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The Sjöberg-Bergman Connection: *Hets* - Collaboration and Public Impact

The German film historian Siegfried Kracauer once made a distinction between films he termed *gleichzeitig*, i.e. films that seemed in tune with their times, and films that were *ungleichzeitig* or not representative of contemporary cultural trends. Kracauer tended to prefer “gleichzeitig” films, for his main concern was to evaluate the social mindscreen embedded in movies, more so than their formal expressiveness. His socio-historical approach has also been dominant in discussions of films made in Sweden in the 1930s and 1940s,¹ a booming time for the native motion picture industry, which coincided with a complex paradigmatic shift in Swedish society: the pull between an age-old authoritarian structure in a basically agrarian society and the emergence of a modern welfare state associated with city living.

¹ The nestor in Swedish film history and the country's first professor of film studies, Rune Waldekranz, led for a long time a project focussing on the social and moral implications of the dichotomy between countryside and city life in Swedish films of the thirties and forties. Among studies anchored in this project are Per Olof Qvist's books *Jorden är vår arvedel. Landsbygden i svensk spel film 1940-59* [*The Soil Is Our Heritage. The Countryside in the Swedish Feature Film, 1940-59*]; Diss., 1986, and *Folkhemmets bilder: Modernisering, motstånd och mentalitet i den svenska 30-talsfilmen* [Images of the folkhem, Modernisation, Resistance and Mentality in the Swedish Film of the Thirties]. Lund: Arkiv, 1995.

A more recent example of such sociological treatment of Swedish films from the same period is Rochelle Wright's study *The Visible Wall. Jews and Ethnic Outsiders in Swedish Film*. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1998

In contrast to this tendency among film scholars to treat Swedish movies as historical artifacts, the critical native commentary on foreign films from the same period have tended to give much more esthetic attention to such works, viewing them in terms of genre and artistic directorship. This is true, for instance, of the French film noir that was brought onto the Swedish market just before World War II. A film like Marcel Carné's *Quai des brumes* (*Port of Shadows*) had become a cult film among Swedish cineasts in the early 1940s and remains, in fact, still today on Ingmar Bergman's list of timeless (*ungleichzeitig*) films.²

The sociological-aesthetic dichotomy suggested above is of special interest in a study of the reception of Alf Sjöberg's and Ingmar Bergman's film *Hets* (*Torment/Frenzy*) from 1944. *Hets* was greeted by Swedish audiences as an incendiary time bomb and led to a public debate that lasted for almost half a year; a debate that emanated mostly from school pedagogues, the majority of whom viewed the film as the work of an angry young scriptwriter letting off steam by depicting a sadistic monster of a teacher, nicknamed Caligula, whose irrational, if not psychopathic, behavior almost destroys some of his students. Judging from the press debate, most of the public reactions to the film considered Caligula both unbelievable and atypical of the Swedish teaching profession.³

The film story seethed with indignation and fury. In the recorded public response this emotional energy was only rarely coupled to the film's visual language. One curious result of this was that the director, Alf Sjöberg, whose very personal visual style put a distinct imprint on *Hets*, was practically ignored. Instead Ingmar Bergman, who had deliv-

² *Bergman's List*, a booklet issued by the Gothenburg Film Festival (*Filmkonst*) in 1994. The following titles were chosen by Bergman: Marcel Carné's *Quai des brumes*; Chaplin's *The Circus*; Dreyer's *La passion de Jeanne d'Arc*; Fellini's *La strada*; Kurosawa's *Rashomon*; Sjöström's *Körkarlen* [The Phantom Carriage]; Tarkovski's *Andrei Rublev*; von Trotta's *Die bleierne Zeit*; Wajda's *Dyrygent* [The Conductor]; Widerberg's *Kvarteret Korpen* [Raven's End]; Billy Wilder's *Sunset Boulevard*.

³ See clipping collection of *Hets* at Stockholm University Film Library, Swedish Film Institute.

ered the script, emerged as the film's creator and gained a great deal of media attention as a rabble-rousing newcomer, who used the film medium as his personal instrument. A further irony in this context is that Sjöberg was by far the politically more radical of the two. While Bergman had completed his high school education and had only fantasized about joining a circus, Sjöberg had left his studies behind in protest to travel around the country with a socialist theatre troupe. But Bergman's portrayal of school life in *Hets* was viewed by many as a revolt from within the establishment and this may help explain why it was he rather than Sjöberg who was singled out as the insidious and dangerous voice behind the film.

Apparently, Svensk Filmindustri, the production company that launched *Hets*, was also responsible for this focus on Bergman, a novice in the film world. True, on the original poster for *Hets*, Sjöberg's name was highlighted together with the main actors of the film. But on a later poster, Ingmar Bergman's name appears at the top, above and in the same size as Sjöberg's (see photo of poster). Some 25 years later when *Hets* was shown on Swedish television, Sjöberg pointed out in a newspaper interview that Svensk Filmindustri very cynically decided to capitalize on Bergman's overnight image as an *enfant terrible*. From then on, according to Sjöberg, SF primed Bergman as its golden calf.⁴ Bergman's ups and downs at SF in the 1940s which led him to seek out other film producers, and his own sense of professional insecurity as a filmmaker prior to his international breakthrough in the mid-fifties, do not necessarily contradict Sjöberg's assessment that Svensk Filmindustri was already forging plans for Bergman's future with the company. Two marketing motives are discernible here. First, commercial philosophy dictated publicity support of Bergman, even at the expense of an established director, for it was Bergman's name that was responsible for making *Hets* a box office hit. Second, Swedish film producers and other people in the trade had, for some time, focused their attention on the need for new literary scriptwriters. These were to bring the Swedish film

⁴ Interview with Alf Sjöberg by Torsten Jungstedt, "Då var det svårt att vara ung." [Then it was tough to be young]. Röster i Radio/TV no 11, 1972, p. 16.

industry back to its glorious days during the era of silent cinema when Swedish films, based on adaptations of works by Selma Lagerlöf and other literary authors, had entered the international film market. During a brief golden age (1917-1925) producer Charles Magnuson, film directors Victor Sjöström and Mauritz Stiller, cinematographer Julius Jaenzon and professionally trained actors had brought the Swedish cinema to world renown.

There was also a third reason for SF's preferential treatment of Ingmar Bergman: the company policy -- stated explicitly in its glossy program to *Hets* -- was to promote young talent.⁵ In the forties a new youth culture emerged in Sweden, partly influenced by American movies, jazz and swing, partly defined by demographic shifts of younger generations of people from countryside to city living. Substantial numbers among these urban newcomers came to constitute a new film-going public. Therefore SF wished to include, in its established cadre of directors, younger filmmakers with a feel for modernity.

All of these factors worked in Bergman's favor and despite several volatile apprenticeship years ahead, he would eventually prove his value to SF. Some twelve years after the making of *Hets*, he entered the lucrative international film marketing scene and soon established himself as the epitome of an *auteur*, a filmmaker/scriptwriter who helped define the supra-national European postwar cinema by shaping his film material in a very personal way. Yet, Bergman's achievement as an *auteur* has also an ironic twist to it, in that it was hardly an isolated phenomenon but part of an artistic renaissance within Swedish filmmaking, shaped by directors like Alf Sjöberg, Bergman's elder by some ten years. Sjöberg's eclectic and curious mind had absorbed vital impulses from the international stage and screen world. As an adolescent⁶ and later as a film director he was as fascinated by the spatial freedom of the camera as ever

⁵ "...to give young film people a chance to prove themselves in the production." SF program to *Hets*, October 1944.

⁶ In an interview Sjöberg relates his childhood encounter with a primitive projector that bears a certain resemblance to Ingmar Bergman's well known *laterna magica* episode at the same age.

Ingmar Bergman. In the twenties Sjöberg went to Moscow to study Stanislavski, Meyerhold and Eisenstein, he knew of course the silent Swedish and German cinemas and continued to follow new artistic expressions in the international cinema, such as the French film noir, the work of German Hollywood emigres, and Orson Welles and cinematographer Greg Toland's epoq̄ue-making *Citizen Kane*. This keen interest in the cinema as artistic expression became also part of Ingmar Bergman's heritage. His role models were found in the silent Swedish cinema and in the French films of Duvivier and Carné, housegods in Bergman's Thursday Club showings in the forties.⁷ It is probably no coincidence that the first foreign presentation of Ingmar Bergman in critical book form and the first extensive foreign interview with him were signed by two French critics.⁸ After all, their own cinema had helped pave the way for Bergman's filmmaking.

Ingmar Bergman's many commentators have been anxious to point out his early fascination with the film projector -- his *laterna magica* -- the favorite toy in the vicarage nursery. Bergman himself has cultivated this image of *enfant merveilleux* who was intuitively drawn to the cinematic medium. One tends therefore to overlook the fact that for Bergman's generation and the one after him (people born before 1930), the movies were at the center of a paradigmatic shift in what one might call a post-Arnoldian European culture: the challenging of traditional elitist art and the emergence of an easily accessible popular medium. For the educated Swedish middle class, the movies remained for a long time a lower class entertainment medium, on par with the circus. Ingmar Bergman himself was to use the analogy, though defiantly, in an early essay (1947) titled "Vi är cirkus!" [We are Circus!].⁹

⁷ Bergman's Thursday Club was an informal gathering of invited friends and colleagues who had access to older films in the studio archives of SF (Svensk Filmindustri).

⁸ Jacques Siclier. *Ingmar Bergman*. Paris: Editions universitaires, 1960, and Jean Beranger. "Rencontre avec Ingmar Bergman," *Cahiers du Cinema* 15, no. 88 (October 1958): 12-30.

⁹ Ingmar Bergman. "Vi är cirkus!" *Filmjournalen* 4: 1953, p. 7, 31.

Bergman's essay title is more applicable to the 1930s than to the time of his own debut. It was Alf Sjöberg rather than Ingmar Bergman who experienced the film industry's own concession to the "circus" status of the medium. A diminishing international market and difficulties in adjusting to the transition from silent film production to talkies led to an overemphasis on popular entertainment aimed at a native Swedish market and resulted in stereotypical formula films, using a narrow cadre of directors to produce them. In the words of Alf Sjöberg:

The thirties were of course an insecure decade. There was no film institute then, so all was a matter of commercial gold-digging. [...] What was produced was a terrible mishmash, as you can see from the repertory. It was totally scary [...] a lack of confidence among the producers.¹⁰

It was not until World War II, at a time when the relative scarcity of foreign films and an increasing public request for screen entertainment created a growing and more varied market demand, that the circumstances were right for a broader and more ambitious native film fare. New film companies mushroomed in Sweden in the first half of the 1940s and new genres were created, such as the youth film, the military farce, the psychological thriller, the wartime story. The demand for new directors was suddenly a fact but it was also now that the myth of the literary scriptwriter as someone holding the key to a cinematic renaissance took real root. The idea of an author with a special talent for the screenplay runs like a mantra among film critics and in the Swedish trade journals of the time. When the 21-year old Ingmar Bergman was invited to work in Svensk Filmindustri's (SF) manuscript department in 1941, it was in fact the result of a veritable headhunting for new script-writing talents. Beyond doubt, Ingmar Bergman was in that respect a Sunday's child, a person born with luck or good timing. Had he arrived upon the scene some ten years earlier he would have encountered an

¹⁰ "Alf Sjöberg och August Strindberg." Interview by Pelle Berglund and Göran Sarring. *Chaplin* 93, no 7, 1963: p. 279.

industry in crisis, conservative in its hiring practices and program development. Had he arrived some ten years later, he would have encountered an industry in economic difficulties caused by high entertainment tax and increasing competition from a postwar film market.

One way of assessing Ingmar Bergman's entry on the filmmaking scene is to compare his arrival with that of his older colleague Alf Sjöberg. In the late 1920s Sjöberg was a promising young director at the Royal Dramatic Theatre, at a time when Ingmar Bergman was still a child.¹¹ In 1929 Sjöberg tried to follow the Swedish custom of rotating theatre work with film work. But his first film, *Den starkaste*, [The strongest], shot under extremely hazardous circumstances on location in the Arctic sea, was the last silent film made in Sweden. With the arrival of the talkies in 1931, Sjöberg suddenly saw his chances for future filmmaking shattered. In several interviews many years later he talks with considerable bitterness about being locked out of the Swedish film industry for an entire decade, i.e during the most vital period of his creative life:

Even though I had had the opportunity to make that film [*Den starkaste*] in 1929, there was no demand for me now. I called all the time and I came up with new manuscript ideas and I tried in every way to get into the studios, but they were simply closed [...] No guy was let into the studios if one suspected he had some artistic aspirations. So I simply wasn't let in. There was a fear of burning issues. All it took was a real economic flop and it was all over. It did not matter very much what I had to offer, whether it was a big production or a small production film. [...] The fact is that the Swedish film industry stole eleven years from me as a productive filmmaker.¹²

¹¹ Ingmar Bergman's first visit to the Royal Dramatic Theatre took place at age ten when he saw Alf Sjöberg's debut as a director of Gustaf af Geijerstam's play version of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale "Big Claus and Little Claus".

¹² Torsten Jungstedt, "Då var det svårt att vara ung." *Röster i Radio*, no. 11, 1972, p. 16-17.

Not until 1939 could Alf Sjöberg find backing for his next film, *Med livet som insats* [With life at stake], a work that is often discussed in Swedish motion picture history as announcing the second golden era of Swedish filmmaking. By the time Ingmar Bergman delivered his first film manuscript in 1943, Alf Sjöberg was one of the leading directorial names in the industry, especially after making *Himlaspelet* (The Road to Heaven) in 1942, a film that reached the international market and circulated for a long time in a number of 16 mm versions.¹³

Two years after the release of *Himlaspelet*, SF was to celebrate its 25th anniversary as a film company.¹⁴ The new head of the company since 1942, Carl Anders Dymling, an academic newcomer in the business, wanted to mark the occasion by launching a series of artistic films that would solidify SF's reputation as a production company "of good taste". Alf Sjöberg was by now a foregone conclusion as one of the anniversary directors. Ingmar Bergman, in his second year as a manuscript reader, was encouraged to contribute a story. He delivered three scripts, of which only one was accepted. Its name was *Hets*. Set in a contemporary Stockholm senior high school (gymnasium), it depicts the youthful rebellion of Jan Erik Widgren, a rebellion against school, family and established bourgeois norms. Jan Erik is, however, more victim than revolutionary. His nemesis, the Latin teacher, nicknamed Caligula or "Little Boot" after the Roman emperor, is Jan Erik's rival for a lower class girl of suspect reputation. Caligula turns his sadistic attention on Jan Erik until the latter is provoked to a physical outburst, which results in his

¹³ *Himlaspelet* is a screen adaptation of a popular contemporary allegory authored by Rune Lindström (who plays the lead role in the film). The storyline is based on naïvistic religious murals from the Dalecarlia province of Sweden, depicting episodes from the bible in the guise of Swedish folklore. No doubt Ingmar Bergman's 1956 film *Det sjunde inseglet* [The Seventh Seal] contains intertextual references to Sjöberg's *Himlaspelet*. Both films depict, in episodic morality play form, the quest and life journey of a man in crisis, a story that takes place in an archaic, allegorized setting and makes use of religious murals inspired by local folk artists.

¹⁴ A fusion of Charles Magnuson's Svenska Bio and the Skandia Film Corp. had taken place in 1919. The company's new name was Svensk Filmindustri.

being suspended from school.

In retrospect, *Hets* seems the first in a series of portrayals of youthful struggles against an authoritarian system that Ingmar Bergman brought to the screen in the 1940s, films such as *Det regnar på vår kärlek* [1947, It rains on our love], *Hamnstad* [1948, Port of Call], and *Fängelse* (1949, Prison). These films are not programmatic; they declare no ideological antidote to the psychological abuse that forms their emotional and dramatic core. But they are all set in contemporary Swedish milieus and imply a questioning of people and agencies who have the power to control and shape a growing generation. In that sense, these films are what Kracauer termed *gleichzeitig*. As such they are companion pieces to the book that revolutionized Swedish children's literature at the time: the 1945 arrival of anarchist Pippi Longstocking who refuses to go to school except when she feels like it, who fights beefy circus artists and policemen with the same gusto, and who goes it alone without parental advice.

When Astrid Lindgren's book about Pippi first arrived, it too caused a rather heated debate. Parents and educators objected to Pippi's "bad manners" and questioned her total freedom. What would happen, wrote one of the book's critics in exasperation, if all Swedish children were to start sleeping with their feet on the pillows?!¹⁵ What would happen, chimed *Hets* critics, if students no longer trusted and respected their teachers? Could anyone seriously believe that a teacher like Caligula existed in the Swedish school system? Alf Sjöberg has testified that such questions were indeed raised already by SF's board before the film's release.¹⁶ The board simply worried about the impact of the script. Discussions were held about marketing strategy and it was decided to launch *Hets* as a youth film, a new genre exposing young people in trouble and designed as moral warnings. In other words, the tables would be turned on Bergman's work and on its protagonist, whose love affair and subsequent trouble at school would be presented as reprehensive. To help achieve this purpose, the film would open at SF's flagship Skandia

¹⁵ John Landqvist, "Dålig och prisbelönad. Några reflexioner om bra och dålig barnlitteratur" [Bad and awarded. Some reflections on good and bad children's literature]. *Aftonbladet*, August 18, 1946.

¹⁶ Jungstedt, *Röster i radio*, 1972, p. 16.

in Stockholm, usually reserved for American gangster and cowboy films, i.e. films that were considered as far removed from Swedish reality and desirable norms as possible.

Alf Sjöberg protested against this decision and *Hets* opened instead at Röda kvarn (The Red Mill), another SF-owned movie house, which catered to a sophisticated film-going clientele. But by that time, the press had already got news of the film and had begun publishing pre-opening tidbits about its story line. As a result, *Hets* had a reputation as a provocative film well before its premiere, with the attention focusing on the script. Sjöberg claimed many years after the release of the film that Bergman had only delivered a synopsis of a script, which had to be reworked and expanded by Sjöberg. Bergman on the other hand has furnished an account of how he had written a preliminary script as a short story, jotted down in a Latin notebook during a convalescent period in 1939. The script was reworked during a work session in Sigtuna and completed in the summer of 1943 when he was given access to the summer house of his office boss at SF, Stina Bergman. She had presented him with a pamphlet she had authored, *Några ord om hur man skriver för filmen* [A few words about how to write for the movies]. This script-writing guide was the result of Mrs. Bergman's brief Hollywood sojourn with her husband Hjalmar in the mid-twenties. It outlined the structure of a good script and Ingmar Bergman has later testified to its impact on his early narrative approach to the cinema:

This film dramaturgy was extremely tangible, almost rigid: the public should never need to doubt where it was in the story. There should be no hesitation about who was who, and the the story line's transport routes were to be dealt with with care. Climaxes were to be allocated and placed at certain, specifically designated spots in the manuscript. The culmination should be saved to the end.¹⁷

¹⁷ Ingmar Bergman, *Bilder*, 1980. p. 117-18.

Granted that this comment is a reconstruction of Bergman's scriptwriting situation many years after the event, it nevertheless seems to corroborate the rhythm and flow of a working manuscript of *Hets* bearing Bergman's name. One notices for instance that the ending in this script, contrary to the shooting script, adheres much more to the advice, cited above, to save the real dramatic climax for the very end. It has also, in terms of dramatic psychology, a more probable ending. The last scene depicts Jan Erik Widgren standing alone in the rain outside his former school, watching his classmates exit, their baccalaureat completed. At the conclusion of the scene Jan Erik walks away, a final confirmation of his outsider position. The shooting script (and final film version) on the other hand adds to this ending a conciliatory scene that contradicts the dramatic flow of the story: The school headmaster visits Jan-Erik in his (now dead) girlfriend's apartment and holds out the possibility that the young student can return to his school some time in the near future.

Bergman had been asked by SF to furnish this 'happier' ending to his story. The request corroborates Sjöberg's account of the producer's concern about *Hets*. Both he and Bergman made certain concessions to SF; Bergman by adding the final scene and Sjöberg by using a respectful and positive tone when he writes about the film in a brief essay in the glossy program issued by SF.¹⁸ Headlined "Ungdom i skräcktid" [Youth in a time of terror] Sjöberg's comments seem aimed at toning down the script's attack on the abusive elements in a contemporary authoritarian school system. Sjöberg politicizes Caligula by letting him read the Swedish Nazi daily, *Dagsposten* and warns of the insidious ways in which such ideological germs may flourish among young and sensitive people. But he ends his brief essay with a curious *volte face* in which he praises the caliber of Sweden's pedagogues, thus undermining the core of Bergman's intended purpose with his story but also giving support to his added new ending to the story, which paints a very sympathetic picture of a school headmaster:

¹⁸ Alf Sjöberg, "Ungdom i skräcktid" [Youth in a time of terror]. SF program to *Hets*, October 1944.

There are not many things that so warm the heart of a mature man's memory as the image of the best "old fogies" of his senior high school years, those teachers who knew their responsibility and did their job. The Swedish school system has plenty of them. They constitute the guarantors of our education. We are aware of the high standards of our Swedish schools, just as we know that Caligula's type is no more welcome in the staff room than in the classroom. It is in full conviction of [this]... that we would like to dedicate our school film tonight to *The Good Teacher*.

Bergman's note in the SF program reads "Hets. En kniv på en varböld" [Hets. A knife on an abscess], and has a tougher tone, more in keeping with the original screenplay. While Sjöberg focused on the threat that Nazism posed to the young as a collective group, Bergman sees the destruction of Caligula as a necessary radical act, a form of therapeutic surgery. Typically for Bergman, he includes the spectator in this act as a vicarious participant in the surgical removal of an infected boil. What is particularly striking in his note however is Bergman's total neglect of his alter ego, Jan Erik Widgren. All his frenzy goes instead into describing Caligula's destiny; Widgren is out of the picture altogether:

I wish that Caligula be unmasked, weeded out, destroyed. For there are many types of Caligulas, bigger or smaller, some rather harmless, others disgusting monsters, visible or treacherous. But Caligula is always recognizable for one thing. He creates hatred, coldness, destruction among people. He is foreign to all forms of fellowship, he lacks any prospects of contact and common empathy.

The press however had apparently expected more autobiographical references in Bergman's presentation of *Hets*. After the preview Bergman was asked to discuss his own school years. It was felt that the very intensity of the film story had to be based on the scriptwriter's personal experience. This kind of reaction was to become a standard response to Bergman's films in Sweden and reveals the same inability among Swed-

ish critics to distinguish between private experience and artistic persona as was the case in Strindberg's time. Several reviewers of *Hets* referred in fact to the fervent tone of the film as "Strindbergian".

Bergman obliged the media by responding with a terse comment in a daily paper, headlined "Skoltiden ett 12-årigt helvete" [School a 12-year long hell].¹⁹ He did not hide the fact that his script had been a way for him to vent the anger and frustration he had felt during his school years. But the press personalized the story even further by publishing the name of his school, a telephone interview with his former headmaster and denials by classmates and teachers that Caligula ever existed. Two days after *Hets* had premiered, the headmaster published a denial of any similarity between Bergman's story and the conditions at his school.²⁰ Bergman however saw his experience as fairly common and symptomatic of a general malaise in the Swedish school system. He dismissed that system as out of tune with the times and founded on principles that were perhaps relevant 500 years ago. In response to his former headmaster's indignant reaction to *Hets*, (before he had even seen the film) and his dismissal of "the good Ingmar" as "a problem child, lazy but rather intelligent," Bergman wrote:

Yes, I was a rather lazy boy and very worried because I was lazy and because I was preoccupied with theatre instead of school and because I detested to keep to time schedules, get up in the morning, do homework, sit still, carry maps, have breaks, write tests, cram for orals, in short and without much ado: I detested school as a principle, as a system and as an institution. Thus, I have not wished to expose my own school but all schools.²¹

¹⁹ See *Aftonbladet* 3 October 1944, p. 1, 16.

²⁰ Henning L. Håkanson. "Det tolvåriga helvetet. Ett tillrättaläggande." [The 12-year long hell. A correction]. *Aftonbladet*, October 5, 1944, p. 1, 14.

²¹ Ingmar Bergman, "Slipper bohemer gå i skolan?" [Are bohemians excused from going to school?] *Aftonbladet* 9 October 1944.

It was this statement, generalizing the situation depicted in *Hets*, that set a debate in motion among Swedish school pedagogues. What emerged was part of a larger syndrome in Swedish society, a questioning of the authoritarian principles on which that society had been founded for centuries, with great power vested in a hierarchy of official decision-makers, from school masters and bureaucrats to church fathers and other upholders of the Lutheran ethos. The decade after *Hets* can go down in Swedish social history as a quiet democratic process leading to new approaches in education and a gradual breakdown of gender and class distinctions.

For a film to be “gleichzeitig” or in tune with the times does not imply that it simply depict, even less confirm the norms dominant in its culture. Rather, its function is to undermine and question status quo. Yet, the mindscape of a film like *Hets* would not have had such an impact unless it expressed feelings already dormant in the society. It is the function of “Gleichzeitigkeit” to dare articulate what has not yet been fully and openly discussed. As a “gleichzeitig” film, *Hets* found itself midway between what Raymond Williams has called ‘receding’ and ‘emerging’ values in a community. The maker of such a film must be able to take on the role of a gadfly, risking and willing to offend the establishment. Ingmar Bergman assumed that role.

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