narration, realism, and time which were in opposition to classical Hollywood cinema. In art cinema also, he argued, the author is foregrounded 'as a structure in the film's system, a formal component, so that authorship unifies the text and the film becomes a chapter in an oeuvre'.⁷⁴ He located art cinema in the postwar period when Hollywood was losing its total control and when, in the absence of stars and genres, the author with artistic freedom became the distinguishing mark of the film.

Steve Neale's 'Art Cinema as Institution'⁷⁵ (1981) remains one of the most cited analyses of European art cinema as a set of institutional forces. Through case studies of Italy, France, and Germany Neale placed art cinema firmly in the context of the attempts of postwar European countries to counter American domination and create their own indigenous film cultures. His discussion foregrounded the discourses of authorship, with their emphasis on 'creativity, freedom and meaning' and their Romantic view of art as creative expression, as central in defining the characteristics of art house cinema. These were set in opposition to the 'profit making and entertainment' worlds of Hollywood. But he also located art cinema in national and commercial infrastructures. In this context he discussed art cinema as individual expression but also examined the commercial function of authorship as a 'brand name . . . a means of labelling and selling a film and of orienting expectation and channelling meaning and pleasure in the absence of generic boundaries and categories'.⁷⁶ Neale argued that censorship and sexuality were also bound up with the rise of the individual European author. Films like *La Ronde*, *And Woman . . . Was Created*, and *Summer with Monika*, for example, were popular in America and Britain because of their

⁷³ Ibid., 53.

⁷⁴ Bordwell, 2008, 155.

⁷⁵ Neale, 1981, 11-39.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 16.

representation of sexuality, at a time when prudery and censorship still prevailed.⁷⁷

Personal expression, national culture, and sexuality were all markers of the films of Fellini and Bergman, two brand name authors who reached their peak in the 1960s but whose international reputations were created in the 1950s when the categories of author and art cinema became intertwined.

Fellini's *La strada*, a Silver Lion winner at Venice in 1955, was a road film featuring three down and out characters: a strongman (Anthony Quinn), a trapeze artist (Richard Basehart) and a simple girl (Fellini's wife Giulietta Masina) who is virtually sold to the strongman. Fellini, who started out as a scriptwriter for Rossellini, was beginning to make a name for himself as a director, especially after the success of *I vitelloni* at Venice. *La strada* was typical of co-productions which became commonplace by the late 1950s and the 1960s. An Italian and French co-production, two of its stars were American and, like all Fellini productions, the sound was post-synchronised, with the voices of Quinn and Basehart dubbed into Italian, then subtitled for English speaking audiences.⁷⁸

La strada won five international prizes, including the first ever Oscar for a foreign film. It came to the Curzon in November 1955 with a big fanfare. According to *The Sunday Times*, 'Italy adores it, France is crazy about it...given a new lease of life to Italian neorealism'.⁷⁹ It was widely and positively reviewed. A few critics made mention of Fellini's neorealist roots, his use of real locations and characters on the margins of society. On the other hand, Allen Brien of *The Evening Standard* praised his flamboyant style, 'brilliant and bizarre, unquestionably the work of a filmmaker of genius'.⁸⁰ Most reviews, however, made more of Masina's star performance than Fellini's authorial traits. Her clownish, Chaplinesque persona and lack of glamour were much commented on, 'a corrective to the mink and Lollobrigida view of Italy', according to Fred Majdalany in *Time and Tide*.⁸¹ And an article in the *Daily Worker* pointed out that her 'fascination owed nothing to the shape of her body or steamy sex'.⁸²

Fellini and Masina were an effective double act, the 'best director star combination in the business' according to the *Daily Herald*.⁸³ They came to London for the premiere of *La strada* at the Italian Film Festival in 1955, and again for the premiere at

⁷⁷ Melvyn Bragg argued that *Summer with Monika* spoke to the condition of many adolescents in the 1950s and that Harriet Andersson represented a new type of woman. Bragg, 1993, 17-18.

⁷⁸ For a discussion of subtitling and dubbing and their roles in differentiating art cinema from the mainstream see Betz, 2009, 45-58.

⁷⁹ BFI Press Cuttings, *La strada*, *Sunday Times*, 27/11/55.

⁸⁰ Ibid., Curzon poster with press quotes.

⁸¹ Ibid., *Time and Tide*, 3/12/55.

⁸² Ibid., *Daily Worker*, 26/11/55.

⁸³ Ibid., *Daily Herald*, 25/11/55.

the Curzon. Fellini used Masina's Chaplinesque persona again in *The Nights of Cabiria*, this time daring to have a prostitute as the sympathetic lead character. Posters for this film often gave Masina top billing over Fellini. She won Best Actress at Cannes, and accepted an Oscar for the film in 1958. It was not until *La dolce vita* that Fellini established himself as the sole star director.

Bergman's *The Seventh Seal* was seminal to the growth of arthouse cinema in Britain. Introduced to British audiences first at the Edinburgh and later at the London Film Festival, it was premiered at the Academy in March 1958 where it ran for nearly four months. (Figure 9). Melvyn Bragg, who first saw it at the Scala in Oxford, described its impact on a young working class student from Wigton who had never seen subtitles before. Like many of his generation he was still a Christian and the film raised fundamental questions about God, and good and evil.⁸⁴

All of the press reviews, both positive and negative, treated the film as out of the ordinary: 'I can only urge lovers of true cinema to see this film', wrote Jympson Harman in the *Evening News*,⁸⁵ *The Daily Telegraph* referred to its 'poetry and power',⁸⁶ the *Sunday Pictorial* called it 'weird and powerful',⁸⁷ whilst Lejeune wrote that 'a film so large in conception rarely comes our way'.⁸⁸ Most critics stressed the power of the film and its large themes, Philip Oakes describing it as a 'great gaunt film that grips the heart' and being 'ravaged with its terrible beauty'.⁸⁹ Although the film was seen to be about the universal themes of sex, death, and religion, it also spoke to contemporary anxieties; some reviewers, including Dilys Powell who disliked Bergman's films, detected the topical subtext of the H-Bomb.⁹⁰

Like all auteurs of the 1950s Bergman's international reputation was established through prizes at the main festivals. But the Hoellering/Cooper partnership was ahead of the big festivals with early screenings of Bergman. The Academy showed *Sawdust and Tinsel* in 1955 which was not popular but *Smiles of a Summer Night* shown in 1956 soon after its success at Cannes did better and ran for five weeks. Hoellering's programming instincts were correct. The success of *The Seventh Seal* at Cannes, where it won the Special Jury Prize, and at the LFF in 1957, followed by the Golden Bear at Berlin for *Wild Strawberries*, which was premiered at Edinburgh, made Bergman an arthouse star in Britain. He went on to win best director for *So Close to Life* at Cannes in 1958. The international wave of Bergmania started in Paris with a

⁸⁴ Bragg, 1993, 14-26.

⁸⁵ BFI Press Cuttings, *The Seventh Seal*, *Evening News*, 6/3/58.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, *Daily Telegraph*, 8/3/58.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, *Sunday Pictorial*, 9/3/58.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, *Observer*, 9/3/58.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, *Evening Standard*, 6/3/58.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, *The Sunday Times*, 9/3/58. The H-Bomb as a sub text was also discussed in the reviews of *The Glasgow Herald*, *New Statesman*, and *Evening Standard*.

retrospective at the Cinémathèque Française in 1958. This delighted the *Cahiers du Cinema* critics, especially Godard, whose review of the re-release of 1953's *Summer With Monika* called it the 'film event of the year'.⁹¹ The first London cinema to hold a Bergman season was the Everyman in 1958, screening only four films: *Sawdust and Tinsel*, *Smiles of a Summer Night*, *The Seventh Seal*, and *Frenzy*. According to *Continental Film Review* London became the 'Land of Bergmania' in 1959 with seven or eight of his films, including the early ones, shown in one year, including *Summer with Monika* at the Paris Pullman.⁹² In 1959 the NFT did a major survey of films from Sweden called *The Passionate Cinema* which was dominated by Bergman, with three films scripted and a further nine directed as well as scripted by him. The programme introduction by John Gillett perfectly illustrates the auteur theory of film programming. 'On seeing a large portion of a director's output in a short space of time, one is able to discover how the films complement each other, how ideas touched on in one work are more fully developed in others'.⁹³

Bergman epitomised the image of the director as auteur in the 1950s. The pressbooks from Svensk Films promoted him as a true auteur:

Bergman uses film as a means of personal expression: with few exceptions he scripts the films he directs and throughout these films his own personality and outlook on life is reflected.⁹⁴

For audiences everywhere it seems that Bergman's films stood out because they were not afraid to tackle the big literary and theatrical themes of good and evil, sexuality and death. He asked the big questions, but at the same time seemed to express the angst of the postwar generation worried about personal morality, relationships, and existential issues. Stories of his strict, Lutheran pastor father, and the religious repression of his childhood, added to the allure. The myth of the solitary creative genius detached from market forces was built up, including Bergman's own stories about his childhood obsessions with the moving image.⁹⁵ Critics particularly admired his artistic independence and personal control over the filmmaking process from conception to final editing. His films were low budget with no prewritten scripts, with only a stock company of loyal actors with whom he worked in the theatre, a factor which added to their cultural cachet.

⁹¹ Quoted in Mandelbaum, 2011, 24.

⁹² *CFR*, December 1959, 14-15.

⁹³ *NFT Programme*, *The Passionate Cinema*, 1959.

⁹⁴ BFI Press Cuttings, *The Seventh Seal*, Pressbook.

⁹⁵ Bergman, 1988.

3.6 Representing the nation: Kurosawa, Ray, and Wajda

The relationship between nation and art cinema was often used by commentators to enhance the status of the film director, who like other great artists, was able to embody the nation. As discussed, Tony Richardson placed Buñuel alongside his countrymen Goya and Picasso, whilst Godard famously claimed 'Robert Bresson is French cinema, as Dostoevsky is the Russian novel and Mozart is German music'.⁹⁶

The reception of the films of Kurosawa, Ray and Wajda shows that in critical discourse authors were signifiers of nation as well as individual artists, an elision which over-simplified what was a complex and sometimes contradictory relationship.

Kurosawa and Japan

When Akira Kurosawa appeared dressed in a kimono at the opening of the NFT this was, according to, his long term collaborator, Teruyo Nogami, his first time in traditional Japanese costume.⁹⁷ In fact, although he was to make his name in the West, mainly with period samurai films, he was better known in Japan for his contemporary films. He was steeped in the works of western writers such as Dostoyevsky, Gorky, and Shakespeare, and his cinematic hero was John Ford. The Golden Lion award at Venice in 1951 for *Rashomon* took everyone by surprise, including those in the Japanese film industry, who had not believed that an historical drama would appeal to the West.⁹⁸ When it came to the Rialto in March 1952, both Kurosawa and Japanese cinema were completely unknown. As indicated by Whitebait's response below, the British critics did not quite know what to make of *Rashomon*:

I don't know what I expected of a Japanese film, something tawdry in colour, I dare say, about paper houses and geisha girls; but *Rashomon* took me quite by surprise . . . what is revealed is native, cruel, poetic and alive. How am I to convey this impact? . . . Who is Akira Kurosawa? What are his other films, and does he stand alone as the exponent of a strong and sophisticated art, or are there in Japan others like him?⁹⁹

Most critics had trouble with the vigorous and stylised acting which harked back to the days of silent film but was at the time wrongly ascribed to the kabuki tradition.¹⁰⁰ Toshiro Mifune's performance as the bandit, with its wildness and brutality, was compared favourably by more than one critic to Brando's Kowalski in *A Streetcar Named Desire*: 'Mifune makes Marlon Brando look like something out of *School for*

⁹⁶ Quoted in Milne, 1972, 47.

⁹⁷ <<https://www.tumblr.com/search/akira+kurosawa+at+National+Film+Theatre>>, accessed 27/11/16.

⁹⁸ It was sent by the production company Daiei at the insistence of Giuliana Stramigiola, head of Italofilms's Japanese office.

⁹⁹ Ibid., *New Statesman*, 15/3/52.

¹⁰⁰ Galbraith, 2001, 130-131.

Scandal', wrote Milton Shulman in the *Evening Standard*.¹⁰¹ The cinematography, with its striking tracking shots, was praised. And several critics pointed out that the continuous movement and rapid cutting was in the style of silent movies. But it was the experimentation with conventional linear narrative which was the most shocking.¹⁰² Called 'a masterpiece and a revelation' by *MFB*, its slow pace, concern with time and the relativity of truth and experimentation with narrative, gave the film its distinctive art cinema status.¹⁰³

The success of *Rashomon* opened up Japanese cinema to the West. Daiei Films, playing on the exotic appeal of Japanese historical drama, repeated the success of *Rashomon* with *Gate of Hell*, a sumptuously coloured costume drama set in the 12th century, which won the Palme d'Or at Cannes in 1954. The following two years saw the international exposure of long time master Mizoguchi who won prizes for *Life of Oharu* and *Ugetsu monogatari*.

But the pre-eminent Japanese auteur remained Kurosawa. His international success with *Rashomon* led Toho to offer him a big budget for the making of the action epic, *Seven Samurai*. The production was fraught with difficulties, went well over schedule and budget, and turned out to be the most expensive film ever made in Japan. It jointly won, with Mizoguchi's *Sansho Dayu*, the Silver Lion at Venice in 1954. It was a big box office success in Japan where the uncut version of 207 minutes was released for first run cinemas. A second, subtitled version of 160 minutes was made for export.¹⁰⁴ Distributed in Britain by Films de France, it was first shown at the Academy in February 1955 with an X certificate. It was well reviewed but some critics like Fred Majdalany were still expressing culture shock:

There is nothing stranger to western eyes than a Japanese film. In both subject matter and the violent projection of startling characters and more startling behaviour, they are quite unlike anything else seen on the screen.¹⁰⁵

On the other hand Tom Spencer of the *Daily Worker* summed up the film's enduring and wide appeal:

¹⁰¹ BFI Press Cuttings, *Rashomon*, *Evening Standard* 13/3/52.

¹⁰² The narrative style was not in the Japanese tradition either. In some rural areas nervous cinema managers hired long retired benshi to narrate and decipher the film, or they showed the film in two parts. See Galbraith, 2001, 132.

¹⁰³ *MFB*, vol. 19, no. 220, May 1952, 61.

¹⁰⁴ This version, as well as being drastically cut had Americanized subtitles which some British reviewers found annoying. The full version only reached British audiences in 1972 when BBC2 showed it with new subtitles.

¹⁰⁵ BFI Press Cuttings, *Seven Samurai*, *Daily Mail*, 18/2/55.

If you pass it up as one for long haired students of cinema you'll be missing a film with all the excitement of a first rate western and a great deal more depth and intelligence.¹⁰⁶

Some critics approved of Kurosawa's cinematic references to the Western. For example, the *MFB* review said:

If all this attests to the way Kurosawa has assimilated the influence of Western directors for his own purposes, it also explains, perhaps, the detached attitude of *Seven Samurai*. Here is a deliberately modern, sophisticated eye looking at the past – in contrast to, say, the films of Mizoguchi, which are overdue for showing in this country.

The contrast with Mizoguchi in these early days of western exposure to Japanese cinema sometimes led to evaluations of the two directors on the basis of their 'Japaneseness'. This was particularly the case with the *Cahiers* critics who compared the 'western' Kurosawa unfavourably with the 'Japanese' Mizoguchi. Rivette, for example, argued that Mizoguchi was the only Japanese director who was completely Japanese and yet was also the only one to achieve a true universality.¹⁰⁷

Nevertheless, after the success of *Seven Samurai*, Kurosawa became the most well known Japanese auteur, and a frequent visitor to film festivals abroad. And Japanese films became fashionable in Britain. The NFT put on a groundbreaking and popular season of Japanese films which ran from 30 October 1957 till 19 January 1958. Fifteen recent films were shown, four of which were by Kurosawa: *Seven Samurai*, *Throne of Blood*, *Living* and his new film *The Lower Depths*. The season also introduced London audiences to Ozu's *Tokyo Story* and to two late works of Mizoguchi: *Ugetsu monogatari* and *Chikamatsu monogatari*. The season carried the title 'Light in the Japanese Window' and the NFT booklet introduction expressed both the cultural mission of introducing new auteurs and the humanist mission of understanding other nations.

Satyajit Ray and India

Pather Panchali, awarded Best Human Document at Cannes in 1956, was a low budget film made by a director new to film with an almost totally amateur cast and crew, working on location with primitive camera equipment. Satyajit Ray told the story of making the film in *Sight and Sound* in 1957.¹⁰⁸ The production process was dominated by the lack of funding which caused the film, finally financed by the West Bengali Government, to drag on for three years. The story came from a village in

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., *Daily Worker*, 19/2/55.

¹⁰⁷ Rivette, 1985, 264-265.

¹⁰⁸ S&S, vol.26, no.4, Spring 1957, 203-205.

Bengal. The cinematic style was influenced by the neorealism of *Bicycle Thieves* which had so impressed Ray during his visit to London in 1950.

The film was described as 'pure cinema' by the *Times of India* which referred to a 'break with the world of make believe' which 'does away with plot, with grease paint, with songs, with the slinky charmer and the sultry beauty'.¹⁰⁹ Although a far cry from Bengali commercial cinema which was imitative of the big spectacle, musical Hindi productions from Mumbai (subsequently known in the West as Bollywood), it was a big success in Bengal.

This was the first Indian post-independence film to get acclaim in the West. It reached Cannes, partly through its successful screenings (not yet subtitled) at MoMA and the NFT, which encouraged the West Bengali Government (a part-funder of the film) to nominate it. James Quinn, Director of the BFI who was a jury member that year, also championed the film. Ray had contacts in London, including his friend and later biographer, Marie Seton and Lindsay Anderson, to whom he had written long letters about the shooting of the film. Anderson was more than enthusiastic in his Cannes report for the *Observer*:

With apparent formlessness *Pather Panchali* traces the great design of living . . .

You cannot make films like this in a studio, nor for money. Satyajit Ray has worked with humility and complete dedication; he has gone down on his knees in the dust, and his picture has the quality of ultimate unforgettable experience.¹¹⁰

The story of its distribution in Britain illustrates the fragility of the business of screening art films. It was picked up by Curzon, but there was a delay with the subtitles. Fearing failure at the box office, because the publicity opportunity provided by the Cannes award had passed, the film was not shown. Meanwhile, Ray had completed *Aparajito* which won the Golden Lion at Venice in 1957. The film, this time supported by British jury member Penelope Houston, was distributed by Contemporary and was being shown at the first LFF. Only then, after 18 months, was *Pather Panchali* released by Curzon and shown at the Academy in December 1957.

The Apu trilogy of *Pather Panchali*, *Aparajito* and *The World of Apu* was later seen at the Everyman by J.M. Coetzee who described its dramatic impact, especially Ravi Shankar's music, in his autobiographical novel *Youth*:

He watches the Apu trilogy on successive nights in a state of rapt absorption. In Apu's bitter trapped mother, his engaging, feckless father he recognises with a pang of guilt, his own parents. But it is the music above all that grips him, dizzyingly complex interplays between drums and stringed instruments, long arias on the flute

¹⁰⁹ *Times of India*, 11/2/56, quoted in Seton, 2003, 87.

¹¹⁰ *Observer*, 13/5/56, 11.

– which catches at his heart, sending him into a mood of sensual melancholy that lasts long after the film has ended.¹¹¹

Western attitudes to Ray were contradictory. In most ways he was a typical art film auteur with his urbane and humanist films about life in the city or tales of the historic landowning class, often adaptations of the classics of Bengali literature. Robin Wood, amongst other critics, saw Ray as a universal director: ‘Ray’s films usually deal with human fundamentals that undercut all cultural distinctions’.¹¹² And, like Bergman and Bresson, his auteur status was awarded because of the almost complete control over his films – the script, music, art direction, even the publicity. At the beginning of his career when *Pather Panchali* reached western audiences, an Italian headline christened him the Indian Robert Flaherty for his use of nature and locations. The comparison stuck and he was categorised as a semi-documentary chronicler of the Indian village, so much so that Penelope Houston was able to write in 1963 ‘until someone comes along to change it, Satyajit Ray’s Bengal will be the cinema’s India’.¹¹³ No matter that the second and third parts of the trilogy dealt with the problems of life in the city and of being a writer, he was first and foremost associated with rural India. Chandak Sengoopta’s analysis of the reception of Ray in the West singled out a condescending review of *The World of Apu* in *Esquire* by Dwight MacDonald who suggested that Ray was able to deal with a family in a village but was not up to the more complex task of representing a writer in the city.¹¹⁴

The World of Apu, the third in the trilogy, like *Pather Panchali* won India’s major award, the President’s Gold Medal, although it was not allowed to compete at Venice on the grounds that it was too similar to its two predecessors. By way of protest, The LFF invited *The World of Apu* to inaugurate the Festival where it received the largest number of screenings. Ray was now established as a director of international importance.

Wajda and Poland

I owe my first international success to Lindsay Anderson’s review of *A Generation*. This meant that the newly established Polish film school was carefully monitored in the West. When asked ‘What is behind the Berlin Wall?’ the Polish directors of the 1950s gave the truest answers of anyone in the Eastern Bloc.¹¹⁵

–Andrzej Wajda (2008)

¹¹¹ Coetzee, 2003, 93.

¹¹² Wood, 1972, 7.

¹¹³ Houston, 1963, 153.

¹¹⁴ Sengoopta, 2007, 287.

¹¹⁵ S&S, June 2008, 34.

The Polish School and Wajda's films which, like the earlier neorealists, conveyed a humanist anti-war message were particularly attractive to British left wing critics who had a romantic vision of filmmaking in East Central Europe. They compared East European cinema, with its government subsidies, low budgets, and anti-commercial ideology, favourably to Hollywood and saw Polish cinema in particular as a guardian of human values, as well as being artistically ambitious. Anderson in particular used his influence to promote Wajda when he was an unknown young director. In an article called 'A New Talent' for the journal *Living Cinema* in 1957 he contrasted Wajda's portrayal of war in his films *Kanal* and *A Generation* unfavourably with the British entry at Cannes, *The Yangtze Incident* with its 'politically naïve, stiff upper lip officers and lower deck humour'.¹¹⁶

Andrzej Wajda was part of the postwar flowering of Polish cinema which moved from near destruction in 1945 to the reception of 15 awards at international festivals in 1958. He was the most famous of the new young directors who gathered around Aleksander Ford, veteran filmmaker, festival winner and director of *Five Boys of Barska Street*, which came to London in 1956. Wajda's first feature in 1954 was *A Generation* which centred on two young factory workers and a beautiful Communist leader involved in the Warsaw Ghetto uprising against the Nazi Occupation. Made during the period of hard line Soviet control, its title spoke of the collective class struggle, although in retrospect it also spoke of Wajda's romantic notion of Polishness. Moskowitz in *Sight and Sound* termed it a 'court film' because it espoused Communist principles and was shot in a realist style.¹¹⁷ But even at this early stage there are many expressionist features in the film, for example the imagery of Warsaw with its dark, cavernous places and fire which prefigure *Kanal* and *Ashes and Diamonds*, the other two films in Wajda's war trilogy.

The death of Stalin and the subsequent denunciation of Stalinism by Khrushchev at the 1956 Party Congress had political repercussions across East Central Europe. It led to the 'Polish October' when Gomulka, the reinstated moderate party leader, staved off an uprising by pledging to follow 'a Polish road to socialism'.¹¹⁸ For film makers, what came to be called the Thaw in the USSR and its satellite states meant a lessening of film censorship and more creative control. The Polish school, which emerged in the mid 1950s, was a loose grouping of young directors including Wajda, Kawalerowicz, Munk, and Has who rejected socialist realism, emphasised the importance of visual imagery, and shared a concern with Romantic literature and

¹¹⁶ Anderson, 1957, 127.

¹¹⁷ Moskowitz, 1957, 136-140.

¹¹⁸ Coates, 2005, 17.

prewar Polish culture and identity.¹¹⁹ The Polish School, born and nurtured on the film festival circuit, was part of the forging of a national cinema in the context of emancipation from the Soviet Union.¹²⁰ It was launched internationally with the success of *Kanal* which won a Special Jury Prize at Cannes in 1957. In Britain it was praised by *Sight and Sound*, shown at the Edinburgh Film Festival and the first London Festival, and opened at the Academy in June 1958.

Kanal was the first Polish film to deal with the Warsaw Uprising, a daring enterprise for any Polish filmmaker, since the Uprising was ordered by the Polish government in exile and executed by the nationalist Home Army. A group of resistance fighters surrounded on all sides by the Nazis take to the sewers of Warsaw. We are told from the start they are doomed, 'Watch them closely for these are the last hours of their lives.' The descent into hell is painted with frightening realism – the horrors of stench, death, the madness, and dark shadows. These are augmented by expressionist camera work, melodramatic flourishes, and a script that quotes Dante, to create what Moskowitz called a 'lyrical, almost hallucinatory' work.¹²¹ The script evaded the central political fact of the Warsaw Uprising, but Polish audiences knew the historical facts: the insurgents were caught between the Nazis and the political calculations of the victorious Soviets, waiting on the other side of Vistula for the Germans to kill off the nationalist rebels. However, this is definitely an 'October' as opposed to a 'court' film, since representation of the Home Army as in any way heroic could only be made after the fall of the Stalinist regime.¹²²

The film was widely reviewed, on the whole very positively, but with a sense of shock at the lurid detail of the brutalities. William Whitebait hailed it as a new poetry of realism: 'Kanal fights its way through realism to poetic vision, to Romanticism if you like: its story of death and destruction exultantly lives'.¹²³ He quoted Alberto Moravia, who also noted the mix of realism and surrealism:

We do not know whether Mr Wajda has ever seen Henry Moore's drawings of the Londoners in the shelters during the blitz: but more than once *Kanal* reminds me of those drawings fluctuating between the oppression of nightmares and the sombre imagination of calculated surrealism.¹²⁴

As did other critics, Paul Dehn objected to the more melodramatic, literary flourishes like the crazed Polish composer who quotes Dante and wanders off to his death playing a handmade pipe, or the final scene of the lovers who reach light and

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹²⁰ Ostrowska, 2014, 86.

¹²¹ Moskowitz, 1957/58, 137.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 139.

¹²³ BFI Press Cuttings, *Kanal*, *New Statesman*, 14/6/58.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

sun only to find bars forbidding escape. He wrote:

If you are going to film horror for truth's sake you must be as scrupulously valiant-for-truth as De Sica. You cannot afford crazed pipers or semi-poetic set pieces about the grass and the trees.¹²⁵

Ashes and Diamonds, shown at the Academy in June 1959, also brilliantly explored the tragic ambiguities of postwar Poland. Zbigniew Cybulski, in a performance compared admiringly with James Dean and Marlon Brando, played a Home Army officer with orders to assassinate a Communist leader on the last day of the War. In presenting the murderer/hero as an equally tragic victim as the Communist and their two deaths as a shared social tragedy, Wajda was challenging the official version of history in which all nationalists were branded as Fascists.¹²⁶ The Polish authorities refused permission for the film to be shown at Cannes. It was not even the official entry at Venice where it was shown out of festival but got a huge ovation, along with the Critics Prize.

András Kovács in *Screening Modernism* has described Wajda as 'a cinematic representative of national consciousness', someone who, in the words of Polish film critic Boleslaw Michalek, 'hears at once the echoes of his country's history and the sounds of its life'.¹²⁷ Indeed, one of the distinguishing features of Wajda's work throughout his career has remained its commitment to problems of national history.

3.7 Conclusions

Bazin's imagining of Cannes as a religious order was in contrast to Baker who saw its increasingly crass commercialism as an insult to the art of cinema. Hagener, however, has argued that these seeming contradictions strengthened the concept of the festival, which was able to become the nodal point in the complex and ever changing network of art cinema largely because of this ability to tap into many different discourses at many different levels.¹²⁸

The glamorous presence of the European female stars was an essential element in the construction of the parallel systems of production and distribution in Europe in the 1950s and 1960s. Much of this construction was done through the festivals where changing images of fashion and lifestyle were showcased in the 1950s, from the earthy sexuality of the Italian stars to the modern, informal style promoted by Bardot. Furthermore, the stars' association with distinctive images of European regions or nations added value to their appeal in the international markets. As David Andrews

¹²⁵ Ibid., *News Chronicle*, 13/6/58.

¹²⁶ Coates, 2005, 40.

¹²⁷ Kovács, 2007, 289.

¹²⁸ Hagener, 2007, 238.

has pointed out, it was Bardot, rather than Fellini or Resnais who led the way in the breakthrough of foreign art films to larger audiences in the United States.¹²⁹

However, it was the notion of authorship (rather than stardom) which raised chosen foreign language films to the level of an art form. Baumann's argument that the intellectual field, as defined by Bourdieu, needs its own discourses, as well as an institutional structure, is pertinent to the discussions of authorship in 1950s film culture. The notion of film as art with the author at its centre was taken up and promoted within British film culture by critics and my discussion has highlighted how critical writing about certain directors was essential to the consolidation of the field. Ideas of authorship were evolving into a more developed auteur theory by the turn of the decade, a development which will be discussed in next chapter.

¹²⁹ Andrews, 2013, 161.

Chapter 4: Cultural shifts: auteurs, audiences, and exhibition (1959-1962)

Michelangelo Antonioni's *L'avventura* reached second place in the *Sight and Sound* poll in 1962, an achievement which marked a key moment of change in film history. As Ian Christie has argued, the canon established by the polls always demonstrated a slow moving consensus about taste, usually biased against the recent, the marginal, and the exceptional, so the fact that Antonioni's film, new and unashamedly modernist, 'vaulted into second place' amounted to 'a revolution in taste'.¹

This shift in film culture started in 1959, the year when an array of modernist works were just finished or in production, including Fellini's *La dolce vita*, Bresson's *Pickpocket*, Godard's *Breathless* and Antonioni's *L'avventura*. It was also the year that Truffaut and Resnais presented their first features at Cannes. Truffaut's *The 400 Blows*, a portrait of a troubled adolescent, opened the Festival and won the Best Director Prize. A turning point in French cinema, it established many of the new production conventions – tiny budgets and technical crew as well as use of exterior locations, natural lighting, and lightweight cameras - popularised by the New Wave. Alain Resnais' *Hiroshima mon amour*, denied official selection but awarded the Critics Prize, likewise excited fellow filmmakers and critics. The break with linear narrative construction, use of editing to merge past with present and individual with cultural memory, and the juxtaposition of image and sound, horror, and poetic dialogue, all worked together in the creation of a film which attempted to capture time itself.

The emergence of modernist cinema went hand in hand with auteurist critical discourses in Britain. This period marked a major cultural shift in ways of making sense of art films. Auteurist articles were appearing frequently in the specialist film magazines, along with analyses of the discernible critical break away from the humanist approach towards an embrace of modernism. Another shift was the increasing liberalization of censorship which affected the distribution and exhibition of foreign language films. Undoubtedly the high status of art films in the early 1960s contributed to the softening of attitudes at the BBFC, but the relaxation was also part of a broader change in film culture which was now finding more spaces for foreign films whose chief selling point was their sexual content. The proportion of X rated films rose from 1951, when five out of the 44 foreign language films reviewed in the MFB were rated X, to 1962 when 59 were X out of a total of 137.² This increase accounted for changes in cinema exhibition which included the opening of special clubs and a period of mixed programming, particularly outside of London, when both

¹ Christie, 2011, 57-58.

² S&S, vol.31, no. 3, Summer 1962, 107.

art and sex films co-existed in the same exhibition spaces.

The chapter starts with an exploration of the modernist break in filmmaking as represented by the films of Resnais and Antonioni. It goes on to a detailed discussion of the New Wave, linking its newly fashionable film techniques with strongly held ideas of auteurism, and with the rise of a new youth audience in Europe. The next section tracks two big budget art films, *La dolce vita* and *Rocco and His Brothers*, from production and international reception at festivals to their contrasting levels of success at the British box office. Section 4 considers how censorship decisions, which both shaped and reflected values in society, reveal attitudes to sex, art, and class, and how these decisions affected the places and spaces of foreign language distribution and exhibition. Section 5 looks more widely at the economics of the British film industry to explore why business success in the foreign language market was so difficult to achieve. The chapter concludes with a comparison of the listings for foreign language films in London and Manchester.

4.1 Modernism and auteurism: Resnais and Antonioni

There has not been a profoundly modern cinema yet that has attempted what the cubists did in painting or the Americans in novel writing. That is, reconstructing reality from fragments, and this reconstruction may appear arbitrary or profane.
—Eric Rohmer (1959)³

This period saw the re-emergence of cinematic modernism which had been present in various periods of film history since the first wave in the 1920s. This second wave was a distinctively European arthouse phenomenon which, some film scholars have argued, emerged in the specific contexts of late capitalist modernity -- technological advances, decline of religion and traditional values, and fear of the atom bomb. John Orr argued in *Cinema and Modernity* that what united a seemingly disparate group of directors in the 1960s was that they shared a common anxiety about one key consequence of the many time-space transformations of modernity, the gap between perception and expression. This was sometimes expressed through distrust of religious authority, as with Bergman, Buñuel and Fellini, and sometimes their secular replacements as with Antonioni, Godard and Resnais.⁴ Gilles Deleuze has provided further rich conceptual approaches to postwar modernist cinemas. In his two seminal works, *The Movement Image* and *The Time Image*, he argued that, starting with neorealism, the War marked a break with the classical, spatialized cinema of the 1930s with its different images which in turn structured perception, feelings, and action. Modernist cinema, however, went beyond the movement image to the time

³ Rohmer, 1959, quoted in Kovács, 2007, 120.

⁴ Orr, 1993, 1-13.

image where characters found themselves in spaces where they are unable to act or react:

Time ceases to be derived from the movement, it appears in itself and itself gives rise to *false movements*. Hence the importance of *false continuity* in modern cinema: the images are no longer linked by rational cuts and continuity, but are relinked by means of false continuity and irrational cuts. Even the body is no longer exactly what moves; subject of movement or the instrument of action, it becomes rather the developer of time, it shows time through its tiredness and waitings (Antonioni).⁵

For Kovács the most spectacular formal characteristic of modernist cinema was the way that it handled narration, and in this respect he argued that it was Resnais who held 'the unquestionable primacy of most consistently introducing modernism into art cinema by applying the *nouveau roman* narrative technique'.⁶ *Hiroshima mon amour* was considered so groundbreaking by the *Cahiers* critics at Cannes that they considered they were watching the beginnings of a film art equal to the artworks of other modernists of the twentieth century.⁷

Hiroshima mon amour was critically acclaimed at the British premiere which opened Kenneth Rive's International Film Theatre in January 1960.⁸ The French critic Georges Sadoul had argued in his survey of New Wave directors for *Sight and Sound* that it was 'the sort of film that can renew and change the art of the cinema'.⁹ And, in that spirit, British critics used and re-used the words 'cinematic', 'poetic' and 'work of art' in their descriptions of the film. But only a few analysed its modernist elements in detail. Penelope Houston was one. She focussed on the film's use of non-linear narrative to bring the past forward into the present and to interlock the spaces of Hiroshima with Nevers, the woman's home town. For Houston it was 'quite possibly the most controversial first feature since *Citizen Kane*. It has aroused the same sort of excitement and partisanship: its place in film history seems no less firmly assured'.¹⁰

Nouveau roman screenwriter Marguerite Duras and actress Emmanuelle Riva created between them a rare but powerful study of the female point of view. Certainly at the Cannes round table discussion *Hiroshima mon amour* was considered as an example of Simone de Beauvoir's existential feminism in action, with Riva, the new

⁵ Deleuze, 1989, xi.

⁶ Kovács, 2007, 292.

⁷ Orr, 1993, vii.

⁸ Rive, the film's distributor, had refused to allow it to be shown at the LFF in order to maximise publicity for this prestigious occasion, attended by the Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd and the French Ambassador. Rive garnered further support and publicity by donating the proceeds to the BFFS.

⁹ S&S, vol. 28, nos. 3&4, Summer /Autumn 1959, 114-115.

¹⁰ *MFB*, February 1960, 19.

woman of postwar Europe, challenging the constraints of her past.¹¹ But the feminist angle was not much emphasised by British critics, with the exception of Lejeune who described the film as 'a woman's eye story written by a woman'.¹²

Some critics expressed doubts about the weaving of individual and collective memories. Georges Sadoul had already argued that the balancing of two very different horrors, the atomic massacre and the individual humiliation of the woman, was a difficult feat.¹³ Similarly, Nina Hibbin's review in the *Daily Worker* objected to the equation of love with the A Bomb.¹⁴ Her reaction was shared, and later recalled, by writer Doris Lessing who saw 'its images of death and tortured bodies mingled with bodies writhing in sex' as an example of 'a new sensibility, to my mind corrupted and sick'.¹⁵

Rive's publicity, after its first run in London, focussed on the love affair rather than Hiroshima. His poster image was of Riva prostrate, sheltered by the naked back of her lover, an X centrally displayed and the suggestive byline, 'A woman's hand caresses, strokes and claws a masculine shoulder'. The promotional spread issued to provincial cinemas included a collage of quotes from reviews, for example, 'Guilty Love in east and west' and 'Brief Encounter Japanese Style.'¹⁶

In contrast, the publicity for Resnais' next film, *Last Year in Marienbad*, distributed by Gala subsidiary Compton-Cameo/Sebricon, was a more respectful signpost of its cultural status as high art. The posters had highly stylised graphics and the actors' names were omitted in favour of that of the director's. Comments from the French press, rarely used hitherto, featured in the publicity campaign and the press notes credited both director and writer.

Set and slowly enacted in the stylized dream world of a grand hotel, a baroque palace, *Last Year in Marienbad* is the enigmatic tale of a young woman being 'persuaded' of the memory of a past affair, the truth of which is never resolved. The screenwriter was another *nouveau roman* novelist, Alain Robbe-Grillet, prominent also for his critical writings. His screenplay, unusually, included décor, gestures, and camera movements as well as dialogue. Illustrated by shots from the film, the hastily translated 'cine novel' was published by John Calder Publishers and advertised in *Sight and Sound*.

There were some negative reactions in the press reviews across the political

¹¹ Orr, 1993, 9.

¹² BFI Press Cuttings, *Hiroshima mon amour*, *Observer*, 10/1/60.

¹³ S&S, vol 28, nos 3+4, Summer/Autumn 1959, 114-115.

¹⁴ BFI Press Cuttings, *Hiroshima mon amour*, *Daily Worker*, 9/1/60.

¹⁵ Lessing, 1998, 249.

¹⁶ BFI Press Cuttings, *Hiroshima mon amour*, Gala poster quad.

spectrum, ranging from boring and pretentious to stylish and empty. Some critics were impressed, if perplexed, especially when Resnais and Robbe-Grillet offered different interpretations. Dilys Powell's review described the various stages of anticipation she went through before seeing the film in an attempt to reach her own interpretation, her final conclusion being that 'the story doesn't matter, the labyrinths of love have been explored and one accepts the adventure as an obscure and splendid poem'.¹⁷

Geoffrey Nowell-Smith came to a similar conclusion in his detailed analysis for *New Left Review*. He called it 'a revolutionary kind of cinematic spectacle' and argued that there was no meaning behind the images, no psychology, no general statements. The plot was an enigma, only the images remained, 'rich in suggestion and hints which we are free to piece together as we like . . . *Marienbad* is pure cinema, the cinema of the image stripped of all emotional and intellectual content'.¹⁸

The film, which had been rejected by the selection committee at Cannes, went on to win the Golden Lion at Venice. After breaking box office records in Milan and Paris, it arrived at the Cameo Poly in February 1962. The scene had been set with a French trailer which announced 'You the viewer are the co-author of the film . . . you yourself will be at the centre', and somewhat incongruously pronounced it 'Better than 3D, better than widescreen'.¹⁹ The British distributors felt obliged to add an introductory title warning that the film may surprise the audience. It ran at the Cameo Poly until May and then went on to become a success, playing at ten different cinemas in London, 36 other commercial venues and 31 non-commercial venues across the country. It is an early example of a cult art film, popular with students, intellectuals and cinephiles.²⁰

Antonioni

Antonioni was 46 when his sixth film *L'avventura* was nominated for the Palme d'Or in Cannes in 1960. He had achieved some festival success at Berlin in 1955 where *Le amiche* won the Silver Lion and at Locarno in 1957 where *Il grido* won the Golden Leopard, but was as yet little known in the United States and the UK. The catcalls, booing, and cries of 'cut', which greeted the screening, and which caused Antonioni to flee in tears, were a mark of the extent to which *L'avventura* broke the normal cinematic rules of narrative, plot, and character. Set amongst a group of rich Italians on a yachting trip, the disappearance of a wealthy young woman from a remote volcanic island is followed by the troubled quest through Sicily of her fiancé with her

¹⁷ Ibid., *L'Année Dernière à Marienbad*, *Sunday Times*, 25/2/62.

¹⁸ *New Left Review*, vol. 1, nos. 13-14, January-April 1962.

¹⁹ Trailer at <<http://www.criterion.com/films/1517-last-year-at-marienbad>>, accessed 26/4/17.

²⁰ Mazdon and Wheatley, 2013, 114-117.

best friend who become lovers. The mystery of the missing woman remains unsolved and the question of a future for the two lovers is left open.

This minimalist tale captured the spirit of the time through its concerns with modernity's alienation, non-communication, and the loss of faith in obsolete values.²¹ What was also strikingly new was Antonioni's use of the visual environment, not as a crude symbol of the characters' actions and states of mind, but rather to accentuate the lack of relationship between the material world and the characters.²² And for Antonioni, actions and emotions were not psychologically motivated, nor did they necessarily form a part of the narrative structure – they were simply there, captured by the long, slow gaze of the camera.

Despite the negative audience reaction, by the next day more than 25 filmmakers had signed a statement supporting the film which then went on to win the Special Jury Prize 'for the beauty of its images and its search for a new cinematic language'. It did good business in Milan and Rome, ran for twelve weeks in Paris, and triumphed at the 1960 London Film Festival. Antonioni and Monica Vitti accompanied the film to New York in April 1961. In an interview for *The New York Times*, Antonioni, in an attempt to stave off the inevitable criticism of the film's lack of narrative resolution, made a strong auteurist statement, describing the film as 'an act of defiance, an attempt to demonstrate that neither plot nor dialogue is as important as the underlying motivation – the personality of the individual artist', whose work 'called for the same respect as for a painting, a symphony, a novel'.²³

L'avventura achieved remarkable critical success in Britain. Positive reactions picked out the modernist aspects of the work: Dilys Powell admired its patterns of characters and crowds and its use of space and architecture,²⁴ William Whitebait in *The New Statesman* compared it to Bresson, with its austere style which took sequences almost to breaking point,²⁵ whilst David Robinson compared its psychological realism to that of Proust.²⁶ Penelope Houston, in her lengthy review in *Sight and Sound*, analysed Antonioni's style in detail, concluding, 'Perhaps the final image we should have of this reserved, grave, deeply concerned filmmaker is of a moralist in search of a moral code he can believe in'.²⁷

Like many of the new art films, *L'avventura* introduced a new type of female star in

²¹ Antonioni discussed this in depth in his press conference statement at Cannes <<http://www.criterion.com/current/posts/100-l-avventura-cannes-statement>>, accessed 24/07/15.

²² Kovács, 2007, 149-150.

²³ Quoted in Balio, 2010, 188.

²⁴ BFI Press Cuttings, *L'avventura*, *Sunday Times*, 27/11/60.

²⁵ Ibid., *New Statesman*, 26/11/60.

²⁶ Ibid., *Financial Times*, 28/11/60.

²⁷ S&S, vol. 30, no. 1, Winter 1960/61, 13.

Monica Vitti, who received widespread praise from the critics. Hers was a different style, in total contrast to the earthy appeal of Italian female stars of the fifties. Slim, sophisticated and blonde with a natural style of acting, she presented a new image of European womanhood which, on the one hand was not burdened by the restrictive roles of wife or mother but on the other hand was alienated from the world she inhabited.²⁸

J.M. Coetzee, in his autobiographical novel, *Youth*, summed up these contradictions as well as Vitti's allure for a young man in the 1960s. He fell in love with her 'perfect legs, sensual lips and abstracted look' in the course of an Antonioni season at the Everyman. But, he divined, she was clearly burdened with 'Angst' which was 'a properly European thing . . . yet to find its way to England'. Nor could he quite believe the explanation he read in the *Observer* which ascribed this Angst to fear of nuclear annihilation and uncertainty following the death of God.²⁹

Fred Majdalanay's unfavourable review in the *Daily Mail* which described the film as 'an interminable Italian dissertation on sex as it may affect a number of handsome, wealthy idlers', expressed both disapproval of the concentration on the lives of the bourgeoisie and boredom at the slowness of the film, both fairly common critical reactions.³⁰ Some members of the audience apparently agreed. Antonioni's signature slow pace in *L'avventura* was blamed in one recent survey for causing the respondent to fall sleep, and he wrote, 'when I woke up nothing had happened'.³¹

But, as Betz has pointed out, the slow pace, characteristic of the heyday of art cinema, did have its intellectual pleasures:

The moments of spatial or temporal excess, unjustified by the narrative requirements of the story could become justified or rendered meaningful through the active engagement of the spectator.³²

The promise of the pleasures to be gained from the thoughtful engagement of the spectator was backed up by this respondent in *Cinema Memories*:

²⁸ See the detailed discussion of 'Wondering Women' in Betz, 2009, 93-177.

²⁹ Coetzee, 2003, 48-49.

³⁰ BFI Press Cuttings, *L'avventura*, *Daily Mail*, 25/11/60.

³¹ Stokes and Jones, 2017, 86.

³² Betz, 2009, 6.

In retrospect, I think a lot of the attraction of foreign language films was their different narrative styles from mainstream Hollywood. I wouldn't have characterised it in this way at the time but I do think that films with a more obvious authorial voice or with a more 'open' narrative meant that audiences had to engage with films in a different way . . . they obliged you to be more alert and to think them through yourselves. This may be why they still mean so much today.³³

L'avventura was fashionable with the young metropolitan audiences of Europe at the beginning of the sixties, and London was no exception. It was a sell-out at both of its screenings at the 1960 London Film Festival where Antonioni was awarded the Sutherland Trophy, in absentia, since he was facing obscenity charges in Milan. Antonioni continued to be championed by the BFI. Before the LFF screening of *L'avventura*, only *Le amiche*, distributed by Gala as a second feature, had reached British screens. Following the publicity given to *L'avventura* a dedicated Antonioni season of all his previous five feature films, along with shorts, was put on at the NFT in 1961, sufficient, according to Richard Roud, 'to make him almost a household name'.³⁴ The season was accompanied by a full treatment of Antonioni in *Sight and Sound*, consisting of an interview with the director and an auteurist analysis of the complete oeuvre by Roud, as well as the review discussed above by Penelope Houston.³⁵ *Films and Filming* gave Antonioni similar treatment in its special Italian issue in January 1961. It contained an article by the director himself and a detailed analysis of his body of works by special Rome correspondent for *Films and Filming*, John Francis Lane.³⁶ Auteurist criticism in the leading specialist magazines had now become the norm.

L'avventura opened at the Paris Pullman in November 1960. To screen it was a risky venture, but the film was immediately popular – the constant queues outside the cinema even meriting a special photograph in *Continental Film Review* with the caption 'a big success'.³⁷ It ran at the Paris Pullman for an unprecedented five months and continued to build cultural kudos. On 14 February 1962 Roud appeared on BBC TV's *Cinema Today* introducing Antonioni, and Derek Prouse introduced the film on *The Critics*. When *La notte*, the second in Antonioni's so-called trilogy came to Britain in early 1962, this time distributed by United Artists, it ran for four months at the Academy. By the mid 1960s, after two further successes, *L'eclisse* and *Red Desert*, Antonioni's sellability on the international market was so high that he was awarded a three picture deal by MGM, starting with *Blow-Up*.

³³ Brian Barford, *Cinema Memories* survey, 2014. Also quoted in Chapter 6.

³⁴ Roud, 2014, 55.

³⁵ S&S, vol. 30, no. 1, Winter 1960/61, 5-13.

³⁶ F&F, January 1961.

³⁷ CFR, January 1961, 4.

4.2 The French New Wave

When the three French films *Black Orpheus* (which won the Palme d'Or), *The 400 Blows* and *Hiroshima mon amour* made such an impact at Cannes in 1959, Camus and Resnais were placed, together with Truffaut, under the umbrella of the French New Wave. The term New Wave describes the large number of emerging young French directors (at least 160 in the period 1959-1962), with the *Cahiers du Cinéma* group at its centre.³⁸ But it was the core group of Truffaut, Rivette, Chabrol, Rohmer, Astruc, Kast, and Godard who expressed in their films and critical writings the main tenets of New Wave filmmaking. As so combatively asserted by Truffaut in 'A Certain Tendency in French Cinema', they were in revolt against the older generation, the 'cinema of quality' being epitomised by such directors as Autant Lara, Clouzot, and Delannoy. They particularly attacked the studio-bound, big budget productions based on adaptations of the literary classics. Most importantly, the New Wave directors popularized their central critical concept of the primacy of the auteur. Truffaut, for example, asserted the importance of the 'first person' cinema of 'small subjects' in *Arts* in 1957:

It seems to me that future films will be even more personal than a novel, as individual and autobiographical as a confession or a private diary. Young filmmakers will express themselves in the first person and recount what has happened to them...They should be excessively ambitious and excessively sincere. Tomorrow's film will resemble the one who shot it.³⁹

The core group of young filmmakers denied a common plan or aesthetic. But the New Wave films, as argued by Michel Marie, did share common characteristics which included the critical doctrine of auteurism, an aesthetic programme, an ensemble of artists, and a promotional strategy, all of which added up to what Marie called a school.⁴⁰

Breathless came to be seen as the prototype New Wave film. Described by Dudley Andrew as the 'definitive manifesto' of the New Wave, *Breathless* is still regarded as its quintessential expression. Antoine de Baecque in *Camera Historica* used a single production still to illustrate the radical informality of the shooting process. Raoul Coutard is filming Belmondo and Seberg in a light filled photography studio. He sits with his handheld camera in a wheelchair, which is being pushed by Godard, an easy to handle version of the travelling shot. (Figure 10). This image, de Baecque argued, perfectly summed up the 'lightness, speed, improvisation and

³⁸ Marie, 2003, 15.

³⁹ Truffaut quoted in De Baecque, 2012, 133.

⁴⁰ Marie, 2003, 28.

resourcefulness' of New Wave location filming.⁴¹ *Breathless* also exemplified the move away from a strict pre-established shooting script: Godard famously wrote the script in an exercise book, apparently making it up as he went along. Other tropes, now commonplace in modern filmmaking, like direct address to camera and wild shot changes with no concern for continuity editing, were radical and fresh at the time.

New Wave films belonged to the postwar generation. In fact the term New Wave was originally used as a title for the massive audience survey, commissioned by *L'Express* in 1957, of the young generation and their attitudes. It was only in 1959 at Cannes that the label was applied to the new films and their young directors. It could be argued, then, that in France the films merged with the audiences – films like *The 400 Blows* and *Breathless* shot on the streets, and in the cafés and apartments of Paris had a documentary immediacy, anchored in the real or desired experiences of the 1960s spectator. In this respect, as de Baecque has argued, despite the right wing anarchist label attached to the early New Wave, the filmmakers did speak to the new generation in radical political ways because they captured the feel of the time:

A way of filming, of lighting, of locating places, of moving bodies which seizes politics precisely where it could not be captured by traditional films: in the youth of the time as seen through a personal style and perspective . . . able to grasp its time because it was uncomfortable with it . . . the New Wave does not illustrate its time, it captures it and offers an uncomfortable commentary on it. And this constitutes its politics.⁴²

In Britain the popularity of the New Wave rested firstly on *The 400 Blows*, and then on *Breathless* and *Jules et Jim*. Announced by the Academy as the most eagerly awaited film of the Nouvelle Vague, *Breathless* did not arrive until July 1961, a whole fifteen months after its release in France. By this time it carried a lot of cultural baggage, including Berlin prize for Best Director, Jean Vigo prize, and impressive box office sales of 450,000 in France, as well as international critical praise for its mix of modernist innovations and cinéma vérité images. Perhaps adding to its cultural cachet, it had also provoked the moral disapproval of conservative and Catholic circles in France.

Alexander Walker in 1998 recalled the Academy press screening when its impact 'stunned us conventional critics' with its heady mixture of high and low culture, although Walker felt it 'owed more to Sartre than to Chandler.' When Hoellering announced the accidental omission of the credits from the print and that he was unclear as to whether they should go at the beginning or the end, Walker facetiously

⁴¹ Ibid., 106-107.

⁴² De Baecque, 2012, 133.

suggested that they should go in the middle.⁴³ This anecdote chimes with Godard's much quoted dictum: 'A story should have a beginning, a middle and an end but not necessarily in that order'.⁴⁴

In her *Observer* review Penelope Gilliatt described *Breathless* as 'the most original, insolently gifted and shattering work the young French directors have produced'.⁴⁵ Most reviews did pay tribute to the energy, vitality, and cool youth appeal of the film and its stars, Jean Seberg and newcomer Jean-Paul Belmondo. Its fragmented, self-reflexive collage style with its free use of the cinematic signs of the Hollywood crime thriller was seen as another marker of Godard's modernist cinematic style.

There were, however, dissenting views from those who still espoused humanist values in film criticism. Ernest Betts was not alone in voicing objections to its amoral tone: 'I don't know how this film – entirely without scruple or morals – passed the censor. Perhaps he thinks it is a work of art'.⁴⁶ Nina Hibbin objected to the lack of a social dimension saying 'The boy rejects the false in society but also work, family, social roots and every known political, social and cultural standard'.⁴⁷ And this concern about the lack of the social was more fully analysed by Jacques Siclier in an article published in *Sight and Sound*:

Most of them have resolutely turned their backs on social reality . . . political theories of right or left are meaningless, as are moral and social values; women are easy objects for physical love but are not to be trusted; there exists no other ideal than the *acte gratuite*.⁴⁸

Breathless ran at the Academy from July to September 1961, supported by the British anti-apartheid documentary *Let My People Go*, directed by John Krish with footage secretly shot in South Africa. Distributed by British Lion, the subtitled version of *Breathless* was passed X with no cuts but, when in October the dubbed version was presented to the Board, cuts were made. This distinction, often implemented between arthouse and popular releases, will be discussed more fully in the section on censorship. It was shown in 130 British cinemas over the course of two years and returned £8,300, less than the James Bond movie *From Russia with Love* earned in a week at a West End cinema.⁴⁹

Jules et Jim came to the Cameo Poly in May 1962. By this time two Truffaut films

⁴³ BFI Press Cuttings, *A Bout de Souffle*, *Evening Standard*, 26/11/98.

⁴⁴ This was apparently Godard's reply to Clouzot's expression of frustration at the 1962 Cannes Festival.

⁴⁵ BFI Press Cuttings, *A Bout de Souffle*, *Observer*, 9/7/61.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, *The People*, 9/7/61.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, *Daily Worker*, 8/7/61.

⁴⁸ *S&S*, vol. 30, no. 3, Summer 1961, 120.

⁴⁹ *F&F*, February 1964, 46.

had screened in Britain. *The 400 Blows*, after its success at Cannes, was shown at the Cork Festival in September 1959 before coming to the LFF in October. Truffaut attended both the gala screening and the commercial premiere at the Curzon in March 1960. Richard Roud, his London host and guide played a prominent role in getting him and the New Wave recognised by the BFI and the art film world of London. Truffaut also formed a good relationship with Kenneth Rive of Gala Films who distributed most of his films in this period.⁵⁰ His next film, *Shoot the Pianist/Tirez sur le pianiste* was shown at the 1960 Festival but was not successful, either critically or commercially. Ironically, with its shifts of tone and tempo, Coutard's informal camerawork, and its innovative use of music, this was Truffaut's true New Wave film.

Jules et Jim had more popular commercial appeal, with its captivating star, Jeanne Moreau, hit song by Bassiak, and musical score by Georges Delerue. The story was daring, a doomed triangular romance which spanned twenty tumultuous years of European history, from the *Belle Epoque* to the 1930s. Stylistically bold, it used newsreel footage, freeze frames, wipes, and a voiceover narration. Coutard's camerawork was as fluid and immediate as ever, on occasion using the camera on a bicycle to create movement.

An X, with no cuts from the British censor, *Jules et Jim* was controversial for the time in its daring portrayal of a *ménage à trois*, so much so that the French censors, because of its 'indecenty', had confined it to the over-18s. Despite the period setting, it spoke eloquently to the contemporary generation about sexual freedom and honesty. Not the least of its attractions was Jeanne Moreau. The sheer vitality of her performance created the definitive image of modern femininity, despite the fact that the narrative casts her as a femme fatale. The discreet makeup, the understated clothes, the dark hair as well as the fact that she was older, sexually emancipated, and cultured, contributed to the distinctive modernity of her image.⁵¹

Jules et Jim is the European film that lingers most in memories of 1960s cinemagoing. For the majority of the respondents to my survey, *Cinema Memories*, it was by far the most memorable film of the 1960s. Some made specific references to its impact. Roger Blackmore, for example, brought up in sheltered suburban Surrey, recalls seeing it in Purley as a sixth former. He was impressed with the free sexual behaviour in this new and foreign adult world, and he fell in love with Jeanne Moreau: 'I fancied her, she was so dam sexy, a woman in control'.⁵² Others, like Jenny Woodhouse, enjoyed the style of the film and the sense of liberation: 'They gave me a

⁵⁰ For a discussion of the importance of personal networking between directors and contacts in major cities across the world, see de Baecque and Toubiana, 1999, 149-150

⁵¹ Sellier, 2008, 186-192.

⁵² Roger Blackmore, *Cinema Memories* survey, 30/4/15.

sense of the kinds of style I wanted to emulate e.g. *Jules et Jim* was a much more exciting view of life than the northern lower-middle class culture I grew up in'.⁵³

Breathless and *Jules et Jim* were culturally valued films. But what role did the New Wave as a whole play in British film culture? From today's vantage point we see films like *Hiroshima mon amour* and *Breathless* through the lens of their subsequent canonization. But, as Lucy Mazdon and Catherine Wheatley have discussed, the long term historical influence of New Wave films has outweighed their overall critical reception at the time.⁵⁴ They did not do all that well at the British box office and moreover tended to take between six and eighteen months to be shown in Britain. As Nowell-Smith has pointed out, critical discussions about the New Wave were well ahead of audience experiences in the provinces, so that when Siclier wrote in *Sight and Sound* in Summer 1961 about the end of the New Wave, most readers had not yet seen the films.⁵⁵

Of the estimated 160 plus New Wave films made in France, only relatively few were distributed in Britain. *Monthly Film Bulletin* carried reviews of the following, which are listed by their distribution titles, some in French and some in English: 1959, Claude Chabrol's *Les cousins* and Louis Malle's *Les Amants/The Lovers* and in 1960 Truffaut's *The 400 Blows*, Resnais' *Hiroshima mon amour*, Malle's *Lift to the Scaffold*, and Marcel Camus' *Black Orpheus*. In 1961 numbers swelled to include Truffaut's *Shoot the Pianist*, Astruc's *One Life and Shadows of Adultery*, Chabrol's *Les Bonnes Femmes* and *Web of Passion*, two films which starred Seberg, *Playtime* and *A Taste of Love*, Pierre Kast's *Love is When You Make It*, Peter Brook's *Moderato cantabile*, and Philippe de Broca's *Infidelity* and *Playing at Love*. By 1962 numbers went down again: they included Jacques Demy's *Lola*, Resnais' *Last Year in Marienbad*, Truffaut's *Jules et Jim*, *Chronique d'un été* directed by Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin, and Jacques Rivette's *Paris Nous Appartient*.⁵⁶

Box office success, however, is not the only way of measuring the impact and legacy of the French New Wave whose films have remained cultish with university students and considered cool by young audiences throughout the sixties and even up to the present day. Indeed, perhaps the most important impact of the New Wave was its influence on film criticism and filmmaking. Nowell-Smith's history of 1960s cinema bracketed the British and the French New Waves together in interesting ways, arguing that their joint importance lay in the focus of critical attention and the fact that they

⁵³ Jenny Woodhouse, *Cinema Memorise* survey, 18/3/13.

⁵⁴ Mazdon and Wheatley, 2013, 133-134.

⁵⁵ Nowell-Smith, 2010, 118.

⁵⁶ There were also numbers of what *MFB* called 'New Wave bandwagons' like *Affaire d'une nuit* distributed in Britain by Bargate in 1962 and featuring a mix of sex, Paris and the Algerian War.

shared a common project as the first concerted attempts since Italian neorealism to create a new and different cinema.⁵⁷ British New Wave films such as *Room at the Top*, *Look Back in Anger*, and *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, with their documentary style location shooting and naturalistic acting were very much part of the international wave of the new art cinema. Tony Richardson's films in particular, especially *A Taste of Honey* and *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*, showed the influence of the French New Wave. What made these films distinctively British, however, was their roots in the Angry Young Man literature of the time. The plays and novels of the new literary movement were often set in working class, northern milieus, locations which Reisz, Richardson and Anderson with their Free Cinema documentary background, were eminently qualified to portray. And, like their New Wave counterparts, they had also been involved in groundbreaking film criticism which championed the filmmaker as author in the 1950s. The British New Wave films won festival prizes including Best Actress at Cannes for Simone Signoret in *Room at the Top* and for Rita Tushingham in *A Taste of Honey*. *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* won the Golden Bear at Berlin and was seen by an audience of 15,000 at the Moscow Film Festival. British audiences were also receptive to the new realist style and the films did well on the circuits as well as the independent networks. It is tempting to think that a more enlightened distribution system in Britain may well have made more of the crossover appeal of the two new waves.

4.3 The big budget art film: *La dolce vita* and *Rocco and his Brothers*

Both Fellini's *La dolce vita* and Visconti's *Rocco and His Brothers* were big budget Italo-French co-productions, both had international casts dubbed into Italian, and both were aimed at an international audience which, it was hoped, would bridge art cinema and popular appeal.

La dolce vita won the Palme d'Or by only one vote at Cannes in 1960. Some members of the jury favoured *L'avventura* but Georges Simenon, the president of the jury, persuaded Henry Miller to vote for Fellini's film.⁵⁸ It had a mixed reception from the audience and when Fellini went up to receive the award there were boos and whistles.⁵⁹ By the time of the making of *La dolce vita* Fellini was already an award winning director with worldwide distribution for his films. This explains why he was able to obtain financial backing for a film whose budget ballooned to \$1.6 million, one of the most expensive Italian films ever made and, with a running time of nearly three

⁵⁷ Nowell-Smith, 2008, 132.

⁵⁸ Kezich, 2006, 213.

⁵⁹ Balio, 2010, 190.

hours, one of the longest.

The narrative, like a series of short stories, was modernist in structure with a distinctly anti-heroic hero, a gossip journalist, played by matinée idol Marcello Mastroianni on a picaresque journey through the dark underbelly of the decadent but glamorous world of Rome's rich café society.

Its reception in Italy revealed the political power of cinema in Italian culture: society was violently split in its response. The clergy and right wing newspapers condemned the portrayal of homosexuality, decadence, and corruption as filth, as well as an attack on the prestige of Rome. The left, not hitherto fans of Fellini, sprang to the film's defence in the face of the onslaught. An audience of 2,000 turned out for a public debate in Rome where it was praised by Moravia and Pasolini.⁶⁰ Most importantly, it was a commercial success, topping the box office in Italy in 1960/61, and eventually grossing over \$19 million at the US box office, where even the subtitled version did well on the general circuits.

Despite its length, it was a popular success in Britain and grossed £100,000. The subtitled film opened in London in December 1960, at both the Columbia West End and the Curzon, and the dubbed version got its Northern premiere relatively speedily at the Regal Manchester in April 1961. Fellini asked John Francis Lane, special correspondent for *Films and Filming* in Rome, to work with Columbia on the dubbing. Two prestigious English actors, Kenneth Haigh and John le Mesurier took the lead male roles but, according to Lane, all the English cast were uncredited because dubbing was not at that time good for an actor's reputation.⁶¹ In his vivid 2013 memoir, *To Each His Own Dolce Vita*, Lane was frank about the weaknesses of the dubbed version where, despite his intelligent translation and the quality of the English performances, there were significant problems in the synching of the dialogue. To make matters worse, Columbia insisted that most of the dialogue should be delivered in the so-called mid-Atlantic accent.⁶²

La dolce vita, excessive, overblown, and surreal, but at the same time firmly located in the new secular, post-austerity world, is another example of a zeitgeist film which embodied the concerns and values of its time. And the new Rome, with its decadent aristocrats, sexual licentiousness, and celebrity culture, along with its mass media appeal fed by the paparazzi, is represented as simultaneously attractive and repellent.

La dolce vita was sexually explicit for its time and was given an X certificate

⁶⁰ For a full account of the film's reception in Italy, see Kezich, 2006, 207 – 212.

⁶¹ *F&F*, June 1961, 30.

⁶² Lane, 2013, 185-201.

because of the very long orgy scene, promiscuous lovemaking, and 'a few queers'. Some cuts were made in the orgy scene and certain subtitles, including 'Tito shall initiate you' and 'no holds barred', were deleted from the trailer.⁶³ When it was released countrywide in both subtitled and dubbed versions, additional cuts in the orgy sequence were made in the dubbed version as well as a toning down of the language. Even so, according to one examiner, 'Nothing like this has been seen before in an English language version'.⁶⁴

Certain iconic shots of the film, like the opening one of the statue of Christ dangling from a helicopter over the city or Anita Ekberg in the Trevi Fountain have passed into film history. And so too has the term paparazzi and the rarely translated Italian phrase *La dolce vita*. The memories of one British IMDb user bears witness to the lasting power of the film and the poetry of its title:

I remember watching this film which was being shown at a foreign film theatre, on a rainy day, whilst waiting for a train and being at a loss for something to do to occupy the few hours I had to wait. I sat entranced, not being able to understand a single word, but able to follow the film using my imagination. This was 43 years ago! Since then, I often use the term 'la dolce vita' in conversation. I guess you could say that this film had a great impact on me as a youth and has stayed with me. My grandchildren have asked 'what is la dolce vita grandad?' and I reply 'the sweet life my child, the sweet life.'⁶⁵

Another high prestige Franco-Italian co-production, *Rocco and His Brothers* was released in Italy in 1960. Visconti, a long standing supporter of the Communist Party, displayed his neorealist roots more openly than Fellini, although both films were essentially about the shock of modernity. *Rocco* was a contemporary social portrait of the huge movement from rural south to metropolitan north where peasant migrants were being recruited to help build Italy's economic miracle. A portrait of working class Milan of the early 1960s, it was also an intense family melodrama which traced the disintegration of a southern family in high operatic style.

Like the reception of *La dolce vita* the film caused a split in Italy. It was deliberately bypassed for the Golden Lion at Venice, for which slight a furious Visconti turned down the second prize. It is true that at the Venice screening the audience was shocked by the graphic detail of two scenes in particular, the rape and later the murder of Nadia, the prostitute who became the lover of both Rocco and his brother Simone and was the cause of the tragic rivalry between them. The film was seized by

⁶³ Mai Harris to Mr Crofts, 14/10/60, BBFC file: *La Dolce Vita*.

⁶⁴ Examiner's report, October 1960, BBFC file: *La Dolce Vita*.

⁶⁵ Chelm, 2005.

the police in Italy and only released on condition that these scenes were cut.⁶⁶ Despite that setback the film did very well in Italy and came third at the box office after *La dolce vita* and *Ben Hur*. In New York its joint release, in arthouse and grindhouse, illustrated its dual appeal as sensational sex melodrama and social comment. It did, however, turn out to be a commercial failure in the USA, partly due to the heavy cuts imposed by the distributors.

In Britain, as the rape and murder scenes had already been cut by the Italian authorities, no further cuts were made by the BBFC. Consequently, when the *MFB* review referred to its cutting by the censor, BFI Director James Quinn had to apologise for the inaccuracy.⁶⁷ It opened at the Cameo Poly and the Cameo Royal simultaneously. As in New York, the film was targeted at different audiences from the beginning. The Cameo Royal had lurid posters like 'Love! Murder! Rape! Passion!' whilst the publicity outside the Cameo Poly used sober, unsensational publicity. Basil Clavering, who owned both cinemas, explained the need for enticing some audiences with racy descriptions, arguing: 'The plain fact is that you've got two sorts of public in two areas. And you have to appeal to them by different means'.⁶⁸

Rocco and his Brothers was distributed by Regal Films International outside of the main circuits. Two contrasting pieces of evidence highlight the complexities of the film's reception. One is a photograph of its screening at the Stoll in Newcastle in January 1962. The Stoll was the only cinema in a theatre circuit which, like other independents at the time, showed a mix of horror, sex, and French comedies, along with the best continental films. The photograph shows two protesters, with a bemused commissioner looking on, calling for it to be banned on the basis of its immorality.⁶⁹ The other is Christine Gledhill's memories of the cultural and political significance of such a film for a student in the early 1960s:

Then I went to Leeds University to read English, and in my second year the one lecture programme I went to consistently (I was very contemptuous of the other lecturers!) was Arnold Kettle (Marxist and Communist Party Member) on the history of the English novel...which was my first encounter with Marxism and I was fascinated. One day he came into the lecture hall and said: 'The novel today is dead: go down to the Odeon and see *Rocco and His Brothers*,' which I duly did. Much of the audience walked out, but I stuck it out, a bit nonplussed.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Rohdie, 1992, 70-74.

⁶⁷ Trevelyan to Quinn and reply 8+9/11/61, BBFC file: *Rocco and His Brothers*.

⁶⁸ BFI Press Cuttings, *Rocco e i suoi fratelli*, *Daily Herald*, 11/10/61.

⁶⁹ Manders, 2005, 124-125.

⁷⁰ Christine Gledhill, *Cinema Memories* survey, 2016. Also quoted in Chapter 6.

4.4 Sex, art, and censorship

The Old Bailey trial in 1960 of Penguin Books for publishing the unexpurgated *Lady Chatterley's Lover* can be seen as a gateway into modernity in Britain. A trial of social and moral values, it had a profound impact on society in general as well as on censorship of the arts in particular. On the one side was traditional, male, upper class society as revealed by the judge's infamous question to the jury as to whether they would like their wives or servants to get hold of the book. On the other side was the new wave of liberal humanitarian impulses which were to spearhead the reforms of the so-called permissive society of the 1960s, like the legalization of homosexuality and abortion and reform of the divorce laws. Penguin were proposing to make the book available at 3/6d, within easy reach of women and the working class, a departure which was seen by traditionalists as a threat to the social order. The victory of Penguin Books was a victory for modern liberal society, and for freedom of expression in literature and the theatre where the stifling control by the Lord Chamberlain was soon abolished.

There were also calls for much needed reform in film censorship. Derek Hill's influential article, 'The Habit of Censorship', in *Encounter* July 1960 was a scathing attack on the 'crippling stupidity' of the film censorship system in Britain. As Hill described it, this was a system which cut over half of films released or imported each year, which did not have to give details of cuts or bans, and which had no written codes for films to conform to. Hill did manage to list fourteen 'unexpressed principles', deduced from piecing together details of cuts or bans.⁷¹ And he cited recent examples of cuts in X films including *Smiles of a Summer Night*, where a glimpse of nipple, so brief that Bergman had trouble finding the offending shot, had to be removed. A more serious example was Visconti's *The Wanton Countess* which was heavily cut: the Board even refused to allow the original title *Senso* or its English translation, *Sensuality*, to be used.⁷² Hill had to admit that there had been progress in recent years, including the granting of an X to *Hiroshima mon amour* without a single cut. One reason for this, he argued, was the influence of television where 'it was found that homosexuals, nudists, prostitutes, striptease dancers, and the victims of frigidity and sexual assault were able to appear and talk freely on television without a single complaint from the watching millions', suggesting in fact that the Board was not up to date with modern public opinion.⁷³

Elsewhere, debates played out in public by the critics epitomised the social

⁷¹ Hill, 1960, 56-59.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 59.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 59.

tensions between those who held traditional morality dear and those who championed sexual freedom, often equated with artistic freedom. Louis Malle's controversial second film *Les Amants* provides a case study. Distributed as *The Lovers* it was about a bored contemporary woman, played by Jeanne Moreau, with a rich but inattentive husband and a polo playing lover, who meets a young man who stirs her deeply. The last twenty minutes of the film is given over to a romantic and sensuous love scene with the young man, in which the camera focuses on Moreau's face, apparently in orgasm. The shock value was partly to do with this unusually frank scene, but it was also partly to do with the unapologetic nature of her adultery: the desertion of her husband and daughter was a radical rupture with her social milieu, and in filmic terms upset the usual conventions of the fate of adulterous women.

In November 1959 a full-page ad for the film at the Cameo Poly appeared in *Kine Weekly* entitled 'The Verdict: a Knock-Out'. In two columns provocatively called 'On My Left' and 'On My Right' were ranged reviewers with contrasting views of the film. The 'left' views, in the majority, which approved of the film included C.A. Lejeune (*Observer*), Dilys Powell (*Sunday Times*), Ernest Betts (*People*), David Robinson (*Financial Times*), Alex Walker (*Birmingham Post*) and Jympson Harman (*Evening News*). The 'right' views, which disapproved, consisted of John Waterman (*Evening Standard*), Josh Billings (*Kine Weekly*), Leonard Mosley (*Daily Express*), and Campbell Dixon (*Daily Telegraph*). Typical of the positive quotations were Powell's 'One of the few genuine love scenes in the history of the cinema', or Walker's 'Some called it pornographic. Some called it chaste. It is notable.' And typical of the negative was Waterman's 'A detestable immoral little piece' or Billings' 'The English subtitles are adequate but not much of its tasteless action needs explaining'. The ad also included the copy of a telegram from Basil Clavering, the exhibitor, to Mondial, the distributor.

The Lovers' smashed every record at Cameo Poly since the theatre turned continental 12 years ago in the first week an unheard of 96% capacity and many hundreds being turned away added difficulty of patrons sitting through the programme twice . . .⁷⁴

This ad was illustrative of more than the film's undoubted success with audiences (according to ads in *Continental Film Review*, in May 1960 it appeared in 19 cinemas).⁷⁵ It also represented the contemporary battles over censorship between those who thought that X meant adults could make up their own minds and those who

⁷⁴ *KW*, 12/11/59, 19.

⁷⁵ *CFR*, May 1960, 2. These were Classic Chelsea, Globe Putney, Paris Staines, Standard Hackney, Regal Purley, Plaza Leyton, Broadway Hammersmith, Empire Islington, Lido Ealing, State Leytonstone, Elyseum Swansea, Tatler Bristol, Granada East Ham, Century Woolwich, Ambassador Stoke Newington, Forum Bath, Tatler Leeds, Queens Bayswater, and Essoldo Belmont.

thought that society still needed protection. Britain was still generally a puritanical society when it came to sexual imagery. This was shown by the row over the poster which featured Rodin's *The Kiss* and which was banned by London Underground on the grounds that it was ripe for defacement.⁷⁶ The film had caused a sensation at Venice in 1958 where the Italian Catholic influence was strong and had prevented the film getting the Golden Lion. It also shocked conservative France, although the Paris critics were ecstatic about the newness of the sexual images. It came to the Cameo Poly a year later, when the BBFC made about 90 seconds of cuts, mainly of the apparent cunnilingus in the love scene, 'one of the Board's rough interruptions', according to Hill.⁷⁷ John Trevelyan, the new Secretary of the BBFC, recalled in his autobiography, with typical deference to high culture, that the cuts were tricky since the scene was cut to the music of Brahms, so he had to go to Paris to work on this with Malle.⁷⁸

The controversy over *The Lovers* and Hill's attack on the Board in fact came in a period of transition towards a more liberal approach, marked by the appointment of Trevelyan in 1958. The success of British New Wave films was also instrumental in extending the boundaries: *Room at the Top* marked a turning point in what was allowed in terms of sex, and whilst words like sod, Christ, and bugger were still not allowed in *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, the film did feature an older woman enjoying adultery, as well as discussion of abortion.

Trevelyan showed a distinct preference for auteur films, especially foreign art films, which were confined to the specialist cinemas and a middle class clientele which, it was felt, had more refined tastes and could be trusted. He justified the A certificate for *Mitsou* by declaring that 'people able to understand foreign languages are not likely to be harmed by anything said'.⁷⁹ This was in reference to a conversation in French where a girl discusses the number of orgasms she has enjoyed during one night. He elaborated:

We used at this time to be more generous to sex-scenes in films with foreign language dialogue than to films with English dialogue since the former usually had a more limited distribution, normally only to art theatres, and were less likely to produce criticism, but I used to ask for a 'gentleman's agreement' giving us the opportunity of reviewing a film if it should get a wider distribution.⁸⁰

His distinction between works of art done with 'integrity and sincerity' and

⁷⁶ This was reported in several newspapers; see BFI Press Cuttings on *Les Amants*.

⁷⁷ Hill, 1960, 59.

⁷⁸ Trevelyan, 1973, 106-107.

⁷⁹ Hill, 1960, 59.

⁸⁰ Trevelyan, 1973, 108-109.

commercial products produced for 'sensationalist exploitation' was resented by some in the commercial industry.⁸¹ Roy Ward Baker, director of a series of Rank dramas in the 1950s, for example, remembers his dealings with Trevelyan over censorship with some bitterness:

Trevelyan had that schoolmasterly habit of pigeon-holing people. If you were in the box marked 'art cinema' you could tackle anything, however controversial: sex, violence, politics, religion – anything. If you were in 'commercial cinema' you faced obstruction and nit-picking all the way . . . he was a sinister, mean hypocrite, treating his favourites with nauseating unctuousness.⁸²

Films of quality, then, were judged by the BBFC on their cultural capital, accumulated through the festival prizes, the critics' reviews, and the reputation of the director. The report on *L'avventura*, for example, mentioned the special jury award at Cannes, the British award, and *The Times*' description of the film as a masterpiece, and went on to say:

Bearing in mind the length of two and a half hours and the fact that it certainly won't go beyond the specialist houses we will not have to make any cuts. Publicity will 'aim at prestige' and will not exploit the film as a sexy X. Title will remain as it is.⁸³

Similar arguments were made for *Jules et Jim* and *Viridiana* which won the Palme d'Or in 1961, both of which were passed X without cuts. With *Fires on the Plain*, however, Ichikawa's film about the Japanese army in the final stages of the War, the censors recognised its artistic merit but were worried about potential sensationalising of the more gruesome aspects of the story, especially the cannibalism. Cuts were discussed but it was decided that it should be passed intact because of its quality and integrity and because it was about the futility and degradation of war.⁸⁴ The main concern was about the publicity. Clavering had to submit the Cameo Royal front of house advert to Trevelyan who replied, 'I am glad you have not taken the opportunity to publicise the rather revolting aspects of this fine film'.⁸⁵

Wider distribution, as admitted by Trevelyan, mandated a stricter policy, as evidenced by the cuts imposed on the dubbed versions of *Breathless* and *La dolce vita*. But BBFC examiners were increasingly coming round to the view that adult audiences could be trusted. *Never on Sunday*, about a Greek prostitute, was given an X but the examiner who observed audience reaction at Belsize Park Odeon was entranced by the experience:

⁸¹ Hill, 1960, 60.

⁸² Ward Baker, 2000, 93.

⁸³ Reader's report, 17/11/60, BBFC file: *L'avventura*.

⁸⁴ Examiner's report, 29/12/61, BBFC file: *Fires on the Plain*.

⁸⁵ Trevelyan to Clavering, 29/1/62, BBFC file: *Fires on the Plain*.

This large cinema was completely full and I have seldom seen an audience enjoy a programme more. It is about a prostitute but played with great delicacy and gaiety. I wonder now with three or four cuts we should give it an A.⁸⁶

An interesting development in exhibition, particular to this period, which directly related to censorship was experimentation with club cinemas. Kenneth Rive came up with the idea of a chain of members only film clubs which would be excluded from censorship and could therefore show banned films, or the complete versions of films cut by the censor, all with an age restriction of 18. He opened his first club at the La Continentale in 1960 with a fanfare, showing *The Wild One*, banned by the BBFC since 1954, and previously unseen in London. Ever the publicist, he even invited John Trevelyan to open it. Of the other films announced *Camp of Violence*, a brutal prison drama had been banned, whilst *Razzia sur la chnouf*, *La Neige était sale*, *And Quiet Flows the Don*, and *The Savage Eye* were all revivals and shown for the first time in the uncut versions.

From the beginning Rive insisted that his clubs were not about 'dirty films'; the early adverts explained that the films were chosen as 'an indication and example of modern filmic trends' and the by-line proclaimed: 'If it's sensation you're seeking - DON'T JOIN!' ⁸⁷ Magazines like *Sight and Sound* initially approved of Rive's initiative and his aims were endorsed by Trevelyan who later recalled that Rive did not at first set out to show sex films but rather films of quality in their complete form. He told Rive that he might find himself short of films as the Board was becoming more liberal.⁸⁸ And this, of course, is exactly what eventually happened.

The early programming of the clubs was indeed an interesting mix of 'modern filmic trends', thrown together by censorship. Screenings included a number of the now widespread 'juvenile delinquent' films in the mould of Brando and James Dean: *The Cola Game* in which Japanese teenagers played a dangerous sexual competition, *Naked Youth* (original title *Cruel Story of Youth*) by Oshima in which two alienated and amoral teenagers perpetrate crimes, and *Teenage Wolfpack*, a more violent and extreme German version of *The Wild One*. But the clubs also showed the uncut version of Marie Seton's reworking of Eisenstein's Mexican footage, *Time in the Sun*, Kobayashi's war epic *Human Condition*, and *The Game of Love*, directed by *Cahiers* critic Jacques Doniol-Valcroze. Rive's programming had always been eclectic, which led *Sight and Sound* to call it 'chain store division which blends trash with quality films'.⁸⁹ However, by 1962 it seems that Gala club audiences had voted

⁸⁶ Examiner's notes, 24/1/60, BBFC file: *Never on Sunday*.

⁸⁷ *CFR*, September 1960, 3.

⁸⁸ Trevelyan, 1973, 122.

⁸⁹ *S&S*, vol. 31, no. 3, Summer 1962, 107.

with their feet, and programming changed to almost all sex films. Michael Ratcliffe, special reviewer of clubs for *Films and Filming*, expressed the view that was to become increasingly prevalent amongst cultural commentators in the 1960s, that there were two film cultures at the clubs, and that they had little in common:

Classy audiences won't cross the tracks to see *Joyhouse of Yokohama* and the *Joyhouse* crowd are annoyed when they buy tickets for *Time in the Sun* and realise it is not a nudie.⁹⁰

4.5 The risky business of foreign language films

The Films and Filming Survey

Robin Baker of *Films and Filming* published an extended survey of foreign language films in the February 1964 edition. Titled 'The Foreign Papers' it consisted largely of interviews with key personnel in distribution and exhibition who used their recent experiences to reflect on the problems of the foreign film business.⁹¹

The distributors attested to the fragile state of the business. Kenneth Rive, who handled by far the largest number of foreign imports, reported that unless you got onto the circuits you were unlikely to get 50 bookings for an average film. Unusually, he was looking forward to reaching 750 to 800 bookings for *Mondo cane*, the Italian exploitation documentary, which was refused a certificate from the BBFC but passed by many local authorities.⁹² The X certificate, according to Rive, was easily the best way to sell a continental film, but even so takings were generally small. David Kingsley, Chairman of British Lion, backed up this claim with some examples of income: the German film *The Bridge* played 135 cinemas in a dubbed version with a gross of £6,000; Godard's *The Little Soldier* played 131 situations, using only two prints and grossed just under £6,000; and *Battle Inferno*, dubbed and re-edited, played 1,174 bookings and grossed £20,000. But with the extra expenses associated with foreign films, the average profit from a non-circuit release was rarely more than £10,000.⁹³ Successful foreign films like *La dolce vita* made £100,000 but, as discussed, circuit releases of foreign films were very rare. And even if a distributor gained a circuit release, profit was not guaranteed: Vadim's film starring Bardot, *Le Repos du guerrier*, distributed as *Warrior's Rest* after Trevelyan rejected Rive's saucier title, *Love on the Pillow*, had a good deal with Rank but it died.⁹⁴

In terms of exhibition one of the big problems pointed out in the survey was the paucity of screening spaces outside of London. Baker estimated that there were no

⁹⁰ *F&F*, November 1962, 43.

⁹¹ Baker, 1964, 41-61.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ Trevelyan insisted that the direct translation of the film's title *Warrior's Rest* be used.

more than 25 specialised art cinemas nationwide, making the distribution of foreign films a risky business.⁹⁵ In one of the interviews, Basil Clavering who ran the Cameo Poly, explained that one of the problems for the exhibitor was having to pay the advance guarantee, usually several thousand pounds. For example, he paid £5,000 up front for *8½*, which was something of a gamble, since it was running concurrently with the *Continentale*. In fact it turned out to be a big success.

Changes in cinemagoing habits

The state of the foreign language film business should be read in the context of the massive shifts in leisure habits by the early 1960s. Cinema admissions overall suffered a drastic decline from 1,396 million in 1950 to 515 million in 1960 and 415 million in 1962, one result of which was widespread cinema closures. Between 1957 and 1963 over a third of cinemas in the UK went out of business, leaving fewer than 2,500 in operation. These closures imposed a forced abstention on audiences and exacerbated the decline of cinemagoing, already affected by a range of social, cultural, and economic factors which changed leisure tastes. But the major factor in the decline in cinema attendance was the massive growth of television sales from 4.5 million sets in 1955 to 10 million by 1959, and the spreading of commercial TV to all regions from the mid fifties.

Gloomy prognoses about the threat to cinema of the increasing number of films on TV seemed justified. Houston pointed out that the BBC's Saturday night film – any film – could count on a much larger audience than for all new films showing in all cinemas that week.⁹⁶ Even foreign art films on television were attracting relatively big audiences: 5 million watched *Alexander Nevsky* and *Ivan the Terrible* and 4 million *Lady with the Little Dog*, numbers unthinkable for the specialised cinemas.

Changes in the social composition of the cinema audience affected production as well as distribution and exhibition. The habitual family audience for cinema was now gone. The new audience was young and largely working class, with 60% of those over 16 coming from the 16 to 24 year age group, whilst the proportion of older audiences was declining with age. More horror and comedy films were made for these new audiences, whilst families were being lured out of their domestic viewing environments by big budget Hollywood spectacles like *Ben Hur*, *Spartacus*, and *South Pacific*. Italian sword and sandal spectaculars dubbed into English or more likely American, with luscious colour, huge sets, and widescreen, were in this category.⁹⁷ *Hercules Unchained*, the most successful, starred Steve Reeves, the American

⁹⁵ Ibid., 50.

⁹⁶ See Houston, 1963, for a full discussion of cinema audiences of the early 1960s.

⁹⁷ These big budget epics were usually co-productions: *Hercules Unchained* and *The Giant of Marathon* were Italian-French productions and *Last Days of Pompeii* was Italian, Spanish and West German.

muscle man and featured epic battles with thousands of extras and feats of superhuman strength by Hercules. Heavily promoted by producer Joseph E. Levine and shown on the ABC circuit, *Hercules Unchained* came third at the British box office in 1960. It was followed by circuit releases of other epics starring Reeves, including *The Last Days of Pompeii* and *The Giant of Marathon*.

Otherwise, foreign language films hardly featured on the circuits. *Films and Filming* reported the dramatic statistic that in 1962 the Board of Trade registered 71 British feature films, 117 American, and 131 foreign, but in following year the major circuits released only 7 of these foreign films.⁹⁸

Tati's award-winning *Mon oncle* was distributed nationally by Rank on its main circuit in October 1959. It was subtitled but obviously had a largely visual appeal. Described by Josh Billings as 'a hit in good and high class halls, flagging badly in industrial areas', it did not do well overall. Other foreign films were relegated to the less prestigious National Circuit. *Never on Sunday*, a United Artists release, did very well here as did Pontecorvo's concentration camp melodrama *Kapò*, which was one of the few Gala films to reach the National Circuit. *Destiny of a Man*, Bondarchuk's Second World War film which won top prize at the Moscow Film Festival, was distributed by Rank in a heavily cut and American dubbed version, with no mention in the publicity of the award or the fact that the film was Russian. Several Bardot films, now handled by Columbia, were also given a national release, for example *Babette Goes to War*, *La Parisienne*, *A Woman Like Satan*, and *The Truth* in a special English version made during the film's production.

The Green Mare's Nest, a bawdy Technicolor French rural farce by veteran director Claude Autant Lara was to become something of a cult in the independent cinemas and small circuits across the country, including the Gala clubs where it was advertised as 'the sizzling story that made the milkmaid blush'.⁹⁹ It achieved national success despite the fears of the BBFC examiner who viewed it at the Cameo Royal. He expressed the hope that it would not do the rounds in the provinces, as some people would find it too crude.¹⁰⁰ However, it was spot booked into ABC's B circuit beginning with the Queens Bayswater in October 1960. Other foreign films which appeared successfully on the ABC circuit were the Bardot and Gabin star vehicle *Love is My Profession* in 1959 and De Sica's *Two Women* for which Sophia Loren won the Best Actress at Cannes in 1961. Buñuel's *Island of Shame/La Joven* was distributed by Columbia through Gala and released on the ABC circuit in 1962.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ *F&F*, February 1964, 41.

⁹⁹ *Manchester Evening News* (hereafter, *MEN*), 13/1/62, 2.

¹⁰⁰ Examiner's report, 28/6/60, BBFC File: *The Green Mare's Nest*.

¹⁰¹ Its title was changed from *The Young One*.

Although an English speaking film, it was a Mexican production, and the only Buñuel film to get general release in Britain.

Outside the main circuits

The dominance of the capital caused a glaring disparity of provision. London was an international centre of culture with a critical mass of population, where cinemagoers were generally of a higher social class than the rest of the country.¹⁰² It was able to support seven art cinemas which specialised in foreign language films. These cinemas could sustain themselves, given a proportion of successful films with long runs like *8½*, which, according to Basil Clavering, was seen in the Cameo Poly by about 200,000 people in 1963.¹⁰³

The power geometry was such that regional towns and cities could not hope to compete. However, the situation was getting better by the turn of the decade: *The Times* reported in 1959 that most large towns in Britain had a cinema which showed at least occasional films from the continent.¹⁰⁴ There were Cinephones in Birmingham, Edinburgh, Brighton, Liverpool, and Bristol as well as Manchester and London and there were Classics in Chester, Eastbourne, Glasgow, Leeds, Portsmouth, Sheffield, Southampton, and Swindon. A select group of independent art cinemas included Cosmo Glasgow, Cameo Edinburgh, Cambridge Arts, Oxford Scala, Wallasey Liverpool, Paris Brighton, Continentale Kemp Town Brighton, Continental Bournemouth, and Tivoli Dundee. And there was a further group of independent continental cinemas which, like the Cinephones, showed a mix of continental art and sex films including Continental Burnley, Globe Cardiff, Paris Coventry, Continental Oldham, Continental Preston, and the Moulin Rouge Nottingham. Further opportunities for the exhibition of foreign language films were provided by Rive's Gala clubs, discussed above. Started in London, by the Autumn of 1960 Gala clubs had been opened at the Paris Brighton (which premiered Astruc's *La Vie*), Warwick in Warwick, Scala Liverpool, Wicker Sheffield, Plaza Leeds, the Cinephones in Birmingham and Manchester, Ritz Northampton, and Monseigneur Edinburgh.

4.6 What's on? A comparison of London and Manchester

There is considerable nostalgia amongst cinephiles for the early sixties when there was an explosion of interest in both European art film and neglected Hollywood directors, and when you could find films of all descriptions – revivals, foreign language art films, cult films, and obscure directors - by seeking out of the way independent

¹⁰² Lembach, 2003, 39-40. He quotes a later survey of 1970 which put 30% of regular cinemagoers in the AB social class category, as opposed to 14% in the rest of the country.

¹⁰³ *F&F*, February 1964, 54.

¹⁰⁴ Lembach, 2003, 13.

cinemas in the city. This section starts with the personal mappings of two such cinephiles and goes on to a comparative study of exhibition in London and Manchester based on reviews and listings in London's *What's On* and the *Manchester Evening News*.¹⁰⁵

For writer and filmmaker Iain Sinclair, cinephilia and London were inextricably linked. Films were what brought him to London and what kept him here and his sense of the geography of London was entirely constructed through cinema.¹⁰⁶ His writings placed cinemas within his own psychogeography as well as their local environments and the different webs of transport which linked them:

Navigation of the city depended on finding the places where films were shown. *A Touch of Evil* as the ballast in a double bill at the Paris Pullman, South Kensington... *Breathless* at the Academy in Oxford Street, *L'avventura* loitering on the King's Road and looking so bleached-blond, so painfully composed, even then... Remorseless Bergman, thumb-prints of the absence of God, at the top of a long hill: the Everyman, Hampstead. *Rio Bravo*, a casual pick-up, walking home through Stockwell . . . Two, three films a day. Mostly achieved by way of the Northern Line.¹⁰⁷

For writer and academic Geoffrey Nowell-Smith in Manchester the choice was much more restricted, but there were still considerable opportunities offered by the independent cinemas. In a short *Sight and Sound* article 'Chasing *The Gorgon*', he listed what you needed if you wanted to play the cinephile game in Manchester, basically a telephone along with back numbers of the *Monthly Film Bulletin*, the *Manchester Evening News*, and an *A to Z* of greater Manchester.¹⁰⁸

It is a game evolved originally by provincial moviemanes on short visits to London, played also by Londoners in Paris and Parisians in New York. . . it can also be played at home by the inhabitants of any large city, and in somewhere like Manchester, it can become part of the very fabric of daily life.¹⁰⁹

Nowell-Smith estimated that at least half of the continental films released eventually turned up in one of the 70 cinemas which were advertised in the *Manchester Evening News*, even if the film was a bad print showing only once on a Sunday afternoon, or was badly dubbed, lacerated, and re-titled.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ The circulation of the *Manchester Evening News* ((hereafter MEN) in 1962 was 1,168,000. The circulation of *What's On* is unknown but it was sold widely across London, including at newsagent, kiosks and cinemas.

¹⁰⁶ Sinclair, 2014, 53.

¹⁰⁷ Sinclair, 2006, 3.

¹⁰⁸ Nowell-Smith, 1965, 60.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

London

At the beginning of the sixties the three leading first run arthouse cinemas in London, the Academy, Curzon, and Cameo Poly, continued to share the pick of the major foreign language premieres. *What's On* for March 3 1961, for example, lists Bergman's *So Close to Life* at the Academy, *La dolce vita* at the Curzon and *Mon oncle* at the Cameo Poly, whilst the other major foreign premiere in town was *L'avventura*, showing at the Paris Pullman. Usually the films then moved to a small number of independent cinemas as well as the small chains like Gala and Jacey/Cinephone. In the early 1960s London's independent foreign language cinemas included the State Leytonstone, the Globe Putney, and the Ionic Golders Green. These independents showed films after their first run at the more prestigious specialist cinemas. *Hiroshima mon amour* for example was listed in *What's On*, May 6 1960, as showing at the Globe and also at the State Leytonstone where it was paired with a revival of *Bread, Love and Dreams*.¹¹¹ Other cinemas like the Lido Ealing, Hampstead Playhouse, Regal Hammersmith, and ABC Fulham Road showed a mix of foreign language and English speaking films, Sundays being the favoured day for foreign films. Regular box ads for these cinemas appeared in *What's On*: in the week of 23 September 1960, for example, *Love is My Profession* was advertised at the Globe, *Wild Strawberries* and *Goha* at a Sunday screening at the ABC Fulham Road, and *Les Grandes Familles* with *Mistress du Barry* at the State.

Cameo, the small cinema chain run by Basil Clavering, showed a majority of foreign films although, with the exception of the Cameo Poly and occasionally the Cameo Royal, these were mainly sex films. Cameo adverts were prominent on the contents page of *What's On*, for example the following were advertised on 19 May 1961: *L'avventura* (after its premiere at the Paris Pullman) at the Cameo Poly, *Girls for the Summer* and *Iles aux femmes nues* (both A certificates) at Cameo Royal and a mix of British, American, foreign, sex, or cartoon films at the Victoria, Walthamstow and Windmill Street Cameos. Standing apart, however, was the Cameo Leyton with a foreign language double bill of *The 400 Blows* and *The Cranes Are Flying*.¹¹² The programming of foreign language art films at Leyton was briefly the norm, with the occasional X for sex film; for example in June 1961 a double bill, *Youthful Sinners* and *The Game of Love*, was followed the next week by *Seven Samurai*.

The Classic chain had over twenty cinemas nationally, nine of which were in London. Like Gala and Cameo they had a weekly spread in *What's On*. The Classics

¹¹¹ The State gained a reputation for creative double bills such as *And Quiet Flows the Don* with *Les Amants* or *Los olvidados* and *The Girl Rosemarie*. When it failed as a commercial venture, it was taken over by the State Film Society and run by volunteers until it closed in July 1961. See Mazdon and Wheatley, 2013, 211-212, for an account of academic John Stokes' memories of the State.

¹¹² The cinema closed in 1963, becoming a bingo hall.

were repertory cinemas specialising in revivals, showing films from one or two to seven days. Only a minority were foreign language, and these were never programmed at Christmas or other holiday times. Foreign films were most numerous in 1959 and 1960, with an average of five or six out of twenty or so films shown per week over London. *What's On*, April 24 1959, advertised *Adorable Creatures* at Baker Street, *Throne of Blood* followed by the Soviet version of *Twelfth Night* at Notting Hill Gate, *Street of Shame* at Croydon, *The She Wolves* at Tooting Bec and Stockwell, and the Russian film *The Forty First* at Tooting. From 1961 the proportion of foreign screenings went down, usually to two or three, although a record five were advertised on October 13 1961: *The Lovers* at Baker Street, *Seven Samurai* at Chelsea, *Wages of Fear* at Notting Hill, *The Love Trap* at Tooting Bec and *Republic of Sin*, Buñuel's retitled *La fièvre monte à El Pao*, at Stockwell.

The regular Gala spread of ads in *What's On* shows how extensive Rive's control of foreign language exhibition in London was: La Continentale and Berkeley in Tottenham Court Road were the main venues (Figure 11). But along with the new International Film Theatre in Westbourne Grove and the Classic Hendon, the Cinephones and Jaceys were also listed as partners. Programming overall was a mix of sex films, prizewinning art films, less well known foreign films, and always a sprinkling of Bardot. 25 May 1962 was fairly typical: *Nudes of the World* and *House of Sin* at the Jacey, *World without Shame* and *Violent Ecstasy* at the Cinephone, *The Truth* and *Striptease de Paris* at La Continentale, *Two Women* and *Hiroshima mon amour* at the Berkeley, *La notte* and *The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter* at the International Film Theatre, *Crossing of the Rhine* at the Classic Hendon, with *Afraid to Live* as the Gala club screening.

The London cinema scene became more vibrant when late night films became the norm at art cinemas. By 1962 the Baker Street, Notting Hill, and Chelsea Classics, the Curzon, Paris Pullman, La Continentale, and International Film Theatre all showed late night films. The Academy, as usual, led the way with creative programming: from 1961 late night films were shown every night of the week except Sunday, and the screenings were used to extend rather than repeat the overall offer. In Summer 1961, for example, Hoellering screened *Don Giovanni* in the morning, *Breathless* in the afternoon and evening and the Polish prizewinner *Eroica* late night. *La notte* started as a late night film but due to its popularity was switched to the main slots; from early 1962 for four months the day's programme consisted of *The Queen of Spades* in the morning, *La notte* in the afternoon and evening and *Ugetsu monogatari* late night. The 'alternative' cultural cachet of late night films in the West End is captured by this memory:

I loved everything continental at that time. London was only just beginning to come alive. Foreign language films showed another world. . . and reinforced my adolescent views of romance, clothes, relationships and excitement. . . I was a 'beatnik' in the 60s and on cold Saturday nights loads of us in our dirty duffel coats used to queue at the Academy, sometimes for hours to get into a film. There was also a local suburban cinema in Golders Green called the Ionic and they also showed foreign language films but as it was local it was never as exciting as the Academy.¹¹³

What's On listings covered the whole of London, divided into West End and then the general releases in the North and West, North and East and South. There was also a further listing called Floating Releases, which was a selection of 'revivals and other movies of interest' across the whole of London. Here the assiduous cinephile in July 1962 could find *Breathless* in Richmond, *Fires on the Plain* in Hampstead, *Game of Love* or *Les Bonnes Femmes* in Croydon, *Kapò* in Bayswater or *Torment* in Walthamstow.¹¹⁴

Manchester

Nowell-Smith's article highlighted the opportunities for cinephiles offered by the small independents or chains across Manchester. But he complained that the main continental cinema, the Cinephone in Market Street in the city centre, stuffed its programme with sex films.¹¹⁵ The Cinephone was opened by Jacey as the Continental in 1950, when its owners the Cohens started out with a vision of quality continental films.¹¹⁶ The gala opening of *Les Amants de Vérone*, with the 17 year old Anouk Aimée in attendance had been followed by such films as *Un carnet de bal* and *La Belle et La Bête*, and visiting foreign stars included Anna Magnani, Fernandel, Tati, Louis Jouvet, and Edwige Feuillère. But as the decade wore on there was a shift from arthouse to continental sex films so that by the end of 1962 the 'sexies' accounted for at least half the offer. Three films shown in November 1961 illustrate the mix. *L'avventura*, described by John Stretton, the regular reviewer of *Manchester Evening News*, as 'baffling, infuriating, frustrating and strangely compelling', lasted only a week.¹¹⁷ It was followed by a double bill of Gala films which illustrated Rive's typical marketing ploys: *Call Girls of Rome*, freely translated from the Italian *I piaceri del sabato notte* (*The Pleasures of Saturday Night*), an X which was nevertheless cut

¹¹³ Selma Shrank, *Cinema Memories* survey, 22/07/13. Also quoted in Chapter 6.

¹¹⁴ *What's On* 20/7/62. Films were listed by area, the reader then had to find them under the relevant area listings.

¹¹⁵ Nowell-Smith, 1965, 61.

¹¹⁶ In March 1950 it opened as the Continental until 1952, reverted briefly to being a news theatre, re-opened as the Market Street Cinema. In 1955 it was relaunched as the Cinephone. It closed in January 1974 to make way for the new Arndale Centre.

¹¹⁷ *MEN*, 11/11/61, 2.

by the BBFC, was paired with *The Forbidden Game*, a re-release in a newly dubbed version of the 1952 award winning, *Les Jeux interdits*.

By the late sixties, the Cinephone was described by local cinema historian Derek Southall as 'run down and seedy', with a reputation for attracting the 'dirty mac brigade'.¹¹⁸ This description was confirmed by Ronald Harris who was fourth projectionist from 1967: it seems that the continental sex films had come to define the image of the cinema.¹¹⁹

Earlier in the decade Nowell-Smith had highlighted one of the problems as the potential audience for art films getting lost in the gap between all the press coverage and critical excitement of a film's appearance in London and its eventual screening in Manchester. The 'unfathomable' slowness of the distributors was also a regular complaint of Stretton in his regular Saturday review of the week ahead. He pointed out that the prizewinning Spanish film *Death of a Cyclist*, for example, was first shown at the Academy in June 1956, but only reached Manchester in March 1959 where it was renamed *The Unfaithful*.¹²⁰ Another example was Fellini's popular, prizewinning *Nights of Cabiria* which was at the Cameo Poly in Spring 1958, but took a whole year to reach the Cinephone. Stretton also repeatedly complained about the programming of inappropriate double bills at the Cinephone. For the Christmas period 1960 *The Red Balloon/Le ballon rouge*, a film which was of obvious appeal to children, was paired with the X rated *Caverns of Vice*, about slave trading in Turkey.¹²¹ In 1962 Rossellini's *Il Generale Della Rovere*, 'a film not on any account to be missed' according to Stretton was paired with the nudie *Travelling Light*, an underwater naturist film.¹²²

Unless films were really popular they were taken off after a week, and sometimes even earlier if an audience did not materialise, as was the case with Resnais' *Muriel* which had lasted only three days.¹²³ A short run at the Cinephone seemed to be the fate of many films that started with long runs in London. In April 1959 *Kanal*, advertised at the Cinephone as 'X for extraordinary' to indicate that it was not a sex film, only lasted one week.¹²⁴ The same thing happened to *The Cranes Are Flying* in September, despite positive reviews for both films by Stretton. Other titles on for only one week included the double bill of *Les Cousins* and *Il tetto* in February 1961, *Breathless* in January 1962, *Last Year in Marienbad* in June 1962, and *Jules et Jim*

¹¹⁸ Southall, 1999, 19.

¹¹⁹ Ronald Harris interview 12/06/16.

¹²⁰ *MEN*, 7/3/59, 3.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 24/12/60, 3.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 10/2/62, 2.

¹²³ Nowell-Smith, 1965, 61.

¹²⁴ *MEN*, 11/4/59, 2.

which had its northern premiere in October. Some films, including *The Lovers*, *Shoot the Pianist*, *Kapò*, *La notte* and *Les Liaisons dangereuses* ran for a second week. The longest running Cinephone foreign language successes, like *Nights of Cabiria* and *Two Women*, lasted for four weeks, as did *Love is My Profession*.¹²⁵ But Bardot was popular all over Manchester. *La Vérité/The Truth* ran for two months at the New Oxford in September 1962 and all her films, especially *And Woman . . . Was Created*, re-appeared with regularity.

The most programmed foreign art director at the Cinephone was undoubtedly Bergman, proof that Bergmania affected the whole country and not just London. *Summer with Monika*, advertised as coming straight from the Paris Pullman, ran for one week at the end of February 1959. *Wild Strawberries*, 'not requested but demanded' according to the Cinephone publicity, ran for two weeks in June, followed in December by *A Lesson in Love*, an early Bergman. In 1960 there was *The Face* and *Summer Interlude*, another early Bergman in May, *Waiting Women* in July, whilst the little known early *Journey into Autumn* supported *The Lovers* at the end of October. In March 1962 *The Virgin Spring* ran for a week.

The Classic Tatler was the other city centre cinema which showed foreign films. It opened in November 1961 with *The Apartment* followed by *Wuthering Heights*. Their first foreign language film was *Nights of Cabiria* which showed for a week from 19 January 1962. *The 400 Blows* was on in February, *Black Orpheus* in March, and *Never on Sunday* in May but overall the majority of films were British or American.

The Regal in Oxford Road occasionally showed foreign language films. A beautiful art deco building, it was one of the first two-screen cinemas, named Romulus and Remus, with a single shared projection box. After refurbishment the Regal premiered both the subtitled and the dubbed versions of *La dolce vita* simultaneously in April 1961. Both versions ran for two weeks, but then the English version ran alone for a further two weeks. The Regal became the first adult late night cinema in Manchester when the Gala Theatre Club started late night screenings there, starting with *The Wild One* and going on to *Joyhouse of Yokohama*. Thereafter the programmes followed the predictable Gala pattern of foreign language films about prostitutes, delinquent teenagers, or the sex slave trade: for example *Wolf Pack*, *Striptease de Paris* or *Human Cargo*. These were very occasionally interspersed with art films like *And Quiet Flows the Don* (August 1961), *Battleship Potemkin* (July 1962), and *Hiroshima mon amour* (October 1962). The Gala Club also programmed the new Buñuel films *Island of Shame* and *Republic of Sin*, both exploitative re-titlings of *La Joven/The Young*

¹²⁵ For comparison, other long runs were *A Kind of Loving* for 16 weeks at ABC Deansgate, *Ben Hur* 9 months at the Oxford and *South Pacific* 2 years and 2 months at the Gaumont.

One and La Fièvre monte à El Pao/Fever Mounts at El Pao. But when *Viridiana* came to Manchester, it was in a different context, with a string of press quotes which referred both to its Palme d'Or status and the fact it was uncut by the censor. It ran for four weeks at the Cinephone.

This case study shows that the view of Manchester as a culturally deprived provincial city needs to be somewhat modified. Two city centre cinemas, a film club and a host of small independents between them managed to show a range of foreign language films, albeit intermittently. There was a strong film society culture with world cinema flourishing in all four of Manchester's film societies.¹²⁶ And film culture was considered so embedded that the BFI supported a full time Regional Film Theatre there, albeit for a short period, in the late 1960s.

4.7 Conclusions

In his *Films and Filming* survey Robin Baker's summary of the reasons for the fragile state of foreign language film provision, interestingly, put negative attitudes first. He argued that British people were more insular and less cosmopolitan than their European counterparts, that art was a dirty word in the British education system, and that most critics did not give sufficient support to foreign language films. In addition there were serious impediments from the industry, mainly that the big circuits were unsympathetic and there were too few independent cinemas outside London willing to risk specialist art film programming.¹²⁷

This chapter has also explored how the growing sexual explicitness of art films coincided with a wave of European nudie and sexploitation films, which resulted in the mixed programming described in the opening quotation. This sharing of space did not in the end work out for audiences. According to Melanie Selfe 'the uncomfortable cohabitation' of sex and serious filmgoing, thrust together by the X certificate, drove the desire for separate art house spaces that eventually became the Regional Film Theatres later on in the 1960s.¹²⁸

Side by side with these problems, however, the cultural status of the foreign art film was rising. These few years were significant for the strengthening of the artistic field of art cinema, a time when the discourses of modernism and auteurism were becoming more readily used by critics and minority audiences. In some ways, also, the infrastructure of cultural institutions was strengthened, particularly in London where the Academy, Curzon, Cameo Poly, and Paris Pullman, with their premieres

¹²⁶ These were University of Manchester, Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, Manchester Film Institute Society, and Manchester and Salford Film Society.

¹²⁷ Baker, 1964, 41-61.

¹²⁸ Selfe, 2012, 124.

and first run screenings, were all flourishing. Meanwhile, the LFF under Richard Roud went from strength to strength, whilst the NFT was showing increasing numbers of new continental films in seasons devoted to auteurs or national cinemas. As Penelope Houston observed in *Sight and Sound*, at a time when the overall audience was shrinking, art films were appealing to a growing minority.¹²⁹ And when London became the centre of the new 60s counter culture foreign films were part of the mix. That is the subject of the next chapter.

¹²⁹ Houston and Crow, 1960, 6.

Chapter 5: Liberation, modernization, and the heyday of art cinema (1963–1968)

Making sense of the turbulent mix of things that constituted the 1960s is not easy. Basically there are two main narratives of the period, a narrative of liberation and a narrative of modernization.

–Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (2008)¹

In the 1960s cinema found itself in a distinguished cultural position within Western culture, with filmmakers able to consider themselves the eminent representatives of contemporary Western culture. In the 1960s modern art cinema had blossomed into the very symbol of a new ‘zeitgeist’ for a new generation that wanted to manifest its opposition to classical bourgeois culture.

–András Kovács (2007)²

Nowell-Smith argued in *Making Waves* that the combination of modernization, which encompassed everything from sex, drugs, and rock and roll to secularization and consumerism, with an idealism which embraced both political and personal liberation constituted a heady mix peculiar to the 1960s. And, the new anarchic style of filmmaking which contributed to the creative flowering of cinematic modernism appealed particularly to young audiences who, in turn, helped to make the new cinemas what they were.³

The Yugoslav film *The Switchboard Operator*, a marker of the aesthetic and political radicalism of the new cinema of the 1960s, can be used as an illustration of these themes. Directed by Dusan Makavejev and based on a newspaper story about a girl who was thrown down a well by her lover, it featured a Belgrade telephonist and her rat-catcher lover. Makavejev rejected conventional narrative in favour of a ‘collage style’ in which sequences of the two making love, cooking, and plumbing were interpolated with ‘found’ footage of dissertations by a sexologist and a criminologist, a political rally, and a demonstration of the habits of the rat.⁴

The details of the film’s release in Britain reveal some of the strands which made up the turbulent mix of 1960s film culture, including the overlap between art and the commercial exploitation of sex. In July 1967 Tony Tenser of Hunter Films, which distributed films with explicit sexual content, had asked the BBFC for a certificate, describing it as a film with ‘a few tits in it’ which he could sell to the sex theatres.⁵ At this stage, both the BBFC and the GLC refused to pass it in the uncut version.

¹ Nowell-Smith, 2008, 8.

² Kovács, 2007, 1.

³ Nowell-Smith, 2008, 2.

⁴ Robinson, 1971, S&S, vol. 40, no. 4, Autumn 1971, 177-180.

⁵ Retroramblings blog, 2011.

But the film was also championed by the New Cinema Club, which showed underground, subversive, and censored films in a range of London arts venues. After the press show in January 1968 it was, according to Trevelyan, 'hailed as a masterpiece' by the critics which, as he admitted, altered the position since it would now be shown in art cinemas.⁶ The New Cinema Club screenings at the ICA in early 1968 were well attended, having been announced in *IT*, the voice of London's counterculture.⁷ Passed for exhibition with just one cut, it was finally shown publicly at the Cameo Poly in Autumn 1969, and was subsequently released to sex cinemas.

This chapter starts with an investigation of the main trends in European art filmmaking through a study of the prizewinners at the main festivals and of their contribution to the flowering of the new cinemas of the 1960s. It is followed by a section on the role played by London, as the leader in art film exhibition and now the centre of the new counterculture, in promoting foreign language films. Then, through reception studies of *Onibaba*, *Un homme et une femme*, and *Pierrot le fou*, I explore the extra-cinematic worlds of these films, relating them respectively to the contexts of censorship, modernization, and liberation.

Returning to the geographies of foreign language cinema, Section 4 goes beyond London to map the institutional infrastructure of foreign language exhibition and distribution, revealing a picture of uneven development, with the X film as the main commercial attractor in many cinemas. Section 5 tells the story of BBC2's *World Cinema* strand and argues that television in the 1960s became a significant channel of transmission for art films, bringing unprecedented numbers of new viewers to foreign language films. Finally, I return to the ideas of spaces and places as active agents, through a study of selected community and university film societies, in order to consider their roles as sites of social exchange for the screening and discussion of films.

5.1 Festivals and international trends

The distinguished cultural position reached by art films and their authors in the 1960s, as described by Kovács, was in no small part due to the growing strength and confidence of art cinema's central institution, the festival.

In 1968 there were 24 festivals recognised by the International Federation of Film Producers. Cannes, Venice, and Berlin remained the most prestigious, but in the 1960s Moscow and Karlovy Vary exercised an increasing influence, raising the international profile of films from Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and Yugoslavia,

⁶ Trevelyan to E.W.Newberry, GLC 4/3/69, BBFC file: *The Switchboard Operator*.

⁷ The full title *International Times* was dropped because of objections from Times Newspapers.

as well as from the Soviet Union.

In a 1964 *Guardian* article 'Cannes Ho!' Richard Roud deftly summarised the role of Cannes and other festivals in encouraging critical debate around a wide range of films.⁸ He argued that, as well as creating international auteurs and new national cinemas through the big prizes, the festivals enabled the critics to make important new discoveries. Polanski's *Knife in the Water*, for example, not considered important enough to represent Poland, was shown out of competition and won the International Critics Award at Cannes in 1962. In the same year at Venice three Italian films were shown only in the Information Section – *Accattone*, *Il posto* and *L'assassino* - which made people realise there were new forces at work in the Italian cinema.⁹ Each of the films helped the others just as, Roud argued, the screenings of *Hiroshima mon amour* and *Les 400 coups* launched the New Wave at Cannes in 1959. And even in the Cannes Film Market, which was becoming increasingly active in the 1960s, films like Wajda's *Siberian Lady Macbeth* and Demy's *La Baie des anges* were seen and won critical acclaim.¹⁰

This section picks out some of the prizewinners at the main festivals from 1963 to 1968, in order to discuss the main trends in international film. The politics of awards should be born in mind however. Roud, from his position as organiser of the non-prizegiving LFF, explained the consequences of a system where 'works of art are judged as if they were so many bulls at an agricultural show' and where compromise was inevitable in order to placate national pride and keep film producers happy.¹¹ There are examples of juries, split between favourites, who picked a compromise film or, on other occasions, one that was a politically expedient choice. Nor does the list of winners show popular runners up, like *Blonde in Love*, whose reputations, nevertheless, were established by their exposure at the festivals.

The table below shows that the big international art film, pioneered by the Italians in the early 1960s and discussed in Chapter 4, continued to be successful. Visconti's *The Leopard*, produced by Twentieth Century Fox, was the Cannes winner in 1963 and a huge hit in Italy and France, but not in Great Britain or the USA. An extravagant epic, based on Lampedusa's novel of Risorgimento Sicily, it was shot in Technirama with a lavish score by Nino Rota and an international cast led by stars Claudia Cardinale, Alain Delon, and Burt Lancaster. The Italian language version shown at Cannes was 185 minutes long but, when released in the US in a badly dubbed English version, it was cut by 45 minutes and processed with De Luxe colour, much

⁸ Roud, 2014, 67-68.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 67.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 68.

¹¹ *NFT Booklet*, Nov-Dec, 1968, 2.

inferior to the original Technicolor process. Visconti publicly disowned this version, and, according to Brenda Davis in *Sight and Sound*, wrote in the *The Sunday Times* that, 'It is now a work for which I acknowledge no paternity at all'.¹² Another, this time highly successful, Italian film aimed at an international audience, was Fellini's *8½*.¹³ This modernist, self-reflexive meditation on auteurship was presented at the Moscow Film Festival in July 1963, where the audience of 8,000 was ecstatic. But the enthusiastic reception for this example of 'western decadence' was not echoed by the more conservative Russian jurors. It was only when the foreign members of the jury, led by Sergio Amidei, threatened a walkout that opinion swung in favour of awarding the film the top prize.¹⁴ It was picked up for US distribution by Joseph E. Levine and its success was sealed with the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film in 1964. The success of what the Italians called the *superspettacolo d'autore* in the 1960s usually rested as much on the status and attraction of 'star' auteurs like Visconti, Fellini, and Antonioni as on the big budgets and use of stars.

Table 5: Festival winners 1963-1967 (Top prizes are in bold)

Cannes	Venice	Berlin	Moscow/Karlovy Vary (alternate years)
<p>1963: <i>The Leopard</i> (Italy, Luchino Visconti) Special jury prizes: <i>Harakiri</i> (Japan, Masaki Kobayashi) and <i>Cassandra Cat</i> (Czechoslovakia, Wojtěch Jasný)</p>	<p><i>Hands over the City</i> (Italy, Francesco Rosi) Special jury prizes: <i>Le Feu follet</i> (France, Louis Malle) and <i>Introduction to Life</i> (USSR, Igor Talankin)</p>	<p><i>Bushido Samurai Saga</i> (Japan, Tadashi Imai) and <i>Il diavolo</i> (Italy, Gian Luigi Polidoro)</p>	<p>Moscow: <i>8½</i> (Italy, Federico Fellini)</p>
<p>1964: <i>Les Parapluies de Cherbourg</i> (France, Jacques Demy) Special jury prize: <i>Woman of the Dunes</i> (Japan, Hiroshi Teshigahara)</p>	<p><i>The Red Desert</i> (Italy, Michelangelo Antonioni) Special jury prizes: <i>Hamlet</i> (USSR, Grigori Kozintsev) and <i>The Gospel According to St Matthew</i> (Italy, Pier Paolo Pasolini)</p>	<p><i>Dry Summer</i> (Turkey, Metin Erksan) Best direction: Satyajit Ray for <i>Mahanagar</i> (India)</p>	<p>Karlovy Vary: <i>The Accused</i> (Czechoslovakia, Elmar Klos and Ján Kadór)</p>

¹² Brenda Davis also discussed the problems of referring to the 'original version': *The Leopard* was shot in various native tongues and then dubbed into Italian, and for the French release only Delon, Cardinale, and a few others dubbed their own voices. See *Sight and Sound*, vol.33, no.2, Spring 1964, 99-100.

¹³ Kovács claimed *8½* was the first explicit demonstration of what modern cinema was in terms of subjectivity, critical reflexivity and abstraction. See Kovács, 2007, 316-322.

¹⁴ Kezich, 2007, 247-248.

Cannes	Venice	Berlin	Moscow/Karlovy Vary (alternate years)
1965: <i>The Knack</i> (GB, Richard Lester) Special jury prize: <i>Kwaidan</i> (Japan, Masaki Kobayashi)	<i>Of a Thousand Delights</i> (Italy, Luchino Visconti) Special jury prizes: <i>Simon of the Desert</i> (Mexico, Luis Buñuel) and <i>I am 20</i> (USSR, Marlen Khutsiev)	<i>Alphaville</i> (France, Jean-Luc Godard) Best direction: Satyajit Ray for <i>Charulata</i> (India)	Moscow: <i>War and Peace</i> (USSR, Sergei Bondarchuk) and <i>Twenty Hours</i> (Hungary, Zoltán Fábri)
1966: <i>Un homme et une femme</i> (France, Claude Lelouch) + <i>Signore e Signori</i> (Italy/France, Pietro Germi) Best direction: Sergei Yutkevitch for <i>Lenin in Poland</i> , (USSR)	<i>The Battle of Algiers</i> (Italy-Algeria, Gillo Pontecorvo) Special jury prizes: <i>Yesterday Girl</i> (Germany, Alexander Kluge) and <i>Chappaqua</i> (USA, Conrad Rooks)	<i>Cul-de-Sac</i> (GB, Roman Polanski) Best direction: Carlos Saura for <i>La caza</i> (Spain)	Karlovy Vary: Main awards: <i>Three</i> (Yugoslavia, Aleksandar Petrovic) <i>Cold Days</i> (Hungary, András Kovács) <i>Carriage to Vienna</i> (Czechoslovakia, Karel Kachyna)
1967: <i>Blow-Up</i> (Britain/Italy, Michelangelo Antonioni) Special jury prize: <i>Accident</i> (GB, Joseph Losey) and <i>Happy Gypsies</i> (Yugoslavia, Aleksandar Petrovic)	<i>Belle de jour</i> (France, Luis Buñuel) Special jury prize: <i>La Chinoise</i> (France, Jean Luc Godard) and <i>La cina è vicina</i> (Italy, Marco Bellochio)	<i>Le Départ</i> (West Germany, Jerzy Skolimovsky) Best direction: Zivojin Pavlovic for <i>The Rats Awake</i> (Yugoslavia)	Moscow: <i>Father</i> (Hungary, István Szabó) Special jury prizes: <i>Detour</i> (Bulgaria, Grisha Ostrovski & Todor Stoyanov) <i>Romance for Cornet</i> (Czech., Otakar Vávra)

A notable cinematic trend of the 1960s was political liberation, often presented through a social realist style. In Italy, a new batch of prize winning directors, including Olmi and De Seta, kept the flag of neorealism flying. But two films in particular, *Hands over the City* and *Battle of Algiers*, both Golden Lion winners, were emblematic of a type of 1960s political film making which consciously coupled remaking cinema with remaking the world. Rosi had exposed the workings of the mafia in Sicily in his critically praised *Salvatore Giuliano*, and now turned his hand to the exposure of corruption in Naples. *Hands over the City*, which starred Rod Steiger, alongside local non-professionals including Naples politicians, used a heady mix of social realism and thriller conventions to tell its story. Rosi's style of filmmaking was to influence political cinema worldwide, including the directors of the *Cinema Novo* in Brazil, Miklós Jancsó in Hungary, and Theo Angelopoulos in Greece. It also influenced the style and political stance of *Battle of Algiers* whose Golden Lion at Venice in 1966 caused such controversy.¹⁵ The jury's choice caused a mass walk out of the French delegation, proof that the wounds and divisions of the Algerian War were still raw in French

¹⁵ The largely left wing jury included Lindsay Anderson, Joris Ivens, and Lev Kuleshov.

society. With its 'on the spot' newsreel techniques, deployment of local people, soundtrack which combined the music of Morricone and Pontecorvo with the indigenous chorus of the wailing women, and the beat of an Algerian drum, the film looked upon torture, terrorism, and mass uprising with a relentless gaze. A powerful and resonant piece of anti-colonial film making, it was banned in France and not shown there until 1971, the same year in which it also had a very limited first release in Britain.

The spirit of the French New Wave remained alive at the festivals. Two Palme d'Or winners, Demy's *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* in 1964 and *Un homme et une femme* in 1966 were commercially successful examples of how New Wave styles of film made an impact on the international market. But the New Wave director who maintained the most consistent and contentious presence at festivals in the 1960s was Godard, whose success proved that a low budget, experimental auteur could thrive on the support of an international minority audience, sustained by the festivals. Of the 15 films which he made from 1959 to 1967, most were presented at Venice and Berlin, and to mixed receptions. *Alphaville*, for example, won top prize at Berlin in 1965, the same year that *Pierrot le fou* was booed at Venice, while two years later *La Chinoise* was awarded the Special Jury Prize at Venice.

New German cinema, also influenced by Godard, was just beginning to make a mark in the 1960s. Alexander Kluge's *Yesterday Girl* won the Special Jury Prize at Venice 1966. About a young Jewish woman who crosses from East to West Germany only to find that her past catches up with her again and again, the film had an open and playful form. Influenced by Brecht, and with the stylistic marks of Godard, it had voice-over commentary, intertitles, and montage sequences that juxtaposed still photos, found film, and written text.

A significant new trend in the 1960s was the entry on to the international scene of the cinemas of Eastern Europe. Russian films had made a dramatic entry into postwar international cinema with *The Cranes Are Flying* (Palme d'Or, Cannes 1957) *Ballad of a Soldier* (Special Jury Prize, Cannes 1959) and *Ivan's Childhood* (Golden Lion, Venice 1962). These films offered a new perspective on the Second World War, focussing on its devastating personal effects, rather than the tub thumping, nationalist heroics of many of the war films of the Stalinist era.

The War and its after effects continued to occupy filmmakers across Eastern Europe. But a new sort of film was emerging, partly to do with liberation from the constraints of socialist realism and partly to do with the modernization of society. Some of the new young filmmakers, again influenced by Godard, were experimenting with filmic forms in the process of putting the urban, youth and consumer revolutions

on screen. *Le Départ*, for example, about a young hairdressing assistant obsessed with the ultimate symbol of modernity, racing cars, won the Golden Bear at Berlin in 1967. Directed by young Polish director Jerzy Skolimowski in his first film outside Poland, and with Jean-Pierre Léaud and Chantal Goya, both recently seen in *Masculin Féminin*, it looked distinctly Godardian with its jazz score, improvised look and anti-realist sequences. Another newcomer to the 1960s festival scene was the young Czech director Miloš Forman whose film, *A Blonde in Love*, narrowly missed the Golden Lion, was widely admired. His wry and gently subversive take on young love in the narrow world of parental conservatism and state socialism was one of many examples of the Czech New Wave which flourished briefly on the festival scene before the Russian invasion of 1968.

The festivals played a major role in the 1960s flowering of the European art film. The 1967 LFF demonstrated the vibrancy and diversity of films being produced. The festival included films by established directors: two Godards, *La Chinoise* and *Two or Three Things I Know About Her*; Buñuel's *Simon of the Desert*; Varda's *Les Créatures*; Donskoi's *Heart of a Mother*; Bresson's *Mouchette*; and Kobayashi's *Rebellion*. The new cinema of Eastern Europe was also represented by the Czech directors Věra Chytilová and Jan Němec; István Szabó's *Father* from Hungary; and Dusan Makavejev's *The Switchboard Operator* from Yugoslavia. Swedish choices, for the first time not dominated by Bergman, included the newcomer Jonas Cornell's *Hugs and Kisses* as well as Bo Widerberg's *Elvira Madigan*.

5.2 London was the best place

I probably spent almost as much time in the cinema as in college . . . but never regretted it. It was the best time and London was the best place.

—Anon (2013) ¹⁶

This spring, as never before in modern times, London is switched on . . . Ancient elegance and new opulence are all tangled up in a dazzling blur of op and pop. The city is alive with birds (girls) and Beatles, buzzing with Mini cars and telly stars, pulsing with half a dozen separate veins of excitement.

—*Time Magazine*, April 1966 ¹⁷

There is, of course, a debate about how swinging the Swinging Sixties in Britain really were.¹⁸ But in London at least, with its new boutiques, clubs, and hairdressers, there was undoubtedly a flowering of youth-based art, fashion and music. All these signs of the times, along with parties, dope, sex, and celebrity photographers, could be found

¹⁶ Anon, *Cinema Memories* survey. Also quoted in Chapter 6

¹⁷ *Time Magazine*, vol.87, no.15, 15/4/66.

¹⁸ See Sandbrook, 2006, for a social history of the swinging sixties.

in Antonioni's *Blow-Up* and in the films of other visiting directors including Polanski, Skolimowski, and Godard.¹⁹

By the 1960s London had become a youthful, late night city with a large population of students and other young people, many of whom were part of the new music, art, and cinema scenes. And the NFT was a popular London venue where new world cinemas and new audiences met and where in the 1960s the age profile was startlingly different from today. A small audience survey for the NFT based on questionnaires returned by 414 full BFI members and 771 associates was published in the NFT booklet in July 1968. Predictably, it confirmed that the audience was middle class, with jobs in business and the professions, education and entertainment. The most striking result was the youth of the audience: of the 1,185 respondents 48.5% were in the 23-34 age group, 29% in the 35-50 group and less than 10% were over 50. The remaining 13% were between 16 and 22.²⁰

The all night screenings of underground films, the regular late night events, the annual 'buzz' created by the LFF and cutting edge seasons of auteurs, from Buñuel to Ichikawa and of nations from Czechoslovakia to Poland, made the NFT a desirable destination for young London filmgoers. Occasionally, on-stage events became 'happenings', especially if Godard was involved. At the post screening event of *Sympathy for the Devil*, he not only hit the producer but proceeded to get into a fist fight with the manager, after which he was loaned a projector to show his own version, *One Plus One*, outside on the wall of the bridge.²¹

In the 1960s the Academy, still the leading art cinema in London, with its fashionable premieres and late night films became the first three screen cinema in London.²² Audiences flocked to the latest Antonioni, Godard or Bergman, but Hoellering also continued to introduce new European directors – Wojciech Jerzy Has, Andrzej Munk and Janusz Kamiński from Poland, Forman (a huge influence on Ken Loach) from Czechoslovakia and Miklós Jancsó from Hungary, for example. The latter's *The Round-Up*, was an example of Hoellering's power to mould public taste. The austere but lyrical formalism of Jancsó's film put off some critics and it failed to win any awards at Cannes in 1966. But it opened in Academy One with a forward on screen to make the historical context clearer to a British audience and, according to Dilys Powell, 'the public crowded in'.²³ *Elvira Madigan* by Bo Widerberg was another example. It ran for a record seven months in 1968, further proof that Hoellering knew

¹⁹ Rose, 2016.

²⁰ *NFT programme*, July 1968, 3-4.

²¹ *Sympathy for the Devil* was the title given by the producer, cashing in on the popularity of the Stones.

²² Academy Two, with 404 seats, was opened on March 31, 1965 and a third screen with 94 seats and a bar, opened as the Academy Club in May 1964 and became Academy Three in 1967

²³ S&S, vol.49, no.2, Spring 1980, 123.

how to pick films that reflected the mood of the moment. Although set in the 19th century, the film reflected 1960s counterculture in its romantic pastoral imagery, defiance of convention, and subtexts of anti-militarism and individual freedom.

The Everyman in Hampstead was where many youthful cinephiles received their film education in the 1960s. Andrew Youdell, later to join BFI Distribution, discovered The Everyman in the mid 1960s where he first saw *Sous les toits de Paris*. He loved the music so much that he wrote it down and stayed on for the 4, 6 and 8pm shows. And he remembered being particularly impressed that 'there were ten Godards in a row and eight Bergmans'.²⁴ The Everyman seasons were legendary and old favourites such as Cocteau and Clair appeared frequently.²⁵ The Bergman season of 12 films in sequence, run at the heights of Bergmania in 1964, was shown again in 1967. In April 1966 a new season of 'under-rated films' was announced, which included *Ugetsu monogatari* and Franco Rossi's *Smog*. This programming strand, with the more appealing title of *Off the Beaten Track*, continued with short seasons of directors like Godard, Resnais and Buñuel in 1967.

The Curzon whose sleek modernist architecture had announced an elite, expensive, and specialist foreign language cinema in the 1930s was pulled down, and re-opened as part of a 1960s office block in 1966 with the subtitled version of Louis Malle's *Viva Maria*. It became the upmarket place to go for the more popular art films, the longest runs being *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, *Un homme et une femme*, and *Belle de jour*.

The Paris Pullman, after 12 years of adventurous and creative programming, was taken over in 1967 by Charles Cooper, along with James Quinn, ex-director of the BFI, and writer Ralph Stevenson. Modernization included the opening of a club where members could browse film magazines or watch 16mm films over a drink in the bar. The flat and smoke filled auditorium became a popular late night destination for students and the films were always sold out.²⁶ Cooper continued the cinema's tradition of creative double bills: for example, in May 1967 the Czech New Wave double bill of Ivan Passer's *Intimate Lighting* with the high profile holocaust tale *A Shop on the High Street*, or Robbe-Grillet's *L'Immortelle* paired with Franju's *Judex*.

By the mid 1960s the Cameo Poly had shown an impressive selection of arthouse films including *Muriel*, *Le Feu follet*, and *La Peau douce*, as well as the more popular *Last Year at Marienbad*, *Jules et Jim*, *Through a Glass Darkly*, *The Eclipse*, and *8½*.

²⁴ Andrew Youdell interview, 9/7/13.

²⁵ This was partly because the Everyman owned the prints of many of these classic films. Youdell recalled that some were 'quite ropey' including *Smiles of a Summer Night* which was 'so delicate it was on the point of breaking'.

²⁶ Kitty Cooper interview, 7/8/14.

Advertised as 'Britain's most distinguished cinema,'²⁷ with prizewinning European films supported by serious shorts and a ban on commercial advertising, it claimed to be 'a by-word for urban sophistication'.²⁸ By 1965, however, the programming was looking more erratic. *Pierrot le fou*, *Au Hasard Balthazar*, and *Kwaidan* were mixed in with a string of mainstream French comedies, featuring Robert Hirsch or Bourvil. And the fact that the Cameo Poly was the flagship of a chain, now operating almost exclusively in the sex market, made the cinema's image problematic. The Cameo Poly had a close relationship with Gala Cinemas and premiered Rive's most prestigious imports. Together they successfully exploited the sex/art crossover appeal of films like Bergman's *The Silence* which was premiered simultaneously at the Cameo Royal and the Continentale in 1965. In 1967 the Cameo chain was bought out by Classic cinemas but the name Cameo Poly was retained until 1972.

In 1964 Gala had a string of cinemas across London which showed the mix of sex and art which characterised Rive's import choices and business strategy. Rive continued to specialise in French films with a youth appeal: Godard's *Une femme mariée*, *Bande à part*, *Pierrot le fou*, and *Masculin Féminin*; Varda's *Le Bonheur*; Rivette's *La Religieuse*; and Truffaut's *La Peau douce* all did the rounds of his London cinemas. Revivals of foreign language cinema such as *Jules et Jim*, *Seven Samurai* and *8½* were also regularly part of the programme, often alternated with nudie and sensational titles or second run revivals of Bond films. *Un homme et une femme* was the most popular revival: paired with *Le Bonheur*, it ran at the Berkeley from August 1967 till July 1968. The Danish coming of age sex film *Seventeen* was also a big success: premiered at the Royalty in October 1967, it ran for several months and then transferred to Rive's flagship cinema, the Continentale.

The establishment of the Electric Cinema Club in 1968 was emblematic of the changing film scene in London at the end of the sixties. Peter Howden, programmer of the Electric till 1981, claimed that when the Electric started it was the only true rolling arts repertory cinema in London - the Academy, Curzon, and Paris Pullman were first run cinemas, whilst the Everyman was following the well worn pattern of seven day runs. Howden became involved with a group of young people who were setting up late night screenings on Fridays and Saturdays at the run down Imperial Repertory Cinema in Portobello Road. The Notting Hill location placed the Electric Club in the heart of London's alternative society and the programme, which opened with *The Criminal Life of Archibaldo de la Cruz*, was designed to show the diversity of cinema, ranging from Louise Brooks through experimental shorts to Visconti:

²⁷ CFR, August 1964, 2.

²⁸ Osborn, 2015, 90.

We put on films that they couldn't see, the Andy Warhols and experimental shorts... Orson Welles and the Kurosawas and the Bergmans all got mixed up together... we had support from people like *Time Out* which was growing up at exactly the same time as the Electric, there was a sort of mutual discovery of things.²⁹

The shabby state of the cinema was legendary – no heating, hard wooden benches in the first six rows, and regular leakages through the roof. But the late night screenings and the counter cultural ambience proved so popular that the group were able to take over the cinema in 1970.

The New Cinema Club, another 'alternative' innovation of the late 1960s, ran from 1967 to 1973. Its founder Derek Hill summed up his aims in the Club's last booklet, *The End*, in 1973:

Mission completed. The New Cinema Club was born with a death wish. It aimed to make itself unnecessary. The films it introduced had encountered at least one of three obstacles: neglect by distributors; reluctance from exhibitors; opposition on the part of censors.³⁰

Hill, who ran the Club, went on to describe how joining the Club (for 25s a year and half price for students) offered opportunities, through the quarterly brochure, to attend three different strands of programming. *Discoveries* were premieres and previews of films acclaimed abroad but still awaiting a London run; the *Underground* strand was international experimental work; and *Forbidden Film Festival* showed, in the words of the 1970 Spring booklet, what the BBFC 'refuses to let the adult public see for itself'.³¹

The Cinema Club was high profile. It attracted considerable press coverage and recommendations from the critics. According to Hill, at one point it had more members than the NFT.³² Highlights in the late 1960s included *Baron Münchhausen* (Karel Zeman), *Something Different* (Věra Chytilová), *The Switchboard Operator* (Dusan Makavejev), *Walkover* (Jerzy Skolimowski), *The Theatre of Mr and Mrs Kabal* (Walerian Borowczyk), *Simon of the Desert* (Luis Buñuel), *Weekend* (Jean-Luc Godard) and *Seventeenth Parallel* (Joris Ivens).

This was a club with no fixed abode, always in search of premises. Screenings were held in rented places, mainly The Place, the New Arts Lab, the ICA in Nash House, and occasionally the NFT, where it ran all night screenings of American underground films. In June 1968 Hill even took over the Royal Festival Hall for an illustrated talk by Trevelyan on censorship, including a Q and A with the audience,

²⁹ Howden, 1994, 34-37.

³⁰ *The End*, New Cinema Club, London, New Cinema Presentations Ltd, 3.

³¹ New Cinema Club booklet, January-March 1970, 2.

³² Derek Hill interview, 25/3/13.

which was sold out.

Forbidden Festival, which represented about a quarter of the programming, had a young audience and was very popular. Hill admitted that an element came just because these were censored films but that their popularity allowed the rest of the programme to run.³³

5.3 Film as event: three case studies

Onibaba, *Un homme et une femme* and *Pierrot le fou* are used in this section to explore the extra cinematic meanings of three films of the mid 1960s, all of which attracted attention, provoked debates, or caused controversy. The idea of the film event was articulated by the French historian Marc Ferro in his collection of essays *Cinema and History*, in which he approached film, not as a work of art, but rather as 'a product, an image object whose meanings are not solely cinematographic'.³⁴ Therefore, according to Ferro, analyses should not be limited to the film itself but should 'integrate the film into the world that surrounds it and with which it necessarily communicates'.³⁵ Ferro's ideas were used by Hugo Frey as the analytical framework in his book on nationalism and postwar French cinema: through a series of reception studies, including *Un homme et une femme*, he argued that certain films become film events because they provoke societal interactions. For example, they may win prizes at festivals, trigger praise or hostility from critics, create censorship storms, or sometimes even become part of political debate.³⁶

Onibaba

Kaneto Shindō's *Onibaba* is set in warring feudal Japan, where two peasant women survive in swamp land by ghoulishly finishing off wounded samurai, pushing their bodies into a pit and selling their armour for food. The horror deepens when the older woman, jealous of the developing sexual relationship of her daughter in law with a peasant deserter, dons a demon mask and threatens her with punishment. Raymond Durgnat was one of the few critics to give the film a positive review. In a 1967 *Films and Filming* article he wrote that this violent and magical film had a 'twin soul', being both traditional legend and part Marxist, part existential work about alienation by an Antonioni-era intellectual. Unlike his fellow critics he appreciated its strangeness and its complexities like the exaggerated gestures and violent acting (which, he reported, provoked incredulous laughter at the press show), the dreamlike quality of the high reeds at night rustling 'like the wind of erotic desire' and the fairy tale imagery of the

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ferro, 1988, 29.

³⁵ Ibid., 30.

³⁶ Frey, 2014, 4-45.

end with the planetary moon and skeleton filled pit.³⁷

Durngat opened his review with a bitter attack on the censor, whose taste was 'as perverse as his liberalism was spurious', for consistently refusing to grant a certificate to the film.³⁸ And it was this censorship debate about *Onibaba* that made it into a film event. When it was first imported by Kenneth Rive in 1965, its director was already known for *Children of Hiroshima* and *The Naked Island*, both festival prize winners. *Onibaba* was a different matter. It had the hallmarks of the popular horror genre and it was sexy. When it was submitted to the BBFC in August 1965, although deemed to have some artistic qualities, it was refused a certificate because of the 'scenes of lust and violence' and the 'loathsome visuals' of the wearers of the mask.³⁹ Trevelyan referred to it as 'a mixture of disgust and blatant sex with nudity thrown in' in his initial letters to Rive.⁴⁰ The film was passed to Nat Miller of Orb Productions, whose claim to fame was producing the first British nudie, the highly successful *Nudist Paradise*.

Onibaba became something of a test case in a period when censorship decisions were becoming more liberal but when Trevelyan was still trying to hold back the tide of explicit sex and violence. Throughout 1966 and 1967, individual local authorities decided whether or not to grant the film a local certificate. Despite the film being viewed again by the BBFC in March 1967, a certificate was still refused. 41 authorities had passed it by January 1968 and it had become a popular success in independent cinemas and the small circuits. In late 1967, for example, the Granada in Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire was able to take advantage of the film being banned in Essex to attract patrons from nearby Harlow, and from even as far afield as Southend and Bedford. The publicity for the film, which was paired with *Nudist Paradise*, was jointly paid for by Orb and Granada. The poster concentrated on its sex appeal but also included a positive quotation from Nina Hibbin, referring to its 'quality of primitive truth that haunts the mind'.⁴¹ (Figure 12).

Trevelyan eventually started negotiations about cuts, in order to give it an X. A letter from Nat Miller to Trevelyan in May 1968 reported that the Japanese producers and distributors of the film at Cannes were 'amazed and amused' at the cuts requested, and he went on to argue that there was more brutality to be found in *Witchfinder General* and more sex in *Night Games*, *Belle de jour* and *Blow-Up*.⁴² The film was finally passed with an X in June 1968 after cuts of the killings, the mask scene, the sex scenes, and the eating of the dog.

³⁷ *F&F*, January 1967, 33.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Trevelyan to local authorities, BBFC File: *Onibaba*.

⁴⁰ Trevelyan to Rive, 16 & 28/8/65, BBFC File: *Onibaba*.

⁴¹ Eyles, 1998, 195-196.

⁴² Nat Miller to John Trevelyan, 21/5/68, BBFC File: *Onibaba*.

Durgnat was almost alone in his championing of a film which crossed the usual divides of high and low culture – the critics Richard Roud, Tom Milne, and Philip French found it variously funny, badly acted or only for the Cameo Royal ‘dirty raincoat brigade’. Its critical reception was in contrast to the recently released *Woman of the Dunes* which also mixed horror with frank sexuality. But a prizewinning source novel, a Special Jury Prize at Cannes, and the star Eiji Ohada, lately of *Hiroshima mon amour*, all contributed to its arthouse credentials and cultural capital.

Interestingly, the status of *Onibaba* has subsequently risen with changing critical tastes. It is distributed on DVD by Criterion, was revived at the NFT in 2008 and received an enthusiastic re-assessment by Peter Bradshaw in 2015.⁴³

Un homme et une femme

‘A widowed racing car driver with a child meets a widowed script-girl with a child and *voilà!* It’s love!’ ran the review in *The New York Times*.⁴⁴

Un homme et une femme, by little known young director Claude Lelouch, was joint winner of the Palme d’Or at Cannes in 1966.⁴⁵ Its international success was further guaranteed by the award of two Oscars for Best Foreign Film and Best Screenplay.⁴⁶ With Jean-Luis Trintignant and Anouk Aimée, it was shot on location in Deauville, Paris, and Monte Carlo, with distinctly Godardian working methods. Its 28 year old director, who was also cinematographer, joint editor, and writer, worked with a tiny crew and a miniscule budget on a shoot which lasted only three weeks. The film successfully packaged New Wave techniques – a free and improvised style with jump cuts, use of telephoto lens and improvised dialogue. Most distinctively, the photography switched back and forth from colour to black and white and sepia. The music was composed by Francis Lai, whose catchy score combined orchestral, pop, and jazz music – it became an international hit album in its own right and contributed to the film’s popular success.

The film, a traditional love story, was also a display of attractive images of modernization. Frey argued that *Un homme et une femme*, with its chic, bourgeois locations, cars, and people which were happy symbols of social change, presented a picture of a France which was modern, successful, and moral.⁴⁷ But it was the context of debates about tradition versus modernity in politics and culture which, according to Frey, turned it into a nationalist film and exposed the ideological conflicts in society. Conservatives, who had been uneasy about the risqué image of France projected

⁴³ Bradshaw, 2010.

⁴⁴ *New York Times*, 26/2/67.

⁴⁵ The co-winner was *Signore E Signori*.

⁴⁶ It won against strong competition including *Battle of Algiers*, *A Blonde in Love*, and *Pharaoh*.

⁴⁷ Frey, 2014, 75-80.

abroad by Bardot, Louis Malle et al., approved of a traditional love story which projected a conservative and reassuring image of the nation. De Gaulle and his wife even invited Lelouch to their private screening which apparently they enjoyed.⁴⁸ Critical reactions to the film in France became split between left and right. Its success coincided with a bitter battle which was raging about the political, pro-Catholic censorship of the film *La Religieuse*, and it was also the year when Resnais' *La guerre est finie* was withdrawn from Cannes to avoid annoying Franco.

Un homme et une femme was extremely successful at the box office in France, achieving the second highest audience of the year with 708,000 admissions. By the time it reached Britain, in January 1967, it had opened in 10 more countries including the USA, Australia, Argentina, Japan, and Sweden. It was particularly popular in the USA, running for a year in New York and two years in Los Angeles, and grossing \$6 million at the box office, mainly from the dubbed version.

Its British premiere was in January 1967 at the recently re-opened Curzon where it ran for seven months. It continued in the West End for a further long run of nearly a year at the Berkeley, at the same time as it was doing the national rounds in the subtitled version in Odeon cinemas.

The political nuances at play in the film's reception in France carried little meaning in Britain or the USA, where its romantic story and good looking leads were key attractors. The majority of user reviews on IMDB today are from those who first saw the film in the 1960s, some recalling with nostalgia how it introduced them to adult romance. One English woman, for example, wrote:

Oh dear - it must be difficult to understand how it appeared to romantic late sixties 20 year olds. There was just something of the slow, brooding love in that era. The bloke chasing the night train from Nice to Paris and beating it by car was so tear jerking . . . it was lovely – and the LP sold millions. The film got an outing on TV on Christmas Eve 1996, and I remember my then 20 year old son considering it a load of old tripe, whilst I continued to swoon over it.⁴⁹

At a time when holidays abroad were becoming more affordable and when French-style consumer items were fashionable, the locations of the Deauville beach and the Paris streets, as well as the chic silk scarves, stylish sunglasses, and endless Gauloises, all added to its allure. The original review in *The Times* summed up its appeal in modern, consumer society:

⁴⁸ Like many female viewers Madame De Gaulle was moved to tears. See *ibid.*, 76.

⁴⁹ Hall, 2004.

All the people in this film look nice and behave well; they have the glamorous glittering unreality of figures out of a colour supplement advertisement. And so do the clothes they wear, the cars they drive, the places where they meet, particularly Deauville out of season, bathed in a light that never was on land or sea.⁵⁰

But the *The Times* reviewer had to admit that it was also ‘charming and spontaneous’, a view echoed by other critics. Even Penelope Houston found it ‘unexpectedly beguiling’ and concluded, ‘a disposable product maybe, but buy it for the articulate exuberance of the packaging’.⁵¹ Alexander Walker was more judgmental:

Like a *People Love Players* commercial they are the getaway people⁵² . . . ingeniously bland music by Francis Lai, like supermarket music one is being slowly asphyxiated between the pages of a weekend colour magazine.⁵³

Un homme et une femme is another example of the power of cinema to capture the ‘zeitgeist moment’ when certain films which capture the spirit and preoccupations of the times can have a big cultural impact.⁵⁴ Its re-releases, however, never did that well. As Walker’s review on its 1999 re-release concluded, ‘its ultra-chic whimsy’ caught the sixties generation at just the right moment.⁵⁵

Pierrot le fou

Pierrot le fou, 1965, Godard’s tenth feature in six years, was nominated for the Golden Lion at Venice, where it was famously booed, but also awarded the Young Critics Prize. Distributed in Britain by Gala, it was screened at the Cameo Poly in Spring 1966, making it the third Godard film running simultaneously in the West End, along with *Alphaville* at the Academy and *Une femme mariée* at the Berkeley.

Based loosely on an American pulp novel about a man who leaves his wife and children to take off on a doomed journey with a perfidious young woman, it starred Belmondo and Karina, both by then well-known internationally from Godard’s earlier films. Anticipating the road movie, the couple take off for the south of France, to escape the villains she is mixed up with and the police. Godard later confessed that a week before shooting he had no idea where the film was going – he had broken free from the novel and was no longer wedded to the genre conventions of the American film noir. This film turned out to be much more unstructured. At different points Godard referred to it as ‘the last great romance’, as a ‘series of 60s happenings’ or as ‘life

⁵⁰ BFI Press Cuttings, *Un homme et une femme*, *The Times*, 19/1/67.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, *Spectator*, 20/01/67.

⁵² The getaway people were featured in the Super National petroleum ad.

⁵³ BFI Press Cuttings, *Un homme et une femme*, *Evening Standard*, 29/1/67.

⁵⁴ For a discussion of the idea of the zeitgeist film, with some recent examples, see *Stories we tell ourselves*, British Film Council, 2009, 27-28.

⁵⁵ BFI Press Cuttings, *Un homme et une femme*, *Evening Standard*, 28/1/99.

filling the screen’.

Shot by Raoul Coutard in colour and widescreen, the film looked stylish and modern, with its distinctive primary colours using the palette of pop artists like Yves Klein. Despite its many visual and spoken references to high art and literature, the film also had the look and narrative style of the comic strip, as well as other popular culture motifs like slapstick and TV commercials. This mixing of high and low art chimed with the cultural milieu of the 1960s when, according to the autobiography of political activist and feminist, Sheila Rowbotham, ‘avant garde and mass popular culture were beginning to discover the pleasure in each other’s company’.⁵⁶ And the film’s visual emphasis on 1960s fashion, cars and comics shows an almost obsessive fascination for contemporary design - and semiotics.

In *Pierrot le fou*, the car is the image sign and ultimate symbol of modernity as well as a personal enthusiasm of Godard’s. As J. Hoberman later commented, ‘Possibly no Godard film has been so hostile to Americans or more devoted to their cars’.⁵⁷ The Peugeot, the instrument of their escape, is blown up and the couple then steal an American Ford Galaxy, which they eventually drive into the sea. The cars are drivers of the narrative as well as symbols of the couple’s freedom and identity, an identity which is lost when the Ford sinks beneath the water.⁵⁸

The film is permeated with a profusion of other cultural signs for consumer goods. True, Godard’s bitter satire in the cocktail party scene, where the guests chatter entirely in ad copy and the colour filters used by Coutard communicate a sense of alienation from the bourgeois party goers, was a far cry from the colour supplement look of *Un homme et une femme*. But the image signs throughout the film are remarkably dense in that they connote both attraction to and alienation from the consumer goods of contemporary culture – the ads, the comic strips, Karina’s clothes, and gasoline signs all form a sensuous and visually rich surround to the doomed journey of the hero and heroine.

Allusions to Vietnam also permeate the film, with references to American intervention in conversations, snippets from radio and newsreel footage, and even a ‘play’ which the penniless Ferdinand and Marianne put on for American sailors. And the explosions bear a disquieting likeness to the imagery on TV screens of the war in Vietnam.

Pierrot le fou received a positive critical response in France, with the poet and

⁵⁶ Rowbotham, 2000, 79.

⁵⁷ BFI Press Cuttings, *Pierrot le fou*, *Village Voice*, 10/10/89.

⁵⁸ For a full discussion of Godard, modernity and cars, see Orr, 1993, 132-143.

novelist Louis Aragon proclaiming 'Art today is Jean-Luc Godard'.⁵⁹ Released in November 1965 it played at three theatres to large audiences, one writer noting wryly that this was the first time he had ever had to wait in line for a Godard film.⁶⁰

In Britain there was a smaller, but still influential, network of support for Godard by the mid 1960s. Richard Roud showed *Pierrot le fou* at the 1965 LFF where most of Godard's previous films had been introduced, and where it was awarded the Sutherland Trophy. Roud, who had become film critic of *The Guardian* in 1963, wrote an enthusiastic review, calling it Godard's 'freest most experimental film to date', making the viewer think about narrative in the cinema.⁶¹ Most other critics, however, were hostile. For Alexander Walker it was 'the most exasperating' of Godard's films...with its excesses of self-indulgence, childishness, and brutal wilfulness'.⁶² John Coleman wrote 'not only is it very bad but its badness seems to arise from something personal and plaintive',⁶³ and for Dilys Powell, Godard's 'self-confidence and self-indulgence join hands to lead him into a disaster area'.⁶⁴

The film and the surrounding publicity around Godard marked a change in British film culture. Writers like Robin Wood in *New Left Review*, Ian Cameron in *Movie*, and Tom Milne in *Sight and Sound* wrote extensively about Godard's revolutionary approach to filmmaking. And Richard Roud, who had consistently supported Godard, organised a big Godard season at the NFT in 1966, and published the first definitive book in English on Godard in 1967, the first of the BFI *Cinema One* series.

5.4 Mapping the exhibition of foreign films: a case of uneven development

Foreign film imports in the 1960s, in relation to numbers of British and American films, were relatively strong. In 1967, for example, there were 106 foreign language films, 42 of which were co-productions, 12 were French and 8 Italian, compared to 85 American and 77 British.⁶⁵ Foreign film production, with its increasing numbers of the more economically viable co-productions, was able to take advantage of cutbacks in Hollywood production and the decline of British filmmaking.⁶⁶ The overall figures, however, have to be set against the context of the continuing, dramatic decline of cinemagoing whereby admissions fell from 501 million in 1960 to 193 million in 1970

⁵⁹ Brody, 2008, 250.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ BFI Press Cuttings, *Pierrot le Fou*, *Guardian*, 13/4/66

⁶² Ibid., *Evening Standard*, 14/4/66.

⁶³ Ibid., *New Statesman*, 22/4/66.

⁶⁴ Ibid., *The Sunday Times*, 17/4/66.

⁶⁵ Figures aggregated from *MFB*. The British figures include the American films made in Britain.

⁶⁶ Many art films associated with one national cinema were in fact co-productions, including most of Antonioni, Visconti and Godard.

and the number of cinemas went down from 3,034 to 1,529.⁶⁷ Almost half of the 106 foreign language films were dubbed or distributed in specially made English versions. The few that were given wide release included the English language version of Demy's second musical, *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, distributed by Warner, *Two Weeks in September*, another Bardot vehicle distributed by Rank, and *Viva Maria*, distributed by United Artists and shown on the Odeon circuit. Unusually for a subtitled film *Un homme et une femme*, distributed by United Artists through Odeon cinemas, was highly successful. United Artists, hoping to repeat the success, paid \$1 million for the rights to Bergman's *Persona* and *Hour of the Wolf*. Although *Persona* ran at Academy 2 for two months in October and November 1967, it was not widely distributed in the UK and both films were commercial flops.⁶⁸

Two highly successful, dubbed spaghetti westerns were also shown on the Odeon circuits, *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964) and *For A Few Dollars More* (1965). Most of the other dubbed films were continental genre products – thrillers, spy films, horror, and comedy. Some were shown on the circuits as second features, distributed by the big companies including 20th Century Fox, United Artists, or MGM, whilst others had limited distribution through small chains or independents.

Foreign films still meant predominantly sex, as at least half of the foreign films in 1967 were rated X and additionally cut by the censor. The titles of at least 20 of them trumpeted that their chief selling point was sex: typical examples were *Sex in the Grass*, an Austrian nudist film; *The Rape from Greece*; and *Hamburg, City of Vice*, distributed by Gala which, along with Miracle and Compton Cameo, continued to lead the market in the handling of the more risqué continental films.

An interesting newcomer in this arena was Antony Balch, also manager of the Jacey Piccadilly, known for its sexploitation films and occasional art crossovers like *Onibaba*.⁶⁹ He picked up the sex films, with no stars or named directors, for next to nothing at the markets in Cannes and Venice. His most successful import was the French film, *The Pussycats* which was described in *MFB* as 'lunatic sex romps reduced to total incoherence', having been cut from 105 minutes to 64.⁷⁰ But Balch had an eye for interesting films, which were either out of fashion or not yet recognised by the critics. In 1967 he distributed *Les Fêtes galantes*, the French/Romanian period farce directed by the now unfashionable René Clair. In 1967 he handled *The Pornographer*, by Shohei Imamura, a black comedy about pornography, voyeurism and incest, rejected by the BBFC and described by *MFB* as 'a curiosity' and 'bizarre',

⁶⁷ Eyles, 2009, 82.

⁶⁸ For the full story of United Artists involvement in foreign language distribution, see Balio, 1987.

⁶⁹ Today Balch is best remembered as the collaborator and friend of William Burroughs and Kenneth Anger, and as director of *Horror Hospital*.

⁷⁰ *MFB*, December 1967, 192.

but 'not prurient or sensational'.⁷¹ Another of his discoveries was Naboru Nakamura's *The Shape of Night* retitled *The Beautiful People*. A widescreen, colour melodrama, originally described in the *MFB* as a 'Japanese pimp and prostitute saga', it has recently been restored and reshown at Venice where it was much admired by Nick James of *Sight and Sound* who made comparisons with the films of Douglas Sirk and Wong Kar-wai.⁷²

A Swedish film of 1967 which broke new ground in what was allowable on cinema screens provided a further example of the crossover appeal of some arthouse films, particularly those from Sweden, for the sexploitation market. *Night Games* directed by Mai Zetterling and banned from public showing in Venice for scenes of sexuality, childbirth and vomiting, was distributed by Gala after BBFC cuts.

Gala, the largest distributor of foreign language films, continued to epitomise the dual appeal of sex and art in the foreign film market in Britain and, as always, the offer included a number of interesting art films. In 1967 alone Rive distributed Bresson's *Au Hasard Balthazar*, Rivette's *La Religieuse* and Godard's *Masculin Féminin*, none of which were commercially successful but all of which have since entered the arthouse canon.

Of the total of 106 films, only about 35 could be classed as art films, loosely defined by the name of the director and/or their status at the festivals, or occasionally even by the fact that they were subtitled, which in itself connoted cultural status. Most of these 35 were handled by specialist distributors and shown on the smaller circuits, independent cinemas and eventually film societies. Contemporary remained the leading distributor of quality art films and by the early 1970s the catalogue reached over 1,000 titles in about 40 languages.⁷³ Cooper was almost the sole importer of films from the Eastern Bloc, on an impressive average of about ten each year. In 1967 he imported *The Saragossa Manuscript*, *Barrier*, and *See You Tomorrow* from Poland; *Intimate Lighting* and *Every Young Man* from Czechoslovakia; *Twenty Hours* and *Cold Days* from Hungary; *The First Teacher* and *Lenin in Poland* from the Soviet Union; and *The Adventures of Werner Holt* from East Germany. He also distributed festival winners from across the world, still pursuing his socialist postwar dream of international understanding and respect for other cultures. Contemporary releases of 1967 also show a commitment to formal innovation with *Yesterday Girl* (Alexander Kluge), *An Actor's Revenge* (Kon Ichikawa), *L'Immortelle* (Alain Robbe-Grillet) and *Bitter Fruit* (Jacqueline Audry).

⁷¹ Ibid., July 1967, 102.

⁷² James, 2013.

⁷³ His closest rival was the much smaller Connoisseur Films run by Bill Pallenca whose films premiered at the Academy and who did good business with the 16mm film society market with films like *Breathless*, *Pierrot le fou*, *Closely Observed Trains*, *Accattone*, *A Man Escaped* and *Rashomon*.

The major complaint from cinephiles outside London remained the lack of access to foreign language films. In Summer 1964, *Sight and Sound* published the results of a small investigation into the commercial screenings of three art films, *Last Year at Marienbad*, *Viridiana* and *Vivre sa vie*, from information provided by the two distribution companies concerned, Miracle and Compton.⁷⁴ The findings were illustrated by a map. (Figure 13). By far the most popular film was *Viridiana* with 79 bookings (16 in Greater London) and particularly strong bookings in the North of England. Miracle's marketing had already proclaimed it 'eXceptional', 'sensational', and 'controversial'⁷⁵ and in Leeds it was even re-titled *Viridiana and Her Lecherous Uncle*.⁷⁶ There were 46 bookings for *Marienbad* (10 in London) and 37 for *Vivre sa vie* (5 in London). 20 cinemas outside London showed all three films: the metropolitan centres of Manchester, Liverpool, Nottingham, Birmingham, Cardiff, Glasgow and Edinburgh; the university towns of Oxford, Cambridge, Exeter, and Brighton; and a handful of other independent cinemas in towns which included Coventry, Bournemouth, Wallasey and Dundee. Whilst admitting that the survey could hardly be graced with the term research, *Sight and Sound* argued that the limited results gave some cause for optimism and highlighted the need for large scale, systematic research.

Meanwhile, the small chains retained control of film exhibition in the regional cities. The Jacey chain, as well as their five London cinemas, had Cinephones in Manchester and Birmingham and, at various points in the 1960s, in Edinburgh, Bristol, Liverpool and Brighton. The case study of the Manchester Cinephone in Chapter 4 showed how the mixed programming of art and sex gradually gave way to a predominance of sex films, a change attributed to audience demand, at least according to John Cohen, grandson of Joseph Cohen, the original founder.⁷⁷ Programmes in most cinemas retained some art film programming, especially in the student-orientated Brighton Jacey, where in January 1967, double bills included *I am a Fugitive from a White Slave Gang* with *London in the Raw*, *Alphaville* with *Les Carabiniers*, *The Decadent Influence* and *Lola*, *Casanova 70* and *The Love Goddesses*.⁷⁸ In February 1968 the Birmingham Cinephone was showing *Angélique*, *The Pornographer*, and *Seduced in Sodom* alongside Kurosawa's *High and Low*, a

⁷⁴ S&S, vol.33, no.3, Summer 1964, 107.

⁷⁵ CFR, August 1962, 26.

⁷⁶ S&S, vol.33, no.4, Autumn 1964, 210. This title was referred to in a letter from James Medcalf, Film Secretary of Bradford City Playhouse, who pointed out that the three films were not typical, as two had a sex appeal and *Last year at Marienbad* had huge coverage in the press.

⁷⁷ On the Jacey website, John Cohen regrets that Jacey is now mainly remembered for sex films. His account of his parents at Cannes, often in the company of Kenneth Rive, is nostalgic for the days of continental film programming before the change to sex films. 'Dad and I were disenchanted with the films that provided the best box office results'. That, and rising rents led to the liquidation of Jacey in 1981. See <<http://www.jncohen.net/JaceyGroup/JosephCohen.htm>>, accessed 29/08/16.

⁷⁸ CFR, January 1967, listings, 26.

revival of *And Woman . . . Was Created* and Godard's *Masculin féminin*. In the same month the Manchester Cinephone showed Kurosawa's *High and Low*, revived *And Woman . . . Was Created*, and introduced Godard's *Masculin Féminin*.⁷⁹ There were few other arthouse films.

The Classic chain was growing in the 1960s: by 1967 there were 10 Classics in London out of a total of 87 across the country. The Classics did not specialise in foreign language films, except for their weekend late night screenings which offered a rich variety of international films. In May 1968, for example, the Brighton Friday late shows were *La Règle du jeu*, *The Vanishing Corporal*, *Nazarin* and *World of Apu*. Meanwhile *Ugetsu monogatari* was on offer in Sheffield and *Hiroshima mon amour*, *The Carmelites* and *Alexander Nevsky* in Leeds.⁸⁰ Late night screenings were obviously cheap programming aimed at the new young adult and student market.

Some intriguing independent cinemas contributed to the geographic spread on the *Sight and Sound* map. The Tivoli Dundee, Rex Cambridge, Globe Cardiff, and Rialto Colwyn Bay, all continued to survive on foreign language films. There was also the Winton Continental Bournemouth, owned by local councillor and ex-head of the Cinema Exhibitors Association (hereafter CEA), Harry Mears, who in 1953 along with other exhibitors, had gone into continental screenings, partly to avoid the barring rules. The Continentale Kemp Town Brighton was another interesting example. Converted from a Congregational Chapel in the 1920s and then variously a cinema and a theatre, it was purchased by Myles Byrne in 1949. Byrne, as with Mears, was active in the local community and was to become a major promoter of the arts in Brighton, managing the theatre on the pier and working with the BFI on the running of the Brighton Film Theatre (later Cinescene) on North Street. He already ran a chain of 12 cinemas in 1949 when he took over the Continentale, which he turned into a foreign language cinema, and leased to George Fernie.⁸¹ Throughout the 1950s it showed an impressive selection of the latest foreign releases including *Seven Samurai*, *Two Acres of Land*, *Light Across the Street*, *Touchez pas au grisbi* and *Sawdust and Tinsel*.

Miles Byrne took over the cinema directly in 1965. After refurbishment he tried a policy of pornography in the afternoon and arthouse in the evening: in 1966 for example he programmed the alluring double bill of *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* with

⁷⁹ Ibid., February 1968, listings, 26.

⁸⁰ Ibid., May 1968, listings, 27.

⁸¹ It was definitely a family affair with George as projectionist, proprietor and commissioner, his wife Sue as cashier and usherette, and daughter Ellen in charge of sweets and cigarettes. Always regarded as cold and draughty, the Fernies tried to alter its image in January 1953 by installing a new infrared heating system, which, the adverts boasted was 'just like standing in the sun'. See <<http://cinematresures.org/theaters/3146>>, accessed 16/05/2016.

Catherine Deneuve and *De l'amour* with Anna Karina. (Figure 14). Ian Beck, an art student in the mid 1960s remembers the Continentale and its films as almost utopian spaces of fantasy, romance and style.

We would queue outside, lining up in all weathers, to see Nouvelle Vague films as they arrived, which they seemed to do in bewildering succession . . . Of course the sound in *The Continentale* wobbled sometimes. Yes, the screen was a fairly small and imperfect one, but what glories we sat through in those first runs. We watched the astonishing opening of Fellini's *Eight and a Half*, sighing with pleasure as Anna Karina danced the Madison, and weeping as *Jules et Jim* unfolded its lyrical tragedy.⁸²

The fact that many of the small independents were showing an increasing proportion of sex and nudist films was a concern expressed by James Quinn in his report for the BFI, *Outside London* in October 1965. He pointed out that cinema, no longer a mass art, had become an elective activity which appealed 'principally to young people at all levels of society, and to the most cultivated adults'.⁸³ And he argued that the current mixing of sexploitation and serious filmgoing was both unsatisfactory and disconcerting. One of his examples was a notice for *Last Year in Marienbad* outside a Birmingham cinema whose staple fare was sex films, which announced 'Normal programmes will be resumed next week'.⁸⁴ Like other commentators he was convinced that a cinema which showed *Hiroshima mon amour* one week and *It's a Bare, Bare World* the next, was confusing to the patrons of both types of film.⁸⁵

The longstanding accusation that the BFI was too London-centric now coincided with the political agenda of the new Labour Government, whose Minister of Culture, Jennie Lee, was arguing for greater attention to the cultural needs of the regions. Quinn pointed out that with the general decline of filmgoing, whole swathes of the country, particularly in the North, were now deprived of cinemas. But local authorities, universities, arts centres, and film societies were willing, with specialist help and some financial aid from the BFI, to pick up the responsibility.

Outside London resulted in the opening of 15 Regional Film Theatres by 1968. These followed a variety of models, most being part time, and a variety of funding patterns, usually the BFI plus local authorities, and they operated in venues which included university lecture theatres, libraries and arts centres. Only three were housed in cinemas, in Manchester, Newcastle and Brighton. Manchester was run by an

⁸² Beck, 2010.

⁸³ Quinn, 1965, 36,

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 9

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

independent committee, but Newcastle and Brighton were directly controlled by the BFI. The aim was to emulate or extend the BFI's National Film Theatre by screening the best in world cinema from all periods and countries. The BFI made a controversial start at Tyneside Film Theatre by opening with *Hugs and Kisses*, which showed a 15 second scene of a female nude with pubic hair, cut for its London run, but passed with an A certificate by the Newcastle Watch Committee. Its chairman, Councillor Tom Waters, was unrepentant and told the press, 'We thought nothing to it. It was just a young lass taking her scanties off to go to bed. After all, this is a specialist theatre which goes in for these arty-crafty films'.⁸⁶ In the first year, the film theatre continued to show the latest foreign language releases including Bergman's *Persona* and Bresson's *Mouchette*, as well as films by this time considered classics like *Les Enfants du paradis* and *La Kermesse héroïque*.⁸⁷

All three cinemas soon reported heavy losses, but that is a matter for analysis in another study.

5.5 The Academy in your living room: television and foreign films

I saw my first Buñuel film, *Exterminating Angel*, on *World Cinema*. I saw Truffaut films and Godard films and Melville films there. One night they screened the complete version of *Seven Samurai*, more than three hours long, and I watched it, mesmerised. . . Growing up in Merseyside in the 1960s, this was the only regular access to foreign-language cinema I had. Later I discovered a film society at the Bluecoat Chambers, and I saw 16mm prints of *Yojimbo* and *Weekend* projected on a wall but I wouldn't have gone if I hadn't encountered their authors on *World Cinema* first.

—Alex Cox (2004)⁸⁸

Alex Cox, film director and presenter of *Moviedrome*, the popular BBC2 series of cult film screenings which started in 1988, remembered rushing home from the pub of a Friday night in his school uniform to catch *World Cinema*. This BBC2 series, which ran from 1964 for 12 years, dramatically altered the accessibility of international cinema. Eventually followed by the other channels, television became a major platform for films and, as Andy Medhurst was to point out at a later date, 'our national repertory cinema'.⁸⁹

'Academy in your living room' was the title given by Allen Eyles in his films and television column for *Films and Filming* to BBC2's *World Cinema*, the first regular

⁸⁶ Chaplin, 2011, 78.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 80-81.

⁸⁸ Cox, 2004.

⁸⁹ S&S, vol.5, no.1, January 1995, 23.

strand of foreign subtitled films on TV.⁹⁰ Although the screening of classic foreign films on TV went back to the early days when the British industry actively banned British and American films on television, it was not until the early 1960s that television became a major provider of films, partly because Hollywood started selling packages of vintage films to ITV and BBC.

The big breakthrough for the screening of contemporary foreign films was BBC 1's *International Film Season* in 1963. This started in January with the Wajda trilogy and was followed by *Hiroshima mon amour*, *Bicycle Thieves*, *The Lady with the Little Dog*, and the British premiere of Olmi's first feature *Time Stood Still*. Commentators were particularly impressed by the size of the audience. Derek Hill reported in *Sight and Sound* that the audience ranged from 6½ million for *Ashes and Diamonds* to 8¾ million for *Bicycle Thieves* which, as he pointed out, was three times the national total of those who had seen the smash Hollywood hit, *South Pacific*.⁹¹

The TV screenings were initially viewed with alarm by the industry. Rive withdrew *Hiroshima mon amour* from his cinemas in the week of the TV transmission and reported that attendances subsequently shrank dramatically. The film had been purchased directly from the producer, so Rive announced a boycott of any films sold in this way, including Contemporary who sold the Wajda trilogy and *Lady with the Little Dog* to the BBC.⁹² Despite complaints from the CEA, a second series of *International Film Season* opened on July 5 with *Sunday in August*, part of a season of ten films which included *Stella* and *Il bell'antonio*.⁹³

BBC2 was set up in 1964 with a remit to cater for minority tastes, but the *Radio Times* introduction to the first international film season announced that foreign films would no longer be 'tucked away in specialised cinemas' and launched a policy of showing the best of world cinema, casting the net wider than just famous classics.⁹⁴ The first foreign film slot was *Cinema 625* which for a while co-existed with BBC1's *International Film Season*. It offered a mix of well known classics like *Seven Samurai*, lesser known but prize winning films like *A Girl in Black* and *Death of a Cyclist*, a number of encores (repeats), and premieres including the Polish *How to be Loved* and two Czech films, *Transport from Paradise* and *On a Tightrope*. Regular seasons on BBC2 became the norm when David Francis from the National Film Archive, was appointed as purchaser, and then programmer, of the newly named slot *World Cinema*, in 1965. Films, about 50 a year, were usually screened late in the evening, starting around 9.15, and occasionally later, on Sundays, Tuesdays, or Thursdays,

⁹⁰ Allen Eyles, *F&F*, October 1967, 30.

⁹¹ *S&S*, vol.32, no.2, Spring 1963, 66.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ In fact the CEA did not impose a ban and Rive had to relent.

⁹⁴ *Radio Times*, 24/5/64, 16.

finally settling for Fridays in late 1968. The films make up a roll call of the cream of international cinema, not only from the established auteurs but also new films, including many from Eastern Europe.

There were pragmatic reasons for the BBC's espousal of foreign films: they were cheap programming. The rule that TV was not allowed to show a film until five years after its release did not apply to foreign films. They could be shown simultaneously with, or even before, their cinema release and in the early days the cost was only £1,000 for three transmissions over seven years. David Francis bought from markets, usually the BRUNO film forum, and sometimes from the distributors or national film agencies like Hungarofilm and Film Polski.⁹⁵ Occasionally he bought straight from the filmmaker, for example, Nikos Koundouras' *The Outlaws* (1958), premiered on *World Cinema* on 16 November 1967, which, according to the director, changed his life since it was then shown elsewhere.⁹⁶

Films rights were purchased singly, so seasons were rare. An exception was the Munk season of five films transmitted following his death, and in February 1967 a similar tribute was paid to the great Russian actor, Nikolai Cherkasov, when *Alexander Nevsky*, *Ivan the Terrible Parts 1 and 2* and *Don Quixote* were shown. Films were introduced and contextualised in the *Radio Times* with write-ups and stills, while review programmes such as *Film Preview*, covered forthcoming films. For example, on 26 May 1966, a few days before its screening, *Breathless*, was introduced by Philip Jenkinson along with an introduction to *Pierrot le fou*. The programme *The Movies*, started in 1967, often featured in-depth interviews with European directors, including Peter Wollen with Rossellini and Jacques Rivette with Jean Renoir.

The broadcasting of the films was a technical feat.⁹⁷ Telecine rather than video was used, with subtitles on a separate band over the image, unless it was a widescreen film. Colour, a signifier of modernization, made a big difference to the experience of watching film on television. Until December 1967 when BBC2 pioneered colour transmission, viewers had a small black and white experience of such colour films as *Senso* and *Don Quixote*. After that they could see films like Renoir's *French Can Can* or Ozu's *An Autumn Afternoon*, both of which made expressive use of colour.

Subtitling, by John Minchinton and Mai Harris, had to be done from scratch as there was less room for words on television than on the cinema screen. According to

⁹⁵ Interestingly he did not go to the festivals. His choices were based on viewings at markets or on his wider reading about foreign films.

⁹⁶ David Francis interview, 5/8/14.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

Minchinton, the art of subtitling was 'rather like translating poetry, only the factor of form becomes one of time. People read faster than they did in the silent days but not that fast'.⁹⁸ John Coleman was one of the few film critics to write about the BBC's programming of foreign language films: there were no press screenings, and besides, many film critics were disparaging about showing films on a tiny screen in a domestic setting. Coleman wrote in the *New Statesman* in 1967 that the BBC had not only achieved audiences of four million when cinema managers had always insisted that they hated subtitles but also had introduced newly subtitled versions of a large number of films including *Toni*, *L'Immortelle*, *Ivan the Terrible*, and *Yesterday Girl*.⁹⁹

The censor's cuts were often reinstated. Francis said that he had a 'running battle' with John Trevelyan, but was able to argue that the films were for a minority audience after the 9pm watershed. His BBC colleagues in drama even complained that things were allowed in foreign films that would not be passed for live dramas. John Coleman also asserted that the BBC was being too coy about its achievements and ought to be 'thumping a drum'.¹⁰⁰ But Francis preferred a lower profile, as he did not want to upset the industry or draw too much attention to censorship.¹⁰¹

The initial concern of specialist cinemas soon died down as it transpired that premieres of films sometimes even boosted their success in cinemas. The screening of Robbe-Grillet's *L'Immortelle*, Sunday 30 April 1967, followed by a profile of the writer turned director on *The Movies* on 1 May, added to the publicity surrounding its premiere on 4 May at the Paris Pullman. It then ran for four weeks. And when *Knife in the Water* was transmitted at the same time as its revival at the Academy, ticket sales went up.¹⁰² BBC2 also introduced British audiences to the films of the Hungarian director István Szabó with the screening in January 1967 of his earlier film *Daydreaming* which subsequently secured distribution. After the success of Jancsó's *The Round-Up* at the Academy it was screened on World Cinema on 25 June 1967, and an episode of *The Movies* was devoted to an interview with Jancsó by Hungarian immigrant director Robert Vas.

Film societies, as well as cinemas, were also initially apprehensive about possible competition. After the first *International Film Season* on BBC1, the BFFS magazine *Film* commented that the size of the TV audience was 100 times greater than that of the total national society membership.¹⁰³ But in 1964, of the 341 members of Bourneville Film Society who filled in a questionnaire which asked if TV would affect

⁹⁸ Coleman, 1967, 301.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ David Francis interview, 5/8/14.

¹⁰² *F&F*, June 1967, 29.

¹⁰³ *Film*, no.36, Summer 1963, 35-36.

their society membership, an overwhelming majority replied no.¹⁰⁴ And a survey by *Film* of distributors in Spring 1966 confirmed that TV did not kill bookings. Healthy bookings were reported for *Ashes and Diamonds*, *Rashomon*, *Ballad of a Soldier*, and *Breathless*, all of which had been shown on TV.¹⁰⁵

5.6 Film societies as cultural centres

Film societies, which permeated the country, continued to provide an alternative model of the geographic spread of foreign film culture. This model, drawing again on the ideas of Doreen Massey, also reinstates the history of film societies as sites of dynamic film culture, spaces which were not just about films, but also about the relationships of audiences to films, and of members to one another in their locality and in regional and national networks. If the film society movement is recognised as a living network in this period, able to challenge the uneven power geometries of cultural film exhibition, then the national picture looks both more densely populated and less bleak.

The 1960s was a period of growth: in 1963 there were 400 film societies with over 50,000 members affiliated to the BFFS and by 1969 the number of societies had risen to 550. In 1965, the CBA reported contact with a total of 817 organisations, the majority community based, but with approximately 40 workplace societies, 135 in universities, art colleges, or teacher training colleges, and over 160 school societies.¹⁰⁶

The table below, based on the programmes of 11 film societies in 1964, enables a comparative study of programming, venues and aims. Films are for the month of March unless otherwise stated.¹⁰⁷

Table 6: Film societies; programming, venues and aims 1964

Society	Location	Film title(s)	Details of film	Additional information
St Albans	College of FE and Old Folks Welfare Centre for Connoisseur Thursdays.	<i>Wir Wunderkinder /Aren't We Wonderful?</i>	Germany, 1958, Hoffman	18 th season. Reciprocal attendance at screenings at Luton, Barnet and Hertford societies.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., no. 38, Spring 1964, 40.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., no. 47, Winter 1966, 20.

¹⁰⁶ Quinn, 1965, 38-44.

¹⁰⁷ Film society programmes, author's own.

Society	Location	Film title(s)	Details of film	Additional information
Eastbourne	Gas Showroom	<i>Il posto</i> and <i>Volcano</i>	Italy, 1960, Olmi France, 1959, Tazieff.	16mm. 14 th year, fortnightly meetings. Discussions, coffee, and films 'of international repute'.
Bedford	Picturedrome Cinema, which closed in 1964 then Mander College and Guild House	<i>Knife in the Water</i>	Poland, 1961, Polanski	35mm at Picturedrome Sunday afternoon. 16mm shows at Mander College Assembly Hall and Film Museum Series (mainly silent) at Bedford Guild House.
Nottingham Co-operative	Concert Hall Co-op Educational Centre (35 and 16mm projection)	<i>Ugetsu monogatari</i> and <i>The Threepenny Opera</i>	Japan, 1953, Mizoguchi Germany, 1931, Pabst	Fortnightly. Accompanying shorts, all listed. Other Co-op courses listed included drama, music, discussion groups, and tape recording.
Great Yarmouth	College of Art	<i>The Confessions of Felix Krull</i>	Germany, 1957, Hoffman	9 main shows, all with shorts, a children's show and a Special Series (art, experimental, old) Programme claimed 'our members are not necessarily long haired or solemn'.
Manchester and Salford (choice of film by members' poll for the season)	Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society	Not known. Top choices of members' poll in next column	<i>Les Enfants du paradis</i> , <i>The Devil and the Nun</i> , <i>Il posto</i> , <i>Nazarin</i> .	Society in debt and considering closing. Free use of the Lit and Phil in exchange for projecting for 50 'outside' meetings in last season.
Sheffield	Abbeydale Cinema, other venue for 16 mm screenings unknown.	<i>Bandits of Orgosolo</i> (16mm), Jan. 64 <i>Two Daughters</i> and <i>All the Gold in the World</i> (35mm)	Italy, 1961, De Sica. India, 1961, Ray. France/Italy, 1961, Clair	Society set up by Margaret Hancock (national secretary of BFFS) and two young architects.

Society	Location	Film title(s)	Details of film	Additional information
Dorchester	The Corn Exchange	<i>Don Q, Son of Zorro</i> (live piano) <i>And Lady with a Little Dog</i>	USA, 1925, Crisp USSR, 1960, Heifets	Fortnightly meetings. Feature plus shorts. Special series of shorts/documentaries and special interest films.
Southampton	Institute of Education	<i>Romeo, Juliet and Darkness</i>	Czechoslovakia, 1959, Weiss	16mm. Accompanying shorts.
Cheltenham	16mm at Playhouse, and 35mm Sunday afternoons at Daffodil Cinema (1920s art deco)	<i>Aren't We Wonderful?</i> and <i>Rocco and His Brothers</i>	Germany, 1958, Hoffman Italy, 1960, Visconti	Started 1945, Thorold Dickinson President. A rich programme of shorts and cartoons, and a serious mission statement.
Leicester (Jan. 1964 programme)	Vaughan College, (35mm)	The World of Women: <i>Cleo from 5 to 7</i> + <i>L'Opéra Mouffe</i> (short)	France/Italy, 1961, Varda France, 1958, Varda	<i>L'Opéra Mouffe</i> screened last, as it 'might seem offensive to some members, dealing as it does with the abstract thoughts of a pregnant woman'.

Place and ambience

Only three societies had access to a cinema, most showing their films in teacher training, further education or art colleges. Leicester Film Society and Vaughan College, home of the Extra Mural Department of the University, for example, had a partnership which went back to the early 1930s, and met in a well equipped college hall. In Nottingham the Co-operative Movement had a new purpose built adult education centre which was featured on the front of the Nottingham Film Society leaflet.¹⁰⁸ Other societies used civic centres, like the town hall or corn exchange, whilst the Eastbourne Film Society screened in the local gas demonstration theatre. Eastbourne's publicity made a feature of its 'well sprung, raked seating' and enticed new members with the promise of coffee, chatting, and post screening discussions. The St Albans Society, which sometimes met at the Old Folks Hall for 'Connoisseur Thursdays' which catered for specialist interests, such as anthropology, art history, and silent films, recommended this venue for its sociable ambience, since coffee could be served in the comfortable chairs at the side of the hall. Manchester and Salford's venue, the lecture room of the Lit and Phil (Literary and Philosophical

¹⁰⁸ The Co-op Centre's well-equipped hall was one reason for Nottingham and District Film Society reluctantly agreeing to a merger. See Selfe, 2007, 164-169.

Society) on the other hand, showed that cultural capital could be imparted by the gravitas of the venue, described by a committee member as:

an environment that suggested we were here to consider matters seriously and we were to behave ourselves . . . with its quiet air of authority and order, an appropriate enough setting for the lofty pursuit of studying the art of the cinema.¹⁰⁹

Lack of refreshments and the raked seating meant there was not much mixing, and when the traditional local pub with benches round the walls, 'like a railway waiting room' was modernized to become *Paddy's Goose* with 'purple velvet and knee cracking sewing machines' and loud music, even the committee gave up post screening socialising.¹¹⁰

These snapshots of film societies as sites of social and cultural relationships suggest a mixture of commitment to inclusive local community relationships, the desire to differentiate the film society from popular entertainment cinema by elevating film to an intellectual pursuit, and a continuing loyalty to the humanist ideals of international understanding.

Programming

It was common for metropolitan critics to be dismissive of film society programming, and even the Film Club columnists for *Films and Filming* joined in.¹¹¹ David Shipman, whilst admitting that provincial societies without access to specialist cinemas were sensible to show 'last year's Academy-Paris Pullman-Cameo Poly offers', castigated others for showing mainstream commercial films. He singled out Chingford's programme for showing classics, like *Les Enfants du paradis*, which were already regularly screened at the Academy.¹¹² And Philip Strick's coverage of forthcoming programming for the 1967-68 season wrote of the 'customary cold wind of conformism' where ex-West End Continental prestige fare, like *The Round-Up*, *Intimate Lighting*, *Juliet of the Spirits* and *An Actor's Revenge* were the favourites.¹¹³ He complained that it was like reading last year's *What's On* and asserted that he looked instead to independent fleapits for more unusual programming.

How far do the actual programmes in the table back up this metropolitan criticism? Most consisted of 16mm titles, with one each from Japan, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, three from Italy and two each from France, USSR, and Germany.¹¹⁴ Also shown were older films like *Ugetsu monogatari* which was only recently made

¹⁰⁹ Pitt, 1990, 16.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹¹¹ In the 1960s *F&F* gave the most comprehensive coverage of the activities of individual film societies.

¹¹² *F&F*, October 1964, 35.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, September 1967, 30.

¹¹⁴ Two film societies chose *Aren't We Wonderful*, a German satiric comedy about the rise of Nazism, which was a winner of many prizes including the Golden Globe at Moscow. The films of Hoffman, the director, were promoted at the 1962 National Viewing Session. Today he is relatively unknown.

available on 16mm. The programming, not surprisingly, reflected the opinions of critics and publicity by distributors, especially Contemporary and Connoisseur, as well as the influence of the LFF, the NFT and the London art cinemas. The national viewing weekends were especially important as shop windows for newly released films or transfers to 16mm, as well as providing invaluable networking opportunities. The 16mm viewing sessions run by the BFFS showed about eight newly available features, plus 25 shorts, as did the 35mm viewing sessions organised by the CBA. David Meeker recalled that the 35mm sessions were used as a testing ground for the making of 16mm prints.¹¹⁵

Some programmes in film societies were influenced by the stated preferences of members, as their views were usually sought, and this may account for the more mainstream choices. In fact there was no shortage of adventurous and original programming, as the programme for the Bedford Film Society shows. (Figure 15). Alan Howden, later to become Head of Acquisitions for the BBC, was booker of films for Manchester and Salford Film Society in the early 1960s and he recalled committee discussions of programming being dominated by the most enthusiastic and knowledgeable cinephiles like himself.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, scope for originality in programming was often to be found in the choice of shorts, and in the additional programmes and discussion groups which specialised in silent or avant-garde film, art history or science.

University film societies

The increasing popularity of art films and the expansion of student numbers went hand in hand in the 1960s, when the number and size of university film societies increased. Traditionally university towns, like Oxford and Cambridge, had strong societies jointly supported by academics and local professionals. The St Andrews and The Queens University of Belfast Film Societies, considered here, although very different localities, had common characteristics, both in their 'high art' programming and the ways in which they operated as 'cultural hubs' for their respective areas.

The St Andrews Film Society started with Dundee as a partner in 1935. They split after the war and by 1950 St Andrews had a membership of 650, reaching 1,025 by the mid 1960s, an impressive figure for a tiny town with a population of less than 14,000. The quality of its programmes and the detailed programme notes communicated the message of film as high art. Screenings were held fortnightly on Sunday afternoons, repeated in the evening, at the New Picture House in North

¹¹⁵ David Meeker interview, 15/03/15.

¹¹⁶ Alan Howden telephone interview, 05/08/16. Other interviewees who became prominent in film culture, including Andrew Youdell, Allen Eyles, and Simon Field, gained their programming experience in film societies in the 1960s.

Street. The programme was firmly committed to modernist international film culture. Of the 13 films in the 1965-1966 season, nine were foreign festival prize winners: 8½ *The Passenger* in a double bill with *Bande à part*, *Il mare*, *The Goddess*, *Le Feu follet*, *Orpheus*, *Smiles of a Summer Night*, and the Russian *Hamlet*.¹¹⁷ To add to the cultural capital of the experience the audience listened to classical music such as Mussorgsky, Ravel, and Mendelssohn or, just as often, to the jazz of Miles Davis, Thelonius Monk or Dizzy Gillespie. The programmes ran for two hours and 45 minutes, usually a main feature with two or three shorts, for example *L'Assassino* was accompanied by *Le Cadeau*, a French animation and *Cradle of Music*, an Austrian documentary.¹¹⁸

The film society was a well established part of the town community, with its AGM in the Court House and a council which included prominent local residents such as J.K. Robertson, the editor of the local newspaper *St Andrews Citizen*, as well as university academics. The honorary president was The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, a politician active in the arts, and honorary vice presidents included two professors.

Queens Belfast also acted as a cultural centre for the town and the surrounding areas. Screenings at Queens went back to the 1930s, and then in 1951 Queen's University of Belfast Film Society was formed by the Extra Mural Department. The society was described as 'a bridge between the University and the people of the province' by the Vice Chancellor, Dr Eric Ashby, at its inaugural show which consisted of the feature *Sylvie et le fantôme*, an Italian documentary, *Romantici a Venezia*, and a British puppet animation, *The Story of Time*.¹¹⁹ Within a year, by May 1952, membership reached 858.¹²⁰ It held twice monthly screenings, both 35mm and 16mm, in the Whitla Hall, an impressive 1930s building on campus which seated over 1,000. Membership by the 1960s may well have been over 1,000, and there was apparently always a waiting list.¹²¹ The student newspaper, *The Gown*, however, was critical of the low proportion of student members.

This society for eggheads, as it is commonly regarded does not deserve this somewhat formidable latter title. The most terrifying aspect of this erstwhile

¹¹⁷ *St Andrews Film Society Programme*, 1965-1966 at <<http://cinemastandrews.org.uk/archive/the-st-andrews-film-society/>> , accessed 2/6/16.

¹¹⁸ *St Andrews Film Society Programme*, 1964-1965 at <<http://cinemastandrews.org.uk/archive/the-st-andrews-film-society/>> , accessed 2/6/16.

¹¹⁹ *Belfast Telegraph*, 25/10/51.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 29/5/52.

¹²¹ Ian Christie interview, 21/3/16.

University Society was not, though many would have it, the film *October*, it is the proportion of approximately five to one of non-student to student members.¹²²

By 1962, despite a previous report of students not filling the quota of 220 membership places,¹²³ *The Gown* complained about the difficulty students encountered getting tickets and even called for an undergraduate only film society.¹²⁴

The society programme, *Film News*, had a modernist design of lights and sprocket holes on its cover. Like St Andrews, it also communicated a serious, educational, and uncompromising art film appeal, with film titles in their language of origin. The programme from December 1962 is typical.¹²⁵ The main feature, *Ballad of a Soldier*, was preceded by three shorts: *Samac* (12 mins, 1958, 35mm), a Yugoslavian animation; *Michael* (13 mins, 1958/61) about a 'mongol' boy, an amateur film produced by the BFI Experimental Film Committee; and *An Underground Palace* (20 mins, 1958, 35mm), a Chinese archaeological film from the Central Newsreel and Documentary Film Studios.¹²⁶ Notes on the feature were written by A.D.F., an academic at Queens and a committee member. On other occasions, extracts from national film publications were used: for example, when *The Lady with the Little Dog* was shown in October 1962, an article by Bergman, 'Adapting Chekhov for the Screen' was printed, courtesy of *Films and Filming*.¹²⁷ A regular feature of the programme, which shows the educational mission of the society, was the guide to circuit, or sometimes city, films which usually came from *Monthly Film Bulletin*.

The educational/extra mural roots of the film society are also apparent in the programme. The report of the 1962 AGM notes a special programme for senior pupils, a screening of *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, when school parties came from as far as Londonderry and Enniskillen.¹²⁸ Discussion groups, some in conjunction with the Belfast WEA were held on subjects like 'Art into Film'. There is little suggestion of student presence on the committee, at least in 1962 when, it was reported that, 'the officers of the Society were re-elected and Dr W.G. Hesse was elected to the Committee'.¹²⁹

Ian Christie who became editor of the University arts magazine, *Interest*, in 1963 recalled that the Society was considered rather staid by the more culturally radical students, and that a rival New Cinema Club was set up in town which showed more

¹²² *The Gown*, Queens University Belfast, McClay Library Special Collections and Archives, 9/11/56.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 23/10/59.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 13/11/62.

¹²⁵ *Film News*, 5/12/62, author's own programme.

¹²⁶ Chinese documentaries were distributed by Stanley Forman whose company ETV, formerly Plato Films, distributed documentary and educational films from the Soviet Union and other Communist countries. Like Charles Cooper he was a member of the Communist Party.

¹²⁷ *Film News*, 10/10/62.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 5/12/62.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

'edgy' films like *Chronicle of a Summer*.¹³⁰ But the mid 1960s saw something of a cultural renaissance at Queens, when a high profile arts festival was set up by a student Michael Emmerson, who was also involved in the opening of the Queens Film Theatre in 1968, a purpose built cinema run by the University.

In contrast to these two examples of traditional town and gown societies, the Essex University Film Society was born from the modernization of higher education in the 1960s. With its parkland campus, its brutalist architecture, high rise residential towers, and international and interdisciplinary curriculum, Essex epitomised the progressive aspirations of the new universities. The first student intake, 122 in 1964, rose to 400 in 1965 and reached 2,000 in 1970. Like most other universities, the majority of students, about 60%, came from grammar school but as becomes clear from the pages of the student union newspaper *Wyvern*, most chose Essex because they were attracted to its non-traditional courses and informal atmosphere.

The film society was run by students who programmed a wide range of films, some of them controversial, like Kenneth Anger's *Fireworks*, which provoked a letter of complaint to *Wyvern*, describing it as 'a masochistic, morbid mess'.¹³¹ But it flourished from the beginning, aided by the fact that, in a campus university with little entertainment, it had a captive audience.¹³² According to Peter Sainsbury they showed 'three films a week, every week of the academic year, had a membership of hundreds, and offered good 16mm facilities in a hall seating 200'.¹³³

The main feature films were usually flagged up in the *Wyvern*. In 1966 highlights included: a double bill of Godard's *Le Petit Soldat* and Mai Zetterling's *War Games*, *Rashomon* (in collaboration with the School of Comparative Studies), and an all-day screening of the *Apu Trilogy*, described as 'a first for Essex over a dead weekend'. Ray's *The Music Room* was also recommended for 'those wanting to hear Indian music through Indian eyes rather than those of George Harrison should make their way to S411 on Sunday'.¹³⁴ The films in November and December included *Il mare*, *Diary of a Chambermaid*, *Intolerance*, *The Exterminating Angel*, *Childhood of Maxim Gorky*, *Charulata*, *The Virgin Spring*, and *3.10 to Yuma*.

The committee was completely student-centred, although young academics like Andrew Tudor and John Ross were also involved. Founder member and Secretary Barbara Sears was also the film reviewer for the *Wyvern*.¹³⁵ Two other leading committee members, Peter Sainsbury and Simon Field were soon to set up and edit

¹³⁰ Ian Christie interview, 21/3/16.

¹³¹ *Wyvern*, 11/03/66, 2.

¹³² Simon Field interview, 14/7/14.

¹³³ Knight and Thomas, 2012, 72.

¹³⁴ *Wyvern*, 28/10/66, 7.

¹³⁵ Women were rare on university film society committees.

Afterimage, a film magazine devoted to new forms in film, mixing the avant-garde with modernist world cinema.

5.7 Conclusions

This chapter has argued that the sixties constituted a high point in film history which saw a convergence of art cinema with the broader political and social narratives of the time. This was the decade when foreign language films evolved into a prestigious art form through a coalescence of infrastructural developments, a creative burst of filmmaking across Europe, critical communities who embraced modernism and auteurism, and receptive new audiences for innovative films.

One of the main aims of this thesis has been to trace institutional developments in order to explore the extent to which a strong infrastructure evolved. However, as I have shown, a significant problem was that cinemas prepared to show minority interest foreign films were few. On the positive side BBC2's *World Cinema* represented a major advance in provision at the same time as film societies, including those of the universities, were flourishing. Meanwhile the BFI maintained its strong position as champion of European art films as evidenced in *Sight and Sound* and the programming of the NFT and LFF.

The 1960s was undoubtedly the heyday of the European art film. Minority film culture was thriving, especially in London, and the diversity was impressive, ranging from big budget co-productions to the low budget New Wave, realist, and political films from a wide spread of countries. Numbers of imports peaked in 1967 when there were 35 to 40 subtitled art films out of a total of 106 foreign language films. Serious film criticism was well established with *Sight and Sound* now rivalled by *Movie*, whilst new standards for writing about films were created by the BFI's Cinema One series, starting with Richard Roud's seminal book on Godard in 1967.

Those who took part in *Cinema Memories* also attested to the cultural relevance of foreign art films. The memories speak in different ways about the affective and transformative power of the films in a period when the conjunction of new cinemas with young audiences created a distinctive film culture which was bound up with taste, identity and lifestyle. The next chapter is devoted to the *Cinema Memories* audience survey.

Chapter 6: Through the lens of memory: foreign language films and other worlds

For a nuanced and integrated understanding of how cinema works historically, culturally and experientially, it is essential to work at the point where historical, ethnographic and textual stories meet.

–Annette Kuhn (2002)¹

Memory alone cannot resurrect past time, because it is memory itself that shapes it, long after historical time has passed.

–Carolyn Steedman (1986)²

This thesis has used contemporary sources, including specialist film magazines, newspapers, censorship reports, and marketing and publicity materials, to construct its accounts of the creation of the field of film as art. It has also engaged with a wider range of historical and contemporary materials, including autobiographies and cultural histories as well as sociological studies, journalism, trade press, and even the rare cinema survey to broaden the investigation.

Largely absent, however, is that elusive element, the actual experiences of the audiences. This final chapter, therefore, engages with cinema goers' memories to recreate the quality of individuals' experiences of going to foreign language films. It does not assume, however, that memories are unmediated gateways to the facts of the past, and its approaches are informed by theoretical debates about the value and meaning of cultural memory work.

This study starts from the premise that memory has to be open to textual readings like any other piece of historical evidence. As cultural theorist Susannah Radstone has asserted, memory is 'a text to be deciphered, not a lost reality to be discovered', nor is it a 'transparent record of the past but rather a representation open to struggle and dispute'.³

Psychologist Charles Fernyhough, in his book *Pieces of Light*, which combined neuroscience with literature and reminiscence, insisted that remembering is above all an act of narration.

The truth is that autobiographical memories are not possessions that you either have or do not have. They are mental constructions, created in the present moment, according to the demands of the present . . . memory is more like a habit, a process of constructing something from its parts in similar but subtly changing ways each time, whenever the occasion arises. This reconstructive nature of memory can

¹ Kuhn, 2002, 7.

² Steedman, 1986, 29.

³ Radstone, 2000, 7-10.

make it unreliable . . . the end result may be vivid and convincing but vividness does not guarantee accuracy.⁴

However, as Annette Kuhn has argued, memories should not be equated with fictions. Rather, they should be seen as renewed narratives about the self, used to make sense of the world and our own place within it. Memories are active producers of meanings, 'neither pure experience nor pure event' and, importantly, are 'always discursive, always already textual', and therefore open to analysis like any other text.⁵ This approach underpinned Kuhn's large scale oral history survey of 1930s cinemagoing, the results of which, published as *An Everyday Magic: Cinema and Cultural Memory*, paid equal attention to both the discourses of popular memory and the actual experiences of cinemagoing.⁶

But memories, it is important to add, do have a relationship to history and their value lies, not so much in the collection of known factual data, but in their characteristics of specificity and particularity, their sense of place, and their individual relationship to change. This aspect of memory as history was explored by Radstone in her description of Luisa Passerini's pioneering oral history, *Fascism in Popular Memory*.⁷

Memory's imbrication with cultural narratives and unconscious processes is held in tension with an understanding of memory's relation with history, with happenings, with events. Memories continue to be memories and it is their relation to lived historical experience that constitutes their specificity.⁸

The memories in this study are used in a variety of ways, sometimes to add to the historical record or to explore contemporary discourses, and often they are about the lived experiences, both cinematic and extra cinematic, of this special period in film history, art cinema's postwar heyday.

6.1 Methods and methodology

The approaches to process and method in this chapter are influenced by Jackie Stacey's *Star Gazing: Hollywood cinema and female spectatorship*, a study of female audiences and Hollywood stars in the 1940s and 1950s which, using letters and a questionnaire, focused on three categories of spectatorship – escapism, identification, and consumption.⁹ Her analyses of the material collated are woven into discussions

⁴ Fernyhough, 2012, 6.

⁵ Kuhn 2000, 189

⁶ Kuhn, 2002.

⁷ Passerini, 1987.

⁸ Radstone, 2000, 11.

⁹ Stacey, 1994, 80.

of historical context and theoretical frameworks, an approach which is adopted in this chapter.

This study has used an online questionnaire, *Cinema Memories*, to collect memories, a process chosen as the simplest and most time-efficient method of reaching sufficient numbers of film viewers in order to make meaningful comparisons and analyses. The questionnaire, designed to take about 20 minutes, was devised following consultation with experts in the field, who also piloted the completed version. It is divided into four sections: A: Your film viewing; B: Your experiences of cinemas, film societies, and television; C: Film in cultural and social life; D: Details about you. The questions are a mixture of structured tick box and more open ended queries, designed to encourage qualitative comments.

An eye-catching leaflet, using iconic film posters of the period, invited potential volunteers to help with my research. (Figure 16). The leaflets were put out in libraries, art cinemas, and film classes, but attracted few replies, with the exception of BFI South Bank where a personal approach after screenings of relevant films achieved some success.¹⁰ Personal requests to friends, family, and colleagues produced the most results, especially as this method creates the so-called 'snowball effect', whereby respondents recommend like-minded contacts who then recommend others, an effective and commonly used social survey method for reaching very specific communities. Attempts to find foreign language filmgoers from the past were also made through relevant publications, some aimed specifically at older people. Here, *Third Age Matters*, the magazine of the University of the Third Age, was a particularly rich source.

Profile of the group

Both the questionnaire and the quantitative results are provided as appendices. The following summary of a selection of the quantitative results provides a context for the rich material provided by replies to the open-ended questions.

Of the 173 participants, approximately 46% were in their 60s and 43% in their 70s, equally divided between men and women.¹¹ The group, not surprisingly, given its self-selecting nature and its affiliation to minority film culture, was remarkably homogeneous. Education levels were uniformly high, with 80% remaining at school until at least 17 and most going on to higher education: in fact only 23 of the group did not eventually gain qualifications at degree and postgraduate level.

Given the time which has passed between the 1950s and the present day, most

¹⁰ The original name, National Film Theatre, is more often used by the older generation.

¹¹ Respondents were not asked to give their gender, assuming their name would indicate this. Unfortunately some respondents did not include name and contact details. Figures available are 78 males and 76 females.

questionnaires returned relate to the 1960s. Only 20% of the respondents went to films before 1955, 45% went between 1955 and 1959, 57% between 1960 and 1964, and 60% between 1965 and 1970. An impressive 38% went to the cinema once a week and a further 20% more than once a week, whilst 36% went once a month. The proportion of foreign language to English speaking films was high. For about 35% of participants, at least half of the films they watched were foreign language; whilst for a further 32% it was a quarter of the total.

The group shared very similar cultural attitudes to foreign films, apart from the few who challenged the premise that foreign language films formed a separate category.¹² When asked to rank the different reasons for choosing to go to particular films, the director was the most important factor, with 80% deeming it important or quite important. Country of origin was also considered important or quite important for 70% of respondents, with French and Italian films leading the way, followed by Swedish, Russian, and Japanese. Reviews were also important or quite important to 68% of the respondents, with a total of 75% claiming that they read film reviews. Only 20% classed stars as important with a further 40% seeing them as quite important, although these figures are somewhat in conflict with the frequently vivid and detailed memories of stars given in the qualitative answers. The vast majority (86%) thought the X certificate unimportant as a factor in choosing a film, although again this contradicts other answers which often made connections between continental films and the promise of sex, particularly in adolescence.

Overall then, the answers reveal a strong investment in 'serious' film culture with 76% of participants reading film reviews in newspapers and/or magazines, 53% being members of film societies, and most enjoying discussion of films with family and friends.

Methodology

The material is divided into five sections: 1. Coming of age (and looking back); 2. Kidnapped by the movie; 3. The discourses of authorship; 4. Image and lifestyle; 5. Other worlds: the utopian promise of foreign films. The respondents were led in certain thematic directions by the contextual introduction to the questionnaire and by the structure of some of the questions; for example, other cultures, politics, and relationships were suggested as possible categories in the question about the impact of foreign films.

However, other self-selected themes did emerge from the memories. For example, I re-titled 'Coming of age' to 'Coming of age (and looking back)', as many respondents

¹² Significantly, most of these became professionals in the world of film. Simon Field's attitude was typical 'Just film, didn't make a distinction'.

decided to take their narrative to its conclusion in the present day. And lifestyle and taste, escape and liberation emerged as strong themes for most respondents. Conversely, the original plan for a section devoted to space and place was abandoned simply because, with a few exceptions, the questions on place or venue did not evoke strong memories.

There is no single methodological framework. Rather, I have interpreted different materials within the critical framework(s) most appropriate to them. The memories are first of all grounded in the historical, sociological, and cultural changes of the postwar years, the core of the overall investigation of my thesis. The two decades of the 1950s and the 1960s are treated together in this chapter although they do not constitute a unified time period: indeed the cultural attitudes recalled in austerity Britain compared to those in the more affluent and liberal period from the late 1950s are noticeably different. In the case of the 1960s the sociological theories of Bourdieu, related to cultural capital and changes in the class structure, have provided a context for the many references to the connections between cinema and lifestyle and taste in the memories of the period.

Discourse analysis has been used across the body of the memories to explore, compare, and interrogate recurring language, intellectual ideas, and emotional responses to foreign language films. Some of the questions in *Cinema Memories* are also concerned with finding out the extent to which the discursive surrounds of the films, for example reviews, publicity, and certification, influenced the language and opinions expressed in the memories.

Finally, Foucault's ideas of heterotopias have provided a flexible framework for the discussion of what transpired as the most vivid and eloquent expressions of memory, those which described the other worlds which foreign language opened up to filmgoers in the 1950s and 1960s.

6.2 Coming of age (and looking back)

More than anything memory is a great storyteller.

–Charles Fernyhough (2012)¹³

People use memories to make sense of the world, create their own world and give themselves a place.

–Annette Kuhn (2000)¹⁴

Memory, as explored in older age, is a complex phenomenon. On the one hand, memory is not linear and we often remember in snapshots, flashes or fragments, in

¹³ Fernyhough, 2012, 21.

¹⁴ Kuhn, 2000, 193.

what the novelist Penelope Lively has described as a 'collection of frames'.¹⁵ These flashes or frames, often from the films themselves, are common in this survey. More than one respondent remembered the final sequence of *L'éclisse*, whilst another vividly recalled the filo pastry scene in *The Switchboard Operator*, without remembering the title or anything else about the film.¹⁶

But the thrust towards the narrativization of memory, central to the discourses of various literary genres including autobiography and oral history, is the dominant mode. According to Fernyhough, our brains are busy with storytelling, constantly producing new stories about the past (for others and for oneself) from the vantage point of the present. He argued that this storytelling is imaginative reconstruction; that we recreate or reconstruct our experiences within particular contexts, rather than retrieve copies of them. And narrative seems to be the most appropriate medium for representing the passage of time and the human push towards the reaching of personal goals.¹⁷

To some extent participants were encouraged to think narratively by the structure of the questionnaire. The first open-ended question they encountered was about their early experiences of a foreign language film, encouraging them to think autobiographically by returning to the scenes of their youth or early adulthood. A number of respondents saw their first foreign film at school or university, in a film society or on a school trip, and some were influenced by reviews. But two types of early memory of foreign film stand out.

Firstly, significant numbers were initiated into foreign language films by parents or older siblings. These two accounts, going back to the mid 1950s are both notable for the specificity of time and place:

The first foreign language film I saw was Jacques Tati's *Monsieur Hulot's Holiday*. It was immensely popular because it gave British people a taste of what a foreign holiday would be like after the long years in which it had been impossible to holiday on the continent! Surprisingly I saw it in the company of my mother and at a cinema in our Scottish town that we had never patronised before because it was regarded as a 'fleapit'. Looking back I am sure that my mother chose the film for the reason I have given – and it made us laugh!

Anon (2012)

The first foreign film I saw was *The Burmese Harp* when I was about 14. My father must have read a review of it . . . we lived in a very small market town, Hungerford, with only the Regal showing popular films, and I'd only seen about 4 or 5 films in my life till then, beginning with *Bambi* when I was very little, so cinema didn't figure in our lives very strongly. Anyway, my father took me and my friend Val to the

¹⁵ Lively, 2009.

¹⁶ Anon, *Cinema Memories* survey, 2013.

¹⁷ Fernyhough, 2012, 272.

Newbury Film Society to see *The Burmese Harp*. We sat on wooden fold-up chairs, and I think I was vaguely bored. That was it for films, apart from *the Dam Busters* and *The Magnificent Seven* which my parents took me and my brother to see as teenagers. . .

Christine Gledhill (2015)

Sibling influence apparently exerted an even stronger pull:

I was very much under the influence of my sister who was a fanatic about French New Wave cinema so I went to most of the films because of her.

Alison Forbes (2012)

The first foreign language film I ever saw was Bergman's *Smiles of a Summer Night*. My brother took me to see it. He told me it was an important film and I believed him.

Leisha Fullick (2012)

The respondent below was introduced to the world of foreign films by the distinctive Academy film posters on the underground stations which he associated with the subcultures of London:

From the age of 14 I started visiting London alone, often to visit my older, bohemian sister, who wanted to be an actress and whom I hero-worshipped. She used to take me to exotic places like cellar bars and music venues. I always associated her - and I'm not sure why any more - with those immensely striking and evocative posters for the Academy Cinema which seemed to be on every underground station . . . I was very interested in graphics anyway, and those woodcuts or linocuts, I was never sure which, seemed to embody the exciting, beatnikky, sub culture world I imagined my sister inhabited.

Anon (2013)

Teachers were also an influence. This quote from a participant who subsequently went to art school also shows the opportunities for youngsters being converted to foreign films in London:

I was taken to see *Une partie de campagne* at the French Institute (a rare screening as it turned out) by a tutor from an art class I attended on Saturday mornings whilst still at school. Enjoying it so much I then went to see a French film screening in London at that time - *Jules et Jim* (the cinema is now an Odeon just around the corner from the BFI), shortly afterwards I tracked down a midnight screening of *Tirez sur le pianiste* at the Astoria Bromley - same director.

Anon (2012)

The second significant group recalls foreign films as a coming-of-age ritual associated with sex. Following the introduction of the X certificate for over 16s in 1951, it was generally the case that the criteria for passing a film with an X were less stringent for foreign films, particularly those with cultural status, resulting perhaps from the name of the director or a festival prize.

The following two memories belong to the beginnings of that period of relaxation of censorship in the early 1950s:

The first foreign language film I saw around 1952 was *Manon*, a French film which I saw with a schoolfriend as we understood that we might catch a glimpse of unclothed women.

Anon (2012)

The first foreign film that I can remember from this period was *La Ronde*. I think that I saw it in 1952/3 when I was in the sixth form at school, or maybe later when I was at London University. I decided to see it because of the publicity given to the subject, definitely a 'naughty French film'. At the time it seemed a bit wicked. I went with a friend.

Anon (2013)

Later on, Bergman, consecrated as the consummate art director and at the same time marketed for his Swedish sexual frankness, occupied an interesting space in British film culture:

My first encounter . . . was an illicit excursion (in which I was very much a hanger-on, rather than a prime mover) to the cinema while I was at boarding school, to see a 'Swedish film'. At that time everything Swedish connoted liberality and sex, which was very much a closed book to me, and probably to my companions. I was very bewildered by the film of which the highlight for me was a close-up of a woman's breast. The incident was memorable also for the fact that while we were in the cinema a serious flood had happened at the school, which resulted in our being missed, and our miscreance discovered. Some years later, when I developed an interest in Ingmar Bergman via the TV series *Six Scenes from a Marriage* and started watching his films when they came on TV, I discovered that the film we had seen was *The Silence*.

Anon (2013)

Teenagers frequenting the circuits and other local cinemas also went in groups for much the same reasons as the respondent above:

Whether the dubbed or subtitled first was the Japanese 'ghost story', *Onibaba*, one of several nudist films with titles like *Naked as Nature Intended* or films starring exotic European female stars like Brigitte Bardot or Sophia Loren (I remember *Two Women*), I was a teenager responding with friends to controversies about X-rated sex and horror in the national press about the emergence of 'foreign' (i.e. non-British or Hollywood) films in local cinemas. Frankly, we were all after salacious thrills.

David Lusted (2013)

Onibaba appealed because of its genre (samurai period) and that its X London certificate promised strong stuff. We were not disappointed!

Steve Greenhill (2013)

Looking at the past from the vantage point of the present often gives way to nostalgia for a lost golden age, and sometimes the present is unfavourably compared to the past:

Perhaps it was a golden age, the Italian Neo-Realism, the French Nouvelle Vague, and Bergman's films. If I see films now, they are mostly French and German films. Contemporary American films seem full of violence, and British films tend to be caricatures of political figures and of the royal family.

Anon (2012)

Just rather sad that France and French films have gone down the pan, like Proust's Swann, all those wasted years when I could have been learning particle physics instead of dreaming....

Anon (2012)

I'm surprised by how many foreign films remain vivid in my memory 50 odd years later, although I think that probably applies more generally to books read and films and plays seen when young that leave a stronger impression simply because they are new. I also have to add that I think foreign films were better then than now, but then that's what older people always end to believe.

Anne Shah (2012)

Memory discourses have a tendency to treat the present as the goal towards which the life story directs itself, and some respondents described foreign films as the beginning of a journey to a better life:

It gave a poor kid from the East End a view of another world, one I was determined to join. I taught myself German, became the first person in my family to go to university and have lived a completely different life to my peers due to all the hours reading sub titles! When I'm in the Showroom Cinema in Sheffield I am always taken back to 1965 to 1970 and I count my blessings.

Mike Ford (2012)

Other participants also made positive connections with their present day lives:

Your questionnaire has made me realise how influential these few films were and which inspired me to explore films from other cultures more, and how I now as a retired person seek them out; also a lifelong interest and belief in valuing other cultures and societies – a core personal and professional value.

Anon (2013)

My experience of watching foreign language films has served me very well in my later life; when I eventually visited some of the countries which I'd seen in these films I felt a rapport with them even though the films had been made many years before. In my later life (particularly since retirement) I have enjoyed introducing other people to foreign language films through the University of the Third Age.

Alan Hooper (2013)

In my 60s I'm on the committee of our town's film society at which we programme approximately 8 to 10 foreign language films per season to audiences of 70 to 120. The taste established in the 60s lives on!

Paul Jordan (2015)

Now I am an enthusiastic participant in the foreign language seasons at the NFT and I also enjoy revisiting favourites there. Seeing *A bout de souffle* recently really brought back my youth. Another film which made a great impression on me in its time was *Two Women* and I was again deeply moved by it when I saw it again last year. I get enormous pleasure from cinema still, and thank my lucky stars that I am still able to get to the NFT regularly.

Jane Kelly (2016)

I spent 12 years working overseas . . . and in retirement maintain my international interests. Not many foreign films are shown in the Lake District but we do have an excellent local art house which selects the best films and shows operas and National Theatre plays direct. I also watch BBC4.
Mary Wane (2013)

They formed the foundation of my lifelong fascination with moving image media in both personal and professional life.
Cary Bazalgette (2013)

6.3 Kidnapped by the movie: memorable films from the age of cinephilia

In 1996, 100 years after the birth of cinema, Susan Sontag wrote a piece for the *New York Times Magazine*, 'The Decay of Cinema', in which she looked back to the lost age of cinephilia with nostalgia and regret.¹⁸ She located this 'feverish age of movie going' in the 1960s and early 1970s when a high number of original and passionate films were made and when the 'temples' of cinephilia, the cinemathèques and clubs, showed both old classics and films by new directors. By the time she wrote the article, cinephilia was considered 'quaint, outmoded, snobbish', but in the 1960s, according to Sontag, it was an article of faith that cinema was an art like no other – 'quintessentially modern; distinctively accessible; poetic and mysterious and erotic and moral – all at the same time'.¹⁹

To what extent do the responses from the participants chime with Sontag's descriptions of the age of cinephilia? There is certainly much pleasure expressed in many of the memories, partly no doubt explained by the so called 'reminiscence effect', the phenomenon discussed by Fernyhough amongst others, whereby events in late teens and early 20s stick in memory better than anything else.²⁰ And for those respondents whose period of youthful vitality corresponded with the 1960s, a period of optimism and relative affluence, this was particularly strong.

In addition, there was the excitement of feeling that this period of optimism also coincided with a fresh and exciting film culture, now remembered as a golden age:

The best time of my cinematic life. I am now buying DVDs of my old favourites which transport me to those golden days.
Tim Lannon (2012)

I probably spent almost as much time in the cinema as in college although I was student at the time, but never regretted it. It was the best time and London was the best place.
Anon (2013)

¹⁸ Sontag, 1996, 60.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Fernyhough, 2012, 22.

The 1950s and 1960s were fantastic years for films. I saw hundreds of foreign language films and still watch them from this period. I wish some were not lost forever.

Anon (2013)

In retrospect the period under discussion feels like a golden age of film culture. Cinema was the art form young people were primarily interested in, and foreign language films figured centrally in this. The situation, however, was more complicated, particularly by the arrival of auteurism in the UK with its heavy emphasis on Hollywood.

Colin McArthur (2014)

In the fifties and early sixties going to a foreign film had an extra thrill attached, a feeling of being where it really mattered and being somehow in the avant-garde . . . in those days it was great moment to be young on a journey of cinematic discoveries.

Adam Pollock (2013)

The attraction of foreign films for some respondents lay in their power to make audiences think and reflect:

In retrospect, I think a lot of the attraction of foreign language films was their different narrative styles from mainstream Hollywood. I wouldn't have characterised it in this way at the time but I do think that films with a more obvious authorial voice or with a more 'open' narrative meant that audiences had to engage with films in a different way . . . they obliged you to be more alert and to think them through yourselves. This may be why they still mean so much today.

Brian Barford (2014)

I went to most foreign language films while I was at university because they were popular and discussed by students. Actually I think they were more memorable than most of the other cinema and some of the arts events I went to – maybe because they needed more concentration and were of higher quality.

Anon (2012)

But the emotional appeal was equally strong:

I think the strongest thing that remains was seeing a new angle on life. Compared to most of the mainstream films that I had seen, the foreign films touched more directly on, and acknowledged, raw emotions. They also had a more open and honest display of sexuality that I had not seen in the mainstream.

Frank Stansfield (2013)

Visually they were often poetic, atmospheric and ambiguous. Somehow the characters were feeling full and emotional and carriers of the human condition. They were for me an education process which widened my world.

Maureen Creasey (2012)

I found myself relating to the people in the films who seemed to reflect my own views of life with all its problems involving relationships, meaning of life etc.

Jane Fieldsend (2013)

Some scenes still produce strong emotions after 50 years . . . they strengthened my anti-war views and helped empathise with loss of loved ones.

Pat Baxell

For the young, enjoying foreign films was mixed up with defining their identity, a 'badge we wore', according to this respondent.

They were very much part of growing up and of my intellectual development, which I shared with my girlfriend and friends. They were a badge we wore, but not just because they were a badge, but for what they gave us. They helped me to formulate questions about the adult life to come—though of course no answers!
Kerry Renshaw (2012)

Others agreed that the effects of the films were profound:

I love the oddity of it, the view of the world which is unfamiliar to me, expansive for me and likely to show me something unexpected. The images of Bergman's films, of Truffaut and *Les Enfants du paradis* are deep in my consciousness.
V. Thorn (2013)

For some, boys in particular, they were enlightening on personal relationships:

I think they widened my horizons in terms of politics and personal relationships. Certainly I remember being struck by the parallels between the family in *Rocco and His Brothers* and my own in a way that I had never thought of before. The distance of a foreign culture enabled me to see things in a more objective light. Also, the male/female dynamic in that and the homosexual subtext were striking to me at the time and highly influential.
Brian Barford (2014)

They formed an important part of my 'sentimental education'. They helped a wholly fumbling adolescent boy gain insight into the world of sexual relationships and provided role models that I was never ever able to get close to. . . . Films for me began to take over from novels as a way of deepening and broadening my understanding of the world, in particular the world of male-female relationships which my family, friends and formal education failed to prepare me for. . . . For a young man trying to understand the world and his place in it, they were an invaluable and inexhaustible stock of ideas and insights.
Bryan Merton (2013)

Looking back, I think they probably helped to prevent my being completely taken over by the cultural and political assumptions of Hollywood films. At the time I was conscious that foreign films opened doors into other ways of thinking. I probably thought that they showed me the wider world, beyond my little suburban back yard, although I can now see that French culture, which excited me, was no less parochial than English. *Jules et Jim* had an enormous effect on me. As an adolescent I accepted its facile view of relationships. It is still the great film of my life, but not for the reasons I might have given in the sixties.
Julian Crowe (2012)

Memorable films

Which films stand out in the memory? Respondents were asked to name three memorable films from their 1950s cinema going (if relevant), and three from the 1960s. The results have to be qualified by the way in which memory, particularly distant memory, reconstructs narratives of the past through changing historical

discourses. There are many reasons why particular films might stand out in memory, to do with repeat viewings, subsequent discussions, reading, and critical attention, or films being re-assessed and passed in and out of the canon.

The most memorable films of the decade of the 1950s were *The Seventh Seal* and *Bicycle Thieves*, each with 21 'votes'. The next grouping included *Monsieur Hulot's Holiday* (14), *Pather Panchali* (11), *Seven Samurai* (11), and *Wages of Fear* (10). Eisenstein and Wajda looked at collectively were also popular. A significant minority of respondents named Cocteau films, as well as Donskoi's *Gorky Trilogy*. Other memorable films of the 1950s included the more popular general releases like Fernandel's *The Sheep Has Five Legs*, and the short French film, *The Red Balloon*.

By far the most memorable film of the 1960s was *Jules et Jim* with 31 'votes', followed by *Breathless* with 19, *Last Year in Marienbad* with 18, and *L'avventura* with 17. *400 Blows*, *Viridiana*, and *Wild Strawberries* were favourites too, with 14 mentions each. The popularity of the 1950s favourites, *Seven Samurai* and *The Seventh Seal* was carried over into the 1960s, with 14 votes each. *8½* achieved 12 votes, and *Bicycle Thieves*, also spanning two decades, had 8 votes.

It is interesting to note that not all of these choices cohere with changing critical fashions. In the 2012 *Sight and Sound* Poll, still probably the most influential guide to international critical opinion, *Bicycle Thieves* has fallen to number 33. *The Seventh Seal*, so strong in these memories of filmgoers in both the 1950s and 1960s, was never even in the top ten, and only reached number 93 in 2012. *Jules et Jim*, likewise has never been in the top ten and did not even reach the top 100 in 2012.

Although respondents were not invited to comment on individual films, a significant number made specific reference to *Jules et Jim*, citing its emotional resonance, its treatment of adult relationships, the feminine charisma of Jeanne Moreau, and its style, narrative structure, and defiance of convention.

It is also noteworthy that detailed memories of the cinemas, those 'temples of cinephilia' considered so important by Sontag, do not feature strongly in the responses. Many foreign language films were, of course, viewed in less than ideal viewing conditions in film societies, small independent 'fleapits', or sex cinemas. Cinemas are remembered as clubby, smoky, and sometimes shabby, as described by Alan Tuckett: 'Smaller, no popcorn, often less comfortable but with a sense of solidarity between cinema and audience'.²¹ However, detailed memories of specialised cinemas are rare in this study, apart from the Everyman and the Academy. The Everyman is fondly remembered for its cheapness, its bohemian

²¹ Alan Tuckett, 2013.

atmosphere and the quality of its programming, especially the seasons of directors:

The Everyman was cosy and there was always an interesting clientele to watch while you waited for the film. There was also little advertising crap that you had to sit through first. It was usually straight into the film and the strange worlds of another country, another language and strange goings-on.

Bryan Merton (2013)

Thanks to the Everyman I saw all the best films of the 60s. It had a great programme. It was cheap 3/- or 4/- in the early 60s, 5/- if you booked by telephone. It was always full. I loved the French New Wave and Italian films. They gave me a sense of freedom after living in South Africa. All my South African friends in London said I had to go to the Everyman.

Ruth Poisson (2016)

Most respondents who remember the Academy recall the serious atmosphere. *Sight and Sound* and other publications like books on Bergman were on sale at the kiosk, the sweets for sale were superior peppermint creams, and the whole atmosphere was reminiscent of a temple or a church:

The ambience was very much like that of the Cosmo, very hushed in comparison with the national chains and local fleapits. The hush indicated that the film experience was a serious business.

Colin McArthur (2014)

As detailed in Chapter 5 from the early 1960s BBC1, and then from 1964 BBC2 screened international art films on a regular basis. This new channel of transmission immediately made foreign language films available to millions rather than the thousands reached by the art cinemas. Sontag was hostile to the practice of watching films on television, arguing that it was 'radically disrespectful of film', not only because of the size of the image but because it was difficult to pay attention in a domestic space.²²

There are only two full descriptions of the experience of watching foreign language films on television, both of which contradict Sontag. One is of a young teenager brought up in a village who, like others, credits foreign films for introducing him to adult themes including sexuality. His memories of watching at home are also very specific about food:

Every Friday night my parents went to the pub and in a rare moment of independence I had control of the TV. I sat with crisps, a pork pie and a coke and waited for the film at 9 which was always a treat. As I grew older, from 12 to say 15, more and more kids at school shared this enthusiasm . . . Thank you BBC for a window out onto the world.

Jon Davies (2017)

The other is of a working class teenage girl who, in the early 1960s, was definitely 'kidnapped by the movie':

²² Sontag, 1996.

I was at home, my parents had a pub so were in the bar and I liked films on TV. I watched masses of British and American films with my mother. This film was part of a series called something like Foreign Film Academy. I must have watched the first and then watched every one week by week. The first was I think *Ashes and Diamonds*.

She is describing the BBC 1 *International Film Season* in early 1963 which also showed *A Generation*, *Kanal*, and *Bicycle Thieves*. Her memories provide a moving and vivid affirmation of the affective and transformative power of film:

It was profound, my experience of the war and the narratives I had for it were very different from those I encountered in these films. They informed my sense of resistance, principles, courage - that some things were worth dying for and that good endings didn't always happen. I experienced real fear watching them, I remember I could not stop crying, they tapped into so many kinds and complexities of human experience. They made me fierce about injustice. Their themes informed how I have chosen to spend my life and what motivates and moves me. I was a young teenager.

Chris Jude (2015)

6.4 The discourses of authorship

When asked to measure the importance of different reasons for their choice of film, just over 85% rated the director as important or quite important, with nearly 70% claiming to follow a particular directors.

Bergman was by far the most frequently named:

Bergman was in everyone's life.

Anon (2016)

Bergman was a kind of deity for the critics, but I found the films too remote. I like red wine!

Kerry Renshaw (2012)

Bergman is the consummate intellectual director.

Cassy O'Brien (2012)

Bergman, you searched your soul with him.

Roger Blackmore (2016)

For several other respondents, the gloom that permeated his films chimed with their own adolescent or student angst whilst others, in a lighter vein, associated him with travelling to Sweden or were attracted to his regular troupe of actors. Bergman was closely followed in popularity by Antonioni, Fellini, Godard, and Truffaut, and then, behind them, by Chabrol, Buñuel, Resnais, Wajda, Ray, Eisenstein, Cocteau, Pasolini, Kurosawa, and Visconti.

In the postwar period the flowering of European art cinema went hand in hand with the new critical discourses which asserted the director as the author of the film. As Janet Staiger has pointed out, the idea of the director as author was not new. It went

back to the 1920s and was a common reading strategy well before its introduction in the scholarly community.²³ But the theoretical development of the auteur theory, as discussed in Chapter 3, took off in postwar Britain with the writings of the *Sequence* group, and was made popular in critical circles by *Cahiers du Cinéma*. Adopted by *Sight and Sound* and other film magazines, the term auteur theory was common usage in critical discourse by 1964, when the new auteurist magazine *Movie* became influential in critical circles in Britain and when Andrew Sarris had popularised the term in America with the essay *Notes on the Auteur Theory* in 1962.²⁴

Ideas of authorship cemented the cultural status of foreign art films. Bourdieu's surveys in *Distinction* related social and educational groups to different types of cinemagoing when they were tested on their knowledge of the names of directors. The results showed that a 'knowledge of directors is much more closely linked to cultural capital than is mere cinemagoing'.²⁵ In other words, it was the director's name which 'consecrated' the film. Unfortunately, there were no comparable sociological studies on leisure and lifestyle in Britain in the 1960s, where surveys of cinemagoing were few and restricted to mainstream commercial cinema. One such survey of Greater London cinemagoing conducted in 1963 found not only that most audiences chose a film because of its stars and story but also that a mere 1% went because of interest in the director, producer, or author.²⁶ This result compares unfavourably with a similar French survey, reported in *Sight and Sound*, where 11% said the director was one of the key factors in choice of film.²⁷

But Bourdieu also pointed out that cinema was part of a cluster of new art forms, including photography, jazz, science fiction, and the comic strip, which were now also being 'consecrated'. These art forms had particular appeal for the growing occupational groups in teaching, nursing, marketing, fashion, and the media, as well as the growing population of students. For these groups film directors were seen to be part of a new movement with other fashionable cultural gurus, as the following participant observes:

An important part of the appeal of this cinema was that the directors were now 'auteurs', and artists/giants in their own right and not just technicians or interpreters . . . Godard, Polanski, Bergman ranked with Sartre, Kerouac, Miles Davis, Muddy Waters, Dylan etc.
Peter Bowman (2013)

The attraction of cinema as one of these new, 'cool' arts espoused by intellectuals

²³ Staiger, 1992, 181.

²⁴ Sarris, 1962, 1-8.

²⁵ Bourdieu, 2010, 19.

²⁶ Bittleston, 1963. Also see summary in S&S, August 1964, vol. 3, no. 4, 161-162.

²⁷ S&S, vol.34, no.3, Summer 1965, 120.

and fashionable in metropolitan and student circles was discussed by some respondents, who most often cited the critics and peer group pressure as influential in their choice of directors.

In the 1960s films by Godard, Truffaut, and Antonioni were available in London and the directors were being constructed as auteurs by cool guys. Minority criticism was becoming sexy unlike dreary lit. crit.

Jim Cook (2013)

I saw everything by Bergman, Eisenstein, Godard, Visconti and others. The reason was I enjoyed their films and again they were part of the canon of the people I knew. People aspired to be intellectual and these were the films that intellectual people saw.

Leisha Fullick (2012)

The new wave films – Godard, Chabrol, Truffaut etc. – were almost required viewing among cineastes.

Bill Shenton (2013)

Truffaut/Godard because they were fashionable I think – can't really remember so much about my 17 year old self.

Anon (2013)

The attitude to stars in relation to directors further reinforces the primacy of the auteur theory. On the one hand, the number and variety of actors variously described as charismatic, cool, sexy, strong, and stylish which are recalled is striking. On the other, some participants were keen to distance themselves from Hollywood-style star worship. The following were typical responses to the question about stars:

Stars seemed uncool and Hollywood, directors seemed cool and intellectual.

Paul Jordan (2015)

Stars was a Hollywood concept. While I admired some of Bergman's actors, and French actors such as Jeanne Moreau, they were not important for selling the film in the way that the Hollywood star system worked.

Jenny Woodhouse (2013)

There were a number of actors I enjoyed such as Emmanuelle Riva and Jean Paul Belmondo – but I don't recall going to a film simply because they were starring.

John Ingman (2013)

The critics

How influential were the critics? Reading about films was certainly important to this group, 76% of which read film reviews. The most widely read were the *Observer*, *The Sunday Times* and the *Guardian*, followed by the *New Statesman*, *Telegraph* and *The Times*, although the only critics frequently mentioned by name were C.A. Lejeune and Dilys Powell. Of those who read film magazines *Sight and Sound* (45%) and *Films and Filming* (41.2%) were the most popular. Other publications mentioned were *Cahiers du Cinéma*, *Continental Film Review* and *Movie*.

The influence of the film reviews in promoting the auteur theory is acknowledged:

It was the yardstick observed by the critics I read such as C.A. Lejeune, Dilys Powell, Richard Winnington, Paul Dehn and Basil Wright.
Timothy Gee (2015)

Through reading reviews, I learned which were the highly thought of directors and thought those were the ones to follow.
Anon (2012)

Movie and the auteur theory oriented me to directors – much of the film literature that was being written then focussed on directors.
Gerry Turvey (2013)

Choices were determined by who BFI Education, SEFT and *Movie* magazine introduced me to in that period.²⁸
David Lusted (2013)

Some respondents used the analogy of the author in literature:

If I liked their work I would look out for their films, just as I would look out for more books by my preferred authors.
Jenny Woodhouse (2013)

Probably deriving from *Cahiers du Cinéma* and *Sight and Sound*, we believed they were auteurs, and watching their development was much like each novel of a significant writer.
Alan Tuckett (2013)

Others simply found the auteur theory a useful, common-sense reading strategy:

Nice to know roughly what you're getting – was aware of auteur theory.
Paul Jordan (2015)

It was simply the desire to repeat a pleasurable experience that made me inclined to follow certain directors.
Bob Cant (2012)

Naturally when I enjoyed *Pathar Panchali* I wanted to see the other parts of the trilogy when they appeared and similarly you couldn't see *Breathless* without wanting to see Godard's next film but I didn't have an exclusive interest in any particular director.
Anon (2013)

6.5 Image and lifestyle

Seeing French and, by the late 50s, Italian films gave me the sense of participating in these cultures which I loved (for instance, I would have gone to see *Porte des Lilas* for George Brassens); seeing Paris and other places on the screen; sometimes fashion that was more relevant to my own life-style and taste (I also read *Elle* occasionally where I would have followed film-stars and fashion...).
Laura Mulvey (2012)

Mulvey was a teenager in a Europhile London household in the 1950s. Her memories bring out the relationship between foreign films and the extra cinematic world of travel, fashion, and lives of the stars. This was the decade when Europe was opening up to

²⁸ SEFT was the Society for Education in Film and Television.

the insular British for travel, food, and fashion. By the 1960s there were further lifestyle changes:

Then I went to Leeds University to read English, and in my second year the one lecture programme I went to consistently (I was very contemptuous of the other lecturers!) was Arnold Kettle (Marxist and Communist Party Member) on the history of the English novel. . . which was my first encounter with Marxism and I was fascinated. One day he came into the lecture hall and said: 'The novel today is dead: go down to the Odeon and see *Rocco and His Brothers*,' which I duly did. Much of the audience walked out, but I stuck it out, a bit nonplussed. Then came *L'avventura*, shown at the student Film Society, which he also told us to go and see. And so it started. A friend had recommended *Sight and Sound* and that became my guide. We went to Bradford Tatler (the old men in dirty macs cinema) to see *A bout de souffle* and *Jules et Jim* (I was desperate after that to find knee high boots!).
Christine Gledhill (2016)

This account eloquently evokes aspects of the new cultural and political worlds encountered at university, memories shared by other respondents in their accounts of film as part of university life.

The shared lifestyle of 1960s university students is a backdrop to the social context of foreign filmgoing in the 1960s. The new grammar schools intake continued the process of greater social mobility through education in the 1950s - the percentage of 17 year olds still in education rose from 4% in 1938 to 7% in 1962. By 1962/63, according to the Robbins Report, there were 216,000 students, 8.5% of the total age cohort of the population, pursuing degree level courses in universities, training colleges, and further education. Robbins recommended the expansion of these numbers through the newer civic universities and the building of the new 'plate glass' universities, and this resulted in an increase in student numbers to 390,000 by 1973.²⁹

The growth of university film societies, a part of this expansion, was integral to university life in the 1960s for the following participants:

Then I was a student and joined the film society. It went with the territory.
Viv Thomas (2013)

I think the first foreign language film I saw was *The Seven Samurai* – it was at the teacher training college I was attending.
Gerry Turvey (2013)

I became an art student in 1957, it was part of study, culture and social life as well as the context of student life and general visual culture . . . as well as girl students and cans of beer. But also within the campus and cheap.
Brian Westbury (2013)

I joined the university film society in 1961 and just went to everything they showed which now comprises a good part of the 'canon'.
Cary Bazalgette (2013)

²⁹ Robbins Report, 1963.

The following account echoes Christine Gledhill's experiences of the world suddenly widening. University meant a general opening up of horizons, and foreign language films were one part of that.

Foreign language films were just one of a number of ways in which I was becoming aware of the wider world. I had gone to school in a small Scottish town where everyone knew everyone else and also what everyone else was doing. Access to higher education – of which film society membership was a part - was really important in enabling me to open my eyes to what had not been familiar previously.
Bob Cant (2012)

The new cohorts at university were accumulating cultural as well as educational capital. Cultural capital, which according to Bourdieu was on the same level as economic and educational capital, bestowed a special cultural status, often unspoken, but associated with a particular form of distinction:

Because I was in a group that saw itself as 'intellectual' and different from the previous generation.
Anon (2012)

I was a student and interested in anything 'cultured'. Foreign films came into this category. Until films like *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* came along British films had little to offer. I/we despised Hollywood.
Jenny Woodhouse (2013)

Because at that time viewing foreign films was relatively unusual I thought this was a sophisticated thing to do!
Stanley Kleinberg (2012)

I think I was probably stuck on the idea of 'high' and 'low' culture at the time and wow, this was HIGH culture, made me feel brainy and sophisticated and impressed girls.
Paul Jordan (2015)

They were more than entertainment. They were part of being an intellectual elite.
Mike Merchant (2012)

It was like being part of an exclusive club. I was never radical or terribly intellectual but I think knowing so much about foreign films made me feel more intelligent and special.
Cyndy Parker (2013)

We felt we were part of the target audience for cutting-edge movies of the period – our friends called us 'culture vultures'.
Jane Kelly (2016)

What also comes over strongly, however, is the association of foreign films with a range of other new arts which could be classed as broadly anti-establishment. These included jazz, blues, and photography, which were cheaper, less class-bound, more accessible and, importantly, more 'cool' than the traditional arts, as this respondent pointed out:

One had to keep up with what was culturally trendy.
Mo Heard (2012)

Part of the student political zeitgeist especially in the 1968 period
Martin Smith (2015)

I knew the language pretty well and loved the particular stylish polish of French New Wave movies. I think I believed I belonged to that generation – smoking a lot, talking politics and philosophy and wondering if I could influence the history of my time.
Jane Kelly (2016)

And the connections with the other new arts, especially jazz, were foregrounded:

Many of the arts that became paramount by the early to mid-1960s relied on reputation....young English would be cineastes and intellectuals often knew about French new wave films or Bergman etc. long before they had seen them because the opportunities were limited in the provinces. Exactly the same situation existed in music with jazz or blues....you had managed to see one or two films and you clutched a couple of import blues LPs. The quality Sunday newspapers - *Observer*, *Sunday Times* etc. with critics like Dilys Powell were much more influential then....I must have jumped at the chance of seeing a Truffaut or Bergman at a Norfolk film society.
Peter Bowman (2013)

Sometimes the cinema itself contributed to the 'cool' image of continental films.

This quotation communicates a strong sense of place –where the romantic aura of the cinema is bound up with the exciting foreign worlds opened up by the screen:

I loved everything continental at that time. London was only just beginning to come alive. Foreign language films showed another world. . . . I had been to Europe quite often as my father was a Europhile. The foreign language films re-enforced my adolescent views of romance, clothes, relationships and excitement. The Academy in Oxford Street was my favourite cinema . . . I was a "beatnik" in the 60s and on cold Saturday nights loads of us in our dirty duffel coats used to queue there sometimes for hours to get into a film. There was also a local suburban cinema in Golders Green, London called the Ionic and they also showed foreign language films but, as it was local it was never as exciting as the Academy.
Selma Shrank (2013)

The continental stars were also a part of the 'cool vibe' of foreign films. Jackie Stacey used the notion of identification, as 'a cultural process with social meanings beyond the cinema', in her study of Hollywood stars.³⁰ Her definition can also be applied to the influence which some European film actors had on the lifestyle and image of a segment of the postwar generation. A few respondents, for example, saw continental actresses like Moreau, Vitti, and Karina as role models for the new free woman:

³⁰ Stacey, 1994, 135.

I can't remember seeing a film simply because a star was in it but was very attracted to French actresses because they seemed to embody a freedom for women that I was interested in.

Leisha Fullick (2012)

These women were interesting role models for me as I grew out of adolescence and into adulthood. They suggested women could have more unusual and exciting lives than those lived by most of the women around me.

Anon (2013)

But it was the 'the cool vibe' of the stars, both male and female, that came over most strongly:

I loved the look, the language, the insight into other cultures, the women (Vitti, Karina, Moreau to name but a few) and the cool vibe that so many gave off. I thought the acting by the women and the men was fantastic and I never tired of watching the beguiling skills of the women mentioned above and also of Mastroianni, Belmondo, Cybulski – I would have liked to include *Ashes and Diamonds* in my top three too!

Bryan Merton (2013)

Belmondo and Seberg were favourites after seeing *Breathless* – and Delphine Seyrig and Jeanne Moreau – again leading lights of the New Wave. They all expressed a world view that fitted in with my own.

Bill Shenton (2013)

To some extent there was an identification – I was very taken by the chin beard Jean Claude Brialy had in *Les Cousins* and I tried to grow a beard at university in imitation- took five years before it would grow enough to be presentable.

Chris Mottershead (2014)

6.6 Other worlds: the utopian promise of foreign films

In this section Foucault's notion of heterotopia is used as a theoretical framework to discuss those memories which express the heterogeneity of other worlds on offer when the cinema screen opens out onto other spaces. In his touchstone essay *Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias*, Foucault made a distinction between utopias, which present society in a perfected form and are 'fundamentally unreal spaces', and heterotopias (literally translated as other places) which are both real spaces (a garden or cinema for example) and sites which can be defined by sets of relations.³¹ A cinema, for example, is a single place which encompasses various kinds of spaces which are foreign to one another: the literal rectangular space of the auditorium contains a two-dimensional screen upon which one sees a three-dimensional space, a space of illusion.³² This formulation has been used by film historians in work on cinema spaces, from silent picture palaces to Australian

³¹ Foucault, 1997, 350-356.

³² Ibid, 354.

suburban multiplexes.³³ But the heterotopic aspect of cinema which most closely relates to the memories in this section is its special power, through the images on the screen, to create this 'space of illusion' that enables the film viewer to travel imaginatively into the cinematic world. Here, he or she finds:

An effectively realised utopia in which all the real arrangements, all the other real arrangements that can be found within society are at one and the same time represented, challenged and overturned: a sort of place that lies outside all places and yet is actually localizable.³⁴

Adrian Ivakhiv, an ecological and cultural studies theorist, has drawn on Foucault's essay to argue that the cinema is by its nature heterotopic, in the sense that it creates worlds that are other than the real world but relate to that world in multiple and contradictory ways. He uses the term 'worlding' to describe a process which 'sets off resonances, diffractions and rippling interactions with the extra cinematic world' and he argues that cinema is in this sense heterotopic.³⁵

Ivakhiv further likened the heterotopia created by the cinema screen to Foucault's mirror which he also discussed as a heterotopia in that 'it presents the world to us but differently in a reconstituted manner with its presentation affecting the world in heterogeneous ways'.³⁶ Likening cinema to a mirror complicates the common metaphor of the screen as a transparent window onto other cultures, suggesting instead that the viewer is transported to other worlds which bear relation to real societies, but which are also about utopian imaginings. And the recurring language used in the memories to describe the effects of foreignness, such as 'new worlds', 'opening up', 'new ideas', and 'otherness', supports this idea of a journey of the imagination to other utopian worlds, as suggested by these respondents:

They gave me an idea of freedom, they opened my eyes to other worlds and the world of ideas.

Leisha Fullick (2012)

I owe an enormous debt to foreign cinema. It was part of an education which released me from the constraints of my upbringing and helped me to understand other cultures.

Sylvia Duffy (2013)

Films most people did not know existed opened up a whole new world.

Mike Ford (2012)

They have always had a profound impact in contrast to Hollywood films. As a child these were mainly 'Cowboys and Indians' and I was always struck by the Indians

³³ Downing, 2005.

³⁴ Foucault, 1997, 352.

³⁵ Ivakhiv, 2011, 192.

³⁶ Ibid.

and why their viewpoint was not explored. It is good to be drawn away from your own culture and to see things from a different perspective.
Anon (2015)

For two respondents in the 1950s, neither of whom were university graduates, new worlds were opened up in the most modest of locations. The first, from Cardiff, went to the cinema with her husband two or three times a week in the early 1950s. They always went to the Globe, the local 'fleapit' which showed foreign language films because, by the time they got home from work, it was too late to travel to the big cinemas in the centre of town. She remembers seeing *Bitter Rice*, *The Miracle* and *Bicycle Thieves* there. The screen at the Globe seemed to open up a qualitatively different experience through transportation to worlds of the imagination:

It broadened my experience. None of my friends or work colleagues went to the foreign language cinema – I felt rather different as though I'd discovered a secret world.
Margaret Worthington (2012)

The new worlds opened up through screenings at a local film society for this respondent, however, were more rooted in life in other countries:

I became interested in foreign films during national service in Germany while watching several times a week at the army cinema. On demob I joined the Eastbourne film society which opened up a whole new field of foreign films and depiction of life in other parts of the world.
Anon (2013)

The notion of escape, whether from the austerity of life in the 'grey' or 'drab' postwar years, the narrowness of provincial life, or the constraints of lower middle or working class family life, had a particular resonance in memories of the 1950s. The following participants are interested in stressing oppositions, contrasting home, upbringing, and sometimes austerity with the other worlds represented in foreign films:

The first foreign language film I ever saw was *Les Enfants du paradis* . . . very soon after the end of the war. . . I was in the sixth-form and I saw it (at the Royalty cinema in Richmond) because it was a new and suddenly available experience. Like the Picasso/Matisse exhibition which took place at the V&A at about the same time it completely bowled me over and made me realise that beyond this island fortress in which I had been growing up during the war there was a world out there that I needed to know about. That was, and I think still is, an important element in my liking for foreign language films: they are a kind of antidote to provincialism.
Anon (2013)

Money was tight after the war, there were still shortages – foreign films were like a magic carpet to a whole new world . . . there was a glorious liberation. I wasn't in Kansas anymore!
Adele Winston (2012)

Exposure to other cultures through the cinema was important to me as a teenager, dissatisfied with the often stultifying attitudes of 1950s Britain.

Anon (2013)

One of the reasons I liked foreign language films, and indeed some Hollywood (Western) films was that they took me to a foreign and often more exotic place than the one I was in. In the 50s I hated the provincialism of England, though things got better in the 60s.

Anon (2012)

Themes of class difference and oppositions between provincial and metropolitan life continued in the 1960s:

Coming from a provincial city I had not been to any cinema on a regular basis. London provided a wide range of foreign language films and I enjoyed exposure to different cultures. They gave me a much wider view of life, introduced me to new ideas and encouraged a more liberal attitude.

Elizabeth Oliver (2012)

They gave me a sense of the kinds of style I wanted to emulate e.g. *Jules et Jim* was a much more exciting view of life than the Northern lower-middle class culture I grew up in.

Jenny Woodhouse (2013)

Watching foreign language films introduced me to new worlds but mainly enabled me to move away from my working class roots.

Anon (2013)

Foreign travel, which was opening up in the 1960s, was for some of the participants a real part of the extra cinematic world of the films. The depiction of foreign cultures and the presence of foreign languages functioned as an educational tool, but was also for some an element of their utopian imaginings:

I studied languages at school and my frequent visits to the cinema increased my knowledge of many facets of others' cultures. It also helped my comprehension and accent.

Tim Lannon (2012)

I hadn't been abroad before 1967, so seeing these foreign films gave me an insight into the language, culture and some political background of other countries.

Cyndy Parker (2013)

For some the real pleasure is in hearing foreign languages which, whether understood or not, seem to represent an exotic otherness:

I also enjoyed simply listening to other languages (as long as the subtitles were good) as adding an extra dimension of atmospheric otherness.

Anne Shah (2012)

I enjoyed the whole experience of listening to foreign tongues.

Tim Lannon (2012)

You very quickly learned to get used to subtitles, always a problem for British audiences I found. It heightened our interest in cultures outside our own sphere and in the appreciation of languages generally.

Mike Marshall (2013)

It occurs to me that much of what I loved was the fact of the dialogue being in a foreign language, which in most cases I didn't understand. I so loved the sound of Swedish in films that I took to seeking out a Swedish station on the radio and listening to it for pleasure, without understanding a word.

Anon (2013)

I have travelled a lot and to some extent foreign language films have a travel aspect to them. I speak or understand several languages and enjoy hearing these and also languages I don't understand, their cadences and nuances.

Noelle Clemens (2012)

Alternative political worlds were opened up by films of the 1950s, especially those that used a social realist aesthetic. Italian neorealism and the films of Satyajit Ray, for example, either reinforced political leanings or gained new converts:

These films and their social realist context were part of the cultural formation of left wing intellectuals of my generation.

Patrick O'Brien (2012)

The De Sica realist films ('Bicycle Thieves', 'Miracle in Milan', 'Umberto D') used non-professional actors and made me think politically.

Geoffrey Batten (2012)

Italian was my favourite cinema because of social realist concerns, history and often the exploration of ordinary everyday people.

Maureen Creasey (2012)

They made me feel that life was far more complex than I had hitherto realised, and made me think that other cultures reflected this in their films perhaps more than our own . . . Ray's films were profoundly moving and recorded the daily life of poor people with wonderful dignity and compassion.

Anna Crowe (2012)

By the 1960s other respondents related foreign films to the 1960s counter culture and youthful rebellion:

During the 60s foreign language films were part of the counter-culture in which I was interested and which formed me. They expressed a youthful desire for change.

Anon (2016)

They perhaps tended to reinforce a leaning I developed in the early 60s towards left wing politics – a typical trend of many young people at the time. The films often followed an essentially left wing theme, with an emphasis on social cohesion and a rejection of patriotism and drum-beating. (I hasten to add that I don't hold those personal sympathies now – but that's ageing for you!)

Anon (2015)

Explicit connections were made with Europe as a political and cultural entity still shaped by the War:

Installed in me an abiding love of Europe. War films (very common in the 1950s and 1960s) were incredibly emotional.

*Katherine Dicky (2012)*³⁷

The world was increasingly determined by American priorities. I preferred a European world view.

Anon (2015)

When the 'Swinging Sixties' came along the more permissive attitudes expressed in foreign films seemed to reflect the changing mores in England. Looking back, those of us who had enjoyed a steady diet of European films were well primed to give a 'yes' vote to the Common Market in 1975.

Anon (2013)

Curiosity about life behind the Iron Curtain, alongside admiration for the films of Wajda in particular, was also mentioned by a number of respondents. One, an actress and part-time usherette at the NFT, was so impressed with Polish films that she made enquiries about going to the Lodz Film School.³⁸ Another wrote:

They were something fresh. We had had a diet of Hollywood and Pinewood films for too long and it was good to see films with a different setting. The Russian and Polish films were particularly memorable because we knew we would probably never travel to those countries.

Anon (2012)

But for the majority of respondents the other worlds represented by foreign films were to do with more generalised cultural liberation, particularly to do with personal and sexual relationships.

They opened up different cultures to me. Some were sexually daring which I had never seen before. It set me up as a lifelong film fan. I remember some hard-hitting political films like *Salvatore Giuliano*. I thought foreign language films were the heights of sophistication. I got a lot of my political ideas from the Russian films.

Anon (2012)

They opened up a new world of adult behaviour e.g. *Jules et Jim*. Politics to some extent. I was a universalist, I didn't think nationalities mattered. They spoke of universal qualities.

Roger Blackmore (2015)

They showed an exciting adult life: often unrealistically romantic I found out later! But they still provided ways of learning about the possibilities of relationships, a sort of travel by proxy, some improvement in my schoolboy French, and a strong sense that however different other nations might seem on the surface, the human concerns are the same.

Alan Bradley (2017)

This section concludes with a quotation which eloquently expresses the utopian promise of foreign language films. The extra cinematic world of 1950s Manchester is contrasted with the other worlds of mystery and foreignness, sex and beauty, and the exotic countries and cultures seen through the screen. It chimes with the experiences

³⁷ Katherine Dickie's mother was involved in the Edinburgh Film Festival. East European directors with no cash often stayed at their house and she remembers Tarkovsky (and his minder) coming round to tea.

³⁸ Mo Heard, 2012.

recounted by fellow participants and bears witness to the power of foreign language films to enable the cinemagoer to travel imaginatively into other, different worlds.

They opened up an unknown world and led me to an enjoyment of foreignness. Also introduced me to sex and the beauty of continental men. They were amongst the best part of my growing up in grey Manchester in the 50s. I didn't know ANYTHING about Italy, France, Scandinavia before these films.
Anon (2012)

6.7 Conclusions

The introduction argued for the value of these memories in adding to the historical record and in revealing the discourses of the reception of the art film. But their value lies particularly in the specificity of the qualitative accounts, viewed today through the multi-faceted and sometimes cloudy lens of memory.

In analysing the responses it becomes clear that social and cultural contexts are central to memories of filmgoing. These extra cinematic elements, related to particular moments in the youth of the respondents, feature strongly in many of the accounts. They range from the relationship of foreign films to early sexual awakening, through memories of the churchlike atmosphere of art cinemas like the Academy, and even to evenings without parents in front of the television. Occasionally films are linked with particular historical events, for example one respondent recalls seeing the Russian *Hamlet* at the Academy and Churchill's funeral on the same day, and having to queue for both.³⁹

The complex relationship between the viewer and foreign language films is only partly to do with learning foreign languages, experiencing European travel, or appreciating foreign cultures. The appeal of art cinema also suggests that its foreignness functioned as a utopian world of the imagination, carrying with it the exotic allure of otherness and offering liberation from the everyday realities of life in Britain.

Discourses of liberation – sexual, emotional, and political – run through many of the memories. As discussed elsewhere, the introduction of the X certificate and the tolerance of the censor towards the art film enabled more explicit representations of sexuality. And the emphasis on emotional relationships, which also set some foreign films apart from British and Hollywood cinema, had a significant influence on boys in particular whose schools and homes failed to provide open discussion of personal matters.

There are of course marked differences between memories of films and filmgoing in austerity Britain of the 1950s and those of the new postwar generation of the affluent 1960s. The voices from the 1950s indicate how, for some cinemagoers,

³⁹ Ruth Poisson, *Cinema Memories* survey, 2016.

foreign films marked an escape from a grim and grey Britain into a continental world which had been closed off during the war years. This opening up represented not only different lives, experiences, and cultures so long inaccessible but new cinematic ways of seeing. Significantly *Bicycle Thieves* and *The Seventh Seal* are the two most remembered films from the 1950s, despite their subsequent fall from grace in the critical canon. The impact of the style of each of these films, whether the realist documentary style of *Bicycle Thieves* or the powerful and evocative religious imagery deployed by Bergman to raise existential issues about the modern world, has remained clearly in the consciousness of many respondents.

The more numerous memories of the 1960s give voice to the postwar generation, many newly arrived in higher education, for whom foreign language films 'went with the territory'. For a number of participants the films highlighted the contrasts between the worlds which they opened up and their own often provincial working or lower middle class backgrounds. *Jules et Jim*, the most memorable film, spoke to the 1960s generation about sexual freedom and cultural liberation using a new, more free-wheeling, style of filming. However, the fact that *Last Year in Marienbad*, *L'avventura*, and *Breathless* were also chosen as memorable suggests that audiences were also open to formally innovative works.

Cinema Memories collectively attests to the transformative powers of foreign language art films for a new postwar generation, most of whom went to university and some of whom also crossed the class divide. They became the new recruits in teaching, public sector, and media jobs as well as in the traditional professions. Their accounts indicate that the flowering of art cinema in the 1950s and 1960s had significant effects on their personal, political, and cultural lives and influenced subsequent developments in film culture

Conclusion

1968 saw a series of political upheavals across the world which in different ways challenged the postwar order inaugurated after 1945. Challenges to authority, however, were as much cultural and intellectual as political, and in France at least, with the Langlois controversy and the upheavals at Cannes, film was at the centre of the struggle.¹ British film culture, in contrast to France, Italy, Poland, and most of all Czechoslovakia, was not much affected by the upheavals of 1968. The end of the sixties, however, marked several changes which influenced the topology of the field and which, over the coming few years, challenged the ascendancy of the European art film director.

Betz described 1968 as 'an unofficial "end of innocence" for European art cinema', and argued that the aesthetic experimentations of the new cinemas of the 1960s were starting to change film practices across the world. American films like *The Graduate* and *Bonnie and Clyde* were achieving worldwide success, the Japanese New Wave was active, and political and third world experimental cinema was attracting the interest of western cinephiles.²

The relaxation of censorship was another key factor in the displacement of foreign language films. Within a year of the banning of *The Switchboard Operator* Trevelyan allowed the shot of pubic hair in Lindsay Anderson's *If . . .* and by the end of the decade British films such as *Ulysses*, *The Killing of Sister George* and *Women in Love* joined continental films in challenging sexual taboos in the cinema. Sexual explicitness, no longer associated exclusively with continental films, was becoming the norm, so much so that in 1970 the X certificate was changed from over 16 to over 18, allowing a greater freedom of sexual representation for all types of films.

Newly 'discovered' Hollywood films and auteurs were beginning to receive more critical attention by the turn of the decade. By the early 1970s specialist cinemas and film societies were starting to broaden their programming, and new publications, such as *International Times* and *Time Out*, with their embrace of pop art were shaping the tastes of new audiences and breaking down barriers between high and low culture.

The late 1960s and early 1970s also marked a period of transition in film criticism. The cultural assumptions of established magazines, like *Sight and Sound* and *Movie*, were being attacked in the newly relaunched *Screen*, one of whose projects was to broaden the auteur theory from its 'aura' orientation to questions of ideology, film

¹ The successful struggle to reinstate Henri Langlois to the Cinematheque Francaise from which he had been sacked by the French Government was followed by strikes and student upheavals and then the protest at Cannes which eventually closed the festival.

² Betz, 2009, 17-19.

production, and culture.³ And the opening out of the auteur theory to embrace Hollywood directors and popular culture further challenged the limits of the field of film art which had hitherto been largely confined to modernist auteur cinema.⁴

The introduction to this thesis proposed Bourdieu's theory of the field of art as a guiding framework for the narratives of the rise of art cinema. The study, therefore, has concentrated on analysing the development of an institutional infrastructure in Britain comprised mainly of distributors, cinema owners, film societies, magazines, critics, and the BFI. Research into the specialist cinemas has found their influence to be extensive. Cinema owners like George Hoellering not only curated and worked with distributors to import films, but they also developed a model for watching them in an appropriately respectful environment, the arthouse. Along with the specialist distributors these exhibitors were the taste makers of art cinema. Press screenings at the Academy, for example, were cultural and networking events for a range of agents in the field, as well as ceremonies for the consecration of films and directors. The regular Contemporary screening days performed similar functions for activists in the film society movement.

The thesis has also drawn on Baumann's contention that the building of institutions has to be accompanied by a field specific discourse in order for an artistic field to evolve. I have argued therefore that an institutional and discursive combination, particular to the period 1945 to 1968, was responsible for the evolution of the foreign language film into a prestigious art form. But the acceptance of film, the quintessential entertainment for the masses, as an art form was by no means automatic. Peter Wollen recalled that, as late as 1968 when he was writing his seminal work *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema*, the idea of film as an art to be studied for its own sake, like the other arts, was still controversial.⁵ My thesis has argued, following extensive searches of newspapers, magazines, and marketing materials, that the critics were essential to the process of the recognition of film as art. Analysis of reviews of neorealist films found that serious film criticism in the early postwar years was predicated on the notion of quality documentary style filmmaking in opposition to the studio practices of Hollywood. By the 1950s further analysis showed how the reviews of Bresson, Bergman, Buñuel, and others were increasingly deploying concepts and vocabulary to do with directors as authors and their films as art. In the 1960s the auteur theory reached new heights when it joined up with modernism in the works of fashionable directors like Godard, Pasolini, and Makavejev. Moreover, my investigations of critical and audience reception in the

³ Rohdie, 1971, 9-13.

⁴ Tudor, 2005, 135-136.

⁵ Wollen, 1997, 211-248

1960s support the idea that the art film had become the primary artistic vehicle for representing the moral and political issues of the day, an idea which is corroborated by the accounts of participants in the *Cinema Memories* survey.

One institution in particular, the film festival, has emerged in this study as a key instrument in the development of the field. Festivals have featured at various points in the narrative as high profile international gatherings for the public consecration of films, movements, directors, and stars. But, as theorised by Hagener, they also operated as network nodes, significant connectors in a complex diagram of the different 'energy flows' which made up the art film world. I have used Hagener's model of networks to explain festivals as points of interaction for all the layers of activity in film culture including marketing, distribution, and criticism. And, as an indication of their pivotal role, accounts of key agents like George Hoellering, Dilys Powell, and Richard Roud, have concentrated as much on their activities in the international sphere as on their roles in programming, criticism, and festival organisation at home.

The local film society has also emerged as a key institution in the development of the field. An important alternative to specialist cinemas as channels of exhibition for foreign language films, film societies have often been overlooked or dismissed as middlebrow, imitative, and provincial. Massey's theories of space, however, and her insistence on its 'openness, heterogeneity and liveliness' have been used to restore the standing of film societies in the world of art cinema. My case studies of societies in Manchester and Salford, Reigate and Redhill, and the universities of St Andrews, Queens Belfast, and Essex have explored not only their programming but also their local identities within geographically specific contexts. The account of film societies also included a cross-comparison of the published programmes of 11 societies in 1964. This, not surprisingly, showed some uniformity of feature film choices but also revealed individuality and creativity in the curation of shorts and ancillary programming such as silent film. Importantly, the programme leaflets show the societies promoting themselves as social gatherings for cultural and educational exchange as well as for screenings.

The duality of sex and art in foreign language films and their artistic, discursive, and institutional overlaps have been strong themes in this study. Working with case studies from *La Ronde* in 1951 to *The Switchboard Operator* in 1968 this thesis has argued that the success or notoriety of many foreign language films rested on their association with sexual freedom expressed in increasingly explicit cinematic ways. Many of the more successful foreign language films, including Bergman's *Summer with Monica*, Truffaut's *Jules et Jim*, and Fellini's *La dolce vita*, daringly engaged with

the adult themes of sexuality and personal relationships. In a culture of censorship such explorations of previously taboo subjects, often also covered in the press, found receptive audiences in both arthouses and more popular venues. The sometimes confusing overlap of sex and art could also be seen in BBFC reports which not only showed the changing criteria for X certification but also revealed how these categories were mixed up with attitudes to class. Allowances were made for selected foreign films on the grounds of their artistic merit or the fact that they were destined for the specialist cinemas, frequented largely by the middle classes. But the intersections of sex and art were most openly apparent in the distribution and exhibition sectors. Kenneth Rive, by far the largest distributor of foreign language films, offered a mix of critically reputable art works with more sexually exploitative fare and screened them side by side in his cinemas, a model of programming which was also adopted by the Jacey exhibition chain.⁶ Again, this model of exhibition, along with the brief success of clubs like Gala and the New Film Club, belonged specifically to the 1960s when the X certificate helped to push foreign language films of all descriptions into the same spaces of exhibition.

As far as the wider themes of this study are concerned it has become clear that class, education, and social mobility had contradictory relationships with foreign film culture. On the one hand there is ample evidence, especially through the *Cinema Memories* project, that foreign art films represented liberation and an opening up of opportunities, especially for newly socially mobile audiences. On the other hand the consolidation of the field with its exclusive cinemas, subtitled films, and cultural aura led to specialization, increasingly associating art cinema with minority films shown in minority places. The mass audience of the circuit cinemas, meanwhile, were offered only rare exposure to foreign language films, despite occasional successes like *A Man and a Woman* and *Wages of Fear*.

Wider economic contexts have also had implications for the narratives of this study. The rise of art cinema in Europe was, economically and culturally, part of a concerted response to the domination of world cinema by Hollywood.⁷ Co-productions, which offered expansion of markets and increased budget subsidies, were part of this European fightback. These new opportunities for the distribution of foreign films in Britain coincided with a shortage of American product and helps to explain the increase in French and Italian imports.⁸ The other major structural change for the industry was the steep decline in mass cinemagoing, from a peak of

⁶ Smith, Adrian, 2017, 209-220.

⁷ Neale, 1981, 11-39.

⁸ American imports declined from nearly two thirds of registered films in 1950 to 40% in 1966 whilst French and Italian imports from 29 or 6% of the total of foreign imports in 1949 to 89 or 31% of the total in 1966.

1,635,000,000 admissions in 1946 to 193,000,000 in 1970. One response to the loss of a mass audience was increasing segmentation, creating niche spaces for specific interest groups, including those for foreign language films, especially sex films. Nevertheless, most foreign language films, including those that did well in France and Italy like *Rocco and His Brothers* had an almost impossible time getting shown on the circuits. The result of this lack of mainstream support was to exacerbate the problem of attracting sufficiently large audiences to make their distribution worthwhile.

This thesis has more than once borrowed the language of Kovács and Nowell-Smith to argue that by the 1960s the foreign art film was a leading cultural symbol of liberation and modernization. But the importance of film as the new art of the contemporary social-cultural moment was not lost on British cultural theorists of the time. Raymond Williams, for example, argued in the 50s and 60s that cinema, as a popular art close to new audiences was uniquely suitable, as theatre and the novel had once been, to challenge the cultural traditions of the separation of art and entertainment.⁹ Paddy Whannel and Stuart Hall, influenced by Williams' analyses of culture, made an early case in their book *The Popular Arts* (1966) for the serious study of cinema as both art and popular entertainment. It is no coincidence that all three writers were also early pioneers in the teaching of film.¹⁰ Furthermore, they argued that European art directors like Godard, Wajda, and Bergman were ideal vehicles for use in the classroom to address issues about modern society.¹¹

One of the aims of this study was to engage in new areas of research in support of the claim that the films under investigation played a pivotal role in postwar film culture, and I hope that my thesis has contributed to putting foreign art cinema more firmly on the map of British film history. The thesis has also been concerned to re-appraise foreign language films within the broader historical contexts from which they have often been separated. Additionally, this study has engaged with the growing academic area of audience studies through its deployment of memory as a tool to recreate the audience experience, an approach which until now has been confined to studies of popular cinema. Finally, remapping the terrain of foreign films has meant looking more broadly at the roles of little explored institutions, especially the festival and the film society, but also distribution and exhibition practices which offered mixed programming beyond the confines of the specialist cinemas and in diverse

⁹ See Williams' early discussion of film in *Preface to Film* 1954 and his 1971 broadcast on Radio 3, Williams, 2013, 20-24.

¹⁰ Whannel started work as a projectionist, did a conversion teacher training course for ex-servicemen at the end of the War, became a secondary modern teacher, and eventually Head of BFI Education. Hall, a middle class immigrant from Jamaica, won a scholarship to Oxford and then taught Film in the Liberal Studies Department of Chelsea College, and eventually became the Head of Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham. Williams taught Film at the Workers Education Association before joining Cambridge University where Film was part of his teaching.

¹¹ Hall and Whannel, 1966, Hall, 1964, Polan, 2013.

venues outside of London. My ambition of mapping a broad terrain has inevitably meant I was not always able to dig deeply into the histories of some of these local institutions. The gaps and absences in this account, however, point towards the potential for further local studies of cities, regions, and towns, for other histories of individuals, cinemas, and film societies, and for more audience studies which integrate the use of memories with other types of archival research.

Figures

Figure 1: Curzon cinema 1930s



Figure 2: Cosmo cinema 1960



Figure 3: *Storm over Asia* poster, Manchester and Salford Film Society 1931

Manchester & Salford Workers' Film Society.

PRESENT

PUDOVKIN'S

"STORM

OVER

ASIA"

The Film that Salford must NOT see.

FUTURIST CINEMA, Gt. Ducie St.,
Manchester, (opp. Assize Courts)

Saturday, June 27th, at 4-0 p.m.
1931.

JOIN THE SOCIETY.—SEE THE FILM.

COMMENTARIES

"A story which is a masterpiece of irony, and photography which ranges between realism and selective beauty."—
Manchester Guardian

"Bolshevik Propaganda"—"Rubbish"—*A Salford Alderman.*

Figure 4: Academy cinema 1945



Figure 5: Programme for the Vogue Continental, Stoke Newington 1953

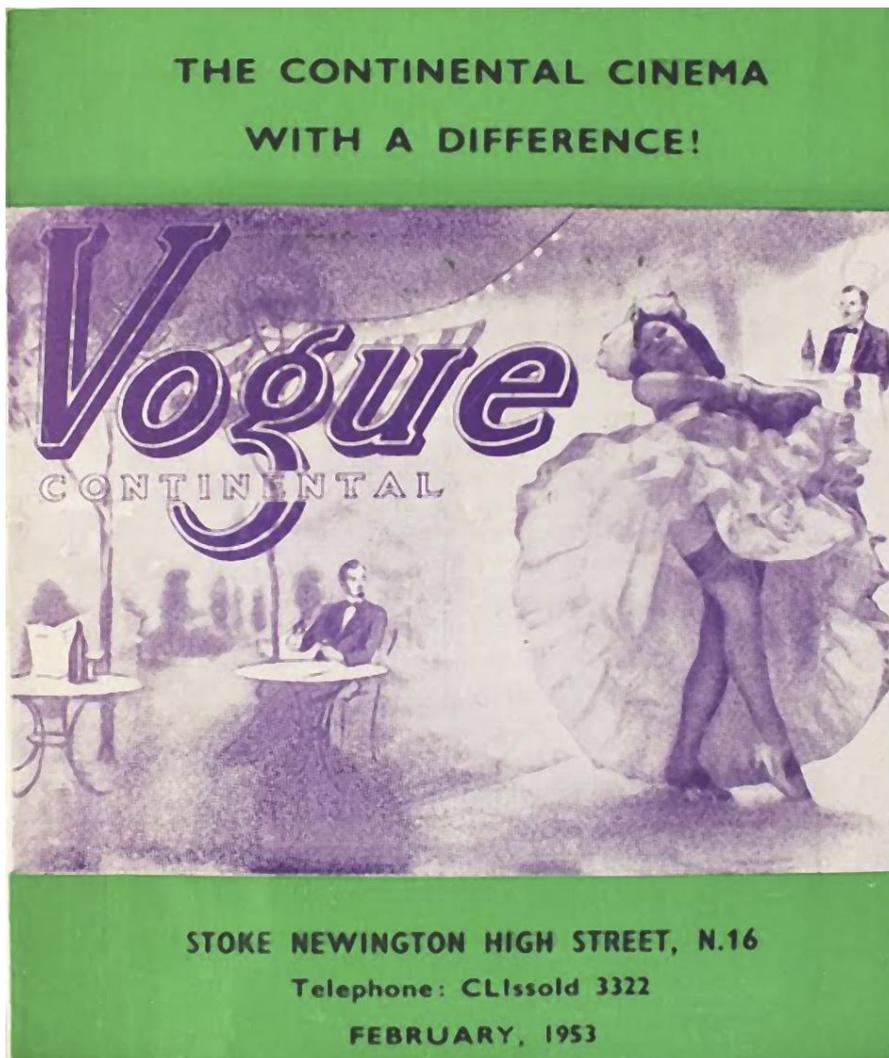
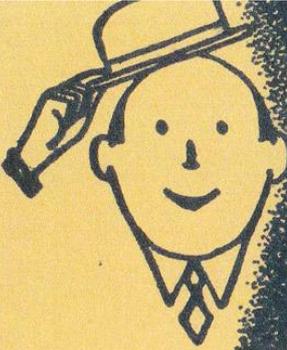


Figure 6: Mr Cosmo's monthly bulletin 1954



Mr Cosmo's MONTHLY BULLETIN

FEBRUARY, 1954

1st February
Another outstanding Russian musical film, **GLINKA** (U), directed by G. Alexandrov. This film gives a spirited account of the career of Mikail Glinka, the composer, best known in Scotland for his opera, *Ruslan and Lyudmila*. Taken as typifying the rise of national feeling in Russia during the first part of the 19th century, Glinka is shown both at times of failure and of triumph. The film has some remarkable moments, particularly when an old church is moved intact by a great body of peasants from one site to another. It also has what appears to be caricature of the pianist Liszt. The *London Evening News* said about the film that "you may relax in a perfect orgy of magnificent music, sumptuous production and very lovely colour photography."

8th February
ARE WE ALL MURDERERS ? (X), a tense French film directed by Andre Cayatte. The theme is whether society is justified in enforcing capital punishment. It goes into the condemned cells and sketches the background of some men who are waiting for death—or clinging to a hope that they will be reprieved.
The film is, of course, grim, but the subject is brilliantly as well as tactfully handled. Most of the actors are new to Glasgow, but some of them give really outstanding performances. Dilys Powell said of the film : "It has an interest beyond its quality as cinema ; it will be used as an argument. Indeed it is itself an argument."

15th February
Jean Renoir's **THE GOLDEN COACH** (U), featuring Anna Magnani. This film, made in Italy but entirely in the English, is by the French director who created such an impression last year with his film about India, **The River**.
The story is set in 18th century South America, still being governed by Spanish viceroys. An Italian theatrical company visits one of the colonies, and Anna Magnani, the leading lady, is wooed by three admirers, the Viceroy himself, a ship's officer and a bull-fighter. The golden coach referred to in the title is a fantastically luxurious coach, brought over on the ship for the Viceroy to impress his court and the natives. But he offends almost everyone by giving it to the actress.
The film is in Technicolor and contains some very pleasant 18th century music.

22nd February
Revival of the French classic, Duvivier's **PEPE LE MOKO** (A), featuring Jean Gabin. The fascinating quality of this pre-war film is its insight into the strange lives of those who shut themselves away in a crowded Algerian Casbah. Here is something that is almost entirely strange to us, and it has the unique merit of being authentic.
Shortly after **Pepe le Moko** was shown in this country it was withdrawn to be remade in Hollywood as **Algiers**, featuring Charles Boyer as the gangster in hiding. Lucas Gridoux played the part of the detective in both versions.
Roger Manvell spoke of the film as being vital, with the camera pushing its way through the crowded Casbah, and Richard Winnington described it as "Gabin's first and lightest essay in that unforgettable style."

Mr. Cosmo denies ever having heard
Garnethill called Glasgow's Casbah !



Figure 7: NFT re-opening 1957



L–R back row: Akira Kurosawa, Vittorio De Sica, John Ford, René Clair; front row:
British film pioneer GA Smith, Gina Lollobrigida, Princess Margaret

Figure 8: American poster for *Bitter Rice*

AMERICA'S NEW BOMBSHELL !

Nothing Short of a Sensation..!
The New York Times

***Silvana* MANGANO**

in
DE SANTIS

"BITTER RICE"
starring

DORIS DOWLING
RALPH and VICTOR
VALLONE GASSMAN

A LUX
Release

**"SILVANA MANGANO
IS SEXIER THAN
BOTH MAE WEST
and JANE RUSSELL"**
- WALTER WINCHELL, Daily Mirror



Figure 9: Peter Strausfield poster for Academy screening of *The Seventh Seal*, 1958



Figure 10: Production shot of *Breathless* 1960



Figure 11: Gala film guide, the Continentale and Berkeley 1960

La Continentale

TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD
MUSEUM 4193
Manager: ALEXANDER TELFORD

NADJA TILLER PETER VAN EYCK

The Girl Rosemarie®

Directed by Rolf Thiele

The film, "The Girl Rosemarie" was first shown at Venice Film Festival after protests from the German Government.

The Germans argued that the film gave a wrong impression.

It tells of a Frankfurt call girl who entertains top German industrialists and politicians wallowing in the post-war boom.

It was based on the story of Rosemary Nitribitt, a Frankfurt girl who was murdered in her flat two years ago. There was a nation-wide scandal when it was discovered that among the men she entertained were leading German business men.



BERKELEY

TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD
MUS. 8150
Manager: PETER ROBERTSON

GESTAPO LYON 1943®

"Un Condamné a Mort s'est Echappé"
Directed by Robert Bresson

This film is the true story of an officer of the French Resistance who was caught by the Germans; while awaiting his death sentence in Lyons prison he manages to escape.

The tension becomes almost unbearable, and the prison atmosphere is conveyed with documentary truth. Robert Bresson, who directed, has again used a simple and unobtrusive symbolism.





GERLINDE LOCKER
WOLF ALBACH - RETTY
in
**DOLLS OF
VICE®**
French Dialogue—English sub-titles

ALAN RESNAIS
(Director of Hiroshima Mon Amour)

NIGHT AND FOG®

A film made to mark the 10th anniversary of the liberation of the German concentration camps.

Chancellor Adenauer said every man, woman and child in Germany should be made to see it.

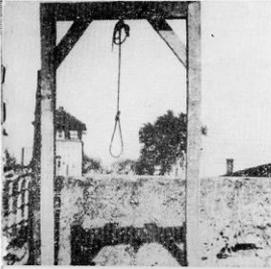


Figure 12: Onibaba publicity, Bishops Stortford Granada 1967

GRANADA BISHOP'S STORTFORD 4456

open 2 o'clock (sun 4.15) sun Dec 3 for 7 days last show 7.10 (sun 6.20)

X
ONIBABA HAS BEEN PASSED BY THE HERTS COUNTY COUNCIL FOR EXHIBITION TO ADULT AUDIENCES OVER 16
X



Onibaba^x

OVERWHELMING EXPERIENCE

what the papers say...

ONIBABA 'ESSAY IN PRIMITIVE SEX' LONDON EVENING STANDARD

ONIBABA 'SOME OF THE FRANKSTEN SCENES I HAVE EVER SEEN' LONDON EVENING NEWS

ONIBABA 'A QUALITY OF PRIMITIVE TRUTH THAT HAUNTS THE MIND' MORNING STAR

PLUS

BREATHTAKING BEAUTIES
NUDIST PARADISE

COLOUR A



ONIBABA sun 4.35 7.45 week 2.15 5.25 8.30
Nudist Paradise sun 6.20 week 4 o'clock 7.10

Figure 14: Continentale Kemp Town



Figure 15: Bedford Film Society programme 1963-64, cover

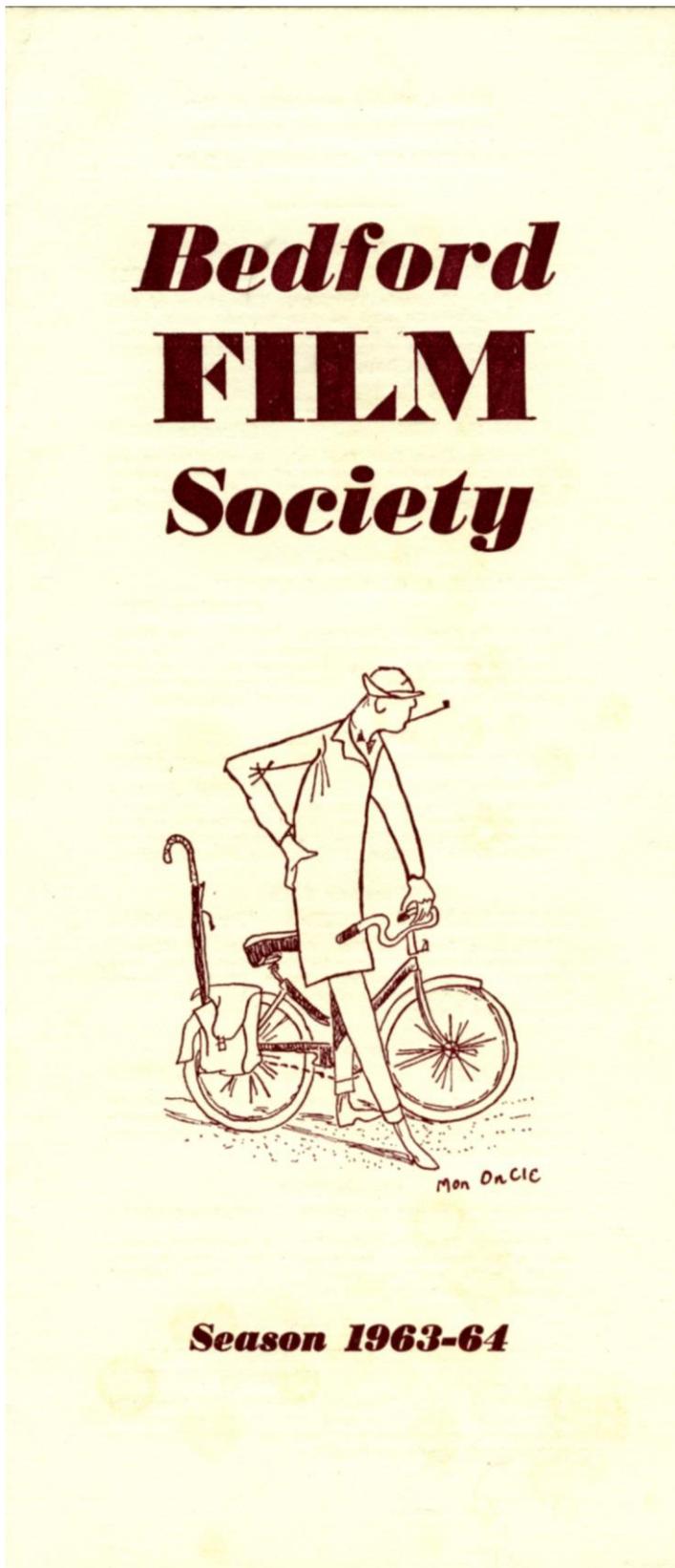


Figure 16: Bedford Film Society programme 1963-64

8pm. shows are held at the
PICTUREHOME CINEMA
on SUNDAY afternoons at 2.30.

September 29th (France 1961)
JULES AND JIM
Director: Jacques Truffaut. The story of two Parisian students who fall in love with each other and try to understand and are finally defeated by Truffaut observes with innocence and a haunting nostalgia for lost happiness.

October 27th (France 1962)
VIVRE SA VIE
Director: Jean Luc Godard. A meditation on a girl who sells her body but keeps her soul. A most personal film and a tribute to Anna Karina who gives a fine performance.

November 24th (Sweden 1961)
THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY
Director: Ingmar Bergman. Book on the Bergman deal with the significance of God. The film is a series of scenes from the life of a man isolated on an island. Visually exciting with a splendid performance by Harriet Andersson.

December 29th (France/Brazil 1953)
BLACK ORPHEUS
Director: Marcel Camus. Colourful modern version of the Orpheus theme set in Rio de Janeiro. A beautiful film with a most beautiful spectacle, myth and melodrama was awarded the 'Palme d'Or' at the 1959 Cannes Film Festival.

January 26th (France 1961)
ZAZIE DANS LE METRO
Director: Louis Malle. An intriguing film in exquisite colour of the adventures of a ten year old girl in contemporary Paris. Male expertly directed and superbly acted. A film which succeeds in being both funny and clever.

February 23rd (Spain/Mexico 1961)
VIRIDIANA
Director: Luis Bunuel. Made and banned in Spain, this parable of destruction is Bunuel's most complex, philosophical and technically consummate film.

March 22nd (Poland 1961)
KNIFE IN THE WATER
Director: Roman Polanski. A peaching week-end with a young wife and a young hitch-hiker aboard. Nervously taut and brilliant film.

April 26th (France/Italy 1961)
L'ANNÉE DERNIERE A MARINBAD
Director: Alain Resnais. Hauntingly beautiful experiment with time and reality, a masterpiece of applied technique and not half as difficult as it has been made to sound.

8pm shows are held at
MANDER COLLEGE ASSEMBLY HALL
evenings at 7.30

Monday, October 14th (U.S.A. 1936)
MR. DEEDS GOES TO TOWN
Director: Frank Capra. The famous story of a mild-mannered man who steps into the arena in a fight with the law. Very funny, very clever and elegant film of Yul Brynner and Jean Arthur met with Gary Cooper and Jean Arthur lead the cast of this delightfully sentimental comedy.

Thursday, November 14th (France/Italy 1961)
CLAU FROM 5 TILL 7
Director: Agnes Varda. On the longest day of the year, four death-roped women to a discovery of the meaning of life. Moving and elegant film of Varda, 34-year-old godmother and her husband, Jean-Louis Barrault and L'OPERA MOUFFE will also be included in the programme.

Friday, December 13th (France 1939)
MON ONCLE
Director: Jacques Tati. Monsieur Hulot disrupts his sister's starchy functional home and his progress is a series of comic incidents on a simple comic theme. Too well applauded to need further recommendation.

Friday, January 3rd (France 1943-5)
LES ENFANTS DU PARADIS
Director: Marcel Carné. The celebrated super-production of the French New Wave. A beautiful and side-show. An elegant production beautifully acted by Arletty, Jean-Louis Barrault and Pierre Brasseur.

Wednesday, February 12th (France 1964)
VICIOUS CIRCLE
Director: Jacques Audié. A version of Jean-Paul Sartre's 'Huis Clos' which succeeds in being intelligent and amusing in its intentionally theatrical manner. Arletty, once more, excels.

Tuesday, March 10th (France 1964)
THE SHEEP HAS FIVE LEGS
Director: Henri Verneuil. An amusing version of the story of a man who is accused of playing six roles, a father and his quinquagenarian wife, a man and his quinquagenarian wife, a man and his quinquagenarian wife. Most amusing episodes concern his likeness to a film-famed priest and his gunning every thing on a fly.

Film Museum Series
ADMISSION TO THESE SHOWS IS RESTRICTED TO MEMBERS ONLY.
Shows are held at
BEDFORD GUILD HOUSE
evenings at 7.30.

Wednesday, October 30th
'The Golden Age of Screen Comedy'
LONG PANTS (U.S.A. 1927)
Director: Frank Capra. The shenanigans of an appeal of Harry Langdon are given very special unity in this delightfully whimsical story with many moments of screen mime at its most inspired. A most amusing and entertaining film. Other examples will be screened of the work of the major comic figures of the silent era.

Thursday, November 21st
'Film Classics of all time.'
THE CABINER OF DR. CALIGARI (Germany 1919)
Director: Robert Wiene. The first expressionist masterpiece was one of the first films to exploit the subjective approach to cinema. It is a night-mare of the imagination of Robert Wiene. The original work of the German Expressionist movement. The settings are unique in film design.

Wednesday, December 18th
'Drawings that Walk and Talk.'
An evening devoted to a history of the development of animation. The work of the great animators of the past and present will be shown. Apart from the work of Walt Disney which will be well represented, films from the work of the great animators of the past and present will be included.

Thursday, February 20th
Annual General Meeting, followed by
LOUISIANA STORY (U.S.A. 1948)
Robert Flaherty's legendary story of the impact of oilmen on the backwoods people of Louisiana.

Thursday, March 19th
'Idols of the Silent Screen.'
SON OF THE SHEIK (U.S.A. 1926)
A film which features Rudolph Valentino when he was at the height of his career. Many authorities still claim it as his finest film.

CURT HERB

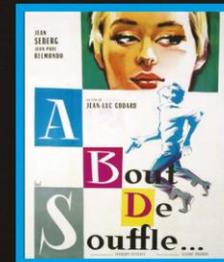
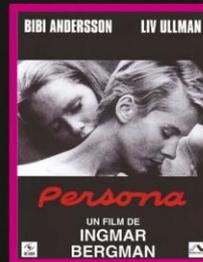
TO JOIN, FILL IN OVERLEAF
AND POST TO THE
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY,
BEDFORD FILM SOCIETY,
75 HARTINGTON STREET,
BEDFORD.

Figure 17: *Cinema Memories* leaflet 2012 (1)

I NEED YOUR CINEMA MEMORIES!



***foreign films
1950s and 1960s***

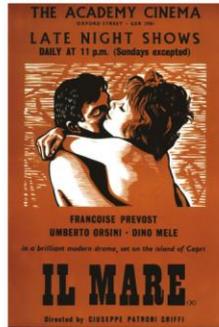


An invitation to help research

Figure 18: *Cinema Memories* leaflet 2012 (2)

CINEMA MEMORIES

foreign films, 1950s and 1960s



WERE YOU A FAN OF FOREIGN FILMS in the 1950s or the 1960s? Did you follow particular directors such as Rossellini, Bergman, Antonioni or Godard? Did you admire Japanese, Polish or Czech films? Where did you watch them and how did they affect you? Why did you choose these films and have they left a lasting impression? If you have answers to any of these questions—

I need your help!

I am doing PhD research at Birkbeck University of London into the films, cinemas and film societies of those years, and also the distributors, audiences, censors and critics. If you have memories of any of the above, I would be delighted if you would share your knowledge by filling in my simple, confidential online questionnaire.

Please contact me for the questionnaire at

margaret.obrien115@googlemail.com

Thank you for your help!

Margaret O'Brien

Appendix 1: *Cinema Memories* questionnaire

cinema memories

Cinema Memories: watching foreign language films in the 1950s and 1960s.

Thank you very much for agreeing to fill in this questionnaire.

This survey is part of my PhD thesis at Birkbeck, University of London, on foreign language films in the UK in the 1950s and 1960s. There are 30 questions (many of them short) and it should take about 20 minutes to fill in.

I am interested in your memories of foreign language films in this period, although I realise that many of you will be talking about the 1960s only. If you have any difficulty remembering as far back as the 1950s and 1960s don't worry - just try to give as much detail as possible.

The questionnaire is in four sections:

A: Your film viewing

B: Your experiences of cinemas, film societies and television

C: Film in cultural and social life

D: Details about you.

Some of the questions are open-ended, asking you to put your answers in your own words; others ask you to choose one answer. I hope you will reply as fully as possible to the open-ended questions. All the information will remain confidential, unless you agree otherwise in the final section of the questionnaire.

Section A: Your film viewing

1. In the 1950s and 1960s when did you go to the cinema most frequently? (you can select more than one of the following)

- 1950-1954
- 1955-1959
- 1960-1964
- 1965-1970

2. At the time you went to the cinema or other screening most frequently did you go on average

- less than once a month
- once a month or more
- once a week
- 2-3 times a week
- 4+ times a week
- I do not remember

3. What proportion of the total were foreign language films?

- about 1 in 10
- about 1/4
- about 1/2
- about 3/4
- all of them

4. How important were the following when choosing a foreign language film?

	important	quite important	not important
country of origin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
the director	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
the stars	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
the reviews	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
the accreditation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If your last answer was other please write in the reason here.

5. Thinking back to the first, or one of the first, of your foreign language films, why did you decide to see that film?

6. List up to 3 foreign language films which you saw in the 1950s which are particularly memorable to you.

7. List up to 3 foreign language films which you saw in the 1960s which are particularly memorable to you.

8 What impact did foreign language films have on you? (e.g. did they increase your understanding of foreign cultures, of politics, of relationships)

9. Please indicate which of the following national cinemas you watched.

- French
- Italian
- Russian
- Swedish
- Eastern European
- Japanese
- Indian
- Other

10. Which was your favourite national cinema and why?

11. Did you follow any particular directors?

- Yes No

If yes, please give reasons.

12. Did you follow any particular stars?

- Yes No

If yes give reasons.

cinema memories

Section B: Your experiences of cinemas, film societies and television

13. In which town or city and in which cinema(s) did you watch foreign language films?

14. If you visited an arthouse cinema how was it different from a mainstream cinema?

15. Were you a member of a film society?

Yes No

If yes which one(s)?

Where did you view the films and what was the venue like?

What were the advantages/benefits to you of belonging to a film society?

16. If you viewed foreign language films on television please give details.

[< Previous](#)

Page 2 of 4

[Next >](#)

SURVEY AND DATA CAPTURE TECHNOLOGY BY DEMOGRAPHIX LIMITED

cinema memories

Section C: Film in cultural and social life

17. If you discussed foreign language films with others in the 1950s and 1960s tick all that apply

- with work colleagues
- with relatives
- with fellow students
- with friends
- with partners (e.g. spouse, boy/girlfriend)
- at film societies
- other

18. Did you read film reviews?

- Yes No

If you did read film reviews, please tell us which newspapers or magazines

19. Which film magazines did you read?

- Sight and Sound
- Films and Filming
- Picture Goer
- Other film magazines
- None

If you read other film magazines, please specify which

20. If you went to other arts events what were they?

- theatre
- music
- art exhibitions
- other
- did not go to other arts events

21. Did you enjoy going to foreign language films

- more than other arts events
- equally with other arts events
- less than other arts events

Please give reasons for your answer

23. This is the last question about film. Please use the space below to add anything else you would like to say about your memories and experiences of foreign language films.

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cinema memories

Section D: details about you

23. In which age group are you?

- 50-59
- 60-69
- 70-79
- 80+

24. In the 1950s and 1960s were you (you can answer more than one)

- in full time paid employment
- In part time paid employment
- working in the home
- at school, college or university
- other (please specify below - next question)

25. If you were employed full time or part time please give details.

26. At what age did you leave school?

- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19

27. What is your highest educational qualification?

28. Would you be prepared to be quoted in my research findings?

- yes (by name)
- yes (anonymously)
- no

29. May I contact you for further information if appropriate?

- Yes
- No

30. If yes, please give contact details below(name, email and a phone number).

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Unless you have agreed to the contrary, I will treat your answers in strict confidence. If you have any questions about my research or would like to hear about some of the findings, you can contact me at margaret.obrien115@googlemail.com

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[Submit Answers](#)

SURVEY AND DATA CAPTURE TECHNOLOGY BY DEMOGRAPHIX LIMITED

Appendix 2: Cinema Memories analysis of responses

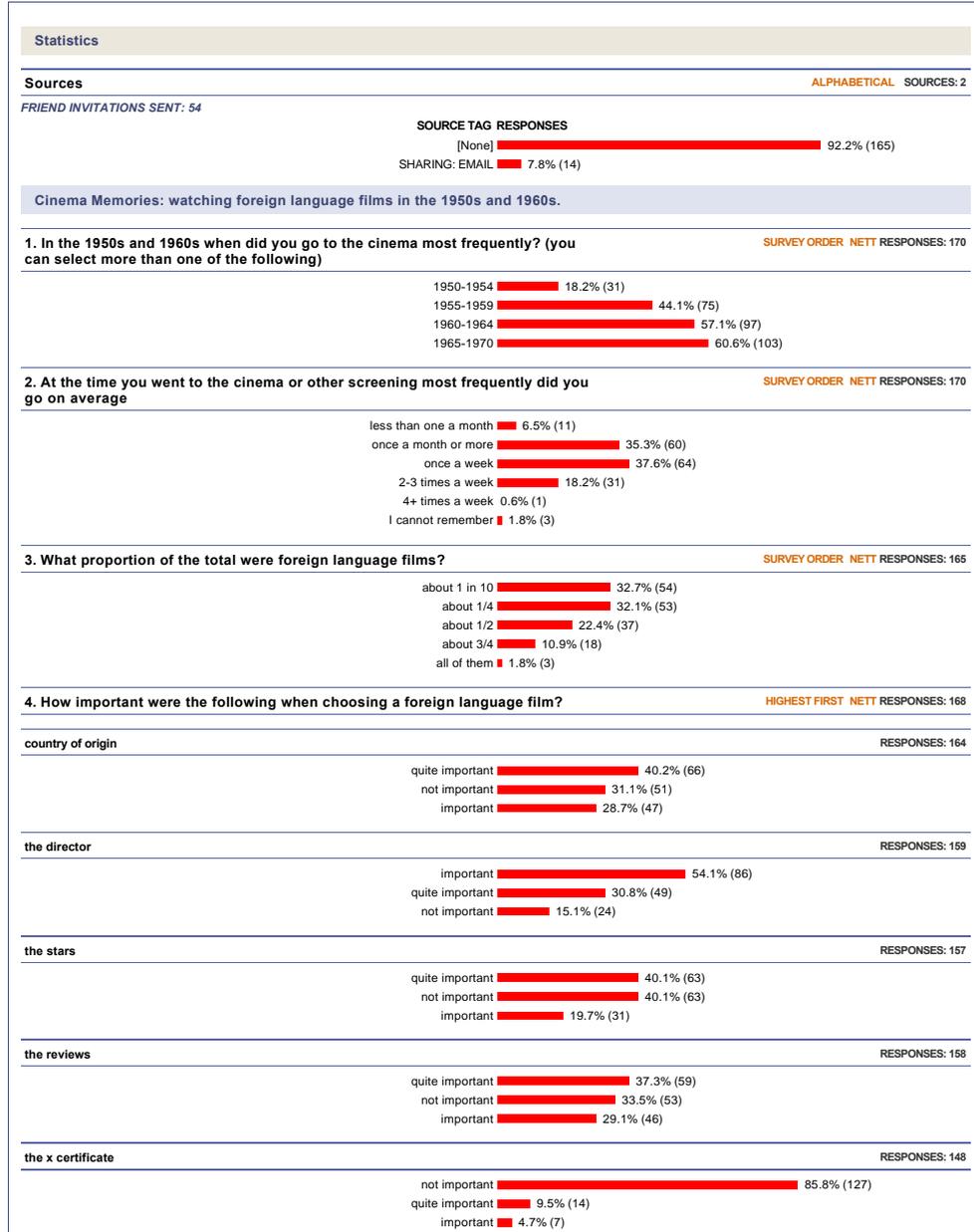
ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES



cinema memories

cinema memories

TOTAL SURVEY RESPONSES: 179
 FIRST RESPONSE: 20 Nov 2012 21:03
 LAST RESPONSE: 14 Feb 2017 20:03

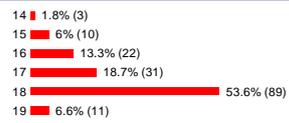


other	RESPONSES: 81
<p>important  44.4% (36)</p> <p>not important  33.3% (27)</p> <p>quite important  22.2% (18)</p>	
If your last answer was other please write in the reason here.	HIGHEST FIRST NETT WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 68
<p>KEYWORD ANALYSIS</p> <p>location  7.4% (5)</p> <p>subject  5.9% (4)</p> <p>other  4.4% (3)</p> <p>because of country of origin 0% (0)</p> <p>because of the director 0% (0)</p> <p>because of the stars 0% (0)</p> <p>because of the reviews 0% (0)</p> <p>because of the x certificate 0% (0)</p>	
5. Thinking back to the first, or one of the first, of your foreign language films, why did you decide to see that film?	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 168
6. List up to 3 foreign language films which you saw in the 1950s which are particularly memorable to you.	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 143
7. List up to 3 foreign language films which you saw in the 1960s which are particularly memorable to you.	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 166
8 What impact did foreign language films have on you? (e.g. did they increase your understanding of foreign cultures, of politics, of relationships)	HIGHEST FIRST NETT WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 162
<p>KEYWORD ANALYSIS</p> <p>no  27.8% (45)</p> <p>yes  5.6% (9)</p> <p>maybe 0% (0)</p>	
9. Please indicate which of the following national cinemas you watched.	SURVEY ORDER NETT RESPONSES: 165
<p>French  98.2% (162)</p> <p>Italian  87.3% (144)</p> <p>Russian  58.2% (96)</p> <p>Swedish  74.5% (123)</p> <p>Eastern European  39.4% (65)</p> <p>Japanese  52.1% (86)</p> <p>Indian  32.7% (54)</p> <p>Other  23% (38)</p>	
10. Which was your favourite national cinema and why?	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 165
11. Did you follow any particular directors?	SURVEY ORDER NETT RESPONSES: 168
<p>Yes  67.3% (113)</p> <p>No  32.7% (55)</p>	
If yes, please give reasons.	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 118
12. Did you follow any particular stars?	SURVEY ORDER NETT RESPONSES: 163
<p>Yes  39.9% (65)</p> <p>No  60.1% (98)</p>	
If yes give reasons.	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 76
Section B: Your experiences of cinemas, film societies and television	
13. In which town or city and in which cinema(s) did you watch foreign language films?	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 169
14. If you visited an arthouse cinema how was it different from a mainstream cinema?	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 152
15. Were you a member of a film society?	SURVEY ORDER NETT RESPONSES: 169
<p>Yes  52.7% (89)</p> <p>No  47.3% (80)</p>	
If yes which one(s)?	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 95

cinema memories (cinema memories)

Where did you view the films and what was the venue like?	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 122														
What were the advantages/benefits to you of belonging to a film society?	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 97														
16. If you viewed foreign language films on television please give details.	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 116														
Section C: Film in cultural and social life															
17. If you discussed foreign language films with others in the 1950s and 1960s tick all that apply	SURVEY ORDER NETT RESPONSES: 164														
<table border="1"> <tr><td>with work colleagues</td><td>25.6% (42)</td></tr> <tr><td>with relatives</td><td>29.3% (48)</td></tr> <tr><td>with fellow students</td><td>65.2% (107)</td></tr> <tr><td>with friends</td><td>77.4% (127)</td></tr> <tr><td>with partners (e.g. spouse, boy/girlfriend)</td><td>63.4% (104)</td></tr> <tr><td>at film societies</td><td>23.2% (38)</td></tr> <tr><td>other</td><td>1.2% (2)</td></tr> </table>		with work colleagues	25.6% (42)	with relatives	29.3% (48)	with fellow students	65.2% (107)	with friends	77.4% (127)	with partners (e.g. spouse, boy/girlfriend)	63.4% (104)	at film societies	23.2% (38)	other	1.2% (2)
with work colleagues	25.6% (42)														
with relatives	29.3% (48)														
with fellow students	65.2% (107)														
with friends	77.4% (127)														
with partners (e.g. spouse, boy/girlfriend)	63.4% (104)														
at film societies	23.2% (38)														
other	1.2% (2)														
18. Did you read film reviews?	SURVEY ORDER NETT RESPONSES: 164														
<table border="1"> <tr><td>Yes</td><td>76.2% (125)</td></tr> <tr><td>No</td><td>23.8% (39)</td></tr> </table>		Yes	76.2% (125)	No	23.8% (39)										
Yes	76.2% (125)														
No	23.8% (39)														
If you did read film reviews, please tell us which newspapers or magazines	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 128														
19. Which film magazines did you read?	SURVEY ORDER NETT RESPONSES: 140														
<table border="1"> <tr><td>Sight and Sound</td><td>45% (63)</td></tr> <tr><td>Films and Filming</td><td>30.7% (43)</td></tr> <tr><td>Picture Goer</td><td>20.7% (29)</td></tr> <tr><td>Other film magazines</td><td>25.7% (36)</td></tr> <tr><td>None</td><td>40.7% (57)</td></tr> </table>		Sight and Sound	45% (63)	Films and Filming	30.7% (43)	Picture Goer	20.7% (29)	Other film magazines	25.7% (36)	None	40.7% (57)				
Sight and Sound	45% (63)														
Films and Filming	30.7% (43)														
Picture Goer	20.7% (29)														
Other film magazines	25.7% (36)														
None	40.7% (57)														
If you read other film magazines, please specify which	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 48														
20. If you went to other arts events what were they?	SURVEY ORDER NETT RESPONSES: 166														
<table border="1"> <tr><td>theatre</td><td>88% (146)</td></tr> <tr><td>music</td><td>74.7% (124)</td></tr> <tr><td>art exhibitions</td><td>67.5% (112)</td></tr> <tr><td>other</td><td>9.6% (16)</td></tr> <tr><td>did not go to other arts events</td><td>3% (5)</td></tr> </table>		theatre	88% (146)	music	74.7% (124)	art exhibitions	67.5% (112)	other	9.6% (16)	did not go to other arts events	3% (5)				
theatre	88% (146)														
music	74.7% (124)														
art exhibitions	67.5% (112)														
other	9.6% (16)														
did not go to other arts events	3% (5)														
21. Did you enjoy going to foreign language films	SURVEY ORDER NETT RESPONSES: 165														
<table border="1"> <tr><td>more than other arts events</td><td>35.8% (59)</td></tr> <tr><td>equally with other arts events</td><td>60.6% (100)</td></tr> <tr><td>less than other arts events</td><td>3.6% (6)</td></tr> </table>		more than other arts events	35.8% (59)	equally with other arts events	60.6% (100)	less than other arts events	3.6% (6)								
more than other arts events	35.8% (59)														
equally with other arts events	60.6% (100)														
less than other arts events	3.6% (6)														
Please give reasons for your answer	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 147														
23. This is the last question about film. Please use the space below to add anything else you would like to say about your memories and experiences of foreign language films.	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 135														
Section D: details about you															
23. In which age group are you?	SURVEY ORDER NETT RESPONSES: 170														
<table border="1"> <tr><td>50-59</td><td>1.2% (2)</td></tr> <tr><td>60-69</td><td>47.1% (80)</td></tr> <tr><td>70-79</td><td>42.9% (73)</td></tr> <tr><td>80+</td><td>8.8% (15)</td></tr> </table>		50-59	1.2% (2)	60-69	47.1% (80)	70-79	42.9% (73)	80+	8.8% (15)						
50-59	1.2% (2)														
60-69	47.1% (80)														
70-79	42.9% (73)														
80+	8.8% (15)														
24. In the 1950s and 1960s were you (you can answer more than one)	SURVEY ORDER NETT RESPONSES: 168														
<table border="1"> <tr><td>in full time paid employment</td><td>49.4% (83)</td></tr> <tr><td>In part time paid employment</td><td>9.5% (16)</td></tr> <tr><td>working in the home</td><td>6% (10)</td></tr> <tr><td>at school, college or university</td><td>86.3% (145)</td></tr> <tr><td>other (please specify below - next question)</td><td>5.4% (9)</td></tr> </table>		in full time paid employment	49.4% (83)	In part time paid employment	9.5% (16)	working in the home	6% (10)	at school, college or university	86.3% (145)	other (please specify below - next question)	5.4% (9)				
in full time paid employment	49.4% (83)														
In part time paid employment	9.5% (16)														
working in the home	6% (10)														
at school, college or university	86.3% (145)														
other (please specify below - next question)	5.4% (9)														
25. If you were employed full time or part time please give details.	WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 108														

26. At what age did you leave school? SURVEY ORDER NETT RESPONSES: 166

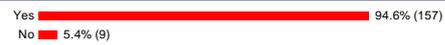


27. What is your highest educational qualification? WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 167

28. Would you be prepared to be quoted in my research findings? SURVEY ORDER NETT RESPONSES: 169



29. May I contact you for further information if appropriate? SURVEY ORDER NETT RESPONSES: 166



30. If yes, please give contact details below(name, email and a phone number). WRITE-IN RESPONSES: 157

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Continental Film Review

Film

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- Accident* (1967, Joseph Losey), UK, dist. London Independent Productions /Monarch (A)
- Accused, The / Obžalovaný* (1964, Elmar Klos and Ján Kadár), Czechoslovakia, no dist. in UK
- Act of Love* (1953, Anatole Litvak), France/USA, United Artists (A)
- Actor's Revenge, An aka The Revenge of Ukeno-jo* (1963, Kon Ichikawa), Japan, dist. Contemporary (A)
- Adorable Creatures / Adorables créatures* (1952, Christian-Jaque), France, dist. GCT (X)
- Adventures of Baron Münchhausen / Münchhausen* (1943, Josef von Báky), Germany, no dist. in UK
- Adventures of Robinson Crusoe aka Robinson Crusoe* (1953, Luis Buñuel), Mexico, dist. United Artists (U)
- Adventures of Werner Holt, The / Die Abenteuer des Werner Holt* (1963, Joachim Kunert), East Germany, dist. Contemporary (A)
- Afraid to Live / Das Bekenntnis der Ina Kahr* (1954, G.W. Pabst), Germany, dist. Gala (X)
- Age d'or, L'* (1930, Luis Buñuel), France, dist. BFI 1980 (A)
- Age of Daydreaming aka Age of Illusions / Álmodozások kora* (1964, István Szabó), Hungary, no dist. in UK
- Aigle à deux têtes, L' / The Eagle with Two Heads* (1948, Jean Cocteau), France, dist. Studio One (A)
- Alexander Nevsky* (1938, Sergei Eisenstein), Soviet Union, dist. Film Society (U)
- Ali Baba / Ali Baba et les 40 voleurs* (1954, Jacques Becker), France, dist. Republic (U)
- All the Gold in the World / Tout l'or du monde* (1961, René Clair), France/Italy, dist. Connoisseur (U)
- Alphaville / Alphaville: Une étrange aventure de Lemmy Caution* (1965, Jean-Luc Godard), France/Italy, dist. Academy / Connoisseur (A)
- Altri tempi / Infidelity* (1952, Alessandro Blasetti), Italy, dist. Regent (A)
- Amants, Les / The Lovers* (1958, Louis Malle), France, dist. Mondial (X)
- Amants de Vérone, Les* (1948, André Cayatte), France, dist. Blue Ribbon (A)
- Amiche, Le / The Girlfriends* (1955, Michelangelo Antonioni), Italy, dist. Gala (A)
- Amici per la pelle / Friends for Life* (1955, Franco Rossi), Italy/France/Spain, dist. Contemporary (U)
- And Quiet Flows the Don* (1957, Sergei Gerasimov), Soviet Union, dist. Gala (A)

And Woman . . . Was Created aka . . . *And God Created Woman / Et Dieu . . . créa la femme* (1956, Roger Vadim), France/Italy, dist. Miracle (X)

Angélique / Angélique, marquise des anges (1964, Bernard Borderie), France/Italy/Germany, dist. Butchers (A)

Ange de la nuit, L' / Angel of the Night (1944, André Berthomieu), France, dist. Film Traders (A)

Angelina / L'onorevole Angelina (1947, Luigi Zampa), Italy, dist. Film Traders (A)

Anna (1951, Alberto Lattuada), Italy/France, dist. Archway (A)

Anna Cross, The (1954, Isidor Annensky), Soviet Union, dist. Gala (U)

À nous la liberté (1931, René Clair), France, Universal Pictures (U)

Antoine et Antoinette (1947, Jacques Becker), France, dist. British Lion (A)

Aparajito / The Unvanquished (1956, Satyajit Ray), India, dist. Contemporary (U)

Apartment, The (1960, Billy Wilder), USA, dist. United Artists (A)

Aren't we Wonderful? / Wir Wunderkinder (1958, Kurt Hoffman), Germany, dist. Contemporary (A)

Ashes and Diamonds / Popiół i diament (1958, Andrzej Wajda), Poland, dist. Contemporary (X)

Assassino, L' / The Assassin (1961, Elio Petri), Italy/France, dist. Connoisseur (X)

Atalante, L' (1934, Jean Vigo), France, dist. The Film Society, no BBFC rating

Au-delà des grilles / Beyond the Gates/The Walls of Malapaga (1949, René Clément), Italy/France, dist. Films de France (A)

Au Hasard Balthazar aka *Balthazar* (1966, Robert Bresson), France/Sweden, dist. Gala (A)

Autumn Afternoon, An (1962, Yasujirō Ozu), Japan, dist. Contemporary (U)

Avant le déluge / Before the Deluge (1954, André Cayatte), France, no dist. in UK

Avventura, L' (1960, Michelangelo Antonioni), Italy/France, dist. Mondial (X)

Babette Goes to War / Babette s'en va-t-en guerre (1959, Christian-Jaque), France, dist. Columbia (A)

Baie des anges, La / Bay of Angels (1962, Jacques Demy), France, dist. Connoisseur (A)

Baker of Valorgue, The / Le Boulanger de Valorgue (1952, Henri Verneuil), France/Italy, dist. Curzon (A)

Ballad of a Soldier (1959, Grigoriy Chukrai), Soviet Union, dist. British Lion (U)

Bambi (1942, David Hand), USA, dist. RKO Radio (U)

Bande à part / The Outsiders (1964, Jean-Luc Godard), France, dist. Gala (A)

Bandits of Orgosolo (1961, Vittorio De Seta), Italy, dist. Connoisseur (U)

Bank Holiday (1938, Carol Reed), UK, dist. GFD (A)

Barefoot Battalion, The (1953, Gregg C. Tallas), Greece/USA, dist. Gala (U)

Barrier / Bariera (1966, Jerzy Skolimowski), Poland, dist. Contemporary (X)

Baron Münchhausen aka *The Fabulous Baron Münchhausen / Baron Prášil* (1962, Karel Zeman), Czechoslovakia, dist. Connoisseur (U)

Battle Inferno / Hunde: Wollt ihr ewig leben (1959, Frank Wisbar), Germany, dist. British Lion (A)

Battle of Algiers, The / La battaglia di Algeri (1965, Gillo Pontecorvo), Italy/Algeria, dist. Rank (X)

Battleship Potemkin (1925, Sergei Eisenstein), Soviet Union, dist. from 1954 by Gala (X)

Beach, The / La spiaggia (1954, Alberto Lattuada), Italy/France, dist. Gala (X)

Beau Serge, Le / Handsome Serge (1958, Claude Chabrol), dist. Gala (X)

Bed, The / Secrets d'alcôve (1954, Henri Decoin, Jean Delannoy, Gianni Franciolini, and Ralph Habib), France/Italy, Gala (X)

Behind Closed Shutters / Persiane chiuse (1951, Luigi Comencini), Italy, dist. Archway (X)

Bel Ami (1954, Louis Daquin), Austria/France/Germany, dist. Synchro-Cine (X)

Bell'antonio, Il (1960, Mauro Bolognini), Italy/France, dist. Mondial (X)

Belle de jour (1967, Luis Buñuel), France/Italy, dist. Curzon (X)

Belle et la Bête, La / Beauty and the Beast (1946, Jean Cocteau), France, dist. British Lion (A)

Ben Hur (1959, William Wyler), USA, dist. MGM (A)

Berliner Ballade / The Ballad of Berlin (1948, Robert A. Stemmle), Germany, dist. London Films (U)

Bête humaine, La / Judas was a Woman (1938, Jean Renoir), France, dist. United Curzon (A)

Bicycle Thieves / Ladri de bicicletta (1948, Vittorio De Sica), Italy, dist. GCT (U)

Birth of a Nation, The (1915, D.W. Griffith), USA, dist. Western Import Co Ltd (U)

Bitter Fruit / Fruits amers: Soledad (1966, Jacqueline Audry), France/Italy/Yugoslavia, dist. Contemporary (A)

Bitter Rice / Riso amaro (1949, Giuseppe De Santis), Italy, dist. Gelardi Rashbrooke (A)

Blackboard Jungle, The (1955, Richard Brooks), USA, dist. MGM (X)

Black Orpheus / Orfeu negro (1958, Marcel Camus), France/Italy/Brazil, dist. R.D. Purie/Curzon (A)

Blonde in Love, A / Lásky jedné plavovlásky (1965, Miloš Forman), Czechoslovakia, dist. Contemporary (X)

Blow-Up (1966, Michelangelo Antonioni), UK, dist. MGM (X)

Blue Angel, The / Der blaue Engel (1930, Josef von Sternberg), Germany, dist. Wardour (U)

Blue Light, The / Das blaue Licht (1932, Leni Riefenstahl), Germany, dist. Universal (U)

Bonheur, Le / Happiness (1965, Agnès Varda), France, dist. Gala (X)

Bonne chance / Good Luck (1935, Sacha Guitry and Fernand Rivers), France, dist. Gaumont-British (U)

Bonnes Femmes, Les (1959, Claude Chabrol), France/Italy, dist. Contemporary (X)

Bourgeois Gentleman, Le (1958, Jean Meyer), France, dist. Connoisseur (U)

Bread, Love and Dreams / Pane, amore e fantasia (1953, Luigi Comencini), Italy, dist. Curzon (A)

Bread, Love and Jealousy / Pane, amore e gelosia (1954, Luigi Comencini), Italy, dist. Curzon (A)

Breathless / A bout de souffle (1959, Jean-Luc Godard), France, dist. British Lion (X)

The Bridge / Die Brücke (1959, Bernhard Wicki), Germany, dist. British Lion (X)

Brief Encounter (1945, David Lean), UK, dist. Eagle-Lion (A)

Burmese Harp, The (1956, Kon Ichikawa), Japan, dist. Contemporary (A)

Bushido, Samurai Saga (1963, Tadashi Imai), Japan, no dist. in UK

Call Girls of Rome / I piaceri del sabato notte (1960, Daniele D'Anza), Italy, dist. Gala (X)

Camp of Violence / Un hecho violento (1959, José María Foqué), Spain, dist. Gala (X)

Carabinieri, Les / The Soldiers (1963, Jean-Luc Godard), France/Italy, dist. Academy/Connoisseur (X)

Card of Fate, The / Le Grand Jeu (1954, Robert Siodmak), France/Italy, dist. Gala (A)

Carmelites, The / Le dialogue des Carmélites (1959, Philippe Agostini and Raymond Bruckberger), France/Italy, dist. Hillcrest (A)

Carnet de bal, Un / Christine (1937, Julien Duvivier), France, dist. Cosmopolitan (A)

Caroline Cherie (1951, Jean Devaivre), France, Gala-Cameo-Poly (A)

Carriage to Vienna aka Coach to Vienna / Kočár do vidně (1966, Karel Kachnya), Czechoslovakia, dist. Curzon (X)

Casanova 70 (1965, Mario Monicelli), Italy/France, dist. Paramount (X)

Casimir (1950, Richard Pottier), France/Italy, dist. Regent (A)

Casque d'or / Golden Marie (1952, Jacques Becker), France, dist. Films de France (X)

Cassandra Cat / Āz přijde kocaur (1962, Wojtěch Jasný), Czechoslovakia, no dist. in UK

Cat People, The (1942, Jacques Tourneur), USA, dist. RKO Radio (A)

Cave of Outlaws (1951, William Castle), USA, GFD (U)

Caverns of Vice / Das Nachtklokal zum Silbermond (1959, Wolfgang Glück), Germany, dist. Gala (X)

Caza, La / The Hunt (1965, Carlos Saura), Spain, dist. Contemporary (X)

Chapaev (1934, Georgi and Sergei Vasilyev), Soviet Union, dist. unknown (A)

Chappaqua (1966, Conrad Rooks), USA, dist. Hunter (X)

Charulata / The Lonely Wife (1964, Satyajit Ray), India, dist. Amanda (U)

Chien andalou, Un (1929, Luis Buñuel), France, dist. from 1968 Contemporary (X)

Chikamatsu monogatari / The Crucified Lovers (1954, Kenji Mizoguchi), Japan, dist. from 1977 Cinegate (A)

Childhood of Maxim Gorky, The (1938, Mark Donskoi), Soviet Union, dist. Soviet Film Agency (A)

Children of Hiroshima (1952, Kaneto Shindō), Japan. dist. Contemporary (X)

Chinoise, La (1967, Jean-Luc Godard), France, dist. Fair Enterprises (A)

Chronique d'un été / Chronicle of a Summer (1961, Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin), France, dist. Contemporary (A)

Cina è Vicina / China is Near (1967, Marco Bellocchio), Italy

Citizen Kane (1941, Orson Welles), USA, dist. RKO Radio (A)

Clandestines, Les / Secret Women (1951, Raoul André), France, dist. Astarte (X)

Cleo from 5 to 7 / Cléo de 5 a 7 (1961, Agnès Varda), France/Italy, dist. Sebricon (A)

Clochemerle (1948, Pierre Chanal), France, dist. Blue Ribbon (X)

Cola Game, The (1959, Noriyuki Itaya), Japan, dist. Gala (X)

Cold Days / Hideg napok (1966, András Kovács), Hungary, dist. Contemporary (A)

Come Dance with Me / Voulez- vous danser avec moi? (1959, Michel Boisrond), France/Italy, Columbia (X)

Confessions of Felix Krull, The / Bekenntnisse des Hochstaplers Felix Krull (1957, Kurt Hoffman), Germany, no dist. in UK

Corbeau, Le / The Raven (1943, Henri-Georges Clouzot), France, dist. British Lion (A)

Cousins, Les (1958, Claude Chabrol), France, dist. Films de France (X)

Cranes Are Flying, The (1957, Michail Kalatazov), Soviet Union, dist. Curzon (U)

Créatures, Les (1966, Agnès Varda), France/Sweden, no dist. in UK

Criminal Life of Archibaldo de la Cruz, The / Ensayo de un crimen (1958, Luis Buñuel), Mexico, dist. Connoisseur (X)

Crossing of the Rhine, The / Le Passage du Rhin (1960, Willy Rozier), France/Italy/Germany, dist. Mondial (A)

Cul-de-sac (1966, Roman Polanski), UK, dist. Compton-Cameo (X)

Dam Busters, The (1955, Michael Anderson), UK, dist. Associated British-Pathé (U)

Dangerous Woman / Bufere (1953, Guido Brignone), Italy/France, dist. Gala-Cameo-Poly (X)

Daughter of Mata Hari, The / La figlia di Mata Hari (1954, Renzo Marisi and Carmine Gallone), Italy/France, dist. Regent (A)

Day of Wrath / Vredens dag (1943, Carl Dreyer), Denmark, dist. Film Traders (A)

Death of a Cyclist / Muerte de un ciclista (1955, Juan Bardem), Spain/Italy, dist. Leontine (A)

Death of a Salesman (1952, Laslo Benedek), USA, dist. Columbia (X)

Decadent Influence, The / Une fille et des fusils (1964, Claude Lelouche), France, dist. Antony Balch (A)

De l'amour / All About Loving (1964, Jean Aurel), France/Italy, dist. Bargate (X)

Demoiselles de Rochefort, Les / The Young Girls of Rochefort (1967, Jacques Demy), France, dist. Warner-Pathé (U)

Départ, Le / The Departure (1967, Jerzy Skolimowsky), Germany, dist. Contemporary (A)

Destiny of a Man (1959, Sergei Bondarchuk), Soviet Union, dist. Rank/Sovexportfilm (A)

Detour / Otklonenie (1967, Grisha Ostrovski and Todor Stoyanov), Bulgaria, no dist. in UK

Devil and the Nun, The aka Mother Joan of the Angels / Matk Joanna od aniolów (1960, Jerzy Kawalerowicz), Poland, dist. Contemporary (X)

Diary of a Chambermaid / Le journal d'une femme de chambre (1964, Luis Buñuel), France, dist. 20th Century Fox (X)

Diary of a Country Priest / Journal d'un curé de campagne (1950, Robert Bresson), France, dist. GCT (U)

Diavolo, Il (1963, Gian Luigi Polidoro), Italy, no dist. in UK

Doctor at Sea (1955, Ralph Thomas) UK, dist. Rank (U)

Doctor in the House (1954, Ralph Thomas), UK, dist. Rank (U)

Dolce vita, La / The Sweet Life (1960, Federico Fellini), Italy, dist. Columbia (X)

Don Camillo / The Little World of Don Camillo (1952, Julien Duvivier), France/Italy, dist. London Films (U). Followed by *The Return of Don Camillo* (1953) and *Don Camillo's Last Round* (1955)

Don Juan / Don Giovanni (1954, Walter Kohm-Veltée) Austria, dist. Synchro-Cine (U)

Don Q, Son of Zorro (1925, Donald Crisp) USA, UK, dist. unknown

Don Quixote / Don Quixote de la Mancha (1949, Rafael Gil), Spain, dist. London Films (U)

Dry Summer aka I Had my Brother's Wife / Susuz Yaz (1963, Metin Erksan), Turkey, dist. SF (X)

Drôle de drame aka Bizarre, Bizarre / Drôle de drame ou L'étrange aventure de Docteur Molyneux (1937, Marcel Carné), France, no distributor or certificate

Eclipse/L' / The Eclipse (1962, Michelangelo Antonioni), Italy/France, dist. Gala (A)

Edward and Caroline / Édouard et Caroline (1951, Jacques Becker), France, dist. Film Traders (A)

8 ½ (1963, Federico Fellini), Italy, dist. Gala (A)

Ekstase / Ecstasy (1933, Gustav Machatý), Czechoslovakia/Austria, dist. Cosmopolitan, no BBFC certificate until 1950

El aka El Bruto / The Brute (1952, Luis Buñuel), Mexico, dist. Gala-Cameo-Poly (X)

Elvira Madigan (1967, Bo Widerberg), Sweden, dist. Academy/Connoisseur (A)

Emil and the Detectives / Emil und die Detektive (1931, Gerhard Lamprecht), Germany, dist. Cinema House (U)

Enfants du paradis, Les / Children of Paradise (1945, Marcel Carné), France, dist. British Lion (A)

Enfants terribles, Les / The Strange Ones (1950, Jean-Pierre Melville), France, dist. Continental Concorde (X)

Erkel's Opera / Dalolve szép az élet (1950, Márton Keleti), Hungary, dist. Contemporary (U)

Eroica (1957, Andrzej Munk), Poland, dist. Contemporary (A)

Éternel retour, L' / Love Eternal (1943, Jean Delannoy), France dist. Eagle-Lion (A)

Eve Wants to Sleep / Ewa chce spaść (1957, Tadeusz Chmielewski), Poland, dist. Contemporary (A)

Every Young Man / Každý mladý muž (1965, Pavel Juracek), Czechoslovakia, dist. Contemporary (A)

Exterminating Angel, The (1962, Luis Buñuel), Mexico, dist. Contemporary (X)

Face, The aka The Magician / Ansiktet (1958, Ingmar Bergman), Sweden, dist. Contemporary (X)

Fall of Berlin, The / Padenie Berlina (1950, Mikhail Chiaureli), Soviet Union, dist. Continental Concorde (A)

Farrebique (1946, Georges Rouquier), France, dist. GCT (U)

Fatal Affaire / Les amours finissent à l'aube (1953, Henri Calef), France, dist. Astarte (A)

Father / Apa (1967, István Szabó), Hungary, dist. Contemporary (A)

Femme du boulanger, La (1938, Marcel Pagnol), France, dist. The Film Society (A)

Femme mariée, Une / A Married Woman (1964, Jean-Luc Godard), France, dist. Gala (X)

Feu follet, Le / A Time to Live and a Time to Die (1963, Louis Malle), France/Italy, dist. Gala/Miracle (X)

Fêtes Galantes, Les / The Lace Wars (1965, René Clair), France/Romania, dist. Antony Balch (U)

Fiends, The / Les Diaboliques (1955, Henri-Georges Clouzot), France, dist. Films de France (X)

Fire in the Skin / Le Feu dans la peau (1954, Marcel Blistène), France, dist. Regent (X)

Fires on the Plain (1959, Kon Ichikawa), Japan, dist. Compton-Cameo (X)

First Communion aka His Majesty Mr Jones / Prima comunione (1950, Alessandro Blasetti), Italy, dist. International (U)

First Teacher, The (1965, Andrei Konchalovsky), Soviet Union, dist. Contemporary (X)

Fistful of Dollars, A / Per un pugno di dollari (1964, Sergio Leone), Italy/Spain/Germany, dist. United Artists (X)

Five Boys from Barska Street / Píatka z ulicy Barskiej (1954, Aleksander Ford), Poland, dist. Synchro-Cine (A)

For a Few Dollars More / Per qualche dollaro in più (1965, Sergio Leone), Italy/Spain/Germany, dist. United Artists (X)

Forbidden Fruit / Le fruit défendu (1952, Henri Verneuil), France, dist. Cameo Poly (X)

Forest Rangers, The (1942, George Marshall), USA, dist. Paramount (A)

Forty- First, The (1956, Grigori Chukrai), Soviet Union

400 Blows, The / Les quatre cents coups (1959, François Truffaut), France, dist. Curzon (A)

Four in a Jeep / Die Vier im Jeep (1951, Leopold Lindtberg), Switzerland, dist. International (A)

Four Steps in the Clouds / Quattro passi fra le nuvole (1942, Alessandro Blasetti), Italy, dist. GCT (A)

Francis Goes to the Races (1951, Arthur Lubin), USA, dist. GFD (U)

French Can Can (1955, Jean Renoir), France/Italy, dist. Miracle (A)

Fric-Frac (1939, Maurice Lehman), France, dist. Film Traders (A)

Fugitive/Il brigante Musolino (1950, Mario Camerini), Italy, dist. Archway (A)

From Russia with Love (1963, Terence Young), UK, dist. United Artists (A)

Frou-Frou (1955, Augusto Genina), France/Italy, dist. Curzon (A)

Fruits sauvages, Les / Wild Fruit (1953, Hervé Bromberger), France, dist. Films de France (A)

Fruits of Summer / Les Fruits de l'été (1954, Raymond Bernard), France, dist. Regent (X)

Furia (1947, Goffredo Alessandrini), Italy, dist. International (A)

Gala Festival, The (1951, Vera Stroyeva), Soviet Union, dist. Continental Concorde (U)

Game of Love, The / L'eau à la bouche (1959, Jacques Doniol-Valcroze), France, dist. Gala (X)

Gate of Hell (1953, Teinosuke Kinugasa), Japan, dist. London Films (A)

General, The (1926, Buster Keaton), USA, dist. Allied Artists Corp (U)

Generale Della Rovere, Il (1959, Roberto Rossellini), France/Italy, dist. Gala (A)

Generation, A / Pokolenie (1954, Andrzej Wajda), Poland, dist. Contemporary (A)

Genevieve (1952, Henry Cornelius), UK, dist. GFD (U)

Germany Year Zero / Deutschland im Jahre Null / Germania anno zero (1947, Roberto Rossellini), Italy/France/Germany, dist. GCT (A)

Gervaise (1956, René Clément), France, dist. Miracle (X)

Giant of Marathon, The / La battaglia di Maratona (1959, Jacques Tourneur and Mario Bava), Italy/France, dist. MGM (A)

Girl in Black, A (1956, Michael Cacoyannis), Greece, dist. Curzon (A)

Girl Number 217 (1945, Mikhail Romm), Soviet Union, dist. Soviet Film Agency (A)

Girls for the Summer / Racconti d'estate (1958, Gianni Franciolini), Italy/France, dist. Mondial (A)

Goddess, The / Devi (1960, Satyajit Ray), India, dist. Contemporary (A)

Goha (1957, Jacques Baratier), France/Tunisia, dist. Contemporary (A)

Gold of Naples, The / L'oro di Napoli / Every Day's a Holiday (1954, Vittorio De Sica), Italy, dist. Paramount (A)

Gospel According to St Matthew, The (1964, Pier Paolo Pasolini), Italy/France, dist. Compton (U)

Grand patron, Un (1951, Yves Ciampi), France, dist. Films de France (A)

Grande Illusion, La (1937, Jean Renoir), France, dist. The Film Society (A)

Grandes Familles, Les / The Possessors (1958, Denys de la Patellières), France, dist. Cross Channel (A)

Green Mare's Nest, The / La Jument verte (1959, Claude Autant-Lara), France, dist. Cross Channel (X)

Grido, Il / The Cry (1957, Michelangelo Antonioni), Italy/USA, dist. Mondial (A)

Guerre est finie, La (1966, Alain Resnais), France/Sweden, Gala (X)

Hamburg, City of Vice / Polizeirevier Davidswache (1964, Jürgen Roland), Germany, dist. Gala (X)

Hamlet (1964, Grigori Kozintsev), Soviet Union, dist. British Lion (U)

Hands over the City / Le mani sulla città (1963, Francesco Rosi), Italy, dist. Contemporary (U)

Happy Gypsies / Skupljaci perja (1967, Aleksandar Petrovic), Yugoslavia, dist. Richard Schulman (X)

Hara-Kiri aka Seppuku (1962, Masaki Kobayashi), Japan, dist. Gala (X)

Heart of a Mokher (1965, Mark Donskoi), Soviet Union, dist. Contemporary (U)

Hercules Unchained (1957, Pietro Francisci), Italy/France, dist. Archway (U)

Henry V (1944, Laurence Olivier), UK, dist. Eagle-Lion (U)

Hill 24 Doesn't Answer / Giv'a 24 Eina Ona (1955, Thorold Dickinson), Israel, dist. Eros (A)

Hiroshima mon amour (1959, Alain Resnais), France/Japan, dist. Gala (X)

Homme et une femme, Un (1967, Claude Lelouch), France, dist. United Artists (X)

Hortobágy (1936, George Hoellering), Hungary, London licence

Hôtel du Nord (1938, Marcel Carné), France, dist. United Curzon (A)

Hour of the Wolf / Vargtimmen (1967, Ingmar Bergman), Sweden, United Artists (X)

House of Sin / Les menteurs (1961, Edmond T. Gréville), France, dist. Miracle (X)

How to be Loved / Jac być kochaną (1963, Wojciech Has), Poland, dist. Contemporary (A)

Hugs and Kisses / Puss & kram (1966, Jonas Cornell), Sweden, dist. Contemporary (X)

Human Cargo / Les impures (1954, Pierre Chevalier), France, dist. Gala (X)

Human Condition [Part 1 No Greater Love and Part 2 Road to Eternity] (1959, Masaki Kaboyashi), Japan, dist. Gala (X)

I am a Fugitive from a White Slave Gang / La Traite des blanches (1965, Georges Cambret), France/Italy, dist. Compton Cameo (X)

I am Twenty (1965, Marlen Khutsiev), Soviet Union, no dist. in UK

I Had Seven Daughters / J'avais sept filles (1954, Jean Boyer), France/Italy, dist. Columbia (A)

Ile aux femmes nues. L' / Naked in the Wind (1953, Henri Lapage), France, dist. Mondial (A)

Immortelle, L' / The Immortal One (1962, Alain Robbe-Grillet), France/Italy/Turkey, dist. Contemporary (A)

Indiscretion / Stazione Termini (1957, Vittorio De Sica), USA, dist. United Artists (A)

Infidelity / L'amour de cinq jours (1960, Philippe de Broca), France/Italy, dist. Miracle (X)

Intimate Lighting / Intimní osvětlení (1965, Ivan Passer), Czechoslovakia, dist. Contemporary (A)

Intolerance (1916, D.W. Griffith), dist. unknown

Introduction to Life / Vstuplenie (1963, Igor Talankin), Soviet Union, no dist. in UK

Invitation to the Dance (1956, Gene Kelly), USA, dist. MGM (U)

Island, The (1960, Kaneto Shindō), Japan, dist. Curzon (U)

Island of Shame / La Joven (1960, Luis Buñuel), Mexico, Gala (X)

Island Sinner / La peccatrice dell'isola (1951, Sergio Corbucci and Sergio Grieco), Italy, dist. Archway (X)

Isle of Levant (1956, Werner Kunz), Switzerland/Denmark, dist. Miracle (A)

It's a Bare, Bare World (1964, William Lang), UK, dist. S.F. Films (A)

Ivan's Childhood (1962, Andrei Tarkovsky), Soviet Union, dist. British Lion (A)

Ivan the Terrible Part 1 (1944, Sergei Eisenstein), Soviet Union, dist. Soviet Film Agency (A)

Ivan the Terrible The Boyars Plot Part 2 (1946, Sergei Eisenstein) Soviet Union, dist. Contemporary (U)

Jan Huss (1954, Otakar Vávra), Czechoslovakia, dist. Contemporary (A)

Jazz Singer, The (1927, Alan Crosland), USA, dist. Warner (U)

Jeux interdits, Les / The Forbidden Game (1952, René Clément), France, dist. International (X)

Jofroi (1934, Marcel Pagnol), France, dist. The Film Society, no certificate

Journey into Autumn aka Dreams / Kvinnodröm (1954, Ingmar Bergman), Sweden, dist. Mondial (X)

Jour de fête / The Village Fair (1949, Jacques Tati), France, dist. Films de France (U)

Jour se lève, Le / Daybreak (1939, Marcel Carné), France, dist. Studio One (A)

Joyhouse of Yokohama (date unknown, Shiro Komori), Gala, no certificate

Judex (1963, Georges Franju), France/Italy, dist. Contemporary (A)

Jules et Jim (1961, François Truffaut), France, dist. Gala (X)

Kameradschaft / Comradeship (1931, Georg Wilhelm Pabst), Germany/France, dist. A.P.D. (A)

Kanal (1957, Andrzej Wajda), Poland, dist. Contemporary (A)

Kapò (1960, Gillo Pontecorvo), Italy/France/Yugoslavia, dist. Gala (X)

Kermesse héroïque, La / Carnival in Flanders (1935, Jacques Feyder), France, dist. Tobis (A)

Killing of Sister George, The (1968, Robert Aldrich), UK, dist. CIRO (X)

Kind Hearts and Coronets (1949, Robert Hamer), UK, dist. GFD (A)

Knack, The (1965, Richard Lester), UK, dist. United Artists (X)

Knife in the Water / Nóż w wodzie (1962, Roman Polanski), Poland, dist. Contemporary (X)

Kuhle Wampe (1932, Slatan Dudow), Germany, dist. The Film Society, no certificate

Kwaidan (1964, Masaki Kobayashi), Japan, dist. Orb (X)

Lady with the Little Dog (1959, Isif Kheifits), Soviet Union, dist. Contemporary (U)

Last Act, The aka 10 Days to Die / Der Letzte Akt (1955, GW Pabst), Austria, dist. Intercontinental (A)

Last Chance, The / Letzte Chance, Die (1945, Leopold Lindtberg), Switzerland, dist. MGM (U)

Last Day of Summer, The / Ostatni dzień lata (1958, Tadeusz Konwicki), Poland, dist. Contemporary (A)

Last Days of Pompeii / Gli ultimi giorni di Pompeii (1959, Mario Bonnard), Italy/Spain/Monaco, dist. United Artists (U)

Last Year in Marienbad / L'année dernière à Marienbad (1961, Alain Resnais), France/Italy, dist. Compton-Cameo/Sebricon (U)

Leopard, The / Il gattopardo (1962, Luchino Visconti), Italy/France, dist. 20th Century Fox, (U)

Lenin in Poland aka Portrait of Lenin (1966, Sergei Yutkevich), Soviet Union, dist. Contemporary (A)

Lesson in Love, A / En lection í kärlek (1953, Ingmar Bergman), Sweden, Cross Channel (X)

Let Justice be Done / Justice est faite (1950, André Cayatte), France, dist. Archway (X)

Liaisons dangereuses, Les / Dangerous Love Affairs (1959, Roger Vadim), France, dist. Gala (X)

Liebelei (1933, Max Ophuls), Germany, dist. Cinema House (A)

Life of Oharu, The (1952, Kenji Mizoguchi), Japan, dist. Cinegate (A)

Lift to the Scaffold / Ascenseur pour l'échafaud (1957, Louis Malle), France, dist. Mondial (A)

Light Across the Street, The / La lumière d'en face (1955, Georges Lacombe), France, dist. Miracle (X)

Lighthouse keeper's Daughter, The / Manina: La fille sans voile (1952, Willy Rozier), France, dist. Gala (X)

Living / Ikiru (1952, Akira Kurosawa), Japan, dist. Curzon (A)

Lola (1960, Jacques Demy), France/Italy, dist. Compton/Sebricon (X)

London in the Raw (1964, Arnold Louis Miller), UK, dist. Compton-Cameo (X)

Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner, The (1962, Tony Richardson), UK, dist. British Lion/Bryanston (X)

Look Back in Anger (1959, Tony Richardson), UK, dist. Associated British-Pathé (X)

Love Goddesses, The (1965, Saul J. Turell), USA, dist. Paramount (X)

Love is My Profession / En cas de malheur (1958, Claude Autant-Lara), France/Italy, Miracle (X)

Love is When You Make It / Le bel âge (1959, Pierre Kast), France, dist. British Lion (X)

Love on the Dole (1941, John Baxter), UK, Anglo-American (A)

Love Trap, The (1960, Jean-Pierre Mocky), France, dist. Unifilms (X)

Lovers of Lisbon, The / Les Amants du Tage (1955, Henri Verneuil), France, dist. Films de France (A)

Lower Depths, The (1957, Akira Kurosawa) Japan, no UK distribution

Luciano Serra, pilota (1938, Goffredo Alessandrini), Italy, no UK distribution

Lust for Life (1956, Vincente Minelli), USA, MGM (A)

M (1931, Fritz Lang), Germany, dist. Film Sales Ltd (A)

Madame du Barry / Mistress du Barry (1954, Christian-Jaque), France/Italy, Films de France (X)

Mädchen in Uniform / Maidens in Uniform (1931, Leontine Sagan and Carl Froelich), Germany, dist. National Distributors (A)

Maddalena (1954, Augusto Genina), Italy/France, dist. Gala (X)

Magnificent Seven, The (1960, John Sturges), USA, dist. United Artists (U)

Mahanagar / The Big City (1964, Satyajit Ray), India, dist. Contemporary (U)

Mamselle Striptease aka *Mamselle Pigalle / En effeuillant la marguerite* (1956, Marc Allégret), France, dist. Miracle (A)

Man Escaped, A aka *Gestapo Lyon 1943 / Un condamné à mort s'est échappé* (1956, Robert Bresson), dist. Films de France (U)

Manon (1949, Henri-Georges Clouzot), France, dist. Grand National (X)

Marcelino / Marcelino pan y vino (1955, Ladislao Vajda), Spain/Italy, dist. Films de France (U)

Mare, Il / The Sea (1962, Giuseppe Patroni Griffi), Italy, dist. Connoisseur/Academy (X)

Marriage of Figaro, The / Figaros Hochzeit (1949, George Wildhagen), Germany, dist. Continental Concorde (U)

Masculin Féminin (1966, Jean-Luc Godard), France/Sweden, dist. Gala (X)

Maskerade / Masquerade in Vienna (1934, Willi Forst), Austria, dist. Reunion (A)

Maternelle, La / Children of Montmartre (1933, Jean Benoît-Lévy and Marie Epstein), France, dist. The Film Society

Miller's Wife, The / La bella mugnaia (1956, Mario Camerini), Italy, Gala (A)

Million, Le (1931, René Clair) France, France, dist. Universal (U)

Millionaires for a Day / Millionaires d'un jour (1949, André Hunebelle), France, dist. Regent (U)

Miracle, The / Il miracolo (1948, Roberto Rossellini), Italy, dist. Film Traders (A) in London

Miracle in Milan / Miracolo a Milano (1951, Vittorio De Sica), Italy, dist. Regent (U)

Misérables, Les / I miserabili (1948, Riccardo Freda), Italy, Archway (U)

Miss Julie / Fröken Julie (1950, Alf Sjöberg), Sweden, dist. London Films (A)

Mistress du Barry / Madame du Barry (1954, Christian-Jaque), France /Italy, dist. Films de France (X)

Mitsou (1956, Jacqueline Audry), France, dist. Regent (A)

Moderato Cantabile / Six Days . . . Seven Nights (1960, Peter Brook), France, dist. Mondial (A)

Mondo cane / A Dog's Life (1961, Gaultiero Jacopetti and Franco Prosperi), Italy, dist. Gala (X)

Mon oncle / My Uncle (1956, Jacques Tati), France, dist. Hillcrest (U)

Mon phoque aka *Mon phoque et elles / The Seal and them* (1950, Pierre Billon), France, dist. Astarte (U)

Monsieur Hulot's Holiday / Les Vacances de Monsieur Hulot (1953, Jacques Tati), France, dist. Films de France (U)

Monsieur Vincent (1947, Maurice Cloche), France, dist. GCT (A)

Morgenrot (1933, Vernon Sewell and Gustav Ucicky), Germany, dist. Wardour (U)

Mother (1926, Vsevolod Pudovkin), Soviet Union, Film Society, no certificate

Mouchette (1966, Robert Bresson), France, dist. Contemporary/Connoisseur (X)

Murder in the Cathedral (1952, George Hoellering), UK, dist. Film Traders (U)

Murderers are Amongst Us, The / Die Mörder sind unter uns (1946, Wolfgang Staudte), Germany, dist. Film Traders (A)

Muriel / Muriel ou Le temps d'un retour (1963, Alain Resnais), France/Italy, United Artists (A)

Musical Story, A (1941, Aleksandr Ivanovsky and Gerbert Rappaport), Soviet Union, dist. Anglo-American (U)

Music Room, The / Jalsaghar (1958, Satyajit Ray), India, dist. Contemporary (U)

Nana (1955, Christian-Jaque), France/Italy, dist. Gala (X)

Naked as Nature Intended (1961, George Harrison Marks), UK, dist. Compton (A)

Naked Youth / Cruel Story of Youth (1960, Nagisa Oshima), Japan, no certificate

Nazarin (1958, Luis Buñuel), Mexico, dist. Contemporary (A)

Neige était sale, La / The Stain on the Snow (1953, Luis Saslavsky) France, dist. Miracle (X)

Neapolitan Fantasy / Carosello napoletano (1954, Ettore Gianini), Italy, dist. Archway (U)

Never on Sunday (1959, Jules Dassin), Greece/USA, dist. United Artists (X)

New Babylon, The (1929, Gregori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg), Soviet Union, dist. BFI in 1982 (U)

Night at the Opera, A (1935, Sam Wood), USA, dist. MGM (U)

Night Beauties / Les Belles de nuit (1952, René Clair), France/Italy, dist. International (U)

Night Games / Nattlek (1966, Mai Zetterling), Sweden, dist. Gala (X)

Nights of Cabiria, The / Le notti di Cabiria (1957, Federico Fellini), Italy/France dist. Mondial (X)

Notte, La / The Night (1960, Michelangelo Antonioni), Italy/France

Nudes of the World (1961, Arnold Louis Miller), UK, dist. Miracle (A)

Nudist Paradise (1958, Charles Saunders), UK, dist. Orb (A)

Oasis (1955, Yves Allégret), France/West Germany, dist. 20th Century-Fox (U)

Occupe-toi d' Amélie / Keep an Eye on Amelia (1949, Claude Autant-Lara), France, dist. Archway (X)

October (1928, Sergei Eisenstein and Grigori Aleksandrov), Soviet Union, dist. The Film Society, no certificate till 1969 (A)

Odd Man Out (1947, Carol Reed), UK, dist. GFD (A)

Of a Thousand Delights / Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa (1965, Luchino Visconti), Italy, dist. Gala (X)

Olivia (1950, Jaqueline Audry), France, dist. Films de France (X)

Olvidados, Los / The Young and the Damned (1950, Luis Buñuel), Mexico, dist. Film Traders (X)

Olympia (1938, Leni Riefenstahl), Germany, not distributed in UK

One Life / Une vie (1958, Alexandre Astruc), France/Italy, dist. Gala (X)

One Summer of Happiness / Hon dansade en sommar (1951, Arne Mattson), Sweden, dist. GCT (A)

Onibaba (1964, Kaneto Shindō), Japan, dist. Orb (X)

On a Tightrope / No lane (1963, Ivo Novák), Czechoslovakia, not distributed in UK

Open City / Roma città aperta (1945, Robert Rossellini), Italy, dist. London Film Productions (A)

Ordet / The Word (1955, Carl Theodor Dreyer), Denmark, dist. unknown

Orphée / Orpheus (1950, Jean Cocteau), France, dist. Films de France (A)

Outlaws, The (1958, Nikos Koundoros), Greece, not distributed in UK but shown on BBC2 World Cinema

P . . . respectueuse, La / The Respectful Whore (1952, Marcello Pagliero and Charles Brabant), France, dist. Gala (X)

Paisà (1946, Roberto Rossellini), Italy, dist. Film Traders (A)

Panique (1946, Julien Duvivier), France, dist. British Lion (A)

Papa, Mama, the Maid and I / Papa, maman, la bonne et moi (1954, Jean-Paul le Chanois), France, dist. Curzon (U)

Parapluies de Cherbourg, Les / The Umbrellas of Cherbourg (1964, Jacques Demy), France/Germany, dist. Bargate (A)

Parents terribles, Les (1948, Jean Cocteau), France, dist. Studio One (A)

Parisienne, La (1957, Michel Boisrond), France/Italy, Rank (A)

Paris nous appartient / Paris Belongs to Us (1960, Jacques Rivette), France, dist. Contemporary (A)

Passenger, The / Pasażerka (1960, Andrzej Munk), Poland, dist. Contemporary (X)

Passion de Jeanne d'Arc, La / The Passion of Joan of Arc (1928, Carl Dreyer), France, dist. Alpha (Joan of Arc) Ltd, (A)

Pather Panchali (1955, Satyajit Ray), India, Curzon (U)

Pearls of the Crown, The / Les Perles de la couronne, The (1937, Sacha Guitry), France, Sound City (A)

Peau douce, La / Silken Skin (1964, François Truffaut), France, dist. Gala (X)

Pépé le Moko (1937, Julien Duvivier), France, dist. Miss J. Wolf (A)

Persona (1966, Ingmar Bergman), Sweden, dist. United Artists (X)

Petit Roi, Le / The Little King (1933, Julien Duvivier), France, dist. British Lion (A)

Petit Soldat, Le / The Little Soldier (1960, Jean-Luc Godard), France, dist. Academy Cinema (X)

Pickpocket (1959, Robert Bresson), France, dist. Mondial (A)

Pierrot le fou (1965, Jean-Luc Godard), France/Italy, dist. Gala (A)

Place in the Sun, A (1951, George Stevens), USA, Paramount (A)

Plaisir, Le (1952, Max Ophuls), France, dist. Columbia (X)

Playing at Love / Les jeux de l'amour (1960, Philippe de Broca), France, dist. Contemporary (X)

Playtime / La Récréation (1960, François Moreuil and Fabien Collin), France, dist. Gala (X)

Poil de carotte (1932, Julien Duvivier), France, dist. Film Traders (A)

Pornographer, The (1966, Shōhei Imamura), Japan, dist. Antony Balch, no certificate

Portes de la nuit, Les / Gates of the Night (1946, Marcel Carné), France, dist. London Film Productions (A)

Porte des Lilas aka Gates of Paris / Gate of Lilacs (1957, René Clair), France/Italy, dist. Films de France (U)

Portrait of Maria / Maria Candelaria (1944, Emilio Fernández), Mexico, dist. MGM (A)

Posto, Il / The Job (1961, Ermanno Olmi), Italy, dist. Contemporary (U)

Pussycats, The / Saluts les copines (1967, Jean-Pierre Bastid), Luxembourg, dist. Antony Balch (X)

Quai des brumes, Le (1938, Marcel Carné), France, dist. Unity (A)

Quai des Orfèvres (1947, Henri-Georges Clouzot), France, dist. British Lion (A)

Quatermass 2 (1957, Val Guest), UK, dist. United Artists (X)

Queen of Spades, The (1949, Thorold Dickinson), UK, dist. Associated British-Pathé (A)

Race for Life (1956, Christian-Jaque), France, dist. Films de France (U)

Rape, The aka *Amok* (1963, Dinos Dimopoulos), Greece, dist. Eagle (X)

Rashomon (1950, Akira Kurosawa), Japan, dist. London Films (X)

Rats Woke Up, The / Budjenje pacova (1967, Živojin Pavlović), Yugoslavia. not distributed in UK

Razzia sur la chnouf (1954, Henri Decoin), France, dist. Gala (X)

Reach for the Sky (1956, Lewis Gilbert), UK, Rank (U)

Rebel without a Cause (1955, Nicholas Ray), USA, Warner (X)

Rebellion (1967, Masaki Kobayaki), Japan, dist. Orb (A)

Red Balloon / Le Ballon rouge (1956, Albert Lamarrisse), France, dist. Films de France (U)

Red Desert / Il deserto rosso (1964, Michelangelo Antonioni), Italy/France, dist. Academy/Connoisseur (X)

Règle du jeu, La / The Rules of the Game (1938, Jean Renoir), France, dist. New London Film Society (A)

Religieuse, La (1965, Jacques Rivette), France, dist. Gala (X)

Republic of Sin / La Fièvre monte à El Pao (1959, Luis Buñuel), France/Mexico, Gala (X)

Rififi / Du rififi chez hommes (1955, Jules Dassin), France, dist. Miracle (X)

Rigoletto (1948, Carmine Gallone), Italy, dist. London Film (U)

Rio Bravo (1959, Howard Hawks), USA, dist. Warner (U)

Rocco and His Brothers / Rocco e I suoi fratelli (1960, Luchino Visconti), Italy/France, dist. Regal (X)

Roi s'amuse, Le / The King (1936, Pierre Colombier), France, dist. Film Society (A)

Romance for Cornet aka *Romance for Bugle / Romance pro kridlovku* (1967, Otakar Vávra), Czechoslovakia

Roman d'un tricheur, Le / The Cheat (1936, Sacha Guitry), France, dist. Unity (A)

Romeo and Juliet (1955, Lev Arntsham and Leonid Lavrovsky), Soviet Union, dist. Gala (U)

Romeo, Juliet and Darkness / Romeo, Julie a tma (1959, Jiří Weiss), Czechoslovakia, dist. British Lion (A)

Ronde, La (1950, Max Ophuls), France, dist. GCT (X)

Room at the Top (1958, Jack Clayton), UK, dist. Independent/British Lion (X)

Rouge et le noir, Le / Scarlet and Black (1954, Claude Autant-Lara), France/Italy, dist. Films de France (X)

Round-Up, The / Szegénylegények (1965, Miklós Jancsó), Hungary, dist. Contemporary (X)

Salvatore Giuliano (1961, Francesco Rosi), Italy, dist. Gala (X)

Sansho Dayu / Sansho the Bailiff (1954, Kenji Mizoguchi), Japan, dist. unknown

Saragossa Manuscript, The / Ręcopis znaleziony w Saragossie (1964, Wojciech Has), Poland, dist. Contemporary (X)

Saturday Night and Sunday Morning (1960, Karel Reisz), UK, dist. British Lion (X)

Savage Eye, The (1989, Ben Maddow, Sidney Meyers, Joseph Strick), USA, dist. Contemporary (X)

Sawdust and Tinsel / Gycklarnas afton (1953, Ingmar Bergman), Sweden, dist. Films de France (X)

Scandal in Sorrento / Pane, amore e . . . (1955, Dino Risi), Italy, dist. British Lion (A)

Scarlet Pimpernel, The (1934, Harold Young), UK, dist. United Artists (A)

Schimmelreiter, Der / The Rider on the White Horse (1934, Hans Deppe and Curt Oertel), Germany, dist. The Film Society

Scoundrel, The (1935, Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur), USA, dist. Paramount (A)

Seduced in Sodom / Fortuna (1966, Menahem Golan), France/Israel, dist. Sebricon (X)

See You Tomorrow aka Goodbye, See You Tomorrow (1960, Janusz Morgenstern), Poland, dist. Contemporary (U)

Senso / The Wanton Countess (1954, Luchino Visconti), Italy, dist. Archway (A)

Senza pietà / Without Pity (1948, Alberto Lattuada), Italy, dist. Archway (A)

Seven Deadly Sins, The / Les sept péchés capitaux (1952, Eduardo de Filippo, Jean Déville, Yves Allégret, Roberto Rossellini, Carlo Rim, Claude Autant-Lara, and Georges Lacombe), France/Italy, dist. International (X)

Seven Samurai (1954, Akira Kurosawa), Japan, dist. Films de France (X)

Seventeen / Sytten (1965, Annelise Meineche), Denmark, dist. Gala (X)

Seventeenth Parallel, The / Le 17e parallèle: La Guerre du peuple (1968, Joris Ivens), France/Vietnam, dist. unknown

Seventh Seal, The / Dat sjunde inseglet (1957, Ingmar Bergman), Sweden, dist. Contemporary (X)

Sex in the Grass / Die Liebesquelle 1965, Ernst Hofbauer), Austria, dist. New Realm (X)

Shadows of Adultery / La proie pur l'ombre (1960, Alexandre Astruc), France, dist. Gala (X)

Shape of Night, The aka *The Beautiful People* (1965, Naboru Nakamura), Japan, dist. Antony Balch (X)

Sheep has Five Legs, The / Le Mouton à cinq pattes (1954, Henri Verneuil), France, dist. Miracle (A)

She-Wolves, The / Les louves (1957, Luis Lavlavsky), France, dist. Cross Channel (A)

Shoeshine / Sciuscià (1946, Vittorio De Sica), Italy, dist. British Lion (A)

Shoot the Pianist / Tirez sur le pianiste (1960, François Truffaut), France, dist. Gala (X)

Shop on the High Street, A / Obchod na korze (1964, Ján Kadár and Elmar Klos), Czechoslovakia, dist. Contemporary (A)

Siberian Lady Macbeth / Sibirska Ledi Magbet (1962, Andrzej Wajda), Yugoslavia, no dist. in UK

Sign of Venus, The / Il segno di venere (1955, Dino Risi), Italy, dist. Gala (A)

Signore e signori / The Birds, the Bees and the Italians (1965, Pietro Germi), Italy/France, dist. Warner- Pathé (X)

Silence, The / Tystnaden (1963, Ingmar Bergman), Sweden, dist. Gala (X)

Simon of the Desert / Simón del desierto (1965, Luis Buñuel), Mexico, dist. Hunter (X)

Slave, The / L'esclave (1953, Yves Ciampi), France/Italy, dist. Gala (X)

Slice of Life / Tempi nostri (1954, Alessandro Blasetti and Paul Paviet), Italy/France, dist. Archway (A)

Smiles of a Summer Night / Sommarmattens leende (1955, Ingmar Bergman), Intercontinental (X)

Smog (1962, Franco Rossi), Italy, dist. Gala (U)

So Close to Life aka *Brink of Life / Nära livet* (1958, Ingmar Bergman), Sweden, dist. Contemporary (X)

Something Different / O něčem jinem (1963, Věra Chytilová), Czechoslovakia

Son of Mongolia (1936, Ilya Trauberg), Soviet Union, dist. The Film Society (U)

Song of Bernadette, The (1943, Henry King), USA, dist. 20th Century -Fox (U)

Sous les toits de Paris / Under the Roofs of Paris (1930, René Clair), France, dist. Academy (A)

South Pacific (1958, Joshua Logan), USA, dist. 20th Century-Fox (U)

Souvenirs perdus / Lost Property (1950, Christian-Jaque), France, dist. Grand National (X)

Spartacus (1960, Stanley Kubrick), USA, dist. Rank/Universal-International (A)

Spivs / I vitelloni (1953, Federico Fellini), Italy/France, dist. Gala (A)

Stella (1955, Michael Cacoyannis), Greece, dist. Intercontinental (X)

Storm over Asia (1928, Vsevolod Pudovkin), Soviet Union, dist. Soviet Film Agency from 1951

Strada, La / The Road (1954, Federico Fellini), Italy, dist. Curzon (A)

Streetcar Named Desire, A (1951, Elia Kazan), USA, dist. Warner (X)

Street of Shame (1956, Kenji Mizoguchi), Japan, dist. Gala (X)

Striptease de Paris / Mademoiselle Striptease (1957, Pierre Foucaud), France, dist. Gala (A)

Stromboli / Stromboli terra di Dio (1950, Roberto Rossellini), Italy/USA, dist. RKO Radio (A)

Subida al cielo / Ascent to Heaven (1952, Luis Buñuel), Mexico, no dist. in UK

Summer Interlude / Sommarlek (1950, Ingmar Bergman), Sweden, dist. Cross-Channel (A)

Summer Manoeuvres / Les Grandes Manoeuvres (1955, René Clair), France/Italy, dist. Films de France (A)

Summer with Monika / Sommaren med Monika (1952, Ingmar Bergman), Sweden, dist. Mondial (A)

Sunday in August / Domenico d'agosto (1950, Luciano Emmer), Italy, dist. Film Traders (U)

Switchboard Operator, The, aka The Tragedy of a Switchboard Operator / Ljubavni slucaj ili tragedija sluzbenice P.T.T. (1967, Dušan Makavejev), Yugoslavia, dist. Hunter (X)

Sylvie et le fantôme (1944, Claude Autant-Lara), France, dist. Film Traders (A)

Sympathy for the Devil aka One Plus One (1968, Jean-Luc Godard), UK, dist. Connoisseur (X)

Symphonie fantastique, La (1942, Christian-Jaque), France, dist. Eagle-Lion (A)

Symphonie pastorale, La (1946, Jean Delannoy), France, dist. Curzon (A)

Taste of Honey, A (1961, Tony Richardson), UK, dist. British Lion/Bryanston (X)

Taste of Love, A / Les Grandes Personnes (1960, Jean Valère), France/Italy, dist. Contemporary

Teenage Wolfpack aka Wolfpack (1956, Georg Tressler), Germany, dist. Gala (X)

Testament des Dr. Mabuse, Das / The Testament of Dr Mabuse (1933, Fritz Lang), Germany, dist. The Film Society (A)

Tetto, Il / The Roof (1956, Vittorio De Sica), Italy, dist. Gala (U)

Theatre of Mr and Mrs Kabal, The / Théâtre de M. et Mme Kabal (1967, Walerian Borowczyk), France, dist. Connoisseur (U)

Their Last Night / Leur dernière nuit (1953, Georges Lacombe), France, dist. Gala-Cameo Poly

Theodora, Slave Empress / Teodora (1955, Riccardo Freda), Italy/France, dist. Archway (A)

Third Man, The (1949, Carol Reed), UK, dist. British Lion (A)

3:10 to Yuma (1957, Delmer Daves), USA, dist. Columbia (A)

Three / Tri (1966, Aleksandar Petrovic), Yugoslavia, no dist. in UK

Threepenny Opera, The / Die 3 Groschen-Oper/L'Opéra de quat'sous (1931, G.W. Pabst), France/USA, dist. First National, rejected by BBFC

Throne of Blood (1957, Akira Kurosawa), Japan, dist. Curzon (A)

Through a Glass Darkly / Såsom i en spegel (1961, Ingmar Bergman), Sweden, dist. Contemporary/Gala (X)

Time in the Sun (1940, Sergei Eisenstein edited by Marie Seton) USA, dist. Unity (A)

Time Stood Still / Il tempo si è fermato (1959, Ermanno Olmi), Italy, no dist. in UK

Together (1956, Lorenza Mazzetti and Denis Horne), UK, dist. BFI

Tokyo Story (1953, Yasujirō Ozu), Japan, dist. Contemporary (U)

Toni (1934, Jean Renoir), France, dist. from 1974 Contemporary (A)

Too Bad She's Bad / Peccato che sia una canaglia (1955, Alessandro Blasetti), Italy, dist. Gala (A)

Torment aka The Wretches / Les Scélérats (1959, Robert Hossein), France, dist. Gala (X)

Touch of Evil (1958, Orson Welles), USA, dist. Rank/Universal-International (A)

Touchez pas au grisbi / Hands off the Loot (1953, Jacques Becker), France/Italy, dist. Films de France (X)

Transport from Paradise / Transport z ráje (1963, Zbynek Brynych, Czechoslovakia, no dist. in UK

Trapeze (1956, Carol Reed), USA, dist. United Artists (U)

Travelling Light (1959, Michael Keating), UK, dist. Gala (U)

Träumende Mund, Der / Dreaming Lips (1932, Paul Czinner), France/Germany, dist. The Film Society

Treasure of the Sierra Madre, The (1947, John Huston), USA, dist. Warner (A)

Trio Ballet (1953, Gerbert Rappaport), Soviet Union, dist. Gala (U)

Trois valse, Les / Three Waltzes (1938, Ludwig Berger), France, dist. United Curzon (A)

Truth, The / La vérité (1960, Henri-Georges Clouzot), France, Columbia (X)

Turning Point, The (1945, Fridrikh Ermler), Soviet Union, dist. Soviet Film Agency (A)

Twelfth Night (1955, A. Abramov and Yan Frid), Soviet Union, dist. Contemporary (U)

Twenty Hours / Húsz óra (1965, Zoltán Fábri), Hungary, dist. Contemporary

Two Acres of Land / Do Bigha Zamin (1953, Bimal Roy), India, dist. Films de France (U)

Two Daughters / Teen Kanya (1961, Satyajit Ray), India, dist. Contemporary (X)

2 or 3 Things I Know about Her / 2 ou 3 choses que je sais d'elle (1966, Jean-Lu Godard), France, dist. Contemporary (X)

Two Weeks in September (1966, Serge Bourguignon), France/UK, dist. Rank (X)

Two Women / La ciociara (1960, Vittorio De Sica), Italy/France, dist. Gala (X)

Ugetsu monogatari (1953, Kenji Mizoguchi), Japan, dist. Contemporary (X)

Ulysses / Ulisse (1954, Mario Camerini), Italy, dist. Archway (U)

Ulysses (1967, Joseph Strick), UK/USA, dist. British Lion (X)

Umberto D (1952, Vittorio De Sica), Italy, dist. British Lion (A)

Unfinished Symphony (1934, Anthony Asquith and Willi Forst), UK/Austria, dist. Gaumont British (U)

Unmarried Mothers / Ogift fader sökes (1953, Hans Dahlin and Bengt Logardt), Sweden, dist. Adelphi (X)

Unvanquished, The / Aparajito (1956, Satyajit Ray), India, dist. Contemporary (U)

Vanishing Corporal, The / Le caporal épinglé (1961, Jean Renoir), France, dist. Contemporary (A)

Villa Borghese (1953, Gianni Franciolini and Vittorio De Sica), Italy/France, dist. Gala (X)

Village Feud, The aka The Hunting Ground / La Table-aux-crêves (1951, Henri Verneuil), France, dist. Films de France (A)

Violent Ecstasy / Douce violence (1961, Max Pécas), France, dist. Gala (X)

Viridiana (1961, Luis Buñuel), Spain/Mexico, dist. Miracle (X)

Virgin Spring, The / Jungfrukällan (1959, Ingmar Bergman), Sweden, dist. Curzon (X)

Visiteurs du soir, Les / The Devil's Envoys (1942, Marcel Carné), France, dist. Eagle-Lion (A)

Vitelloni, I / Spivs (1953, Federico Fellini), Italy/France, dist. Gala (A)

Viva Maria (1965, Louis Malle), France/Italy, dist. United Artists (A)

Vivere in pace / To Live in Peace (1947, Luigi Zampa), Italy, dist. GCT (A)

Vivre sa vie / It's My Life (1962, Jean-Luc Godard), France, dist. Miracle (X)

Volcano / Les rendez-vous du diable (1959, Haroun Tazieff), France, dist. Contemporary (U)

Voyage en Amérique, Le / Trip to America (1951, Henri Lavorei), France, dist. Films de France (U)

Wages of Fear, The / Le Salaire de la peur (1953, Henri-Georges Clouzot), France/Italy, dist. Films de France (A)

Waiting Women aka Wanting Women / Kvinnors väntan (1952, Ingmar Bergman), Sweden, dist. Cross-Channel (X)

Walkover/ Walkower (1965, Jerzy Skolimowski), Poland, dist. Polit Kino

Wanton, The / Manèges (1950, Yves Allegret), France, dist. Films de France (X)

Wanton Countess, The / Senso (1954, Luchino Visconti), Italy, Archway (A)

War and Peace (1966, Sergei Bondarchuk), Soviet Union, dist. London Continental (A)

Warrior's Rest / Le Repos du guerrier (1962, Roger Vadim), France/Italy, dist. Gala (X)

Wayward Wife, The / La Provinciale, (1953, Mario Soldati), Italy, dist. Gala (X)

Web of Passion / A double tour (1959, Claude Chabrol), France/Italy, dist. Contemporary (X)

We from Kronstadt (1936, Efim Dzigan, Soviet Union, dist. The Film Society (A)

Weekend (1967, Jean-Luc Godard), France/Italy, dist. Connoisseur (X)

Welcome Mr Marshall / Bienvenido Mister Marshall (1953, Luis García Berlanga), Spain, dist. Curzon (U)

Well Digger's Daughter, The / La Fille du puisatier (1940, Marcel Pagnol), dist. The Film Society (A)

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? (1966, Mike Nicholls), USA, dist. Warner-Pathé (X)

Wicked Go to Hell, The / Les salauds vont en enfer (1955, Robert Hossein), France, dist. Miracle (X)

Wild One, The (1953, Laslo Benedek), USA, dist. Columbia (X)

Wild Strawberries / Smultronstället (1957, Ingmar Bergman), Sweden, dist. Contemporary (A)

Windfall in Athens (1953, Michael Cacoyannis), Greece, dist. Gala-Cameo-Poly (U)

Witchfinder General aka Matthew Hopkins: Witchfinder General (1968, Michael Reeves), UK, dist. Tigon (X)

Wolf Man, The (1941, George Waggner), USA, dist. GFD (H)

Wolf of the Sila, The / Il lupo della Sila (1949, Duilio Coletti), Italy, dist. Archway (A)

Wolfpack / Die Halbstarcken (1956, Georg Tressler), Germany, dist. Gala (X)

Woman Like Satan, A / La Femme et le pantin (1959, Julien Duvivier), France/Italy, dist. United Artists (X)

Woman of the Dunes (1964, Hiroshi Teshigahara), Japan, dist. Contemporary (X)

Woman of the River / La donna del fiume (1955, Mario Soldati), Italy/France, dist. Columbia (A)

Woman Trouble aka The Street Has Many Dreams / Molti sogni per le strade (1948, Mario Camerini), Italy, dist. Archway (A)

Women in Love (1969, Ken Russell), UK, dist. United Artists (X)

World of Apu, The (1958, Satyajit Ray), India, dist. Contemporary (U)

World without Shame (1961, Donovan Winter), UK, dist. Gala (A)

Wuthering Heights (1939, William Wyler), USA, dist. United Artists (A)

Yangtze Incident: The Story of HMS Amethyst (1957, Michael Anderson), UK, dist. British Lion (U)

Yesterday Girl / Abschied von gestern (Anita G) (1966, Alexander Kluge), Germany, Contemporary (X)

Yojimbo (1961, Akira Kurosawa), Japan, dist. Contemporary (A)

Youthful Sinners / Les Tricheurs (1958, Marcel Carné), France, dist. Gala (x)

Zéro de conduite / Nil for Conduct (1933, Jean Vigo), France, dist. Contemporary from 1962 (U)