

Transnational Connections

Finland's and Sweden's Mutually Constructed Homosexuality

ABSTRACT

In reference to recent interest in transnational queer studies, this essay takes steps to document the long-standing tradition of cultural connection and exchange with regard to homosexual images that has taken place across the Gulf of Bothnia and influenced the understanding of homosexuality, lesbianism included, in both Finland and Sweden. It argues that the cross-border exchange has not only nourished lesbian and gay culture and cultural production in both countries, but also influenced the way in which homosexuality – and thereby the countries themselves – have been viewed. In the article, Finnish cultural products, such as detective novels, films, scandal and porn magazines are searched for traces of the enduring idea of Swedishness being intrinsically intertwined with homosexuality. Whereas the image of Sweden was rather tainted by homosexuality in the 1950s, the public perception of Sweden in Finland changed markedly in the 1960s. In addition to ideas changing, people also started to travel between the two neighbouring countries, ensuring that the cultural exchange was by no means a one-way street.

Keywords: queer history, cultural exchange, Finland, Sweden

THE DANISH HISTORIAN Peter Edelberg has recently studied the the LGBTQ+ organizational networks across Denmark, Norway, and Sweden in his project *Interrogating the Scandinavian LGBT+ Activist Movement 1948–2021*. He has shown how the Scandinavian countries were inspired by each other's ideas and consequently helped each other move toward a shared goal of advancing the human rights of LGBTQ+ people.

Edelberg convincingly argues a transnational angle on the dynamics of LGBTQ+ activism that brings out new perspectives and offers a new periodization of LGBTQ+ movement history (Edelberg, forthcoming a & b). Yet far less studied is the equally important cultural exchange with regard to homosexual images that has taken place across the Gulf of Bothnia and influenced the understanding of homosexuality, lesbianism included, in both Finland and Sweden.

In this essay I highlight certain ideas, events, and people from both Finland and Sweden that can help us to trace the underground homosexual cultural connections that historically bind the two countries together. When delving into the history, I focus particularly on the period from post-World War II through to the 1990s. I argue that the transnational flows between the two countries give a surprisingly fresh view on the queer cultural history of both countries and open up interesting new questions for further research.

Homosexual Swedes in the Finnish imagination

To the Swedes, Finland was for centuries East-Sweden, the part of the kingdom that conveniently functioned as a bulwark against Russia. The situation changed radically in 1809, as Sweden lost its eastern parts to Russia, these parts becoming the Grand Duchy of Finland. Finland's position changed once again when it gained independence in 1917, after the Bolshevik Revolutions in Russia. But only after the Finnish Civil War in 1918 and the country's surrender in World War II, which it had fought together with nationalist-socialist Germany, did Finland begin to model its policies after the social welfare principles already established in Sweden.

Throughout these tumultuous centuries there were however certain things in Finland that did not change in relation to Sweden, but rather solidified. One of them was the idea that Swedishness and homosexuality were intrinsically intertwined. In Finland, "Swedishness" was often understood as, and merged with, the Swedish-speaking Finnish nobility that had longstanding historical connections to the Royal Court of Sweden. The intimate friendship between King Gustav III and his

political adviser, the Finnish Gustaf Mauritz Armfelt, was already an item of gossip in the late eighteenth century. The rumours of their sexual relationship were kept alive in Finnish queer oral history, as homosexual men could use it to elevate their sexuality from the degradation that otherwise tainted it (Juvonen 2020, 11).

Yet the discursive connection between Swedish nobility and homosexuality was in the late nineteenth century fuelled by German sexologists' studies on homosexuality as a "degenerative" disorder. This allowed for making a connection between the decadent and degenerative nobility and decadent and degenerative homosexuals – a connection that was publicly spread throughout Europe in the early twentieth century, with the German sex scandals around Philipp, Prince of Eulenburg. His political career at the Court of Emperor Wilhelm II was ruined through accusations of homosexuality (Herzer 1997, 44–46).

Sexological texts and the connections made between the supposed degenerative nature of both nobility and homosexuality also informed the writings of the Finnish author Mika Waltari, who in 1939 published the detective story *Kuka murhasi rouva Skrofin?* (*Vem mördade fru Kroll?* [Who Murdered Mrs. Skrof/Kroll?]). The novel utilized the common trope that connected Swedishness with homosexuality in introducing the readers to the Swedish-speaking nobleman Kurt Kuurna, whose questionable traits were made evident not only by his degenerative art works, but also by his infatuation with his best friend, Kaarlo Lankela. Although Waltari in his description of Kuurna was leaning on the medical understandings of homosexuality, for those not already familiar with the sexological theories, the most evident feature that highlighted the artist's homosexuality was his "Swedishness".

Waltari's successful book was later made into the film *Kaasua, komisario Palmu!* (1961; *Vem mördade fru Skrof?* [Gas, Inspector Palmu!]) directed by Matti Kassila. It is the second instalment of Kassila's beloved film trilogy about Inspector Palmu, and the film, starring Pertti Siimes as Kuurna, has been in constant circulation ever since – culturally upholding the close connection between Swedishness and homosexuality in the minds of generations of Finnish audiences.

Stockholm – City of vice

In the early 1950s, scandalous events in the former motherland added further fuel to the trope of homosexuality in Finland. Homosexual scandals around under-aged rent boys, and the so-called Kejne and Haijby scandals, were major news items also in Finland. The scandal around the priest Karl-Erik Kejne launched a gay purge in Stockholm, and the scandal around the restaurateur Kurt Haijby revolved around Haijby's claims of having had ongoing sexual relations with King Gustaf V (Söderström 1999, 406–501). The tabloids especially, but also the more serious newspapers, keenly followed the respective court cases. Moreover, the burgeoning adult magazine scene, including publications such as *Kalle*, saw an opportunity to profit from the interest in the exotic topic of homosexuality.

Kalle published a series of two articles that alerted concerned Finns to the “Swedish disease” threatening to spread to Finland. The first of the articles discussed homosexuality in Finland, and the follow-up article addressed the situation of homosexuals in other Nordic countries. The section on Sweden was based on an article about “Allan Hellman, the bravest man in Sweden” that had previously been published in the Swedish magazine *Se*. The section on Denmark was authored by Axel Lundahl-Madsen and described the work of the Danish gay organization *Förbundet af 1948* [The Association of 1948]. The openness that characterized the Scandinavian articles, which also mentioned how homosexual acts had been decriminalized in the neighbouring countries in the 1940s and 1930s respectively, stood in stark contrast to the situation in Finland, where homosexual acts were still criminalized and attitudes therefore heavily coloured by prejudice and fear.

Sweden, and especially Stockholm as a city of vice, was also present in the 1952 film *Suomalaistyttöjä Tukholmassa* (*Finska flickor i Stockholm* [Finnish Girls in Stockholm]), written by Kaarlo Nuorvala. Although the film focuses mainly on the dangers a big city presents to the sexual morals of young women, it also contains a scene where the male lead Olavi Peltola (Esko Saha) to his own surprise finds himself at a gay house party. The party is thrown by sleek photographer Karl (Ebbe

Moe), who addresses Peltola in broken Finnish but with clear intentions, “*så här oss pojkar emellan*” [between us boys]. The shocked Finn manages to escape the gay party only by loudly cursing “*perkele!*” and punching his host on the nose. A very similar scene can also be found in Nuorvala’s next film, *Viattelysten tie* (1955; *Frestelsernas väg* [The Path of Temptation]), or as its title read in Sweden: *Stockholm frestar*). This film focused on the trouble young innocent Finnish men in Stockholm may get caught up in, and again featured a Swedish male artist who was a little too keen to portray young Finnish men in the nude.

Fighting the “Swedish disease”

The intense discussions regarding homosexuality in Sweden in the early 1950s brought the topic into focus in lieu of the homosexual scandals, not only in Norway (Gjesvik 2018) but also in Finland. Consequently, “Swedishness” became a code word when talking about the unspeakable vice of homosexuality in Finland. In addition to the expression “Swedish disease”, people also used the term “Swedish love” when speculating about a relationship between two female friends (Joutsijärvi 2023, 119). Similarly, the term “Stockholm case” was used in reference to a Finnish court case – for which Kejne was invited as an expert witness – where an abandoned wife wished to have her marriage dissolved after her husband left her to live with another man (*Helsingin Sanomat* 13.1.1953, 3). People also started to tell risqué “Swedish jokes” with a homosexual double entendre – a habit that survived well into the 1990s, and contributed to the enduring idea of Swedes as homosexual (Taavetti, forthcoming).

The vivid discussions that linked Sweden so closely to homosexuality in the early 1950s also raised the question whether homosexuality could be used to harm the national image of Finland – a timely question, since Helsinki in 1952 was about to host the Olympic Games. Hence, in 1951 the police in Helsinki began to “clean up” the city by patrolling public parks and toilets, which was where bootleggers ran their businesses and men seeking sexual encounters with other men congregated (Hagman 2014, 196–203). The success of the measures can be seen in the statis-

tics on court sentences handed out for homosexual acts. The nationwide numbers for convictions regarding sex between men had been rather low: below ten cases a year in 1924–1936, and below twenty cases a year up until 1945. Yet the number of convictions rose to fifty in 1948, and jumped to eighty-seven in 1951. Convictions then gradually declined in the following years, but as late as 1970 – a year before same-sex sexual activity was decriminalized in 1971 – three men were convicted for same-sex sexual acts. This pushed the number of men’s convictions to a total of 1 009. The number of female convictions also reached its height in 1951, with a total of eight sentences. In the years prior to that there had been at most four cases a year, with forty-nine convictions in total (Mustola 1994, 52).

One might ask whether there were any underlying causes that led to the spread of homosexual panic in Finland in the 1950s. One explanation may be sought in the Winter War Finland fought against the Soviet Union. Considering that Finland, unlike the Baltic countries, maintained its independence after the war, the result is in retrospect often framed as a defensive victory. However, for the men who had fought for their country and who had been hailed as masculine heroes during the war, the fact that Finland ended up losing 10 percent of its area to the Russians and having to relocate some 420 000 refugees was a blow that was difficult to handle. Another blow to the heterosexual masculinity of veterans was the fact that many of them had engaged in same-sex relations during the war. Some, such as Touko Laaksonen, better known as the artist Tom of Finland, did it as dedicated homosexuals, others because they unexpectedly fell in love with the comrades with whom they shared the dangers of the front, and still others simply due to the lack of opportunities to have sex with women. After the war, these men had to renegotiate their sexual orientation, and many of them felt the necessity to return to heterosexuality.

As I have argued elsewhere (Juvonen 2002, 157–160, 2006), the post-war restoration period also included the restoration of the heterosexual masculinity of Finnish men, and the contrast of the homosexual Swedish man was well suited to this purpose. Swedish men could be depicted

as weak and effeminate since they had not fought in the war, and that they were “all” homosexual was already an established “fact” as per the news items published in the tabloids. Hence, displacing homosexuality across the Gulf of Bothnia conveniently cleansed Finnish men of any suspicions that they may have engaged in homosexual encounters during the war.

Liberal Sweden as an example to follow

Whereas the image of Sweden was rather tainted in Finland in the 1950s, the public perception of Sweden changed markedly in the 1960s. When the new post-war student generation started to question the sexual morals of their parents, much of their inspiration came from Sweden. This also affected the tone in discussions regarding homosexuality.

An important book that fuelled a more liberal discussion of sexuality in Finland was Lars Ullerstam's *De erotiska minoriteterna* (1964), translated into Finnish as *Sukupuoliset vähemmistöt* (1968), and into English as *The Erotic Minorities* (1966). The book contributed to portraying Sweden as a sexually liberal and progressive country from which Finland had a lot to learn – not least in terms of how it treated its homosexual citizens (cf. Rydström & Tjeder 2021, 228–234). This was also highlighted in Finnish pamphlets published around the same time, such as *Sukupuoleton Suomi* [Finland without Sex/Gender] (Taipale 1966). The pamphlet questioned the narrow-minded Finnish legislation on homosexuality by contrasting it with the liberal Swedish legislation.

The spring of 1965 came to be referred to as “the Sex Spring” in Finland, as two different student magazines published their respective special issues on sexuality – both of which included demands for various sexual reforms – that same spring. One of the demands was for decriminalization of homosexual acts. In the mid-1960s, a new scandal magazine, *Hymy* (founded in 1959), began publishing articles in which Finnish homosexuals were for the first time interviewed about their lives.

The first interview published in *Hymy* was conducted with a 23-year-old Finnish man who, in the tradition of the previously discussed “Swedish films”, had for years had made a living for himself in Stockholm and

Copenhagen selling sex to men (Eronen 1967, 62–66). Letters to the editor, prompted by this and other articles, highlighted the difficulties faced by homosexual men and women living in Finland. They had to hide away, either entering a heterosexual marriage or settling for living alone, and live in constant fear of being exposed. Their desperate letters were in stark contrast to those sent to *Hymy* from Sweden: “I was able to move to Sweden, and only that saved me from suicide, which seemed inevitable. Here we have our dignity as human beings, and we can meet others like us” (Anonymous 1968, 102). The image of Sweden as a promised land for homosexuals was further solidified by the article “We Are a Happy Couple”, where a divorced Finnish man described his bright new life in Stockholm with his Danish partner, a “dark and silent man”, and which featured actual photographs documenting their coupled bliss (Suoste 1968, 86–89).

The contrasting of liberal Sweden to the backward Finland eventually achieved its goal: in 1971 homosexual acts were finally decriminalized in Finland. However, a new law was simultaneously enacted which prohibited the incitement of homosexuality. This controversial law was initially used to suppress any discussion of homosexuality in programmes published by the public broadcasting company. Consequently, homosexuality was pushed to the margins in media, and the medium became the message: since homosexuality was only present on the pages of sordid tabloids and adult magazines, it was not perceived as an acceptable way of life. Although the “ban of incitement” became a dead letter over the years, it remained in the criminal code until 1999.

“Somewhere across the ocean there is a land...”

The beloved Finnish tango *Satunmaa* [The Fabled Land], written and composed by 19-year-old Unto Mononen in 1949, commences with the lyrics “*Aavan meren tuolla puolen jossakin on maa...*” [Somewhere across the ocean there is a land...]. The wistful song could easily have been written for those Finnish lesbians and gay men who saw Sweden as the promised land where they would be able to live their lives openly as homosexuals.

It is no wonder then, that from the 1950s through to the 1970s, Finnish women and men wrote letters to RFSL (Riksförbundet för homosexuellas, bisexuellas, transpersoners, queeras och intersexpersoners rättigheter, the Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex Rights) to request information about the organization's activities, to order its magazine *Följeslagaren* [the Companion], or simply to have someone to pour out their heart to.¹ The same trend of seeing Sweden as a land of opportunity continued even after the decriminalization of homosexuality in 1971, and the ensuing demedicalization in 1981, as many homosexual Finns chose to move to the more tolerant Sweden – and were also encouraged by homophobes to do so: “The homos ought to go to Sweden, there are others like them there” (Anonyymi 1967, 94)

The need to leave Finland, felt by many homosexual women and men, was highlighted in an article titled “Sweden’s Finnish Homosexuals: We Have to Flee Finland”, published by the popular magazine *Apu* in the early 1980s (see Surakka 2015). At the time of publishing, close to 300 Finnish women and men had joined RFSL, comprising roughly 10 percent of its members. The interviewee Päivi, who worked as a nurse, had already been an RFSL activist for four years. The presence of Finnish lesbians and gays in Sweden had previously also been recognised in the first independent gay magazine, *HOMO*, which had been publishing news and personal ads from Finland since 1967.² Similarly, the magazine *96* in Finland also published selected articles in Swedish.

For homosexual Finns living in Sweden, many of whom had detached from their former social lives back home, it was easier to come out and give interviews to Finnish magazines – although most chose to use their first names only, to protect their families. Some of the publishing forums for lesbian interviews were the ever-curious adult magazines, such as *Ratto*. *Ratto* informed its readers how a “Lesbian Couple Got Engaged in Tampere!”³ Marja-Leena from Turku and Seija from Tampere had gotten to know each other through a personal ad in a Finnish magazine while still living in Finland. They soon, however, decided to leave for Stockholm, which they perceived to be a more tolerant place to live

than Turku. In Sweden they worked as cleaners and took to visiting the bar Piperska Muren to meet others like themselves. At the time of the interview – and sexy photo session – they visited Tampere, where they wanted to buy rings to consolidate their two-year relationship. “Regardless of the narrow-mindedness, the homeland is always the homeland”, Marja-Leena declared (*Ratto* 1/1981, 3).

A perusal of lesbian and gay, or adult, magazines would very likely also reveal details of the situation faced by gay men who were moving between the two countries and – from the early 1980s, when the AIDS crisis hit Sweden and Finland – dying away from home. Some of that history has been recorded in literary form in the trilogy *Torka aldrig tårar utan handskar* [Never Wipe Away Tears Without Gloves] by Jonas Gardell (2012–2013).

The lesbian connection

It was not by accident that Finnish lesbians chose to move to Sweden and get involved in RFSL, since there were already longstanding organizational connections between the two countries. When Psyke, the first registered Finnish organization for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and trans people was founded in 1968, it soon began to publish *96*, or “*Ysikutonen*” [Ninety-six], a magazine dedicated to homosexual and transvestite themes. There are many small traces of cross-border activism in the magazine. Since Psyke was a rather male-dominated organization, lesbians sought to encourage more women to join. In these efforts the Swedish forerunners were consulted.

For example, in 1971 Psyke’s magazine *96* published articles that discussed the impressive lesbian activism taking place in Scandinavia. Readers were presented with inspiring ideas, for instance from Line Varhede from Denmark, who suggested the founding of a Nordic lesbian magazine, and Barbro⁴ from Sweden, who suggested setting up Nordic lesbian meetings. Barbro also warmly encouraged lesbian readers to visit Stockholm, where lesbians met at the Diana club. The articles highlighted how lesbians in particular were active in making cross-border visits happen (Arkimo 1971; Barbro 1971; Lehtovirta 1971).

The connections became more varied in 1974, when a group of young activists split from Psyke and founded a new organization: Seta (shortened from *Seksuaalinen tasavertaisuus* [Sexual Equality]). The networks and connections between Finnish and Swedish lesbians and gays were not limited to RFSL. Letters in which experiences and encouragement were exchanged are known to have traveled between Finland and both EKHO Uppsala and UFH (*Uppsala Förening för Homosexuella* [Uppsala Association for Homosexuals]), at least in the 1970s and 1980s. UFH also, on Seta's request, sent money to support Seta, as "in Finland things were so much worse than in Sweden". Articles and *Seta* magazines from Finland were sent to Sweden for the benefit of those members who were able to read Finnish. Personal friendships also ensued, and activists travelled across the Gulf of Bothnia to visit each other.⁵

The lesbian presence became more pronounced in 1975, when lesbian feminists from RFSL founded a group they called the *Lesbisk Front* [Lesbian Front]. In Helsinki, lesbians from Seta were keen to learn more about this exciting new organization, and in 1976 a group of them were invited to a party organized by the Swedish lesbian feminists. The meeting proved to be an earth-shattering experience for the Finns:

Lesbiska fronten (sic), yes, for some reason we got the info that this *Lesbiska fronten* (sic) is organizing a party, so a group of some 20 women took off and went to party, like really party, and when they came back, they had experienced a kind of religious awakening. They were really like that. But, yeah, it [feminism, TJ] was in the air here as well. (Manner 2002, 38–39, translation TJ)

Consequently, the feminist-inspired Finnish lesbians took over both the chair and the vice-chair positions at Seta the following year (Rand 1989, 26). They also founded a separate group for women within Seta, which they called Akanat. The women-only group did not sustain itself for long however, as it turned out that many of the Finnish lesbians were not really into feminism after all. "I do remember how frustrating it was, explaining feminism to lesbians. They did not get it at all" (Saarinen

1985, 21). Some years later however, in 1983, Akanat was re-established by somewhat younger lesbians, and this time the lesbian feminist group took off.

The lesbians, along with other Finns, kept making trips over to Stockholm to celebrate Homosexual Liberation Day, which had been organized there annually since 1977. In 1981, a Finnish flag could be spotted in the march.⁶ Finns who already lived in Sweden, or who travelled to Stockholm to participate in the march, added to the crowd on the streets. When they returned home, energized with new ideas, this in turn fuelled their activism in Finland.

Building cultural bridges

The cultural connection between the two neighbouring countries was by no means a one-way street. Homosexual Swedes had also sought refuge in Finland, among them one baron Göran Åkerhielm, who was given the option by his father to either remain in Sweden and be disowned, or move away with his inheritance intact. In 1958 Åkerhielm chose to make Källskär in Åland his home, a place to which he would also occasionally invite Tove Jansson and Tuulikki Pietilä for a visit (Suhonen n.d.).

Tove Jansson is also present in Swedish queer culture in other ways. The first Swedish lesbian film,⁷ *Avskedet* (*Jäähyväiset/Farewell*), directed by Tuija-Maija Niskanen in 1981, was based on the lives of two Swedish-speaking Finns: Vivica Bandler (Valerie von Freyer, played by Pirkko Nurmi) and her love interest, the budding artist Tove Jansson (Kerstin, played by Stina Ekblad).⁸ The film premiered in Helsinki in 1982 and a year later in Sweden. Although the film was partly filmed in Helsinki, the actors spoke Swedish, and the funding came from Sweden. The Swedish Film Institute describes the film as “A subtle and touching coming-of-age narrative in a Finnish-Swedish upper-class milieu, with tense family relations, forbidden lesbian love, and a struggle for one’s own identity” (*Avskedet* n.d., translation TJ). The film has recently been restored by the Swedish Film Institute.⁹

There had however been cultural cooperation in the publishing sector for more than 20 years prior to the making of that film. The publish-

ing house AKRO in Norrköping had published a pornographic booklet, *Homosexualistien muistelmia* [The Memoirs of Homosexuals], by an anonymous author on the sexual experiences of gay men in 1960.¹⁰ Apparently, it was possible to publish literature in Finnish, that at the time would not have been publishable in Finland, in Sweden. In the early 1970s, it was the Swedish Revolt Press that kept publishing the drawings of Tom of Finland, both in its magazine *Revolt*, and as illustrated books and collections (Voss 2020).

Ongoing exchange

Before wrapping up this essay, I must highlight the inspiring role that Sweden played in Finnish political discussions in 1996, when the registered partnership of Eva Dahlgren and Efva Attling became front-page news in Finnish tabloids. The publicity of their relationship helped sustain the campaign for registered same-sex partnerships in Finland – although it was not until 2002 that the law finally came into effect.

The queer cultural connections between Sweden and Finland have in many ways continued through to present day, and can still be observed when one pauses to pay attention. The Finnish queer scholar Tiina Rosenberg has deeply influenced Swedish queer scholarship with her queer-feminism. Similarly, the partially Finnish roots of Mark Levengood, who spent his youth in Helsinki, may have contributed to his long-time partner Jonas Gardell having continuously written Finnish characters into his novels.

There are also certain homosexual tropes that have had a long lifespan, such as the idea of Sweden as the promised land. This is exemplified in Swedish-speaking Finn Edith Hammar's autobiographical graphic novel *Homo Line* (2020), which was nominated for the Comic Finlandia prize. The book describes moments in the life of a young queer person, who seeks to find a home for their identity both in and between Helsinki and Stockholm.

When all the shared and intertwined queer history of Finland and Sweden is examined, it is extraordinary to note how the scholarship on the history of homosexuality in both countries has been written in such

a manner that the connection can be neither seen nor imagined. It may be argued, also in reference to the recent interest in transnational queer studies, that the tendency for nationalist scholarship severs the possibility of acknowledging cross-border influences that have nourished lesbian and gay culture and cultural production in both countries.

This essay can only hope to scratch the surface of centuries of cultural exchange between Finland and Sweden. Hence, one would hope to see a burst of collaborative research projects, where for example, older sexual refugees who left Finland for Sweden were interviewed before leaving us permanently. Additionally, searching through digitized newspapers and magazines while exchanging findings for a more well-rounded perspective would potentially reveal novel aspects of the thus far overlooked history of sexual migration and exchange. Certainly, the lesbian and gay press of both countries still contains many hidden gems that would further illuminate the depths of our shared culture. You are more than welcome to climb aboard – *Stig ombord! Tervetuloa!*

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NOTES

1. The letters sent from Finland to RFSL are archived at the Swedish National Archives in Stockholm. They can be found under SE/RA/730611: Riksförbundet för sexuellt likaberättigande, serie E: Inkomna handlingar; serie E1: Korrespondens; serie E1E: Korrespondens med organisationer och privatpersoner i andra länder; volymen 3: Korrespondens Utlandet Finland 1960–1970. I would like to thank Peter Edelberg for this information. Copies of the letters can also be read on the premises at the Työväen Arkisto in Helsinki.
2. I would like to thank Riikka Taavetti for this information.
3. I would like to thank Susanna Paasonen for pointing out this article to me.
4. The Barbro who wrote an engaging letter to the “girls of Psyke” for 96 was most likely Barbro K. Gustafsson, who was at the time rather visible in the Swedish lesbian and gay movement. I would like to thank Varpu Alasuutari for this piece of detective work.
5. I would like to thank Varpu Alasuutari for this information, which she found when going through the archives Folkrorelsearkivet för Uppsala län in Uppsala.
6. This could be evidenced in one of the short documentaries shown by SAQMI at the Tampere film festival screening in 2023.
7. Coincidentally, the first Swedish gay film, *Vingarne* (1916), was also directed by a Finn, Mauritz Stiller.
8. The love letters from Tove Jansson to Vivica Bandler are archived at Svenska litteratursällskapet in Helsinki.
9. A new trailer of *Avskedet* with commentary by Stina Ekblad can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFTMF2Hd1IA>.
10. I would like to thank Rita Paqvalén for this information.