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CHAPTER 1

The movies and emigration to America

An introduction

'Perhaps the most significant event in the history of modern Sweden.' This is how the historian Lars Ljungmark characterizes Swedish emigration to the US in the period 1860–1923.[1] In the academic world this important and revolutionary process has been the focus of much research and literature, and our understanding of the various consequences of emigration is comprehensive and continues to grow. In the general consciousness, both among Swedes in Sweden and among Swedish Americans, Vilhelm Moberg's Karl-Oskar and Kristina are regarded as the archetypical emigrants. Moberg's series of novels and the films by Jan Troell based on them have profoundly influenced public opinion about Swedish emigration to America, and, as Göran Hägg points out, thanks to Moberg the history of emigration has become one of the central Swedish myths or narratives.[2] Thanks to these books and films, the common picture of the Swedish emigrant as a farmer from Småland who emigrated with his family in the mid nineteenth century and settled in Minnesota because it was the state that was much like Sweden, has had an enduring impact, and as late as the mid–1990s the narrative was augmented further by Björn Ulvaeus and Benny Andersson's retelling in the form of a musical, *Kristina from Duvemåla*. However, Moberg's version tells only a limited part of the history of Swedish emigration to the US—even if, as the critic Jens Liljestrand writes, it has 'come to replace the historical facticity'.[3] Between 1840 and 1930 over a million people emigrated from Sweden to North America. The majority of them remained in the US, but it is estimated that up to a fifth returned to Sweden in the

years 1875–1925, and even more after 1930.[4] Emigration to America proceeded in waves. The first great wave, if we discount the pioneers who settled in Delaware in the seventeenth century, was formed by pious Jansonites in the 1840s. This was followed by the great hunger-driven emigrations towards the end of the 1860s, the period depicted by Moberg and Troell.[5] By far the greatest number left for the US during the years of mass emigration from 1880 to 1914, an exodus which was so troubling for Sweden that the government not only commissioned a detailed inquiry, but went so far as to found an association whose purpose was to oppose emigration. In the last wave of emigration, people fled the Depression in Sweden during the 1920s.

Is it true that the typical emigrant was a farmer attracted by new land in Minnesota? There were indeed a great many farmers among those who left Sweden, but between 1850 and 1920 fully one-quarter of emigrants were town-dwellers.[6] Emigrant farmers rarely moved directly on to their new farmland in the US; instead, nearly all of them remained in a town or city for a while to earn money, most often in Chicago. The reason why Minnesota and Illinois became home to so many of the immigrant Swedish families was because that was where the limit of cultivation lay at that time; but Swedes also settled in Texas and, later, on the West Coast, mostly around Seattle and in various parts of California.[7] During the later periods of emigration it became increasingly common for immigrants to settle permanently in the cities, and by 1920 Chicago was Sweden's second largest city, ranked according to the number of Swedish inhabitants. Swedish immigrants were often eager to remain in the Chicago area if they had relatives or acquaintances already living there.[8] During the first decades of the twentieth century, only seventeen per cent of immigrants worked as farmers, and in cities and towns they worked in factories or as craftsmen of various kinds.[9] Many Swedes distinguished themselves in the construction industry in particular.

The waves of emigration did indeed include many people from the southern province of Småland, especially from what were then the counties of Jönköping and Kalmar. In many cases emigration was motivated by religion; their home area was characterised by fervent revivalist and Free Church movements. However, many emigrants also came from other southern provinces (Skåne and Blekinge), central Sweden (Bohuslän, Östergötland, the city of Gothenburg, and, in some

periods, Älvsborg) and various regions in the north of Sweden.[10] Most often, emigrants were not entire families, but single men or women, especially during the later waves of emigration. At times, single women between 15 and 29 years old were the most common emigrants, and often found employment as maids or in other forms of domestic service.

In this book I analyse how emigration, emigrants, and returning Swedish Americans have been construed and represented in Swedish film. The focus is on motion pictures from the period 1910–50, and to some extent subsequent developments until around 1980. The picture presented by Swedish movies is an ambivalent one. Emigrants could be seen as traitors to the nation, representing what were perceived as the negative aspects of America—or, as doughty settlers, seeking a new life in a land of opportunity, and returning to Sweden with a modernizing spirit and democratic ideals. Which of these depictions is used is often linked to how the Swedish national identity is valued.

Swedish immigrants to the US created a cultural identity and community through activities such as running their own newspapers, publishing literature from their own publishing houses, and staging plays. Swedish Americans also went to the cinema, and Swedish films were imported for showing to Swedish American groups, both privately and through distribution companies. In this book I will analyse the films chosen by the Swedish immigrants for distribution, how and where these films were shown, and how they were reviewed in the press. I will then go on to discuss those aspects of the old country that were chosen for reproduction—those that Swedish Americans wished to remember and identify with, and which became a part of a transnational Swedish American identity. I consider notions of Swedishness and representations of America and Sweden, and how, in the light of those representations, those who emigrated to America were portrayed in film, as well as how Swedish Americans regarded their Swedishness and how they construed their transnational cultural identity with the help of the movies. Finally, I take a closer look at how Swedish American women have been depicted in American film, which, given how emigrant women were construed in Swedish movies, makes for an interesting comparison. From this perspective, issues such as cross-dressing, national affiliation, and the depiction of role models are important to study as part of the two film cultures. When it comes to the Swedish context, there has been very

little prior research on film, media, and emigration to the US.[11] The representation of Swedish Americans on film is only briefly discussed in Birgitta Steene's article 'The Swedish Image of America', and in H. Arnold Barton's monograph *A Folk Divided*, with both painting a simplified and cursorily researched picture.[12] Per Olov Qvist, who has studied a wide variety of contextual aspects of Swedish film in the 1930s, mentions Swedish Americans and how inconsistently they are depicted in the movies at that time,[13] but while he gives some examples of typical characterizations, his is not a detailed study of the subject. The showing of Swedish movies among Swedish Americans, and the uses to which they were put, has not been studied at all.[14]

There is more extensive research into the importance of theatre, literature, and the press in the construction of a new migrant identity or in creating a collective memory of the old country. In his dissertation on the image of the US in Swedish prose fiction, Lars Wendelius focuses on the ways in which Swedish Americans were represented—a body of research which I have used extensively.[15] Wendelius has written several monographs and articles in which he discusses Swedish American culture, most notably from the viewpoint of literature, but also in a general cultural sense.[16] The Swedish American theatre—staged performances by the Swedish diaspora and Swedish American artists who toured the US—have been thoroughly analysed by Anne-Charlotte Harvey and Lars Furulund in a number of different publications. Swedish American newspaper publishing has been considered by many historians, including Anna Williams, Lars Furulund, and Ulf Jonas Björk.[17] I will return to this research later in the book.

There is now a considerable amount of research into American immigrant groups and their media, but it rarely has historical ambitions and is often concerned with the production of film and other media in exile. Also, there is not exactly an abundance of research into how emigration and emigrants have been construed and represented within national film traditions. One example is Stephanie Rains's recent *The Irish-American in Popular Culture, 1945–2000*, which looks at the representation of Irish-American women and men in American film, and at the ways that representations of the Irish family in American film influence memories of the old country. Rains writes about popular culture in general, but gives most weight to visual representations.[18] The most extensive literature of all concerns Italian

immigrants in American film; one example would be the research of Giorgio Bertellini.[19]

Even though a historical perspective is not particularly common in studies of emigration as it appears in film and other media, there are many similarities between the historical situation and how today's exile groups use film and media to maintain various forms of contact with their homelands. Here the film and media scholar Hamid Naficy has been very influential, and although mainly concerned with how Iranians in the US today use Iranian television, there are surprising parallels with how Swedish Americans used and described feature films and documentary shorts made by Swedish filmmakers between 1920 and about 1950.[20] This reveals the similarities between the Swedes' situation as immigrants in the US and today's immigrants in Sweden: the Swedes in the US were segregated, not least in the cities; they founded ethnic and cultural associations to strengthen their identity and to maintain solidarity in the face of other immigrant groups; they founded their own schools, universities, churches, and congregations; and they used media of various types to keep in touch with the culture of their homeland.[21] The satellite dishes which are to be found on nearly every balcony in the areas of Swedish cities with a high proportion of immigrant residents are not a new phenomenon—the immigrant Swedes in the US maintained contact with the home country and built their new identities using the same cultural practices.

Swedish emigration to the US was a national trauma, which was taken up and addressed in the cultural sphere, including in movies. Film, an art form which is at once popular, commercial, and artistic, has a rare ability to capture general attitudes, opinions, and ideas. Claude Lévi-Strauss is one of those who have shown how narratives can attempt, in a symbolic sense, to solve or deliberate upon social or political problems, for example, issues based upon ethnicity, class, or gender. These issues are construed through such narratives as unavoidable or natural. Analysis can elucidate these practices, and film, which is both a system of representation and a narrative structure, richly rewards an ideological analysis.[22]

It is important to bear in mind that films do not simply reflect real-world relationships or values, neither does reality contain intrinsic or self-evident truths with which the fictional world of film is bound to align. My theoretical starting-point is that films express, repre-

sent, and construe national and cultural identities, as well as ideas, thoughts, and opinions that are prevalent in a society at various historical moments. In agreement with theories of culture and constructionism, my understanding is that art, culture, and society mutually influence one another—culture is not just a reflection of societal relations, but rather it is the case that cultural expressions are to the highest degree the co-creators of attitudes and ideologies.[23] As Jostein Gripsrud writes, representations always present something in a particular way, and so representation always also involves construction.[24] The media reproduce and reinforce prevailing attitudes and ideological dispositions, and are therefore co-creators of the content of those ideas and attitudes, as well as their cultivation, survival, or propagation. In accordance with the English-speaking school of cultural studies, whose view of the media and society has been discussed by Stuart Hall in a number of publications, the starting-point for my analysis is that cultural expressions are representations of our culture and our society, but that such expressions both describe cultures and societies and propagate and form them.[25] This also captures what is for me an ideological–critical stance: a critique of ideology should expose representations that favour a dominant group and highlight how that group presents its own representations as common sense and generally accepted truths.[26] This practice is plainly in evidence in the Swedish film industry's productions.

The theoretical basis of this book, and an analytical screen for various analyses, is provided by a sort of ideological conglomerate, consisting of the concepts 'nationalism', 'nation', 'Swedishness', 'ideology', 'identity', and 'citizenship'. Discourses on what is national, on nationalism, and on the phenomena related to them, were very prominent in Swedish movies about migration and migrants, at least as late as the 1950s. As soon as the concept of the 'nation' is raised, it becomes hard to avoid taking into account Benedict Anderson, and his idea of an imagined community and the media-based discourse connected with this conceptualized affinity.[27] Anderson and other sociologists argue that media-based communication was of crucial importance for the construction of the national consciousness and a national identity.[28] That is, 'the collective consumption of mediated communication serves to create a sense of national community'.[29]

For Anderson, who was writing about the growth of European nations, the printed word was the medium that had the greatest import-

ance in nation-building, and in developing a sense of unity among members of a nation that could only be imagined. Thomas Elsaesser and others who study film have pointed out that it is a dangerous simplification to apply Anderson's discussions wholesale to other mass media, and argue that his theories are more useful when applied to television than to film.[30] Others, such as the historian Eric Hobsbawm in his book *Nations and Nationalism*, have emphasized the identity-creating power of film. Hobsbawm notes that during the twentieth century people 'had new opportunities to identify with their nation with the help of the new forms of expression found in the modern, urbanizing high-technology society. Two important examples should be noted. The first … was the birth of modern mass media: the press, the cinema, and radio. Through these popular ideologies could be standardized, given a unified form, remodelled, and, of course, also used as deliberate propaganda by states or private interests.'[31] The media scholar David Morley, who has extensively studied the media, memory, and identity, and the sociologist Kevin Robins, have noted that the visual media are crucial intermediaries of the national identity: 'Film and television media play a powerful role in the construction of collective memories and identities.'[32] For Sweden in particular, the ethnologist Orvar Löfgren, among others, has studied the role of the media in nation-building.[33]

The literature on the nation and film has often been concerned with how movies could be nation-specific in an aesthetic sense, or what characterized a particular national film culture—often, how it distinguished itself from Hollywood productions. Since 1980, this field of research has concentrated more on the ways in which films are expressions of national or cultural discourses.[34] I wish to show how Swedish film played an active part in the national discourse, in the building of a national identity according to which it was necessary to share particular values and norms perceived as specifically Swedish in order to be a genuine citizen (which did not prevent other national film cultures from regarding the same attitudes as characteristic of their national mentality too, of course). There was a strong sense in which Sweden should be seen as the foremost nation, Swedish characteristics should be regarded as the most lofty and moral, and striving for homogeneity was manifest.

The first research on national film was essentialist in character, in that it investigated films' narratives, iconography, and recurrent ideas with the

aim of saying something about each nation's values and opinions. Since then, Benedict Anderson, Eric Hobsbawm, and others have introduced the constructionist stance common in cultural studies.[35] I too base my analyses on a constructionist line of reasoning, although the conceptual world of the movies is almost entirely essentialist. Films present the nation, national identity, and their characteristics as biological or essentialist, while I see them as being fundamentally constructionist.

Ian Jarvie in his article 'National Cinema' poses the question of why it was the culturally and nationally stable countries such as France, Germany, Italy, and the Scandinavian nations, which in the 1910s and 1920s were the first to build up a national film culture.[36] These countries already had a clearly defined national identity, built up entirely without the help of film, and yet movies were used as a component of all subsequent nation-building. Jarvie argues that this was because new problems and challenges had arisen, and for Sweden this was certainly true. In the period covered by my study, emigration was a profound trauma; far greater than we usually imagine. During the 1930s and 1940s, Swedish society underwent huge changes. Urbanization, a new government with revolutionary plans, the nascent welfare state, the tearing down of old societal structures—all this left the Swedish national identity facing a process of rapid change, in which film, which at the time reached a very large audience, became an important factor.

Nationalism in this sense is not made up of displays of patriotism; kings and parades; rousing songs; deep, manly tones: no, it turns on a routine, everyday form of nationalism, as characterized by the influential concept 'banal nationalism', a phrase coined by the social psychologist Michael Billig.[37] Billig demonstrates convincingly that in the established countries and states of the Western world, this type of nationalism is found in everyday discourses of all kinds: in everything from politicians' speeches, via cultural products and sports stars, to how newspapers are structured. In our everyday lives, we are continually reminded of our nationality, what is thought to characterize it, and how we should relate to it; and the ideological influence takes place in such a quotidian and familiar way that we do not notice it—'In so many little ways, the citizenry are daily reminded of their national place in a world of nations. However, this reminding is so familiar, so continual, that it is not consciously registered as reminding. The metonymic image of banal nationalism is not a flag which is being

consciously waved with fervent passion; it is the flag hanging unnoticed on the public building.'[38]

The construction of national identity takes a wide variety of forms and discourses, and film is one of the most important forms of national narrative, as has been especially clear at certain points of the twentieth century. In the same way as American movies were important for the process of Americanization in the early twentieth century, I believe that Swedish film played a substantial role in Swedish nation-building and the construction and reproduction of an ideology of Swedishness during the first decades of the twentieth century. This was a period when narratives of emigration, narratives of Swedish Americans, were important in creating a sense of unity and common purpose against anything that might threaten the national façade.

CHAPTER 2

Betraying the nation

Emigration to America

Attitudes to emigration

The great wave of emigration after 1900, widely known as 'the mass emigration', was the one which caused the most dismay in Sweden.[1] It was no longer crop failure and famine which prompted Swedes to leave their homeland in droves; neither was it religious groups seeking paradise on another continent. The causes were of quite another kind, and they often struck hard at the foundations of the national self-image. As well as a fair number of young men attempting to avoid conscription, the most common reasons to emigrate were grass-roots and class based: people were reacting to economic, political, and social injustice, and wanted to move to a country where there was no king, nobility, or authorities; where hard work was rewarded by a more tolerable way of life.[2] Such at any rate was the view of America in the pro-emigration propaganda put out by emigration agencies. It was also true for many of those who emigrated, even if some did not find success in the US. However, perhaps more important than the emigration agents in persuading people to leave for good were the '*Amerikabrev*', the letters home from America, which came from those who had already emigrated, sending money or a Swedish American newspaper. The letters and the Swedish American press told of how good things were in the US (if the emigrant had, in fact, been successful), and many Swedes had never seen a newspaper before they were sent a Swedish American one by their relatives. The letters and newspapers provided glimpses of life in the US, and showed that it was possible to live a different life to the one in Sweden.[3] Many of those who emigrated in the twentieth century ended up working in industry or domestic service in the US, and were not employed in agriculture to such a great extent as before.

Emigration after 1900, which peaked in around 1910 and 1923, was mostly a class-based matter. Of course, this had also been the case previously—the proportion of emigrants who came from the upper classes was not great—but now it became even more evident. It was clearly a hard blow to Sweden's rulers that so many people—well over half a million in the first decades of the twentieth century—wished to leave the country because they were dissatisfied with its politics and ideology at exactly the time when nation-building was at its most intense, when the government, state, and other official bodies were working hard to create a national identity and a sense of belonging using history and National Romantic art, literature, and music.[4] The Swedish sense of nationhood received a telling blow. The historian Nils Edling, along with official authorities during the periods of emigration, calls it a 'national trauma', a 'terrible blood-letting'.[5] Efforts to counteract emigration could not be allowed to wait.

The Swedish Emigration Commission has been described many times in the scholarly literature.[6] It was the most extensive public inquiry during this period, carried out by a group of academics led by the statistician Gustaf Sundbärg. Its task was to investigate why people emigrated, and to inquire into various ways in which emigration might be reduced.[7] The inquiry produced a large number of documents (or appendices, as they are termed), including, for example, the testimony of the emigrants themselves in the shape of 'Information gained through the Emigration Commission's agents as well as letters from Swedes in the US, and working practices in America'.[8] In 1907 the National Society Against Emigration was formed, which in practice was led by its secretary, Adrian Molin, a right-wing radical who was to lead its activities for a long time, and allied it with the '*egnahemsrörelse*', an owner-occupier movement, of which Molin was a leading proponent.[9] Gustaf Sundbärg was also active in the movement, as were a large number of members of the government and Parliament. The National Society Against Emigration was dominated politically and ideologically by forces whose sympathies lay on the right wing, but Social Democrats were also represented. Its board aimed to include all shades of politics, in order to give the impression that their support was unanimous.[10]

The strength of the opposition to emigration at this point can be seen from the fact that the Swedish Emigration Commission was con-

vened in the same year that the National Society Against Emigration was founded, and at about the same time as the Gothenburg-based Riksföreningen för Sveriges bevarande i utlandet (the Royal Society for Swedish Culture Abroad).[11] It perhaps should not be forgotten that the Swedish Society for Eugenics was founded in 1909—politicians and the ruling elite give off a sense of desperation, and in some way, this is understandable. Men and women in the prime of life preferred to leave Sweden for good, and emigration 'thus became a population question of crucial importance after the turn of the twentieth century.[12] The new Sweden which was to be built, a new industrialized country, risked losing the labour it so desperately needed, and a number of predictions even showed that the country was well on the way to under-population.[13] I do not think one should underestimate the enormous ideological importance of Swedish emigration: it was a highly effective way of showing dissatisfaction with the country. In the first decades of the twentieth century Swedish women and a great many men did not have the vote, and for lower-class men and women who had difficulty making their voices heard in the public sphere, emigration became an extraordinarily powerful response to the Swedish nation and what it could offer—an unparalleled vote of no confidence.[14]

The National Society Against Emigration's aim was to prevent emigration, and its means were to 'strengthen the Swedish people's affinity with their country'.[15] In its propaganda it set out to address the young men of rural Sweden, as well as Swedish Americans. Put simply, in its 'work of enlightenment', as the Society called it, it spelled out the drawbacks of America and the advantages of Sweden, and sought to 'influence political decisions so that society develops in a way which curbs emigration'.[16] The rallying cry became 'Home in Sweden', and the Society collaborated above all with the owner-occupier movement and its Own Home Society to build new places to live and work, and to put new land under the plough in an 'domestic colonization'.[17] 'Home', according to Nils Edling, was 'one of the century's most loaded words, being emotive and highly symbolic'.[18] During the nineteenth century, notions of 'home' and 'family' had seen a dramatic intellectual advance in Sweden, and the nuclear family and the home played a highly significant role in the growth of an ideology of Swedishness and Swedish Nationalism. The red cottage, nestled in a birch clearing out in the countryside, became an enduring symbol of every Swedish home.

There is one to be found on the National Society Against Emigration's membership card, and a similar one on the Own Home Society journal.[19] Other symbols of what was regarded as the core of Swedishness in this process of 'Swedification' were the national flag, the Skansen Museum, Nils Holgersson, and the national anthem.[20]

In general, the emigrants were regarded as unpatriotic; leaving the country showed a lack of solidarity.[21] To some extent, it was imputed that emigrants had poor morals, at times in turgidly severe dressing-downs from the pulpit.[22] This was a period when biological explanations were always close at hand, but although it was asserted that emigrants suffered from certain psychological deficiencies, the preference was for emigrated Swedish Americans to return, rather than accept immigrants from other nations. At the same time as the earliest anti-emigration propaganda began to appear, immigration was debated in Parliament, and it was made clear that 'foreigners' were not wanted in Sweden; especially unwelcome were 'Gypsies, Galicians, Russian tinkers, and East European Jews'.[23] People from other countries were not welcome to join the building of the Swedish nation, even if Swedes were accepted in other lands.[24] In its propaganda, the National Society Against Emigration also expressed confidence in those Swedes who had already emigrated, and announced that they were, in face, the best Swedes: industrious, energetic, and enterprising.[25] An important part of its work was therefore to convince Swedish Americans to return to Sweden, and in various ways to make it easier for them to do so. Essentialist attitudes to the nation and its people paved the way for this kind of policy.

Under the aegis of the National Society Against Emigration, the 'work of enlightenment' was concentrated on giving lectures and 'abundant dissemination' of leaflets and pamphlets.[26] The pamphlets were often of the type crammed with useful facts and figures, but there were also more tempting sorts with stories and illustrations such as *När Maja-Lisa kom hem från Amerika* ('When Maja-Lisa came home from America') and *Per Janssons Amerika-resa* ('Per Jansson's American journey').[27] To a large extent, the Society's work consisted of giving an alternative account to the tales of success found in the letters from America. The story of Maja-Lisa tells how she was more or less fooled into going to the US, where things do not turn out as well as she had hoped, but she returns home to visit wearing fine clothes she has made herself, spreading lies and showing off. The story concludes that people would realize that life in Sweden

was good, if only the emigrants were truthful. Lars Wendelius and others have also discussed the impression of emigration given in literary works. For example, in K. G. Ossiannilsson's poem 'The Emigration' from 1904, the image of bloodletting is crucial.[28] One stanza runs:

> A thousand red drops, Sweden,
> like water,
> oh, tomorrow as yesterday,
> thousand upon thousand upon thousand—!
> Who shall light the candle in the cottage?
> Homes stand empty in the night—
> all your life is ebbing away, Sweden,
> life ebbs
> from your open wounds

Even if biologism and the idea of the country as a body takes centre stage here, nothing is explicitly said about 'foreigners' or other nationalities. Neither does Wendelius' monograph *Bilden av Amerika i svensk prosafiktion 1890–1914* ('The image of America in Swedish prose fiction, 1890–1914') depict xenophobia as something characteristic of literature with American themes at this time. However, Swedish public opinion was fed by, and interacted with, nationalism, the immigration debate, and an ever more prominent racial biology. Denigrating portraits of Jews and Africans were routine fare in comic strips and a good deal of fiction.[29] Early Swedish film was no exception.

The movies and anti-emigration propaganda

At the same time as this minor explosion of anti-emigration associations, Swedishness promoters, and owner-occupier and racial biology societies, Sweden saw the first regular production of feature films, and it seems inevitable that this broadly nationalistic trend exercised some degree of influence on the decision to build up a national film industry. In the summer of 1909, Charles Magnusson arrived in the south-eastern city of Kristianstad from Gothenburg to take part in an expansion of the activities of Svenska Biografteatern, one of the main film companies, which until then had concentrated on distribution. After two years, operations were moved to Lidingö, just outside Stockholm.

It would be easy to interpret the earliest film productions in the light of the national transformation and its attendant modes of thought. In contrast to the contemporaneous Danish film industry, which successfully concentrated on drama with an international character and at times a strong element of eroticism, Svenska Biografteatern in Kristianstad occupied itself with productions which were thought suitable for reinforcing national feeling: *Värmlänningarne* ('The People of Värmland') and *Fänrik Ståls sägner* ('Tales of Ensign Stål') (both by Carl Engdahl, 1910); *Bröllopet på Ulfåsa* (two distinct productions, both 1910, viz. 'The Wedding at Ulfåsa', Carl Engdahl, and 'The Wedding at Ulfåsa', Gustaf 'Muck' Linden), *Regina von Emmeritz och konung Gustaf II Adolf* ('Regina von Emmeritz and Gustavus Adolphus', Gustaf 'Muck' Linden, 1910). In the summer of 1910 there were also productions of two anti-emigration films: *Emigranten* ('The Emigrant') directed by Robert Olsson, and *Emigrant* ('Emigrant') directed by Gustaf 'Muck' Linden. The latter film is also sometimes known as *Amuletten* ('The Amulet'), and I will hereafter use this title to avoid confusion.[30]

Neither of these two anti-emigration films were given a public screening, and in the first volume of the official Swedish filmography (*Svensk Filmografi*) Lars Lindström speculates that this was possibly because *Emigranten* was withheld from release as a result of self-censorship, because the acting was of such poor quality. According to one of the actors in *Emigranten*, the cancelled release was because the images had been cloudy due to the bad British weather (where parts of the film were shot), a factor which is not particularly perceptible in the film. The reasons why *Amuletten* was never shown remain unclear. Only ten or so feature films were made in Kristianstad, and the fact that two of them were anti-emigration propaganda is conspicuous. The two films also stand out among those produced at Kristianstad in that, unlike the others, they were not adaptations of well-known, popular plays or literature.[31] However, there is no evidence to indicate that the films might have been produced in collaboration with or on commission from the National Society Against Emigration. There are no records concerning the films at Svenska Filminstitutet (the Swedish Film Institute) or at Filmmuseet (the Museum of Film in Kristianstad), and as far as is known, the minutes of the meetings of the National Society Against Emigration up to the 1920s have been lost.[32] The journal *Hem i Sverige* ('Home in Sweden'), which was started when the Society was formed,

published descriptions of its activities, but even there no mention is made of any collaboration with the nascent film industry at the production stage, and neither is there any indication that the films might form part of the Society's lecture tours. It therefore seems that the initiative to produce the films came from Svenska Biografteatern itself.

There is evidence that at least one short—now lost—was commissioned, and in all probability was also written by the Society. Anne Bachmann has found censor certifications and newspaper articles which show that a film with the title *Egnahemsbyggarnes väg* ('The Own-Home Builder's Way') was produced by Svenska Bio in 1915. The film was shown at the World's Fair in San Francisco that year, accompanied by models of various types of own-build houses. The National Society Against Emigration had made common cause with the Own Home Society, and in this film, as Bachmann reconstructs it, we follow a Swedish American who returns to Sweden, builds his own home on a beautiful piece of land with the aid of the owner-occupier movement, farms the land, and reaps a harvest together with his family. A large proportion of the film is taken up with the various stages of building the house. Swedish land, the Swedish nation, and the importance of remaining in the country are ideas which seem to have been central concepts in the film.[33]

The initiative to make the two anti-emigration films produced in Kristianstad cannot in the same way be said to have originated with the National Society Against Emigration. Since production in Kristianstad was always based upon literary or dramatic originals, it is possible that inspiration was drawn from two short stories with an anti-emigration theme which were written by Henning Berger: '86 Clark Street' and 'En hälsning' ('A Greeting'). Berger became probably the first Swedish author ever to write film scripts. He rewrote his two short stories to create a script for the film *Amuletten*, work he was well remunerated for.[34] In addition, the two anti-emigration films are almost certainly the first time an explicitly political position was taken in a Swedish film, which must be seen as coming surprisingly early. There is another early example of an attempt to influence Swedish politics with the help of film, and as Erik Hedling has shown, *Ingeborg Holm* (Victor Sjöström, 1912) was successful in doing so.[35] The fact that Svenska Biografteatern made two films connected to a contemporary political debate about an important social development is a sign that even at this early stage

they believed in the power and capabilities of film, and that film could contribute to the formation of social ideologies. However, in contrast to *Ingeborg Holm*, neither of these two films (and, what is more, none of those with an emigrant theme which were to follow soon afterwards) took the part of the less well off, but instead allied themselves with the dominant bourgeois ideology.

The use of film as propaganda to persuade Swedes not to emigrate to the US was in some senses ironic, since movies and the US were already seen as tightly linked, not least because many of those who toured Sweden showing movies were Swedish Americans.[36] America was seen as a model country when it came to all things modern, and film was the mass medium of modernity. In a way, it is therefore interesting that it was film, with its American overtones, that was chosen to propagandize against emigration to America. At the same time, part of the work of the National Society Against Emigration was aimed at showing that Sweden was just as modern and progressive as the US, and because filmmakers were still to some extent experimenting with the ways in which film could be used, this can be seen as an early attempt to use film for propaganda and information. Film was a popular entertainment medium, and it was possible to use it to reach an audience in a different way than was possible with traditional information channels.

By this point, film was already being used as a teaching medium for a form of nationwide education in the US, and it is likely that this made an impression on a number of organizations in Sweden. Lee Grieveson, amongst others, has found that, in order to facilitate the immigrants' acculturation to their new country, films were shown during the trans-Atlantic crossings that in some way dealt with American ideology. This was also discussed in the contemporary film press: 'Thanks to motion pictures, immigrants will have some knowledge of the ideals of the US even before they set foot on American soil.'[37] Marina Dahlquist has written about how these screenings continued once on land, and the fundamental aim of this work to 'promote better citizenship' was to bring about moral and social order: 'to turn immigrants, children, and women into patriotic and well-adjusted social subjects in line with the requirements of modern American society'.[38] It is possible that the very first movie productions in Sweden were designed to use film as a similar form of propaganda.

Emigranten, *Amuletten*, and other emigration films

In Swedish film, *Emigranten* by Robert Olsson was an early example of documentary footage being inserted into a staged narrative, or rather, of a type of mixture of feature film and documentary to form a type of bricolage which was very common in international film in the early twentieth century.[39] The film tells the story of a farming couple who are inspired by a newspaper advertisement to emigrate to America. They take the ferry from Gothenburg to Hull, in this case a real ship full of genuine emigrants. The scenes in Gothenburg were filmed in the so-called emigrant quarter around Postgatan, west of the main railway station. In the film, Hull stands in for New York or some other American city. The couple buy a portion of land which in the agent's photographs looks promising, but which in practice is as worthless as their strip of land back home in Sweden. Soon, disaster follows disaster, and just as quickly as they made the decision to leave Sweden, they decide to return. They are reunited with their relatives, gathered around the Swedish coffee table.[40]

The central message in the movie is that life in the US is not as easy as one might imagine, that the soil is not so fertile, and that in reality, one is being fooled by the agents. That things go badly in America is the theme of nearly all the early Swedish feature films which one way or another are concerned with emigration. In addition to this basic theme, *Emigranten* contains a series of significant motifs which deepen, reinforce, and expand on its fundamental message. This is at its plainest in how the emigrant couple is depicted. Even if parts of the original film are missing, their decision to emigrate appears very rash. Two short scenes show the farmer's work in the fields, and his frustration with their stony, unforgiving land. He and his wife need only to read the newspaper advertisement for them to decide to leave. They make the decision to return home to Sweden in a similarly ill-considered manner, and even though the movies of this period where not particularly marked by psychological depth or mental reflection, I believe the filmmakers consciously chose to present the leading figures' decisions as impetuous. This interpretation is strengthened, I think, by the way the couple are depicted and the way their clothes suggest vanity when compared to the real emigrants in the film. The difference in dress is a device to make the actors clearly stand out from the other people, but it also appears to have been a deliber-

Emigrants on the boat to America in *Emigranten*, 1910 (Swedish Film Institute Archive).

ate choice to represent those emigrating to America as superficial and somewhat foolish. In *När Maja-Lisa kom hem från Amerika*, mentioned earlier, the returning woman with her garish clothing is depicted as ostentatious and showy, and here in *Emigranten* the effect is to suggest that the couple has already metamorphosed to become American. The extravagant clothing worn on departure also has a narrative function: when they return, the couple's clothing is considerably simpler, since they no longer can afford to dress so well. This can also be interpreted as meaning that they have once again become Swedish—they wear the unpretentious garb of Swedishness.[41]

It is not just their clothing that indicates that the couple were not really hard up in Sweden, their home appears relatively prosperous too—considerably better off than the home we see later in the US. Given how their Swedish home is depicted, their decision to emigrate becomes incomprehensible, in the sense that it is not justified

by the narrative—but then, they are also presented as victims of an advertising campaign and immature in their ability to take decisions. In various ways, the emigrant couple are made objects of ridicule, for they are depicted in a way that prevents the intended cinema audience from identifying with them. At the same time, all of these factors can have contributed to the decision not to show the movie. Of course, just like Maja-Lisa, emigrants were also caricatured in pamphlets and elsewhere, but the movie may have been regarded as somewhat unethical because of the bricolage technique. Even though the fictional couple were distinguished from the true emigrants by their dress the deprecation could have been interpreted as applying to the real people as well.

Emigrants were often portrayed as gullible. In *Emigranten*, the American land agent is a con artist who sells worthless land. In his photographs, however, the land appears to be good, a slightly meta-filmic hint that pictures have the potential to deceive. With time, the idea that 'foreigners' were untrustworthy became a common xenophobic trope in Swedish film, and in *Emigranten* there is already a denigrating portrait of a stereotypical Jew. Both Tommy Gustafsson and Rochelle Wright have described and analysed the widespread appearance of Jewish stereotypes in Swedish film, as has Per Olov Qvist in a section of his wide-ranging book on Swedish film of the 1930s, but the appearance of this theme in *Emigranten* has not been remarked upon previously.[42] The trans-Atlantic shipping agent in Gothenburg is clearly meant to be Jewish—he has a large, hooked false nose which is not immediately apparent in the medium long-shot framing which characterizes the Kristianstad movies—and most of all, he performs the stereotypical gesture of eagerly rubbing his hands together when dealing with money (the 'money-rubbing gesture'), as is discussed by Rochelle Wright.[43] Lars M. Andersson has established that the Swedish audience was well versed in Jewish caricatures from sources other than film, especially comic series, and early Swedish movies could therefore adopt these codes without any problem.[44] By doing so, *Emigranten* lays some of the blame for the fact that Swedes were emigrating on the Jews: usurious, untrustworthy Jews are portrayed as one of the reasons why gullible emigrants actually depart for America, and as the ones who truly profit from emigration. Nothing similar seems to appear in the pamphlets published by the National Society Against Emigration, as has been dis-

cussed by the ethnologist Tom O'Dell, but the contemporary Swedish comic press often associated Jews with emigration.[45] It is, however, only in the social-democratic newspaper *Karbasen* ('The Birch Rod') that 'Jews are explicitly blamed for Swedes leaving their native country for America', and then because they are included in groups, including the ruthless capitalists, which are jointly to blame for the emigration.[46] As a film, *Emigranten* thus conformed to the strong anti-Semitic currents that Swedish society was awash with, and with both of its anti-emigration movies the rising film company Svenska Biografteatern laid the foundations of what would become several decades of on-screen denigration of the Jewish population of Sweden.

The other anti-emigration movie produced in Kristianstad, *Emigrant* aka *Amuletten*, directed by Gustaf 'Muck' Linden, is better made, and the characters do not act as precipitately. However, the characterization of America is even more negative, and the caricatures of the non-Swedes are considerably more accomplished and sensational. Viewing a Swedish film often brings a shocking insight into the degree of hostility to foreigners, tipping over into xenophobia, to be found in the Swedish mentality; and denigrating depictions can be found in movies even in our own time.[47] In *Amuletten*, the protagonist, Åke, has already decided to emigrate when the film begins, and we see him take leave of his mother and sister. In America he is lured into a bar by a group of Americans, where they slip him a Mickey Finn and then steal everything he owns except an amulet he was given by his mother. He succeeds in finding a short-term job in an office, but when he is dismissed everything goes downhill, and after attempting to pawn his amulet, he is reduced to begging and sleeping on park benches, and he finally falls ill and dies in a hospital. To be robbed after having been lured into a bar was a scenario which was depicted in several of the Swedish handbooks for emigrants, which I will discuss further in Chapter 5.

In both *Emigranten* and *Amuletten*, people are cheated in America, and if they do not return home, they die. In *Amuletten*, however, the emigrant's enemies are more numerous, and more ethnically and culturally heterogeneous, than in *Emigranten*. Åke is relatively short, and appears to be kind and meek. The other decent people in the movie are other Swedes, the police in the US, the Swedish American who helps Åke as an interpreter, and a helpful lady. With these few exceptions, the America of the film is populated by miscellaneous villains of a

multitude of ethnicities—and this last is presented as something wholly negative. The US as a nation was characterized by multiculturalism, the diametric opposite of the Swedish ideology, founded as it was in the idea of a monocultural society. At the bar into which Åke is lured, the people are playing cards, smoking, and drinking alcohol. They are shabbily dressed, unshaven, and wear their hats at jaunty angles. Women smoke and drink too, they also walk with an exaggerated swing of the hips—which marks them out as prostitutes—and they actively take part in robbing Åke. Perhaps the first ever character in blackface in Swedish film is, significantly, occupied drying the dishes. According to Tommy Gustafsson, blackface was highly unusual in Swedish silent movies, but this was probably its very first use.[48] The portrait which is the most disturbing, however, is a demeaning portrayal of a Jew, the pawnbroker to whom Åke tries to pawn his amulet.[49] It is not just that pawnbroking was a stereotypical occupation for a Jew, but also that his

The dangers of America in the movie *Amuletten*, 1910 (Swedish Film Institute Archive).

costume and make-up are tremendously exaggerated. The way ethnicity is handled in this anti-emigration film is therefore both explicit and clear: Americans are, with a few exceptions, rogues and bandits, black people are servants and bandits, and Jews are usurers. The ideology of Swedish nationalism is a constant presence. Because America is not populated with Swedes, but rather with villains, bandits, Jews, and black people, things go badly for Swedes there. This message was repeated in a number of films in the following years.

There was another film produced which concentrated on the theme of emigration, namely *Två svenska emigranters äfventyr i Amerika* ('The Adventures of Two Swedish Emigrants in America', Eric Malmberg 1912). It was made with the explicit aim of trying to prevent emigration.

The film was shown in cinemas and apparently was well received by the public and critics, but unfortunately it has been lost in its entirety.[50] It is about two siblings who make their way to the US independently of each other. The sister falls prey to conmen, and at one point ends up fighting one of them on top of a skyscraper in a sort anticipatory *King Kong* scene. She manages to push the man over the railing and flees to a church, where she is rescued by her brother, who has become a priest. The siblings realize they do not want to stay in America, so they return home. The film ends according to the programme as follows: 'And when the dear blue and yellow standard is raised and slowly flutters in the mild breeze of summer, then Sven doffs his hat, his emotions bursting out in a "Long live dear old Sweden!" ' This apparently met with an immediate response in cinemas, for according to *Svensk Filmografi 1*, an advertisement mentioned the audience's cheers when the emigrants returned to Sweden: 'And there have been people who have attended these showings every evening, and participated rapturously in the applause when the emigrants return and hoist the Swedish flag above their dear old home!'[51] All good Swedish emigrants would turn their backs on wicked America and return home—this was the narrative point in almost all the Swedish films about emigration or Swedish Americans until the late 1930s.

The reception in the press was generally positive. The critics saw through the partisan message, remarking on the overt nationalism and willingness to malign America, the tendency to 'glorify their own little patch of turf in Sweden at the expense of the vast country to the west, which of course is vilified as much as is possible.'[52] The adventure turned

out to be so awful that it was understandable that the characters might become sentimental and homesick, wrote the critic, adding that that was exactly the way the audience wanted it. Overall, however, the critic was full of admiration for the film, writing that it was among the best ever made and that it would be good to see Swedish film maintain this high standard. Likewise, *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* felt the plot was good, and *Skånska Dagbladet* seems to have embraced the message of the film, announcing that 'The whole thing is as instructive as it is entertaining'.[53]

Other films from the 1910s and the few from the 1920s that deal with emigration, American, or Swedish Americans are less interested in emigration per se than what is happening in America, and it was often the case that emigration was used as a traditional melodramatic construct. Between them, the three films I have discussed thus far all present the same conclusion, one that is also found in the other ten films that concern me here: it is best is to return to Sweden as quickly as possible, otherwise there is an imminent risk of death or a life of crime.

Naturally, there were a few exceptions. There is the still extant film *Storstadsfaror* ('Perils of the Big City', Manne Göthson, 1918), in which a young man goes to America and at the end of the film returns to Sweden, rich; however, while this was one of very few films made in the 1910s to show America in a positive light, it is also significant that his was only a supporting role. Of the few Twenties' films to even mention America, only one has a happy ending, namely *Boman på utställningen* ('Boman at the Exhibition', Karin Swanström, 1923). Frans Lundberg's films, which were mostly Swedish–Danish co-productions, were very different from the Swedish films discussed here.[54] Their action rarely takes place in settings with a strong Swedish characterization, which is perhaps why the stories were not as negative about America. In two films from his production company from 1912, *Guldgossen* ('The Golden Boy') and *Broder och syster* ('Brother and Sister') people are often driven to flee to America having committed petty crimes, but having made their fortune they return to Sweden.

For the most part, Swedish movies from the 1910s display an anti-American attitude. This changed a little during the 1920s. Emigration was no longer the central focus, and no longer was it a given that a terrible fate awaited the emigrant who did not immediately return to his homeland. However, just as in the movies of the 1910s, one recurrent motif is how criminals move to the US in order to avoid an unpleasant

fate in Sweden. This is such a common narrative theme that it deserves to be discussed in more detail.

The criminal emigrant

In the movies discussed so far, the emigrants were above all shown seeking a better life in America. Even though the emigrants in these films do not appear to be driven by need or hunger, but instead make hasty decisions based upon superficial, if tempting, descriptions, nevertheless, according to the constructed world of values in the movies, they are patently honourable Swedes who do best when they return to Sweden, and do not stay in the ethnically variegated, all too modern, and generally dangerous land off to the West. However, by far the most common reason why movie characters from the 1910s and 1920s leave Sweden is that they are in some way criminally or morally compromised—this is true of the majority of the movies, and it continued to surface in movies made in later decades. America became the continent to flee to, and the US as a nation thus acquired the stamp of immorality. The reasons for emigrating that were given in the earliest films—poverty, hard times, bad harvests—are morphed through Swedish film's endless rehearsing of the emigration problem into the idea that those who left Sweden were criminal, or morally suspect in some way or another. Naturally, characters in these films also have other reasons for emigrating—they are unhappy in love, or trying to dodge being conscripted into the army—but some form of criminality is the most common. In a never distributed movie *Opiumhålan* ('The Opium Den') from 1911 (Eric Malmberg) a ruined man finds his final refuge in the US, where he is drawn into the opium dens of New York. The man does not seem to be a criminal, but on the other hand he is morally compromised to a degree (opium was forbidden by the International Opium Convention of 1912, to which Sweden was not a signatory, but the US was).[55] Frans Lundbergs's *Guldgossen* ('The Golden Boy') of 1912 is about the son of shoemaker, who has extravagant tastes and pawns his father's household goods and runs away to America. In the US the young man's luck changes; he discovers an oil well and returns to Sweden a wealthy man, where he begs everyone he has injured for forgiveness. According to conventions of the day in Swedish film, he cannot remain in the US because he has been successful.

Something similar happens in *Broder och syster*. Work in America reforms the young good-for-nothing's character, and he returns home. In *Samhällets dom* ('Society's Verdict', Eric Malmberg, 1912) a man travels to the US to start a new life after having been entangled in embezzlement, more or less forced upon him at his wife's morally suspect insistence. When the regretful wife eventually tries to contact him again, he has died. Much the same storyline appears in other films: *Rannsakningsdomaren* ('The Investigating Magistrate', Frans Lundberg, 1912), *Vampyren* ('The Vampire', Mauritz Stiller, 1913), and *Nattens barn* ('Children of the Night', Georg af Klercker, 1916), which, however, have characters with English-sounding names. In *Luffar-Petter* ('Petter the Tramp', Erik Petschler, 1922), the tramp, who is not regarded as an entirely trustworthy person, has a past life in the US, and in *Hälsingar* ('The People of Hälsingland', William Larsson, 1923; 'The People of Hälsingland', Ivar Johansson, 1933) one of the main characters flees to America after having made a woman pregnant. In *För hemmet och flickan* ('For Home and Girl', William Larsson, 1925), which in the filmographies is called a boxing film, and which stars the first great boxing idol Harry Persson in the role of Harry Boman, a woman called Gerd falls in love with Charlie, a man who has 'newly returned from the US where he had won both gold and honour as a boxer', and follows him back over the Atlantic.[56] Once they arrive in America he turns out to be a swindler who is continually unfaithful. Harry comes to Gerd's rescue. He wins a boxing match against Charlie, and Gerd returns with him to Sweden, while the ruffian Charlie remains in the US.

Why are these criminal and moral motifs so prominent in Swedish films about emigration? One reason is that flight was a genuine reason to emigrate—or, rather, it was the case that official bodies, mostly the local authorities, encouraged people with criminal records to leave for America, and sometimes even paid for their journey.[57] This was common in certain other areas of Europe—in Britain and Italy, and particularly in Switzerland, where emigration was used 'to get rid of not just the poor, but also invalids, and the sick, aged and criminal'.[58] In reality, this was not, of course, the most common reason to emigrate, but in Swedish film this became the most prominent, not least because of its dramatic, narrative value. Literature too held up criminality as a reason to emigrate, and even earlier than film at that.[59]

It would also be possible to interpret the way this subject was treated

in Swedish film as a fear of collaborating with anti-emigration forces, but it is unlikely that the reasons lay at this political or ideological level. According to Lars Wendelius, in the literature of the 1910s which touched upon the subject of America and Swedish Americans it was very usual to concentrate on material considerations—economic matters and social injustice—but in Swedish film this only became important when movies began to be concerned with returning or visiting Swedish Americans, most of all during the 1930s.[60] Movies with a social pathos and an understanding of why the less well off emigrated to the US are conspicuous by their absence. Perhaps it is asking too much of the early Swedish movies that they should have treated emigration in this way, but there are movies which displayed social consciousness in other matters. However, early Swedish film served the purposes of anti-emigration, and broadly speaking was consciously allied with the dominant bourgeois, anti-emigration ethos.

As already noted, the representation of Swedish Americans in Swedish film was inconsistent, as was the image presented of the US. The idea of the US as a sort of dumping ground that should take anyone who was not wanted in Sweden flies in the face of the idea of the US as a place of education and discipline. For those with a criminal record, a sojourn in the US might mean that they become a better person, and people could be sent to America in order to acquire discipline and maturity. In the Swedish discourse, the US was viewed as somewhat backward, culturally and spiritually, and so it was appropriate to send uncivilized people there.[61] It is probable that this last was also the reason why it was rare for the upper classes to be sent to America in Swedish films, and instead they travelled to that country which was regarded as being culturally and spiritually superior, namely France.

However, in *Patriks äventyr* ('Patrik's Adventure', Arvid Englind, 1915) the eponymous upper-class ne'er-do-well behaves so badly that his enraged father sends him to America, albeit with a large sum of money in his pocket. He is not permitted to return for three years. Since he does not improve himself in the slightest, he returns incognito, disguised as a 'negro servant'. After various complications, his parents are finally 'moved by their reunion, and forgive him'.[62]

In *Boman på utställningen*, Johan, the son of a country gentleman, is sent to Paris to forget his love for Karin, who his family regard as common. Karin has borne his child out of wedlock, and after an

adoption is negotiated for the child, she is ordered away to America. In the movie, Johan sits in his smoking jacket in a tasteful room in Paris, composing letters at an elegant writing desk. When he returns home to Sweden, his mother tells him that she has sent Karin away to the US because she was not worthy of him. Johan seeks out Karin in America, earns a large amount of money, and the couple return home and look for their child.

Of course, one reason why it was not so usual to portray upper-class emigrants in Swedish film was partly because so few emigrants were drawn from the upper classes. Discouraging what passed for the Swedish gentry from emigrating was a recurrent theme in the emigration debates, and, according to Wendelius, the same theme is also found in early writing about America.[63] Because members of the upper classes were not used to hard physical labour, it was thought they were not suited to the US, and emigrants from the upper classes were regarded as shady characters. *Patriks äventyr* fits in well with this discourse. Martin Alm writes that educated people were thought to feel out of place in the US because the ideal there was to earn money—productivity was the only important thing—and the educated had other interests.[64]

A criminal or an otherwise morally suspect person could escape or be sent to the US, which became in some sense a place of asylum, somewhere they had the chance to better themselves, as in *Broder och syster* and *Hälsingar*. In the latter film, the man who had made a woman pregnant in Sweden returns 'mature and full of homesickness', having worked hard and saved money.[65] This view of America as a way out is a persistent theme which recurs in many movies. In *Som en tjuv om natten* ('As a Thief in the Night', Börje Larsson and Ragnar Arvedsson, 1940) Sture Lagerwall's criminal has escaped from Långholmen Prison. In *Brödernas kvinna* ('The Brothers' Woman', Gösta Cederlund, 1943) one of the brothers sees the US as a way out when he cannot have the woman he loves, his brother's wife, and in *Folket i Simlångsdalen* ('The People of Simlång Valley', Åke Ohberg, 1948) a pair of lovers consider emigrating to America when the woman's father refuses to bless their marriage because of his class prejudice. In the movies of the 1910s, by far the most common reason for someone to emigrate was that he was a criminal, and the criminals show up again as returning Swedish Americans, particularly in movies from the 1930s and 1940s. In later movies, from around the mid–1940s onwards, a journey to

the US takes on entirely new meanings, yet the idea that criminals of various nationalities have often fled to the US lived on in the film *Jens Månsson i Amerika* (*Jens Mansson in America/Jens Mons in America*, Bengt Janzon, 1947) in which Jens, played by Edvard Persson, says: 'Over the years, it's the crooks who've been shipped here.' Similarly, the American film critic Martha P. Nochimson points out that having protagonists who are immigrants has always been a starting-point for the American gangster movie.[66]

In the years up to 1947, when *Jens Månsson i Amerika* had its premiere, most movies which in some way were about America or about Swedish Americans in Sweden were filmed with only short glimpses of America itself, and these glimpses rarely, if ever, gave a flattering picture of America. One example is *Som en tjuv om natten* from 1940, which makes the San Francisco inhabited by the main character into a negative stereotype that is taken to represent the whole of the US: a seedy bar, drunk men, smoke, and a besequinned woman playing 'Swanee River' on the piano. Not until *Jens Månsson i Amerika* is the action really set on the other side of the Atlantic; indeed, nearly the whole film takes place in the US. This movie marked the changeover of location from the Swedish nation to the American, with everything that implied for an ideological turnaround.

Good emigrants in documentaries

Two documentaries from the 1920s, the English-language *Svenskarna i Amerika* ('The Swedes in America', 1923) and *Bland landsmän i Amerika* ('Among our Countrymen in America', Carl Halling, 1924) were both entirely filmed in the US, and the view they give of the emigrants is thoroughly positive. They pay fulsome tribute to Swedes who have emigrated in a manner not seen in feature films until the 1940s, and which did not really take off in documentaries until the 1940s, come to that. Both of these films are thus unusual in this respect, and they represent the inconsistency which has been a permanent characteristic of the representation of emigration and Swedish Americans in Swedish film.

Svenskarna i Amerika is a film diary from 1923 which shows the annual meeting in Gothenburg of the Royal Society for Swedish Culture Abroad, photographs from its activities, and some sequences filmed in Chicago.[67] Taken together, it is a flourishing US which appears here,

with nothing dilapidated or dingy, and a relatively large proportion of the movie is devoted to views of Chicago, with its skyscrapers, imposing buildings, and elevated railway. We see construction sites, bustling streets, impressive panoramas of the city, and an enormous meeting in a stadium with crowds of people and a Swede who is campaigning for the vice-governorship; we see people who are strangely dressed in a combination of Viking helmets and sub-classical garb, dancing around another individual dressed as a Viking, and there is a glorious mixture of Swedish and American flags (I will discuss the emphasis on the Vikings in more detail later). It seems that these were intended as positive images. What is stressed is the metropolis, modernity, and advanced technology, as well as the ways in which Swedes were preserving their old culture and history.

Bland landsmän i Amerika is more distinct and explicit. It was produced by a specially formed company, Atlasfilm, and was distributed by Svenska Filmindustri (SF), the dominant cinema, distribution, and production company in Sweden, having been included in SF's selection of films for showing in schools.[68] According to its entry in *Svensk Filmografi*, the film shown in cinemas was 94 minutes long, of which 67 minutes survive. The movie glorifies Swedes in the US to a marked degree, but this should not be thought unusual—other countries did the same in their documentaries. Nevertheless, the film also indicates its attitude to all things American by using the deprecating term 'Yankee land' for America—'A depiction in film of a summer's ramble through the Swedish heart of Yankee land'[69]—before it launches into its flattering depiction of Swedish Americans and the Swedish influence on the US. The movie shows us places where the Swedish opera singer Jenny Lind had performed, a statue to the inventor John Ericsson—'the greatest of Swedish Americans'—and, of course, several people from Minnesota who had been engaged in politics (it is said of one of them that he could have become the union's first Swedish-born president, had he not died young), and some who had left their mark on the architecture of Minneapolis. The Scandinavian politicians who are shown here are so numerous, and are praised so eloquently in the intertitles, that there is a general impression that the entire US is run by Swedes or other Scandinavians. However, Swedes were not as numerous as this film implies: in 1930 there were 1.5 million Swedish Americans in the US, making up 1.3 per cent of the population.[70] The

unconcealed Swedish chauvinism continues throughout the film: a bascule bridge in Chicago was built by Swedish engineers, and the city's construction industry in general is dominated by Swedes because they are 'much valued by building contractors'; Leif Eriksson's statue stands in Boston; the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia is supposed to have come about thanks to a deciding vote by a delegate originally from Uppland (Swedish Americans are here seen being influential as early as 1776); world-famous calculating machines are produced by a wealthy Swede in Rockford; and in Minnesota and Illinois there are 'brave countrymen who through bloody struggle and peaceful diligence have converted the prairie into productive farmland'.[71]

The biologistic, racist thinking is plain, and serves the purpose of further stressing the superiority of the Swedes. The Governor's ministers are 'of old Nordic yeoman stock', a senator in Illinois is half-Swedish, half-Norwegian—'in other words, of noble race'—and the only quote from one of the oldest pioneer settlers in Minneapolis is 'you had to always keep an eye on that Indian rabble'. The racist depiction of Jews recurs here too. When the film shows images of Chicago, where the Swedes had mostly settled in Lakewood in the north of the city, there are also scenes from the southern areas occupied by marginalized groups. The voiceover then says: 'Fortunately, there are no Swedes living on the South Side, but the same isn't true of negroes and Jewish peddlers', and images are shown of a Chicago that is nothing like as prosperous as it is in the rest of the film: a small, run-down street with a multitude of market stalls; no beautiful buildings, grand avenues, or modern communications. However, is it not possible to identify any people who are supposed to be Jewish. As Tommy Gustafsson writes in his analysis of the movie, such identifications become impossible because the stylistic cues offered by the fiction films are no longer available in documentaries.[72] Instead, the intertitles are used to depict the Jewish population in a conventionally denigrating manner: 'On the South Side we find David and Moses doing a brisk trade in used toothbrushes and other choice rarities.'[73]

In this way there is a boundary placed between Swedish immigrants and other ethnicities in the US. In *Bland landsmän i Amerika*, even emigrants still count as Swedish, the risk otherwise being that if they had not been characterized as fully Swedish because they had left the country, it would suggest that they had become like the 'Other'. The

America on display is a white America, and all that is Swedish is promoted to such a degree that the movie almost resembles an invocation. To some extent, it seems to be trying to render the US harmless, and to make it appear as similar to Sweden as possible. From this perspective it is difficult to interpret it as being a particularly pro-American film. With its monoculturalism and emphasis on the superiority of particular ethnicities, despite making a show of Swedish successes in the US, the film conforms to the nationalist discourse that characterized feature films at the time. It is also striking that the successful Swedes are only drawn from the upper class and the bourgeoisie—no successful workers or domestic servants figure in the movie.

By this time, attitudes to America had undergone a sea change. The bourgeoisie had become more positive towards the US, and their once negative attitudes had instead been adopted by the working class, who earlier had stressed the new country's democratic advantages.[74] This change is reflected in newspaper reviews of the film. Most critics talked about how *Bland landsmän i Amerika* showed the true picture of Swedish American life. All the newspapers, even those which were critical of how Swedish Americans were depicted, enthused about the movie's formal aspects, and especially Carl Halling's cinematography. *Svenska Dagbladet*, *Arbetet*, *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*, and *Stockholms Dagblad* were all positive about the movie in the main.[75] However, the review in *Arbetet* is a very short one, and finds the film interesting mostly because of the chance of catching sight of an acquaintance. *Stockholms Dagblad* had reservations because the sequences were too monotonous and mostly show churches and schools. The criticism from the left was sharper. The reviewers in *Arbetaren* and *Folkets Dagblad* thought that the movie's depiction of how Swedish Americans lived in the US was misleading.[76] The *Folkets Dagblad* reviewer adopted an attitude to the US that was typical of the left at the time, writing that there were certainly more who had failed in the US than had succeeded: 'The thousands upon thousands of Sweden's working sons and daughters who sink below the surface in the struggle for existence in that archetypical capitalist country, America—of them we don't get so much as a glimpse. And that despite their being in the majority.'[77] *Arbetaren* took a similar line, emphasizing that because the movie does not show the true situation of emigrants—'One is given no idea of the Swedes' America'—the film was unusable as propaganda against emigration.[78]

Even though 'Among countrymen in America' was almost unique in being the only film with a wholly positive attitude to emigration and to Swedish Americans in the US, it is also an example of how Swedish films since 1910 tended to espouse bourgeois attitudes, at least as far as emigration from Sweden was concerned. Although that bourgeois ideology shifted towards a more favourable view of the US, the film's reception in Sweden makes it clear that the most left-leaning politicians had begun to identify the US as a capitalist nation. The movie only showed emigrants who had been highly successful in economic terms, and entirely ignored all who had succeeded in the sense that they were living a good life in their own home and with food on the table.

The final great wave of emigration occurred in 1923, and the emigrant as a clearly defined motif in Swedish feature films began to fade away, at least for a couple of decades. In my opinion, the first film to treat emigration as a historical phenomenon was *Flickan från fjällbyn* ('The Girl from the Mountain Village', Anders Henriksson, 1948). Although it was set at the turn of the century, crop failure and poor harvests were given as the reasons for emigrating from the Norrland village where it was set. This was essentially a 1948 version of Moberg's Emigrants series, a view supported by the fact that the book by Bernhard Nordh on which the film is based was published as early as 1938. Vilhelm Moberg's novels were the first to become an unreserved success among the Swedish population as a whole, a phenomenon which the literary critic Jens Liljestrand has called attention to, but here, with *Flickan från fjällbyn*, we have an example of a novel and its film dramatization which to a large extent follow the same storyline as Moberg.[79] The film takes a dim view of emigration, even if its message was not unequivocal. It shows those who chose to emigrate as leaving awful lives behind them, and did not ridicule or disparage them for it. Nevertheless, the behaviour and attitudes of the main character, Erik, ensure that the film adopted a stance that was critical of emigration. While most of the other villagers leave, Erik remains behind because he is convinced that one should never abandon one's land, even if it is not always profitable—a clear allegory of the nation. Per Olov Qvist has called the movie's emphasis on Erik's principled stance a form of social Darwinism: 'only the strong survive … The weak abandon the land, lured by more easily won happiness in America.[80] Other movies from the same time period as *Flickan från fjällbyn* that touch

on the US or Swedish Americans were far more positive in approach; however, they did not address nineteenth-century emigration, and it may be that general views on emigration remained negative—the emigrants were not entirely forgiven.

No films were made that stressed social injustice and its importance in relation to emigration. Vilhelm Moberg's books, and indeed the films Jan Troell based on them, focus entirely on the famine-driven emigrations that took place during the 1860s and 1870s. Yet while it was true that the largest numbers emigrated then, the subsequent waves of emigration, when people often chose to leave for other reasons, were far from insignificant. There were exceptions to the concentration on famine-driven emigration, but only vague reasons were given for why people left Sweden, with it being put down to a general desire to leave.[81]

Various kinds of television programme have also addressed the same isolated periods of history found in Troell's films. In 1963 a programme called *Utvandringstider* ('A Time of Emigration') was made for schools as part of a series on nineteenth-century Sweden. The programme went into a great deal of detail, but followed a similar storyline, albeit this time through the eyes of a young boy who is waiting for a ticket to America to be sent by his father, who has already emigrated. The programme also featured a young woman who got a job as a maid in New York, and thus did differ from the usual stories of emigrants who ended up in Minnesota, but the ideological and political conflicts that were such an important reason why people emigrated were not so much as mentioned. In 1979, Lasse Holmqvist made a television series called *På luffen i svenska Amerika* ('On the Road in Swedish America'), which had a sequel in 1982 called *På luffen igen i svenska America* ('On the Road Again in Swedish America'). The series mostly consisted of interviews with emigrants, who told the stories of their lives in America. A two-part television series, *Den stora utvandringen* ('The Great Emigration') was made in 1971, in which the emigration historian Lars Ljungmark described in detail the phases of the various emigrations. The programme showed great insight, but in form was close to an academic lecture, which perhaps did not appeal that much to a wider audience.

However, it is interesting that so many films and television programmes about emigration appeared in the 1970s. It is intriguing to consider why. It is possible that the television programmes were made

at least in part because it was realized that first generation emigrants were dying out, and something had to be done to record their stories before it was too late. In the early 1970s there was a large research project on Swedish emigration, and that may also have increased the general level of interest, even if the research did not directly influence the programmes' content. In the depictions of visiting or returning Swedish Americans to be found in films from the 1930s and 1940s, none had emigrated before the start of the twentieth century—most of them much later, in fact—and emigration to escape famine was not a factor in their choices. By this time, other constructs had begun to signify Swedishness, contributing to the construction of welfare state.

CHAPTER 3

Celebrating Swedishness

Representing the Swedish American

Swedish American returnees

As early as the end of the 1870s, Swedish emigrants had begun to make return visits to their native land. It was the successful Swedish Americans who returned, many of them having spent the majority of their time in the city of Chicago. The former head of the Swedish Emigration Institute, Ulf Beijbom, describes them arriving to meet their families in Sweden, with fine clothes, gold watches, and the manner of people familiar with the wider world, and the vision of them duly served to inspire yet more to leave.[1] For a long time, the only Swedish Americans who were seen in Sweden were those who had achieved success, and they seldom had any intention of remaining in their old homeland. Of those who emigrated before 1900, only 6 per cent returned on a permanent basis, although after that date the numbers rose markedly and for a couple of decades from the end of the First World War onwards more than one in five emigrants returned for good.[2] Not until 1930 were there more returnees than emigrants. This was presented in the newspapers as a national triumph.[3]

The America-bound Swedes of the last decades of emigration were a kind of economic migrant—they planned to remain in the US for only a few years in order to earn money before then returning home. According to Ulf Beijbom, it was most often men who travelled to the US to work and earn money. When they returned, it was often to their 'agriculture-dominated home parishes'.[4] It is such people who we mostly see as visitors or returnees in Swedish films of the 1930s and 1940s, but there were others. For a while, women made up the majority of emigrants, and a number of them also figured in Swedish films, which I will discuss in detail later. Entire families still emigrated

in the period after 1900, and even individual children, who left with no plan of returning. There is not a single example of a returning or visiting family in a Swedish movie, with the exception of childless married couples. Of course, this can partly be explained by the fact that emigration to find work, which seldom involved whole families, was extensive in the 1920s—it was a phenomenon many would be familiar with, and mainstream films prefer to depict the well known—but I believe that it might also reflect the sense in which family was valued as being something very 'Swedish', and definitely not as something 'Swedish American'. There are certainly many examples in the movies of Swedish Americans who have been construed afterwards as having more of the ostensibly Swedish character traits than the so-called 'home Swedes', but at the time they were not regarded as being more Swedish than the Swedes. In fact, the Swedish American in Swedish feature films nearly always *defied* the norm in some way, whether this was thought something positive or negative. After their return, the Swedish Americans depicted in Swedish film had to earn the right to resume their 'legitimate' citizenship.

The result was that it was mostly urbanized Swedish Americans who visited or returned to live in Sweden in the twentieth century, the majority of whom had worked and lived in large cities, most often Chicago. Both in reality and in the movies, they returned to their roots in the countryside. Swedish film in the 1930s often idealized rural areas, and the urban experience of Swedish Americans was not always much valued in the movies (at this point, both Herman Lundborg and the National Society Against Emigration's foremost advocate, Adrian Molin, had little time for city-dwellers).[5] Only a few films with Swedish American characters were set in a city, and even then the place was distinctly rural in tone, such as Söder in Stockholm. Overwhelmingly, returning emigrants turned up most often in comedies, but then it was also true that comedies were the most popular type of film made in Sweden in the 1930s.[6]

Swedish Americans came to Sweden dressed in fine new clothes, sometimes behaving a bit differently, and with a new outlook. Beijbom writes in one of his many books about Swedish American emigration that 'a series of ideas and innovations in agriculture and small-scale industry can be credited to the "Swedish Americans" ', and subsequent research has treated this in more detail.[7] The emigrants had in various ways become Americanized—a term that was first used to describe

a phenomenon at the level of the individual emigrant. One became Americanized by dint of taking on the habits and lifestyle of the new country.[8] The visitors, with their tales of 'furs and money', certainly influenced the stereotypical image of Swedish Americans which then appeared in literature and in the movies. The image recurred in several genres and in many different variations; the tales were founded on true events and experiences, but came 'through their repetition, their cross-references, and by confirming one another's existence … to frame the manner in which America was perceived as the Other'.[9] Swedish Americans were on the verge of being mythologized at times, and it was increasingly assumed that it was possible to tell who had been to America simply by looking at their clothes. In 1908, *Kvartalsbladet*, the journal of the National Society Against Emigration, stated that 'You here at home have surely had cause to notice the Swedish Americans—the women with veils and silks, the men with grey, serious faces, hair cut round at the nape of the neck, with their double collars and coloured shirts, all wrapped up in a long mackintosh, ending in a pair of wide American shoes.'[10] Such a fascinating phenomenon naturally became a regular character in books, comic series, and films.

Lars Wendelius in his thesis gives an overview of how Swedish Americans were portrayed in Swedish literature between 1890 and 1914.[11] In contrast to the movies, upper-class emigrants were relatively common in literature, but visiting or returning Swedish Americans would become even more popular. The first of these appeared as early as the mid nineteenth century, the Swedish American being depicted then, and for several decades thereafter, as a serious person, and 'as a bearer of progressive and radical ideas on various subjects'.[12] The visitors were regarded as embodying a free, enlightened way of thinking and relaxed relations between the sexes, and they were quick to take a dig at aristocratic and monarchist attitudes in Sweden. With time, the character type became ever more comical, vain, and ostentatious, and once into the twentieth century, somewhat shady and unprincipled. Decent Swedish Americans were not entirely absent from the literature of the period, of course, but, according to Wendelius, they became increasingly typecast and clearly Americanized. Birgitta Steene advances the hypothesis that because the American literary character of the Yankee appeared so often in popular narratives, it became common to draw and characterize him in a humorous way;[13] by the same token,

the mythologized image of the returning Swedish American survived far into the 1940s, and people continued to tell fantastic tales of returnees of turning up with things like Cadillacs in their luggage. It is Steene's opinion that Swedish Americans on the silver screen often turn up in the role of helpers, just in time to save their village from economic collapse, but this is only a very small part of the truth.[14] True, there were a couple of films of this type, but others were more common. H. Arnold Barton writes in *A Folk Divided* that Swedish Americans in films, books, and comics were long characterized as pompous and self-absorbed; however, this too does not bear scrutiny, at least not as far as film is concerned. Swedish Americans were portrayed in an inconsistent way in Swedish films, and they fulfilled a number of different roles. All the movies from the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s are marked by a fundamental sense of Swedishness, an ideology that was to be protected from American influences at all costs. Such narratives often positioned Swedish Americans as defenders of all things Swedish, rather than all things American as one might expect. Those issues and characteristics which were often associated with emigrants and returnees, such as money, technical modernization, and American influence, were often taken up, but in fact the boastful, swaggering, self-important Swedish American does not appear particularly often in Swedish feature films. In this chapter I will give as comprehensive picture as possible of the shifting roles apportioned to the Swedish Americans.

One stock character who often appeared in narratives concerning emigrants in Swedish silent movies was the criminal who had fled to America to avoid his punishment, or to begin a new life after serving his sentence. Criminals and swindlers did not in reality make up a particularly large proportion of emigrants; they were more common on screen, where for the most part they were portrayed in a way designed to discredit the US and emigration. The motif became increasingly uncommon, but can still be found in a few films from the 1930s onwards.

The actor Edvard Persson was a central figure, both in movies concerning Swedish Americans, and movies that were shown to Swedish Americans. In the movie *Våran pojke* ('Our Boy', Arne Bornebusch, 1936) his character does everything possible to oppose the returnee Charlie Swenson, who disappeared to America after making a women pregnant and stealing both money and identity documents. Per Olov Qvist asserts that Charlie has acquired a 'foreign, American way of

thinking'.[15] He is bullying, boastful, and mendacious, all of which were coded as American. At the end of the film, Edvard allows Charlie to sneak away: according to the logic of the film, such an 'evil' Swedish American cannot be allowed to remain in Sweden.

Criminals also appear in *Livet på en pinne* ('Living in Clover', Weyler Hildebrand, 1942) and in the Nils Poppe film *Tappa inte sugen* ('Don't Lose Heart', Lars-Eric Kjellgren, 1947). In both, the roles are almost caricatures, but it is telling that the hardened criminals who appear in *Livet på en pinne* had a background as American emigrants, even though the film does poke fun at a whole series of preconceptions about America. After that, it was a long while before another Swedish American criminal turned up in a Swedish feature film—indeed, we have to jump to the 1970s, at which point the said criminal embodies to the anti-American stance of both the director and the period.

Stereotypical signs of Americanization

'It appears as if the adjective "American" uniquely at this time [in the 1900s] could signify an exaggerated, fantasizing mendaciousness', writes Lars Wendelius, and indeed, Swedish stories that were called 'American' were invariably like that.[16] Of course, American untruthfulness appears in movies too, mostly among Swedish Americans of a criminal bent. Both Wendelius and Steene write that the stereotypical image of Swedish Americans as boastful, stuck-up, and unconventional later became commonplace in literature. 'An exaggerated self-image became the most important feature in the Swedish portrayal of the emigrant', writes Steene, and this trait was personified in the stock character Mr Swanson, who turned up in comics, the popular press, and literature, and in a few instances gave his name to films too.[17]

As we have seen above, Swedish Americans were thought to stand out because of the way they dressed, something also seen in contemporary reports and fiction. The historian Magnus Persson discusses in his thesis how the returnees' appearance differed from those who had remained in Sweden.[18] Returnees retained their distinctive clothing for several years after returning home, and some also built their houses in a different style. This sort of Swedish American also occurs in Swedish feature films, even if the type is not so common as warrants calling it dominant. When it comes to clothes, the exaggerated 'Yankee style'

was in fact almost exclusively reserved for Swedish American women. Sometimes the Swedish American man appeared wearing black, thick-rimmed glasses, a form of ironic distinguishing mark which differentiated him from the Swedish characters, and in a few isolated cases he was given an Americanized outfit, for example a checked shirt with a bolo tie instead of a normal necktie, as in *I mörkaste Småland* ('In Darkest Småland', Schamyl Bauman, 1943) or somewhat ostentatious clothes with white shoes as in *Bergslagsfolk* ('The People of Bergslagen', Gunnar Olsson, 1937).

Very few returnees or visitors speak with an American accent, perhaps for the prosaic reason that it was thought too difficult for most actors to carry off. In *Landstormens lilla Lotta* ('The Home Guard's Little Lotta', Weyler Hildebrand, 1939) the Swedish American has a distinctively bleating American accent, but this was a comedy that poked fun at many of the notions about Swedish Americans. Only one film has a character with a consistent but not exaggerated accent—the returnee played by Bengt Djurberg in *Ebberöds bank* ('The Ebberöd Bank', Sigurd Wallén, 1935). In *Stiliga Augusta* ('Handsome Augusta', Elof Ahrle, 1946) Åke Grönberg's character, 'The Yank' ('Jänken'), speaks just a few words of English at the start, and often says 'Yeah, yeah', while another small sign of his Americanization is that he perpetually chews gum. Neither of these movies uses an accent to indicate that a person has been Americanized or has abandoned his Swedishness.

In the popular mind, chewing gum has been coded as American since the end of the Second World War, and there are other details that were connected to American traits: when Åke, played by Karl-Arne Holmsten, returns from America incognito in the movie *Hotell Kåkbrinken* ('Kåkbrinken Hotel', Schamyl Bauman, 1946) he wears dark glasses and speaks English. Sunglasses were widely used among American silent movie actors, and it was generally assumed that this was because they did not wish to be recognized. The truth was rather that they had red eyes as a result of exposure to extremely harsh studio lights, but sunglasses have continued to be regarded as an actorly attribute, a double bluff to both conceal and proclaim one's fame, and it appears that they were used in movies with this purpose in mind. Sunglasses were also used as a modern American attribute in the movie *Älskling, jag ger mig* ('Darling, I Surrender', Gustaf Molander, 1943). Another prop that was meant to be read as American was the special cigarettes

that turn up in *Våran pojke*. In this film, Edvard Persson's character also buys clothes by mail order: mail-order sales were a novelty that had originated in the US, and the clothes Edvard orders are a further indication of his Americanness.[19] As it says in a newspaper advertisement for the AB Färdiga Kläder ready-to-wear clothing company: 'Modern fashions at low prices! American style!' This film therefore demonstrated in various ways the American influence on Swedish society, especially when it came to consumer goods.

In several films, some or all of the narrative is based upon a comparison of Swedish and American characteristics, a comparison that always takes the form of a caricature. The films seem not to have intended to blacken or discredit returning emigrants, but rather set out to debate prejudices about what was American and what Swedish. Likewise, reworkings of general preconceptions for the purposes of comedy always include a significant kernel of truth, and, when it came down to it, all things Swedish were defended while the visitors from the other side of the Atlantic were ridiculed.

In the film *Tjocka släkten* (*Close Relations*, Sölve Cederstrand, 1935), Edvard Person personified the values that were regarded as signifying down-to-earth, ordinary Swedishness, a characterization he adopted in nearly all his films. Here, Swedishness was contrasted to what was construed as the vanity, tastelessness, and stupidity of Swedish Americans. Persson is the one to finally dethrone the Swedish American visitors by showing how gullible, naïve, and greedy they are. In one scene, Persson dupes the Swedish American couple into paying to chop firewood so as to get some exercise and help them sleep better. The wife is so exhilarated by the physical effort that she announces that when she returns to America she will open a 'Institute of Firewood-Chopping' for insomniacs, and charge a dollar a split. Persson says that it would definitely be something for lazy millionaires, effectively demeaning that which we regard as American. Also, as a handy way of diminishing, ridiculing, and discriminating against the entirety of American culture in one fell swoop, Edvard says that American national dress is a cowboy suit. The image of the Wild West could thus be invoked to characterize the entire US.[20]

A similar antithetical structure can be found in *Landstormens lilla Lotta*; however, here there was a very clear intent to stereotype both Swedish Americans and others, so exaggerations should be expected. The film clearly defines the ingredients that went into the stereotyp-

ical 'Swedish American', and could be expected to be familiar to the viewing public. It was so broadly drawn that even a modern audience recognizes it without difficulty.

In *Landstormens lilla Lotta*, Charlie Swanson is a returnee from the US, and he often debates America's superiority to Sweden with the characters played by Åke Söderblom and Thor Modéen. Charlie is clearly marked out as different at an early stage: he wears black-rimmed, slightly ridiculous glasses, is loud and jokey, has an American accent, and drops English words into his Swedish sentences. The antagonism between the Swedish American and the Swedes in the film boils down to how large and fast everything is in the US, and how small and unsuccessful everything is at home in Sweden. Sometimes the jibes are reminiscent of the Norwegian jokes which were rife in Sweden in the 1970s.[21]

Even if Charlie's old Swedish friends good-humouredly joke with him and seem to accept him as he is, nevertheless, even in this light-hearted comedy world, he steps over the mark and becomes something different, someone who is not 'Swedish' and in whom one therefore cannot have full confidence. In the film, the character played by Åke Söderblom intends to sign an IOU to a farmer and Charlie offers to sign it instead 'so that is has some value'. The response is telling: 'Nah, nah, this here's a local deal. No suspect US types.'

Above all else, it was Charlie's swagger that was accented, a well-established tack when describing Swedish Americans, but then still rarely used for returning Swedish Americans on screen. The braggart returnee and starkness of the contrast to staid Swedishness is used as the framework for an advertising film for Stomatol from the beginning of the 1930s. A Swede, played by Thor Modéen (who appeared in many advertisements for Stomatol) trades quips about which country is best with a Swedish American, who once again is wearing black-rimmed glasses.

The punchline comes when Modéen bites an iron horseshoe to pieces, thus demonstrating that Swedes have the strongest teeth.[22] Boastfulness has often been regarded as one of the most important characteristics of the Swedish Americans, as Tom O'Dell discusses in his thesis. His view is that since the days of the National Society Against Emigration, the US had been seen as bringing out the worst side of Swedes who went there, and that 'boastfulness was in fact a burden the Swedes carried with them, which grew fast in the American climate'.[23] That becoming Americanized made one untrustworthy and conceited was

Charlie Swanson in an American hat and black-rimmed glasses in *Landstormens lilla Lotta*, 1939 (Swedish Film Institute Archive).

a preconception that repeatedly influenced stories about America. Boasting and bragging did occur in reality, of course, and it is possible that visitors emphasized the advantages of the US as a way of justifying their decision to emigrate, and the films did try to triumph over the Swedish Americans by making them ridiculous in one way or another; however, more often it was not the returning Swedish Americans who boasted of their success in the US, but rather those who had stayed in Sweden who expected them to be rich and have successful careers.

'Very welcome home, Mr Swanson' —the dream of the dollar millionaire

The thing that was most strongly associated with America was money. Wealth was a highly important element in dreams of America, as was shown most clearly during the California gold rush. Those who fled

the famines of the 1860s and 1870s were mostly concerned with ensuring their own survival, but later emigrants, not least the labour immigrants of the 1920s, quite often had financial motives. During the 1920s there was also a shift in attitudes towards the US. The country was no longer seen as a shining example of democracy, but as the great centre of capitalism. As Martin Alm writes, the acquisition of money is often associated with America.[24] There has been a steady stream of research looking at this theme. Lars Wendelius, for example, shows that literature often portrayed Americans as materialists, as people with a craving for money.[25] That money took a central role can partly be explained by the economic recession and subsequent depression at the time, and also by unemployment in Sweden and the after-effects of the Kreuger Crash. Swedes were feeling the pinch, and so in the films hope often presented itself in the shape of a newly rich returnee or an inheritance from America. As Leif Furhammar writes, money had a prominent 'place in the public consciousness', which appears, for example, in advertisements encouraging people to save.[26] In the 1930s and 1940s, Lasse Dahlquist wrote and sang the immensely popular hit 'Very welcome home, Mr Swanson', which captured, while also making fun of, the dream of the rich emigrant who returns to save a crisis-ridden community. All these currents came together in feature films, especially the idea of the Swedish American who leaves a large legacy or who returns to Sweden with a fortune in his pocket. That said, films on this theme are not particularly numerous.

Frans Lundberg's movies from the 1910s, *Guldgossen*, *Rannsakningsdomaren*, and *Broder och syster* are all concerned with emigrants to America—in this case, most often of a criminal bent—who are successful and have become rich. In *Guldgossen*, the money comes from an oil well; in *Rannsakningsdomaren* its origin is unclear, but it is honestly come by; in *Broder och syster* the main character works his way up in a respectable business. A common motif, based in reality, was that of waiting for a letter from America containing money, while the real jackpot was an inheritance. This happens in *Calle som miljonär* ('Calle as a Millionaire', Georg af Klercker, 1916). The Swedish-born businessman Swan Swanson has died in the US, and lawyers advertise for his heir, one Lundberg, in Sweden. It seems the heir has been found in shop assistant Lundberg, who even before the money has been paid out begins to live a life of luxury, styling his name differ-

ently and putting tasteless rosettes on his shoes. When it becomes clear that Lundberg is the wrong person, he happily and contentedly returns to his working-class life. One way to interpret this movie is that easily earned money, such as an inheritance, changes someone for the worse. Money was an element which, to some extent, it was desirable to place within a negative discourse, and in this film too there is a greedy upper-class woman and a money-lending Jew. Money, the US, the upper classes, and Jewishness are thus joined together in a complex structure of meanings, and are contrasted with the simple life, the working class, and Swedishness. Sometimes, the inheritance from America turns out to be an asset, as in *Luffar-Petter*, in which the eponymous tramp marries Ottilia Asterblad, largely because she has just received an inheritance from America.

Although many emigrants did achieve success, and some did in fact become very wealthy, we see few examples of this in Swedish feature films. Apart from a few films in which there is an American legacy, but it has negligible effect on the narrative—for example, in *Falska millionären* ('The False Millionaire', Paul Merzbach, 1931), *Blixt och dunder* ('Thunder and Lightning', Anders Henrikson, 1938), and *Ung dam med tur* ('Lucky Young Lady', Ragnar Arvedson, 1941)—it is only in the films mentioned above that emigration turns out to be financially profitable. Since film was an important medium in the construction of opinions and attitudes, this disavowal is significant.

The fact that most of the returnees and visitors from America who appear in Swedish films have not become rich probably reflects a reluctance to show them as successful in a way that might conflict with the popular conservative ideology to which Swedish films conformed. At the same time, it was the case that people had great expectations of those who had left Sweden. Swedish feature films fuelled this by repeatedly depicting them on screen, while at the same time deconstructing them by avoiding portraying returnees as wealthy. This was a way of making fun of both Swedish Americans and the Swedes' preconceptions about them. Swedish Americans may have be shown as conceited and boastful, but equally the Swedes are shown being highly servile to people they believe to be wealthy; when it turns out that the returnees are just as poor as they are, the disappointment is great, albeit somewhat mixed with *Schadenfreude* and relief. This sequence of events recurs in several movies, and is treated as something positive because it signals that the

returnee is 'Swedish'. What is interesting is that the Swedish American frequently has to pretend to be wealthy, often to satisfy the demands of the narrative.

In *Ebberöds bank*—the classic money film of the 1930s—the Swedish American shows up with a bag bulging with cash. 'Twenty million', he says, but never mentions the word 'dollar'. Immediately, everyone begins to bow and scrape to him. Eventually it turns out that the twenty million is only the nominal value of worthless South American mining shares. In the version made in the 1920s the money was Austrian currency; in the version from the 1940s, Chinese. Whatever the currency, all are regarded as equally worthless as in the Swedish film

The two films in which this dissimulation is carried furthest, in which the entire intrigue rests on expectations and role-playing involving wealth, are *Smålänningar* ('The People of Småland', Gösta Rodin, 1935) and *Lyckliga Vestköping* ('Happy Vestköping', Ragnar Arvedson, 1937). *Smålänningar* exemplifies what we take to be characteristic of a wealthy returnee, or rather how to go about impersonating a rich Swedish American. Gustav Adolf (played by Sigurd Wallén) is to return to Sweden, and his good friend Napoleon (Thor Modéen) interprets his letter to mean that Gustav Adolf has made his fortune in the US. Fantasies about his wealth start to proliferate, and when Gustav Adolf finally arrives home he is greeted almost as if he were making a state visit: he rides in an open car draped with American and Swedish flags, crowds line the streets and wave handkerchiefs, and boys circle the car on their bicycles. The non-diegetic music, which also functions in a somewhat diegetic role, is Sousa's march 'The Stars and Stripes Forever', which signifies an official, nationalist America. Gustav Adolf does not really understand what is happening until Napoleon tells him that the whole town thinks that he is a millionaire.[27] It is decided that Gustav Adolf should pretend to be one in order to gratify the expectant townsfolk, and in various ways to take advantage of their belief in his wealth. With Napoleon's help he adopts the role of a wealthy Swedish American, wearing a straw hat, smoking cigars, making sweeping gesticulations, and using occasional words of English, which he otherwise never speaks. Gustav Adolf is forced into playing a dishonourable game, which offends his sense of honesty—a quality that in all Swedish movies is construed as typically Swedish, and which is repeatedly emphasized in this particular film. Napoleon regards him as altogether too honourable, to which Gustav Adolf answers, in a

voice heavy with pathos: 'It's the only thing that matters in the long run. Had I not been altogether too honourable, I would have stayed back in the States and become a millionaire.' The US is depicted as a country where one cannot become wealthy by good, honest work.

Had Gustav Adolf really become wealthy in America, he would not have been able to act as a representative of those values and qualities which at the time were construed in the movies as Swedish (and typical of the proverbially parsimonious inhabitants of the province of Småland).

Poor uncle Justus, who returns home from America in *Lyckliga Vestköping,* is met by ingratiating, money-grubbing Swedish relations who have lost their money in bad business deals. Justus is gentle and kind, arrives with only a simple suitcase, and has made it his life's work to collect buttons. The reaction when it is discovered that he has no money to speak of verges on panic. A bank clerk suggests that Justus should pretend to be wealthy in order to get the community's mine

The Swedish American Gustav Adolf in the cavalcade to mark his return from America, greeted by expectant townsfolk, in *Smålänningar*, 1935 (Swedish Film Institute Archive).

back on its feet. The bank director says: 'People don't need to see the money, it's enough for them to catch a whiff of it', and thus takes part in the game and ultimately in the maintenance of preconceptions about dollar millionaires from America.

In the movie *Calle som miljonär* discussed above, Lundberg the shop assistant happily returns to his once simple life when it turns out that he is not the rightful heir to the American millions. Becoming rich all too easily did not sit well with the Swedish film ideology of earning one's money by hard graft. However, it is quite often implied in Swedish films that one cannot become wealthy in the US by honourable means. The country is criminal to the core, and it may be easy to earn money, but thieves and swindlers can just as easily take it all from you. In *I mörkaste Småland*, the returnee, Alfred, tells his girlfriend Marie that he had made a great deal of money in America, but that he had been cheated out of his fortune. His father, Johannes, believes that Alfred has brought money from America, but his good friend Cornelius breaks the illusion with the words: 'They don't have any money there, they only have dollars.' There are similar lines in other films. The expression 'dollar millionaire' is used in several with an almost contemptuous undertone. Only Swedish kronor are regarded as having true value, and the Swedish ideal is to work, and struggle, and so earn your way.

The Swedish American woman

In films made after 1930, most of the emigrants depicted as visiting Sweden or returning for good are portrayed as being essentially likeable. A few, mostly criminals, are shown in a negative light. Most of all, though, it is striking that the returnees on film are almost exclusively male; women are very few in number. In reality, a large proportion of emigrants were women. Women emigrated together with their husbands, brothers, or parents, but it was also not exceptional for them to emigrate on their own. For a while at the start of the twentieth century, the most common emigrant was a single woman. And those women were also often young: Ulf Beijbom writes in his thesis that there were periods when there was an overrepresentation of women aged between 15 and 29. They often ended up working as seamstresses in the textile industry or, most of all, as servants in private homes. In 1900, over 60 per cent of first-generation Swedish American immigrants in Chicago

were women, often working as housemaids.[28] This fact was reflected in the American films that feature Swedish characters from the 1910s right up to the 1940s, but was almost entirely ignored in Swedish movies. Even the National Society Against Emigration directed its propaganda at working-class men from rural districts and at returnees.[29] Presumably, women's labour and citizenship were not regarded as having the same importance as men's.

Even allowing for the prevailing repressive attitudes towards women, it is surprising that female emigrants were given so little space in Swedish film. Many women found success, which one might think would have made an interesting theme for a book or film. However, that is not how patriarchal society worked, and to this day less attention is paid to the migration of women than to that of men.[30] It may also have been the case that women's emigration was deplored even more than men's was. Of the pamphlets published by the National Society Against Emigration to deter emigrants, one widely distributed example told the story of a single woman who emigrated, Maja-Lisa. She is made into an object of derision, because she returns home showing off, with her tall tales and borrowed finery. There are similar pamphlets about male emigrants, of course, yet on the few occasions when a woman emigrant is the central character of a film, she is *always* presented as laughable and deviating from the Swedish norm.

The classic film narrative almost invariably focuses on the male storyline, and is driven by an active male character, with a passive woman as a secondary figure. An active woman with a central role posed a challenge for this kind of basic, patriarchal story. Presumably, this was what things were like in reality too—an independent emigrant woman might well have been seen as provocative and defiant, at the same time as she was regarded as more readily dispensed with as far as national defence or the workforce was concerned. However, it was surely also the provocative aspects of her behaviour that led to the mocking tone adopted in propaganda, and later specifically in films—on those few occasions when she was mentioned at all. The political scientist Maud Eduards, writing on body politics, notes the way in which men and women are accorded different 'national values' and hence different roles in the national community.[31] The woman's task is to bear children, and the home is her province: 'Honourable women lived a private life, within the family.'[32] The Swedish nation demanded Swedish children

born to Swedish women—in its capacity as child-producer, the Swedish woman's body was owned by the nation. For a woman to leave Sweden was an affront, a form of theft even, which may also explain the masculinization of the female characters in the movies. The message ran that a woman who left Sweden was no real woman—an interpretation that mitigated or eliminated the insult.

The Swedish American woman makes a brief appearance in two films from the 1910s: *Två svenska emigranters äfventyr i Amerika* and *Vampyren* (Mauritz Stiller, 1913). In both films, she lives in America and has no redeeming features, the narrative presenting a negative image of both the US and of female emigrants. It is most of all in three movies from the 1930s that a woman emigrant, on a return visit to Sweden, acts as the protagonist: *Tjocka släkten* (*Close Relations*, Sölve Cederstrand, 1935), *Släkten är värst* ('Unfriendly Relations', Anders Henrikson, 1936), and *Dollar* (Gustav Molander, 1938), based upon Hjalmar Bergman's play of the same name.

As I have already mentioned, male returnees on film were rarely distinguished by their clothes, appearance, or demeanour; however, in the stigmatization of female returnees, it is with the help of such visual signs that the filmmakers made them objects of ridicule and contrasted Americanized women with Swedish women. This was combined with a behaviour that most contemporaries would not have regarded as either 'Swedish' or appropriate for a woman. As early as *Amuletten* in 1910, American women were depicted in a way which was intended to serve as a deterrent. The Swedish emigrant enters a bar where women are smoking, playing cards, and sitting in masculine poses with their legs wide apart, or swaying their hips as they walk. One can suppose that the corollary was a warning that this type of American woman would be a bad influence on Swedish woman emigrants. Also, the women characters in Thirties' films are notably masculinized.

In *Tjocka släkten*, it is not clear whether Sally is American or Swedish American, but since she speaks Swedish I would argue she was thought of as the latter. The man looks tolerably normal, and wears ordinary suits. He behaves in ways which do not differ from others; he laughs and is good-humoured. Sally, on the other hand, behaves like a man, and wears large, round glasses with heavy rims, a long, very masculine coat, black-and-white flat shoes, a tie, a stripy outfit which is almost a suit with a long skirt, and a hat which is strongly reminiscent of men's hats.

The worst possible taste in American evening gowns in *Tjocka släkten*, 1935 (Swedish Film Institute Archive).

When she smokes, she holds her cigarette in a manner clearly coded as masculine. When the characters in the movie are to eat a banquet, she is dressed up in an extraordinary checked dress with a kind of bustle, and still wearing her heavy glasses, a tiara, a large necklace, and dangly earrings. The whole effect is discordant and tasteless.

Naturally, to a Swede this get-up would have been recognizably 'American': exaggerated, vulgar, and ostentatious. Maja-Lisa and other emigrants were depicted in the same way in the pamphlets put out by the National Society Against Emigration. However, clothing was also a symptom of Swedish preconceptions about American women as compared to Swedish women. The ideal Swedish woman stood out for her nature and her naturalness; her hair would gleam from a healthy outdoors life; her clothing would be simple; and she would be sweet and submissive.[33] The artful, affected American woman was the diametric opposite, and was not only to be skirted cautiously, but

was also judged against the standards of Swedish moderation.[34] Her clothing was a material manifestation of her ostentation, with the wearer wanting to show that she had the financial wherewithal to buy large pieces of jewellery and glamorous gowns. Since Maja-Lisa's time, such dresses have been a symbol of wealth.

The majority of women emigrants were working class, and the fact that according to the pamphlets and some films they adopted a tasteless style of clothing was thus also a way of disparaging the working classes. Some women emigrants have testified how in the US they were relieved of a double stigma which they were burdened with in Sweden: of being female and working class.[35] This found expression in their choice of clothing, for in America they were able to buy clothes that in Sweden were regarded as being reserved for the upper classes.

In *Kvartalsbladet*, the National Society Against Emigration painted a black picture of the fate awaiting men in America, whereas it was sometimes noted that women were treated better in the US than in Sweden, and it was often said that class was less important in America. This also found expression in what people wore:

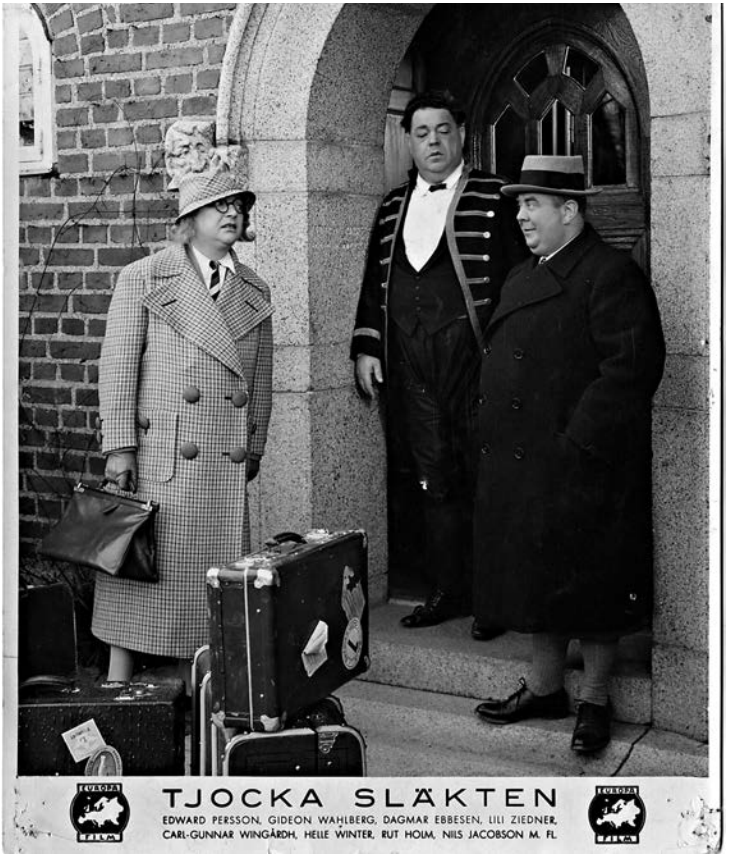
> Young men and women of the working classes are able to dress according to their means and taste, without being shamed for using styles or garments that for us are the privilege of the upper classes. This is a highly sensitive and serious issue, and especially when it comes to young women of the working classes, it is not surprising that they do so well in America, since they are able to occupy a position there, financially and socially, which they seldom achieve in Sweden.[36]

However, the thing that is really striking about the clothing in *Tjocka släkten* is the masculinity of the woman's dress and behaviour. She represents an early example of cross-dressing. In her behaviour too, she has been given male attributes: thus instead of sipping a dainty glass of liqueur or sherry, she swigs away from a conspicuously large mug of whisky and smokes cigarettes in a masculine way. Cross-dressing without a clear reason would have been unthinkable in a Swedish role model, but was a way of construing the Swedish American woman as abnormal and unacceptable.[37] Cross-dressing may also have been the on-screen version of Swedish attitudes to the relatively independent

position enjoyed by women in the US, and which here was coded as being masculine.

Lars Wendelius and Martin Alm both discuss in some depth the attitudes towards American women that were prevalent in Sweden in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Wendelius states that when it came to literature, it appears that it was women's independence that was most strongly stressed, with the nineteenth-century novelist and feminist Frederika Bremer and others pointing to American women's educational aspirations, self-sufficiency, commitment, boldness, and outspokenness.[38] These characteristics naturally later became the targets of literary sarcasm. The portrayal of marriage also underwent a shift from positive to negative, for in turn-of-the-century literature and later, husbands were regularly depicted as henpecked. The same attributes of the American woman are to be found in Alm's work, but in the material he considers these characteristics have only negative connotations.[39] Women are represented as dominant (the word 'independent' is dropped) and obstinate, and are matched with submissive husbands. All of these characteristics are on show in *Tjocka släkten*. According to Alm, American women were thought to be addicted to consumption, which was linked to their being impulsive, easily led, and lacking in rationality.[40] This too was echoed in *Tjocka släkten*, which increasingly appears as a standard rehearsal of the prevailing attitudes to Swedish Americans and the US. It was also the woman in this film who was the focus of Edvard Persson's scorn: gullible to a fault, she believes that chopping firewood is done for exercise and to help you sleep better, and she even sees it a commercial opportunity, planning to open a firewood-chopping institute in the US, which is duly remarked upon with patronizing contempt by Person.

Wendelius groups the way American women were depicted in early literature into three categories: the ingénue, or young girl (of which there are perhaps only a couple of examples in the entire history of Swedish film); the coquette, who is more or less criminal (I have given several examples here); and the professional, emancipated woman, who is often a little older and has a strong sense of self and an idealistic attitude (examples are almost entirely absent from Swedish film, except for essentially comical or strongly critical depictions).[41] The comical Swedish American professional woman turns up again in *Släkten är värst*, in which she shares a number of similarities with Sally in *Tjocka*



The Swedish American woman in masculine clothing in *Tjocka släkten*, 1935 (Swedish Film Institute Archive).

släkten. The woman in question is Aunt Hanna, and despite being shown with the attributes of American womanhood—glittering rings and earrings, thick lipstick, and a large, leopard-print collar—she has a clearly masculinized appearance thanks to her large, square glasses and a bowtie at her neck, her bossy garrulousness, and her successful and well-paid professional life, this last being incompatible with the Swedish norm which insisted that women did not have careers. So that we do not miss her character's masculinization, she says to Thor Modéen's character when trying to stop him drinking: 'You're headed for the dry dock, and I'm the man for the job.' She is accompanied

Aunt Hanna, a masculinized returnee, in *Släkten är värst*, 1936 (Swedish Film Institute Archive).

by her adopted daughter, May, who obeys all the Swedish rules of behaviour and is not in the least 'Americanized'—in other words, her portrayal is entirely positive. The film *Hustru för en dag* ('Wife for a Day', Gösta Rodin, 1933), which is now lost, had a similar plotline and its characters played similar roles.[42] However, despite the negative portrayal, Aunt Hanna's character also challenges normative gender boundaries. In many ways, she and other characters like her in Swedish films, could function as a positive image for those who were critical of traditional gender roles. The American influence can be said to have contributed a degree of progressiveness and modernity.

We again find a successful professional woman with a huge ego and a fundamental belief in herself in the movie version of Hjalmar Bergman's play, *Dollar*. The movie breaks with the usual popular comedies of the 1930s in being satirical, but at the same time, from a present-day perspective, it is so extreme in its anti-Americanism that it is hard to take it seriously. Gunnar Eidevall, who has written about the depiction of America in twentieth-century Swedish literature, discusses Bergman's American adventures and his attitude to the country, which above all found expression in *Dollar*, originally in the play written in 1926.[43] Eidevall argues that one of the reasons for Bergman's almost white-hot hatred of America was his unsuccessful stab at being a Hollywood screenwriter at the start of the 1920s. Bergman was very interested in the movies and wrote a great many scripts for the Swedish cinema. He also adapted his own and others' work for film, sometimes together with Victor Sjöström. Inspired by Sjöström's stay in Hollywood, Bergman went there in response to an offer of work. According to Eidevall, this was done mostly in order to restore his finances, and not because he held any particular idealized views about the country. However, he did not do at all well. According to his letters, the reasons included the excessively relaxed and casual social life; the strictly money-focussed attitude to filmmaking; the people—more or less everything, in fact. (It is hard not to be struck by the suspicion that that this was because his work was not appreciated in Hollywood. Only one of his scripts was accepted, after all.) A couple of years later, he wrote the play *Dollar*, which was immediately staged at the Oscarsteater in Stockholm, but Eidevall does not write anything about its success. Ten years later, the comedy appeared on the silver screen, but it did not make any great impression.

Dollar was not strictly speaking a Swedish American film, in the sense that it concerned itself with the return of first-generation emigrants. There is some doubt as to the background of the lead character, Mary Johnstone, but it seems she was thought of as a second-generation Swedish American. Her behaviour is ludicrously over the top, and the Swedish characters' prejudices about America are cheap and superficial. At heart, the movie is more about attitudes to America than attitudes to emigrants or Swedish Americans, but it is nevertheless worth mentioning here because of its position as by far the most anti-American movie of the 1930s. The director was one of the decade's most renowned, Gustaf

Molander, who worked with a star-studded cast: Ingrid Bergman, Georg Rydeberg, Tutta Rolf, Håkan Westergren, Edvin Adolphson, and others. Even if it is possible to laugh at the movie's exaggerations, it must have been based on an ideology that with reason was regarded as dominant, and it was given a glowing review by Per Lindberg in the newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, which even went so far as to say, despite the film's exaggerations, that he 'would have enjoyed it even more if the satire on the contrasts between Sweden and America, the krona and the dollar, had not been blunted'.[44] Eidevall believes that the film above all else attacked American self-righteousness, and that at heart it represented Bergman addressing his own feelings: 'For Hjalmar Bergman, the drama also becomes a moral confrontation with something in himself, which, a couple of years earlier, had taken him off to the illusory world of the movies in a hunt for dollars. In the comedy *Dollar*, he was able to project onto the laughably exaggerated Miss Johnstone his own feelings of guilt about what could have happened to him as a person had he succeeded to the full in his vain hunt for success in an America he had always mistrusted.'[45] In this anti-American settling of scores, it is the woman who is made the scapegoat, and the woman who brings the dubious influences with her to Sweden.

Miss Johnstone is very wealthy, and she and her American dollars will turn the tide for a Swedish company with the symbolic name Sveaverken. She also advocates a number of modernizations, which I will return to below. Thus *Dollar* addresses many of the most common themes found in films about America and Swedish Americans.

Thereafter, the Swedish American woman as a returnee or visitor only appears in Swedish film one more time, and then not in a leading role. The Swedish American domestic servant, who was so common in real life, made an appearance in *Du gamla, du fria* ('You Ancient, You Free', Gunnar Olsson, 1938). Dagmar Ebbesen plays a housemaid visiting Sweden with her Swedish employer. Both, however, decide to return to the US.

In subsequent movies, the examples are limited to women who emigrate to America, but who do not return to or visit their former homeland. Also, after the Second World War, attitudes changed. I have already briefly mentioned the films *Älskling, jag ger mig* from 1943 and *Stiliga Augusta* from 1946. They are not really concerned with Swedish American returnees, but rather with people who intend to emigrate. Despite their

emphasis on emigration per se, I include them here because, just as they promote a new attitude to emigration, they also depict women in a new manner. In *Stiliga Augusta*, Hanna decides to accompany her Swedish American husband to the US to work in his company; *Älskling, jag ger mig* presents modern attitudes in a way that was extremely unusual in contemporaneous Swedish film, for although it is about the well-to-do classes, the young woman is well educated and has a burning desire to write about social issues and politics. She takes a position as secretary to a woman professor in economics in the US. Her boyfriend is also going to travel to America to work. At the end, the film makes a concession to more conventional ways of living, with the young couple marrying each other before leaving because they want everything to be 'correct'. However, the modern attitudes expressed in the movie are connected to a more positive view of the US. The modernity that had previously been seen in film as a threat to the Swedish nation was now acceptable, and this in turn influenced views on both class and gender. Women from the upper classes travelled to the US to study and to work, and Hanna the working-class woman is seen to be aware of the benefits of unionization as she explains to her employer that she is not a housemaid, but a domestic worker. The masculine, interfering Swedish American aunt of Thirties' film gave way in the Forties to a modern, independent woman working in a profession in the US.

The Swedish American as modernizer

America was widely seen as the embodiment of all that was modern and futuristic in the first decades of the twentieth century, and, as Martin Alm writes, the subsequent shift in opinion took place in parallel with the ways modernization was perceived. In film, this found expression in the manner in which female Swedish Americans or emigrants were portrayed, as Swedish public opinion became ever more modern in outlook. Modernity, in the sense of a certain set of societal and cultural values, and modernization, meaning technical and economic progress, are often associated with the American nation, and numerous films have shown Swedish Americans bringing modernization with them from America.[46] This was often a question of a physical or technical modernization, but there were also movies that addressed social, political, or cultural modernity.

Modernization as a form of technological development was associated with America from early on, but of course modern technology was also an essential component in the building of the Swedish welfare state, as the historian of ideas Conny Mithander has discussed.[47] In the 1930s, Sweden saw itself, at least as far as social issues were concerned, as the most successful proponent of modernism and modernization, thanks to the prominence of welfare in the Swedish Model. The US, however, was one step ahead when it came to technological advances in various fields, and even someone as opposed to emigration as Adrian Molin could look to America as an example in this respect: 'There Molin found what was lacking in Sweden: a work ethic, capable personnel, natural leaders, modern industrial and business practices, advanced mechanical engineering.'[48] These ideas were also considered in *Kvartalsbladet* in 1908, where it was concluded that it was not wise to make fun of Swedish Americans when they returned home, for they might prove to be 'standard bearers in the work of national regeneration, these tough, seasoned Swedish Americans'.[49]

The left-wing liberal Ernst Beckman put a motion to Parliament that Sweden should learn from America's education system, industry, and agriculture; one should, in his words, 'bring America over to Sweden'.[50] However, these examples were concerned with a material modernization—the National Society Against Emigration was 'spiritually conservative' and did not look kindly on the import of ideological modernity from the US. The overwhelming Swedish opinion in the first decades of the twentieth century was that America did not exactly have much to offer when it came to culture: 'Swedish commentators were happy to see the US as a primarily technological civilization: the Americans had made technological and material progress, but their culture was backward and immature.'[51] Film is the medium of modernity, and from an early stage was associated with the US, not least because the vast majority of those responsible for showing early films in Sweden were Swedish Americans.[52] However, the type of modernization inspired by America which did appear in the movies was most often restricted to the introduction of agricultural technology, and it is mainly this that Steene is referring to when she writes that Swedish films that represented Swedish Americans often dealt with modernity and modernization.[53] Against that, it is important to note that in general, movies on modernization themes were characteristic not least of the

1930s, as Per Olof Qvist has noted, and there was no requirement at all for them to include Swedish American characters, although, as he goes on, 'In post-war films, the maintenance of a traditional line would become more dominant', a statement which, while perhaps generally valid, does not hold good in those cases in which the films include an element of Americanization.[54]

An important part of modernity, as Martin Alm writes, was generally speaking the metropolis, with its cars, neon signs, and skyscrapers. This type of American-inspired modernization does not appear that often in Swedish films, which is perhaps not so surprising given their usual themes in the 1930s and 1940s. The kind of modernity that was inspired by America often kept itself to the Swedish countryside. While *Goda vänner och trogna grannar* ('Good Friends and Faithful Neighbours', Weyler Hildebrand, 1938) is set in Stockholm, it is limited more specifically to Söder, a suburb which on film was often treated as a rural part of the city.[55] Another movie set in Stockholm was *Annonsera!* ('Advertise!', Anders Henriksson, 1936), in which American advertising techniques were directed at a Swedish public.[56]

Examples of a more cultural form of modernity also turned up in Swedish films. I have already mentioned such details as chewing gum and sunglasses, but in many ways, it was American popular music that was of central importance, with some Swedish films even explicitly treating it as a plotline—think only of *Melodin från Gamla Stan* ('The Melody from the Old Town', Ragnar Frisk, 1939), in which 'the celebrated Swedish American Mr Carlton', a publisher of hit songs, visits Sweden, or *Peggy på vift* ('Peggy on the Loose', Arne Mattsson, 1946), in which the famous singer Frank Bing, originally from Småland, pays a visit from the US.[57]

One of the first movies in which American influence appeared in the form of marketing tricks, and in which modern technology in some sense was paired with America, was *Smålänningar* from 1935. The Swedish American Gustav Adolf has returned home from America to Småland, where his son Gustav, in the welfare state spirit, is trying to build a boat engine that will be better than all others.[58] He needs capital to do so, and that is where American marketing and sales techniques come in—Småland needs a little help from America to put it on the right track. To impress the Smålanders—and persuade them to buy his merchandise—Gustav Adolf adopts the role of a dollar millionaire, and

in the sales pitch he and his son refer to one of the richest Americans of all: Rockefeller. Other names bandied about in the campaign are the Swedish prime minister Per Albin Hansson and Gustav Adolf himself, and with a combination of Swedish welfare politics, Småland enterprise, and American capital they attempt to persuade people to buy their trifles. The boat engine is completed and christened 'Inga', and is duly entered in an engine competition to prove its usefulness, where it is pitted against an American engine called 'OK', sold by a Stockholm company. The city of Stockholm is associated with all things American and with people of means, while Småland is rural, 'Swedish', and populated by people living in more humble circumstances. Engine competitions were fairly common in Swedish films at this time, where they often had the purpose of 'showing how Swedish has the edge'.[59]

In other movies we meet the sort who is determined to introduce American methods across the board because they are thought to be so much better than Swedish methods. One of the earliest dates from 1936: *Spöket på Bragehus* ('The Ghost of Bragehus', Ragnar Arvedson and Tancred Ibsen). It conveys an unusually positive view of America and its technology, and, symptomatically, it is preoccupied with class. The film is about a country estate, Bragehus, which for generations has been owned by the aristocratic Brage family, and the way its decay is turned to financial and material success thanks to modern techniques introduced by a Swedish American. The Swedish American, played by Adolf Jahr, has been in the US and is engaged as the new estate manager. 'A youthful force with modern methods', as the district judge says, Jahr does indeed introduce new ideas, a new way of life with jazz and cocktails, and a form of behaviour that is not subservient to the old upper class. As well as electrification, milking machines, egg-hatching machines, and ploughs drawn by tractors, he also introduces a policy of equality that audiences would readily have associated with America—a desire to leave behind the old hierarchical society, and to escape injustice and repression at home in Sweden, was one of the prime motives for emigration, after all.

In the spirit of consensus which was to characterize the emergence of a new Sweden, there was a strong belief in egalitarianism, and in this particular film many of the ideological foundations of the welfare state are made visible as part of the narrative of popular culture. The film can be seen as an allegory of the need for change in the new Sweden:

the old upper-class way of managing agriculture (for which read ruling Sweden) is not working any more, and other methods (modernization), other people (the working classes, farmers, the young), and another lifestyle (Americanized culture) must take over, and are in the process of doing so. Not only was it the case that the upper-class women who had had the running of Bragehus were no longer able to take care of the estate properly, but the man who was expected to take over—Joachim Brage—had been in the US all his life (this character is one of the very few upper-class emigrants in Swedish film) and is said to have become an incorrigible vagabond. He becomes a symbol of the careworn upper classes in the new welfare state—at least, according to this movie's popular (social-democratic) ideals. The future would show that not everything worked out quite as planned.

Spöket på Bragehus was one of the very first films to offer a slightly more challenging account of modernization methods inspired by the US. It is true that Sweden had been governed for the previous four years by the Social Democrats, and that a majority of the Swedish population supported a certain degree of modernization, but other films, and other research, indicate that a relatively strong conservatism predominated, even among a portion of the population who supported the principles of the new Swedish Model. Nevertheless, a movie like this showed that there could be broad support for new, modern approaches, and that American influence might be welcomed. Despite the movie's lightness of tone, its conventional form and style, its place among the genre comedies of the 1930s, and with a familiar group of actors in which Adolf Jahr brought with him a large fanbase, the movie did to a certain extent challenge negative attitudes towards America and modernization. At the end, the movie is even allowed to break the classic cinematic narration: in a meta-filmic parting shot, framed as a joke with the audience, the main characters look straight into the camera, Jahr moves towards it as if he is going to turn it off, and at the last moment there is a cut to Jahr opening a door to reveal a caretaker watching them on the sly.

In its appreciation of the ostensibly American methods of modernization and automation, *Spöket på Bragehus* is unique among the Swedish films made in the 1930s. Only the following year, *Bergslagsfolk* was released, in which a visiting Swedish American returns to his rural hometown and wants to start a mine. The film begins with a collage of the kind that glorifies nature and farming, and which was so prevalent

in Swedish movies of the 1930s and 1940s: rolling vistas, farms, horses, mountains, leafy trees, couples working in sun-drenched meadows—all accompanied by a score based largely on folk music. All this is interrupted by its very antithesis: prospecting for ore and mining. The images turn grey, and switch to ugly machines, large factory buildings, and railway trucks being loaded, accompanied by serious, heavy music.

One of the film's working titles was 'Jord och malm' ('Earth and ore'), and the values the film espouses are already on show in the title sequence. Who could possibly want to ruin a glowing Swedish landscape with ugly machines that destroy nature? Rudolf, the Swedish American who wants to mine ore and earn money, thinks that his old village should adapt to modern times: it must become efficient and welcome the 'winds of change'. His is one of the most unforgiving portraits of all the male Swedish American roles on film, and inevitably conforms to the boastful, garish stereotype: he bursts in on the Swedish landscape, where 'driving' usually means a horse and cart, in a luxurious open-top car, wearing a checked jacket and white cap. He turns out to be a swindler, and at the end of the movie he is forced to leave and the village is able to return to its safe, rural Swedishness. The action in the movie illustrates attitudes towards American society that Alm summarizes thus: 'American society was often presented as a dehumanized, mechanized society where humanity was altogether forgotten. Productivity and the acquisition of wealth were the only things that mattered.'[60]

The Swedish American woman described with such exaggeration in *Dollar* also had ambitions to modernize, as we have seen; if nothing else, she wanted to demonstrate her superiority over the Swedes. Her money was needed to keep the Sveafabriken factory running, and to modernize it; she wants to buy a sanatorium which figures in the movie, and expand it along modernist lines; and she intends to reinvigorate what she sees as the Swedes' lax morals. However, the plot goes the way of most tales about strong women at this time: she is eventually tamed by a man, realizes how wrong she has been, and asks forgiveness. The Swedish characters in the movie do not accept the money to keep Sveaverken open—they wish to postpone modernization.

It is important to note that the benevolent modernizers in these films are all people who have returned permanently. Either they are shown in a positive light from the start and then return to Sweden for good (the most usual scenario), or they change their once poor opinion of

Sweden and decide to stay. In the film that had perhaps the most positive attitude to modernization of all, the theme was not just material modernization, but also political and cultural progress. However, with this we move into the post-war period, a time which saw dramatic shifts in ideology and values, both in Sweden and elsewhere, and not least a rising esteem for the US and all things American. The film in question is *Flickorna i Småland* ('The Girls in Småland', Schamyl Bauman, 1945).

Swedish attitudes to what was seen as American were influenced by the role played by the US in the outcome of the War, and the majority of movies produced after 1945 were considerably more sympathetic to the US, to Americans, and to Swedish Americans. There was a very clear dividing line. At the same time, the development of the Swedish Model was approaching completion and the welfare state stood at the threshold of its great breakthrough. In *Flickorna i Småland*, the keywords were increased efficiency, modernization, and equality, but at the same time the power structures of gender and ethnicity were left intact, in this case when it came to the 'vagrants'. The farmer and the land are still lauded—even in the Swedish Model, agriculture was emphasized as a foundation of Swedishness and its values and norms. Åke Grönberg plays Carlman (a name which Rochelle Wright has pointed out is doubly masculine, *karl* in Swedish being slang for man), who for many years has earned his living as a cowboy in North America.[61] He travels to Småland and finds work on a couple of farms, where he introduces workers' rights and modernization. Even though Carlman originates from the city and is a returning emigrant, two things which were usually viewed askance in Swedish film, he is portrayed in a more positive way than the Småland farmers, who in contrast to earlier films are shown as conceited and old-fashioned. The Smålanders are used to represent an obsolete way of farming. Despite the rural Småland landscape being depicted in terms of idealized and romanticized nature, the film's agenda is that it needs to be adapted to a modern, Americanized ideology. The movie conveys the same message in other ways too, with jazz music played at the open-air dance, for example. Modernity is embodied by Carlman, that scion of the city and, by extension, America.

Carlman's aspirations to improve efficiency take the form of him suggesting that his employers should introduce artificial fertilizer and agricultural technology to their farms; he insists on his right to days off; and he replaces the word 'maid' (*piga*) with 'agricultural worker'.

Social-democratic principles are paramount here, and Carlman becomes the connection between social democracy and North America.

This Småland version of a modernized and somewhat progressive ideology does not extend to the 'vagrants' ('*tattarna*'), however—the travellers who are still marginalized, in much the same way as in other films made at the time.[62] Neither is the embryonic feminism to be found in the movie allowed to go unchallenged: gender discipline is abruptly re-established at the end. The character of Christina, played by Sickan Carlsson, owns and runs a large farm on an estate that has long passed from woman to woman. To some extent, both Carlman and Christina break with established, conservative patterns. She undoubtedly manages her workforce; she is the one who introduces more rational methods on her farm. Yet independent and obstinate Christina is eventually tamed by a man, in accordance with prevailing movie conventions: he gives her a telling-off which she receives gratefully. A real cowboy is what is needed on the farm, she thinks. Thus Americanization is at last admitted to the fields of Småland. As vehicles of modernity, efficiency, and incipient equality, both America and returning emigrants are given a more sympathetic interpretation—in *Flickorna i Småland* a certain degree of foreign influence over Swedish traditional norms and values becomes acceptable.

Since the late nineteenth century, Swedish farmers had been an emblem of the Swedish national character, and it was to this emblem that people now looked in the wake of the major social upheavals. The farmer became a 'symbol of security in a time of revolution', a form of counterweight to impending modernity.[63] The modernization of Sweden had to start at the roots of its national identity. In her thesis on the National Society Against Emigration in the early twentieth century, Anna Lindkvist writes that 'the small-scale farmer could be the saviour of manliness and power structures alike' in the coming cultural and spiritual modernization, and from this perspective *Flickorna i Småland* was significant.[64] Here, the Swedish farm was used as the site for the negotiation of modernization and gender roles. In both *Spöket på Bragehus* and *Flickorna i Småland*, modern, American-influenced methods were introduced by men to farms run by women. However, the women were not permitted to be 'American', in the sense of independent or innovative; such practices were firmly co-opted by the men. Compared to before to the Second World War, there was a definite change in thinking.

In literature, too, there were several examples of Swedish Americans as modernizers, albeit rarely in agriculture. It was through their familiarity with technology that returning Swedish Americans often distinguished themselves. The historian Magnus Persson's research into returnees to the Bjäre peninsula in the southern province of Skåne shows that at times they were the driving force behind the implementation of material modernizations such as electrification and mains water.[65] Electricity was often installed earlier in communities where there were returnees, who often also started their own companies to make use of their technical abilities. Per-Olof Grönberg shows in his thesis on returnee engineers that their careers benefitted from their American experience—indeed, the mere fact that they had been in America lent them a certain status.[66] This was also reflected in the increased social mobility they enjoyed. They were clearly over-represented on local government committees and municipal councils in the 1920s.[67]

Swedishness and other ethnicities

In the movies, those who return to Sweden for good are characterized by qualities which are construed as being especially Swedish, and are often just as stereotypical as the American attributes. Their thoroughgoing Swedishness means that they have no wish to return to the US, and that they tend to defend all things Swedish almost more than those who never left. However, even before the Second World War we find movies that were positive towards America and whatever was seen as American; movies in which the Swedish character is even allowed to choose the US over the old country without impugning Sweden's honour. At the same time as America and Swedish Americans were shown in an ever more positive light on screen, other ethnicities were pressed into service as a contrast to 'the good guys'.[68]

Swedish film since its earliest days has been infected by a pervasive xenophobia.[69] Rochelle Wright describes how Swedish films denigrated Jews, Africans, Sami, and itinerant groups. This negative construction continues to the present day. (Here I have used the term 'vagrants' for the similarly derogative Swedish umbrella term *tattare* for itinerant groups).[70] Contrasting other ethnicities to Swedishness was a structural device that meant Swedishness and ethnic Swedes could appear effortlessly superior in the movies.

The same device was used in some films about Swedish Americans in order to make them appear more Swedish, and thus more congenial. In *Falska millionären* of 1931, two jolly Swedish Americans, played by Håkan Westergren and Fridolf Rhudin, return to Sweden after several years working in American factories. In order for them to be received without suspicion, the film relies on the presence of other ethnicities to make them appear more Swedish than foreign. The villain is therefore a female adventurer with a French-sounding name, who also uses French phrases when she speaks (it is particularly norm-defying and threatening that the villain is a woman). In both *I mörkaste Småland* and *Flickorna i Småland*, it is the vagrants who are labelled as abnormal, most obviously in the unabashedly racist *I mörkaste Småland*, which was based on a number of short stories by Albert Engström. In the film version, Albert the country boy returns to Sweden, clothed in American props: he has a hat like a cowboy's, a checked shirt with a bolo tie, and smart trousers.[71]

Before Alfred has even returned, the film has made it clear that he is on the side of the angels. His waiting girlfriend, Marie, visits a fortune teller to find out if Alfred is coming back. The fortune teller prophesizes that a fair friend who has been away a long time will return, and that this friend is as true as gold. This is contrasted with a prophecy that 'three swarthy men' will figure in Marie's life. Here, light is contrasted with dark, an opposition that for centuries has symbolized good against evil, as Richard Dyer has charted in his work on the ideology of whiteness, especially in visual culture.[72]

In *I mörkaste Småland*, exactly as in other Swedish films, vagrants are depicted as sly, unreliable, dishonest, thieving, and thriftless, making a living in the occupations which in reality they were often forced to take on because of their low status among Swedes—horse dealers, tinkers, and coppersmiths.[73] It is perhaps not so surprising that this particular film pushed its depiction of vagrants to the very limit. After all, it was based upon short stories by Albert Engström, a writer who published and wrote much of the newspaper *Strix*, which made a name for itself with its strident anti-Semitism. He was also a writer 'whose folksy humour often incorporated situations that made their point at the expense of non-Swedish ethnic groups', as Rochelle Wright puts it.[74] Even being American in appearance and behaviour is better than being a vagrant. On several occasions when the Smålanders come into conflict with the

vagrants, Alfred holds up his pistol, says 'Hands up!' and fires it, all in best detective manner. During the course of the film, his clothing becomes ever less Americanized in order to mark his affiliation with Småland. In the end, it is thanks to Alfred that the fight against the vagrants is won, and the Swedish American is thus presented here as both positive and 'Swedish'.

Both the popular and the more official conception of the vagrants was that they were criminals, that their way of life was not 'Swedish', and that they had undesirable characteristics. For example, the women were seen as sexually challenging, the men as prone to violence.[75] This attitude was construed and given further credibility in the interplay of the Swedish authorities and popular culture. The journalist and author Christian Catomeris believes that it was very probably 'the growth of the film industry that most strongly contributed to the widespread dissemination of the cliché of the criminal vagrant', and emphasizes that the theme is at its clearest, and is taken to its furthest extent, in *I mörkaste Småland*.[76] Vagrants are central to the action in approximately twenty films, in which they were often contrasted to farmers. Film critics joined in this racist discourse, calling the characters in the movies 'vagrant scum' or 'a pack of vagrants.[77]

In *Falska millionären*, *Flickorna i Småland*, and *I mörkaste Småland*, the Swedish American is accorded broadly positive characteristics by the standards of the day, and in comparison to outsiders such as vagrants or sometimes Jews, even a Swede who had once absconded to America is acceptable. Those characteristics that were construed as 'typically Swedish' in so many Thirties' films do not need to delay us here. The contrast with those individuals who represented the darker side of society will suffice, even though, for example, the fortune teller's pronouncements were an expression of a whiteness ideology paralleled in an anxiousness to classify the Swedish American. It was within this discourse on whiteness that it was thought Swedishness would be found. Sweden's Jews and travellers were often full citizens, but, lacking the visible and cultural characteristics of whiteness, were presented as a threat to Swedishness. Meanwhile, however, in the majority of films that include returnee emigrants there are no other ethnicities that can act as a counterweight. In this case, any Swedish American who is to be construed in entirely positive terms must express a stronger love of his homeland than those Swedes who have never left, vigorously demon-

Albert uses his American pistol in the fight with the 'vagrants' in *I mörkaste Småland*, 1943 (Swedish Film Institute Archive).

strating the qualities that were regarded as 'typically Swedish'. What were these inherent and essentially Swedish characteristics, according to the discourse of Swedish film? They are most clearly on display in *Ebberöds bank* (the version from 1935) and *Smålänningar*; the lead role in the latter appears to be a quintessence of the sort of Swedishness that characterized so many film roles in the 1930s. The worthy Swedish American, who prefers Sweden to the US, and who returns home for good, appears in several movies other than the two named above: *Storstadsfaror* ('Perils of the Big City', Manne Göthson, 1918), *Falska millionären*, and *Goda vänner och trogna grannar* from 1938, as well as *I mörkaste Småland* and *Hotell Kåkbrinken* from 1946. In many of these films, the returnee is shown as having a deep love of his mother country in dialogue that pays endless tribute to Swedishness. These movies often have a rural connection—they are set in the Söder area

of Stockholm (which in *Goda vänner och trogna grannar*, as in many other movies, is treated as a rustic enclave) or in the southern provinces of Skåne or Småland. Småland's characteristics became a synthesis of all things Swedish, while the province itself stood for the essence of Swedishness, to the extent that it is striking that the region where which many of the emigrants originated was the one used to safeguard Sweden against America.

Dorothy Burton Skårdal remarks in her analysis of Swedish American lyric poetry that is dominated by three themes: homesickness, childhood memories, and descriptions of Swedish nature.[78] These three elements are also prominent in the movies that harp on about Sweden's national pre-eminence. In *Goda vänner och trogna grannar* and *Hotell Kåkbrinken*, the returnee Swedish American breaks out into a panegyric for the beauties of nature, 'the dear old tumbledown houses', and Swedish food. This sentimental view of Swedishness is clearest in *Smålänningar*, where, appropriately, it is combined with an element of homesickness. On the question of why he has returned from the US without having made his fortune there, the main character answers with a faraway look in his eye, and a tremor in his voice: 'Homesickness, my lad. But is doesn't strike a man until he's been away a few years. Wherever in the world he may walk, his heart is back home in Småland. See how so damn lovely it is here'. And with that, the camera takes in Lake Lagan and its glittering natural beauties in a scene intended as a paean to Swedish nature, which, just as in a large number of other films, stands for Sweden as a whole.

The main protagonist in *Smålänningar*, played by Sigurd Wallén, is called Gustav Adolf, a name with obvious royal overtones. His thoroughly Swedish honesty is clearly emphasized in the movie, as is what it means to be a true Smålander. He supports progress in his home district with a doggedness characteristic of many of Wallén's roles, his goal reiterated several times: he wants to put an end to unemployment. In the local paper he is called 'the famous Smålander', not 'the Swedish American' as was usual in other films.

The Swedish characteristics brought to the fore in this and similar films were honesty, a love of country, conscientiousness, a passion for justice, and an unaffected manner.[79] This last idea of being true to oneself was often important, and is shown playing a role in both class relations and in the characters' willingness to adopt foreign (in this

case, American) ways of life. According to these norms, one could only make one's way, socially or economically, by hard work, and hard work was a sign that one was genuinely Swedish, as can be seen in many movies, not least in *Smålänningar* and *Ebberöds bank*. In the former, Gustav Adolf says it in so many words, contrasting hard work to the dishonourable ways of earning money said to be so widespread in the US. In *Ebberöds bank*, the emigrant Johan Anders (aka John Andrews), who has returned home because of homesickness, is at least superficially Americanized, and speaks with an American accent throughout the film; however, his heart beats for Sweden alone. Johan Anders is depicted as honourable and just, and several times he stresses the importance of hard work. It is worth noting, though, that the characteristics that were construed as typically Swedish in these films (and indeed in other artistic works) were also likely to be found in most notions of national mentality, whatever the country.

One can see a tendency in some of the Swedish films to take a more benign view of Swedish Americans towards the end of the 1930s, but that was because they were even more clearly furnished with characteristics that were seen as particularly Swedish. Also, it had been taken as given in all movies up to then that a good emigrant would return to live in Sweden. However, in 1938, a film was released which to a certain degree went against this line. At first glance, its title and protagonist would seem intended to praise and promote Swedishness and all things Swedish. Taking as its title the first words of the national anthem, *Du gamla, du fria* ('You Ancient, You Free', Gunnar Olsson, 1938), it starred Sigurd Wallén, who had played the very Swedish Smålander in *Smålänningar*, as the Swedish American Charlie Johnson, who wants to visit Småland and is thinking of returning there for good.

The initial scenes are set in the US, the very first in the post-silent era to show Swedish Americans actually in America (or, at least, in an environment intended to represent it). However, it is not America that is on show, but the thoughts and feelings of a loyal son of Sweden, expressed in Swedish American terms. We are shown a male-voice choir—choirs were very common in the Swedish American communities—singing 'Där som sädesfälten böja sig för vinden' (a sentimental song about emigration, to the tune of Paul Dresser's 'On the Banks of the Wabash, Far Away'). We visit the offices of the newspaper *Nordstjernan*, where the real editor-in-chief plays a cameo role, and the protagonist

outlines his plans to return to Sweden: 'Have you forgotten that there is an old country on the other side of the Pole, a real land, with a king and everything? Not like this mishmash of white, black, yellow, and red.' This xenophobic turn of mind was standard in Swedish film for decades, as we have seen, and here was it even applied to the American nation. 'White', however, is also included in mix, the critique being that the country is populated with people of a wide range of origins, and is not culturally and ethnically uniform in the way that the character imagined (and wanted) Sweden to be. The ideology of Swedishness has always ignored the fact that Sweden is a country with hundreds of years of immigration behind it, and that it has inhabitants who have been marginalized almost as long—the Sami, for example. Johnson's lines give proof of a number of Swedish American conceptions about Sweden and the US: Sweden had an ancient cultural inheritance and a uniform ethnic composition, while the US was a new country bereft of culture and heritage, and where various ethnicities were mixed together. The pro-Swedish tone is firmly securing this initial sequence, and it seems that what will follow is a patriotic movie. When Charlie Johnson arrives in Sweden he is at first very unimpressed, criticizing it at length. He realizes after a while that Sweden has its advantages and becomes once again a defender of Swedishness and Sweden; however, the view of the country he then expresses is conservative, nationalistic, and nostalgic in a way which conforms with how Swedish Americans in the US were thought to regard their homeland, as I discuss in the following chapter. The movie ends with Johnson returning to America, because, he believes, for someone who once has emigrated it is impossible to return, and Sweden must remain a nostalgic memory.

The film does not go so far as to entirely discredit Sweden, of course, even if the US and anything American is valued to an extent previously unparalleled in Swedish film. A moderate success at the box office, it was exceptional in that its Swedish American leading man is permitted to return to the US with his honour intact. What was it about the construction of this film which made this transgression possible, and how were the audience brought to accept it?

Surely, some of the explanation lies in the choice of Sigurd Wallén as Johnson. As Per-Olov Qvist writes, Wallén often 'embodied the core of Swedishness and genuinely Swedish virtues', and 'more than any other cinematic father figure had come to represent a vision of

the social-democratic welfare state'.[80] Films which shared this ideology included *Karl Fredrik regerar* (*Karl Fredrik Reigns*, Gustaf Edgren, 1934) and *Med folket för fosterlandet* (*With the People for the Fatherland*, Sigurd Wallén, 1938), in which Wallén took the leading roles; he also appeared in a series of social-democratic party political broadcasts. He was Swedish honesty personified, in virtually all his roles. To use this much-loved actor, the embodiment of welfare state ideology and deeply responsible Swedishness, guaranteed a safe passage for a film that was ideologically ambivalent, and thus a character who could be returned to the US without diminishing his Swedishness or implying any contempt for Sweden. In the same way, other actors were able to signal to the audience that the Swedish American roles they were playing were sympathetic; this was true, for example, of Håkan Westergren and Fridolf Rhudin in *Falska millionären* and Bengt Djurberg in the 1935 version of *Ebberöds bank*.

There is one further example of a Swede who was 'permitted' to live out his days in the US, and it comes from the film about the famous inventor John Ericsson, who lived much of his life in the US, from 1839 until his death in 1889.[81] *John Ericsson—segraren vid Hampton Roads* (*John Ericsson: Victor of Hampton Roads*, Gustaf Edgren, 1937) paid him due honour, and his life in the US was shown to be as meaningful and influential as it actually was, but there was a continual undercurrent of the Swedish norms and values that characterized other Thirties' movies about Swedish Americans.[82] Swedish reviewers stressed the movie's Swedish qualities, while American critics saw the movie as 'American'. Ericsson is portrayed as a man with nothing but good qualities, all of them read as being Swedish, and his longing for his native land was accentuated, above all by the film score with its strong element of folk music. Because of his success and historic significance, the fact that he lived in the US was acceptable. The same can be said to be true of the Swedish movie stars who became very famous in Hollywood—when a successful person left Sweden for the US, some of their glory was reflected back on the old country.

In Swedish movies of this period, and indeed later, Swedishness was not just a question of citizenship; it was also necessary to be ethnically Swedish, as seen from an essentialist perspective. As we have seen earlier, the Swedish state did all it could to prevent immigration, and faced with a choice between Jews, travellers, and Swedish Americans,

the film industry never hesitated to choose the Swedish American, or even the American—that is, the white Anglo-Saxon. Swedes who did not fit within the bounds of an ideology of whiteness were used as a contrast to Swedish Americans in films, which in the late 1930s and early 1940s began to express an ever more positive attitude towards anything perceived as American. Thus the way was paved for a general acceptance of emigration and the US, but the mishmash referred to by Wallén's character in *Du gamla, du fria* was quickly swept away to make space for a monocultural and ethnically homogeneous ideology.

Advancing on America

Du gamla, du fria was the first Swedish talkie with scenes set in the US. In *Jens Månsson i Amerika* (*Jens Mansson in America/Jens Mons in America*, Bengt Janzon, 1947), Edvard Persson in the leading role took the important step of crossing the Atlantic, in the first Swedish full-length movie to be filmed in America, at least according to the brochure put out by Europafilm: 'This was the first time a Swedish film crew had travelled across the Atlantic to shoot a sound film.'[83] According to Per Olov Qvist, both the production and content of Swedish films almost without exception remained firmly within Sweden's borders in the Thirties.[84] As far as production was concerned, the reasons were most often financial, but there was also a prevailing ideological sense that promoted Swedishness and the familiar, while regarding the foreign and unknown as 'dangerous'. Qvist argues that regardless of whether a film was set in Sweden or abroad, it expressed the same attitudes towards the foreign or unfamiliar.

Jens Månsson i Amerika was the first sound film in which a Swede travelled to America without being an emigrant; the good Swede breaks down boundaries in order to visit Swedish Americans. Edvard Persson and his movies had been very popular among Swedish Americans for years, and after the War he was invited to tour the US. Before his countrywide tour began in 1946, the idea was mooted of shooting a movie at the same time.

Naturally, while the eponymous hero of *Jens Månsson i Amerika* takes himself off to a foreign land, it is not in order to encounter other ways of life or cultures. The film used every one of the places visited during the tour, from the East Coast to the West, but the US

we are shown is populated by Swedes. The movie attempts to avoid presenting anything 'foreign' or multicultural, and instead portrays the US as culturally uniform and 'white'—indeed, almost Swedish. Here, the blending of Swedish and American characteristics that is hinted at in *Du gamla, du fria* is achieved to the full, with the sole purpose of transferring something essentially Swedish to the US. The emphasis on the Swedishness of the US is achieved in the way the movie's narrative leads to repeated encounters with Swedish Americans, and through various other film techniques.

The film is about a farmer from Skåne, Jens Månsson (Persson) who inherits money from a brother who had emigrated to the US (money and America are still linked), but the inheritance comes with certain conditions attached. Jens Månsson must visit America, and when he arrives it turns out that he has to obtain the signature of a third brother, who had also emigrated. However, no one knows where this brother can be found, and while searching for him, Jens is obliged to travel over the entire American continent. He has the company and assistance of a Swedish American, and together they have various adventures in the iconic American landscape. The movie can be seen as a homage to the US, with its progression of tourist highlights and beautiful natural scenes, but most of all it is a homage to Swedish Americans, who are now regarded with admiration and respect instead of the former misgiving. The prime example of Swedishness is always at hand, however, and the film's aim was established in an intertitle shown right at the start: it wished to show an America 'where so many scions of Sweden have come to live, and who, through their industry and enterprise, honour the country of their birth'. The almost official aspect of the movie emerges early on, when the two countries' national anthems are played as Jens travels from Sweden to the US, and rounds off the film in a final scene in which the song 'Sweden–America, Hand in Hand' confirms the relationship between the two countries.

All things Swedish are extremely prominent throughout the film, in part because Swedish Americans appear to be the most numerous ethnic group in the US, but also because Persson continuously draws attention to anything Swedish. It was natural that Persson's tour would visit the Swedish communities in North America, and it was these places that figured most in the film, both the classic locations of Minnesota and Illinois, and the perhaps less well-known enclaves in Texas and

California. One of Edward Persson's distinguishing marks as an actor, and in all probability one of the factors which made him so popular with the Swedish public, was that he never allowed himself to be impressed by anything. His 'monumental self-satisfaction', regional roots in Skåne, and Swedish national populist ideology are made very clear in his meetings with Americans.[85] He believes that everyone should learn Swedish, or, better, the dialect they speak in Skåne; he allies himself to the traditional view that the dollar is worthless, and that Swedish money is best; when he meets a Swede, he proclaims him a 'real person'; he dances a Swedish folk dance to a rumba; and he looks with distain on emigrants who had anglicized their names. All of his lines are spoken in the portentous tone that was Persson's trademark.

It is therefore white culture that the film construes as truly American. Other aspects of the American nation and its culture are treated in an arrogant or racist manner. When Jens Månsson arrives at his late brother's house, the door is opened by a black servant. Månsson looks at the servant with some concern, greets him by shaking hands, and then looks at his hand and wipes it on his coat as if the black colour might have come off on him. The film score marks the handshake with a slight increase in tension, which makes the essentially normal act of shaking someone's hand appear as a moment of drama. Everything that departed from the narrow definition of 'normality' as construed in Persson's movies is treated with a contempt which to some extent is camouflaged by his bonhomie. However, this ideology of whiteness informed the prevailing Swedish attitude to the US: American culture was self-evidently white culture, as long as the intention was not to draw a negative picture of the US—in which case, multicultural aspects were stressed, as in the beginning of *Du gamla, du fria*.[86] Ethnic homogeneity was always given preference in the conceptual world of Swedish film.

The message of *Jens Månsson i Amerika* is summarized in the closing song that Edvard sings when he is safely home in Skåne: 'Sweden–America, Hand in Hand'. According to the lyrics, America is a peaceful as Skåne, and that is why Swedes feel at home there; trade ties are marked in a phrase to the effect that America needs Swedish film stars and ball-bearings, while Sweden needs American nylons; and the conclusion of the song is that Sweden and America need each other and that the bonds of friendship must be strengthened. However, what the ideology expressed by the film and the song, both implicitly and

Edvard Persson, complete with cowboy outfit, is attended to by a servant in *Jens Månsson i Amerika*, 1947 (Swedish Film Institute Archive).

explicitly, was prepared to accept was that part of American society which was culturally and ethnically similar to Sweden—there was no question of understanding anything foreign or multicultural.

The dominant ideology in both the US and Sweden was built on what was regarded as the superiority of white culture, and in that respect the two countries were—and are—very similar. Johan Fornäs writes that the dominant Swedish attitude to American culture was still wilfully blind to race at this point, which could 'reinforce an uncritical acceptance of the dominance of the US and its cultural exports, which included its own racism. In this way, white hegemony was strengthened rather than called into question'.[87] Fornäs discusses in this context 'Sweden–America, Hand in Hand', and shows that by the linking of such words and phrases as 'fine pair of legs', 'Swedish', and 'Hottentot music', the lyrics have an unambiguously racist connotations. Fornäs sees the song as glorifying the US and the opportunities for industrial

cooperation promised there. However, under its good-natured surface there were some highly suspect elements to this homage: 'The praise for the United States' superiority went hand in hand with a continued racial prejudice, despite the fall of Nazism in Germany.'[88] We have encountered the same racial prejudice in connection with the 'vagrants' in movies such as *I mörkaste Småland* and *Flickorna i Småland*.

Film critics of various political shades highlighted how untrue to life it was that Persson only met Swedes everywhere he went, and many of them opined that more should have been made of the encounter with Swedish America—in terms of depicting the Swedish communities and Swedish American lifestyles.[89] However, the almost ambassadorial commission held by Persson and the film was noted with pleasure by many critics. *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning* wrote that 'There is not the slightest doubt that with this film he has strengthened the ties with Swedish America', and *Göteborgs-Posten* that 'The movie has a mission, which one notes with satisfaction. It is in the main a friendly, one could almost say heart-warming depiction of the great US and those of Swedish descent there, and it is perhaps not without importance for the fellow feeling extended to us from over the Atlantic.'[90] *Ny Dag* was more critical, arguing that the film should have captured 'something essential in the life of the Americans and their particular problems. Instead, the film descends into cheap propaganda for the US and for Swedish–American trade. A sort of personal thank you from Persson for his warm welcome'.[91]

The critics took up the film's key aspects, not least Persson as an actor and as a marketing agent for all things American. There is no doubt that they were aware of the advantage, or even the necessity, of the fact that it was Edvard Persson who had the task of conveying this highly positive opinion of the US and those things which were seen as characteristic of (white) America: a change in Swedish attitudes towards the great country to the West could only be achieved with the help of someone who had the confidence of the majority of the general public, which Edvard Persson had in abundance—in fact to just as high a degree as Wallén, for Persson had the aura of a national father figure, albeit of a different ideological slant.[92] Politically and ideologically, Persson stood for a conservative, patriarchal social order, but at the same time he was very much part of the Swedish welfare state, and for a majority of the public it was probably reassuring that

someone with feet so deeply sunk in Skåne's soil should act as an intermediary with America.[93]

Documentary films had made the jump to the US nearly twenty years earlier with *Bland landsmän i Amerika*. In their depiction of Swedish Americans, this and *Jens Månsson i Amerika* display many ideological and narrative similarities, despite the different eras in which they were produced and the shattering world events that had taken place in the interim: they had the same emphasis on the large Swedish population in the US, the same demarcation between the immigrant Swedes and other ethnicities, and the same racist portrayal of these other ethnicities and cultures. The new, better-disposed attitude to things Americas—which always meant white, Anglo-Saxon American culture—was also apparent in several documentary films of various lengths produced between 1948 and 1956.

The short movie *Svensk-amerikanskt* ('Swedish American') had its premiere in 1948 and was directed by Bengt Janzon, who had also made *Jens Månsson i Amerika*. Even though the latter movie was produced by Persson's usual company, Europa-film, and the short documentary by Svensk Filmindustri (SF), it is within reason to imagine that Janzon shot film for the short while in the US with Persson. *Svensk-amerikanskt* is a 13-minute-long 'reportage from the Midwest', and the framing narrative is that a Swedish American airline captain visits Sweden as part of his job, and then at the end of the film is back in the US. In the introduction, the unsatisfactory political situation that had resulted in the emigration of so many Swedes is said to have been rectified: 'welfare services and a cooperative society have revolutionized everyday life, breaking down the barriers separating people, creating a democracy where Americans would feel at home'. Because the prefix 'Swedish' is emphasized in the American settings, the movie is just as much propaganda for a social-democratic Sweden as it is a rather boastful homage to Swedish Americans. Throughout, it praises the contribution made by Swedes in the Swedish districts of Minnesota and Illinois as farmers, skilled workers, leaders of industry, trailblazers in the care of children and the elderly, university founders, and clergymen. *Svensk-amerikanskt* is a biologistic, chauvinist, imperialist homage to all things Swedish American. It concludes with the voiceover speaking of a new cross-fertilization between what had previously been regarded as belonging to separate European or American spheres, embodied in an airline captain

of Swedish descent: 'He who represents the new Swedish generation in America. One who no longer works the prairie, but is the pioneer of the air, of technology, of research; and who is now working to make Swedes known and honoured for their ground-breaking work in the field of spiritual cultivation.'

Swedes in America was an English-language film not made in Sweden, but it is an interesting production, and comparison, made by the US Office of War Information (OWI) in 1943. The OWI produced a large number of propaganda films intended to boost American patriotism, but it also had a European department which produced propaganda about the US for European consumption. The film is said to have been a response to the question 'What is it about American life that particularly appeals to Swedes?' which had been asked in letters from Swedish people. It represents the same ideology as the films produced in Sweden, but expresses more distinctly American liberal values. The movie presents Swedish life in the US over four centuries, stressing, for example, John Ericsson's achievements, and, like *Jens Månsson i Amerika*, the similarities between Sweden and the US, while other cultural and ethnic aspects of North America are supressed. To provide drawing power and guarantee its credibility, Ingrid Bergman acted as the film's cicerone, and the American expert on Scandinavia Arne Lunde has shown that the image of Ingrid Bergman as a country girl and winter sports enthusiast in *Swedes in America* was one strand in Hollywood's efforts during the Second World War, in a form of competition with Nazi Germany, to 'annex' Scandinavia.[94]

A couple of reportages-cum-advertisements from the 1950s further cemented this closer approach and growing mutual understanding with the US. The short film *Svenskstaden vid Indiansjön* ('The Swedish Town on Indian Lake', Håkan Cronsioe, 1956) was about second-generation emigrants in the US who did not speak Swedish. Jamestown in New York State is presented as 'a piece of Sweden in America'. However, it is not Swedish Americans who are honoured in the film, but instead it is America itself. The Swedes have become Americans.

Följ med till Minnesota ('Come with us to Minnesota', Håkan Cronsioe, 1954) was a 25-minute-long advertisement for Sparbanken savings bank, produced by Svensk Tonfilm.[95] The film aimed to show how important the bank had been for Swedish American success in agriculture in the US, and pushed the idea that the bank should give loans to

modernize Swedish farming along American lines. Sigge Fürst's narration gives us considerable insight into the work of Swedish American families on their extensive and very well-ordered farms, where throughout the film the mechanization and modernization of farming and domestic work is very much to the fore. American ways are depicted in such a positive light that one might well wonder whether it was an advertisement for the US rather than a Swedish bank. It was no longer just a question of outlining the similarities between the US and Sweden, or of making Swedish Americans appear to advocate Swedishness, but rather of holding up Swedish Americans and the US as examples for Sweden and the Swedes to follow—in matters of agriculture and personal savings, at any rate. The traditional Swedish traits that were played up in Thirties' films are used here to create a link between Swedish and American characteristics, and the bank's participation in the building of the nation is presented as being based on these characteristics. Fürst's voice tells us that in the US 'as everywhere on Earth, there is only one way to true prosperity—work and saving'. Swedish core values now applied in the US too. The criminal activities and near-worthless dollar that had been associated with America in past films and in Swedish public opinion are no longer to be seen. Sweden and America stood hand in hand, at least for twenty or so years to come.

Visitors in later years

During the 1940s, representations of Swedish Americans and the US became increasingly sympathetic, but also noticeably fewer in number. This was a large difference compared to the 1930s. In addition to the films mentioned above, we find positive depictions in *Lärarinna på vift* ('Teacher on the Loose', Börje Larsson, 1941), where a key character is a second-generation immigrant, and in *Bröder emellan* ('Between Brothers', Börje Larsson, 1946), *Brödernas kvinna*, *Hotell Kåkbrinken*, and *Stiliga Augusta*, the latter two with a sympathetic attitude to America on the everyday level. Visits to America became a feature of a number of films in following decades. As early as 1943 we find an example of this in *Prästen som slog knockout* ('The Parson's Knock-out' (Hugo Bolander), about a boxing manager and a university scholarship student, who have both been to the US. In it, America becomes almost part of a homage to Sweden: this is a movie with a

very strong emphasis on patriarchal, nationalist convention and the Swedish welfare state. *Livet på en pinne* from 1942 is an early example of a type of film that became increasingly common during the 1950s and 1960s: comedies that played on Swedish American or occasionally American stereotypes, and on attitudes to the US. This kind of playing with clichés can be a kind of light-hearted social critique, perhaps most of all of the unreflecting use of stereotypes and cultural representations. Other similar movies are the screwball comedy *Aldrig med min kofot eller Drömtjuven* ('Never with my Jemmy', Gösta Bernhard, 1954) the comedy *Älskling på vågen* ('Darling of Mine', Schamyl Bauman, 1955), in which Karl-Arne Holmsten played the renowned Swedish American actor Jack Harris.

There are also a few dramas that touch on emigration or Swedish Americans, such as *Glasberget* ('The Glass Mountain', Gustaf Molander, 1953), in which a man is more or less forced to emigrate because of his relationship with a woman, and becomes a pimp in the US, though ostensibly more as a consequence of the unhappy relationship than any bad American influence. A returned Swedish American can also be found in *Hästhandlarens flickor* (*Time of Desire*, Egil Holmsen, 1954) in the shape of a man who seems to have emigrated because he was excluded from society, which, of course, was given as a reason to emigrate in earlier movies. Representative emigrants and Swedish Americans appear in a few isolated films from the 1960s, but they only have small parts, adding period colour or providing a comic touch, as in *Hällebäcks gård* ('Hällebäck Farm', Bengt Blomgren, 1963), a rural drama based upon Sigge Stark's novel, or in a couple of films in the Åse-Nisse series.

Historical films, which started to appear in greater numbers in the 1960s, saw a boom in the 1970s. One was Lasse Holmqvist's extensive television series *På luffen i svenska Amerika* ('On the Road in Swedish America'). Research into emigration had begun to really take form in the 1960s and 1970s, which might be one reason for the growing interest in historical movies and television productions about this important era in Swedish history. The most extensive productions were *Utvandrarna* and *Nybyggarna* (*The Emigrants* and *The New Land*, Jan Troell, 1971 and 1972 respectively), but *Joe Hill* (Bo Widerberg, 1971) also had a historical theme, as did the less-well-known *Drömmen om Amerika* ('The Dream of America', Christer Abrahamsen, 1976), which was set at the

end of the nineteenth century and followed a pair of criminals who wished to emigrate (a theme that simply refused to die). Of the films produced in the 1970s which touched on the themes of emigration or Swedish Americans, the majority were set in a historical period and the action gave at least the appearance of being based on historical events.

The newly awakened interest in Swedish emigration can have been a consequence of the increasingly heavy criticism of American foreign policy and cultural dominance from the 1950s onwards. Globalization also meant that a larger number of Swedes were going to America to study and work, and there was a need for a deeper understanding of the country. This was a period when anti-Americanism was fairly widespread in Swedish society, but it was usually not immediately apparent in the movies made at the time, with the exception of the deeply critical *Gangsterfilmen* ('The Gangster Film', later 'A Stranger Came by Train', Lars G. Thelestam, 1974) which again used the motif of the returning Swedish American.

Gangsterfilmen tells the story of a sleepy town in Skåne that is suddenly descended on by three people who are ideological gangsters of a kind, but are also wholly criminal in a general sense. Before their arrival, there is a rumour that a well-known American gangster, Glenn Mortensen, will be showing up, and it turns out that he is of Swedish descent, and that his number two, Nils, came from the town. Both are coded as negative in the film because of their connection with America.

Mortensen is depicted in a way which makes him foreign, American, and gangster-like, according to Swedish preconceptions: he is smartly turned out in an informal way—white shoes, a signet ring, a necklace, and often sunglasses too—and he almost always has a drink in his hand. In the film, his violence erupts suddenly and without warning. There is a whiff of evil about him, says the town police chief. Mortensen is construed in the movie as evil because he comes from America, and his depravity manifests itself in his raping women and his attempts to indoctrinate the unsuspecting Swedish population with American shows—a symbolic rape. Few films have been so clearly anti-American as *Gangsterfilmen*. Mortensen can be seen as a Seventies' male version of the Thirties' Swedish American woman in *Dollar*, and indeed both films' titles are symptomatic of the two main threads in the Swedish understanding of America.

When it comes to movies produced in more recent decades, it is no

longer relevant to discuss emigration and Swedish Americans in the terms I have used thus far. Attitudes to America began to be treated in films and television productions in ways that did not involve representations of emigration or Swedish Americans, and from the 1960s onwards there is often an explicit critique of the country's politics or society. Anti-Americanism was fairly explicit in educational broadcasts as late as the 1990s, for example.[96] The relationship between what was American and what was Swedish became apparent in other ways, for example in American influence on the themes of Swedish films, or on their form and style—but that is beyond the scope of this book.[97] There are, though, still productions that have inherited the views on America and Swedish Americans that were prevalent in the 1930s: the television series *Svenska Hollywoodfruar* ('Swedish Hollywood Wives', 2009–) is designed to sneer particularly at working-class women who have chosen to live in the US.

Film and the nation—concluding remarks

This chapter presents a chronology of the representations, themes, and values to be found in Swedish films involving Swedish Americans. In recent decades, Swedish American characters have become more rare in Swedish film as the issue dwindled in significance. Just as emigration was a key theme of dramas and comedies in the 1910s and 1920s, the Swedish American was characteristic of the comedies and farces of the 1930s. In some dramas of the 1940s we encounter emigrants who have returned to Sweden, but in the 1950s and 1960s the Swedish American resurfaces as an amusing stereotype, essentially free of any ideological function. In the 1970s, there were once again a number of films concerned with emigration and dreams of America, but, after that, emigration and Swedish Americans were only marginal in Swedish film.

Film was quick to become a significant cultural vehicle for the creation of national narratives. It gave expression to the norms and values that formed the basis of standardized national identities, and anything that threatened this unity, or which showed other ways of relating to the world, as in the case of Sweden's American emigrants, had to be neutralized to avoid creating a serious split in the construct that was society. You could say that newly urbanized, industrialized Sweden, its fate tightly bound up with the welfare state, tolerated no criticism; and

in many ways, emigrants represented a telling criticism of Sweden. They might also return home from America with ideas that did not sit easily with the Swedish identity that was in the process of being constructed, particularly in the 1930s.

The importance of film to a society has often been remarked on when it comes to American movies, and perhaps American film does have a special position in its contributions to the construction of national narratives. However, the same has also been noted for Swedish film, especially by Per Olov Qvist in his work on film's many-facetted relationship with societal processes, above all in the 1930s. Swedish film contributed to the process of constructing a national identity, which to a large extent went hand in hand with the Swedish nation's dominant ideology. Film, thanks to the ambiguities it commanded, was an expression of popular culture that could quickly adapt to shifts in ideology, as it had a variety of points of view readily available.

A cultural, national, and ethnic homogeneity was fundamental to the nation-building of the twentieth century. During the social-democratic construction of the Swedish welfare state which began in the 1930s, one major aspect was the defence of Sweden and those things which were construed as Swedish. That some chose to reject Sweden for a life in America was compromising for Sweden's self-image, but at the same time the US was a country that people admired and in many ways wished to emulate. Views on America were ambivalent, as they were on emigrants and Swedish Americans. Although the fact that so many people were leaving Sweden was seen as a betrayal of both the nation and the national spirit, the dream of America was always there in the background. America had long been associated with democracy, a lack of class structure, modern attitudes, and opportunity for all, irrespective of background, and these associations, which had acquired almost mythic proportions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, would come to influence Swedish perspectives on Swedish Americans.

Just how the cultural identity of Swedish Americans was construed depended on how they behaved—were they to retain those characteristics that were regarded as representing Swedishness and were suitably apologetic about having left the country, then all was forgiven. The attitude which was most prominent in the films was a biologistic one: a Swede who had been Americanized was not biologically 'evil', but

rather had been infected by something foreign, and thus could once again 'become Swedish' down the line. It was even possible to redeem a criminal past. On the other hand, those who were seen as ethnically and culturally abnormal—travellers, for example—were construed as 'impossible to reform because they have criminality in their blood'.[98] 'Vagrants', who had long suffered persecution, slander, and exclusion from Swedish society, began to feature in films during and after the Second World War as the standing of the US changed, and filmmakers found they needed someone to contrast with the previously stigmatized Swedish Americans. Despite the fact that the 'vagrants' were Swedish citizens, they were not included in Sweden's 'white' cultural and ethnic community. Sweden (like all other nations) was, and is, regarded as a closed, homogeneous unity, for, as the historian Eric Hobsbawm writes, one of the tenets of nationalism is exactly that a nation is 'a territory which to a large degree is inhabited by an ethnically, culturally, and linguistically unified population'.[99] The emigrants departed this screened-off nation, in part to construct a new identity, and they were often regarded with suspicion in overtly nationalist Swedish films.

Swedish welfare state in its first decades—a period which coincided with political instability abroad—amounted to an ideological project to strengthen what was Swedish and demarcate what was foreign. Film Swedish Americans became both representative of those who had betrayed Sweden and advocates of the Swedish ideal. The relatively frequent appearance of Swedish American characters on screen of course also reflects the great popularity of Swedish films among Swedish Americans in the US around this time. The films were often concerned on various levels with the local–global dichotomy, invariably defending anything local. This too became a part of the broader Swedish project: things global in these films represent all that is foreign and strange.

With time, the depiction of Swedish Americans became generally less negative than might be supposed from reading the very limited literature on the subject. Mr Swanson, the blaring braggart, was not a typical character. Of course, the films construed various preconceptions about Americanization, modernization, and Swedish American identities—attitudes towards Swedish Americans reflected general attitudes towards America, it must be remembered. However, paradoxically, Swedish Americans were rarely made into advocates for Americanization; instead, they were shown as proponents of the Swedish welfare state

and its nation-building project, and what was taken to be the Swedish identity. On film, Swedish Americans were expected to show far greater love for Sweden and ostensibly Swedish characteristics, far more than any native Swede in fact, in order to be forgiven for abandoning their true country and once again be enfolded in the national embrace. Swedish Americans had to earn the right to be Swedish citizens again—a common theme in films about nationality. As Thomas Elsaesser writes, 'Nationhood and national identity are not given, but gained; not inherited, but paid for. They exist in a field of force of inclusion and exclusion, as well as resistance and appropriation.'[100]

Swedishness and all things Swedish were the governing principles, even in those films whose view of America was more positive, such as *Jens Månsson i Amerika*, which was nothing short of propaganda for America, or rather for the American–Swedish relationship. Even this film is in the business of Swedishness, achieved in this case by charting America's many similarities to Sweden. In the final analysis, a Swedish emigrant was still thought of as a Swede first and an emigrant second, and it is typical that it was Edvard Persson who became the ambassador for this view, using the power of his popular image as a patriot and his repeated casting as a no-nonsense farmer.

It was during the 1930s that the largest number of Swedish Americans featured in Swedish movies, and this reflected events in the real world: it was during this decade that the flow of people over the Atlantic reversed, as the Depression brought a final end to a history of Swedish economic emigration that stretched back decades. Many emigrants returned to Sweden, and those who stayed in the US now had quite different opportunities to visit the old country. Another important reason for the many Swedish American characters on screen was that the ideology of Swedishness was dominant in Swedish society at this time, and in the same way that early Westerns, as Richard Abel has pointed out, were crucial to the Americanizing project in the early twentieth century, one can regard Thirties' films as an important component of the Swedishness project of the day.[101] Abel shows that in iconographical and ideological terms, Westerns became the genre that characterized American nation-building, framing the myths of the nation's progress and relations with the indigenous peoples.

Swedish film captured the narrative of emigration as a central issue in the history of the Swedish nation. Of all the genres, it was com-

edy that was the site of this mythologizing negotiation of emigration, and which more and more appears as the Swedish equivalent to the American Western. It certainly presents the largest number of mythologizing elements, not least the positioning of Swedishness in respect to 'the foreign', which was fundamental in the demarcation of the nation: 'The increasingly popular Westerns of 1907–10, I would argue, served not only as models of negotiation in the construction of the single-reel fiction but as models of exclusion and inclusion, defined sharply to "race" and gender differences, in the construction of national identity. As quintessentially "American" subjects, they also staked out a territorial claim against "foreign" incursions.'[102] The same could be said of almost all the Swedish comedies of the 1930s. It might be countered that feature films always play a part in negotiations of nationality and identity, but it remains the case that it was true of the Thirties' movies to a particularly high degree. According to the film scholar Andy Medhurst, British popular comedies are in much the same way a barometer of Britishness, and comedy is the genre which, under cover of its often-misleading simplicity, offers the filmmaker the chance to address the various deficiencies and problems in a society.[103] Swedish comedies were not only popular with home audiences: Swedish Americans across the US used them as a link to the old country and to all that was Swedish, often in the most conservative of interpretations.

CHAPTER 4

Preserving Swedishness in the New World

Swedish film in Swedish America

Culture and Swedish American identity

It became essential for most Swedish Americans to preserve the memory of Sweden, using it to build a cultural identity in Swedish America that both comprised of a memory of Swedishness and could be used to justify their presence in the US. This was achieved in various ways. They retained, or learned, the Swedish language; they built their own Swedish churches and schools; they joined Swedish organizations; they produced newspapers, literature, and plays in Swedish. There exists research into all this activity, but very little on the role of film. According to the literary historian Lars Wendelius, this may be a consequence of the idea that film of itself implies Americanization, that film could not be a part of the mechanism of Swedish memory or contribute to the creation of a desirable conception of Sweden, while at the same time being equated with identity in the New World. Thus in looking at cultural life in one particular Swedish American community, Wendelius writes that 'In the 1910s, the theatre in Rockford faced serious competition from the movies. In Rockford's Grand Opera House—where, as a rule, touring troupes performed—there were more and more cinematographic shows. It is conceivable that this marked a pronounced Americanization of the cultural and entertainment life of the town. The emigrant communities probably lacked the resources needed to use the new medium for their own purposes.'[1]

In fact, nothing could have been further from the truth. As we shall see in this chapter, Swedish American communities arranged

film showings specifically aimed at recent immigrants and those who had been in the US for longer, including documentaries, travel films, shorts, and feature films.

Between roughly 1920 and 1950, Swedish films were an essential part of cultural life in Swedish America. After 1950, they continued to be shown, but the context changed in various ways: film showings were no longer held in cinemas specially aimed at Swedish immigrants, but instead were either shown at normal cinemas as part of the standard programme, or at dedicated venues, for example, in later years at Scandinavian House in New York, the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis, or the Swedish Cultural Center in Seattle. Naturally, Swedish movies were also shown to the general public before 1950, but I will concentrate on the showings directed at a particular audience. I will also not discuss those showings that are still put on by the organizations named above; where often, in Minneapolis' case at any rate, a form of Swedish promotional film was shown, which is better studied from other perspectives.

In August 1921, the Swedish American newspaper *Nordstjernan*, which was published in New York, wrote a detailed report about Svensk Filmindustri's plans to distribute films in the US. It took up several aspects of Swedish film that would prove important for the Swedish American population, and shows that 'Swedishness' and 'film as a creator of memories' were important reasons to show Swedish movies to Swedish Americans.

> When, on 2 July, the Swedish Glee Club in Brooklyn visited the headquarters of Swedish film, the Råsunda film studios, just outside Stockholm, Director Bouveng said in his speech welcoming the singers that, among other things, it was his hope that the acquaintance which was thus founded would soon be reborn on the other side of the Atlantic, for it was his intention to travel to America shortly in order personally to lead and oversee the introduction there of Svensk Filmindustri's cinematic productions, already renowned throughout the rest of the world. Just as the Brooklyn choir had travelled to Sweden to make Swedish America better known and respected, so he dedicated his American journey to making Sweden better known and appreciated there, and in this respect no medium could measure up to film. This message was received with the liveliest

> applause on the choir's part, and should also awaken unalloyed joy among the majority of Swedes in America, for the Swedish filmic arts are at such an exalted level that we may be assured of seeing various masterpieces of Scandinavian literature interpreted on film in a manner which no one else is capable of achieving. Furthermore, we should also have the opportunity of meeting once again those places which are so dear and well known to us, and of becoming acquainted with those parts of Sweden which we have not seen, for the material that exists includes an extensive number of landscape depictions from almost every nook and cranny of Sweden.[2]

The Swedish traditions (which, with time, changed in the US) that found cultural expression included the Protestant religion, which in Swedish America often had an explicitly Pietist element; the Swedish language, which emigrants at first shunned, but which experienced a revival towards the end of the nineteenth century; music, mostly in the form of songs (choral music based on Swedish songs is still widespread among Swedish Americans, for example, in Minneapolis); traditional dress; handicrafts; food (*smörgåsbord*, Swedish pancakes, and coffee mornings are still regular offerings even today, both at the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis and the Swedish Cultural Center in Seattle); and Swedish high days and holidays.[3] It was a form of rural culture, a popular culture of the sort cherished to this day at the Skansen Museum in Stockholm, which the various organizations sought out and, eventually, accommodated to the new Swedish American identity (or, more properly, identities—there has been relatively little research on socialist culture and its potential opposition to bourgeois Swedish American culture, which, perhaps for ideological reasons, always asserted the homogeneity of the Swedish American identity).[4] The ideology and type of Swedishness in which this culture had its roots, and with which it was interwoven, was strongly represented in the plays and films put on for Swedish Americans. According to Lars Furuland and Anne-Charlotte Harvey, who have both written on Swedish American theatre, popular burlesques and other comedies dominated the repertoire along with melodramas, although Swedish musicals were also common.[5] As Harvey stresses, the theatre repertoire can tell us a great deal about what the self-appointed guardians of Swedish culture chose to show, and what was accepted or rejected by the public. The play which was shown

more than any other during almost a hundred-year period, between the late 1860s and the early 1950s, was *Värmlänningarne* ('The People of Värmland'), while other highly popular pieces were *Bröllopet på Ulfåsa* ('The Wedding at Ulfåsa'), *Nerkingarne* ('The People of Närke'), and *Andersson, Pettersson, Lundström*. Swedish America's most popular slapstick comedian went by the stage name of Olle i Skratthult (lit. 'Olle in Laughterton') or Skratt-Olle ('Laughing Olle'). Harvey believes that these productions and the artists involved were referring back to a pre-industrial world populated by comical and romantic characters. In the Swedish American press, the performances were not reviewed in the traditional manner, and their success was discussed in terms of how many Swedes attended, how large a proportion of the audience were non-Swedes, how 'Swedish' the performance had been, and so on. Harvey writes about how theatres faced heavy competition from cinemas from the 1920s onwards.

Slapstick comedians and popular artists still performed widely throughout the period covered by my study, however, and according to the Swedish American newspapers, Laughing Olle, who told stories in dialect and sang songs to the accompaniment of his squeezebox accordion, was appearing as late as 1949. By that time, his performances were often cancelled because it was difficult to find places to perform in, a problem shared by those showing Swedish films. Another popular comedian was Skrällbom (lit. 'Crash Bang'), who was performing at least up to 1945, and there were sometimes visiting artists from Sweden, for example, the singer Lydia Hedberg, aka Bergslagsmor, and Gustav Fonandern, who sang traditional Swedish songs, sometimes in conjunction with film showings. By this point, around 1950, fewer and fewer people were able to speak Swedish well, and that was probably one of several reasons why Swedish-language performances became less common. In general, there was no lack of entertainment in Chicago or New York for the Swedish American public: the Swedish American press carried a stream of advertisements for balls, bazaars, trips, and festivities of various kinds.

The Swedish American press was an important conduit of ethnic consciousness, not least as a preserver of language. One example was the Swedish newspaper *Allsvensk Samling: En tidning för all världens svenskar* ('All-Swedish Digest: A Journal for all the World's Swedes') which was published by the Royal Society for Swedish Culture Abroad between

1914 and 1971.[6] Anna Williams writes that the Swedish American press created ethnicity on several levels: it communicated culture and offered guidance on how Swedish Americans could best fit into their new environment, while at the same time preserving and developing their particular ethnicity.[7] Also, it was through newspapers that Swedish Americans learned about the Swedish films that were to be shown in cinemas. Book publishing was also fairly extensive in Swedish America. There were pamphlets, almanacs, songbooks, and other small-scale publications, along with reprints of the Swedish canon and a not insignificant number of Swedish American authors who had written about their experiences as immigrants.[8] Several smaller publishers imported Swedish books; the Swedish publishing house Bonniers had its own bookshop in New York; and at least twenty printers and small publishers, as well as a number of Swedish book dealers, were scattered across the country, with concentrations in Chicago and Minneapolis.

All of these are examples of what research into emigration and immigration has long confirmed: that an immigrant culture which develops in the new country is established by means of networks which lie outside the homeland. The networks and the culture in which a person is situated directly influence the development of a form of collective memory or mythology about the old country. However, it was only certain elements of Swedishness that were incorporated, and, as I have said, the resulting culture had two sides to it: old memories and new identity. As Dag Blanck writes, the 'maintenance of Swedishness in America became a cultural project, involving the active creation of a Swedish American cultural tradition in the new land. This was an ethnic identity that drew on the cultural repertoire that Swedish Americans brought with them from Sweden, but in a very selective way. It was precisely these aspects of their cultural heritage that gave the Swedish Americans the capacity to fit into the larger American context.'[9] When they created their identity, Swedish Americans could pick and choose from Swedish history and culture, using it as they saw fit, and giving the component parts slightly different meanings in their new context. Exactly which elements were to be important in the new identity was something that was negotiated and renegotiated over the years. This process of identity-building saw people create their own Swedish American history in which the Vikings became, and still remain, deeply significant.

Giving the Vikings a central role of the version of history that developed, and in some ways making them a symbol for the Swedish American identity, was a strategy aimed at legitimizing Swedish Americans' own emigration; at asserting a form of local belonging in the US; and at stressing the importance of Swedish Americans to the US as one of the first nationalities to colonize North America.[10] Leif Eriksson and the Vikings were annexed by both Swedish and Norwegian Americans as the true discoverers of America.[11] This Viking cult took hold among Scandinavian Americans in the second half of the nineteenth century and was, in the words of Anne-Charlotte Harvey, 'a proud move on the part of Swedes in America that enabled them to claim a glorious past and the discovery of America at the same time'.[12] It has even been said that a contest between Scandinavians and Italians developed over who had first discovered America.[13] Towards the end of the nineteenth century, a large number of lodges and organizations sprang up, inspired by the theme of Viking history, including the International Order of the Vikings in 1890. Esiais Tegnér's epic poem *Frithiofs saga* (*Frithiof's Saga*), written in 1825, was widely distributed in Swedish America.[14] Seen from a different theoretical perspective, this honouring of the Vikings was a way for Swedish immigrants to 'become white' and integrate into American Anglo-Saxon culture (I will return to this in the next chapter). Because they could claim to have been the continent's original white inhabitants, the Scandinavians could be seen as having 'biological fitness for citizenship'.[15] This enthusiasm for the Vikings flourishes to this day, and has found expression in many different ways: a type of Viking game was played in the documentary film *Svenskarna i Amerika* of 1923 (see Chapter 2), while today courses on the Vikings are given at departments of Scandinavian studies in the US, and DVD showings about the Vikings are often announced at the Swedish Cultural Center in Seattle.[16]

The Swedish American community was not uniform: there were various groupings based on class, culture, and political affiliation. However, the Church and organizations which worked to preserve the use of the Swedish language were a powerful influence for many.[17] According to an article in *Nordstjernan* on 20 January 1922, it was also the churches and the language that were especially cherished by the Royal Society for Swedish Culture Abroad, founded in Sweden in 1908, and this somewhat nationalistic, conservative view of culture

was one shared by many Swedish Americans. This is made clear by the tone adopted by the newspapers when writing about film showings.

Swedish Americans used culture to provide an entrance to American society and, once there, to conform with it, while at the same time they wished to set their distinctive mark on a multi-ethnic environment.[18] The identity-based politics common to emigrant groups the world over—erecting borders between themselves and others to recreate a cultural homogeneity—has been closely examined by David Morley and others.[19] America, far from being the melting pot usually talked of, saw different nationalities fight tooth and nail to retain their own culture and to create something which distinguished them from others.

In this chapter I will discuss the movies that were shown among Swedish American groups, and the way in which the Swedish American newspapers wrote about them. The newspapers I have studied cover the entire continent of North America, and represent those areas settled by the greatest numbers of Swedes: *Nordstjernan* from New York; *Chicagobladet*, *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, *Svenska Amerikanaren*, and *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen* from Chicago; *Minnesota stats tidning* and *Svenska Amerikanska Posten* from Minneapolis; *Svenska (Pacific) Tribunen* from Seattle; as well as *Texasposten* and *Utahposten* from their respective states.[20] Films were mostly mentioned and discussed in advertisements and shorter reports—one would not expect to find reviews as such in all of the newspapers. The newspaper which most often published film criticism worthy of the name was *Nordstjernan*. The writers there were clearly both knowledgeable about film and interested in it, and they wrote long, thorough reviews.

To a certain degree, we can learn something of how Swedish Americans created their cultural identity by following which films were shown and became popular; and we can learn about the conception and image of Sweden they wished to construct by following how newspapers wrote about film. It was largely the same Swedish films that became popular on both sides of the Atlantic, but they signified different things depending on the social and cultural context, and on what they were 'used' for. The reception of Swedish films by Swedish Americans was different because they were far from home; for them, a film showing was not just entertainment or a cultural experience, but also a window on the familiar and known, and a way to stay in touch. From the ways the newspapers wrote about film, it is possible

to tell how the public sought to use it. It is important to note that the film reviewers were almost certainly first-generation immigrants: later generations did not have the sort of personal knowledge of Sweden and their reviews would have been very different.

Nowadays, research into migration and identity is quite extensive, but it is often concerned with contemporary matters. Very few researchers have considered the topic's historical dimensions.[21] Apart from the research on identity in conjunction with migration, work on memory has also made great strides, and, without going into detail in what is now an increasingly busy field, I would argue that 'without question, the idea of place still often constitutes an important anchor for memory as a remembered or fabricated origin made "real" by matters of faith and custom'.[22] Sweden and Swedishness as ideas permeate most of the articles and reports on films shown in Swedish America, and it would seem it was impossible for Swedish Americans to see too many pictures of the old country.

Distribution and screening

According to the newspapers, the first movie screenings for Swedish Americans in the US took place in November 1916 and April 1917 in Chicago. After that, there were no further advertisements until February 1919, when Swedish films began to be shown in Chicago at regular intervals.[23] A more regular distribution system for the Swedish population across the whole of America seems to have come into being in 1921, establishing itself rapidly: over the course of 1923, it is possible to see a dramatic change in marketing in *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter* as film advertisements became larger and more numerous. Who was responsible for arranging screenings is not always stated in the advertisements, but the very first film showings in 1916 and 1917—of *Sverige i bilder*—were organized jointly by a film company based in Stockholm called Svensk-America (this was the short-form name used in the advertisements) and Svenska Sångarförbundet (the Swedish Choral Society) in Chicago, and were held in Orchestra Hall. For the screenings in 1919, which were held in the Aryan Grotto Temple, and included *Tösen från Stormyrtorpet* (*The Girl from the March Croft*, Victor Sjöström, 1917), it is not clear who the organizers were, or how the movies were obtained—a situation which is relatively common.

The details of who imported and distributed the films, and who took charge of the showings, are to a certain degree lost, but with the help of various pieces of the puzzle it is possible to form a relatively good understanding.

Previous research has shown that churches and community organizations were significant arenas for the growth of Swedishness, as well as an idealized, chauvinistic, conservative view of Sweden. Both the earlier distributors and their later successors directed their efforts towards these forums. In *Utahposten* in 1921, the public were informed that the film company Skandinavisk Filmcentral was to open offices in New York under the name Palladium-film (after its cinemas in Sweden), from where it would rent films to churches and a variety of other organizations.[24] The first showing in Salt Lake City, which was organized with the help of Palladium-film, was of a Sweden film, a documentary detailing Swedish nature, landscape, festivals, and daily life (such films will be discussed in more detail in below). By aiming to serve the organizations that promoted the dissemination of this kind of nationalistic Swedishness, the film companies can be said to have affiliated themselves with the cultural attitudes and ideology which these organizations stood for. The name Palladium-film does not crop up again in any of the newspapers, but the company may have continued to distribute films.

It is clear from the newspaper advertisements that various organizations did indeed arrange film showings, and not just Sweden films but also feature films. These screenings were not just characterized by Swedishness, but perhaps more often by an enthusiasm for individual regions of Sweden. For example, *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter* on 8 August 1923 carried advertisements for two different showings in Chicago of *Tösen från Stormyrtorpet*, at the Julian Theatre and the Calo Theatre, both in Lakeview, which had a large Swedish community. The Chicago Dalaförbund (Chicago Dalarna Association) had organized the showings with the owner of the Calo Theatre, and both venues were given over to a celebration of Dalarna. Girls from the Chicago Dalarna Association appeared in the appropriate folk dress, and Henry Corsell sang songs during the interval. The evenings were not just directed at people who came from Dalarna, and the advertisements made it clear that the showings were 'For all Swedes'. Tickets could be bought from all the members of the Dalarna Association. *Värmlänningarna* ('The People of Värmland',

Erik A. Petschler, 1921), which was shown on many occasions in the US, was given a screening in Brooklyn in April 1922, arranged by the Swedish Glee Club and Lyran, the Swedish choral society.[25] There was a regional flavour, although of a somewhat less National Romantic kind, to the January 1924 showing by Stockholmsklubben (the Stockholm Club) in New York of *Anderssonskans Kalle* ('Andersson's Kalle', Sigurd Wallén, 1922).[26]

In 1929, at the meeting house of the Pentacostalist Ebenezer Church in Chicago there was a New Year's celebration at which a film called *Sverige Filmadt 1929* ('Sweden on Film 1929') was shown.[27] Who was responsible for producing, making, and distributing these Sweden films is often rather unclear. As was made clear from press items over the years, in some cases it was simply private individuals who had been to Sweden on a visit and had shot home movies, which were then screened when they returned to America, mostly at the meetings of various organizations. Individuals in general seem to have been significant for the film culture of Swedish America. In the first half of the 1920s, advertisements published in the Swedish press in Chicago often stated that tickets should be bought from private individuals, whose home addresses were given: Othelia Myhrman, Carl Youngberg, Emil Peterson, and Helander are names which often crop up. It was also the case that private individuals imported Swedish films, including major feature films. In *Nordstjernan* on 6 December 1921 there was an announcement that it would be possible to rent a film of *Värmlänningarna* from Tage Cronström, who was expected in New York from Sweden. What was essentially the same advertisement can be found in the Chicago newspaper *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter* later that same December: 'Societies and private individuals who wish to hire the film should write to Mr Tage Cronström, who will arrive in New York in mid December.'[28] This was the year when film showings began to be put on for Swedish Americans on a more regular basis. Cronström appears to have been active for a number of years: on 15 April 1925, *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter* reported his return to America, bringing with him several Swedish films. It was even possible to apply for an exclusive licence to show the films, available from the Chicago company Wahlquist & Burgeson. As late as 1936, when the institutionalization of film culture was well advanced, there was a notice in the Seattle newspaper, *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, that informed readers that Gus Backman had returned from a visit to

Sweden, bringing with him 'a number of movies for the amusement of the public'.[29]

When churches arranged screenings, which they now did regularly, most often to show Sweden films, they were held on church premises. Associations and other community organizations rented cinemas or other venues for their screenings. In those cities and towns covered by the newspapers I have studied, it was not unusual for the Swedish screenings to have a permanent location at a particular cinema. In Seattle, however, films were shown in various places: the Metropolitan Theatre and the Wintergarden Theatre, in the Masonic Temple, and in the auditorium of the Swedish Club. The usual cinemas seem to have been the Roxy Theatre and the Music Hall. In every city it became increasingly difficult to find places where Swedish films could be shown. *Svenska Pacific Tribunen* wrote as early as 1942 that 'The best Swedish films are available, but the difficulty of finding a locale in Seattle for regular Swedish film showings has been the cause of the comparatively long delay in arranging screenings.'[30] In this case, the film in question was the Ingrid Bergman film *En enda natt* (*Only One Night*, Gustaf Molander, 1939), and the organizers eventually managed to hire the Metropolitan Theatre. That times were changing was also clear from the unfavourable times of day available for such screenings: in the present case, only Monday and Tuesday evenings, and Sunday between 11 and 1 o'clock. The same difficulties were experienced in Chicago towards the end of the 1940s, where the comedian Skratt-Olle often had to cancel his performances because of difficulties finding anywhere to perform. *Svenska Amerikarnaren Tribunen* of 4 March 1948 had a notice to the effect that the distributor Scandia Film had had difficulty in finding a venue for the Chicago screening of the Edvard Persson film *Jens Månsson i Amerika*. It was eventually shown at The Little Theatre, a cinema that could only seat 300.

Chicago was one of the cities where there was a cinema that was usually available for the showing of Swedish films. At first, cinemas and other locales with names such as Orchestra Hall, the Aryan Grotto Temple, the Clermont Theatre, and the Calo Theatre were used. As early as 1923, in the northern Chicago Lakeview district with its large Swedish population, the Julian Theatre on Belmont Avenue became increasingly known as the Swedish Theatre, and it was called this by *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*. The Julian Theatre was a home to

Swedish cinema from the mid 1920s until the early 1940s, although there were sometimes showings at the nearby Calo Theatre. The cinema was subsequently used as a church, before finally being demolished in 2005.[31]

In Manhattan, Swedish films were at first shown at City Hall; in Brooklyn, at the Academy of Music, which was used to show films for a long time. A couple of cinemas in Manhattan became permanent venues for Scandinavian film: as early as 1928, an article in *Nordstjernan* remarked that the Fifth Avenue Playhouse was increasingly living up to its promise to be a cinema for Swedish film.[32] In New York, organizers deliberately set out to attract the general public, and not just Swedish speakers; however, films were not always subtitled into English, even in the 1930s, and according to the American reviewers in the *New York Times*, audiences were mainly made up of Scandinavians.[33]

There seems to have been a hiatus before the business of importing, distributing, and screening became more organized. To a large extent, the Swedish Americans who organized the film showings had to rely upon help from private sources. Since 1908, Denmark's Nordisk Film had had offices in both New York and Minneapolis as the Great Northern Film Company, and SF seems to have had rental operations all over the world—the fact that Swedish films were being shown is proof enough.[34] According to a note in the archive at the Swedish Film Institute, Nils Bouveng had a contract with SF from 1921 to 'take care of film sales in the US', a contract that was roughly contemporary with the sudden jump in the number of Swedish film showings to Swedish Americans.[35] SF directed its work more to the general public, and it can be seen from the Swedish American press that private individuals and a number of independent entrepreneurs were responsible for importing films to be shown by Swedish American organizations.[36]

Bouveng seems to have mostly been responsible for importing films in the 1920s, and thereafter Ernest Mattsson took over as the key player in the flow of films between Sweden and America. It is beyond my scope to give a complete description of the toing and froing, and the sources are also very limited, but an article from 1931 in *Nordstjernan* provides a fairly detailed account.[37] It reported that from 1910 on in London, and later in the US, Mattsson worked on exporting films from those countries to Sweden. When the article was published in 1931, he had started the company Scandinavian Talking Pictures Inc.,

with offices on 220 West 42nd Street in New York, and according to the article, during the autumn of 1931 he had plans to distribute and show twelve Swedish films. Later, as far as can be told from the meagre evidence available, he founded the production company Scandia Films Inc. at the same address. Scandia produced or co-produced a number of films, including *Jens Månsson i Amerika* and the short films made at the same time by Håkan Cronsioe, and the documentary *Svenskt i och omkring New York* ('Swedish in and around New York') from 1943.[38] Scandinavian Talking Pictures imported around seventy more Swedish films during the 1930s, and was co-producer of Edvard Persson's movie *Än leva de gamla gudar* (*Old Gods Still Live*, Schamyl Bauman, 1937).[39] It is possible that Scandinavian Talking Pictures and Scandia Films were one and the same company, especially given the former's change of name in 1940 to Scandia Films, which was then listed as the distributor in a couple of newspaper items. According to Gustav Scheutz, writing in the Svenska Filmsamfundet yearbook in 1944, Mattsson had for some years had what amounted to a monopoly on importing Swedish films to the US.[40]

In the 1931 article in *Nordstjernan*, Mattsson had expressed the hope that there would be a permanent Swedish cinema in New York, only showing Swedish films. It is clear that neither Mattsson nor *Nordstjernan* thought the programme at the Fifth Avenue Playhouse cinema, which showed Swedish movies every week, was sufficient—perhaps they did not have as large an influence over the cinema as they would have liked. In 1938, *Nordstjernan* wrote that organizers had finally managed to find a dedicated cinema for showing Swedish film: the 48th Street Theatre. According to the newspaper, this was entirely the doing of Scandinavian Talking Pictures, that is, Mattsson, and the writer expressed great satisfaction with the cinema's appearance and decor: 'Now Swedish movies can be shown here independently of other foreign movies, and in an atmosphere that is conducive to our Swedish comfort.'[41] In 1945, operations were moved back to the Fifth Avenue Playhouse, as an article in *Nordstjernan* announced with an air of disappointment.[42] Swedish screenings were held there for several years, and subsequently Swedish films were increasingly shown in more restricted circumstances, specifically aimed at Swedish Americans. The emphasis over the years on having a dedicated cinema had a purely pragmatic explanation, of course: the organizers wished to have a suitable venue in a convenient

location (especially true of the Julian Theatre), and access to favourable screening times. It seems very likely that there was an element of identity formation and differentiation in all this, which would have gone hand in hand with the more pragmatic considerations.

There is an interesting example of a planned project that would have taken Swedishness as a premise of sorts. The project seems not to have been carried out, however. The Valkyria Picture Company, a Swedish American production company based in New York, was said to have been founded in 1921 with the purpose of 'particularly shooting the kind of drama which more intimately shows the national life of Sweden, from ancient times to the present. Thus a performance of Tegnér's play *Frithiofs Saga* is under consideration.'[43] As far as can be made out from the announcement, the company appears to have been prompted by both Scandinavian chauvinism and racial biology. The announcement stated that Valkyria had contracts for four films, and that it had engaged the Swedish actress Sonia Carlsson. There were also plans to offer a certain amount of training for movie actors: 'One wishes to train Swedish men and women in the arts of film, since it is necessary to use typical Swedish characters.'[44]

Sweden films

Documentary or semi-documentary films that showed Swedish nature and life in a variety of forms, sometimes in the form of travelogues, I have chosen to call 'Sweden films' (*Sverigefilmer*) as they often were termed also in the newspapers.[45] Before film showings became common, shows of lantern slides with the same content and themes were popular: the public thus had already had access to images from Sweden. Sweden films, however, were not newsreels of the usual type; indeed, newsreels proper seem to have been rare at Swedish American screenings. As late as the 1940s, *Nordstjernan* wrote that Film-Matte—presumably meaning Ernest Mattsson—was intending to start importing newsreels.[46]

As early as 1916, the film *Sverige i bilder* ('Sweden in Pictures') had been shown at Orchestra Hall in Chicago, followed by the programme *Sverige i rörliga bilder* ('Sweden in Moving Pictures') at the same venue in 1917. The content of these two programmes was partly the same, although the latter was considerably longer. The screenings seem to have been akin to public lectures, and there was an emphasis in the

films on official matters and festivals. A Professor Hillberg introduced the film, and the programme also included organ music and singing. Swedishness was to be presented in a serious manner, framed in high culture, and not with popular songs and accordion music. Not yet, at any rate.

From the first Swedish feature films screenings in Chicago in 1919, some kind of Sweden film was shown at nearly every Swedish film showing, either in the form of several shorts, or a single longer film. Sometimes, especially during the 1920s, a lengthy Sweden film was the main attraction of the evening, while later they often formed part of a cinema programme. The showings were done in the grand style, with all-Swedish evenings that naturally attracted an audience that mostly had strong ties to Sweden.

In their Twenties' heyday, there were four or five major Sweden films that were shown all across the US, and sometimes were given repeat showings. The first of them was *Sverige i sommar och vinter* (*Sweden in Summer and Winter*), sometimes also referred to as *Sverige i sommar- och vinterskrud* ('Sweden in Summer and Winter Dress') (the titles varied at times, probably because the films were actually compilations of various shorts). It is interesting that these films often moved from west to east through the US, while feature films were nearly always shown in New York first. *Sverige i sommar och vinter*, however, was first screened in Salt Lake City: *Utahposten* carried an advertisement for it on 26 January 1921, giving Skandinavisk Filmcentral as being responsible for the screening. The movie was also shown elsewhere, including Chicago (February 1921) and Seattle (April 1921), and in the advertisement in the *Svenska Pacific Tribunen* (which was in English, in contrast to the Swedish used in the rest of the newspaper) we see in concentrated form the components that went into these films, how they were interpreted by newspaper staff, and what function they served for their audiences.[47] These can be summarized with the concepts 'history', 'nostalgia', 'age', and 'travel': 'Intimate glimpses of everyday in quaint old cities and countryside of Sweden. Reminiscences of a glorious history … Just think! A trip to Sweden for 50 cents.'[48] This view of Sweden—the memories and identity that were shaped by the Sweden films—harks back to nationalist and conservative views of culture, and the ethnic identity which was construed and promoted by churches and traditional organizations, as Dag Blanck has discussed.

The second major Sweden film was *En turistfärd genom Sveriges städer och natursköna bygder* ('A Tour through Sweden's Towns and Areas of Natural Beauty'). From the advertisement's turn of phrase, it seems likely that this was a compilation, especially as it stressed that it was made up of films and not lantern slides. Once again, the film was compared to a journey to Sweden—a recurring theme in most of the advertisements for Sweden film showings. It was to be followed by music and singing, both Swedish and Scandinavian—music was often an important part of the construction and celebration of Swedish ethnicity at film showings of all kinds. Hence the New York showing could offer: 'Moving choral quartets by the Swedish Glee Club will accompany the films. A special program of Scandinavian melodies by a first-class orchestra conducted by Professor Gustav Lindgren.'[49] Swedish music was played on these occasions, often as a separate item on the evening's programme, and it was common to find exhibitions of art and crafts by Swedish Americans in the foyer of the cinema. Various art forms contributed to what was often a nostalgic celebration of the Sweden of memory.

That Sweden films were a kind of substitute for an actual journey to the old country was naturally part of the nostalgia, but it was also an expression of the phenomenology that had reigned since the birth of film.[50] A journey in the mind had indeed been part of film's attraction, and films that showed other parts of the world, or which thematicized travel itself, had been popular since the end of the nineteenth century. For Swedish Americans, the opportunity to see films about Sweden had a different significance than for native Swedes, even if a number of them were also shown in Sweden. Film became a way for emigrants to make a mental journey home, if only for an evening. Taking images of the old country to the new was also possible thanks to the work of Swedish American artists. For example, Frithiof Calling regularly visited Sweden between 1887 and 1902 in order to paint *gåramålningar* (naïve paintings of individual farms and properties), commissioned by Swedes in the US.[51]

One of the most popular and famous Sweden films ever, judging by the number of showings, was the two-hour *Sweden. The Land with the Sunlit Nights*, which went by its English title. In Chicago, it was screened for several weeks in November 1922 at the Selwyn Theatre, and the following year it was already being shown again at the Julian

Theatre.[52] That the film was very much a journey was something that was stressed in the advertisements: 'All aboard for the journey to Sweden this coming Sunday.'[53] In New York, a tenor called Beckman sang 'the national anthems and folk songs always so dear to our hearts. These were well chosen, complementing the pictures and enhancing their mood.' The reviewer had the impression that a large proportion of the audience came from Småland, 'since, as the images unrolled on the screen, and were recognized by one or more in the audience as their dear home or birthplace, clapping could be heard here and there in the salon; and to judge by the loud applause that greeted the pictures of fair Småland, it seems that Smålanders formed a majority of the audience'.[54]

The movie was called travelogue (*reserevy*) when it was shown in Seattle, the advertisements stressing that it gave the same impression as if one had experienced Sweden at first hand. The film was set out as if it were a visit home: it began with the crossing to Gothenburg and ended with the return journey to the US. *Sweden. The Land with the Sunlit Nights* was a typical Sweden film, and showed many parts of Sweden, concentrating on its nature and everyday life—images of industry and other places of work take up little of the film's time. According to what was written in the newspapers, nature and everyday life were what audiences wanted to see, a clear expression of a nationalist, nostalgic conception of Sweden. The movie contained the following scenes:[55]

1. New York to Gothenburg. Life on board a modern ocean liner.
2. Sweden's west coast. Sensational sailing stunts, feats of daring, and skilful manoeuvres.
3. Sassnitz–Trelleborg to Stockholm. The Baltic is crossed on board a Swedish State Railways ferry, the largest and best ferry service in Europe.
4. Stockholm, Sweden's capital. More than half an hour is given over to the enchanting beauty of this Nordic Queen of Cities—one of the world's most beautiful capitals.
5. Over the Baltic to Finland. A journey through the rocky rapids of Ule Älv in a 'Water Sight Seeing Bus'.
6. Sundsvall, and up the Indalsälv—through the sawmill and timber district.
7. Jämtland at Midsummer. Åre to Storlien—mighty waterfalls of in-

comparable natural beauty. Mountain climbs. Enchanting mountain lakes. The Lapps. Five thousand reindeer pass by the camera.
8. From Sollefteå to Ramsele. Another part of the timber district.
9. The pleasures of Northern Sweden. Scenes north of the Arctic Circle, where the sun lingers above the horizon, night and day, for several weeks of the summer. The sensational scenic grandeur of Lappland, and the glitter of the midnight sun on the lakes.
10. The natural beauty of Lake Vättern. Interesting pictures from the fruit-growing district.
11. In the county of Småland.
12. Värmland—'Gösta Berling country' in Dr Selma Lagerlöf's book.
13. Castles in Skåne.
14. The life of the storks. Photographed from the roof of Trollenäs Castle. The most wonderful film of birds ever made.
15. Industry in Västerås—ASEA's electrical workshops and Svenska Metallverken.
16. Västergötland. The churches of Varnhem and Husaby. The oldest churches in Sweden still in use. A thousand or more years old.
17. The Göta Canal to Gothenburg. The world's most famous canal journey. Up and down the flights of locks in a steamboat.
18. The Gothenburg Exhibition of 1923. Commemorating the founding of the city 300 years ago by King Gustavus Adolphus, the hero of the Thirty Years War.
18. Return to America.

The film's popularity can be explained by the fact that it showed the parts of Sweden that many of the emigrants came from, but also those which had become iconic or were regarded as the most exotic: the area of Norrland is the foremost example. Norrland usually featured in both longer and shorter films. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the area was intensively exploited by the Svenska Turistföreningen (a travel association which went on to start the Swedish youth hostel movement), and was developed 'in the 1890s until it was regarded as a sight worth seeing of national importance', which film after film confirmed.[56] It became an essential task of all Sweden films to show a Sweden that was easily recognizable and, at the same time, special and distinctive. *Sweden. The Land with the Sunlit Nights* also took the opportunity to locate Sweden within Europe and the world so as to promote Sweden's advantages.

Depictions of the old country as people wished to see it, in *Se Sverige!* 1924 (Swedish Film Institute Archive).

The next film in this genre to be a popular hit was *Filmen från Sverige. Sverige i fest och Göteborgsutställningen* ('The Film from Sweden. Sweden *en fête* and the Gothenburg Exhibition'—the title varied). As was usual, it was shown in several cities with Swedish American communities, and apparently proved especially popular in Chicago, because it followed the Chicago Glee Club on its tour of Sweden—indeed, it was sometimes referred to as *Sångarfärden från Skåne till Lappland* ('A Choral Voyage from Skåne to Lappland').[57] The film was also shown in Austin, Texas, where Swedish screenings were rather more unusual at this time. The showing was held in a school in the city, and according to reports the Swedish Club, which was organizing it, had worked hard to make the event possible. 'Even those who have not been to Sweden may be proud of their country thanks to this film', noted the local Swedish newspaper.[58]

It was the Swedish American filmmaker Waldemar J. Adams's company, Adams Picture Craft Travels Inc., which screened the Sweden films in the US. In the summer of 1924, presumably influenced by the enormous popularity these films enjoyed, Adams made his own, *Se Sverige!* ('See Sweden!'), which later was distributed by SF.[59] Parts of the film survive in the Sveriges Television archive. It was a traditional Sweden film, focussing on nature, typical cityscapes, and dramatic views, and it was also shown in Sweden. The Swedish critics were evidently aware that the movie was primarily intended for Swedish American audiences in the US, because their reviews remarked on how Sweden was presented to those groups, and not just on how the Swedish public might react. One critic even wrote that it was tear-jerking propaganda for Swedish Americans, which illustrates how these Sweden films truly encapsulated a particular iconography of Swedishness, emphasizing elements that were useful in the construction of a Swedish American identity.[60] Other reviewers thought that any patriotic fervour instilled by the film would be just as appropriate for a native Swede as for a Swedish American, even those who were not particularly nationalistic. *Stockholms Dagblad* wrote that the film was 'intended for our countrymen far away in America as a greeting from the land of their fathers and mothers. Yet it should mean just as much to every Swede, and one cannot but believe that even the most hardened communist heart would beat a little faster when presented with these scenes of grandeur'.[61]

The film was indeed a hit with Swedish Americans audiences, and in Chicago it was shown with a musical accompaniment by Hjalmar Nielsen's full symphony orchestra.[62] According to the newspapers, the film met with loud applause and 'in many, the pangs of homesickness were heart-rending'.[63] One of the movie's intertitles played on this personal, emotional connection: 'A greeting from the land of your Fathers and Mothers, this film is dedicated to Swedes in America.'

The advertisements for many of the films emphasized that there were intertitles in English as well as Swedish, and people were encouraged to bring along their American friends. It was even spelled out that the films could be expected to impress Americans; they were a way of making Sweden known and recognized.

From the end of the 1920s, far fewer Sweden films were produced and shown, and for several years thereafter the longer films were mainly shown in parish halls, churches, and school auditoriums. Svenska

Turistföreningen produced some that toured similar locales, including *Sverige av 1929* ('Sweden in 1929'), also known as *Sverige filmadt 1929* ('Sweden on Film 1929'), which was shown at the New Year's Eve celebrations that year at the Ebenezerkyrka church hall in Chicago.[64] Sometimes, private individuals would tour with films, such as Dr Amandus Johnson, who conducted a lecture tour with his film *Sweden Today*. Another amateur production that was shown in alternative venues to cinemas was *Du hemmets jord* ('Thou Soil of Home').[65]

During the 1930s, the Sweden films were cut down to make shorts, and at almost every Swedish movie screening one of them was shown before the main feature. They had titles such as *Stockholm i bild* ('Stockholm in Pictures'), *Norrlandsrapsodi* ('Norrland Rhapsody'), *Med Uttern till fjälls* ('With the Otter in the Hills'), *Midsommar i Hälsingland* ('Midsummer in Hälsingland'), and *Resa genom Göta kanal* ('A voyage through the Göta Canal'). The focus of the showings was increasingly on the main feature film, but there was one major event still to come: the release of the documentary short *I Gösta Berlings land* ('In Gösta Berling's land', Folke Svensson, 1935) with a script by Selma Lagerlöf, which was produced by Europafilm.[66]

As we have seen, Swedish emigrants created a Swedish American historiography in which the Viking Age played a central part. One film producer realized that a film could be used to concoct and promulgate this version of history, which was in part used to justify the presence of the Swedes in the US. Thus 1934 and 1935 saw screenings of the film *Sweden, Land of the Vikings*, which, despite its title, I count as a Sweden film rather than a history film.[67] The movie was produced and filmed by John W. Boyle, and is called a 'documentary' by the IMDB website.[68] According to the same source, many of the locations in the film are those found in other Sweden films, albeit with a slight bias towards western Sweden (presumably because of the proximity of the Svenska Amerika Linjen ocean liners) and nothing of Norrland. When the film was shown in Seattle and Chicago, for example, care was taken to reinforce its Swedishness by performing Swedish folksongs. Viking movies are still produced today, although they go straight to DVD; they are often shown in conjunction with lectures. The Viking Era continues to permeate much of Swedish American culture, but often in a more superficial way, with Viking culture becoming a kind of decoration, or playful scene-setting. In the autumn of 2011, Seattle's

Swedish Cultural Center invited the public to a Viking Happy Hour with masked ball and dance ('Two floors of Vikings! During Happy Hour, Viking look-alikes will flood the dance floor'); Leif Eriksson Day is celebrated in various places with the building of Viking longships; and T-shirts and badges with Viking motifs are sold at festivals all around the US.[69] It is amazing that this cult has proved so long-lived and has attained such proportions. In its defence, the Viking motif is visually powerful, and the connection between Scandinavians and Vikings has had great success in various forms of cultural expression, which in American cultural life is now regarded as self-evident.

During the 1940s, the longer Sweden films experienced something of a renaissance. Perhaps the groundswell of nationalist feeling brought on by the War was a contributing factor. Thus 1942 saw the release of *Svenskt Panorama* ('Swedish Panorama'), which was notably different from the earlier Sweden films in that its makers not only abandoned simple landscape nostalgia for various forms of human activity (firemen responding to an emergency, a chimney sweep at work, a quarry, and charcoal-burning), but also that it was a straightforward compilation of shorts.[70] The advertisements stressed what was traditionally thought of as the foremost signs of Swedishness: natural beauty, populist nostalgia, and the film as a journey. In Seattle, the newspaper noted that it was 'A journey through Sweden by film. Ever since the days of silent movies there has been a constant and express demand to see more landscape motifs included in Scandinavian film programs. … Offers an interesting journey through Sweden's countryside, and at the same time shows us the most lovely episodes in Swedish country life.'[71]

Increasingly often, the films, which as mentioned had often been called Sweden films in contemporary advertisements, now instead began to be called 'travel films' or travelogues. This was certainly the term used in *Nordstjernan* when advertising *Runt Sverige* ('Around Sweden'), a compilation movie produced by Skandiafilm that in all probability was the same as the one later advertised as *Här och där i Sverige* ('Here and There in Sweden').[72] In 1950, Chicago's *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen* reported that 'travel films' about Sweden were available for hire through the Svenska Amerika Linjen shipping line, which had begun to buy in films very early on—perhaps to persuade people to travel home to Sweden on their liners.[73] As early as January 1933, *Nordstjernan* could report that a copy of *En resa genom Sverige* ('A Journey Around Sweden', *c.*1933)

was in Svenska Amerika Linjen's possession, and had been shown by a sewing association.[74] With time, the films were shown increasingly often in churches or the premises of various associations.

Sweden films of various sorts proved to be hardy perennials, and are still shown today. For example, a couple of years ago at the American Swedish Institute (ASI) in Minneapolis, there were showings of films such as *Beautiful Sweden*, *Adventures of the Vikings*, *Return to Sweden*, *World Heritage Sites in Sweden*, and *Carl Larsson Paints, Draws, and Recounts his Life*, as well as a number of films about the Nordic countries.[75] The representation of Sweden spread by the ASI was essentially the same nostalgic construct that had shaped the Swedish American identity, largely in the 1920s and 1930s; a contrived representation of Sweden and its history that was so all-pervasive that it became essentialized. It appeared wholly natural and self-evident. This mythologizing construal of Sweden has set in a form in which Sweden plays the role of itself, over and over again, without change.

Heritage films

Even when they were writing about feature films rather than Sweden films, the newspapers concentrated on the accounts of Sweden's nature, folklore, festivities, and times gone by instead of a film's plot or production values. This was at its most obvious when it came to the films of Sweden's cinematic golden age, but it remained true long after. For that reason it seems appropriate to call them 'heritage films', although Per Olov Qvist argues that they could equally well be called 'rural films'.[76] Heritage films are part of the film culture of most nations, and as a genre have been discussed at length by Andrew Higson.[77] Such films are made in order to participate in the creation of a common national heritage—'a genre of film which reinvents and reproduces, and in some cases simply invents, a national heritage for the screen'—and are often based on literary works that are already accepted in the national canon.[78] The landscape is a frequent stylistic element in a heritage film: 'One central representational strategy of the heritage film is the reproduction of literary texts, artefacts, and landscapes which already have a privileged status within the accepted definition of the national heritage.'[79] Britain's heritage films, which usually have an aristocratic setting, first took off in 1910s, and were later essential for the British

film renaissance of the 1980s and 1990s—think only of *A Room With A View* (James Ivory, 1985) and *Howards End* (James Ivory, 1992). It was the same in France during this period, with *Jean de Florette* (Claude Berri, 1986) perhaps the prime example.[80] This sort of nostalgic film was very popular in France for exactly the same reasons that rural films had once been popular in Sweden—concerns about modernization and major industrial change, and a wish to recreate a lost era. For Swedish Americans in the US, the heritage films of the 1920s became an important factor in how they remembered Sweden and, crucially, how they wanted to build their new identity.

The first time a Swedish feature film was screened for Swedish Americans in the US was in February 1919, when Victor Sjöström's *Tösen från Stormyrtorpet* was shown in the Aryan Grotto Temple in Chicago.[81] It was screened several times over the course of a week, each time with performances by a Swedish vocal trio and accompanied by Meck's Orchestra. At this time, the advertisements for Swedish film showings in the Swedish American press were often large, with considerable amounts of text and pictures. The advertisement for *Tösen från Stormyrtorpet* accentuated both its local and Swedish flavour; the title alone breathed nostalgia. Having noted that the film was shot in Dalarna—the local element—it continued 'Come and see a genuine Swedish spectacle. Come and see the most beautiful scenery in our old homeland. Come see the simple hut in the wilderness and the affluent farmer's grand farm. Come see a poignant scene in a Swedish courtroom. Come and see the bridal party in their wedding finery, their boats decorated with leafy branches, and the wedding feast. Come and see the magnificent beauty, which always shines through Selma Lagerlof's work.'[82]

Ann-Charlotte Harvey writes that the first Swedish film to be shown in Minneapolis, outdoing local theatres, was *Herr Arnes pengar* (*Sir Arne's Treasure*, Mauritz Stiller, 1919), an event she dates to 1921.[83] It is possible that this was the film shown in Minneapolis, but in Chicago it seems to have been *Tösen från Stormyrtorpet* in 1919 that heralded the arrival of regular Swedish film showings, much as in Seattle, where it was first shown in 1921.[84] However, there were no later repeat showings of *Herr Arnes pengar* in the US, unlike several other heritage films.

In Chicago there was a rerun of *Tösen från Stormyrtorpet* as soon as the end of March, as part of an all-Swedish evening with *Thomas Graals*

bästa film (*Wanted—A Film Actress*, Mauritz Stiller, 1917), and some shorts of 'Swedish scenery' about 'mountain Lapps, ice regattas, Älfkarleö waterfall'.[85] *Thomas Graals bästa film* rated only a brief mention, not being based on such a distinctively nationalist discourse as *Tösen från Stormyrtorpet*, which was described as 'A genuine Swedish spectacle of profound pathos and a breathtakingly beautiful idyll. The best that Swedish cinema has created.' Almost exactly a year later it was shown again, this time at the Ziegfield Theatre. The advertisement singled out the Swedishness of both its content and production: 'Based on a story by a Swedish writer, made in Sweden, spreading the old country's full beauty before your eyes, and starring only Swedish actors … A Swedish film for Swedes.'[86]

New York's first Swedish film showing was *Synnöve Solbakken* ('Synnöve Solbakken', John W. Brunius, 1919) in 1921, followed a few weeks later by *Herr Arnes pengar*. The audience at both showings was small, according to one report.[87] It was assumed that this was because the tickets had been too expensive, so prices were lowered for the next film, *Dunungen* ('In Quest of Happiness', Ivan Hedqvist, 1919), which, according to the review, played 'to a reasonably full house'.[88] All three films were shown in Brooklyn, where there was a sizeable Swedish community, at the Academy of Music. *Duningen* was also on the repertoire in Seattle and Chicago, for example, and was rerun several times over the years.[89] As we have seen, the popular burlesque musical *Värmlänningarna* was by far and away the most popular show on the Swedish American stage for several decades. It was equally popular in Sweden, and was adapted for the screen several times, first off in Swedish Bio's nationalist production of 1910 and for a second time soon after by Frans Lundberg. The next version, directed by Erik A. Petschler, was released in 1921, and just over a year after its Swedish premiere it was shown for the first time in the US, in Brooklyn and then in Manhattan.[90] An arrangement of the original music was performed, and a sizeable marketing campaign began which included an article about the film that used phrases such as 'the typical Värmland countryside', 'national character', 'the real value of the account of country life', and 'genuinely and quintessentially Swedish'.[91] The review published before the showing in Manhattan said it was much better than the play, especially in its portrayal of the Swedish countryside; the reviewer thought he could even see how material things were animated by a typically Swedish

spirit: 'First think we on that glorious and magnificent scenery, fair Ransäter rolling away into the distance, the old-world farms over which exudes old-fashioned probity and trustworthiness.'[92] In the reviews in the Swedish newspapers, meanwhile, the glories of the countryside rate a passing mention at best. The Swedish critics were divided about this version of the movie: several said it was monotonous and contained too many dances, but most praised the female protagonist.[93]

In this version of *Värmlänningarna*, Anna was played by Anna Q. Nilsson, a very well-known Hollywood actress and a Swedish American. The Swedish American press tended to follow the doings of the major Swedish film stars working in Hollywood, and published long articles on the likes of Anna Q. Nilsson, Greta Garbo, and Victor Sjöström. In the marketing for *Värmlänningarna*, Nilsson's participation was highlighted, of course, but she still did not manage to outshine the beauty of the Swedish countryside. When the film was screened in Chicago, there was a huge advertisement followed in the next edition by several small articles, which made much of the extensive programme of music to be provided by the Northland Trio, the Chicago Swedish Glee Club, and Hjalmar Nielsen's Symphony Orchestra.[94] The orchestra performed original music for the musical numbers, and in Chicago also accompanied the singers (the newspaper claimed that the singing was a first, not having been included in showings of the film elsewhere in the US). This was a show on a scale rarely seen in Sweden, and both the film in general and this concert performance in particular were of great importance as ethnic events for Swedish Americans. Yet despite a star in the lead role and a crowd of musicians in the cinema, it was Sweden's nature that was repeatedly emphasized in the press reports: 'It is simply nature, such that only much-praised Värmland can offer, and so captivating that when you see it, you long for home, will you or no.'[95] By September the same year the film was being reshown in Chicago, when its writer, F. A. Dahlgren was the subject of a special article. In his book on Swedes' perceptions of the Swedish landscape, Jacob Christensson writes that ever since the early nineteenth century Dalarna and Värmland have been regarded as special—as ideally Swedish.[96] This view can be seen in numerous cultural outpourings, of which *Värmlänningarna* was one, especially because of the immense popularity of its songs, especially 'Ack Värmeland du sköna' ('Oh Värmeland the Beautiful'). Selma

Lagerlöf in her novel *Gösta Berlings saga* (*Gösta Berling's Saga*, 1891) thematized the Swedish landscape, and it was to play a crucial role in the film adaptation by Mauritz Stiller in 1924. Several writers, including Vilhelm Moberg, have associated nature with homesickness, which provides another perspective on the Swedish American writers' general focus on descriptions of nature, not to mention the ubiquity of Swedish pictures in the press coverage about the films. It also highlights the film's function as a virtual journey.[97]

The silent film that had a record run in Swedish cinemas and earned vast amounts of money was *Sången om den eldröda blomman* (*Song of the Scarlet Flower*, Mauritz Stiller, 1919). It was the only Swedish silent film to have a through-composed score by Armas Järnefelt: usually film music was compiled from existing pieces, perhaps with some newly composed elements.[98] By all accounts, this specially composed music was only performed at the cinema where the film had its premiere, Röda Kvarn in Stockholm, while other Swedish cinemas had to settle for music put together by their in-house organists.

In America, showings of *Sången om den eldröda blomman* saw the Swedish American organizers remain faithful to the producers' intentions, and Järnefelt's score was performed—there was a different tradition in the US, and silent film music had a different status, partly because the cinema orchestras were so much larger (in Sweden there were cinema bands, but rarely the forces necessary to perform Järnefelt's music), and partly because original scores were also more common and audiences were thus accustomed to seeing films with a full musical accompaniment.

The advertisements for Swedish films in the Swedish American press often made much of the Swedishness of the music, and the fact that in this instance Armas Järnefelt was the composer featured very large in the advertisements for the showings in Tacoma and Seattle.[99] Järnefelt's score was performed in Chicago and New York too, even though the film was only on for one or two evenings.[100] It is astonishing to consider the sheer time spent in rehearsing an entire feature film score, all for a mere handful of showings, but it demonstrates the importance they ascribed to these Swedish film screenings.

A few more heritage films from the silent era were shown in the US, but they were not so specifically Swedish in tone (and several of them were actually more Scandinavian than Swedish, with *Synnöve Solbakken* being an adaptation of a Norwegian work and *Sången om den eldröda*

blomman of a Finnish one). The advertisements gradually became more modest, too. Films that appeared in America a remarkably long time after their Swedish premieres—there may have been earlier showings, but I have not found any evidence of them—included *Körkarlen* (*The Phantom Carriage*, Victor Sjöström, 1921), *Gunnar Hedes saga* (*The Blizzard*, Mauritz Stiller, 1923), *Dunungen* ('In Quest of Happiness', Ivan Hedqvist, 1919) *Fiskebyn* (*Chains*, Mauritz Stiller, 1920) and *Ingmarssönerna* (*Dawn of Love*, Victor Sjöström, 1919).[101] The newspapers generally restricted their coverage to listing a film's merits, with the occasional mention in advertisements that Swedish music would be played. *Vem dömer* (*Mortal Clay*, Victor Sjöström, 1922), *Terje Vigen* (*A Man There Was*, Victor Sjöström, 1917), and *Mästerman* ('Masterman', Victor Sjöström, 1920) were not shown until the end of the 1920s, and by all accounts they had not been screened in America before then.[102] Considering they were decade-old silent films and the age of the talkies had already dawned, this seems a little odd, but on the other hand they were all directed by Victor Sjöström, who by then had made a name for himself in Hollywood and was very popular with Swedish American cinema-goers, so it was perhaps for this reason the films drew a crowd despite their age.

Some of the heritage films from the silent era that had already been shown (and of which copies might have been bought) were reshown several times in the 1920s and well into the 1930s. The films that were repeated most, and thus numbered among the most popular heritage films of the 1920s, were *Tösen från Stormyrtorpet* (which was the first Swedish feature film shown in America, and presumably had a special place in Swedish Americans' hearts), *Värmlänningarna* (its popularity as a play long predating its screen adaptation) and *Sången om den eldröda blomman* (which was also the most popular film in Sweden). These were also the three films that were given the most elaborate showings. Judging by the press reports, the last showing of a Swedish silent film was in 1931, when the University of Washington screened *The Saga of Gösta Berling* at the Egyptian Theatre in Seattle.[103] The advertisement for this was brief and contained only the information that Greta Garbo played the lead role, which was probably the reason why the film was being shown in the first place. The Swedish American press published article after proud article about Garbo.

Of the heritage films, the most popular were about country people,

and relied for much of their visual expression on a dramatic use of Sweden's scenery. However, a slightly different type of heritage film that attracted much attention in the Swedish American press was *Karl XII* ('Charles XII', John W. Brunius, 1925). The film's release in America was preceded by several long articles and a stream of advertisements. According to an article in *Svenska Pacific Tribunen* in March 1927—fully two years after the Swedish premiere—it had been difficult to get copies of the film for the US, but the newspaper reported from the showing in Brooklyn that the audience could at last enjoy 'one of the most glorious chapters in the history of Sweden'.[104] A majority of Swedish American newspapers tended to the bourgeois in editorial tone, reflecting the standard Swedish American political position, so it is unsurprising that Charles XII and his era were presented in glowing terms. True, the article did offer some critical perspectives, but it still concluded that although the king's actions and personality might be controversial, it was nevertheless a fascinating and romantic period in Swedish history. And where the discourse of Swedishness had generally lost much of its archaic, nationalistic force, here it erupted spectacularly:

> The story of his brief life is one of the most romantic, most fascinating, most fabulous, most incredible in Swedish history since ancient times. As such, it will always resonate in the Swedes' popular imagination, even though cold prosaicness is ever gaining ground there. The success, which the first part of the film met with here last week, also shows that Swedes out here still retain a memory and an understanding of the time when Swedish heroism and Swedish feats carved their eternal runes on world history, and when Swedish repute soared on the wings of fame over the European Continent.[105]

This film too was reshown; in New York, for example, as late as 1933.[106]

A couple of articles in *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter* in 1924 and *Nordstjernan* in 1928 problematized the image of Sweden as mediated by heritage films. The author of the earlier article wrote that heritage films in general, and *Ingmarssönerna* especially since it was being shown at the time, could give second- and third-generation immigrants to the US a skewed picture of Sweden. The worry was that they might not believe that Sweden was a modern country: 'But many of those born here may well labor under the delusion that dress, customs, and

traditions in Sweden are quite the same today as he saw in last Sunday's film. 'The film ought have made it clearer that it was talking about "the old days".'[107] *Nordstjernan* praised the film then showing, *Hans engelska fru* (*Discord*, Gustaf Molander, 1927), because it was modern. The reviewer thought it was useful that the film alternated wistful images of Norrland with the city streets of London: it made for a 'really good film of almost Continental standards'.[108] Obviously, even the most nostalgic Swedish American could have enough of glorying in Swedish iconography from a bygone era, and it is interesting that these articles discussed the impression of Sweden that was being given to the younger generations who had never lived in Sweden. Evidently some Swedish Americans, or at least some of their newspapers, had a way of relating to Sweden that was not essentialist or conservative, but rather recognized that the country was changing and modernizing. This more progressive faction was probably at a disadvantage—the more conservative Swedish Americans held all the interpretative privileges.

Some heritage films and rural films were included in showings in the 1930s, but they were relatively few and the marketing was usually low key. Very few Swedish heritage films were being produced by this point, and audiences in the US increasingly preferred comedies. The heritage films that *were* shown were often described in terms that highlighted their Swedishness, often with the word 'äktsvensk' (genuinely Swedish), while shots of the countryside still dominated the advance advertising. The past, the traditional, the down to earth were what mattered. The films shown in the 1930s were *Fridas visor* ('Frida's Songs', Gustaf Molander, 1930), *Hälsingar* (*Haelsingar*, Ivar Johansson, 1933), the remake of *Synnöve Solbakken* ('Synnöve Solbakken', Tancred Ibsen, 1934), *En saga* (*En Saga*, released in Sweden as *Laila*, George Schnéevoigt, 1937), *Bergslagsfolk* ('The People of Bergslagen', Gunnar Olsson, 1937) and *Folket på Högbogården* ('The People at Högbogården', Arne Weel, 1939). The film *Bergslagsfolk* seemed to give Swedish Americans exactly what they needed to generate memories of Sweden as part of their Swedish American identity, at least in the view of *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*:

> The Swedish film industry has perhaps never reached so high as when it produces popular drama, however much it is based on an ancient historical story or song, showing how Swedish farmers, yeoman,

> log-drivers, or fisherfolk live their lives in twentieth-century Sweden. These films seem to speak straight from the Swedish soul: the characters are interpreted with humor, understanding, and compelling artistry, and the background is always colorful and authentic. … Its title is *Bergslagsfolk*, and it shows in a gripping fashion how ancient tradition wrestles with modern ideas and inventions, and how, in the end, ancestral wisdom triumphs.[109]

The tone was equally nationalist when yet another version of *Värmlänningarna* ('The People of Värmland', Gustaf Edgren, 1932) was shown with great success in the US in the mid 1930s. In Seattle, showings were organized jointly by the local Swedish male voice choir and cultural association, and *Svenska Pacific Tribunen* remarked on the Swedishness of the countryside on show, the popular heritage, and the special mood of the film. The reporter thought the film superior to the original play, and praised the film's handling of the natural scenery and almost ethnographic style: 'Here we have, for example, Värmland's wonderful scenery depicted in all its rich splendour—and in such dramatic surroundings. … You see, for example, Anna Lisa Ericsson—the heroine—singing a love song surrounded by lakes, forests, and clear blue Nordic sky. … You can also see folk dances and other festivities in true authentic Swedish dress—and of course you can also hear Swedish. It's as if you are at home for a while.'[110] Film showings on several occasions became part of a kind of nationalist campaign. In South Bend, Indiana, for example, the Swedish Vasa and Viking lodges arranged displays to 'strike a blow for the preservation of Swedishness'.[111]

Pride in their Swedish heritage knew no bounds when the film *John Ericsson—segraren vid Hampton Roads* (*John Ericsson: Victor of Hampton Roads*, Gustaf Edgren, 1937) was shown. The film is about the Swedish inventor John Ericsson, whose gunboat the *USS Monitor* was used during the American Civil War, and this was magnified in the press to become 'the story of the Värmlander, whose genius and energy saved the United States' republic, and has brought glory to the name of Swede for all time'.[112] In the Swedish and American reviews, we can discern a genteel struggle over whether it was Swedish or American history that was being constructed and depicted. John Ericsson came originally from Värmland, a fact that is taken as crucial in the film.[113] The historian Jakob Christensson argues that Ericsson's birth and upbringing in the

county was probably a major reason why the film was made at all.[114] Värmland was regarded as one of the most Swedish of Swedish provinces, and at this time in history the defence of one's homeland had become very important. It should also be noted that both the male lead, Victor Sjöström, and the director themselves came from Värmland.[115] The film was important for Swedish Americans' identity in a way that paralleled the celebration of their Viking heritage: it highlighted the Swedes' significance to the North American continent.

Comedies, dramas, and all things Swedish

During the 1930s, heritage films continued to be reshown. Otherwise, the standard fare in the US was a long list of comedies and a handful of the dramas that were then popular in Sweden. It was in the 1930s and 1940s that there were the greatest number of Swedish film showings in the US—an average of about 10–15 a year—and the organizers still catered to an almost exclusively Swedish American audience and not the general public. During the 1940s, double bills were quite common, with showings that paired a comedy with a drama. Most film showings were held in New York, Chicago, and Seattle. About twice as many comedies as dramas were shown, going by the figures taken from the Chicago newspapers in 1923–1950—a fairly accurate reflection of Swedish film production at the time. The slightly weightier heritage films had to make way for comedies and dramas, but the things the newspapers chose to write about the films were astonishingly similar to what they had written about the Sweden films and heritage films. One of the first comedies to be shown in the US was *Anderssonskans Kalle* ('Andersson's Kalle', Sigurd Wallen, 1934); *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter* wrote that it was 'the funniest Swedish film ever to make its way to America.'[116] The film was shown on two nights with three performances each evening, and the newspaper reported that queues had been long.

Apart from the immensely popular Edvard Persson, to whom I will return later, I want to mention a few other Swedish actors. News of Gösta Ekman's enormous popularity had reached America, as can be seen in the advertising for the film *Kära släkten* ('Dear Family', Gustaf Molander, 1933), but the superstar status he enjoyed in Sweden eluded him in Swedish America. His popularity at home was partly based on an interplay of film and theatre that was lost in transit over the Atlantic.

Kära släkten, however, was a film that the American audiences had obviously been rather looking forward to, and it was shown for an unusually long time in Chicago: over the course of three or so weeks, it was shown perhaps two or three nights a week.[117]

As already noted, the Swedish American press reported often, and with pride, on Swedish American movie stars in Hollywood: Greta Garbo, Signe Hasso, Anna Q. Nilsson, Tutta Rolf. Garbo was the brightest star. Several articles made much of Ingrid Bergman's arrival in Hollywood, and the US release of *Swedenhielms* (Gustaf Molander, 1935) was heralded by an extended advertising campaign. When the film was marketed in Sweden, it was Gösta Ekman in the lead role who was expected to draw the crowds, but in the Swedish American advertising, attention was focused much more on Ingrid Bergman—to the extent that it was advertised as 'Ingrid's Farewell to Sweden', which was a bit premature.[118]

Of the actresses working in Sweden, Dagmar Ebbesen was by far and away the most popular among Swedish Americans, just as she was very popular in Sweden. She often played the maid, and perhaps a reason for her considerable popularity in the US was that female audiences could identify with this profession on screen: many of them were or had been in service in the US. Ebbesen was hailed in the press as a comedy star on the release of *Vi hemslavinnor* (*We Home Toilers*, Schamyl Bauman, 1942). Both *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen* and *Nordstjernan* concentrated on Ebbesen as the audience favourite, writing about how popular and talented she was and what a brilliant performance she had turned in, and for a film that was 'one of the most entertaining and really funny films to be shown for a very long time'.[119] In Ebbesen's interpretations of her roles there were occasional flashes of progressive gender and social thinking, which generally escaped the notice of the press, while, of course, it is impossible to know the extent to which her female audience, with their experience of domestic service, registered and appreciated this dimension.

Irrespective of the film, any account of the Swedish countryside and any shots of Stockholm were invariably remarked on in all the press reports or reviews, which often singled out the film's portrayal of the scenery in a way not seen in the Swedish press. Dramas, comedies, Sweden films, heritage films: all the press coverage was characterized by such a keen interest in the natural scenery that it sometimes seemed

to have been the most significant element in the cinematic experience, and it was always mentioned in the same breath that it was 'genuinely Swedish'. Take a typical press report, in this case about the film *Hennes lilla majestät* ('Her Little Majesty'): 'The scenic background opens out into a series of breath-taking views of the Swedish countryside. A well-written, well-acted, genuinely Swedish film.'[120]

In a fairly long review in *Nordstjernan* of what has been called the first Swedish film revue, *Brokiga blad* ('Colourful Pages', Valdemar Dalquist, Edvin Adolphson, 1931), there were first some words about the actors (Gösta Ekman and Vera Nilsson) and the fact the film was well paced and had good music, but then it dwelt at length on the scenery and city-scapes, which seem to have made quite an impression on the reviewer and presumably the audience too. The reviewer needs only mention nature to wax poetic: 'Special mention must be made of pictures of Stockholm's streets, the Stockholm Exhibition last summer where some of the film was shot, swimming from the archipelago's beaches. … What is more, there is also an exceptionally beautiful picture of lovely Södermanland, with its meadows and fields of golden corn, its smiling birch groves and charming lakes, its mansions, castles, and towns so rich in memories, shown to the accompaniment of music and song.'[121]

What set apart these newspaper items, and above all the reviews, was their almost unreserved acclaim for all Swedish films. It is also typical that on that rare occasion when a film was slated, it was at the hands of *Nordstjernan*, which had consistently distinguished itself by having the most qualified reviewers. Little good was found to be said about *Ungdom* (*Youth*, Ragnar Hylten-Cavallius, 1927), which the reviewer dismissed as 'the most blunt and awkward movie we've seen in a long time', doomed by its 'amateurish, flawed technique'. The only redeeming feature in the entire movie was the actress Martha Halldén; Brita Apelgran was hopelessly miscast and the others, if possible, even more so. And yet the longing to see the Swedish countryside makes itself felt, even when roundly panning the film itself: 'The only thing worth seeing in the whole film is actually the views of Stockholm, Söder, and Strömmen, of which unfortunately one gets far too few glimpses.'[122]

As for the films that were shown in the 1930s and 1940s, it is significant that their Swedishness, nostalgia, and jollity were key to their Swedish American reception by audiences and critics alike. 'The

Swedish temperament' was something the newspapers attempted to construe as bright and cheerful, dependable and down to earth. Even films that were anything but were written up as being happy and positive. Swedish American critics could describe films completely differently to their Swedish counterparts, and were capable of some frankly surprising interpretations. *Intermezzo* (Gustaf Molander, 1936), starring Gösta Ekman and Ingrid Bergman, seems an unlikely candidate to be filed under the genre of comedy or musical, yet that was exactly what the Chicago *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen* did, calling the taught melodrama a 'beautiful, thoroughly nice Swedish talking, singing, musical film. A sentimental music professor's hilarious adventures at home and abroad.'[123] The Minneapolis paper *Svenska Amerikanska Posten* also unreservedly recommended the film, but described it in a more recognizable way.[124] Ingrid Bergman and Gustaf Molander made another well-known film together, the even weightier *En kvinnas ansikte* (*A Woman's Face*, Gustaf Molander) from 1938. One of the newspapers ran quickly through its good points, but then added that what really deserved a mention were 'the captivating images it offers of authentic Swedish manors'.[125] It comes as a jolt to find that the reviewer, faced with this of all films, preferred to point up something as marginal as footage of country houses. It seems that it was unthinkable for Sweden's image to be tainted by anything negative or too serious, and the films seem to have been read as barometers of how Sweden and the Swedish people were faring. Very much an unchanged and unchanging Sweden—that was what people wanted to read into the films they saw. The Swedishness of it all was reinforced by the same repeat phrases: 'genuinely Swedish', 'a completely Swedish film', 'a genuine, Swedish film', and Sweden itself, old, enjoyable, idyllic, with the beauty of its nature and bright summers. There seems to have been an inbuilt contradiction between modernity and Swedishness, two entities that were regarded as essentially different. Or as a short report about the comedy *Familjen Andersson* ('The Andersson Family', Sigurd Wallén, 1937), then showing at the Julian Theatre in Chicago, put it, 'This piece is genuinely Swedish and at the same time ultra-modern.'[126] Modernity was not something the Swedish American press considered much when writing about film; 'the Swedish soul' was to Swedish American minds mostly incompatible with new ways of thinking.

A few times, the newspapers chanced an emphasis on the modern in their accounts of Swedish cinema. Perhaps it was the younger writers who sought to identify with a modern Sweden; people from a generation where the need to remember the past was not so great. When one of the Chicago papers wrote about *Brokiga blad*, it singled out the fact that the film showed 'ultramodern motorbuses' on Swedish roads, and did not think the film was quite as stiff as several Swedish efforts shown recently.[127] An intellectual and cultural modernization was what caught the eye of the Seattle newspaper about *Hennes lilla majestät*, and the changes that even a traditional profession might undergo: 'It is the parish priest who is the piece's leading personality. A modern, far-sighted, and energetic pastor, a spiritual guide for the twentieth century.'[128] Despite Selma Lagerlof's fame and popularity, one columnist in *Nordstjernan* did wonder in 1931 whether she really suited the Swedish American mindset, thereby demonstrating that Swedish Americans rather differed from native Swedes: they had been partially Americanized in their preferences. The writer reckoned that the next Lagerlöf screen adaptation due to arrive in the US, *Charlotte Löwensköld* (Gustaf Molander, 1930), would probably be better than previous efforts: 'After all, the screen adaptations of Selma Lagerlöf's books have thus far been fairly leaden and perhaps in Swedish-American eyes uninteresting, but this is one of her most captivating stories.'[129] Perhaps the writer was not best placed to judge the wider public's perceptions of the Lagerlöf films—and they were popular, judging by how often they were reshown—but the opinion certainly existed. The same newspaper a few years earlier had enthused about Molander's film *Hans engelska fru* of 1927, writing that 'for once' there was an excellent film 'of almost Continental standards' to see, even though, typically Swedish, its pace was 'too slow and protracted'.[130] Thus not all Swedish Americans welcomed with open arms the things that were thought of as typically Swedish. Perhaps this was a New York phenomenon, perhaps it had to do with age, but it is important to note that the positive perception of Sweden was not universal.

The films shown to Swedish Americans were the ones that had also been successful in Sweden, and often in various ways dealt with ongoing changes in Swedish society; however, what was rare in the US were the comedies about social mobility, which in the Thirties were very popular in welfare state Sweden. If ever that sort was shown, the

political message was played down. Thus when *Karl Fredrik regerar* (*Karl Fredrik Reigns*, Gustaf Edgren, 1934) was on in 1937, *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*'s verdict, in finest telegramese, was 'far from being purely political, beautiful love story interwoven', as if trying very hard to keep its nostalgic Swedish myth undisturbed by crass political reality.[131] The newspaper did not deny the existence of political change, even if it is described in a diplomatic way, but rather took the line that the film was about 'how the country resolved certain social issues in a satisfactory manner and thus acquired a global reputation'. An earlier film that commended social democracy, *Röda dagen* ('The Red Day', Gustaf Edgren, 1931), was referred to in the Swedish American press only as 'a hugely enjoyable comedy'. The fact that the film, although a comedy, had a significant political message was overshadowed: 'The film is said to show Swedish life as it is seen today with humorist's eyes, but with reality always as its background.'[132]

Instead, Swedish American audiences preferred films about community—of farm, village, work, and family—and above all the national community that was ideologically fundamental to these films.[133] The image of the idyllic welfare state where class differences no longer mattered, and where community spirit in one's home tracts was essential to one's identity, was fondly cherished by the Swedish Americans.

Naturally enough, it mattered to the emigrants, and perhaps also to later generations, to point to America's good points and sometimes to discredit Sweden. It was their way of justifying their choice of America above Sweden, which was also some of the reason why they tended to emphasize Sweden past and not Sweden present: if Sweden were to prove as successful as the US, then they would be able to choose Sweden. Writing about the musical comedy *Fram för framgång* ('Here's To Success', Gunnar Skoglund, 1938) starring the famed Swedish tenor Jussi Björling, a critical tone crept in when the reviewer turned to how the film 'shows how difficult it is for new ideas and new talent to break through even in our modern, democratic Sweden'.[134] Something similar can be seen in the comments prompted by *Du gamla, du fria*, which the press felt was more Swedish American than Swedish because it actually favoured the US over Sweden. The film was about an emigrant who had planned to move back to Sweden. After travelling around his old homeland he decides to return to the US, because 'in the leading man's opinion, there is greater freedom in his new country than in the old'.[135]

The all-American trope—that America is the country that encourages talent and people with abilities, and that anyone can succeed if they work hard—permeated *Nordstjernan*'s review of the same film. If it was thought difficult for new ideas to get traction in Sweden, the opposite was considered true of America: 'The story is American, as much in its cheerfulness and rapid succession of exciting situations as in the moral it preaches, namely that glorious opportunities are there for the taking for anyone who doesn't give a damn about prejudice, angry glances, and narrow rules, and instead, with adventurousness and energy, storms onwards towards achieving their dreams.'[136]

But in general, the film reviews assumed that readers would remember Sweden for its summers and beautiful nature, and that the films would be based on good-natured and unaffected themes. Even as late as 1948 they continued in the same stereotypical, nationalist vein. The film *Flickorna i Småland*, as we have seen, stood out for its deeply racist sentiment. This was ignored by both Swedish and Swedish American critics, and the Chicago-based *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen* wrote: 'It is refreshing to see a movie occasionally that is so simple and inoffensive, so sunnily bright and summer fresh. With its rolling cornfields and smiling birch groves, it is genuinely Swedish, a beautiful part of the Småland countryside. The action is equally unaffected and light-hearted.'[137]

Exactly how Swedish Americans chose to remember the country of their birth and which parts of the films they emphasized—or what meanings they ascribed to the films without them necessarily being there in the first place—is a complicated problem. It is conspicuous that films are received very differently, depending on the time, place, and audience. Swedish Americans used the films to remember their former homeland, but also either to highlight what they saw as Sweden's advantages or to reject them out of hand. They needed to shape a new identity, but also to justify their presence in their new country, for example by implicitly transferring Sweden's good qualities to themselves. Harald Runblom writes that this was generally true of everyone in the same situation: 'Immigrants in America during the mass immigration period exploited the virtues of their homelands in order to explain, justify and glorify their existence in the new country.'[138] They wanted to be good American citizens, preferably better than other immigrants. At the same time, they continually wanted to convince themselves

that it had been the right thing to leave Sweden, and that was almost certainly one of the reasons they chose not to see just how much it had changed and modernized. This too is a universal truth of emigration—Runblom refers to Scott E. Erickson's book, which speaks of the different experiences that ultimately point to just one 'very common migrant experience, that is, the difficulty to accept how the homeland undergoes changes'.[139]

Loving Edvard Persson

Edvard Persson was the film star the Swedish American press wrote by far the most about. Fêted like no other, he was arguably the most popular film actor in all Swedish America, probably the most loved Swedish artist of all. His first efforts were in silent film, and although they gained an audience it was not very large. His popularity grew in the Thirties, and in the Forties his films dominated Swedish American cinema.

Edvard Persson often portrayed patriarchal types from the countryside, and one probable reason for his popularity was that he was felt to represent the farming culture and rural life that emigrants and later-generation Swedish Americans had left behind in Sweden, much as his films, particularly from the end 1930s, expressed a strong anti-modernism.[140] As Ulf Beijbom writes, the twentieth-century Swedish American was 'least of all an agriculturally dominated person', and Persson's films became the staging of a bygone culture and a conservative way of viewing old power structures.[141]

Skratt-Olle, Skrällbom, and their ilk had, with their years of working the Swedish American entertainment circuit, laid the foundations of Edvard Persson's popularity. Their humour was similar, differing from, say, Nils Poppe's more socially critical comedy—his films were notable by their absence from Swedish American film showings. Swedish American culture did not associate Swedish culture with social critique, and thus it was not looked for in the Swedish films that were shown in the US. Where there were attempts at political or critical discussions in the Swedish films, Swedish American audiences interpreted them differently.

Ann-Charlotte Harvey has studied what distinguished these country comedians and their success among Swedish Americans.[142] She wonders how the audience could identify with these comics, who to a modern

eye appear so ridiculous. The answer is probably that they manifested Swedishness and the characteristics that had been constructed as being typical of the Swedish identity: Swedes in the US were 'linked back to an essential common goodness, simplicity, and naturalness, which gives them a sense of identity and values enduring even into the second and third generation'.[143] Like Edvard Persson himself, these values elicited a nostalgia for times that had their roots in the countryside.

Look at Edvard Persson's films from a Swedish American cultural perspective, and his popularity becomes explicable. On the one hand, he stood for all a conservative, patriarchal, and homely Sweden that emigrants wanted to preserve in memory, and which was an element in their new identity. Persson's films were steeped in nature, farming, home, native soil, changelessness, and heritage, and he often played a farmer, a common symbol for 'real Swedishness'.[144] He was also a comedian, of course, and as we have seen, the Swedish Americans wanted to see their Sweden as merry and bright as possible. Likewise, sung tributes to his native country were almost mandatory in Edvard Persson's films, and choir-singing was a very popular feature of Swedish American culture. The fact that the films after the mid Thirties were set almost exclusively in Skåne became part of Persson's image, with Skåne's iconic status easily as great as that of Dalarna and Värmland.

This passion for the countryside was not unique to Swedish emigrants. Pastoral life was an essential part of many countries' national symbolism: David Morley discusses paintings of the English countryside, such as John Constable's *The Cornfield*, which were for the British in general and immigrants in particular 'an archetypical representation of a nostalgic vision of Englishness as an idealized form of rural life'.[145] Nature and the countryside sequences in Persson's films brought more than a touch of the Sweden film to his feature films.

It took Persson some time to become famous in Swedish America. The first of his films to be shown seems to have been *Studenterna på Tröstehult* ('The Students in Tröstehult', 1924), in which Edvard Persson stood for the script and the direction, and took the starring role. The advertisement for the showing in Seattle highlighted only the fact that it was a comedy: 'The most funny and comical Swedish film ever shown.'[146]

After *Studenterna på Tröstehult* was shown in 1925 there would be a decade-long hiatus before the next Edvard Persson film was shown in Swedish America. When *Flickorna från Gamla Sta'n* ('The Girls from

the Old Town', Schamyl Bauman, 1934) was screened, Persson had not yet totally won the hearts of Swedish America, and the review's focus was elsewhere. Seattle's *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, however, made a point of the fact that he was Swedish cinema's most popular comedian.[147] As usual, there was a longer review of the film in New York's *Nordstjernan*, in which much was made of the film's Swedish character, especially compared with American comedies: 'The film is probably an excellent measure of your Swedishness. If you are too Americanized, it will probably all seem very tame alongside one of Eddie Cantor's and Harold Lloyd's burlesque and exaggerated creations. You'll probably sit there, being irritated that these superb situations are not better capitalized on, that its points aren't more incisive, and that the ending isn't the "hit with a bang" that the end of an American film has to be. But a genuine Swede will perhaps rejoice above all at the absence of these things.'[148] *Nordstjernan*'s reviewers often returned to this difference between American and Swedish cinema. In fact, for several years the paper's reviews of Persson's films held to a very similar line; first it was said that the audience's laughter could be heard all the way out on the streets of Manhattan, often drowning out the dialogue; then there was this same comparison with American cinema. Something very similar is found in the review of *Larsson i andra giftet* ('Second-marriage Larsson', Schamyl Bauman, 1935), which was said to be 'as Swedish as anything can be. That it unwittingly is the scourge of such Swedish cardinal weaknesses as admiration of foreigners, currying favor, and trying to impress, makes it doubly appreciated.'[149] It is significant that 'admiration of foreigners' is seen as something negative.

After a series of box office successes, it is reasonable to say that Persson had finally managed to break through, even before *Lördagskvällar* ('Saturday Evenings', Schamyl Bauman, 1933) was shown. It was shown in America much sooner after its original release in Sweden than Persson's earlier films, which may be a sign that the distributors were bringing in as many as they could get hold of now he was in demand. In a report about the film in *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, it was Persson himself, and not the film or the storyline, who was the focus: 'Persson the Minister of Fun's next movie. As a comedian, Edward [*sic*] Persson has in an extremely short time managed to garner many admirers in Swedish America, and especially here in the North-West. He is admired perhaps most of all for his healthy, natural humor and

his spirited songs. In the next film of his to arrive here, *Lördagskvällar* … this wish would seem to be fulfilled to a greater extent than in his previous films. In the cities where the film has been shown thus far, cinemas have been packed and everyone has been thrilled by Persson's *Lördagskvällar*.'[150] By the time *Nordstjernan* advertised the imminent arrival of *Våran pojke* ('Our Boy', Arne Bornebusch, 1936) in the autumn of 1936, Persson was so much the people's favourite that the enormous advertisement simply announced 'The whole of Sweden and Swedish America's irresistible comedian', and in small letters that more details were to follow the next week. What the film might be did not rate a mention—it had almost become irrelevant.[151] It was also significant that Persson's films were sometimes released as Christmas films in Swedish America: in 1936 *Söderkåkar* ('The Southsiders', Weyler Hildebrand, 1932) ran for the whole of the Christmas period at the Fifth Avenue Playhouse, while at Christmas 1938 it was the turn of *Baldevins bröllop* ('Baldewin's Wedding', Emil A. Pehrsson and Gideon Wahlberg, 1938).

In 1937 came the film that would be the biggest hit ever in the history of Swedish America cinema: *Söder om landsvägen* ('South of the Highway', Gideon Wahlberg, 1936). The advance publicity had begun as early as mid January in Chicago's *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, a full month before the mid February premiere. Reports the following week spoke of audiences flocking to the cinema: 'Every day, from north and south, east and west, the crowds came hundreds of miles to see, hear, and enjoy.'[152] In *Nordstjernan*, the spotlight was on Persson at least as much as the film itself, if not more so: a cartoon of his face dominated the picture completely.[153] The film was equally popular in New York, with one review clearly showing how much the film's Swedish and Skåne iconicity was valued: 'The whole of Swedish New York has been descending en masse on *Söder om landsvägen*, which for the moment is located between 12th and 13th Streets on Fifth Ave., specifically the Fifth Avenue Playhouse.'[154] The week before the newspaper had noted: 'No wonder, for rarely have the Kingdom of Sweden's great comedians succeeded better than in this film, and rarely since the days of *Värmlänningarna* has one been able to enjoy more captivating pictures of our fair Sweden.'[155] Other newspapers also likened *Söder om landsvägen* to *Värmlänningarna*, the reason being the films' depictions of nature. *Söder om landsvägen* was very much Sweden film and comedy combined: it started with a fairly long montage of views of Skåne,

Edvard Persson, tankard raised, in the midst of traditional Skåne, in *Söder om landsvägen*, 1936 (Swedish Film Institute Archive).

with its castles, forests, storks, cornfields, avenues of willows, farms, and windmills. The tribute paid in song and image to this region of Sweden is deeply nostalgic.

Some of the newspapers tried to pinpoint the source of Persson's popularity, and what characterized him as a film personality. The reviewer in Chicago's *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen* praised Persson's performance in *Kalle på Spången* ('Kalle's Inn', Emil A. Pehrsson, 1939), hailing him as 'a consummate artist who takes his art seriously. And he also appears to accept the moral responsibility that crowns his God-given ability. EP brings to his performances a message to humanity that is always worth attention. He lashes out at our vanity and our stupid selfishness, and homes in with consummate focus on all that is essentially true, right, and good. Achieving this while appearing a fool, a coward, and a jerk—that is real dramatic art.'[156] The writer of

Nordstjernan waxed lyrical when few years later he described Persson as a mix of simplicity, confidence, firmness, and joviality—qualities embraced by both Swedish and Swedish American audiences, and that over the course of the years and several films were added to the ideal Swedish character. Edvard Persson's personality, however, was seen as being inextricably linked with the province of Skåne, in a tangential *Blut und Boden* ideology:

> Although he is more round than angular, Edvard Persson should probably still be best likened to a Rock of Gibraltar. Against the safety of his embrace, waves of evil beat in vain; against his pleasant Skåne eloquence, evil or suspicious tongues cannot make themselves felt. In all his joviality he represents the inviolate and undefeated majesty of the good. Persson has rarely any larger message to spread, no solemn and vapid sentences to pronounce. No, heaven be praised, he is simply our well-known, welcome, and ever popular 'Edvard P.', as the Swedish newspapers call him. In *Skanör och Falsterbo* we have the pleasure of seeing him again 'south of the highway', that is to say in 'the Kingdom of Skåne', where Persson is and should feel most at home, and where he always performs his roles best and with greatest warmth.[157]

Throughout the Second World War, Persson was a welcome sight in Swedish American cinemas, when film imports were not stopped by the various blockades. The newspapers made much of the fact that his wartime films were felt to be greetings from the old country. Articles about him were published from time to time, with long autobiographical features about his life and career.[158]

His popularity peaked with his tour of America, which he combined with the filming of the movie *Jens Månsson i Amerika*. The tour was followed closely in *Nordstjernan*, which treated news from the trip and his performances as front-page material. The tour meant Persson met some of the leading figures in the Swedish American groups, and above all that he appeared before large, admiring crowds. And his tour really was country-wide: a series of cities on the East Coast including New York, Boston, and that Swedish haunt, Jamestown, and several cities in the states of Illinois, Minnesota, Washington, Oregon and California. Persson was accompanied by his wife Mim, his co-star Stig Olin, his

accompanist, and the film crew. His arrival was thrillingly announced in full-page newspaper advertisements: 'And now—on his triumphal tour of Swedish American parts—Edvard Persson is coming to Illinois to entertain us in jovial person.'[159] In most places, he appeared for one day only in two performances, in the major cities for two days. According to one advertisement, his show consisted of 'Persson's own songs and monologues. Performances by his accompanist and conductor Alvar Kraft, his wife Mim Persson, Stig Olin and Tatiana Angelini, and master of ceremonies Gerhard Rooth, plus a Swedish film *A Yank in Sweden*, which is a kind of travel film about Sweden.'[160]

The newspapers followed Persson's movements from the time he boarded the *Drottningholm* in Gothenburg bound for America until he returned by plane to Stockholm several months later. According to *Nordstjernan* on 12 September 1946, he had been a raging success in Boston, Worcester, and Hartford, and his conquest of New York was reported the following week. The long article that reported from Boston had the headline, 'Edvard P. in triumphal procession through New England', and said of his entrance: 'Over 2,500 enthusiastic Persson admirers almost charged at Skåne's popular son and gave him a five-minute round of welcoming applause when it was his turn in the very good program. Edvard P. had only to show himself … then the matter was settled. The good residents of Boston rose as one and gave Edvard a right royal welcome. They shouted and cheered him, and the applause was thunderous even before he had time to say hello from old Sweden.'[161] Wherever he went, Persson was given the keys of the city, met the mayor (and in the case of New York, the Swedish-born Police Commissioner, who revelled in the name of Wallander), signed autographs, went to parties, and shot his new film. In Jamestown, they proclaimed an Edvard Persson Day.[162] He became an important ambassador for Swedishness, and the Swedishness he embodied was the conservative, patriarchal, *Blut und Boden*-romantic, anti-intellectual variety, a far cry from the modern, innovative, urban, industrialized Sweden that was increasingly becoming a reality. *Nordstjernan*'s reporter from the tour reported from Illinois, where Persson had stopped to visit the Swedish-founded village of Bishop Hill: 'Edvard Persson is now an institution in Swedish America. That much can be gathered from this tour. When Edvard P. arrived here on the silver screen, he breathed life into the interest in Swedishness. Daily, people tell us that

Edvard Persson, singing in front of the American flag, in *Jens Månsson i Amerika*, 1947 (Swedish Film Institute Archive).

it is thanks to the film that they know so much about Sweden. The film that we have with us [*A Yank in Sweden*] is applauded nearly as loudly as Edvard himself. "That's what it looks like in granny's country, imagine if one could go there sometime." 'Not only Edvard Persson, but film as a medium was mentioned as being crucial for both the interest in and knowledge about Sweden, especially for the generations born in the US. That they might get their knowledge from a feature film is clearly unproblematic in the article; cinema's role as a source of knowledge, and not just creating memories, is looked to as natural and important.[163]

The Swedish film showings became fewer after the War, and they began to have real difficulty renting space for screenings. These conditions also affected *Jens Månsson i Amerika*'s reception when it finally appeared, and the movie did not have as consistently warm a reception as one might have expected, neither was it mentioned much in the newspapers. *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen* in Chicago wrote that it was amusing, sentimental fun, but even more than before the action was subordinate to the leading man. Edvard and his wife were good, the paper wrote, 'but the other players cannot expect to receive a summons to Hollywood'.[164]

In the years after the War, *Nordstjernan* published increasingly shorter reviews, but even so, Edvard Persson films were still standard fare, including reruns of old films. It was Persson's films that had the longest runs among the offerings at the cinemas' Swedish film showings. Like the Sweden films, feature films also began to be shown in churches and clubrooms. *Söder om landsvägen* was shown for example by Nobel Lodge in 1950, and *Barnen från Frostmofjället* (*The Children*) in Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church in New York.[165]

Edvard Persson was very popular with Swedish audiences too, and certainly ranks as one of Sweden's greatest movie stars ever. Swedish critics were also generally well disposed to him, even if their interpretations were often rather different than those of the Swedish American critics.[166] Meanwhile, the American critics who ended up in Swedish American cinemas were nothing like as impressed, and made it quite clear that audiences consisted mainly of Swedish Americans. The typically non-existent plot was noted, for example, in the review of *Vart hjärta har sin saga* (*Each Heart Has Its Own Story*, Bror Bügler, 1948), with the *New York Times* critic arguing that the film seemed to

be nothing more than an excuse to show off Edvard Persson, whose appearance and behaviour had a certain 'roast pig succulence'.[167] And in his criticism of *Pimpernel Svensson* (Emil A. Lingheim, 1950) the reviewer seems to have delighted in being as nasty as possible, even though the crowd's behaviour led him to understand that Edvard was extremely popular if not a national institution:

> Only those sufficiently diverted by the sound of Swedish dialogue and the whimsical capering of a portly actor named Edvard Persson will derive much enjoyment from the Fifty-fifth Street Playhouse's new import, *Pimpernel Svensson.* Judging by the general chuckling of a predominantly Swedish audience at the early afternoon show yesterday, this benign middle-aged gentleman is a national Institution who can do no wrong. Mr Persson is undoubtedly fat enough, at any rate, and he and his associates are joining hands to tell an hour-and-a-half joke that in any language, including subtitled Swedish, requires no more than ten minutes.[168]

The critic finishes his panning with the tart remark that the film's shortcomings and its 'rattling amateurishness' show that the director must have slunk away as soon as shooting began. And there can be no doubt that it was not for his great acting skills that Edvard Persson won his fame and his popularity—he often played no one but himself. For Swedish Americans, however, he represented a Swedishness with several facets that were significant for their memories of Sweden and their nostalgic construction of the time they had left behind.

Swedish Americans and films from their homeland —concluding remarks

The image of their sometime homeland that Swedish American audiences looked for in various Swedish films over the years was extraordinarily uniform. The historian H. Arnold Barton, an authority on Scandinavians in North America, and whose arguments are relevant to migrant research in general, has said of Swedish emigrants' impressions of Sweden that they were faced with a fundamental dilemma: they had left their native country of their own free will, but how were they to relate to Sweden in future in order to be able to feel a sense of

national unity?[169] One reason that an idealized picture of Sweden spread among Swedish Americans may be that such a it meant that they could potentially return to Sweden later. If nothing else, this 'ritual nostalgia' could be a substitute for a real return.[170]

The nostalgic memory constructed by Swedish Americans was not only fed by Swedish cinema; various art forms and organizations assisted in the production of the ideology. However, in the first half of the twentieth century film was an increasingly important factor. Albert Moran points out that film, being a visual and narrative form, plays a significant role in shaping our understanding of geographic location, and mythologizes places and landscapes.[171] As we have seen, great efforts were put into putting on an ethnic display at some of the film showings for Swedish Americans, giving the films a setting they rarely had in Sweden—*Sången om den eldröda blomman*, after all, was shown in the US accompanied by the original score composed specially for it, whereas in Sweden only the cinema where the premiere was shown had that privilege. The idealized, nostalgic picture of Sweden that American audiences seemed to prefer was there to be seen on screen—they were a conservative revisiting of the past for Swedish audiences too—but the image of Sweden they read into the films was sometimes the result of a sort of countervailing reading, a specifically Swedish American interpretation.

It was partly the regions, countryside, and the past that Swedish American audiences sought in Swedish films. In Swedish cinema, the representation of the country's provinces was often closely linked to changing social conditions. In Per Olov Qvist's analysis of representations of the countryside in Swedish feature films in the 1930s to 1950s, he argues that the Swedish countryside and its inhabitants were portrayed in quite diverse ways, but the common thread was that they were largely idyllized and romanticized.[172] The films resisted the idea of social evolution in 'an attempt to hold on to what was changing or was about to be lost'.[173] Films were a reaction to modernization and industrialization, and the cleft between town and country often featured prominently. During the structural transformation that saw rapid rural depopulation in the 1950s, many Swedish films clearly fell into a 'Romantic rural tradition'.[174] This suited Swedish Americans' need to create memories and a picture of the old country that was compatible with their new identity in a new country.

Throughout, Swedish films reflected the familiar: the country would be preserved just as the emigrants seemed to remember it, and no change could be suffered since they were not present and so could not be involved. If Sweden remained the same, they would be able to return, feel at home, and still be part of the national community. This is how both the films and people's interpretative practices seem to have worked, psychologically speaking. Place was now more imagined than real.

In several news items, this retrospection and idealization were associated with distinct emotions. In recording their impressions from cinema auditoriums, newspaper reporters write of open displays of emotion. Audiences wept when they saw their homeland. It was in the emotional bonds that nostalgia was felt the most—anything at a temporal and, as in this case, geographical remove often tends to be sentimentalized. The emigrants gradually forgot the bad things about home, the things that had prompted them to leave, and just remembered what had been good. They idealized Sweden. The image of Sweden they conjured up as they watched the films became the image of Sweden they could agree on. This consensus has been remarkably resilient, echoing on to the present day in the cultural activities and films put on by some Swedish American organizations.

What is a homeland? Charles Westin has written that the strange thing about the term 'homeland' is that it pops up as a mental image when you are no longer there: it is only when you move away that the idea of a homeland emerges;[175] for Felicita Medved, meanwhile, 'home' is a place or region with which the migrant has an emotional relationship, and the term is really only possible to understand from an emotional perspective.[176] Karin Johannisson makes a similar connection between the physical and the emotional planes. As she puts it: 'Home does not only mean a country, a community, a house, a family, a living environment, a way of life, but also habits, emotions, moods, physical experiences, memories. Home is powerfully charged with symbolic and emotional meaning. It almost always touches on the questions of identity, community, and belonging.'[177] The yearning for something lost, a home or a childhood, is a form of nostalgia that we all experience, and, as Johannisson says, it is often not places we long for, but times long past. Place changes places with time, one might say. We are all migrants in time, writes Barton, and in one sense those who stay at home experience exactly the same sort of nostalgia as

emigrants.[178] To emigrate is to cross a border between the known and the unknown, between the home country and a different country.[179] We can return to the place from where we started out, but not to the time, Westin reminds us. Yet that is exactly what Swedish American emigrants seem to have tried to achieve with the help of the Swedish films they saw. The idealized picture of their native land that they created for themselves in the US, which often was nothing like their attitudes towards the 'official Sweden' of state and society, would have taken a real knock if they actually had returned. 'Time also changes place', writes Johannisson, and to return was associated with a certain risk—things they thought they remembered were not there or did not match their memories. The Sweden films that were shown, and indeed are still shown today, carried audiences to a place so frozen in time that they did not have to be confronted either with the extent that the old country had changed, or what that might mean for their identity.

National identity—to borrow from Benedict Anderson—is by extension to feel party to a country's customs, traditions, beliefs. Yet as Andrew Higson points out, this imagined community is not dependent on its members living in a certain place, as migrants' experiences show.[180] The sense of belonging evoked by Swedish Americans in various ways was possible 'despite—or even because of—their transnational dispersal'.[181] Where once Church and religion had been crucial in creating a sense of community for Swedish Americans, several historians have argued that the broadcast media now took on a far bigger role than both Church and the printed word combined.[182] Very few scholars, however, have looked specifically at the role of film, despite its importance before the broadcast media took off. It is even fair to say that film consumption among migrants in the early twentieth century—in other words, among European emigrants to the US—was the first step on the road to a modern practice for constructing imagined communities. Film can also be seen as an intermediate step between the sort of community experience created in church and the sort created later over the airwaves, or perhaps rather a combination of the two given that they gathered in cinemas instead of churches, but saw moving pictures that came from far away.

Of course, people continue to create memories and images of their homeland to this day, when migration is an escalating, global phenomenon. In his studies of Iranian exile television in Los Angeles in 1981–9,

Hamid Naficy shows how producers both fetishized and stereotyped images of their native land.[183] The programmes do not address the changes in Iran. Naficy's point is that this was not just a question of lessening the sense of loss having left the country, but also—and perhaps even more evidently here because the programmes were produced in the new country—to create a sense of community that could bring stability. The programmes celebrated the past in what here seems a very familiar manner, recreating the image of their homeland again and again: 'In exile, home colonises the mind.'[184]

Marie Gillespie uses much the same reasoning when showing how Londoners from the Punjab use television programmes in a variety of ways both to establish themselves in their new lives and to understand their experience of migration. The younger generation, however, feel that such overtly Indian television programmes have created a community within a community, and one far more old-fashioned and traditional than Indian cities they come from: 'Lots of people in Southall are living in the "India" they left behind and they don't realise how … things have changed'.[185] If there had been satellite television in the first half of the twentieth century, Andersonville and Lakeview in Chicago would have been dotted with satellite dishes pointing at the nearest Swedish satellite.

CHAPTER 5

Becoming an American citizen

The Swedish American woman in American film

Swedish Americans and ethnicity in American film

Swedish and Swedish American characters are quite numerous in American cinema, both in leading roles and as comic sidekicks. The representation of different ethnicities is almost a theme of its own in Hollywood films: how African Americans, Asians, Southern Europeans, and Latin Americans have been depicted has been the subject of discussion and negotiation since almost the birth of film, and has been treated in an increasingly extensive literature. The theoretical concerns have often been representation and identity, and it is only in recent decades that American and Northern European peoples and cultures have been admitted as subjects for analysis, in what is commonly termed whiteness studies. This ideology-critical research, in which Richard Dyer has long been a prominent figure in the field of film studies, has demonstrated that negative encodings of, for example, Latin Americans have been matched by positive encodings of white characters through lighting, dress, and other techniques.[1] Whiteness is determined by relationships with non-whites: 'in many important respects whiteness takes its definition from non-white and not-fully white others'.[2]

A number of works on Hollywood's racialized images of 'non-whites' that have 'historically policed a color line separating whiteness from non-whiteness' have now received their necessary corrective in the research on 'the naturalized invisibility of whiteness'—that whites are seen as the norm and as morally and ethically superior.[3] Whites and what they represent is rendered narratively invisible in cinema in a completely different way than the representation of people who are

non-white, and the representation of whites in this way becomes a norm that is neither mentioned nor questioned until its constructs are exposed to scrutiny. Even among whites there is a hierarchy, which, as Lunde argues, Dyer does not discuss, but researchers have been more drawn to recently.[4]

Swedish Americans and Swedes in films produced in the US are there at all levels: from John Wayne's leading role as the Swede Olsen in *The Long Voyage Home* (John Ford, 1940), via El Brendel in the role of Swede in several films, to Greta Garbo as the Swedish American in *Susan Lenox* (Robert Z. Leonard, 1931) and various actresses in a number of supporting roles as maids and blonde bikini babes. Compared with other Scandinavians, Swedish and Swedish American roles are comparatively numerous. Search the catalogue of the American Film Institute and there are 2 hits for 'Danish American', 4 for 'Norwegian American' and 26 for 'Swedish American'. The figures are not entirely reliable, of course, given that 'Norwegian as character' and 'Swede as character' produce 9 and 67 hits ('Dane' is not an ideal search term because it is also a personal name). Swedes are by far the most common Scandinavians, but frequently seem to represent a sort of indefinite 'Scandinavian'. German and Italian characters are much more common, which is to be expected: 'German American' produces 44 hits and 'Italian American' 93 (in addition to these narrow terms, there are of course Americans of Italian descent in many more roles). Although search terms and names are not the most refined method, the number of hits still gives an indication of the Swede's and Swedish American's importance to American cinema.

The representation of immigrants in American cinema has changed over the years. Since the 1950s, Swedish Americans featured far less than before, and their roles changed, especially the women's. For one national group who began to emigrate to America at much the same time as the Scandinavians, the Irish, the opposite was true: Irish American characters in American film began making themselves felt after the Second World War.[5] Although by that point Northern European immigrants were seen both as self-evident Americans and American citizens, as Stephanie Rains writes, a large number of films were produced concerning Americans of Irish descent, or second- and third-generation Irish Americans who return to Ireland. The reason for this, Rains finds in the growing interest among Irish Americans in their cultural heritage and

an American craze for Irish culture in a broad perspective—tendencies also reflected in other popular culture.

With the advent of whiteness studies came a fresh interest in the representation of Swedes and other Scandinavians in Hollywood films. The first study of this kind revolves around the Swede as the Other, and is part of Chris Holmlund's monograph on femininity and masculinity on film.[6] Holmlund discusses male representations, such as how the Swedish male immigrants were depicted in Fifties' Westerns as pacific, weak figures. Other representations are Nils Asther's roles as the seductive 'Oriental' aristocrat in the 1920s and 1930s (comparable to the Swede Warner Oland's Asian characters) and Dolph Lundgren's big blond Soviets, East Europeans, and Americans—a 'Swedish hole at the heart of whiteness', in common with every other Swedish male character in American cinema.[7] What Holmlund means is that Swedish men in Hollywood films are always portrayed as the Other, even while being 'white': they have a privileged place in the story, but despite everything are not really white. Within the internal hierarchy of whiteness, it transpires that Swedes and Scandinavians are often placed close to the bottom. According to Holmlund's analysis, the role of Swedish men shifted from an emphasis on their whiteness and Swedishness in an oriental character via an object of pity or derision in Westerns to their virtual exclusion from the Eighties' and Nineties' action movies, where Swedish actors instead play other nationalities. Interestingly, then, the Swedish actors play non-Swedish roles and vice versa in the films Holmlund considers.

Diane Negra has analysed the importance of ethnicity for various female film stars' images and roles, and as a Scandinavian example she uses the Norwegian skating star Sonja Henie. However, of all the studies of Scandinavians in American cinema, the one by the Scandinavian studies specialist and film historian Arne Lund is the most comprehensive and detailed. In his monograph on Scandinavian identity in Hollywood films, he discusses, among other things, Victor Sjöström's *He Who Gets Slapped* (1924), Warner Oland's Asian roles, and Scandinavian female stars such as Greta Garbo. Among other things, he shows how Hollywood productions distinguished between Nordicism, which connoted race in a biological sense, and Scandinavianism, which included ethnic and cultural differences such as language, cultural norms, gender roles, and class. The Nordic was presented as the

mythical, essential, and 'natural' category, used in films about Vikings, for example. But having white skin was not the same as being thought of as white in the cultural sense of the word, and Lunde shows that while one can talk of a category of Scandinavian 'hyper-whiteness', the assimilation of Scandinavian immigrants remained problematic. Even Scandinavians had to fight to be accepted as white by appropriating American whiteness codes and behaving accordingly.[8] In Lunde's view, whiteness was often linked to belonging: the films, not least Sjöström's Hollywood productions, thematized and problematized the immigrants' desperation to belong to American society and to be seen as equally worthy American citizens.

In this chapter I will consider citizenship and female Swedish immigrants in American cinema. How were Swedish immigrant women and their struggles to become American citizens represented on the silver screen? American film, as we have seen, offered a fair few Swedish American roles of various kinds. I will focus here on the female roles, if only because the Swedish American woman was a relatively common feature of American cinema, while being rarely portrayed in Swedish films, and especially not the lone emigrant woman. Moreover, it is interesting to compare the representations in Swedish and American cinema. Rather than attempt a full typology of female Swedish American characters in American films, I concentrate on a few telling cases that speak of the theme of American citizenship. My analysis primarily concerns the women's immigrant self and place in American society as depicted on film. American film portrayals of Swedish American women offer interesting insights into contemporaneous historical and social contexts, and at times a surprising alternative to Swedish views of Swedish women.

The Swedish female emigrant

Taking Swedish emigration to America as a whole, more men than women left Sweden, but break it down by year and one will find there were some when women were more numerous. In 1896–1900 and 1916–20, 100 men left for every 105 women, after which the number of female emigrants fell quite sharply.[9] Between 1890 and 1910, about one-third of all who emigrated from Sweden to the US were single women, most of them moving to urban areas such as Chicago.[10] In

fact, lone emigrants of both sexes were significantly more common than families for the entire emigration period.[11] In some years, there were more women than men among the Swedes in the key immigrant cities. Margaret Matovic has established that in around 1910, of adolescents aged 15–19 years there were 136 women for every 100 men in Chicago, but in the older age groups, men were in the majority.[12] Whoever the Swedish anti-emigration propaganda singled out as responsible for the mass exodus, and however much newspapers and pamphlets were distributed to discourage people from going to America, none of it could match the impact of the letters and Swedish American newspapers sent home to Sweden by emigrant relatives. Poor maids in Sweden did not read the daily papers, but they would read a letter home from a sister, cousin, or friend. In fact, the very first daily newspaper many Swedes saw was a Swedish American one, and this, together with letters talking of good land, jobs, good incomes, and better status, proved irresistible for those tempted to make off for the land of opportunity.

Among female emigrants at the turn of the last century, maids or servant women constituted the largest group.[13] Back in Sweden they were low-wage, low-status workers, and often they were given the money for the journey by relatives who had already emigrated. The first thing they had to do when they arrived in America was to work off the debt—and then perhaps scrape together the fare for the next friend or relative who was waiting hopefully at home.[14] In Chicago perhaps most of all, Swedish women went into service as maids. According to the US statistics Beijbom has used, an overwhelming majority of Swedish women earned a livelihood as domestic staff when they moved to America: in 1900, over 61 per cent of Swedish-born women were working as maids or other domestic staff, while the figure for second-generation immigrant women was 44.5 per cent.[15] Other standard occupations for first-generation immigrants in the same year, in descending order, were seamstress in the rag trade, laundress, or agricultural worker, and for second-generation immigrants seamstress, teacher, industrial worker, and tradeswoman. If accurate, these figures are interesting because the women in the second generation had evidently moved on to more skilled occupations, such as teaching. 'A type of social advancement based on growing up in America thus appears when comparing first- and second-generation

professional women', writes Beijbom.[16] In other immigrant groups, a smaller proportion of the first generation was in domestic service: Irishwomen were second after the Swedes with 54 per cent, Hungarians and Norwegians third with 46 per cent. The Swedish maid was thus a very real figure.

In the literature on emigration, it is often said that Swedish women were very popular as domestic staff because they were good workers, thorough, and quick to learn. It is almost impossible to prove something like that one way or the other, but, considering how many Swedish women did work as maids in homes across Chicago, it is likely that Swedish women had a good reputation.[17]

However, as Joy Lintelman has shown, the fact that it was a low-status profession among American women was one reason why Swedish domestic servants became so common:[18] American women did not want to enter service as maids, and Swedes took the jobs the American women did not want, a pattern that has characterized migrants' situations down the ages. While other ethnic groups, such as Italians, balked at domestic service, Swedes saw it as very respectable.[19]

It was the prospect of a reasonably steady income that persuaded Swedish women to apply for positions as maids, as Lintelman shows. However, they had other good reasons too: many had already worked as maids in Sweden (albeit in agriculture), the work did not require them to learn the language, and they often worked as live-in staff, which was a practical solution to the problem of finding a roof over their heads.[20]

They thus enjoyed fairly high status among their fellow Swedes, not least because of their potential earnings. Within a couple of months, a maid could be earning a monthly salary equivalent to an annual salary in Sweden, and these happy prospects were communicated in letters home to other young women.[21] Not all were successful, of course, but domestic service was a career path for many Swedish women. It was common to change position quite often in order to advance, progressing to richer and richer families—the goal was to end up working for a 'millionaire family', where one would enjoy the best pay and finest places of work. For women, emigration to the US would mean emancipation of a sort: they earned well, were financially independent, were of higher standing than at home, could enjoy the urban public entertainments, learned the language, and made housework into a profession.[22] This impacted

on their willingness to marry. Although, according to Beijbom, there was at times a surplus of women in the Swedish groups in the major immigrant cities, as Lintelman points out, working women hesitated to marry.[23] It was not simply that under their terms of employment maids were not permitted to marry, but women were reluctant to forsake their newfound independence, professional pride, and economic standard.[24] They might be employed in a wealthy home, and marriage would mean a step down. Many chose personal and financial freedom over marriage.[25]

From much of the literature, it might seem that women elected to work as domestics because of all the opportunities it offered, or because it was easy to obtain such positions, or because they were popular among American families; however, there was another very important reason that the overwhelming majority of women went into service, and that was the strict immigration laws that more or less forced them into it. The laws, inevitably, bore the hallmark of patriarchal society's gender structure, which meant that a woman who arrived alone at Ellis Island was far more likely than a man in similar circumstances to be branded an LPC (Liable to become a Public Charge).[26] Legislators assumed that a woman would find it more difficult to support herself, and thus was far more likely to prove a burden on American society. Because American women were reluctant to work in private homes, and because there was a demand for such work, domestic service was held to be an eminently suitable job for an immigrant woman. From the early twentieth century onwards, the immigration laws favoured women who did waged housework. Maids, and later nurses and governesses, were exempt from the contract legislation that regulated the types of workers who were allowed to enter and work in the US:

> From the beginning, immigration law exempted women's work in domestic service, agriculture, and eventually nursing from the provisions of the contract labor law. While not classified as skilled work, immigration law recognized domestic work in particular as providing a worthy, remunerative service to the nation. Beginning in 1885 and continuing through the 1920s and 1930s, contract labor laws specifically exempted women working as nurses or domestic servants from the blanket prohibitions against the arrival of

> immigrant labors. … By privileging women's paid work in professions that mirrored their traditional responsibilities in the home, immigration law valued women immigrants' domestic skills while it undervalued their potential contributions to an industrializing economy.[27]

The work Swedish women were able to find in America was thus a question of gender and immigration, and ultimately a question of what it was believed would benefit the American nation. It was also a question of class, in that maids were thought of as providing sought-after and important services to the bourgeoisie, 'trained nurses and those employed on behalf of the needs of the entire household were perceived as providing a valued service to the middle- and upper-class family'.[28] As they arrived at Ellis Island, women thus often presented themselves in a way that complied with the law's requirements in order to enter America and to avoid being classed as LPCs, and thus were driven into certain occupations. Working as a seamstress, which was something many Swedish women later did, was considered to be against the law, but once the women were in the country they could basically take whatever job they wanted. The Swedish maid was such a standard feature of American homes that she was a stock character in American films for years to come. The question of becoming an American citizen was also a substantial part of the story, for either the Swedish American woman had her sights on citizenship as an explicit goal, or she wanted to acquire an American lifestyle and American values.

Deterrence: the white slave trade and *Traffic in Souls*

To attempt to discourage the emigration, like Sweden's National Society Against Emigration, with pamphlets that painted lurid pictures of just how badly things could turn out in America, or with films that showed how easy it was to fall prey to crime or end up in the hands of American criminals, was one way of persuading women to stay put in Sweden. This propaganda also encompassed stories about the white slave trade. Several of the emigration handbooks published in the second half of the nineteenth century onwards, with their basic language guidelines and good advice on transport and communica-

tions, working conditions, housing, and trades unions, also offered dramatic warnings about the various pitfalls that lay in wait for the unwary, especially when arriving wet behind the ears in New York. Thus Konni Zilliacus wrote in 1893 about the so-called runners who in different ways tried to deceive the emigrants: 'The first people the emigrant in New York will come into contact with are so-called runners, a kind of agent, who solicit customers for various institutions. Vendors of railway tickets, hotels and restaurant keepers, dealers in various sorts of supplies, agents who find people places and work—all have runners out to bring in clients from among the recently arrived immigrants.'[29] Zilliacus warns of the most sinister kind of runner, the one who attracted the unwitting immigrant to an inn or hotel, and there plundered 'the incautious'. Anti-emigration films produced in Sweden in the 1910s were influenced by these handbooks, and this last scenario is to be seen unfolding in *Amuletten*.

Several thousand young women a year were said to fall victim to these New York '*kadetter*' (cadets) as they were called according to Johan Henrik Chronwall in his emigration handbook of 1914.[30] Even the cover draws the reader's attention to the chapter on how girls are lured into prostitution. This manual is not as comprehensive and useful as several others, and the author seems to have set out to shock, yet even as worthy a body as the Swedish Emigration Commission drew attention to the white slave trade. In one of its report appendices on Swedes abroad, it included a 'special investigation' of conditions in America, conducted and written by G. H. Koch.[31] The survey covers Swedes' financial position, 'distress, crime, and disease', and Swedish charitable institutions.[32] In enlarging on these themes, he offered fairly detailed descriptions of a variety of phenomena, an attempt at the characterization of the Swedish emigrant population, and data on living conditions from a variety of perspectives. One of the headings was 'The White Slave Trade'. Koch reported that the US was a global hub for the human trafficking of white women, and that more than 15,000 young women every year were 'imported' to the country for that purpose. What percentage of them were Swedish Koch was unable to determine. The subtext of the Swedish anti-emigration propaganda and some of the emigration handbooks was that the world, and especially the US, was a dangerous place for single women. The criminals were the faceless 'runners', the traffickers whose nationality in the books is not spelled

out, but who were depicted as being American. The Swedish view of the white slave trade can be said to have resulted in a similar appraisal of America as that found in Swedish feature films of the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s, based on a general assumption that such things were not possible in Europe. The reports from America in the 1900s surfaced in the Swedish feature film discussed earlier, *Två svenska emigranters äfventyr i Amerika* of 1912, in which the conmen who target the sister seem to be running a brothel.[33]

White slavery was a fact and the hair-raising stories were based on real incidents—it was a chapter in American history that has been treated in several books.[34] The US Immigration Department examined the effects of immigration in 1907–10, the results of which proved significant when the White Slave Traffic Act was drafted in 1910.[35] The survey had discovered that thousands of unaccompanied female immigrants never reached their final destination, a revelation that came as a shock to the public as well as to the authorities.

The discussion about human trafficking was an important element in the debate about American identity that was underway in the early twentieth century, fuelled in part by rising immigration. The American nation was felt to be increasingly divided, nationally and ethnically, and there was a widespread view that the white slave trade depended on a collaboration among different ethnic groups.[36] Thus, the fact that women were forced into prostitution was taken by the official investigations to be an ethnic problem, not a political or sociological issue. It was migrant women who became the commodity in this trade, and it was often immigrant men who were the pimps, said investigators. They imagined that the white slave trade was carried on by foreigners and international networks—Russian Jews, Italians, Sicilians, Germans, Austrians, Britons, or Greeks—so it was not 'America' in either literal or symbolic senses that was dangerous—which, of course, was the starting-point for the Swedish public inquiry.[37] They never managed to prove this in the official investigation, however.

Janet Staiger, in *Bad Women: Regulating Sexuality in Early American Cinema*, has looked at the foundations of the moral panic about the white slave trade and has found that it was not just about ethnicity, but also largely about regulating female sexuality. Stories of women abducted to work in brothels were popular in the public perception,

especially after 1905, which stressed the salacious and dangerous element.[38] All these stories had a strongly repressive undertone: they wanted to warn young women of the dangers that threatened if they went out in public. Joy Lintelman also emphasizes this perspective, for example in her analysis of the novel *Sister Carrie*, which, she argues, 'reflected … the attitude of American society toward single working women, both domestic servants and those labelled "women adrift" (a phrase popularized by a 1910 government study of working women in large cities, it referred particularly to women living outside of a family setting and dependent upon their own earnings for living). Single women were viewed as naïve, innocent, and in danger of being corrupted by the evils inherent in the workplace and leisure activities of cities like Chicago.'[39] Lintelman, Staiger, and Grieveson all emphasize that in the public fears about human trafficking was a strong undercurrent of anxiety that women, and especially immigrant women, had a greater degree of independence and mobility thanks to waged work, an anxiety which largely sprang from notions of how women *ought* to live and behave. The idea of guiding women into jobs where they would be protected—or easier to monitor and control—thus sat well with the official inquiries into immigration and the white slave trade. The reason so many Swedish women became maids in the US must be sought in this perspective too, particularly given that their terms of service often required them to live in their employer's home.

To warn the American public and new immigrants of this risks, pamphlets and brochures were printed. To little purpose, of course, because many of the immigrants could not read. The US authorities then decided to show films about the problem on the transatlantic liners. It was said that the initiative for this came from the director of the Immigrant Girls' Home in New York, S. M. Haggen.[40] She suggested to Universal that they should make a film about the white slave trade, and the response was *Traffic in Souls* (George Loane Tucker, 1913). This film marked the beginning of the Americanization films screened during the Atlantic crossings, mentioned in Chapter 2, that were designed to 'Americanize immigrants and hasten the process of acculturation through which they might embrace the values and behaviour of mainstream America.'[41] Staiger tenders *Traffic in Souls* as an excellent instance of where the regulation of female sexuality and identity was the underlying purpose of a film.

Traffic in Souls was not the first film about human trafficking; the subject had been raised in both American and European films in the past, for example in the very well-known Danish *Den hvide slavehandel* ('The White Slave Trade', Alfred Cohn and August Blom, 1910) and *The Fatal Hour* (D. W. Griffith, 1908),[42] and, while not treated as fully, in passing in the Swedish *Två svenska emigranters äfventyr i Amerika*.

In this context, *Traffic in Souls* is interesting partly because it says something about how female emigrants were construed in American cinema, but also because the two of the women who are the conmen's victims are Swedes who had just arrived. Perhaps this was also the first time that Swedish female immigrants appeared in an American film. The women who come to grief in the film have left the shelter of home to venture out into the world and become independent. The American women work in a department store and have close contacts with a great many people; the Swedish women are newly arrived immigrants. All of them are 'women adrift', as they were termed in the US, in accordance with an ideological construction that assumed that a woman's place was in the home. The film's explicit purpose was presumably to warn women against the men intent on abducting them to work in brothels, but the consequence was that it curbed women's pursuit of an independent life.

The women in *Traffic in Souls* are American and Swedish, and it is interesting that the filmmakers chose Swedes as the immigrant women. It could just as well have been Danes, Norwegians, or Germans, but at a guess the choice fell on Swedes because they were considered ethnically close to the Anglo-Saxons: they wanted to make a point of their whiteness in this film treatment. Examine how Swedish women were represented in this and later films, and one is struck by their provincial, peasant style. The Swede was construed as peasant-like, rural, and rustic: these are not fashion-conscious urban women with sophisticated tastes and habits, but peasant women with plaited hair, scarves, and pinafores—and thus representative of most female immigrants at this time. To a Swede, they do not appear particularly Swedish—if anything, more Dutch, or a vaguely Northern European mixture—but it was this that became a standard representation in American cinema for several decades to come.[43] Meanwhile, their country guilelessness explains why the women are easy bate for the American traffickers: they are simple

people from a foreign country and have no inkling of life's perils out in the wider world.

Swedishness is manifested in a definite way in the film: in the harbour, a man presents a paper to the girls on which it says 'Swedish Employment Agency, Mr Hans Anderson, Stockholm, Sweden', and lures them to a house where a hurriedly erected sign announces that it houses an employment agency and that 'Swenska Talas her' ('Swedish spoken here'). They are kidnapped, but later freed with the help of the police, and their part in the film is fairly minor. *Traffic in Souls*, like *Amuletten*, is a mix of staged and documentary scenes, and, again like *Amuletten*, the shots of the migrants going ashore are documentary. Yet even though the film was used for educational purposes, and the bricolage approach might be thought particularly well suited to an information film, it was still made mainly to entertain. It was exciting and dramaturgically well thought through, which meant that it remained more entertaining than educational, Grieveson writes.[44]

There were other films in which Swedish female immigrants had a significant role. One that explicitly dealt with American citizenship and patriotic values was *Follow the Girl* (Louis Chaudet, 1917). The film seems to be lost, but from the American Film Institute's website and other sources it can be gathered that it was about Hilda Swanson, a Swede who finds herself caught up in a spy plot when she arrives in the US and immediately takes the American nation's part. With her help the evil spies are captured, she is told 'she has done a great service for her new country', and she marries one of the good Americans, 'thus making her an official American citizen'.[45]

Marriage as a means to citizenship, often paired with a willingness to serve the new nation, is a motif that occurs in several films with a Swedish American female character, which I will return to later. If she did not marry or otherwise adapt to American norms, and instead continued as a woman adrift, the Swedish American was often exposed to some degree of ridicule in American films. A film like *Follow the Girl* might not discourage immigration, because Swedish women would have first seen it when they were already crossing the Atlantic or after they came ashore at Ellis Island, but perhaps the film made them cautious, and possibly strengthened them in their resolve to work as a maid, a profession where they would live in a sheltered home environment. In

this way the American authorities were able to encourage immigrant women to choose certain professions and not live as women adrift, a violation of the norm that might otherwise have a certain appeal to American women too.

The Swedish female stereotype, or, *Sweedie, the Swedish Maid*

Immigrants, especially women, were an important section of the American cinema-going public.[46] When Swedish women went to American cinemas in the mid 1910s, they saw themselves on the big screen in caricature and in the slapstick comedies about *Sweedie, The Swedish Maid*. The film series was produced by the Essanay studio in Chicago (founded by Gilbert M. Anderson, whose Broncho Billy was the prototype for the Western character: Charlie Chaplin also worked briefly at Essanay) in 1914–16, and was about the Swedish American maid Sweedie.[47] The films have such titles as *Sweedie's Shoes*, *The Fickleness of Sweedie*, *Sweedie Learns to Swim*, and *Sweedie the Laundress*. According to some sources, the series was very popular with the American public, but how it was received by Swedish American audiences (or even Swedes) cannot be ascertained—there are no mentions in any of the Swedish American newspapers.[48]

The most notable thing about it is that the part of Sweedie was played by a male actor in drag: the large, well-built, and later very famous Wallace Beery, who also directed the films. Beery was made famous by the Sweedie series, which also set Ben Turpin and Gloria Swanson on the path to stardom. Some thirty short films were made in which Sweedie was put in situations where she constantly failed or made a fool of herself. The situations had very little to do with her job as a maid, although her profession was there as a complicating factor in most of the films. Only a few of the films survive, and of them I have seen two: *Sweedie Learns to Swim* and *Sweedie the Laundress*.

The humour derived from the very large and very masculine Beery's performance as the eponymous heroine, a woman who placed herself in childish, ridiculous, and foolish situations. A couple of authors have written that Beery wore a blonde wig, but judging from the two films I have seen (both from 1914) and the poster for *Sweedie's Hero* of 1915, Sweedie had dark hair put up in a loose bun.[49]

In *Sweedie Learns to Swim*, Sweedie is seized with the urge to learn to swim when she looks out over Lake Michigan from the kitchen where she works as a maid, and, childish creature that she is, she acts on impulse and heads off to learn. On the way she encounters a number of other young women, and next to them Sweedie's hopelessly provincial, outdated, and tasteless clothing is obvious. She is dressed in a baggy, full-length dress while the other women have shorter dresses in modern cuts. Her hat is shapeless and exaggeratedly decorated compared to the other women's neat little toques, and to round off her ensemble she carries a minimal parasol that adds to her ridiculous look. Her behaviour is consistently childish, instinctive, and rural, and although the character is to some extent a woman adrift (even allowing for the fact that domestic staff usually lived with their employers) Sweedie is such a big, mannish, contrary figure that it seems unlikely that a anyone would attempt to ambush her or lure her away. The name Sweedie is of course a nickname for 'Swede', but it can be confused with 'Sweetie'—a strange contradiction of name and figure.

The Sweedie figure formed the basis of the Swedish female stereotype on film, and although that stereotype became more varied and complex in time, it continued to appear in films for some decades to come. The outsized Swedish woman with outdated clothes, her hair often in plaits, and her rough country manner became a stereotype in American cinema (and perhaps in American perceptions in general) that was diametrically opposed to the vision and ideals in Sweden, which perceived the ideal Swedish woman as soft, natural, and feminine (see Chapter 3). The male Scandinavian—a demasculinized, naive, gullible country bumpkin—was a common stereotype in American vaudeville and comedy, both Swedish and American, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and was translated to the screen through, for example, El Brendel's portrayals of stupid Swedes, writes Arne Lunde.[50] Something similar was found in the Swedish American popular theatre tradition (see Chapter 4).

Lunde writes that this burlesque theatrical tradition and film 'had left the Scandinavian female relatively untouched by ridicule', but I cannot agree when it comes to film.[51] Akin to the early role of the demasculinized Scandinavian man there is the defeminized Sweedie, who, to top it all, was played by a man in drag. Cross-dressing has a long tradition in the theatre, but in this case the aim was to ridicule

a Scandinavian woman, to undermine her both as a woman and as a servant-maid, and thereby enhance and accentuate the traditional Anglo-Saxon female role. Beery's cross-dressing had its counterpart in Swedish cinema, where, as we have seen, the Swedish American woman was often presented as masculine in dress and conduct. Cross-dressing was part of the plot of *Sweedie the Laundress*, in which Sweedie dresses up as a man of the same kind of gender duality as Tony Curtis's character in *Some Like It Hot* (Billy Wilder, 1959).

The image of the peasant-like Swedish female immigrants straight from the country had some basis in reality: the absolute majority of them had indeed originated in the Swedish countryside. And mostly ended up in cities in the US: 'The overall pattern of America-directed Swedish emigration was, however, from rural areas in Sweden to urban places in America.'[52] It could take a while for them to be transformed into urban women, and several researchers have noted the change from rural to urban. In an anthology on this very transition, a number of essays chart how immigrant women from different parts of Europe were Americanized, urbanized, and modernized when they moved from sometimes quite isolated rural areas to a bustling metropolis.[53] One clear sign of urbanization was dress, which was useful in a visual medium such as film: Being able to spend a sizeable part of their salaries on smart clothes was part of the immigrant women's new-found independence, and right up to the present day it has been their clothing that has been highlighted. In the pamphlet *När Maja-Lisa kom hem från Amerika* ('When Maja-Lisa came home from America'), written and published by the National Society Against Emigration, Maja-Lisa goes home to Sweden to visit and then has to live up to the image she has given of herself as a well-paid and successful emigrant. She does this primarily through what she wears: before her departure from America, she has 'cobbled together ugly, cheap things, with shabby lace'.[54] According to this propaganda pamphlet, her clothes were ugly, cheap, tasteless, and, presumably, what were seen as 'American', and the same mindset was to permeate Swedish films that mainly in the Thirties portrayed the return home of female emigrants. Almost a full page of the ten pages of the pamphlet is given over to describing how Maja-Lisa looks when she shows up in her home village:

The Swedish immigrant woman as a figure of fun—Wallace Beery in drag as Sweedie the Swedish maid in *Sweedie's Hero*, 1915 (Private collection).

> Her ample figure was now laced up in accordance with the style prescribed in the latest fashion plates. She was a fashion doll in bargain pink silk, trimmed with cheap, cream-coloured lace. Her dress was very low-cut. Around her round plump neck wound row upon row of necklaces that hung down to her waist. On her large but shapely feet she wore a pair of shiny patent-leather shoes, two sizes too small and with high French heels; above the shoes a pair of lace stockings; on her head, with her straight hair crimped and pomaded back and front à la mode, rose a 'picture' hat, in three sections: flower garden, chicken wings, and chiffon bows. As the finishing touch, a parasol with a long handle, trimmed with deep frills, and much, much more.[55]

The pamphlet has a picture of Maja-Lisa surrounded by local women, who are dressed in shawls and kerchiefs or plain hats. The returning women's dress was often the subject of some attention, even if it was not quite this negative: returnees reported back on all that was different and beautiful in America, and fashion was an important part of that, at least for the women. In her article on Swedish emigrant women, Joy Lintelman follows a couple of women, one of whom was Eva Nydahl Wallström in Småland. Her aunts came to visit from Chicago, and Eve was keenly interested in their stories of how good work as a maid was there and their impressions of the city, and also in their clothing: 'The many wonderful sights in Chicago—skyscrapers, streetcars, parks, and the like—were also popular topics of conversation. Eva absorbed this information with great interest. She also could not fail to notice the fine clothing and hats her aunts wore. Although they were only domestic servants, they were dressed like "fine ladies".'[56]

As Margaret Matovic writes, it was the clothes that transformed the country lass into an urbane young woman, and unmarried domestics staff spent a good deal of money on new clothes, unlike married women.[57] Above all, the stylish hat became a symbol of higher status and upward mobility; setting aside a triangular kerchief for a fashionable hat denoted both outward and inward change. In *Nybyggarna* (*The New Land*, Jan Troell, 1972), Ulrika (Monica Zetterlund) wears a big hat once she has married an American pastor, a hat that the farmer's wife Kristina (Liv Ullman), embarrassed, tries on when she

visits Ulrika. The ease and pride with which Ulrika wears the hat, contrasted with Kristina's shy, blushing face when she tries it on, spells out that Ulrika has been Americanized, urbanized, and has a higher status, while Kristina is still a country girl and farmer's wife with a stout Swedish heart.

The young Swedish American maids in Chicago and other cities were only too happy to parade in their fine new clothes that symbolized their social and financial independence. Several authors talk of the 'maids parade' on their days off, when smartly dressed Swedes promenaded along Belmont Avenue or other Swedish streets in Chicago, or 'snuff street' (so called because of the large Swedish population) in Minneapolis.[58] In *Sweedie Learns to Swim*, Sweedie tries to look modern and refined, but fails. Her appearance and dress mean that she stands out from the other women. They mock her and reject her—which can be interpreted as a metaphor for her not yet being a full citizen, not yet being a true American. Sweedie cannot crack the dress codes and cannot act in the way required of her if she is to be thought American—she is still a Swedish girl with country manners.

Sweedie challenges the conventional feminine norms: she does what pleases her, even if it is childish and instinctive; she can outsmart all the life-guards to a man; and she is bright enough to fool the men who try to deceive her in various ways. There is a duality about Sweedie. Yes, she is unfeminine and provincial, which in the context of the films is taken to be a bad thing, but equally she defies gender notions and shows her independence of her employers (at least in the films I had access to). It was usual to make fun of America's new residents in early twentieth-century popular culture, but in the case of Sweedie there was an edge to it, because maids in reality challenged the American values that expected to see women remain in the bosom of their families. An independent working woman who had left her homeland was felt to some extent to be 'dangerous', and one way to render her harmless was to use certain characteristics, such as her rusticity, to ridicule her. Sweedie was partly made into a child. The attributes that to our eyes seem positive were perhaps not seen in the same way then, as they reinforced the impression of the 'dangerous', independent woman—but even so there was certainly a chance to turn it on its head and see Sweedie as an inspiration. She does not appear to have been a particularly good housemaid: she would rather swan off to learn to swim than finish the

cooking, and she has to dash home in order to dish up, with anything but full silver service, some burnt offerings for her employers and their friends.

According to Kevin Brownlow, the Americans' perception of immigrants was negative and they were generally only too happy to blame them for all sorts of problems and shortcomings, something all too familiar today. Immigrants were thought to undermine the workers' struggle to unionize by accepting lower wages, and it was said they were dirty, drunken, illiterate, mentally unstable, and more.[59] Such social tensions rarely fail to find an outlet in popular culture, especially film. Miriam Bratu Hansen discusses this with reference to Siegfried Kracauer, who sees anarchic and socially critical tendencies in the American slapstick of the Twenties and Thirties, making the point that the slapstick genre was an important arena for the discussion of ethnicity and gender roles.[60] The same debate was heard about other genres, but slapstick, which was based on collisions between people, technology, things, and everyday situations, was received differently, because it made people laugh in a way that was new and which became very much a hallmark of the film medium. 'The genre was a vital site for engaging the conflicts and pressures of a multiethnic society … And, not least, slapstick comedy allowed for a playful and physical expression of anxieties over changed gender roles and new forms of sexuality and intimacy', writes Bratu Hansen.[61] The films about Sweedie actualize both ethnicity and gender roles.

There were other female immigrant characters in American films in the period, of course. One recurring figure was the Irish Bridget, who appeared in comics and on stage long before she turned up on film. Bridget's guises could vary somewhat, and not only in a specific series like Sweedie. She appeared in comedies, where she was a maid to an American family, a resemblance to Sweedie that did not stop there because they both represented immigrants. Bridget is described as impulsive and unmanageable, she behaves badly, and is quick to hit to the bottle—a description that largely fits Sweedie and indeed the Americans' general views on immigrants, according to Brownlow.[62] Peter Flynn, who has analysed Bridget's development in early American film, writes that her characteristic features were a sturdy body and a large mouth. Judging by the pictures of Bridget illustrating Flynn's article, Sweedie was significantly more deviant from the norm because

of Beery's appearance. The first Bridget film was made back in 1895, but in 1910–17 the standard Irish figure in American cinema was not Bridget, but rather was the Irish policeman—another comic figure.

Flynn admittedly brings an immigrant perspective to his analysis, but only in order to claim that the figure of Bridget was 'a comic projection of bourgeois American anxieties over the great influx of Irish immigrants following the famine years of the 1840s'.[63] Bridget's main function in the story was as a threat, but not because she came from another country, or because she was lower class, but rather because she challenged the bourgeois institution of the nuclear family and marriage and the role of women in it. In other words, Flynn is writing about a woman adrift. Flynn does not associate Bridget's position with the immigrant woman's status *as* an immigrant, which could deepen the analysis. This becomes clear when Flynn writes about Bridget's subtly changing role in the films from 1910–17, where the plot often revolves around attempts to marry her off. Flynn sees the films as 'an effort to return Bridget to the kitchen—to domesticate the domestic'.[64] Had the immigration motif been woven into the analysis, it would have become clear that the effort did not go into reducing the threat posed by Bridget and other immigrant women to gender boundaries and the bourgeois nuclear family, but rather to Americanize immigrant women—to have considered them citizens would have been unthinkable as long as they did not behave like Americans and refused to resign themselves to the traditional, bourgeois gender frameworks. The films about Sweedie and Bridget were not only about threats to gender boundaries: because this threat was embodied by immigrants, there also an in-built fear of non-Americans.

Citizens and politicians —*Annie was a Wonder* and *The Farmer's Daughter*

Swedish American or Scandinavian maids popped up occasionally in American films, mostly in supporting roles or as a sort of comic sidekick. In *How Could You, Jean?* of 1918, Mary Pickford pretended to be a Swedish American cook, and *The Midnight Kiss* of 1926, *Five Bad Men* of 1935, and *Life with Henry* of 1941 all have a Swedish cook or a Swedish maid in a supporting role.

Immigrants, especially women, were significant to the way modern America took shape. As the history of literature shows, maids were often well liked and sometimes became part of the family. Finally, the idea dawned that these women were worth celebrating, and the Scandinavian maid was especially honoured in the short film *Annie was a Wonder* of 1949. The film was part of *Passing Parades*, a series of radio programmes and short films produced by MGM. *Annie was a Wonder* was directed by Edward L. Cahn, but was primarily the brainchild of John Nesbitt: he wrote the scripts, provided the voice-overs, and produced all the features. Several of the films were highlighted at the Oscar ceremony, and *Annie was a Wonder* was nominated for an Oscar for best short subject.

The film is about a Swedish woman who is working as a maid in an American family for a couple of years. Nesbitt's stated purpose with the film was to draw attention to all the immigrant women who were working as 'hired girls' for American families, which Nesbitt said belonged to the past (which of course was not true, for the relationship is just as relevant today, except that the women now come from other parts of the world such as Latin America or South-East Asia). The film was by no means a critical review of these conditions, but instead a kind of homage to the women concerned, although at the same time it inadvertently managed to reproduce the stereotypical image of the Swedish American woman that had been created by Sweedie, and which emphasized the deviancy of a nationality that was not American. Annie was Americanization piecemeal.

The film starts in romantic vein, with a shot of Annie pegging out washing in the garden, which is accompanied by the title of the music that accompanied most of the *Passing Parade* films, part of the second movement of Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony, opus 64. With the soaring theme music, Annie becomes a symbol of all maids, and standing there hanging out the laundry she acquires a sentimental aura—historical even. The story then begins with a camera sweeping across some women sitting waiting for the 'Scandinavian Welfare Domestic Placement Service', and Nesbitt's narrator, who is one of the now grown-up sons of the family, looking back on Annie's stay with them, and announcing that a variety of young women immigrated each year to the US and that as maids they worked up to fourteen hours a day.

Annie, who is played by Kathleen Freeman (who went on to be Lina Lamont's voice coach in *Singin' in the Rain*, 1952), is hired by the family because the mother is pregnant. When Annie arrives at her employer's, she comes walking down the street dressed in a simple long skirt, a striped blouse, a plain jacket, and a flowery scarf on her head. She is presented by the speaker as Annie Swenson from Valborg in Sweden (Valborg is not a place at all, but rather Walpurgis Night!); she herself says Anna. Annie is big and strong, she has a glum, plump face surrounded by bright hair in two plaits pinned in a coil around her head. When the wife, ever proper, lists Annie's chores in a severe tone, Annie sighs deeply and fans herself with her apron to cool off. The rustic, country look that was already evident in *Traffic in Souls* and especially in *Sweedie* was even 30 years later still the stereotypical perception of the Scandinavian working class (the image of the more glamorous Scandinavian women was quite a different matter). She is reminiscent of a sulky child, an association that is developed in the next sequence.

The two sons, who have been watching Annie surreptitiously with big eyes, try their hand at recreating the Lumières' *L'arroseur arrosé* ('The Waterer Watered', 1895) as Annie waters the garden. They stamp on the hosepipe, and lift it just as Annie looks into the hose to see what is wrong. Annie is soaked through, but rather than be angry she playfully chases the boys with the hosepipe to spray them back. Meanwhile she opens her mouth and laughs loud and shrill. The mother looks out, sees what is happening, and rushes into the garden. At the same time the father arrives from work and hears Annie's happy, piercing laughter from the back garden.

Surprised and alarmed, he marches into the garden to find his wife standing, looking at Annie now half lying in the grass, laughing uncontrollably. Wife introduces her, ashamed and submissive, and Annie realizes that she probably will not be allowed to stay. The father announces that she ought to be deported back to Sweden.

Annie is portrayed as a big child in thrall to her emotions—she weeps very easily, for example—which is a deviant form of behaviour easy stigmatized in a middle-class environment. Her shrill laughter echoing across the calm of the wealthy residential street and the father's stunned reaction is tangible evidence that it is considered abnormal behaviour. She is Swedish, she behaves childishly, she is clumsy and

has a rustic look about her, she talks oddly, and is loud. The American family is quiet, they almost never talk, they show no emotion, and mostly seem amazed at Annie's behaviour. The Swedish maid has an ambivalent coding: she does not look or behave according to the American middle-class codes that are understood in the film, but she works hard, she is obliging and cheerful, and she is fond of the family's children, and it is this positive picture that is in the forefront of the story. She is portrayed not as a woman adrift, but as a girl who stays within her family, working in the house all day. That Annie is construed like this may reflect the idea that audiences will recognize the stereotype from the film narrative, but also that she is engaged in domestic work, which had a low status among American women and, along with her behaviour, would mark her out as a representative of the common woman.

Despite her behaviour, Annie is allowed to stay with the family, and it is thanks to her amazing Swedish cooking that she wins over the father the very first evening—'Her smorgasbord wasn't food, it was poetry'—with one delicious dish after another. Yet despite the warmth in her voice and longing in her eyes when she tells the carrier who comes with her bags (his name is Gustaf, he comes from Stockholm, and is played by Sven Hugo Borg) that she comes from 'Valborg', she dreams of becoming an American citizen. She is studying the Constitution and is learning everything she will need in a few years in order to 'take the examination for the citizen', and she jumbles Swedish and American by alternately singing Swedish songs and American hymns while she works: 'Rock of Ages', an English hymn written for the Anglican Church in 1830 and very popular in the US, interspersed with the Swedish folk song 'Uti vår hage' ('Out in Our Meadow'). The moment that finally persuades Annie to stay in the US comes one evening when the boys in the family go into the kitchen and tell her what their father had said: 'Our Annie can do anything.' Moved to tears, she reveals that she has long been saving up to visit Sweden, and that for a while she found it difficult to decide whether she should go home or become an American citizen; but now she knows that America is a good country: 'When its people here say to a servant girl—you are our Annie—then this country is home.' She gives a voice to the image of America as a democratic country with little class conflict; the America that tempted emigrants

The Swedish immigrant on her way to a position with an American family in *Annie was a Wonder*, 1949.

to leave Sweden; the image that America itself wishes to be associated with.

After working with the family for almost five years, Annie marries Gustaf the carrier (like most immigrants, she weds a man from her native country),[65] and with the help of her savings they buy a farm in Wisconsin. When they leave the family home, Annie is married and an American citizen, and her appearance has altered: she wears a smart corseted dress and an almost elegant hat. Married, Annie no longer poses the same threat to the norms of the nuclear family; she is more Americanized. According to this logic—and according to the movie—she cannot become an American citizen until she marries and sets up her own home. The voice-over says that all of these maids have now disappeared 'into the heart of the country', and are now neighbours in the street or farmers' wives in the Midwest.

The idea that Scandinavian women came from rural backgrounds and that in the US they became farmers' wives or daughters was deeply rooted in American popular culture. The existence of Scandinavian women was almost unthinkable outside the Midwest, the working class, or domestic service.[66] Yet as we have seen, it was usual for them to advance professionally and become nurses or teachers. One film that portrays this is *The Farmer's Daughter* (Henry C. Potter, 1947, released in Sweden as *Katrin gör karriär*). The title refers to the origins of most single immigrant women, and to the perception that many Swedish immigrants became farmers in the Midwest.

In *The Farmer's Daughter* the daughter in question is Katrin Holström, played by Loretta Young, who leaves her Swedish American family in the Midwest (probably Minnesota—Katrin says she comes from Red Wing County, but such a place does not exist, unlike Red Wing, the county capital of Goodhue County, Minnesota) to train as a nurse at Swedish Hospital in the great metropolis of Capitol City. She gets a lift from an itinerant farm painter, Adolph, who turns out to be a nasty piece of work who cheats her of all her money. She has to earn a living instead of training as nurse, and finds a job as maid with the politically active Morley family—mother, son, and butler. Katrin's outspokenness and spontaneity, and her love for the son, Glenn Morley, played by Joseph Cotten, lead her to become interested in politics. She marries Glenn and becomes a congresswoman in Washington.

The film was a huge success and won Loretta Young an Oscar for Best Actress. It was based on the Finnish film *Juurakon Hulda* (Valentin Vaala, 1937, released in Sweden as *Hulda kommer till sta'n* and *Hulda Juurako*). It is supposedly the only Finnish film so far ever to have an American remake, but everything Finnish was swapped out, presumably because a Swedish woman was a commoner figure in American cinema (which reflected the fact that there were far more Swedish immigrants than Finnish), if only because Swedish and Norwegian actresses—Greta Garbo, Ingrid Bergman, and Sonja Henie—had had such an impact in Hollywood, of which the Swedes were the better known among the general public. Both Ingrid Bergman and Sonja Henie had reportedly been up for the role.[67]

During the War, American filmmakers, almost cocking a snook at the Third Reich, had used Nordic female movie stars in a return to the Nordic essentialism that had characterized Hollywood produc-

tions during the 1910s and 1920s. In both Nazi and Hollywood films, Scandinavian actors embodied naturalness, rural simplicity, and all the good qualities they considered these to symbolize—but with different ideological purposes, of course. In Hollywood films, all things Nordic were sometimes a component in the anti-Nazi propaganda, but because of the Swedish political ambivalence towards Germany, the characters were rarely Swedish—Hollywood needed to establish clear poles in its representations. Thus it was, for example, that Ingrid Bergman's character in *Casablanca* (1942) was originally from Norway.[68]

In *The Farmer's Daughter*, we meet Katrin, or Katie, the first time at home with her family—mother, father, and three brothers. In this sequence, their Swedish heritage is shown using a number of devices. Katrin's mother, played by the former Swedish American film star Anna Q. Nilsson, says some sentences in Swedish; the three brothers sing the last lines of the folk song 'Höga berg och djupa dalar' ('High Mountains and Deep Valleys') albeit in an almost incomprehensible Swedish as the American actors probably learned the script phonetically; the father, played by the Irish American actor Harry Shannon, has a strong accent that is supposed to be Swedish; the man who will drive Katrin to the bus station is called Mattson, played by Sven Hugo Borg, who had also had a role in *Annie was a Wonder*, and he too has a thick accent and says the odd sentence in Swedish. More stereotypical indications of Swedishness show up later in the film. For example, both the father's and brothers' handshakes are so firm that they hurt (the strong Scandinavian Viking), and the whole of Katrin's farming family is down to earth, stubborn, and slightly uncompromising. These slight deviations are construed in such a kindly, cheerful, and honest light that they cannot be thought too weird or threatening.

Katrin herself is radically different from other representations of Swedish American maidservants. She is tall and very slender, beautiful, and obviously intelligent—all that was rural, clumsy, and childish is gone. The plaits survive, but in a much more sophisticated hairdo. She has a Swedish accent, often says '*Ja*' for 'Yes', and is the very picture of a healthy, natural woman in the image created first for Ingrid Bergman and her ilk—hence when Katrin goes skating, she warms up by running in circles in the snow, which the people watching find quite strange.[69] What is most different about Katrin's behaviour is her outspokenness and independence; she amazes everyone by openly saying what she

The Swedish maid, Americanized, in *The Farmer's Daughter*, 1947 (Swedish Film Institute Archive).

thinks, without worrying about whom she is talking to. This construction of independence may be a survival from the previous notions of immigrant women's independence. Outspokenness, which can be seen as a kind of naïveté, is presented in the film as unusual behaviour, but also as something positive. It is interesting that it is encoded here as something slightly non-American, while outspoken women in Swedish cinema, and indeed in Swedish perceptions in general, were usually thought typically American (see Chapter 3).

Katrin is clearly Americanized, which is a narrative technique and an ideological necessity for her to climb the social ladder. The American dream, that all people have an equal opportunity to become anything, is played up the film: Katrin is a woman, she is young, she comes from an immigrant background—all factors that tend to be barriers to advancement. Yet thanks to the American political family's support she manages to get into Congress. The concept of a democratic America, which was one of the reasons that so many Swedes emigrated, underpins both Katrin's career and her opportunities to speak so freely. A democratic and equal America is very clearly expressed in the relationship between the Morley family and their butler Joseph Clancy. He calls everyone by their first names, does not behave in the least like a servant, and he and Mrs Morley seem almost like an old married couple.

That Katrin becomes a congresswoman suggests a more progressive attitude towards both women and immigrants. Yet, even so, it probably would not have done to replace Swedish Katrin with a woman of another nationality. The film reaches out to immigrants, yes—but only certain immigrants. Many American films during and immediately after the War wanted to conjure up a picture of an open and tolerant America: 'The number of Good Neighbor films produced by Fox and other studios worked similarly to show US acceptance of other cultures' (the Good Neighbor policy, which was adhered to by the Roosevelt administration until 1945, was that the US should not interfere in Latin America's internal affairs, but instead should support economic and cultural exchange).[70] However, that openness was only proffered to certain nationalities, and Sean Griffin, who has written on Irish American representation in American wartime musicals, says that it was largely camouflage for the widespread racism that still pertained.[71]

After the War, immigrants from 'white' European countries such as Ireland and Sweden were felt to be self-evidently part of the American

nation, for as Rains says, 'There is no doubt that, following the social, political and cultural upheavals caused by the war, the position within American society of white European ethnic groups such as the Irish changed enormously. Their access to social and economic mobility was for the most part increasingly assured, and the very serious questions which had been raised during and after the First World War about their identity within and allegiance to the US appeared as an irrelevance by the 1950s.'[72] These immigrants were no longer assumed to have the same need to retain their old cultural identity. The Oscar won by Loretta Young might reasonably be seen as the product of an ambition to bring (select) immigrants within the circle of American culture.

The fact that Katrin is so assimilated, such a self-evident American citizen, that she can become a congresswoman can also be linked to the discussion about Hollywood's wartime aversion to allowing film characters to be of Swedish origin, because of Swedish ambivalence towards Germany. After the War there were no longer such objections, and both of the Swedish films about Swedish Americans and the relationship with the US—*Jens Månsson i Amerika* and *The Farmer's Daughter*—manifested the new political and ideological approach. It does not seem unreasonable to place the itinerant painter Adolph in *The Farmer's Daughter* in this discourse. His name, Adolph, and the fact that he is a painter brings Hitler to mind. Adolph is characterized as evil; he swindles Katrin, and is close to putting an end to her career. At the end of the movie she defeats him, however, by hitting him over the head with a chopping-block, and he is forced to admit that he spread lies about Katrin at the opposition party's behest (he had said they had spent a night together).

The film's portrayal of women is progressive for its time. Of course, the obligatory wedding is included, and Katrin cannot have a political career without being married, yet nonetheless she goes against the pattern that immigrants should marry people of the same nationality, as had been the case in *Annie was a Wonder*, which further enhances the assimilatory picture. Similarly, the last visible remnants of the Swedish farm girl are gone—in the film's final scene, when she enters the Capitol, her plaits are gone, replaced by an upsweep hidden under a stylish hat. Symbolically, she marries America: her American husband, Glenn, carries her over the threshold of the Capitol.

The Farmer's Daughter lived on as television series and that ran for

101 episodes in 1963–6 with the Swedish American actress Inger Stevens in the role of Katy Holstrum, as the name was anglicized.[73] A few of them are currently available on YouTube, revealing the series, a sitcom, to be a curious mixture of the old stereotypes—the occasional accent, a smattering of Swedish words like '*Ja*' and '*himmel*' (sky), forthrightness, and a naive air (although this last might be an expression of Sixties' female ideals)—and the new Swedish stereotype that emerged in the mid 1950s: the blonde bombshell. Katy's achievement in becoming a congresswoman seems to have been left out of the television version: she works as a maid for Morley, who is a congressman, until they get married in the third and final season and Katy adopts Morley's children from a previous marriage. Even so, the television series garnered several prizes, including a couple for its production, and an Emmy and a Golden Globe for Inger Stevens for her portrayal of Katy Holstrum.

Citizenship, Swedish performativity, and cinema since 1950

Women who emigrated for economic reasons or to find a degree of independence for various reasons denied them in their native country often enter some form of domestic service, and these circumstances are sometimes to be found on film. The Swedish female immigrants to the US who found work as maids—a role which followed them across a number of American films—had their counterparts in different places and different times. The first African feature film made by an African, *La noire de …* (*Black Girl*, Ousmane Sembene, 1966), was about a Senegalese woman working as a maid in a French family, first in Senegal and then later in France. And Lukas Moodysson depicted something very similar in *Mammoth* (2009) in which a woman has to work as a maid and nanny for an American family in order to be able to provide for her own family in the Philippines. And though John Nesbitt in *Annie was a Wonder* says that American families no longer have maidservants, we know they do. In American cinema, the Spanish-speaking maid is a stock character, her citizenship or residence permit often the subject of negotiation, as in McTiernan's *Die Hard* (1988), in which an aggressive journalist threatens the maid Paulina, from an unnamed South American country, that he would shop her to the immigration authorities.

In this chapter I have focused on films that thematize citizenship in relation to the film character of the maidservant. There are a wide range of films in which Swedish, Scandinavian, or Swedish American women have prominent parts, some of them analysed by Arne Lunde in his recent volume. In addition to the films I have discussed above, I would like briefly to mention a couple more where citizenship or Swedish performativity are prominent motifs.

American citizenship is what the comedy *Ice-Capades* (Joseph Santley, 1941) revolves around. The film is all but an advertisement for the relatively newly formed ice show troupe Ice-Capades, and several of its stars appeared in it. The story hinges on the discovery that the Swede Marie Anderson, who has been offered a job as the star of the Ice-Capades show, is living illegally in the US. Throughout the film she is persecuted by the Immigration Office's agents, who says she is 'an alien, wanted for deportation'. That is not how she is seen by the film's male protagonist, a newsreel cameraman who later falls in love with her; she does not have typically Scandinavian looks and she speaks accentless English (the agents explain that 'she was educated in this country, that's what made it so difficult to trace her'). The film ends with newsreel photographer and Marie marrying, whereupon she becomes an American citizen.

Ice-Capades was designed to catch the wave of Hollywood success being enjoyed by Sonja Henie, the multiple world champion in figure skating, with films in which she often went both skating and skiing. The cold North with its firs, snow, and icicles sets the tone right away in the animated title sequence, and the story and the rather silly comic elements are interspersed with appearances by the troupe. It all culminates in a grand finale where ethnicity is to the fore, but now in a thoroughly American version with stereotypical cowboys and Indians. The film was an exception to the rule that for political reasons, female Scandinavian roles in American films during the War were never Swedish, but, as Lunde points out, Garbo also played a Swede in her final film, *Two-Faced Woman* (1941). Like Katrin in *The Farmer's Daughter*, the character Marie is independent and successful, but in order to become American citizens, both end up marrying American men. Marie too lacks all the stereotypical Scandinavian characteristics, which, while a positive step (the film does not make fun of Swedish women migrants), can also be interpreted as meaning that Marie must seem as 'American' as

possible if the audience is to accept her citizenship. Too different an appearance or behaviour would probably not have been tolerated by the general public.

The reverse situation was true in the movie *Let's Fall in Love* (David Burton, 1933), which can be taken as a commentary on the fact that so many female Hollywood stars came from Europe, not least Greta Garbo. The action concerns a film production in a place not so very unlike Sweden. The star, Hedwig Forsell, pulls out and the producers have to find a new actress. The director says that she must be replaced by a Swede—only a Swede can play a Swede, he pronounces, in a kind of essentialist dogma—and searches Hollywood, with all its Swedish bakeries, Swedish employment offices, and Swedish massage parlours, without finding a suitable woman ('They're just farmers,' snorts producer Max). A chance encounters leads the director to an American woman working at an amusement park, attracting customers with a pretend French accent, and he contracts her for the role. But first, she has to learn to be Swedish.

When *Let's Fall in Love* begins, the shoot is in full swing and we get to see the film in the film's production design and costumes. The setting is supposed to be Sweden, but both the sets and the actors' costumes are a mishmash of everything that could possibly be thought Nordic or Northern European. The painted backdrop has a mountain with a medieval castle in the German style, there is an open-air dance floor in best Swedish style, and the women in the chorus are dressed in a completely unidentifiable national dress, complete with stays, Dutch bonnets, and small peak caps. It is tempting to judge the whole hodgepodge as an expression of Hollywood ignorance, but the same mixture can also be intentional: the film thematizes performativity on several levels, not least when it comes to nationality, and the performative is signalled in this way. There are also other signs that signal its performativity and deliberate play on national clichés. The first scene takes place on a film set: Hedwig Forsell (who, with her body language, hair, and eyebrows is an obvious parody of Greta Garbo) is played by the Romanian, Tala Birell; the producer, Max, played by the Russian, Gregory Ratoff (who in 1939 had directed Ingrid Bergman's first film in the US, *Intermezzo*), his accent much emphasized and a source of endless confusion; and, in an evidently performative sign, the woman who is contracted as the replacement, Jean (played by Ann Sothern),

first attracts attention because of her ability to mimic a foreign accent.[74] The film is also an allegory of Hollywood-style multicultural cinema—Hollywood's production companies consisted largely of Europeans at this time—and a comment on the various pitfalls of the talkies.

Jean has got the part of the film within the film's Swedish star, and has to learn the Swedish language and Swedish culture. She is dispatched to a Swedish immigrant couple, Lisa and Svente Bjorkman, played by the German Greta Meyer and John Qualen, who had Norwegian ancestry. In appearance, Lisa personifies the stereotypical Scandinavian woman in an exaggerated manner: she is large and plump (with extra padding in the bosom area) and has long plaits coiled at the sides of her head. Svente is the typical unmanly Swedish man as described by Arne Lunde (who specifically discusses the character of John Qualen in his book) and Chris Holmlund. Both Lisa and Svente are comic sidekicks of a type that American immigrants often had to play, but here carefully pitched to tip over into overacting, which means we can read it as an ethnic satire.[75] Lisa and Svente speak with heavy accents, they are simple and rustic, and at one point Svente sits in Lisa's lap for a big hug. At the Bjorkmans' Jean learns to be Swedish: the film lays bare all the performative detail in national identity. In a double-exposure collage we see Jean reading a Swedish primer with foreign letters such as ä, ö and German ü, and words such as *byxa* ('trousers'), *hjässa* ('head'), and *sjägg* [*sic*] (a misspelling of beard), while agitated music plays interspersed with the Swedish drinking song 'Helan går'. Finally, to show how Swedish Jean has become, Lisa and Svente throw a Swedish party that spins into an ethnic display with fiddles and accordions and people in national dress (just as unrecognizable as in the opening scene) who eat *smörgåsbord* in time to the music. The whole thing is crowned by Jean, who has been renamed Sigrid Lund, singing a song in incomprehensible Swedish. *Let's Fall in Love* is a commentary on the essentialist and biologistic views of national identity, in that it highlights the performative and constructed—that anyone can learn to impersonate any ethnicity, anywhere. It plays with ethnic stereotypes, it is sarcastic about them, and, by extension, it criticizes them. *Let's Fall in Love* was probably one of the first to use this approach; during the War, Fox made a number of musicals that, in Sean Griffin's words, created 'spaces for viewers to consider race/ethnicity and gender as ideological performances rather than biological essentialisms', which

these films could do largely because they were musicals, a genre that has a 'carnivalesque nature'.[76] *Let's Fall in Love* is not really a musical, although it has some songs, but it takes place in the show business and movie world, which of course is a place where one can assume a role.

There were not that many films that dared to mock the audience's clichés and ethnic prejudices. The Swede as comic sidekick reappears over the years in several films, for example in *Not as a Stranger* (Stanley Kramer, 1955) with a stellar cast of Robert Mitchum, Frank Sinatra, and Olivia de Havilland as the Swede Kristina Hedvigson. The film shows that the Swedish female immigrant, now often in the second or even third generation, was without any problem regarded as an American citizen, but even so Olivia de Havilland's character exhibits a few signs of Swedishness: she is blonde, beautiful and very white-skinned, has a barely discernible accent, comes from Minnesota, and serves up a *smörgåsbord*. Of the guests gathered around the *smörgåsbord*, her Swedish friends are portrayed as being different to the American guests: they eat a huge amount but do not understand how it affects them, they are outspoken, and laugh at the wrong sort of jokes. The ethnic stereotypes were not completely dead.

Katrin in *The Farmer's Daughter* abandons the immigrant women's allotted place as a maid to become a member of Congress, but that movie was not to be the first of many, for instead the Swedish woman was constructed in American cinema (and in one performance, pretty much all cinema) as the blonde bombshell or a sex object.[77] The Sixties' television series about Katy the farmer's daughter reflects this. The question of civic identity can sometimes be spotted in the occasional film, but these days the way Swedes go to become American citizens does not go via domestic service or an ice-skating career, but rather through a well-lit chapel. This view of the easy Swedish woman who uses her sexuality to get ahead can be found in the comedy *The Marriage-Go-Round* (Walter Lang, 1961), with Susan Hayward, Julie Newmar (as the Swede Katrin Sveg), and James Mason in the leading roles.

CHAPTER 6

Concluding words

In this study, I have turned a familiar perspective upside down. It is not about how the Swedish media represent immigrants who come to Sweden and the notions of themselves that immigrants face there, but how Swedes have been regarded in their capacity as migrants, both in the country they left and the country they moved to. I have shown how the Swedish American was construed in Swedish and American feature films, and how the Swedes in the US used Swedish cinema to keep in touch with their native land, acknowledging their Swedish character, and, from that, building a new identity. In Sweden today, you sometimes hear grumbles that blocks of flats in immigrant areas are plastered with satellite dishes, complaining at the idea that today's immigrants want to watch television programmes from their countries of origin, assuming that if they do it must mean they are not integrated into Swedish society sufficiently. The Norwegian media researcher Eva Bakøy writes that the authorities in Germany and France see it as deeply worrying that their Turkish and North African immigrant communities watch more television from their old homelands than from their new, 'Satellite television was thus perceived as an obstacle to the Turks' integration and as a threat to the German community's unity and integrity.'[1] But she goes on that research has shown that there is a possibility that 'nostalgic myths about the ideal fatherland are put to the test' when watching television programmes from the country they have left behind.[2]

Swedish emigrants to the US did exactly the same way, but using those channels then available to them: newspapers, books, cultural organizations, theatre, and cinema. Film became increasingly important, and should perhaps be seen as the bridge from traditional cultural expressions to modern media society. The literature on the use of media—satellite television, private television stations, the Internet—is verging on the

overwhelming, but it is remarkable how rarely a historical perspective has been taken. In this study, I have set out to show that contemporary migrants' media use has a long history, enlarging our knowledge of Swedish Americans' film use and how they viewed Sweden and Swedishness, and ultimately providing a new perspective on today's issues.

Immigrants in America were ascribed all sorts of negative characteristics and blamed for many of society's problems. Even Swedes—a white, Christian ethnic group—were long considered in the US to be strange and abnormal, which is borne out in the American films.[3] Swedish American immigrants wanted to be accepted as Americans, while preserving their distinctively Swedish character; however, in order to be thought American, as Arne Lunde writes, they had to rub out the salient markers of their original ethnicity: 'The notion of "becoming white folks" for working-class or peasant-class Scandinavians in America of this period might require effacing the marks of "too ethnic" foreignness (including heavy foreign accents, fractured syntax, dual language practices, old country dress and manners, suspicious displays of overattachment to the foreign homeland of origin, etc.).'[4]

Migrants are often viewed with a jaundiced eye, both in the country they emigrate from and the country they immigrate to. It is as if they have violated a national moral code. In America, Swedish Americans, like all other immigrants, tried to maintain some kind of Swedish identity. They settled in ethnically defined areas in the cities, they formed gangs and fought turf wars with other immigrant gangs, often the Irish, and were treated as comical, silly characters in American films. In Sweden they met with equal disapproval, unless they proved themselves to be Swedes after all by moving back for good. Female emigrants were construed in an even more negative light in both Swedish and American cinema.

From the newspaper material about Swedish films shown in America, it is clear that Swedish Americans' views about their native land stood still: the old country was not allowed to change. This was apparent in the films shot by Swedish Americans on visits to Sweden.[5] The returning Swedes' films that were made between 1927 and 1980 construed their home tracts and Sweden as a whole in essentially the same terms: they recorded what was familiar, and the same motifs appeared without fail, time and again, even in films made 50 years apart. Although society has changed in a number of fundamental ways, returning Swedes

still came up with the same images of their homeland. The stereotyping appears to increase the more time has elapsed. Contemporary Swedish Americans across the US, perhaps third- and fourth-generation immigrants, celebrate Midsummer and Lucia, enjoy a cup of coffee and cinnamon bun, and dress up as Vikings, but their traditions have an unmistakable Swedish American touch. Although the first large wave of emigration from Sweden to the US began about 150 years ago and the last 100 years ago, there are still a great many organizations that survive to spread 'Swedishness' and Swedish culture in the US. Film advertising before 1950 encouraged Swedish Americans to bring their American friends along to show them how beautiful Sweden was and raise awareness about the country.

The impression of Swedish Americans given by Swedish films also reflected Swedish views on the US and all things American. Swedish Americans on screen were sometimes shown having acquired what were seen as the bad American traits: all the swagger, tastelessness, criminality, and greed, and, for women, the mannishness and emancipation. Anti-Americanism in Swedish film and television has gone in waves, but some constructs have proved extremely long-lived and unchangeable.[6] The fact that America, and in a film context, Hollywood, are seen as bad things is amply evident in *Swedish Hollywood Wives*, a television series that is a heady mix of anti-American attitudes which build on exactly the same foundations as century-old anti-migration pamphlets, the stereotype of the Swedish blonde sex bomb, and Hollywood as the epitome of a superficial lifestyle: the Swedish women in Los Angeles are being represented in exactly the same manner as the emigrant woman in Thirties' Swedish films.

In contrast to all this anti-Americanism there is the self-congratulation about Sweden, that is very evident in modern Swedish television productions. Although nationalism and patriotism nowadays have negative connotations, and there is a sense in which the importance of all things national is diminishing, one can still find the same values on Swedish television that existed in Swedish feature films from before the Second World War. In *Allt för Sverige* (*The Great Swedish Adventure*), broadcast on Sveriges Television in 2011, 2012, and 2013, Swedish essentialism could celebrate fresh triumphs: American descendants of Swedish emigrants in the third or fourth generation visited Sweden to participate in a contest about Sweden and Swedishness, in

which everyone could find out their Swedish family history, learn the national anthem and some drinking songs, eat Swedish food, celebrate Midsummer, and dress up in national dress, while the competition itself consisted of things such as rowing a boat, finding things out, finding and opening a treasure chest—all with a Swedish connection). Although many of them had roots in other nations, and even though they had never had any contact with Sweden before, they were greeted with a cheery 'Welcome home' by the television host.[7] Many of the participants also had a strikingly traditional Nordic look about them. The producers wanted the Americans to feel like 'real' Swedes, and viewers at home were encouraged to consider them such, at the same time as many Swedes want today's immigrants to Sweden to 'become Swedes' as soon as possible. Thus in the Swedish world of ideas, no matter how much time has passed, the American immigrant is still thought of as being at heart a Swedish emigrant, and even a Swede as long as she or he returns home and admits their love for Sweden, which will then welcome them with open arms.

Notes

1. The movies and emigration to America

1 Lars Ljungmark speaking in the television series *Den stora utvandringen: bort från det gamla landet*, made in 1971, which was based upon Ljungmark's book, *Den stora utvandringen: svensk emigration till USA 1840–1925* (Stockholm: Sveriges radio, 1965)

2 Göran Hägg, *Svenskhetens historia* (Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 2003).

3 Jens Liljestrand, *Mobergland: personligt och politiskt i Vilhelm Mobergs utvandrarserie* (Stockholm: Ordfront, 2009), 17

4 H. Arnold Barton, 'A Heritage to Celebrate: Swedes in America, 1846–1996', *Scandinavian Review* (1996, 84: 2).

5 Ulf Beijbom, *Swedes in Chicago: a Demographic and Social Study of the 1846–1880 Immigration* (diss., Uppsala: University, 1972)

6 Beijbom, *Swedes in Chicago*.

7 Ljungmark, *Den stora utvandringen*.

8 Barton, 'A Heritage to Celebrate'.

9 Beijbom, *Swedes in Chicago*.

10 Ibid.

11 International research into this particular theme is also relatively sparse. One example is Stephanie Rains, *The Irish-American in Popular Culture 1945–2000* (Dublin, Portland, OR: Irish Academic Press, 2007). More has been published concerning contemporary migration, including a variety of different aspects of film and media. In Swedish film research there are also examples of work on Swedish-American relations from a cultural-analytical perspective, in which, for example, the author discusses Swedish film's relationship to what is seen as American, including aesthetics, industry, and culture, as well as the fear of Americanisation found in Swedish film, especially during the 1920s—see Mats Björkin, *Amerikanism, bolsjevism och korta kjolar: filmen och dess publik i Sverige under 1920-talet* (diss., Stockholm: University, 1998).

12 H. Arnold Barton, *A Folk Divided: Homeland Swedes and Swedish Americans, 1840–1940* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1994); Birgitta Steene, 'The Swedish Image of America', *Images of America in Scandinavia*,

ed. Poul Houe & Sven Hakon Rossel (Amsterdam, Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1998).

13 Per Olov Qvist, *Folkhemmets bilder: modernisering, motstånd och mentalitet i den svenska 30-talsfilmen* (Lund: Arkiv, 1995).

14 See Ann-Kristin Wallengren, 'Svenskhet i diasporan – nationell film och den svenskamerikanska pressen', *Då och där, här och nu: festskrift till Ingemar Oscarsson*, ed. Magnus Nilsson, Per Rydén & Birthe Sjöberg (Lund: Litteraturvetenskapliga institutionen, Lunds universitet, 2007).

15 Lars Wendelius, *Bilden av Amerika i svensk prosafiktion 1890–1914* (diss. Uppsala: University, 1982).

16 Lars Wendelius, *Kulturliv i ett svenskamerikanskt lokalsamhälle: Rockford, Illinois* (*Cultural life in a Swedish-American community: Rockford, Illinois*) (Uppsala: Centre for Multiethnic Research, University, 1990).

17 Lars Furuland, 'From Vermländingarne to Slavarna på Molokstorp: Swedish-American Ethnic Theater in Chicago', *Swedish-American life in Chicago: Cultural and Urban Aspects of an Immigrant People, 1850–1930*, ed. Dag Blanck & Philip J. Anderson (Uppsala: University, 1991); Anne-Charlotte Harvey, 'Performing Ethnicity. The Role of Swedish Theatre in the Twin Cities', *Swedes in the Twin Cities: Immigrant Life and Minnesota's Urban Frontier*, ed. Philip J. Anderson & Dag Blanck (Uppsala: Universitetsbiblioteket, 2001); Anna Williams, 'Den svensk-amerikanska pressen och de etniska identiterna', *Göteborgs-emigranten* (Göteborg: Göteborgs-emigranten, 1997); Lars Furuland, 'The Swedish-American Press as a Literary Institution of the Immigrants', *Scandinavia Overseas: Patterns of Cultural Transformation in North America and Australia*, ed. Harald Runblom & Dag Blanck (2nd edn, Uppsala: Centre for Multiethnic Research, 1990); Ulf Jonas Björk, 'Svenska amerikanska posten: An Immigrant Newspaper with American Accent', *Swedes in the Twin Cities: Immigrant life and Minnesota's Urban Frontier*, ed. Philip J. Anderson & Dag Blanck (Uppsala: Univ.-bibl., 2001); Ulf Jonas Björk, 'Nils F:son Brown and the Decline of the Swedish-American Press, 1910–1940', *Swedish American Genealogist* (1999, 19:2/3).

18 Rains, *The Irish-American in Popular Culture*.

19 Giorgio Bertellini, 'Black Hands and White Hearts: Italian Immigrants as "Urban Racial Types" in Early American Film Culture', *Urban History* (2004, 31:3); see also Carlos E. Cortés, 'Italian-Americans in Film: From Immigrants to Icons', *Melus* (1987, 14:3/4).

20 Hamid Naficy, *The Making of Exile Cultures: Iranian Television in Los Angeles* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

21 For a general and specialist discussion of Swedish American identity, see Dag Blanck, *Becoming Swedish-American: The Construction of an Ethnic Identity in the Augustana Synod, 1860–1917* (diss., Uppsala: University, 1997).

22 See, for example, Graeme Turner, *Film as Social Practice* (4th edn, London: Routledge, 2006) for one of several possible approaches.
23 For some of the extensive literature on the subject, see Turner, *Film as Social Practice*; Stuart Hall, Jessica Evans & Sean Nixon ed., *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices* (2nd edn, London: SAGE, 2012).
24 Jostein Gripsrud, *Mediekultur, mediesamhälle* (3rd edn, Gothenburg: Daidalos, 2011).
25 See, for example, Hall, Evans & Nixon, *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices*.
26 Douglas Kellner, *Media Culture: Cultural Studies, Identity and Politics between the Modern and the Postmodern* (London: Routledge, 1995).
27 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (rev. edn, London: Verso, 1991).
28 For an interesting comparative discussion of this theoretical complex, see Philip Schlesinger, 'The Sociological Scope of "National Cinema" ', *Cinema and Nation*, ed. Mette Hjort & Scott MacKenzie (London: Routledge, 2000).
29 Ibid. 23
30 Thomas Elsaesser, *European Cinema. Face to Face with Hollywood ('ImpersoNations: National Cinema, Historical Imaginaries')* (Amsterdam: AUP, 2005).
31 Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nationer och nationalism*, [*Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 1990] trans. Paul Frisch (Stockholm: Ordfront, 1994), 185.
32 David Morley & Kevin Robins, 'No Place like Heimat: Images of Home(land)', *The Cultural Geography Reader*, ed. Timothy S. Oakes & Patricia L. Price (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2008), 299.
33 Orvar Löfgren, 'Medierna i nationsbygget: Hur press, radio och TV gjort Sverige svenskt', *Medier och kulturer*, ed. Ulf Hannerz & Peter Dahlgren (Stockholm: Carlsson, 1990).
34 Stephen Crofts, 'Concepts of National Cinema', *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies*, ed. John Hill & Pamela Church Gibson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).
35 For these developments, see Stephen Crofts, 'Concepts of National Cinema'; Elsaesser, *European Cinema*.
36 Ian Jarvie, 'National Cinema: A Theoretical Assessment', *Cinema and Nation*, ed. Mette Hjort & Scott MacKenzie (London: Routledge, 2000).
37 Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: SAGE, 1995)
38 Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 8.

2. Betraying the nation

1 Barton, 'A Heritage to Celebrate'.
2 Barton, 'A Heritage to Celebrate'; Ann-Sofie Ohlander (Kälvemark), *Reaktionen mot utvandringen: emigrationsfrågan i svensk debatt och politik 1901–1904* (diss., Uppsala: University, Stockholm, 1972); Nils Edling, *Det fosterländska hemmet: egnahemspolitik, småbruk och hemideologi kring sekelskiftet 1900* (diss., Stockholm: University, Stockholm, 1996)
3 Beijbom, *Swedes in Chicago*.
4 Patrik Hall, *Den svenskaste historien: nationalism i Sverige under sex sekler* (Stockholm: Carlsson, 2000).
5 Edling, *Det fosterländska hemmet*, 190–1.
6 For example, Ohlander (Kälvemark), *Reaktionen mot utvandringen*.
7 Conny Mithander, 'Från mönsterland till monsterland: Folkhemska berättelser', *Berättelser i förvandling: Berättande i ett intermedialt och tvärvetenskapligt perspektiv*, ed. Åke Bergwall, Yvonne Leffler, and Conny Mithander (Karlstad: Karlstad University Studies, 2000:12) states that this was the most extensive public enquiry. In 1913, Gustaf Sundbärg published the final report which ran to 900 pages, followed by several appendices, which were published from 1908 onwards.
8 *Emigrationsutredningen* (Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt & Söner, 1908), Appendix 7.
9 Edling, *Det fosterländska hemmet*; Hall, *Den svenskaste historien*; Anna Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket: Nationalföreningen mot emigrationen 1907–1925* (diss., Umeå: University, 2007).
10 Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket*.
11 See ibid. for a more detailed discussion on the relationship.
12 Ibid.; for a similarly detailed treatment, see Edling, *Det fosterländska hemmet*.
13 Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket*.
14 Edling, *Det fosterländska hemmet*.
15 From the National Society Against Emigration's programme, see Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket*, 38.
16 Ibid. 30.
17 One of Alexander Molin's expressions, see Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket*, *passim.*
18 Edling, *Det fosterländska hemmet*, 25.
19 Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket*, 204; Hall, *Den svenskaste historien*, 259.
20 Billy Ehn, Jonas Frykman, Orvar Löfgren, *Försvenskningen av Sverige: det nationellas förvandlingar* (Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 1993).
21 Edling, *Det fosterländska hemmet*
22 Ibid.

23 Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket*, 51.

24 An exception was prompted by the lack of musicians to play in restaurant and cinema bands in Sweden in the late 1910s and 1920s, see Ann-Kristin Wallengren, *En afton på Röda Kvarn. Svensk stumfilm som musikdrama* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1998).

25 Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket*.

26 Gustaf Berg, *Nationalföreningen mot emigrationen 1907–1912: en öfversikt* (Stockholm: Westerbergs, 1912), 8.

27 Welma Swanston Howard, *När Maja-Lisa kom hem från Amerika* (Folkskrifter utg. af Nationalföreningen mot emigrationen, 1; Stockholm, 1908), discussed at length in Tom O'Dell, *Culture Unbound: Americanization and Everyday Life in Sweden* (diss., Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 1997); Ernst Lindblom, *Per Jansons Amerika-resa* (Folkskrifter utg. af Nationalföreningen mot emigrationen, 2; Stockholm, 1909).

28 In Swedish: 'Tusen röda droppar, Sverge,/liksom vatten,/o, i morgon som igår,/tusen, tusen, åter tusen - -!/Vem skall tända stuguljusen?/Tomma stugor stå i natten –/allt ditt liv förrinner, Sverge,/livet rinner/ur ditt öppna sår'. Quoted in Hall, *Den svenskaste historien*, 226.

29 Lars M. Andersson, *En jude är en jude är en jude: representationer av 'juden' i svensk skämtpress omkring 1900–1930* (diss., Lund: Lund University, 2000); Christian Catomeris, *Det ohyggliga arvet: Sverige och främlingen genom tiderna* (Stockholm: Ordfront, 2004).

30 This and the other movies with an emigration theme that I will be discussing are considered briefly by Marina Dahlquist, 'Teaching Citizenship via Celluloid', *Early Cinema and the 'National'*, ed. Richard Abel, Giorgio Bertellini & Rob King (New Barnet: John Libbey, 2008); for descriptions of the films, see Kevin Brownlow, *Behind the Mask of Innocence* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992).

31 See, for example, Leif Furhammar, *Filmen i Sverige: en historia i tio kapitel* (Höganäs: Wiken/Svenska Filminstitutet, 1991).

32 Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket*.

33 Anne Bachmann, 'Atlantic Crossings: Exhibiting Scandinavian-American Relations in Scale Models and Moving Pictures during the mid-1910s', *Early Popular Visual Culture* (2012, 10:4).

34 *Svensk filmografi*, i: *1897–1919*, ed. Lars Åhlander (Stockholm: Svenska Filminstitutet, 1986); Sven Lagerstedt, *Drömmaren från Norrlandsgatan. En studie i Henning Bergers liv och författarskap* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1963) only notes that Berger wrote for the cinema. Berger was generally fiercely anti-American, and was emphatic that he had tried to use film to counteract emigration.

35 Erik Hedling, 'Receptionen av Ingeborg Holm: Filmen som politiskt vapen', *Filmanalys—en introduktion* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1999).

36 Åsa Jernudd, 'Före biografens tid: kringresande filmförevisares program 1904–1907', *Välfärdsbilder: svensk film utanför biografen*, ed. Erik Hedling & Mats Jönsson (Stockholm: Statens ljud- och bildarkiv, 2008); Rune Waldekranz, 'Levande fotografier. Film och biograf i Sverige 1896–1906' (unpub. diss., Stockholms universitet, 1969).

37 'Immigrants on Leviathan Witness First Americanization Pictures', *Moving Picture World*, 20 November (1926), 3, quoted in Lee Grieveson, 'Policing the cinema: Traffic in Souls at Ellis Island', *Screen* (1997, 38:2), 159.

38 Dahlquist, 'Teaching Citizenship via Celluloid', 118.

39 Pelle Snickars, *Svensk film och visuell masskultur 1900* (Stockholm: Aura, 2001), 148–9 includes a detailed discussion of the term 'bricolage', its meaning as a mixed art form, and how it has been approached theoretically; it has been used most of all by Richard Abel, *The Ciné Goes to Town—French Cinema, 1896–1914* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), and Miriam Hansen, *Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991).

40 A film ending of a gathering around a meal table was very common in Swedish films of the 1930s, and was not at all unusual as early as the 1910s (Furhammar, *Filmen i Sverige*).

41 O'Dell, *Culture Unbound*, 93–4.

42 Tommy Gustafsson, *En fiende till civilisationen: manlighet, genusrelationer, sexualitet och rasstereotyper i svensk filmkultur under 1920–talet* (diss., Lund: Lunds univ., 2008); Per Olov Qvist, *Folkhemmets bilder: modernisering, motstånd och mentalitet i den svenska 30–talsfilmen* (Lund: Arkiv, 1995); Rochelle Wright, *The Visible Wall: Jews and Other Ethnic Outsiders in Swedish Film* (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1998).

43 Wright, *The Visible Wall*.

44 Andersson, *En jude är en jude är en jude*.

45 O'Dell, *Culture Unbound*.

46 Andersson, *En jude är en jude är en jude*, 294.

47 Tommy Gustafsson, 'Ett steg på vägen mot en ny jämlikhet? Könsrelationer och stereotyper i ung svensk ungdomsfilm på 2000–talet', *Solskenslandet: svensk film på 2000–talet*, ed. Erik Hedling & Ann-Kristin Wallengren (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2006).

48 Gustafsson, *En fiende till civilisationen*.

49 Ibid., *passim*, analyses such anti-Semitic slurs.

50 My brief discussion of this movie is based upon information in *Svensk filmografi*, i: *1897–1919*, and the programme sheets and reviews held in the library and archive of the Swedish Film Institute.

51 *Svensk filmografi*, i: *1897–1919*, 169.
52 Ibid. 169.
53 *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*, 7 May 1912; *Skånska Dagbladet*, 6 May 1912.
54 For Frans Lundberg's films, see Jan Olsson, *Sensationer från en bakgård: Frans Lundberg som biografägare och filmproducent i Malmö och Köpenhamn* (Stockholm: Symposion, 1989).
55 *Svensk filmografi*, i: *1897–1919*, table of contents; for the International Opium Convention, see Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/ wiki/International_Opium_Convention, accessed 18 November 2012.
56 *Svensk Filmografi*, ii: *1920–1929*, ed. Lars Åhlander (Stockholm: Svenska Filminstitutet, 1982), 248.
57 Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket*; Ohlander (Kälvemark), *Reaktionen mot utvandringen*.
58 Ohlander (Kälvemark), *Reaktionen mot utvandringen*, 21.
59 Wendelius, *Bilden av Amerika i svensk prosafiktion*.
60 Ibid.
61 Martin Alm, *Americanitis: Amerika som sjukdom eller läkemedel: svenska berättelser om USA åren 1900–1939* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2002).
62 *Svensk filmografi*, i: *1897–1919*, 277; for a discussion of racial stereotypes in the film, see Gustafsson, *En fiende till civilisationen.*
63 Wendelius, *Bilden av Amerika i svensk prosafiktion*.
64 Alm, *Americanitis*, 252.
65 *Svensk Filmografi*, ii: *1920–1929*, 179.
66 Martha P. Nochimson, *Dying to Belong: Gangster Movies in Hollywood and Hong Kong* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007)
67 The film is a 10-minute-long newsreel and should not be confused with another film of the same name, which is 80 minutes long and was directed by Carl Barcklind in 1928 on commission from the Royal Society for Swedish Culture Abroad.
68 *Svensk Filmografi*, ii: *1920–1929*.
69 Although, strictly speaking, in American usage the word 'yankee' means someone who comes from New England in the north-east of the US, and of itself does not always carry negative associations, the word acquired a pejorative tone in the literature of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It came to denote a boastful American of unsettled, unconventional habits, often a manual labourer; Wendelius, Bilden av Amerika i svensk prosafiktion; Birgitta Steene, 'The Swedish Image of America', *Images of America in Scandinavia*, ed. Poul Houe & Sven Hakon Rossel (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1998).
70 Ljungmark in the 'Bort från det gamla landet' episode of the television series *Den stora utvandringen.*

71 It was common at this time, by telling stories which had a greater or lesser hold on the truth, to emphasize the fact that a very large number of Swedes were living in the US. Hence *Svenska Dagbladet*, 3 February 1925, reported on a showing of *Bland landsmän i Amerika*: 'The chief of the fire department of a small town in Southern Sweden was on a study trip to America, and eventually ended up in San Francisco, where he was enthusiastically hailed by the press as "the Fire Marshal of Sweden". One day he was visiting one of the fire stations. There was an emergency call-out, but as with everything in America, it all went so fast that "the Fire Marshal of Sweden" was left behind. However, he was a man of action, so he threw himself into a car and made his way to the site of the fire, to find it was already cordoned off. Forgetting his English in his haste, he explained, in broad Skåne dialect, to the mounted police blocking his way, that he was Fire Chief Jönsson from Trelleborg [a small town in the far south of Sweden]. "Boys, let Jönsson through," was heard from one of the horsebacks, where a sergeant was seated. And Jönsson was allowed though—all the mounted police were former Skåne Hussars!'

72 Gustafsson, *En fiende till civilisationen*.

73 In Swedish: "På sydsidan sköta ten David och ten Måses om kommersen med begagnade tandborstar och andra schene rariteten." See Wright, *The Visible Wall: Jews and Other Ethnic Outsiders in Swedish Film* for a discussion on the language used in comics.

74 Alm, *Americanitis*.

75 *Svenska Dagbladet*, 3 February 1925; *Arbetet*, 3 February 1925; *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*, 3 February 1925; *Stockholms Dagblad* 4 February 1925.

76 *Arbetaren*, 3 February 1925; *Folkets Dagblad*, 3 February 1925.

77 *Folkets Dagblad*, 3 February 1925.

78 *Arbetaren*, 3 February 1925.

79 Liljestrand, *Mobergland*.

80 Per Olov Qvist, *Jorden är vår arvedel: Landsbygden i svensk spelfilm 1940–1959* (diss., Stockholm: University, 1986), 176.

81 For example, *Vägen till Klockrike* (*The Road to Klockrike*, Gunnar Skoglund, 1953), adapted from Harry Martinson's famous novel of the same name of 1948.

3. Celebrating Swedishness

1 Beijbom, *Swedes in Chicago*.

2 Ulf Beijbom, *Amerika, Amerika! en bok om utvandringen* (Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 1977).

3 According to Arne Ruth, 'Det moderna Sveriges myter', *Svenska krusbär*, ed. Björn Linell & Mikael Löfgren (Stockholm: Bonnier Alba, 1995), 550.

4 Beijbom, *Amerika, Amerika*.
5 For the rural ideal in Swedish film, see Qvist, *Jorden är vår arvedel*, och Qvist, *Folkhemmets bilder*; for Lundborg and Molin, see Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket*.
6 Furhammar, *Filmen i Sverige*.
7 Quoted in Beijbom, *Amerika, Amerika*, 61; for recent research on the significance to Sweden of returning emigrants, see Per-Olof Grönberg, *Learning and Returning: Return Migration of Swedish Engineers from the United States, 1880–1940* (diss., Umeå: Umeå University, 2003); and Magnus Persson, *Coming Full Circle? Return Migration and the Dynamics of Social Mobility on the Bjäre Peninsula 1860–1930* (Lund: Sisyfos, 2007)
8 O'Dell, *Culture Unbound*.
9 Tom O'Dell, 'Det amerikanska Andra och berättelser om skillnad', *I andra länder: historiska perspektiv på svensk förmedling av det främmande: en antologi*, ed. Magnus Berg & Veronica Trépagny (Lund: Historiska Media, 1999), quotes at 76 (furs and money) and 82.
10 Jonas Folcher, 'När de komma åter', *Kvartalsblad* (Stockholm: Nationalföreningen mot emigrationen, 1908), i.–ii. 9.
11 Wendelius, *Bilden av Amerika i svensk prosafiktion*.
12 Ibid. 156.
13 Steene, 'The Swedish image of America'.
14 Ibid.
15 Qvist, *Folkhemmets bilder*, 440.
16 Wendelius, *Bilden av Amerika i svensk prosafiktion*, 66.
17 Steene, 'The Swedish Image of America', 159.
18 Persson, *Coming Full Circle?*
19 Alm, *Americanitis*.
20 O'Dell, 'Det amerikanska Andra', 79.
21 Consider these two examples from the dialogue. The first is a conversation when they are trying on overcoats at enrolment between Ludde Grentzel's Swedish American (LG) and Thor Modéen's butcher (TM): LG: 'Charlie Swansson. I've been in America you know. Built railways, big railways. [The coats are the wrong size] Coats are like the Swedish budget, they don't match up. Everything is pared down here at home.' TM: 'It's rather you who's got too big. It happens easily in America I've heard.' LG: 'Here at home you just get fat—in the head.' TM: 'I'm only thick around the middle, and that's something you can't be in America. You have "svält" [starve] there—Roose-svält.' Later in the movie the old buffers of the Home Guard are marching to their camp. LG: 'You call this marching? You should see things in the States, there we go so fast the telegraph poles along the roads seem packed like sardines.'
22 The advertisement film is available at www.filmarkivet.se.

23 O'Dell, *Culture Unbound*, 94. The quotation is translated from the English, as it appears in O'Dell's thesis, where he refers to an undated pamphlet by the National Society Against Emigration.
24 Alm, *Americanitis*.
25 Wendelius, *Bilden av Amerika i svensk prosafiktion*.
26 Furhammar, *Filmen i Sverige*, 144.
27 For a closer analysis of the film, see Ann-Kristin Wallengren, 'Småland–Amerika tur och retur: Filmen och smålänningen', *Speglingar av Småland*, ed. Inger Littberger Caisou-Rousseau, Maria Nilsson & Carina Sjöholm (Hestra: Isaberg, 2009).
28 Ulf Beijbom, *Utvandrarkvinnor: svenska kvinnoöden i Amerika* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 2006).
29 Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket*.
30 Monika Edgren, *Hem tar plats: ett feministiskt perspektiv på flyttandets politik i 1970–talets sociala rapportböcker* (Lund: Sekel, 2009).
31 Maud Eduards, *Kroppspolitik: om moder Svea och andra kvinnor* (Stockholm: Atlas, 2007), 34 discusses the ideological view of the female body to be found in a series of contexts in Swedish society, but surprisingly does not address the emigration of single women.
32 Ibid. 41.
33 See Qvist, *Jorden är vår arvedel*, *passim* for a discussion of this Swedish female ideal as it appeared on screen; see also Therése Andersson, *Beauty Box: filmstjärnor och skönhetskultur i det tidiga 1900–talets Sverige* (Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, 2006).
34 Therése Andersson, *Beauty Box* analyses the relationship between American and Swedish ideals of beauty to be found in the periodical *Filmjournalen*; see also Eva Blomberg, *Vill ni se en stjärna? Kön, kropp och kläder i Filmjournalen 1919–1953* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2006).
35 For emigration's liberating potential for women, see Ann-Sofie Ohlander (Kälvemark), 'Utvandring och självständighet: några synpunkter på den kvinnliga emigrationen från Sverige', *Historisk tidskrift* [Stockholm] (1983, 2).
36 Henry von Kræmer, 'Svenskarnes lif i Amerika', *Kvartalsbladet* (Stockholm: Nationalföreningen mot emigrationen, 1908), i.–ii. 7.
37 For men cross-dressing to escape trouble, see *Släkten är värst* (Anders Henrikson, 1936) and *Pensionat Paradiset* ('Hotel Paradise', Weyler Hildebrand, 1937).
38 Wendelius, *Bilden av Amerika i svensk prosafiktion*.
39 Alm, *Americanitis*.
40 Ibid.
41 Wendelius, *Bilden av Amerika i svensk prosafiktion*.

42 According to the description in *Svensk Filmografi*, iii: *1930–1939*, ed. Torsten Jungstedt (Stockholm: Svenska Filminstitutet, 1979).
43 Gunnar Eidevall, *Amerika i svensk 1900–talslitteratur: Från Gustaf Hellström till Lars Gustafsson* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1983)
44 *Dagens Nyheter*, 6 September 1938, quoted in *Svensk Filmografi*, iii: *1930–1939*, 373
45 Eidevall, *Amerika i svensk 1900–talslitteratur*, 69.
46 For the difference between technological and cultural modernization, see Alm, *Americanitis*, *passim*; see also Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket*, 302 ff.
47 Alm, *Americanitis*; Mithander, 'Från mönsterland till monsterland'.
48 Mithander, 'Från mönsterland till monsterland', 76.
49 Folcher, 'När de komma åter', 10.
50 Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket*, 45–6 has Beckman's proposal being published in *Emigrationsutredningen: betänkande i utvandrings frågan och därmed sammanhängande spörsmål* (Stockholm 1913), 9.
51 Alm, *Americanitis*, 251.
52 See, for example, Jernudd, 'Före biografens tid'; Waldekranz, *Levande fotografier*.
53 Steene, 'The Swedish Image of America'.
54 Qvist, *Folkhemmets bilder*, 253.
55 Furhammar, *Filmen i Sverige*.
56 For advertising and commerce, see Alm, *Americanitis*.
57 *Svensk filmografi*, iv: *1940–1949*, ed. Lars Åhlander (Stockholm: Svenska Filminstitutet, 1980), table of contents.
58 Wallengren, 'Småland–Amerika tur och retur'.
59 Qvist, *Folkhemmets bilder*, 430.
60 Alm, *Americanitis*, 250 ff.
61 Wright, *The Visible Wall*.
62 Ibid.
63 Ehn et al., *Försvenskningen av Sverige*, 140.
64 Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket*, 304.
65 Persson, *Coming Full Circle?*
66 Grönberg, *Learning and Returning*.
67 Persson, *Coming Full Circle?* 242–3.
68 Hall et al., *Representation*.
69 Gustafsson, *En fiende till civilisationen*; Wright, *The Visible Wall*.
70 Wright, *The Visible Wall*.
71 For a longer analysis of the film, see Wallengren, 'Småland–Amerika tur och retur'.
72 Richard Dyer, *White: Essays on Race and Culture* (London: Routledge, 1997).

73 Catomeris, *Det ohyggliga arvet*.
74 Wright, *The Visible Wall*, 101.
75 Catomeris, *Det ohyggliga arvet*.
76 Ibid. 236.
77 *Svensk filmografi*, iv: *1940–1949*, 320
78 Harald Runblom, 'Introduction: Homeland as Imagination and Reality', *Migrants and the Homeland: Images, Symbols, and Realities*, ed. Harald Runblom (Uppsala: Centre for Multiethnic Research, University, 2000), 11.
79 For Swedish characteristics, see also Qvist, *Folkhemmets bilder*, *passim*.
80 Qvist, *Folkhemmets bilder*, 370–1.
81 Ann-Kristin Wallengren, 'John Ericsson: Victor of Hampton Roads. Images of Sweden in American History', *Regional Aesthetics: Locating Swedish Media*, ed. Erik Hedling, Olof Hedling & Mats Jönsson (Stockholm: National Library of Sweden, 2010).
82 Wallengren, 'John Ericsson'.
83 Swedish Film Institute Archive, Europafilm brochure, *Jens Månsson i Amerika*.
84 Qvist, *Folkhemmets bilder*.
85 Leif Furhammar, *Från skapelsen till Edvard Persson: 'Fem essäer om film' omarbetade och ytterligare tre* (Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 1970), 163.
86 Alm, *Americanitis*, 270–1.
87 Johan Fornäs, *Moderna människor: Folkhemmet och jazzen* (Stockholm: Norstedt, 2004), 246.
88 Fornäs, *Moderna människor*, 248
89 *Svenska Dagbladet*, 26 March 1947; *Ny Dag*, 26 March 1947.
90 *Göteborgs handels- och sjöfartstidning*, 26 March 1947; *Göteborgs-Posten*, 26 March 1947
91 *Ny Dag*, 26 March 1947.
92 Qvist, *Folkhemmets bilder*.
93 Qvist, *Jorden är vår arvedel*.
94 Arne Lunde, *Nordic Exposures: Scandinavian Identities in Classical Hollywood Cinema* (Seattle, Wash.: University of Washington Press, 2010).
95 Another advertising film made by Håkan Cronsioe for Sparbanken is analysed by Mats Jönsson & Cecilia Mörner, *Självbilder: Filmer från Västmanland* (Stockholm: Svenska filminstitutet, 2006).
96 See Wallengren, 'Samhällsbyggarnas tv-berättande'.
97 Ann-Kristin Wallengren, 'Hollywood in Sweden: Cinematic References Imagining America', *Film International* (2008, 6:5); Ann-Kristin Wallengren, 'Importing Evil: The American Gangster, Swedish Cinema, and Anti-American Propaganda', *Media, Popular Culture, and the American Century*, ed. Kingsley Bolton & Jan Olsson (Stockholm: National Library of Sweden, 2010).

98 Michael Tapper, 'I mörkaste Sverige', *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*, 18 July 2011.
99 Eric Hobsbawm, *Nationer och nationalism*, 205.
100 Elsaesser, *European Cinema*.
101 Richard Abel, ' "Our Country"/Whose Country? The "Americanization" Project of Early Westerns', *Back in the Saddle Again: New Essays on the Western*, ed. Edward Buscombe & Roberta E. Pearson (London: BFI, 1998)
102 Richard Abel, ' "Our Country"/Whose Country?', 88.
103 Andy Medhurst, *A National Joke: Popular Comedy and English Cultural Identities* (London: Routledge, 2007).

4. Preserving Swedishness in the New World

1 Wendelius, *Kulturliv i ett svenskamerikanskt lokalsamhälle*, 74.
2 *Nordstjernan*, 19 August 1921.
3 According to *ASI-Posten*, the newsletter of the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis, and the Swedish Cultural Center in Seattle, http://www.swedishculturalcenter.org.
4 See, for example, Anna Williams, 'Den svensk-amerikanska pressen och de etniska identiteterna', paper given at the symposium 'Amerika tur och retur', Gothenburg, 18–19 September 1996 (*Göteborgs-emigranten*, 6; Gothenburg: Göteborgs-emigranten, 1997).
5 Lars Furuland, 'Från "Vermländingarne" till "Slavarna på Molokstorp": svenskamerikansk teater i Chicago 1866–1950', *Ljus över landet och andra litteratursociologiska uppsatser* (Hedemora: Gidlund, 1991); Anne-Charlotte Harvey, 'Performing Ethnicity. The Role of Swedish Theatre in the Twin Cities', *Swedes in the Twin Cities: Immigrant Life and Minnesota's Urban Frontier*, ed. Philip J. Anderson & Dag Blanck (Uppsala: Universitetsbiblioteket, 2001).
6 See the website for the National Society for the Preservation of Swedishness Abroad, now known as Riksföreningen Sverigekontakt (the Royal Society for Swedish Culture Abroad), http://www.sverigekontakt.se/?id=881.
7 Anna Williams, 'Den svensk-amerikanska pressen'.
8 Lars Furuland, 'Svensk-amerikanernas litteratur', paper given at the symposium 'Amerika tur och retur', Gothenburg, 18–19 September 1996 (*Göteborgs-emigranten*, 6; Gothenburg: Göteborgs-emigranten, 1997).
9 Dag Blanck, 'On Being Swedish in America: The Search for Identity', *Scandinavian Review* (1996, 84:2).
10 Henrik Tallgren, *Svensk-amerikaner i Kalifornien. En studie av lågaktiv etnicitet* (diss., Gothenburg: University, 2000).
11 Considered, for example, by Orm Øverland, *Immigrant Minds, American Identities: Making the United States Home, 1870–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000).

12 Anne-Charlotte Harvey, 'The First Swede in Worcester', *Swedish American Historical Quarterly* (1995, 1), 81.
13 According to Tallgren, *Svensk-amerikaner i Kalifornien*.
14 Harvey, 'The First Swede in Worcester'.
15 Lunde, *Nordic Exposures*, 43.
16 For Viking culture and Vikings in modern American visual culture, see Jeff Werner, *Medelvägens estetik: Sverigebilder i USA* (Hedemora: Gidlund, 2008).
17 Blanck, *Becoming Swedish-American*.
18 Ibid.
19 David Morley, *Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity* (London: Routledge, 2000).
20 Newspapers had a tendency to merge, change name, and even be printed in paired editions, leading to some inevitable confusion.
21 Karim H. Karim (ed.), *The Media of Diaspora* (London: Routledge, 2003); Hamid Naficy (ed.), *Home, Exile, Homeland. Film, Media, and the Politics of Place* (London: Routledge, 1999); Eva Rueschmann, *Moving Pictures, Migrating Identities* (Jackson, Miss.: University Press of Mississippi, 2003); Nancy Wood & Russell King (ed.), *Media and Migration: Constructions of Mobility and Difference* (London: Routledge, 2001).
22 Julia Creet, 'Introduction: The Migration of Memory and Memories of Migration', *Memory and Migration: Multidisciplinary Approaches to Memory Studies*, ed. Julia Creet & Andreas Kitzmann (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 7.
23 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 28 November 1916, 3 April 1917, and 5 February 1919. Marina Dahlquist, 'Teaching citizenship via celluloid', has drawn attention to two articles—*Allsvensk Samling*, 10 (15 May 1916) and *Allsvensk Samling*, 12 (15 June 1917)—in which the visit paid by a Swedish-American journalist to the National Society for the Preservation of Swedishness Abroad had resulted in a proposal to start a company to promote the screening of Swedish films in the US, concentrating on nature, industry, and so on. The articles state that Axel Palmgren had toured showing what were clearly Sweden films. It is more than likely that he was responsible for the early film showings which I have found described in the Swedish American press.
24 *Utahposten*, 26 January 1921.
25 *Nordstjernan*, 7 April 1922.
26 *Nordstjernan*, 25 January 1924.
27 *Svenska Amerikanaren*, 26 December 1929.
28 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 21 December 1921.
29 *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 17 September 1936.
30 *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 1 October 1942.

31 For the Julian Theatre, see www.cinematreasures.org/theaters/4608, accessed 14 August 2012.
32 *Nordstjernan*, 16 February 1928.
33 The *New York Times* on the showing of *Pimpernel Svensson* (Emil A. Lingheim, 1950) in 1953.
34 For a close examination of Great Northern's activities up to 1917, see Ron Mottram, 'The Great Northern Film Company: Nordisk Film in the American Motion Picture Market', *Film History* (1988, 2:1).
35 Swedish Film Institute Archive, general catalogue.
36 Swedish film was often shown in smaller venues. For reviews and a discussion of the reception of Victor Sjöström's films, see Bo Florin, 'Victor Goes West: Notes on the Critical Reception of Sjöström's Hollywood Films, 1923–1930', *Nordic Explorations: Film Before 1930*, ed. John Fullerton & Jan Olsson (London: John Libbey, 1999).
37 *Nordstjernan*, 24 September 1931.
38 Scandia Films is not mentioned at all in the database of the Swedish Film Institute, but the name can be made out when viewing the actual film.
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40 Gustav Scheutz, 'Synpunkter på svensk film i USA', *Filmboken: Svenska filmsamfundets årsskrift* (Stockholm: Svenska filmsamfundet, 1944).
41 *Nordstjernan*, 17 November 1938.
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43 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 18 May 1921.
44 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 18 May 1921.
45 The phrase 'Sverigefilm' is not an established term in the same way as, for example, 'Danmarksfilm', even though the meaning is, in effect, the same. For a discussion of the term 'Danmarksfilm' and its various implications, see Gunhild Agger, 'Danmarksfilm—kan danskhed oversættes?', *Transformationer. Valda texter från International Association of Scandinavian Studies (IASS) 28:e konferens i Lund 2010*, ed. Per-Erik Ljung (Lund: CSS, 2011).
46 *Nordstjernan*, 13 September 1945.
47 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 16 February 1921; *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 14 April 1921.
48 *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 14 April 1921.
49 *Nordstjernan*, 13 January 1922.
50 Pelle Snickars, among others, has elaborated on the connections between images, film, and travel in his thesis *Svensk film och visuell masskultur 1900* (diss., Stockholm University: Aura, 2001), and early film history is brimfull of examples of various types of travel films. Concerning the development

of 'film as a journey', see, for example, Tom Gunning, ' "The Whole World within Reach": Travel Images without Borders', *Virtual Voyages: Cinema and Travel*, ed. Jeffrey Ruoff (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).

51 Werner, *Medelvägens estetik*.

52 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 1 November 1922, 21 March 1923.

53 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 8 November 1922.

54 *Nordstjernan*, 24 November 1922.

55 *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 3 May 1923.

56 Snickars, *Svensk film och visuell masskultur*, 71. How Norrland is exoticized in Swedish film—both in feature films and in various types of documentary—and how the inhabitants there are treated as the ethnic Other is discussed by Wright, *The Visible Wall*, and Ann-Kristin Wallengren, 'Dollartåget', *Skosmörja eller arkivdokument? Om filmarkivet.se och den digitala filmhistorien*, ed. Mats Jönsson and Pelle Snickars (Stockholm: Kungliga biblioteket, 2012).

57 *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 7 February 1924.

58 *Texasposten*, 26 February 1925.

59 *Svensk Filmografi*, ii: *1920–1929*.

60 *Folkets Dagblad Politiken*, 4 November 1924.

61 *Stockholms Dagblad*, 4 November 1924.

62 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 31 December 1924.

63 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 21 January 1925.

64 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 26 December 1929.

65 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 15 February 1928.

66 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 7 March 1935.

67 Advertisements for the showings in the Julian Theatre in *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 29 March 1934; *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 19 juli 1934; and advertisements for the showing arranged by the Nordstjernan Lodge in *Nordstjernan*, 10 January 1935.

68 *Sweden, Land of the Vikings*, http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1249372/, accessed 14 September 2011.

69 Seattle's Swedish Cultural Center http://www.swedishculturalcenter.org/, accessed 14 September 2011.

70 According to the advertisement *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 25 February 1943.

71 *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 3 December 1942.

72 *Nordstjernan*, 13 January & 16 March 1944; *Nordstjernan*, 22 February 1945; *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 25 April 1946.

73 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 13 April 1950.

74 *Nordstjernan*, 19 January 1933.

75 Various issues of the *ASI-posten*, the newsletter of the American Swedish Institute Minneapolis, 2005–2007.

76 Qvist, *Jorden är vår arvedel*.
77 Andrew Higson, *Waving the Flag: Constructing a National Cinema in Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995) explains that the term 'heritage film' was first coined by Charles Barr in 'Introduction and Schizophrenia', *All Our Yesterdays: 90 Years of British Cinema*, ed. Charles Barr (London: British Film Institute, 1986).
78 Higson, *Waving the Flag*, 26.
79 Ibid. 27.
80 Jill Forbes & Sarah Street (eds.), *European Cinema: An Introduction* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000).
81 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 5 February 1919.
82 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 5 February 1919.
83 Harvey, 'Performing Ethnicity'.
84 *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 23 June 1921.
85 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 26 March 1919.
86 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 7 April 1920.
87 *Nordstjernan*, 4 November 1921; *Nordstjernan*, 25 November 1921.
88 *Nordstjernan*, 2 December 1921; review in *Nordstjernan*, 9 December 1921.
89 *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 6 April 1922; *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 12 April 1922.
90 *Nordstjernan*, 10 March 1922 and 7 April 1922.
91 *Nordstjernan*, 24 March 1922.
92 *Nordstjernan*, 7 April 1922.
93 I have consulted the newspapers *Arbetet*, *Folkets Dagblad*, *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*, *SocialDemokraten*, plus *Stockholmstidningen*, 21 October 1921; *Dagens Nyheter*, 25 October 1921; and *Svenska Dagbladet*, 25 October 1921.
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96 Jakob Christensson, *Landskapet i våra hjärtan: en essä om svenskars naturumgänge och identitetssökande* (Lund: Historiska Media, 2002).
97 Christensson, *Landskapet i våra hjärtan*.
98 Wallengren, *En afton på Röda Kvarn*.
99 *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 24 May 1923; *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 30 August 1923.
100 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 28 November 1923; *Nordstjernan*, 8 February 1924.
101 In order of film, *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 12 March 1924; *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 9 April 1924; *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 10 September 1924; *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*; 15 October 1924; *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 29 October 1924.
102 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 16 February 1927; *Nordstjernan*, 2 February 1928; *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 3 April 1929.

103 *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 5 February 1931.
104 *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 3 March 1927.
105 *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 3 March 1927.
106 *Nordstjernan*, 23 March 1933.
107 *Svenska Tribunen Nyheter*, 22 October 1924.
108 *Nordstjernan*, 16 February 1928.
109 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 17 February 1938.
110 *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 17 January 1935.
111 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 14 March 1935.
112 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 26 May 1938.
113 For an analysis of *John Ericsson—segraren vid Hampton Roads*, see Wallengren, 'John Ericsson'.
114 Christensson, *Landskapet i våra hjärtan*.
115 Ibid.
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117 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 11 October 1934.
118 In *Nordstjernan*, 29 August 1935, among others.
119 *Nordstjernan*, 18 May 1944; *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 21 September 1944.
120 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 12 September 1940.
121 *Nordstjernan*, 26 November 1931.
122 *Nordstjernan*, 8 December 1927.
123 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 18 November 1937.
124 *Svenska Amerikanska Posten*, 16 March 1938.
125 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 5 October 1939.
126 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 6 October 1938.
127 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 31 December 1931.
128 *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 3 October 1940.
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130 *Nordstjernan*, 16 February 1928.
131 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 16 September 1937.
132 *Nordstjernan*, 12 May 1932.
133 Leif Furhammar, *Filmen i Sverige* has termed this the community theme.
134 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 25 August 1938.
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136 *Nordstjernan*, 17 November 1938.
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139 Ibid. 15.
140 Qvist, *Folkhemmets bilder*.

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142 Harvey, 'Performing Ethnicity'.
143 Ibid. 165.
144 The themes of Persson's movies have been examined by many, including Qvist, *Folkhemmets bilder*; Leif Furhammar, *Från skapelsen till Edvard Persson: 'Fem essäer om film' omarbetade och ytterligare tre* (Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 1970); for the farmer as representing genuine Swedishness, see Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket*; Ehn et al., *Försvenskningen av Sverige*.
145 David Morley, *Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity* (London: Routledge. 2000), 36.
146 *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 28 May 1925.
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148 *Nordstjernan*, 3 January 1935.
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150 *Svenska Pacific Tribunen*, 30 April 1936.
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155 *Nordstjernan*, 11 March 1937.
156 The Persson review was published twice in the same paper: *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 28 December 1939 and 10 October 1940.
157 *Nordstjernan*, 26 February 1942.
158 For example in *Nordstjernan*, 1 August 1946.
159 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 19 September 1946.
160 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 19 September 1946.
161 *Nordstjernan*, 12 September 1946.
162 *Nordstjernan*, 26 September 1946.
163 *Nordstjernan*, 5 October 1946.
164 *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen*, 11 March 1948.
165 *Nordstjernan*, 16 March 1950; *Nordstjernan*, 13 April 1950.
166 For the critical reception of Persson's films, see Kjell Jerselius, *Hotade reservat: spelfilmerna med Edvard Persson* (diss., Uppsala: Filmförl., 1987).
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168 At the showing of *Pimpernel Svensson* (Emil A. Lingheim, 1950) in 1953, *New York Times*, accessed 12 August 2011.
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172 Qvist, *Jorden är vår arvedel*.
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175 Charles Westin, 'Migration, Time, and Space', *Migrants and the Homeland. Images, Symbols, and Realities*, ed. Harald Runblom (Uppsala: Centre for Multiethnic Research, 2000).
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177 Karin Johannisson, *Nostalgia. En känslas historia* (Stockholm: Bonniers, 2001), 31.
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179 Westin, 'Migration, Time, and Space'.
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185 Marie Gillespie, *Television, Ethnicity and Cultural Change* (London: Routledge, 1995), 180.

5. Becoming an American citizen

1 Dyer, *White: Essays on Race and Culture*; Bernardi, Daniel (ed.), *The Birth of Whiteness: Race and the Emergence of U.S. Cinema* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996).
2 Diane Negra, *Off-white Hollywood: American Culture and Ethnic Female Stardom* (London: Routledge, 2001), 4.
3 Lunde, *Nordic Exposures*, quotes at 5 and 4.
4 Lunde, *Nordic Exposures*.

5 Rains, *The Irish-American in Popular Culture*.
6 Chris Holmlund, *Impossible Bodies: Femininity and Masculinity at the Movies* (London: Routledge, 2002).
7 Holmlund, Impossible Bodies, 94 and 105.
8 For Swedish analyses, see Werner, *Medelvägens estetik*, in which he gives an overview of Swedish film and film stars in the US, drawing extensively on Holmlund, *Impossible Bodies*; Lunde, *Nordic Exposures* (in dissertation form); and Bo Florin, 'Victor Goes West: Notes on the Critical Reception of Sjöström's Hollywood Films, 1923–1930', *Nordic Explorations: Film Before 1930*, ed. John Fullerton & Jan Olsson (London: John Libbey, 1999).
9 Beijbom, *Utvandrarkvinnor*, 36.
10 Joy K. Lintelman, '"On my Own": Single, Swedish, and Female in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago', *Swedish-American life in Chicago: Cultural and Urban Aspects of an Immigrant People, 1850–1930*, ed. Dag Blanck & Philip J. Anderson (Uppsala: Univ., 1991).
11 Beijbom, *Utvandrarkvinnor*, 37 drawing on official figures from Statistics Sweden.
12 Margareta Matovic, 'Embracing a Middle-Class Life: Swedish-American Women in Lake View', *Peasant Maids—City Women: From the European Countryside to Urban America*, ed. Christiane Harzig, (New York: Cornell Univ. Press, 1997).
13 Beijbom, Utvandrarkvinnor; Matovic, 'Embracing a Middle-Class Life'.
14 See Beijbom, *Utvandrarkvinnor*, and several others.
15 Beijbom, *Utvandrarkvinnor*, 229. Beijbom refers to the Dillingham Commission that considered immigration to the US.
16 Beijbom, *Utvandrarkvinnor*, 229.
17 Matoivc, 'Embracing a Middle-Class Life'; also Beijbom, *Utvandrarkvinnor*. Beijbom writes that one investigation had shown that American maids were the most desirable, followed by Swedes; however, Beijbom does not give any reference for this investigation.
18 Lintelman, 'Single, Swedish, and Female in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago'.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
21 Beijbom, *Utvandrarkvinnor*.
22 Joy Lintelman, 'More Freedom, Better Pay: Single Swedish Immigrant Women in the United States, 1880–1920' (diss., Univ. of Minnesota, 1991); Matovic, 'Embracing a Middle-Class Life'; Ohlander (Kälvemark), 'Utvandring och självständighet'.
23 Beijbom, *Utvandrarkvinnor*; Lintelman, *More Freedom, Better Pay*.
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26 Martha Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen: Women, Immigration, and Citizenship, 1870–1965* (Princeton, NJ: PUP, 2005).
27 Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen*, 101.
28 Ibid. 106.
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30 Johan Henrik Chronwall, *Utvandrare-boken. Om lifvet i och på Resan till Amerika* (Stockholm, 1914), 26–7.
31 G. H. Koch, 'Svenskarne i Förenta Staterna', in *Uppgifter rörande svenskarnas ställning i vissa främmande länder: äfvensom uttalanden angående åtgärder för återvandringen* (Emigrationsutredningens bilaga, 20; Stockholm: Nordiska bokhandeln, 1911).
32 *Uppgifter rörande svenskarnas ställning i vissa främmande länder*, 120.
33 As the film has not survived, it is not possible to know this exactly, but to judge from the surviving cinema programme held in the library of the Swedish Film Institute, this seems to have been a form of prostitution.
34 Lee Grieveson, 'Policing the Cinema: *Traffic in Souls* at Ellis Island, 1913', *Screen* (1997, 38:2).
35 Grieveson, 'Policing the Cinema'; Brownlow, *Behind the Mask of Innocence*.
36 Grieveson, 'Policing the Cinema'.
37 Janet Staiger, *Bad Women: Regulating Sexuality in Early American Cinema* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1995).
38 Staiger, *Regulating Sexuality in Early American Cinema*.
39 Lintelman, 'Single, Swedish, and Female in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago', 96.
40 Brownlow, *Behind the Mask of Innocence*; Grieveson, 'Policing the Cinema'.
41 Grieveson, 'Policing the Cinema', 154.
42 Staiger, *Regulating Sexuality in Early American Cinema*.
43 Grieveson, 'Policing the Cinema', also writes that the clothing is typically Swedish. The men are also clearly from the countryside, see Holmlund, *Impossible Bodies*. The Swedish American ethnic theatre also was heavily based upon rural humour and jokes involving dialect, see Harvey, 'Performing Ethnicity'.
44 Grieveson, 'Policing the Cinema'.
45 *Follow the Girl* (Louis Chaudet, 1917) in American Film Institute Catalogue, http:// afi.chadwyck.co.uk/film/full_rec?action=BYID&FILE=../session/1345396821_ 5136&ID=1901, accessed 19 August 2012.
46 For the importance of the immigrant and female audiences see especially

Miriam Hansen, *Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994); the female audience is also discussed in, for example, Elizabeth Ewen, 'City Lights: Immigrant Women and the Rise of the Movie', *Folklore, Culture and the Immigrant Mind*, ed. George E. Pozzetta (New York: Garland, 1991).

47 David Kiehn, *Broncho Billy and the Essanay Film Company* (Berkeley: Farwell Books, 2003).

48 Arnie Bernstein, *Hollywood on Lake Michigan: 100 years of Chicago and the Movies* (Chicago: Lake Claremont, 1998), like Matovic, 'Embracing a Middle-Class Life', says the series was very popular, but without citing any sources for this assertion.

49 Bernstein, *Hollywood on Lake Michigan*, and Matovic, 'Embracing a Middle-Class Life' both say she is wearing a blonde wig, which is incorrect.

50 Lunde, *Nordic Exposures*.

51 Ibid. 113.

52 Harald Runblom, ' "Chicago compared": Swedes and other ethnic groups in American cities', *Swedish-American life in Chicago: Cultural and Urban Aspects of an Immigrant People, 1850–1930*, ed. Dag Blanck & Philip J. Anderson, (Uppsala: Univ. 1991), 69.

53 Harzig, Christiane (ed.), *Peasant Maids—City Women: From the European Countryside to Urban America* (New York: Cornell Univ. Press, 1997).

54 Howard, *När Maja-Lisa kom hem från Amerika*, 6.

55 Ibid. 8–9.

56 Lintelman, 'Single, Swedish, and Female in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago', 90.

57 Matovic, 'Embracing a Middle-Class Life'.

58 For example Beijbom, *Utvandrarkvinnor*.

59 Brownlow, *Behind the Mask of Innocence*, who refers in turn to Edward A. Ross.

60 Miriam Bratu Hansen, 'The Mass Production of the Senses: Classical Cinema as Vernacular Modernism', *Modernism/Modernity* (1999, 6:2), 59–77.

61 Hansen, 'The Mass Production of the Senses', 70–1.

62 Peter Flynn, 'How Bridget was Framed: The Irish Domestic in Early American Cinema, 1895–1917', *Cinema Journal* 50 (2011, 2).

63 Flynn,'How Bridget was Framed', 1.

64 Ibid. 17.

65 For marriages with immigrants from the same country, see, for example, Harzig, (ed.), *Peasant Maids—City Women*.

66 Lunde, *Nordic Exposures*.

67 For *The Farmer's Daughter* (1947) på http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0039370/trivia, accessed 21 August 2012.

68 For a detailed discussion, see Lunde *Nordic Exposures*.

69 Skiiing and ice-skating are sports which are often associated with Scandinavia in American Forties' movies: Ingrid Berman in *Spellbound* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1945), Sonja Henie in almost all her films, and even Garbo (just the once) in her last movie *Two-Faced Woman* (George Cukor, 1941). This practice had its roots in an old association between ideas of Nordicness and mountains, purity, air, nature, and everything in the ideology of whiteness, see Lunde, *Nordic Exposures*; Dyer and White, *Essays on Race and Culture*.

70 Sean Griffin, 'The Wearing of the Green: Performing Irishness in the Fox Wartime Musical', *The Irish In Us: Irishness, Performativity, and Popular Culture*, ed. Diane Negra (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 69; for the Good Neighbor policy, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Good_Neighbor_policy, accessed 18 November 2012.

71 Griffin, 'The Wearing of the Green'.

72 Rains, *The Irish-American in Popular Culture*, 2.

73 For the television series *The Farmer's Daughter* (1963–1966), http://www.imdb.com/title/ tt0056755/, accessed 21 August 2012.

74 Lunde, Nordic Exposures also briefly writes about this movie because of its light parody of Garbo; however, a few errors concerning the casting and the names of characters have crept in.

75 Mark Winokur, *American Laughter: Immigrants, Ethnicity and 1930s Hollywood Film Comedy* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995)

76 Griffin, 'The Wearing of the Green', 65.

77 For Swedish sin as a theme, see the original article, Joe David Brown, 'Sin & Sweden', *Time* 25 April 1955; for a discussion of the same, see, for example, Klara Arnberg, 'Synd på export: 1960–talets pornografiska press och den svenska synden', *Historisk tidskrift* (Stockholm 2009, 129:3).

6. Concluding words

1 Eva Bakøy, 'Å føle seg hjemme langt hjemmefra. Innvandrere og satellittfjernsyn', *Norsk Medietidsskrift* (2006, 2), 99.

2 Bakøy, 'Å føle seg hjemme langt hjemmefra', 108.

3 Brownlow, *Behind the Mask of Innocence*, ch. 5.

4 Lunde, *Nordic Exposures,* 45.

5 For films by returnees, see Ann-Kristin Wallengren, 'På besök i det gamla hemlandet: amerikaemigranternas återvändarfilmer', *Välfärdsbilder: Svensk film utanför biografen*, ed. Erik Hedling & Mats Jönsson (Stockholm: Statens ljud- och bildarkiv, 2008).

6 For anti-Americanism in Swedish educational broadcasts, see Ann-Kristin

Wallengren, 'Samhällsbyggarnas tv-berättande: Estetik och ideologi i utbildningsprogram för televisionen', in Ann-Kristin Wallengren & Cecilia Wadensjö, *Om tilltal, bildspråk och samhällssyn i utbildningsprogrammen*, ed. Bengt Sandin (Stockholm: Stiftelsen Etermedierna i Sverige, 2001).

7 For the television programmes relation to Twenties' Sweden films and Fifties' travel films of Sweden, see Wallengren, 'Dollartåget', and literature cited therein.

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Bröllopet på Ulfåsa ('The Wedding at Ulfåsa', Gustaf 'Muck' Linden, 1910)
Calle som miljonär ('Calle as a Millionaire', Georg af Klercker, 1916)
Carl Larsson Paints, Draws, and Recounts His Life (Göran Gunér, 1987)
Casablanca (Michael Curtiz, 1942)
Charlotte Löwensköld (*Charlotte Lowenskoeld,* Gustaf Molander, 1930)
Den hvide slavehandel ('The White Slave Trade', Alfred Cohn and August Blom, 1910)
Den stora utvandringen: *bort från det gamla landet* ('The Great Emigration', Sveriges Television, 1971 [TV series])
Die Hard (John McTiernan, 1988)
Dollar (*Dollar*, Gustaf Molander, 1938)
Drömmen om Amerika ('The Dream of America', Christer Abrahamsen, 1976)
Du gamla, du fria ('You Ancient, You Free', Gunnar Olsson, 1938)
Du hemmets jord ('Thou Soil of Home', year unknown)
Dunungen ('In Quest of Happiness', Ivan Hedqvist, 1919)
Ebberöds bank ('The Ebberöd Bank', Sigurd Wallén, 1935)
Egnahemsbyggarnes väg ('The Own-Home Builders Way', produced by Svenska Bio, 1915)

Emigrant aka *Amuletten* ('Emigrant' or 'The Amulet', Gustaf 'Muck' Linden, 1910)
Emigranten ('The Emigrant', Robert Olsson, 1910)
En enda natt (*Only One Night*, Gustaf Molander, 1939)
En kvinnas ansikte (*A Woman's Face*, Gustaf Molander, 1938)
En resa genom Sverige ('A Journey Around Sweden', *c.*1933)
En saga aka *Laila* (*En Saga*, 'Laila', George Schnéevoigt, 1937)
En turistfärd genom Sveriges städer och natursköna bygder ('A Tour through Sweden's Towns and Areas of Natural Beauty', *c.*1921)
Falska millionären ('The False Millionaire', Paul Merzbach, 1931)
Familjen Andersson ('The Anderson Family', Sigurd Wallén, 1937)
Fänrik Ståls sägner ('Tales of Ensign Stål', Carl Engdahl, 1910)
Filmen från Sverige. *Sverige i fest* and *Göteborgsutställningen*, aka *Sångarfärden från Skåne till Lappland* ('The Film from Sweden. Sweden *en fête* and the Gothenburg Exhibition', aka 'A Choral Voyage from Skåne to Lappland', *c.*1923)
Fiskebyn (*Chains*, 'The Fishing-Village', Mauritz Stiller, 1920)
Five Bad Men (Clifford S. Smith, 1935)
Flickan från fjällbyn ('The Girl from the Mountain Village', Anders Henriksson, 1948)
Flickorna från Gamla Sta'n ('The Girls from the Old Town', Schamyl Bauman, 1934)
Flickorna i Småland ('The Girls in Småland', Schamyl Bauman, 1945)
Följ med till Minnesota ('Come with Us to Minnesota', Håkan Cronsioe, 1954)
Folket i Simlångsdalen ('The People of Simlång Valley', Åke Ohberg, 1948)
Folket på Högbogården ('The People at Högbogården', Arne Weel, 1939)
Follow the Girl (Louis Chaudet, 1917)
För hemmet och flickan ('For Home and Girl', William Larsson, 1925)
Fram för framgång ('Here's To Success', Gunnar Skoglund, 1938)
Fridas visor ('Frida's Songs', Gustaf Molander, 1930)
Gangsterfilmen ('The Gangster Film', later 'A Stranger Came by Train', Lars G. Thelestam, 1974)
Glasberget ('The Glass Mountain', Gustaf Molander, 1953)
Goda vänner och trogna grannar ('Good Friends and Faithful Neighbours', Weyler Hildebrand, 1938)
Gösta Berlings saga (*The Saga of Gösta Berling,* Mauritz Stiller, 1924)
Guldgossen ('The Golden Boy', Frans Lundberg, 1912)
Gunnar Hedes saga (*The Blizzard,* Mauritz Stiller, 1923)
Hällebäcks gård ('Hällebäck Farm', Bengt Blomgren, 1963)
Hälsingar ('The People of Hälsingland', William Larsson, 1923)
Hälsingar ('The People of Hälsingland', Ivar Johansson, 1933)
Hans engelska fru (*Discord,* Gustaf Molander, 1927)
Här och där i Sverige (se *Runt Sverige*) ('Here and There in Sweden', *c.*1943)
Hästhandlarens flickor (*Time of Desire*, Egil Holmsen, 1954)

He Who Gets Slapped (Victor Sjöström, 1924)
Hennes lilla majestät ('Her Little Majesty', Schamyl Bauman, 1939)
Herr Arnes pengar (*Sir Arne's Treasure*, Mauritz Stiller, 1919)
Hotell Kåkbrinken ('Kåkbrinken Hotel', Schamyl Bauman, 1946)
How Could You, Jean? (William Desmond Taylor, 1918)
Howards End (James Ivory, 1992)
Hulda kommer till sta'n, aka *Hulda från Juurako* (*Juurakon Hulda*, Valentin Vaala, 1937)
Hustru för en dag ('Wife for a Day', Gösta Rodin, 1933)
I Gösta Berlings land ('In Gösta Berling's land', Folke Svensson, 1935)
I mörkaste Småland ('In Darkest Småland', Schamyl Bauman, 1943)
Ice-Capades (Joseph Santley, 1941)
Ingeborg Holm ('Ingeborg Holm', Victor Sjöström, 1912)
Ingmarssönerna (*Dawn of Love,* Victor Sjöström, 1919)
Intermezzo (*Intermezzo,* Gustaf Molander, 1936)
Intermezzo: A Love Story (Gregory Ratoff, 1939)
Jean de Florette (Claude Berri, 1986)
Jens Månsson i Amerika (*Jens Månsson in America*, aka *Jens Mons in America*, Bengt Janzon, 1947)
Joe Hill (*Joe Hill*, Bo Widerberg, 1976)
John Ericsson—segraren vid Hampton Roads ('John Ericsson: Victor of Hampton Roads', Gustaf Edgren, 1937)
Juurakon Hulda (*Hulda kommer till sta'n*, aka *Hulda från Juurako*, Valentin Vaala, 1937)
Kalle på Spången ('Kalle's Inn', Emil A. Pehrsson, 1939)
Kära släkten ('Dear Family', Gustaf Molander, 1933)
Karl Fredrik regerar (*Karl Fredrik Reigns*, Gustaf Edgren, 1934)
Karl XII ('Charles XII', John W. Brunius, 1925)
Körkarlen (*The Phantom Carriage*, aka *The Stroke of Midnight*, Victor Sjöström, 1921)
L'Arroseur arrosé (*Vattnaren bevattnad*) ('The Waterer Watered', Louis Lumière, 1895)
La noire de… (*Black Girl*) (Ousmane Sembene, 1966)
Laila (see *En Saga*, George Schnéevoigt, 1937)
Landstormens lilla Lotta ('The Home Guard's Little Lotta', Weyler Hildebrand, 1939)
Lärarinna på vift ('Teacher on the Loose', Börje Larsson, 1941)
Larsson i andra giftet ('Second-marriage Larsson', Schamyl Bauman, 1935)
Let's Fall in Love (David Burton, 1933)
Life with Henry (Theodore Reed, 1941)
Livet på en pinne ('Living in Clover', Weyler Hildebrand, 1942)

Lördagskvällar ('Saturday Evenings', Schamyl Bauman, 1933)
Luffar-Petter ('Petter the Tramp', Erik Petschler, 1922)
Lyckliga Vestköping ('Happy Vestköping', Ragnar Arvedson 1937)
Mammoth (Lukas Moodysson, 2009)
Mästerman ('Masterman', Victor Sjöström, 1920)
Med folket för fosterlandet (*With the People for the Fatherland*, Sigurd Wallén, 1938)
Med Uttern till fjälls ('With the Otter in the Hills', 1934)
Melodin från Gamla Stan ('The Melody from the Old Town', Ragnar Frisk, 1939)
Midsommar i Hälsingland ('Midsummer in Hälsingland', year unknown)
Nattens barn ('Children of the Night', Georg af Klercker, 1916)
Nerkingarne ('The People of Närke', Axel Anrep, *c.*1870 [play])
Norrlandsrapsodi ('Norrland Rhapsody', year unknown)
Not as a Stranger (Stanley Kramer, 1955)
Nybyggarna (*The New Land*, Jan Troell, 1972)
Opiumhålan ('The Opium Den', Eric Malmberg, 1911)
På luffen i svenska Amerika ('On the Road in Swedish America', Lasse Holmqvist, Sveriges Television, 1979 [TV series])
På luffen igen i svenska America ('On the Road Again in Swedish America', Sveriges Television, 1982 [TV series])
Patriks äventyr ('Patrik's adventure', Arvid Englind, 1915)
Peggy på vift ('Peggy on the Loose', Arne Mattsson, 1946)
Pensionat Paradiset ('Hotel Paradise', Weyler Hildebrand, 1937)
Pimpernel Svensson ('Pimpernel Svensson', Emil A. Lingheim, 1950)
Prästen som slog knockout ('The Parson's Knock-out', Hugo Bolander, 1943)
Rannsakningsdomaren ('The Investigating Magistrate', Frans Lundberg, 1912)
Regina von Emmeritz och konung Gustaf II Adolf ('Regina von Emmeritz and Gustavus Adolphus', Gustaf 'Muck' Linden, 1910)
Resa genom Göta kanal ('A Voyage through the Göta Canal', year unknown)
Return to Sweden (Dale Johnson, 1996)
Röda dagen ('The Red Day', Gustaf Edgren, 1931)
Runt Sverige, probably aka *Här och där i Sverige* ('Around Sweden', probably aka 'Here and There in Sweden', Skandiafilm compilation, *c.*1943)
Samhällets dom ('Society's Verdict', Eric Malmberg, 1912)
Sången om den eldröda blomman (*Song of the Scarlet Flower*, Mauritz Stiller, 1919)
Se Sverige! ('See Sweden!', Waldemar J. Adams, 1924)
Singin' in the Rain (Stanley Donen, Gene Kelly, 1952)
Skanör-Falsterbo ('Skanör-Falsterbo', Emil A. Pehrsson, 1939)
Släkten är värst ('Unfriendly Relations', Anders Henrikson, 1936)
Smålänningar ('The People of Småland', Gösta Rodin, 1935)
Söder om landsvägen ('South of the Highway', Gideon Wahlberg, 1936)
Söderkåkar ('The Southsiders', Weyler Hildebrand, 1932)

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Some Like It Hot (Billy Wilder, 1959)
Spöket på Bragehus ('The Ghost of Bragehus', Ragnar Arvedson and Tancred Ibsen, 1936)
Stiliga Augusta ('Handsome Augusta', Elof Ahrle, 1946)
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Storstadsfaror ('Perils of the Big City', Manne Göthson, 1918)
Studenterna på Tröstehult ('The Students in Tröstehult', Edvard Persson, 1924)
Susan Lenox (Robert Z. Leonard, 1931)
Svensk-Amerikansk ('Swedish American', Bengt Janzon, 1948)
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Svenskarna i Amerika ('The Swedes in America', Bengt Janzon, 1923 [documentary])
Svenskstaden vid Indiansjön ('The Swedish Town on Indian Lake', Håkan Cronsioe, 1956)
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Sweedie the Laundress (Wallace Beery, 1914)
Sweedie's Hero (Wallace Beery, 1915)
Sweedie's Skate (Wallace Beery, 1914)
Synnöve Solbakken ('Synnöve Solbakken', John W. Brunius, 1919)
Synnöve Solbakken ('Synnöve Solbakken', Tancred Ibsen, 1934)
Tappa inte sugen ('Don't Lose Heart', Lars-Eric Kjellgren, 1947)
Terje Vigen (*A Man There Was,* Victor Sjöström, 1917)
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The Farmer's Daughter ([television series], ABC, 101 episodes, 1963–6 [television series])
The Fatal Hour (D.W. Griffith, 1908)
The Fickleness of Sweedie (Wallace Beery, 1914)
The Long Voyage Home (John Ford, 1940)

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The Midnight Kiss (Irving Cummings, 1926)
Thomas Graals bästa film (*Wanted—A Film Actress*, Mauritz Stiller, 1917)
Tjocka släkten (*Close Relations*, Sölve Cederstrand, 1935)
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Two-Faced Woman (George Cukor, 1941)
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Värmländingarna ('The People of Värmland', Ebba Lindkvist, prod. Frans Lundberg, 1910)
Värmlänningarne ('The People of Värmland', Carl Engdahl, prod. Svenska Bio, 1910)
Värmlänningarna ('The People of Värmland', Erik A. Petschler, 1921)
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