Introduction

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Film has often been excluded from the other art forms when cultural policies have been discussed and implemented. This general tendency to place film outside «cultural policies proper» is due to several reasons. One is the relationship between industrial production and film art; film production companies or cinema theatres have rather been connected to the sphere of national industry and commerce, than to the sphere of cultural institutions. Another reason is the early establishment of film as a means for propaganda, information or education.

Until the 1950s, the common political interests in film were oriented towards control over the power of the medium – economically, ideologically or didactically. With the introduction of television after the Second World War the power of film propaganda weakened, as did the economic strength of film industry. The latter was especially evident outside Hollywood. As a consequence, national systems of public support to film production were introduced in many countries. The outcomes of these schemes were often double edged – they were trade subsidies, but they could also fill functions as instruments designed to strengthen the conception of film as an art.
Film cultural policy is thus a quite recent phenomenon. This is obvious in the Nordic countries, where film has been treated through taxation, censorship and regulations during most of the 20th century, but only recently has been regarded as a part of cultural policy in a traditional sense, i.e. as art policy, related to, for example, literature and the fine arts. There has thus been a political deficit concerning cinema culture.

In the age of participatory, convergence and consumer culture, the boundaries between different art forms and media technologies have become blurred; and the autonomy of the cultural field has been questioned. The continuing digitalization of the cultural heritage as well as the hybridization of our means of communications has resulted in new protocols for discussing and governing culture. As the unscrupulous security guard coldly replies in Aki Kaurismäki’s modern classic *The Man without a Past* (2002) when being accused of being greedy: «Today the state protects business». This neo-liberal turn has resulted in an increasing economization of cultural policy, considering culture as a substantial economical resource. Thus, the cultural implications of film are now possible to translate to the fields of other art forms and to the discourses and policies of the creative and cultural industries. There is therefore much to be learned both from cinema’s struggle for legitimacy and from its grounding in commercial structures.

**Article summaries**

A new generation of cultural critics as well as scholars within the fields of cultural policy and adjacent disciplines are now mapping and investigating film policy, and this has been an evident development also in the Nordic countries, with several interdisciplinary attempts to understand the cultural policies of film. There is no established tradition of film policy research within the film studies community and we hope therefore that this issue of *The Nordic Journal of Cultural Policy* will both spawn such an endeavour and encourage further interdisciplinary studies.

The contributions to the theme section on Scandinavian film policy are, as indicated, diverse and bear witness of the eclecticism of policy studies. The essays do not cover all aspects of film policy, nor even all Nordic countries – neither Finland nor Iceland is included, which is a loss of course. But, even if in glimpses and fragments, a map is drawn, with some recurrent topics and some recurrent problems. And the story will hopefully continue.

One way to enter the field is through a historical understanding. **Gunnar Iversen**, professor in film studies at Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, gives an account of the first hundred years of Norwegian film policy, starting in 1913 and the Film Theatres Act, «Kinoloven», which with adjustments still is in force. This legislation, which implied control for distribution and screening, as well as the implementation of a censorship agency, started in a climate of moral panic concerning the new media form. But, as Iversen shows, the legislation has gradually turned into an instrument for support of film, and an understanding of film industry not just in economic terms. Since 1950 all feature-length fiction films has received government support, and the domestic film production is regarded as part of the cultural heritage.

The historical perspective of Iversen is supplemented by **Marit Falkum Enerhaug**, master candidate in media studies, and by **Håkon Larsen**, postdoc in sociology, both from University of Oslo. In their article they describe the development of film industry that has taken place during the last decade, in order to fulfil the ambitions of becoming top of the Nordic countries. In seeking to reify this goal the Ministry of Culture has initiated a major restructuring of both the administration of the
Norwegian film industry and the system for subsidies. These major changes are discussed and analysed.

Film policies in Norway and Sweden are in many ways similar. There is a quest for control of film, and a growing interest in making domestic film production successful through governmental support. But, one interesting difference is that a single man, the engineer and freelance critic Harry Schein who during the 1950s entered the public sphere and became a member of the inner circles of the Swedish Labour party, dominates the Swedish history of film policy. The important film reform of 1963, which resulted in the funding of the Swedish Film Institute, was to a great part due to him. Per Vesterlund, assistant professor in film studies at University of Gävle, describes the path to the film reform, putting the writings and doings of Schein in focus. The article is a reminder of the individuals and also the serendipity latent in every system, and is a sketch of a hitherto forgotten part of Swedish cultural history.

Systems and rationalities are dealt with in depth in the following contribution, which is an analysis of bureaucracies and judgemental autonomy, where the film consultants at the Danish Film Institute are scrutinized. The article is co-authored by Per Darmer, associate professor at Copenhagen Business School, Chris Mathieu, senior lecturer in sociology at Lund University, and Jesper Strandgaard Pedersen, professor at Copenhagen Business School. They discuss the proximity-distance dilemma for the film consultants of the Danish Film Institute, where the consultants, mostly recruited from the film industry, are expected to act neutral and disinterested when in office. In the article the strategic manoeuvres, managed by the film institute in order to solve the dilemma, are discussed.

Olof Hedling, associate professor in film studies at Lund University, further researches the unintended effects of organizational structures within film support. Hedling looks at the development of a Swedish film policy. In a way his enterprise shares some perspectives with Gunnar Iversen’s presentation of the conditions in Norway, but Hedling is primarily interested in the effects of state support on the contemporary film industry, where he maps a dismantling of the traditional production infrastructure in Sweden; the forceful, vertically integrated companies have been replaced by several small, often momentary agencies, looking for funding and trying to fulfil the explicit and implicit demands of the state policies regarding film production. His critical conclusion is that the state support is undermining an established production with more long-term perspectives. Thus, the arguments of the de-professionalization of film also indicate that film is characterized by the situation of the common cultural worker: it is roughly only 25% of the professionals that may have culture as their profession.

The two last contributions to the theme section deal with film and new media technologies, but from angles seldom penetrated in e.g. film studies proper. The first example is conducted by Terje Gaustad, senior lecturer at Norwegian Business School, Oslo, and his colleague professor Anne-Britt Gran. They propose that institutional economics may offer an interesting framework for research on the ability of the Norwegian film sector to reach current film policy goals. Their main object is to underline the presence and enforcement of copyright law when investigating the consumption of film and TV-series in the Norwegian home video market. In their study they report that approximately half of the total consumption takes place outside the legal framework established by copyright, which represents a considerable challenge in relation to the policy goal of achieving increased national film production through a robust national film industry.
The copyright study is an interesting memento concerning new movements in media reception, and it points back to several of the other articles, and links also to the last contribution of the theme section which deals explicitly with the consequences of the digital era. It is Jon Wengström, Curator of the Archival Film Collections of the Swedish Film Institute, who outlines the problems of film archiving. The recent shift from analogue to digital technology has led to «the biggest challenges ever faced by the global archive community», and Wengström points out the practical problems and the costs for the further digitization process by the film archives. He claims that the possibilities of taking care of the film heritage are slipping out of our hands, due to lack of technical capacities and financial support: «115 years of film heritage may become forever inaccessible in the future.»

In all, these studies and presentations from different perspectives make it clear that there is a need for in-depth research concerning film as an object for cultural policy. There have been singular important works paving the way, for example, Anne Marie Honoré’s Filmpolitik midst i en medierevolution (1994), Roger Blomgren’s seminal Staten och filmen. Svensk filmpolitik 1909 – 1993 (1998), and Mervi Pantti’s «Kansallinen elokuva pelastettava: elokuvaliittinen keskustelu kotimaisen elokuvan tukemisesta itsenäisyyden ajalla (2000) («National Cinema Must Be Saved. The debate on subsidising domestic film production during the period of independence») but with this theme section we hope to encourage more of discussion and research into the field, and more of joint ventures, connecting disciplines and methods in understanding the moving image as a phenomenon, conditioned not only by technological, economical and artistic interventions but also by cultural policy.