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Sami Finally Win Reindeer Grazing Rights

Sweden's Supreme Court (Högsta Domstolen) has ruled that Sami reindeer herders in northern Sweden can continue to let their animals graze in forests despite the objections of landowners, ending a 20 year dispute.

The relief was tangible among the Sami who had gathered in **Umeå** to receive the verdict. "Finally it is over. We have had 14 years of uncertainty, so this is something we have been waiting for. Finally life can go back to normal routines," said Oleg Omma, the chair of Umbyn Sami village (Upmeje tjeälddie).

The Supreme Court upheld a Court of Appeal for Upper Norrland ruling from September 2007, which said that the Sami had proven that their ancestors had grazed reindeer on the land in the Nordmaling area "since time immemorial".

"For us this ruling is absolutely crucial. But primarily I see this as incredibly important for all the children and young people in Sápmi who are considering reindeer herding," Omma said, referring to the cultural region traditionally inhabited by the Sami people. "This will ease concerns in all of Sápmi, for all of us who work with reindeer. It is a ruling for all reindeer

herders," he added.

The case had been brought back in 1998, when over a hundred forest owners in the Nordmaling area clubbed together to try to force the Sami to stop using their land for winter grazing of reindeer. The landowners argued that the Sami villages (Siida) of Ran, Umbyn and Vapsten had no right to use the land, claiming that the forests had not been used for grazing long enough for the Sami to have established the right to use them.

The Supreme Court however found in their favor, ordering the property owners to pay the legal costs incurred by the Sami villages, running to a total of 3.75 million kronor (\$617,000).

Michael Hägglund, who owns forests in Sunnanå, Nordmaling, and is one of the landowners who have now lost the protracted dispute, explained that the court's ruling was expected. "The courts have not dared to take a position in any other way because of the EU and because



the Sami are a minority people. The authorities should in fact have sorted this out earlier, before the problem emerged," he said.

The Supreme Court decided to try the case as customary law had not previously been considered. The court's ruling thus sets legal precedent, meaning that lower courts have to follow to the decision.

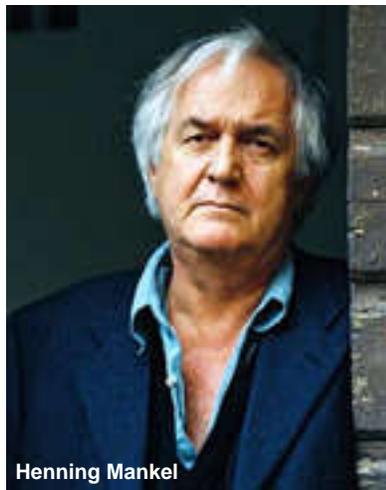
"Now we have written a piece of history for the Sami. And finally, it is in a positive direction," said Camilla Wikland, who represented the Sami in the case.

<http://www.thelocal.se/33430/20110427/>
by Peter Vinthagen Simpson
27 Apr 2011 in The Local.

Sweden's True Master of Mystery

He may be half as famous as Stieg Larsson, but his fans will tell you he's twice as good. So why is **HENNING MANKELL** killing off a beloved series that's sold 35 million books?

Mystery writer Henning Mankell has been beaten by French police and arrested by Israeli commandos. He's worked on a Swedish merchant ship, at a Paris musical-instrument shop, and as the artistic director of an African theater company. He spent years living in the middle of a long, bloody civil war in Mozambique. And he's managed to find time to write some 40 books,



Henning Mankell

which are available in 41 languages and have sold almost 40 million copies around the world. "I have been accused of many things in my life," says the 63-year-old Swedish author. "But never of being lazy."

When you walk into Mankell's Swedish house, the first thing you see is a weathered ship's figurehead mounted on the hallway wall. This, it turns out, used to belong to film giant **Ingmar Bergman**, who used it as the logo of his company and included it in *Persona* and other films. For the past 18 years, Mankell has been married to Bergman's daughter Eva, and he and Bergman became close before the director's death in 2007. "During his last 10 years we became good friends," says Mankell. "We saw 140 movies together: Fellini, Kurosawa, Woody Allen, his own movies.

He liked *Ocean's Eleven*. He thought it was very fun, very exciting. I mean, people would have given a *hand* to be able to sit with him and watch these movies."

Henning Mankell is best known for his 11 books featuring Kurt Wallander, an overweight, middle-aged, diabetic police inspector who fights bad guys and personal demons in a small town at the desolate southern tip of Sweden. He's not a particularly appealing character, except somehow, weirdly, he is. "We are the same age and very fond of Italian opera, but besides that, I don't think we have anything in common," says Mankell, sitting in the living room of his modest '60s-modern house, which overlooks the Kattegat bay outside of **Göteborg, Sweden**. "He stands for a lot of good things in a difficult world. I think that people feel safe with him, in a way."

His mystery novels were big hits in Sweden and then around the world. The books are more cerebral than much of the genre, with a lot of the action happening inside Wallander's head. "I am not that interested in police procedure," he says, although his books are full of detective-work detail. "What really interests me is why things happen. For me it is a very important challenge to let Wallander stand thinking in a room for 10 pages, and make that read (well)."

"**The Killing**" is a new crime drama on AMC that's based on a recent **Danish** series named **Forbrydelsen**, which probed the murder of a local high-school girl from three different perspectives, and stars Swedish actor Joel Kinnaman. It's *Twin Peaks meets 24*, and is the latest in what's being dubbed **Scandinavian Noir**. Reviewed at TVWorthWatching.com.

Until recently, Mankell was Sweden's most famous politically active leftist mystery-writing export. Then, of course, Stieg Larsson came along, and the Millennium Trilogy exploded into the biggest international publishing phenomenon in years. Mankell is a fan of *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo* ("The two others were not that good," he says). It's hard to imagine Larsson wasn't influenced by Mankell's global success. But instead of capitalizing on the world's sudden obsession with **Scandinavian crime fiction**, Mankell is walking away from his most popular creation. It's been 20 years since he published the first Wallander book in Sweden, and he's written one last mystery, *The Troubled Man*, that brings the series decisively to a close. *The Troubled Man's* conclusion is powerful and unexpected, and it's not giving too much away to say it will divide longtime fans. But Mankell is confident that he handled it the right way.

"I have written many thousands of pages about this man," Mankell says. "I have spent a lot of time with him. I don't regret it. But now there are other things I want to do." As Mankell takes a final gulp of tea and heads toward the rocky coast where he goes for a long walk every day, he seems peaceful, content with how his unusually full life has turned out.

—read the entire article by Rob Brunner in *Entertainment Weekly*, April 15, 2011, p.60.