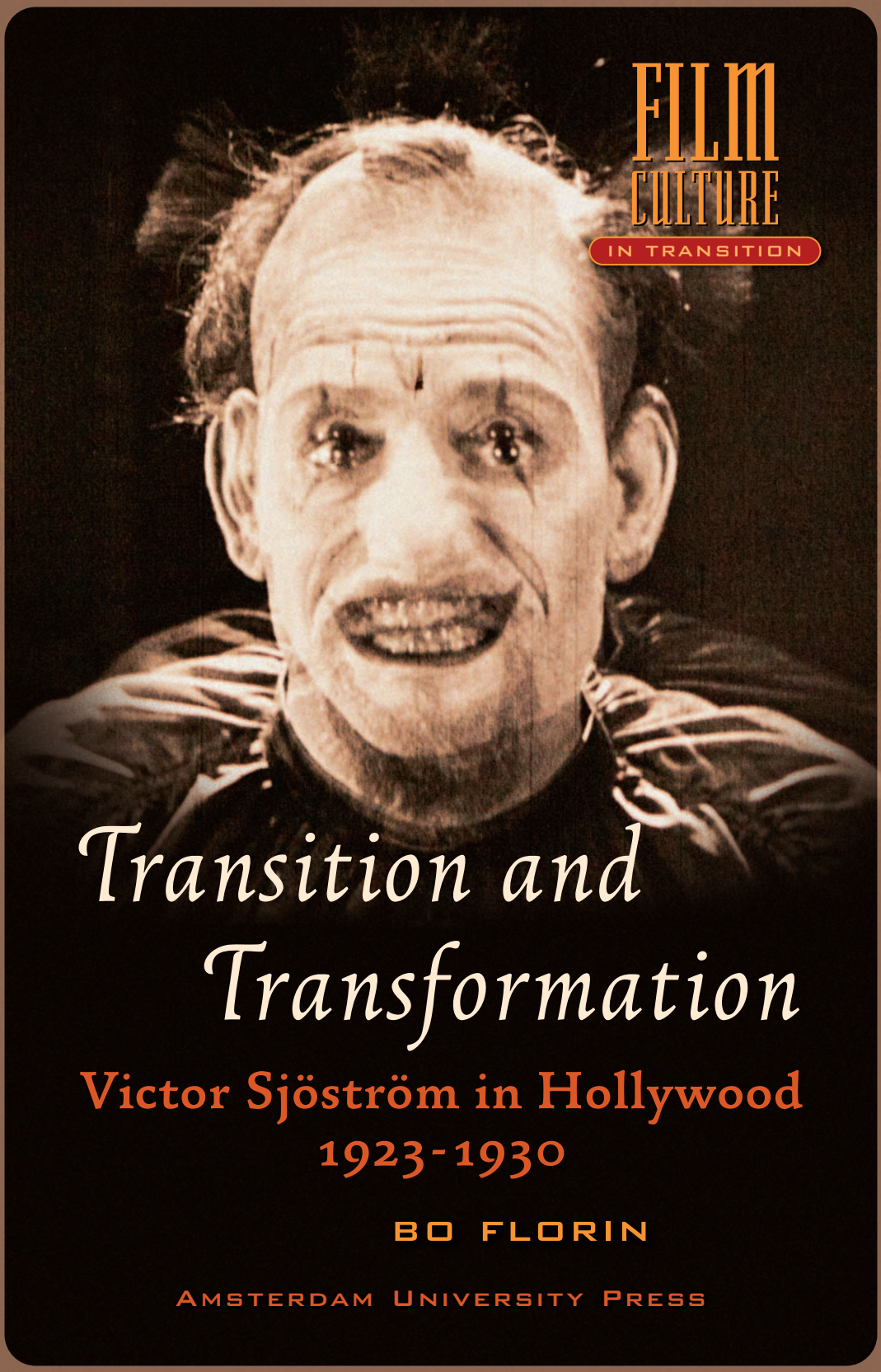

Transition and Transformation

Victor Sjöström in Hollywood 1923-1930

BO FLORIN

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When starting to work on Sjöström in Hollywood, I turned to two essays in Swedish on The Scarlet Letter and He Who Gets Slapped that were published in the legendary journal *Chaplin*, both written by my first film history teacher, Örjan Roth-Lindberg, who also showed me He Who Gets Slapped for the first time back in the 1980s. As I have worked on Sjöström, these essays, it seems to me, have increased in richness in their condensed approach to the issues that I have here attempted to explore in more detail. I am most grateful to Örjan for his inspiration and his innovative approaches to film analysis.

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Stockholm, August 2012

Bo Florin

Introduction – From Sjöström to Seastrom

Victor Sjöström (1879-1960), or Victor Seastrom as he was known during his Hollywood career, is undoubtedly the most renowned Swedish director from the period of silent cinema. In the present digital era, however, a long time has passed since these early years of moving pictures, and his contribution to film history might at least seem distant, if at all important. However, numerous retrospectives during the first decade of the twenty-first century (e.g. in Stockholm, Helsinki, New York, Montreal, Toronto, Munich, London, Lisbon, Madrid, Barcelona, São Paulo) and some important restoration projects, as well as the sensational rediscoveries of hitherto lost material, all testify to the significance of Sjöström's films.[1]

This study attempts to explore the films directed during Victor Sjöström's Hollywood years from 1923 to 1930. My research endeavours to analyze the director's transition from European to American film culture. Central to this analysis is the question of film style and its transformations, from Sjöström's earlier films directed in Sweden – in particular, those from the years 1917 to 1923, often labelled as the "golden age" of Swedish cinema – to the American ones.[2] Equally important, however, are questions of framing: the complex interplay between texts and contexts within a new production culture.

My general definition of "film culture" draws inspiration from Richard Maltby and his "New Cinema Histories", considering cinema "a site of social and cultural exchange", though my focus on the films rather places this work within the paradigm of Jean Mitry's classic proposal from 1973 for a film *histoire totale*, which Maltby also refers to: "simultaneously a history of its industry, its technologies, its systems of expression (or, more precisely, its systems of signification), and aesthetic structures, all bound together by the forces of the economic, psychosocial and cultural order", as well as to Michèle Lagny's definition of film history "as part of a larger ensemble, the socio-cultural history".[3]

There is, however, a methodological problem implicit in the assumption of the European (or more specifically, Swedish) film culture as clearly distinguishable from Hollywood film culture. Kristin Thompson, though, argues that "in rare cases [during World War I], a country's filmmaking might exist in near isolation, creating the possibility for a distinctive national cinema to arise", where she mentions the Swedish example in the first place.[4] In my earlier research on the Swedish "national style" during the golden age, however, I discuss the problematic concept of national cinema. Here, I rather analyze the "national" as a

construction, defined by the audience; a "national" cinema consists of films that are perceived as "national" at a given point. This does not exclude that a group of national films may also contain certain stylistic devices, or be made according to certain codes.[5] Hollywood is also a particular case, at it is generally considered "international" but precisely by being "national", in Thomas Schatz' and Alisa Perren's phrasing "a distinctly American phenomenon". Moreover, as they have argued:

> Any effort to assess, analyze, or even describe "Hollywood" inevitably begins with a definitional dilemma. The term Hollywood refers to an actual place, of course – a community north of Los Angeles that emerged, nearly a century ago, as a primary base of operations for the burgeoning American film industry. But the industry involved far more than the Hollywood environs even then, and as it continued to develop, the meanings associated with the term Hollywood became increasingly complex and multivalent. Most fundamentally, the term Hollywood refers to three interrelated aspects of American cinema: the industrial, the institutional, and the formal-aesthetic.[6]

This study touches upon all three aspects of Hollywood cinema and their interrelations. In examining stylistic devices and relating them to the systems of production, I have also drawn inspiration from Kristin Thompson's work on German émigrés in Hollywood, with a particular focus on Ernst Lubitsch.[7] However, unlike Thompson, my method is not neo-formalist, and I do not proceed in the systematic way that she does, to compile a complete inventory of different stylistic devices. My aim is, rather, to bring together the examination of a particular film style, as revealed through some central devices, with questions of meaning. The concept of film style may thus involve narrative meaning, but, even more importantly, it opens for discussion the cultural contexts of which the films are themselves part, and which in turn both serve to frame and to take part in the interpretation of their meaning.

In concentrating on Victor Sjöström's Hollywood films, this study inevitably, though mostly implicitly, relies upon the concept of authorship, as much questioned as it has proven hard to kill. The films of Sjöström are here considered as "authorial" in the sense of their carrying along the imprint of his hand kept in the process: "on the threshold of the work, evident in the film itself, but also standing outside it, absent except in the imprint left behind", much in the same way as Tom Gunning in his study *The Films of Fritz Lang* has defined authorship.[8] However, just like in the case of Lang, due to the decisive change in production cultures from Europe to America, the actual mode of production plays an equally important role when considering the works. Thus, to speak of the films as "Sjöström's" in the Hollywood context is more of a construction than it was in the Swedish context. The critical reception aspect, however, cannot be

ignored in this connection either, as both in contemporary criticism and within film history, even the Hollywood films have generally been considered as Sjöström's works.

Before turning to the more general question on Sjöström's shift from Sweden to Hollywood, however, a few words ought to be said on the source material available. This study, in spanning over (at least) two film cultures, including different languages, also contains a not inconsiderable linguistic issue, to which there will be reason to return on a more general level. As far as the matter of translation of Swedish scripts or secondary sources is concerned, if no published translation is available, they have been translated by the author. Secondary sources, though, are strikingly rare, except for some biographical records. Bengt Forslund in his dissertation on Victor Sjöström has provided the most thorough and insightful general overview of his life and work to date, including important facts and observations concerning the films from the Hollywood years. [9] It is inevitable that my book to a certain extent overlaps with his research. However, as his book was published in 1980, it does not include the latest rediscoveries of film material. My aim with this study also differs from Forslund's, firstly in being more limited in its purpose: I deal only with the director's Hollywood years, with his work in Sweden used as comparative background, and secondly by having another focus: the intersection between production culture and style, which I want to analyze in more detail. A number of articles, some recent, have dealt with one or another of Sjöström's American films within different contexts.[10] Only a few studies adopt a wider perspective, most notably Graham Petrie's solid book *Hollywood Destinies*.[11] These will all be discussed further in relevant contexts.

Except for the films preserved as a whole or in part, there are generally two other kinds of primary sources. Firstly, there is rich and varied published material, mostly from the press: reviews, reports, debates. The status of such source material within film studies is somewhat ambiguous: sometimes, it is considered to be of limited value because of the standardization and dominating templates of film criticism, which not always allow for differentiation in a given historical situation or within a corpus of films. These objections may be valid if the material is used for the purpose of film analysis. In contextualising or framing the films, however, with emphasis on their surrounding discourses both on the films themselves and the production systems, the objections lose their relevance and the templates instead become important clues in the description of how different ways of looking at cinema are confronted during the actual period.[12] The example of Sjöström particularly underlines the importance of the press as a cultural institution, active in the ongoing process of interpreting individual films as well as the cinema institution itself. Thus, the press contributes to the regulation of cinema, both of production in the past and of our historical

understanding of its development. Criticism, in Sabine Hake's words, "was a weapon in the struggle for cultural dominance, it was a product of modern consumer culture, it was a form of political and intellectual resistance".[13] Following Janet Staiger in *Interpreting Films*, I will also attempt to treat discourses that figure in the press as "significant historical reading strategies".[14]

Secondly, a variety of unpublished sources exist, including company contracts, film scripts, and private diary notes and letters. As for company contracts or scripts, they are rarely controversial as sources if their authenticity is confirmed. A few words should be said on the relation between script or scenario and cutting continuity script. While the former is the manuscript on which shooting is based, the latter is the cutter's compilation once shooting and cutting is over, in which you can follow the visual transitions from scene to scene. The cutting continuity script thus offers, even in cases when the films are lost, a good overview of how they were made and what they might have looked like.[15] Another possible source is offered by the Daily Production Report, a kind of highly formalized log book, where all details concerning the production are listed: which actors were on set, when shooting started, reasons for any delay, retakes, and so on. This kind of report offers invaluable insight into the working processes of a production. Other kinds of unpublished source materials, however, have been at times regarded with the sort of scepticism that arises in regard to film journalism, the feeling being that the views found in these sources are tainted by their subjective character and hidden intentions, which are difficult to measure. Here, though, the same principle is valid. In the present analysis of discourses and production systems even a personal view is of interest, not so much because of its supposed objectivity or exactitude but because of its way of illustrating how the difference in production systems between Europe and the United States might be interpreted.

The basic structure of the study is chronological, starting with a general chapter on Sjöström as a director in Sweden, as well as the discourses surrounding his status as a national or international director, and the general debate on such issues. The next chapter deals with Sjöström's transfer to Hollywood and the ways that this change of production culture might possibly be dealt with and interpreted, but in particular also with his first American film, Name the Man (1924). Although some parts of this film are missing, it has been preserved to such a large extent that it is possible to regard it as a complete film. This analysis is followed by a chapter dealing with He Who Gets Slapped (1924), a film that has been preserved in its entirety. However, the chronology is then partly abandoned, as the fourth and fifth chapters deal with Sjöström's most famous preserved films, the two collaborations with Lillian Gish: The Scarlet Letter (1927) and The Wind (1928). In all these analyses, the central aim of the study is the analysis of the change of production cultures from Sweden to Hollywood, in

relation to questions of cinematic style – the latter also including cinematic landscape portrayal, generally considered one of the most important stylistic characteristics of Sjöström's films from the Scandinavian heydays. To these general analyses discussions have been added of different contexts or framings, such as some aspects of critical reception where these are particularly called for, or the literary sources and their use. Analyzing this question of adaptation is relevant especially when there is a particular dynamic between the original work and its screen version – such as with Andreyev's *He Who Gets Slapped* and Sjöström's script for the film (this aspect has been much discussed) or such as in the case of Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* or Scarborough's *The Wind* – but it has been left out in the discussion of A Lady to Love, where the writer of the drama, Sidney Howard, also wrote the film script. In analyzing The Wind, I make a close-reading of the plot development in relation both to style and to different frameworks and contexts. This is motivated not only by the close intertwining of plot and style (this could be argued of several Sjöström films), but rather by the fact that this film, paradoxically enough as it has been considered Sjöström's Hollywood masterpiece, has previously been subject only to marginal analysis.[16]

The reason for abandoning chronology is that all of Sjöström's Hollywood films that are lost or only preserved in short fragments are dealt with in a sixth, more general chapter. Two of these films – Confessions of a Queen (1925) and The Tower of Lies (1925) – were made after Sjöström's second Hollywood film, and two of them – The Divine Woman (1928) and The Masks of the Devil (1928) – after his double collaboration with Gish, and immediately preceding his last Hollywood film. The reason for bringing together all lost films or shorter fragments in a separate chapter is that they have important historiographical problems in common: the question how to deal with partially or completely lost film material as well as issues of reconstruction.

Finally, another film considered lost for a long time – A Lady to Love (1930), Sjöström's last Hollywood film, which has recently been rediscovered – is analyzed. As the director's first sound film, which for this reason was also produced in different versions, the film provides rich material for discussing from yet another perspective the intersection between different film cultures. It also demonstrates the consequences of the transition to sound for an individual director, who was frequently using visual "sound effects" in his films during the silent era.

When working on a research project for many years, as I have done in the present case, it is inevitable that some central observations do reoccur in different papers and articles. I have already published several texts on Victor Sjöström in other contexts. The most comprehensive is my bilingual presentation, written for a retrospective at the Swedish Film Institute, *Regi: Victor Sjöström/ Directed by Victor Sjöström*, which is based on my original research but does not

overlap with the present study other than in details, as its aim was less specialized.[17] Previously, I have also published an article entitled "Victor Goes West: Notes on the Critical Reception of Sjöström's Hollywood Films, 1923-1930", which dealt with the reception of the films from his American period, relatively limited in scope, but necessarily overlapping this study in its discussions dealing with critical reception of individual films.[18]

An earlier version including parts of the analysis concerning Name the Man has been published in German, in the journal *Montage/AV*, as part of a more general article on Europeans in Hollywood comparing Sjöström to Lubitsch.[19] A few short passages from an article in *Film History* in a special issue on émigré filmmakers and filmmaking, mainly concerning He Who Gets Slapped and The Scarlet Letter, have also been included in new versions and new contexts in the present study.[20] Finally, the analysis of The Wind has also been previously published in a slightly different version in *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture*.[21]

If there exists a general view of Sjöström as a director it may well be summarized by Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell concerning his Swedish period in their influential textbook on film history, and also decisive for how the director will be understood by new generations of film students:

> Victor Sjöström was one of the most important directors of the entire silent era. His style was austere and naturalistic. He used restrained acting and staged scenes in considerable depth, both in location shots and in sets. His narratives frequently traced in great detail the grim consequences of a single action.[22]

The transition to Hollywood is described by Thompson and Bordwell through a few key examples, and not evaluated as a whole in the same way as his Swedish years. They state that: "His first American film, *Name the Man*, was a bit stiff. [...] His next project, *He Who Gets Slapped*, was a vehicle for Lon Chaney." As for The Scarlet Letter, they note that "MGM insisted on a comic subplot that vitiated the austere drama" and finally, they conclude that "*The Wind* was a powerful, bleak film. Its grimness and its release as a silent film as sound was coming in doomed it to failure, however, and Seastrom returned to Sweden, to his original name, and to a long career acting in sound films."[23] A story of a failure is thus told, though not without a few grand moments. The general, remaining impression is that Sjöström, perhaps being too austere, didn't really succeed in adapting, neither to the Hollywood style, nor to the demands of the time: that is, sound cinema.

In her book on Ernst Lubitsch in Hollywood, Kristin Thompson simply proposes as her main argument that "he rapidly absorbed the new style of Hollywood once he became exposed to it",[24] whereas others, as she also notes, were slower to follow. Adapting to Hollywood, in this historical account, seems to

equal success, whereas the delay in so doing is judged as being less on the forefront. The Hollywood style thus remains the norm, the general criterion to judge from.

In the case of Sjöström, I hope to nuance the picture of a European in Hollywood a little in the following, by showing that, while "Seastrom" adapted well enough to the new context to remain in Hollywood for seven years, elements of the particular "Sjöström style" from the Swedish years also appear to have been integrated and developed in the American context, modifying and varying the Hollywood system, which does seem to have allowed a range of possibilities within the given limits of the dream factory, and thus, in spite of its general formulaic structure, does not appear as monolithic.

Sjöström – From National to International

To fully understand Sjöström's position as one of the leading Swedish film directors at the time when he was moving to Hollywood it is necessary to first take a closer look at his Swedish background, both as actor and director.[1] After this general background, the change in Swedish production strategies during his early years as director will be shortly discussed, which leads on to a more specific description of the particular film style that has been identified with "Sjöström" as an early Swedish auteur. The public debate concerning film cultures, on the specific issue of national versus international, that took place in Sweden as well as in the rest of Europe and in America during the 1910s and 1920s will also be dealt with, as well as the American reception of Sjöström's films from the Swedish years.

Sjöström was born in 1879 to a mother with a background as actress and a father who was a businessman with varying success. He spent part of his childhood in the United States, but returned by himself to Sweden after the death of his mother to attend an Uppsala secondary school in 1893. After the death of his father in 1896, and with the help of his maternal uncle, Victor Hartman, a prominent actor who provided him with a letter of recommendation, Sjöström started his acting career. For 15 years, he worked mostly with a number of touring theatre companies in Sweden and Finland, where he performed in classics by Shakespeare or Strindberg, but he made his most prominent appearances in popular comedies, where he won acclaim both for his good looks and his natural way of acting. By 1911, he was managing the Einar Fröberg repertory company.

In 1912, however, the picture would change. Sjöström received a phone call from an old classmate who had become a journalist and thus come to know people from the film industry. Sjöström later recalled:

> He asked me straight out, "How would you like to be a film director?" "Yeah – sure", I stammered, secretly ecstatic but trying to control myself and pretending not to be particularly enticed by that kind of hocus-pocus. But apparently his idea was well received, because Charles Magnusson, president of A. B. Svenska Biografteatern [Svenska Bio for short – the forerunner of AB Svensk Filmindustri] told me to meet him at a hotel early the next morning. And before long the whole thing was in the bag.[2]

Svenska Bio had just moved from the town of Kristianstad to a brand new studio in Lidingö. Cameraman Julius Jaenzon, whose name would later be closely associated with Sjöström, had been working for Svenska Bio ever since 1910. His brother Henrik, who would also shoot for Sjöström, was there as well.

Georg af Klercker and Mauritz Stiller – both former actors – joined Sjöström as new directors.

After a first summer at Svenska Bio, where he directed five films, Sjöström went back to the theatre – to what was now called the Fröberg-Sjöström company – but only to return once again to Svenska Bio in 1913, now with a permanent position as director.

Sjöström directed no fewer than thirty films – of which only four have been preserved – before Terje Vigen (A Man There Was), the 1917 work based on an Ibsen poem that is often considered his breakthrough. From 1917 to 1923, he made twelve, all but one of which have been preserved. Of his nine Hollywood films from 1923-1930, seven have survived (although two are only fragmentary). After returning to Europe for the last time, he made just one film in Sweden (Markurells i Wadköping, 1931) and one in Britain (Under the Red Robe, 1937), both of which have been preserved, but he also returned to the theatre and to acting from 1930–1957 (not least in his memorable role in Ingmar Bergman's Smultronstället [Wild Strawberries], 1957). Sjöström also worked as artistic director for Svensk Filmindustri from 1943 to 1949. He died in Stockholm in 1960.

Sjöström's career as film director in Sweden before he went to Hollywood is usually divided into two parts: before and after A Man There Was (1917). That film earned him a critical breakthrough in Sweden and marked a shift in Svenska Bio's production strategy from a large amount of films per year to fewer productions, exclusively based on prestigious literary sources.[3] Film historians have often regarded these early films as a historical parenthesis, or as exercises preceding Sjöström's "real" career. This not least as his directing debut, Trädgårdsmästaren eller världens grymhet (The Gardener or The Cruelty of the World) was banned by the Swedish censors. In this view, Ingeborg Holm from 1913 has thus traditionally been considered an exception, anticipating the development to come, a view to some extent based by the simple fact that much of the early material is lost. The rediscovery of Dödskyssen (The Kiss of Death) from 1916, however, calls for a nuancing of this; in its complex stylistic effects, this film stands much closer to Körkarlen (The Phantom Carriage) 1921, his internationally most famous and stylistically most elaborated film, than to A Man There Was. Thus, it would be misleading to discuss Sjöström's development as director primarily from an evolutionary perspective, where he gradually masters more difficult technological or stylistic devices. The change in 1917 had less to do with Sjöström's general working methods and his insights in cinematographic technology or devices of style, than with a general change of Swedish production policies. The vision for the future was grand.

This tendency towards developing a national style in Sweden had gradually grown stronger. The "Swedish style" was characterized in particular by its ways

of handling cinematic subjectivity, but, above all, it seems to express a national – or at times rather nationalistic – strive to create a genuinely Swedish cinema, possible to distinguish from other, international productions. This aim was expressed through a contrasting of quantity and quality, like in an 1919 article from the magazine *Filmen*, when Europe was still in the shadow of the First World War:

> When things have got back into the old groove again in the world, we will have reason to hope that Swedish films with Swedish trade marks shall go half round the world or the whole world. According to the press, there are plans to increase our production so that, even quantitatively, we will become fairly 'American'. As long as there is no legislation disadvantageous to the cinema, there is a real opportunity for us to become the most distinguished film nation in Europe.[4]

These production and stylistic aims are also echoed in an anonymous chronicle in the Swedish film press from 1920:

> Free, cinema grows strong. Free, its song of praise to nature will be high and mighty. Free, the cinema will pay its compliments to the Swedish country, to Swedish art and Swedish culture all over the globe. Swedish cinema will become a national anthem in pictures.[5]

Already during the first years of the 1920s, however, conditions had hardened in Swedish cinema. This coincided with an economic crisis in the new company Svensk Filmindustri (SF), starting in 1921, which led to drastic cuts: only three films were to be produced in the plans for 1922. The new board had a majority of bankers, whose concerns were purely financial, and as a result producer Charles Magnusson, who had maintained a strong artistic vision, became marginalized. A subsidiary company, AB Svensk Filminspelning, was also founded by SF, of which directors Victor Sjöström, Mauritz Stiller and John W. Brunius were a part. This made them economically responsible for their own productions, and they were forced into commercial considerations. American films were taking over the market – no less than 90% of the films that premiered in the early 1920s were American – and SF started to turn its attention towards "international" productions. Sjöström's acceptance of the offer from Goldwyn Pictures must be seen against this background.[6] Still, the change would be considerable from the small scale Swedish film industry to the gigantic Hollywood factory. In Sweden, Sjöström and Stiller had been the unquestioned leading directors for a long time, reigning at Svenska Bio/SF and its new studio at Råsunda. Not only could they claim their right to a final cut, but they were able to control the whole process of filmmaking, from idea to finished product. At the same time, according to Bengt Forslund, SF seems to have planned for him to make a "study trip" to Hollywood, in order to learn how to make American

films and "see what the market wants", as he wrote in a letter to Hjalmar Bergman.[7] He had already undertaken two such investigative trips in the past – first to Pathé in Paris in 1912, before he directed his first film, at a time when French cinema was at the forefront, and then in 1913 to Nordisk films in Copenhagen, as Danish films became the new stylistic ideal of the time. But in 1923, as he left Sweden, it was clear that he would not only study production, but also make films. SF, however, had him sign a contract, which reveals that their intention was to "lend" him to Hollywood for a short period, in order to let him learn from American filmmaking, but also to get the rights to distribute Goldwyn films in Sweden.[8]

This time, however, unlike the first study trips, it was a full-fledged director who went abroad. What, then, were the particular characteristics of Sjöström as director, the specificity of his film style? It is essential to examine in more detail the question of whether there is any stylistic continuity between Sjöström in Sweden and Hollywood, or if he was immediately assimilated by the new production system.

Lyrical Intimacy as Authorial Style

In my previous research on Victor Sjöström as part of the Swedish national style of the 1910s and early 1920s, I have distinguished several stylistic markers that seem particularly characteristic to his film style, which are here summarized. Sjöström's preserved films from the Swedish years, which have formed the overall picture of the director, are perhaps above all characterized by their lyrical intimacy, created through downplayed acting, thorough work on the lighting of scenes, and a mise-en-scène and montage privileging a circular space with a clear centre, towards which movements converge.[9]

A particularly clear example of this lyrical intimacy is provided in a scene from Berg-Ejvind och hans hustru (The Outlaw and His Wife) from 1918, showing Berg-Ejvind, his wife Halla and their little daughter living as outcasts in a cave in the mountainside, close to a precipice. In a sequence with eleven takes, the perspective is changed no less than eight times. Thus, the larger picture is framed and encircled in a way that creates a more intimate space; through the camera, a safe and close world is construed. In a few frames, the stunning view from the mountain is revealed, but mostly in a way that focuses on the cliff where they live rather than on the distance to the ground below. In several shots, the cliff face is shown as a protective background to their exposed existence. In one frame, Halla is shown sitting beside a barrel where a fire has been lit, which also suggests the idea of home: a safe fireplace. Only late in the

sequence, Berg-Ejvind and his daughter walk to the precipice, looking down and throwing down a stone, which is seen falling from a perspective from below, as a dark foreboding. However, from the potential danger, the perspective is again changed, showing the child returning to her mother, thus downplaying the danger and closing the sequence with a feeling of close intimacy in the bosom of the family.

In addition to this general lyrical intimacy, but also contributing to it, two particular devices also stand out in Sjöström's films. The first is his systematic cuts across the 180-degree line to a completely reversed camera position, thus creating a 360-degree cinematic space, which occurs in most Swedish films from the period but is particularly frequent in Sjöström. Strikingly enough, these cuts in his films also occur at narrative turning points in the plot. Early examples may be found in Tösen från Stormyrtorpet (The Girl from the Marsh Croft, 1917), where the device is used on five occasions, such as when Gudmund, the hero, who has fallen in love with Helga, the maid, has to tell her on behalf of his mother that she wishes to speak to Helga (in order to give her notice) – indeed a turning point in the story as this meeting between Gudmund and Helga turns out to be decisive. Interestingly enough, Sjöström has here himself noted in the script, immediately beside the intertitle "You may go in and see Mother...": "To be shot from opposite perspectives – Gudmund with the other door, Helga turning around at the door to the vestibule."[10] This confirms the hypothesis of the cuts across the line being a consciously chosen stylistic device by the director.

In addition to the cuts, the dissolve plays a particularly central role among other optical transitions in Sjöström's films. Moreover, it is often used as a transformatory device, creating analogies between two images – sometimes also in connection with superimpositions. This occurs for example in Klostret i Sendomir (The Monastery of Sendomir, 1920), where a monk, compelled by two strangers visiting his monastery, begins to recount the story of its coming into being. The narration takes place in a large room with a centrally placed table and a sculptured relief on the wall to the left in the shot. An intertitle has recently shown the beginning of the monk's story: "Starchensky was the name of the monk, a count by birth, who owned all his surrounding land." Now, the image of the monk in the room recurs, after which the image is dissolved into another: the image of a man with a child on his lap. Next to the man there stands a table, and shortly after the sculptured relief on the wall reveals that the room is the very same one as shown before, and thus that the monastery in the past has been a castle, i.e. the residence of Count Starchensky. The attentive viewer may also recognise that the man, Starchensky, is in fact identical with the narrating monk. This identity gets its explicit confirmation only at the end of the film when we have returned anew to the frame story. The dissolve works,

in other words, as an independent device, which does not in this context receive any clarifying support from any other narrative patterns. In this single changing of images, through a motion in reverse direction, the whole drama that the film portrays and which turns the count into a monk and the castle into a monastery, is concentrated. The reappearance of these transformatory dissolves as well as other central stylistic devices in the Hollywood films will be further analyzed in the following chapters.

National or International in Public Debate

Generally, a basic assumption for film historians dealing with the period from the mid-teens and well into the 1920s seems to have been the existence of a clear-cut difference between the two production cultures, Sweden and Hollywood. However, as will be argued in the following, there might be reason to assume a less rigid distinction between them.

Still, the gradual internationalization of Swedish cinema, not least in the case of Victor Sjöström, seems to have needed a justification from a national perspective, which would also equal national to international. An interesting early example is provided in an article from 1919 by the renowned Swedish art critic, August Brunius, titled "National cinema".[11] Here, he draws an unexpected parallel between Sjöström's Ingmarssönerna (The Sons of Ingmar) and Hall Caine, whose novel *The Master of Man* Sjöström would later bring to the screen as his first film in Hollywood. In Brunius' eyes, though, the comparison does not hold good as Selma Lagerlöf with all her literary prestige had provided the literary source of the Swedish film. Brunius' main point, however, is that Sjöström's film, as concerns plot and characters, could have fitted into any international context, which he finds astonishing in a film that to such a degree represents the goal of the industry during the Swedish "golden age" to create a Swedish national film style.

The internationalization of Swedish cinema must also be seen in relation to the overall national film culture, in particular, the repertory of the cinema theatres. In 1915, Germany still dominated the Swedish market with 93 films imported, compared to 85 American films. In 1916, however, the balance changed for good, as 199 American films were imported compared to only 101 German films; the American part of the market doubled both in itself and in comparison with its main competitor.[12] There are good reasons to suppose that the described tendencies to conform Swedish films in accordance with American norms is closely related to this development, where American cinema quickly captures the market. But it was not only the United States that dreamed of dom-

inating the world market of cinema. The new European film policy initiated by an editorial in *Lichtbildbühne* in 1924, which was named "Film Europa", was initially intended as an attempt to defend European production against overwhelming American competition.[13] But its aim was to take a more offensive position within film production globally and – in Fritz Lang's famous phrase from 1927 – "show the way to the world".[14]

The trend towards international film, however, was not only a production strategy noted by the critics; it also contributed actively in forming the idea of cinema in interaction between national and international. Considering Sjöström's case, a clear continuity between the Swedish productions and his Hollywood films might also be traced, not least concerning the various adaptations. Thus, in his second American film – He Who Gets Slapped (1924) – Sjöström brought a play by Leonid Andreyev to the screen, whose play *Professor Storitzyn* he had previously staged in Stockholm in 1920, where he also played the title role.[15] In his fourth Hollywood film, Sjöström returned to Selma Lagerlöf in a free adaptation of *The Emperor of Portugallia*, with the title The Tower of Lies (1925); earlier in Sweden, he had already made four films from Lagerlöf novels: The Girl from the Marsh Croft, 1917), Ingmarssönerna (The Sons of Ingmar, 1919), Karin Ingmarsdotter (Karin, Daughter of Ingmar, 1920) and The Phantom Carriage, 1921. Thus, it is not possible to easily separate Sjöström's Swedish films before Hollywood from his international American productions.

In an article, "National or International Films?", Kristin Thompson discusses the European debate of the 1920s concerning these questions.[16] As early as the war, there was a heated discussion on internationalism in the film press. During these years and immediately after the war, internationalism was largely regarded as an addendum to national production cultures: the use of internationally renowned actors, of subjects devoid of national specificity, or of advanced technical devices. Such international strategies may be traced in all of Sjöström's films from the late Swedish period, after The Phantom Carriage. With Vem dömer– (Love's Crucible, 1922) the Swedish film industry made an attempt to repeat the commercial export success of The Monastery of Sendomir. This international concentration continued with Det omringade huset (Honour, 1922) from a French drama, where British actress Maggie Albanesi played the female lead and is set in a highly conventionalized English and African setting. Critics noted the trend with certain scepticism:

> Swedish cinema has lately become strikingly internationalized. Story and scenery are set in territories more familiar to the world public than earlier and lately even foreign actors have been engaged for filming. This may be understandable or even necessary from a business point of view, but it hardly means any artistic gain for what is usually called "Swedish film".[17]

In Eld ombord (Fire Onboard, 1923), Sjöström's last film in Sweden before his departure to Hollywood, British actor Matheson Lang played the male lead. Even in this case the critics noted the international profile of the film, here particularly concerning the structure of the story:

> And there the film should have ended – with the ship exploding as a great climax of this brilliant dramatic crescendo. But as we know, there is a cinema audience on the other side of the Atlantic whose taste and preferences doesn't allow for tragic endings, and to them, author and director have surrendered and added a "happy ending" to the film.[18]

American Voices on Sjöström

If some sceptical voices had been raised in Sweden, however, several of Sjöström's films after his breakthrough had attracted attention and been well received by American critics and audiences. The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures arranged for a special screening of Sjöström's The Girl from the Marsh Croft together with Out of the Fog, a Metro production directed by Albert Capellani in 1919 with Russian star Alla Nazimova, based on a script by June Mathis.[19] A report was made after this screening, based on an audience survey, posing one main question: "What, if any, distinctive characteristics do you perceive in the European production, 'The Girl from the Marsh Croft', which are absent from representative high grade photoplays produced in the United States?"[20] To this, the majority responded that "the production is characterized by a greater naturalness, a more careful attention to detail and the creation of atmosphere, and perhaps on the whole a higher degree of artistry". Only a few critical remarks concerning dramaturgy and "the mechanics of the two films presented" were in favour of the American production.[21]

American critics generally hailed A Man There Was: Sjöström's acting as well as the scenes shot at sea. *The New York Review* wrote: "In looking at 'A Man There Was', we cannot think of an American director who could have brought out its psychology or its realistic scope any better – perhaps not so well."[22] *The Exhibitor's Trade Review* comments that: "This Swedish Company might give tips to certain American producers on how to make an intensely dramatic feature without a flourish of action, piffling sentiment, excessive romance, geegaws and curls."[23] The Outlaw and His Wife was also imported and became a great success, but in an American version. As for The Phantom Carriage, it received unanimous praise from American critics for its photographic qualities as well as for the acting. However, some doubts voiced by director Tom Terriss

in a Swedish interview in the magazine *Filmjournalen* turned out to be prophetic:

> Your stories are too heavy for American audiences. Not for some of us – but for public success. To me, it seems as stupid to ask you to make other stories – as to ask a great artist to make the cover for a commonplace magazine. For the success of your films, however, it seems necessary to "compromise" in that direction. But it is sad that it should be needed![24]

As Terriss seemed to have foreseen, The Phantom Carriage completely failed with the American audience. Now, SF instead put great faith in the next, more internationally oriented production, Love's Crucible, though without the expected outcome as Goldwyn declined the offer to import the film. Swedish films, therefore, seem to have been successful in America only to the degree that they were different. As soon as the former "national style" was changed to "international", the interest faded. To compete with Hollywood on their own conditions turned out to be more difficult than the Swedish producers had expected. However, Goldwyn's decision to invite Sjöström to Hollywood was undoubtedly just as much based on the great success of his films with critics and audiences alike in Europe, and not least in France: a promise for the future as to export possibilities.[25]

American critics, however, do not always seem to have shared the general enthusiasm of the producers concerning the import of European directors. With eye-catching headlines such as "With Berlin Foreign Center; Famous Shuffling Directors", "The Foreign Legion in Hollywood" or "The Swedish Invasion", the American press hailed the European colony of film workers that arrived in Hollywood during the 1920s invited by several American production companies. Captions such as "Metro's bringing them in by car load", clearly demonstrate the sceptical or at least ambivalent attitude in the public sphere of the receiving country towards this potential assault.[26] Critical comments speak of the immigrants keeping closely together in the new context, and note that consequently only a few of them really become Americans. Rhetorical remarks mention that these adventurers or "foreign invaders" want to capture the American film industry and American dollars. But there are also more positive comments on the competence of the imported film workers, pointing towards a potential creative exchange. A few individuals are mentioned (e.g. scriptwriter Hanns Kräly, who accompanied Ernst Lubitsch to Hollywood and "made the screen better for his coming"), but in general focus lies on the contrasts between "them" and "us".[27]

There is more to this rhetoric than historical curiosity only. It points to the dividing line between Europe and the United States in film production that might easily be interpreted as razor-sharp – a view that, as we shall see, might have to be revised or at least nuanced. In the European press of the period,

however, it also has its counterparts – as eloquent as they are frequent – in headlines as "Europe Gets Plundered", "German Sale" or "European Invasion", with the following rhetorical question whether the renewal of American cinema is in the hands of the Europeans.[28] In both Germany and Sweden several commentators presumed that the export of film workers to Hollywood was less the result of a genuine interest in European talent than dictated by the intention to drain other countries' national production cultures.[29] Thus, according to those critics, any risk of competition was eliminated in favour of American hegemony on the world market. The critical question for this study, then, remains: what actually happened with Sjöström through his transition to Seastrom?

A European in Hollywood – Name the Man and the Shift of Production Systems

When Victor Sjöström arrived in Hollywood in 1923, it was, as already mentioned, part of a strategy carefully worked out by Samuel Goldwyn and his fellow producers, to import a number of influential European directors and actors. As the director of a number of films in Sweden which were generally considered as being among the most acclaimed critical and public successes in world cinema, Sjöström was certainly a hot name, well worth acquiring for Hollywood producers. But he and his colleagues would also, had they remained in Europe, become a possible threat to the American hegemony of the market to which Hollywood at this time clearly aspired.

If the previous chapter dealt with how Swedish national cinema might be considered early on also as international, both from a national and an international viewpoint, this chapter will rather deal with the question of American films by European directors – and Sjöström in particular. Their ambiguous status between two production cultures will be discussed in relation to the variations between different practices, and the possible degree of independence that a director like Sjöström might have enjoyed, but also in more detail concerning the stylistic variations taking place in connection with his first Hollywood film Name the Man.

By the time that he left for Hollywood, Sjöström was by far the most renowned director in his home country. He had a unique relationship with Nobel Prize winner Selma Lagerlöf, who had shown the utmost confidence in Sjöström's way of bringing her novels to the screen – a confidence which he, however, had to earn the hard way. As several scholars have shown, Lagerlöf was at first extremely sceptical towards the film medium and its potential, and she also had difficulties in cooperating, e.g. with Mauritz Stiller.[1] Sjöström had worked with novelist Hjalmar Bergman, whom he brought to Hollywood in 1924; after an unsuccessful attempt to write another script for Sjöström, Bergman however went back to Sweden. Sjöström had acted in seven films directed by his colleague Mauritz Stiller, and they had developed a close friendship over the years. Stiller also left Sweden for Hollywood in 1925 together with Greta Garbo and Lars Hanson, who both acted in Hollywood films by Sjöström.

It seems clear that Victor Sjöström has often been interpreted only as part of this European – and not least Scandinavian – colony that was imported to Hollywood in the 1920s. These Scandinavians – or Europeans – have generally been regarded as a unity, in spite of the fact that they had very different experiences within the new production culture. An additional perspective on the differences between European and American film cultures, which also adds to the differen-

tiation between individuals in the Scandinavian or European colony, is provided by the issue of language; an issue which also has its bearings upon the press debates and the reception of the films. In the 1920s, English had not yet become the lingua franca that it is today, and the change to another working language did provide considerable difficulties for many Hollywood immigrants. This, of course, particularly concerned the actors after the change to sound, a matter which will be dealt with in the chapter on A Lady to Love. But already during the silent era, film workers who did not master the English language caused some debate – as when scriptwriter Frances Marion noted the fact that "the leading man chosen to play the Puritan minister [in Sjöström's The Scarlet Letter] was also a Swede who did not speak a word of English" – a fact that she thought to be "even more curious, especially to anyone outside our bewildering medium" than the fact that the director was Swedish.[2] Sjöström, though, had a distinctive advantage compared to many other Europeans in this linguistic transfer, as he had actually already spent no less than thirteen years in New York, from age 1 to 14. Thus, he already had mastery of his new working language. But, above the individual level, the linguistic circulation initiated by this import of European directors to Hollywood also contained many other potential problems, where whole film projects seem to have run the risk of getting lost in translation.[3]

Thus, however, the statement by Hjalmar Bergman – who returned to Sweden after only a few unhappy months as part of this Scandinavian colony – in his literary allegory of Hollywood, *Jac the Clown*, has often been generalized as something that would include Sjöström as well, not least as he had extensive experience in the theatre, in this circus allegory called "the arena":

> The arena is a short-lived meeting place for people from both sides of the barrier. That's where the movie falls short. Who loves or hates a moving picture rather than a life-and-blood human being? As clever as they may be, these screen comedians remain lifeless and hollow – they're stuck in place, can't even break their necks. A movie screen is a poor substitute for real life.[4]

This quotation seems to include a general pessimistic statement on cinema as such and its possibilities to render the truth of life, rather than on the specific production culture in Hollywood. Relevant as it may be for understanding the outsider position that the Europeans may have suffered, it thus still seems less valid as evidence of the particular change from Sjöström to Seastrom. Here, the question is not so much related to the dichotomy between real life and movie screen as to the possibilities to remain true – or not – within the new system to a specific, artistic vision, in this case already clearly expressed during Sjöström's Swedish years through their distinctive stylistic character.

Consequently, a central theme in Swedish debates from 1923 onwards concerned the classification of Sjöström's – as well as Stiller's – Hollywood productions: should they be considered Swedish or American? Were they national or international? According to Kristin Thompson, the European film industry in the late 1920s had developed a kind of pan-European style, represented not least by quality German films. She sees the fall of Film Europa mainly in relation to the recruitment of European talent by Hollywood, and later on to the national trends that followed the breakthrough of sound.[5] However, I would like to point out another important aspect, which during the 1920s accompanies Hollywood's increasing dominance of the world market, namely, strongly national debates. Here, pan-European ideas seem to have vanished completely and the nation state in isolation is once again contrasted against the main competitor, the United States.

In a chronicle in *Biografbladet* 1923 under the headline "What Is Meant by Swedish Film?", the author "Romulus" discusses whether Sjöström's American films should be called Swedish or not.[6] He quotes an article arguing that Swedish film industry should have entire disposal of the three films that Victor Sjöström was supposed to direct in America. Such a formulation seemed reasonable from a Swedish point of view as the contract signed two months earlier specified the aim of Sjöström's Hollywood trip as being "for purposes of study", and furthermore granted him full freedom to make his own agreements with production companies. The sole right for Swedish Film Industry to distribute the productions in Sweden was the only restriction.[7] But the columnist chose to widen his scope: according to him, the basic question concerns whether a film should be considered a commodity or a cultural product. He ends up with the rhetorical question whether cinema had already left "the era of nationalism" in favour of "internationally valid ideas", which to him at the same time equalled superficiality.[8]

Four years later, however, the writer Sven Stolpe didn't hesitate in defining the national character of the films:

> Sweden thus reappears among the leading film-producing countries of the world. Because we have the right to call both "The Scarlet Letter" and "Hotel Imperial" [Mauritz Stiller, 1927] *Swedish* films. It must be said that, to the credit of our country, our directors have brilliantly defended their artistic integrity in America.[9]

The same question was debated in the German film press. "Colony or competition?" – a rhetorical question posed by Robert Ramin in *Der Kinematograph* in 1927 which provided its own answer.[10] To him, what might look like a German colony in Hollywood was in fact part of the American production system and, therefore, a threat to the German film industry. With the dichotomy introduced by the Swedish chronicler between commodity or cultural product, however,

answers become more varied. The economic loss is, of course, evident, but culturally, the conclusion is not as obvious. Thomas Saunders wrote that most of the assessments concerning the loss for Berlin and the gain for Hollywood were based on classifications of specific German traits in respect to the American traits in the films made by the emigrants. The general question, just as in the Swedish context, was whether the Germans had preserved artistic links to their native country and "in this regard act as apostles of German film abroad".[11]

Production Cultures

In her book reporting from Hollywood 1924, Swedish film critic Märta Lindqvist interviewed, among others, Ernst Lubitsch and Victor Sjöström.[12] These interviews give interesting glimpses of how European directors regarded the American production culture. Not least interesting is the emphasis in their respective answers, where Lubitsch quickly abandons the differences in production culture in favour of a discussion of differences in public preferences. Answering a question on film production in Europe and in the United States, Lubitsch states:

> Technically, there is, of course, no difference, but the diversity lies in the choice of film ideas, in the very content of the films. Public taste here differs completely from that in Europe. In America, one wishes to see gay and entertaining films, in Europe one is more interested in those which address the subject more heavily, in a more psychological manner.[13]

In conclusion, he notes that he is determined to pick only subjects with a happy end for his future films, in order not to be forced to "construe an artistically irrelevant ending for a film".[14] Sjöström, too, had – as previously mentioned – experienced this kind of retouching with The Outlaw and His Wife (1918). This film had been distributed in the United States with the title You and I, with the addition of a prologue and an epilogue providing the original film with a frame which made it appear as a film within the film. In Lindqvist's interview, Sjöström, just like Lubitsch, talks about the enormous difference separating the American view of cinema from the Swedish one, and he also points to the meaninglessness in producing "Swedish" film for the American market. Sjöström characterizes the taste of the American film industry as "basically naive and simple. They are always afraid of accepting anything that isn't already tested and approved of as leading to box office success".[15]

Sjöström, in contrast to Lubitsch, concentrated on a detailed account of different production conditions in Sweden and the United States, a theme that also

reappears in his working diary, especially in relation to his first American film, Name the Man. Among the points developed is the comparatively bigger economic responsibility for the individual film project in the United States. There follows an exhaustive examination of different moments in film production, with its point of departure in Sjöström's remark on the Hollywood system that "within film production, organization has, so to speak, become over-organized".[16] The art director and his scenographic work is mentioned in relation to architects and building workers. The script clerk, who was discussed in positive terms in Märta Lindqvist's account as a "very important functionary", is in retrospect, from the point of view of his later working diary, also discussed with a certain touch of irony: the task of the clerk is among others to:

> [E]stablish a report of what happens every minute of the day. [...] The boy or girl in question walks around with a stop-watch, noting everything that happens during the shooting, and the result might approximately be like this:
> 9-9.06 Mr Seastrom had talks with the cameramen
> 9.06-9.28 Rehearsal
> 9.28-9.37 Waiting while Miss So-and-so's dress was fixed.
> 9.37-9.45 Waiting for Mr So-and-so, who had left. Reason unknown, but had Mr Seastrom's permission, etc. etc.[17]

Only the cutter, who in Hollywood not only keeps the film strips in order but also is responsible for the first, rough cut, and whose role thus differs considerably from the Swedish production system, is excepted from Sjöström's critique. In Märta Lindqvist's description this function, possible only within a sufficiently big production apparatus, is indeed presented as an advantage:

> A great deal of responsibility rests with the cutter, who is in charge of all the film negatives and positives. Each morning, he has to show up with the previous day's work, ready to go into the camera and be shown to the director. Since every scene is taken with two or more cameras, the director can choose the most appropriate shots. The cutter then holds onto the selected material. As production proceeds, he cuts time and again so that a rough cut is already available by the time the shooting is over. According to Sjöström, the cutter takes an enormous load off the director's shoulders. In Sweden, the director does the cutting himself, and simply keeping track of all the different film strips is incredibly time-consuming. In that respect, the American approach is incomparably more methodical.[18]

The production director, assistant director and production manager are then covered by the analysis of technical differences, such as the lighting appliances or the special effects – the latter, in the phraseology of the time, called "excellent machines" – and the number of technical assistants required to handle all these. Later, in the manuscript of Sjöström's informal reminiscences of his Hollywood

years, he returns to the same question and relates the virtual terror he experienced while shooting his first scenes there. A sequence in NAME THE MAN revolves around a pregnant girl whose family has thrown her out of the house and left her to wander down a dark road on a stormy night. During the afternoon, Sjöström took his assistant and cameraman to the remote rural spot in order to explain what he was trying to do with the scene.

> "Don't worry, Mr Seastrom" – those were probably the words I heard most frequently in California – "We'll take care of everything, you don't have to come until 8 PM when it gets dark out." Just imagine my surprise when I showed up and found a whole little crowd there. I asked my assistant who they were, and he said that they were simply the crew that would be helping us during the evening: a bunch of electricians, people to run the wind and rain machines, assistant cameramen, you name it – not to mention the orchestra. "An orchestra?" I inquired. Sure enough, there was a little quartet that was going to play. "But won't the wind machines drown them out?" I persisted. "Sure", he answered, "but the studio has already hired them, and they might as well hang around and liven things up a little during the breaks." I snuck around and counted the technical crew – 63 people in all, myself included. Back in Sweden, we would have made it with 12 or 14. Think about it – a crew of 63 for a single actress.[19]

Sjöström's accounts are much more interesting than the anecdotal form might suggest. Source material concerning the evolution of the production system during the 1910s and 1920s is characteristically poor. The conclusions that may be drawn are general, based upon small-scale development in Sweden, which hints at a situation similar to the French film industry during the same period. Thompson characterized this as a "director unit system", as in Hollywood during the period 1909-1914, where the director also functioned as producer.[20] The director's responsibility and control over the script stage is confirmed by the credits, and the salary lists show the number of persons involved in the productions, but without specifying their tasks. However, Sjöström's reactions, positive as well as negative, to the new production context, confirm and specify this picture. How, then, did this adjustment take place?

Contaminating Hollywood

Hypotheses vary about the degree of independence enjoyed by European directors within the Hollywood system. Concerning Sjöström, it is often mentioned that he, like other Scandinavians, met difficulties and setbacks in the new country. However, the historical perspective varies: whereas contemporary critics tended to see the Europeans as prisoners of the system, later historians have

emphasized their relative independence. The first issue under debate of course concerns the different production practices. In this connection Bengt Forslund, Sjöström's biographer, describes how the director succeeded in realizing his individual vision, "in spite of" or "fighting against" the restrictions inherent in the production system.[21] All in the spirit of national self-confidence: the Swede in America never compromised his European heritage, but returned to the home country when difficulties became overwhelming.

Several facts support such a reading. Sjöström's contract with Goldwyn Pictures Corporation, signed in January 1923, guarantees him certain specific advantages.[22] The contract specifies the director's right to approve the film scripts selected by the company. He was also granted general charge of the direction of the casts, assistant directors and cameramen, as well as of the cutting process – which Sabine Hake has noted was very unusual for the period[23] – "but subject to the supervision of Goldwyn". In spite of these conditions, the model adopted not only in Sjöström's case, but also in several other contracts involving European directors, seems to have preserved a number of "European" features within the American system of production.

In this context, it is interesting to note that, to a certain extent, Sjöström worked with the same production crew in Hollywood, just as he did in Sweden. In Sweden, all his films were made with Julius or Henrik Jaenzon as cameramen. From 1916 with Kiss of Death and onwards, the set designer is also indicated as a specific function in the records; here, he worked exclusively with Axel Esbensen. In Hollywood, the cameramen were changed from one production to the next, with two exceptions. One was Percy Hilburn, with whom Sjöström worked on Confessions of a Queen and his next film The Tower of Lies, and Oliver Marsh, who shot both The Divine Woman and the following film, The Masks of The Devil. When it comes to set design however, Sjöström – just as in Sweden – worked with only one designer, Cedric Gibbons, on all productions without exception, though in some cases (Confessions of a Queen, The Scarlet Letter, The Wind and The Divine Woman), Gibbons was assisted by different set designers. As concerns editing – as indicated earlier this task was accomplished by Sjöström himself during the Swedish years – he was almost as consistent. Thus, Huge Wynn did the editing work on the first Hollywood films, The Scarlet Letter included. J. Haden replaced him on The Tower of Lies, but then Wynn (with Conrad Nervig) resumed working as editor of the remaining four films. A few comparisons with other directors show that this might not be all that exceptional. For example, Ernst Lubitsch worked with the cinematographer Theodor Sparkuhl and the scriptwriter Hanns Kräly throughout his whole German career. In Hollywood, Lubitsch continued to work with Kräly, and worked with the same cameraman, Charles van Enger, in five films from The Marriage Circle to Lady Windermere's Fan.

However, the perspective on this difference in production culture changes if the scope is widened from the individual director's biography to the more general history of circulation within and between production companies. Here, the general Hollywood practice also includes, for example, the useful concept of recycling, which turned out to be most rewarding in the case of Sjöström. In 1922, Goldwyn Pictures produced The Christian, with a script by Paul Bern based on a novel by Hall Caine from 1897, with Mae Bush playing the female lead. A European, Maurice Tourneur, directed the film with Charles van Enger as cameraman. As this film became a box office success, the company decided that the concept was worth renewing. Between May and August 1923, Goldwyn Pictures shot Name the Man from the Hall Caine novel *The Master of Man: The Story of a Sin*, first published in 1922, still with Paul Bern as scriptwriter and Charles van Enger as cameraman. Only the director (Maurice Tourneur) was replaced by another European: Victor Sjöström, who didn't want Mae Busch as the female lead. However, the company had already made its decision on this point and Sjöström had to give in. Not only the lead, but also Aileen Pringle, in a minor part, reappeared in the cast. That this kind of recycled concept could be useful in several respects is suggested by Paul Bern's script for Sjöström's film, at this point still called "The Master of Man", where the first scene starts with the following description: "Here insert two or three atmospheric shots – cutouts from *The Christian*."[24] This film had been shot on location on the Isle of Man, and the insertion of cutouts was thus supposed to set the mise-en-scène for the Sjöström film, which takes place on the same spot. (FIG. 1)

Name the Man, which is only partly preserved, tells the story of Victor, a young lawyer who quarrels with his girlfriend Fenella and has a brief affair with a peasant girl Bessie, who becomes pregnant and kills the baby. Victor is appointed judge and is reconciled with Fenella. His first case is to try Bessie for child-murder. Fenella guesses the truth, but Bessie refuses to name the father and is sentenced to death, whereupon existing copies end. In the last part of the film, Victor was shown first helping Bessie to escape, then to confess his own guilt, be thrown into prison and thus wins back Fenella's love.

The parallel to The Sons of Ingmar is obvious (as Forslund has also noted) with the theme of a young woman secretly giving birth to a child only to kill it, and the father then being ridden by guilt and remorse. It is also interesting in this context to recall August Brunius' earlier mentioned parallel from 1919 – before this particular novel was even published – between The Sons of Ingmar and the work of Hall Caine. Another parallel to Sjöström's Swedish years has been drawn in film history accounts concerning his portrayal of nature, as Name the Man "contained several landscape shots that recalled his earlier feeling for natural environments".[25]

Fig. 1: Production still from Name the Man*: Victor Sjöström in the middle and Charles van Enger behind the camera.*

The film opened on 15 January 1924. On 3 February of the same year, a film from Warner Bros. Pictures opened, The Marriage Circle directed by Ernst Lubitsch, which had been shot in September and October of 1923, directly after Sjöström's film, and with several participants from this production. Paul Bern had written the script and Charles van Enger was engaged as cameraman. (As mentioned, van Enger afterwards continued to work with Lubitsch on another four films, whereas Paul Bern returned to Goldwyn.) Creighton Hale also played a minor part both in Name the Man and The Marriage Circle. Thomas Schatz has shown that Warner Bros., by engaging Lubitsch, wanted to intensify its production after having mostly concentrated on distribution for several years.[26] It is revealing that the company, wanting to start anew, turned to one of its rivals in order to "borrow" a production concept, which had several times been proved successful. The comparisons clearly show that the overall production machinery, in spite of the exception clauses in the contracts, barely seems to have been affected by the individual preferences of the directors, and that their eventual influence has to be sought elsewhere.

Fig. 2: From a trade paper: A God's eye view on Name the Man*: "See it – that's all!"*

The reception of the film was varying. The audience present at the release in Stockholm sent a telegram to the director, certifying that if Sjöström would continue in the same way, he could be assured of its gratitude: "Continue the way you have begun, faithful to your own specificity and your traditions, and you may always be assured of the gratefulness of your native country regarding your artistry, your enthusiasm, and above all, the depth and authenticity of your feelings that bring fame to Sweden over there."[27] At least one Swedish critic, however, found "the mixture between Swedish and American" confusing, a confusion that had to do with Sjöström's ambition of creating a human drama based on character development and not only a narrative where certain events unfolded.[28] (FIG. 2)

In an interview on the shooting of Name the Man, Conrad Nagel, who played the male lead, suggests a difference between production modes revealed in the European way of working within the studio, which also testifies to gener-

al difficulties for European directors and actors to acclimatize to the new production context:

> He had a very difficult time at first – as we all had. We didn't understand each other! We had acquired the habit of working playfully, joking and chatting! But I have to admit that you Europeans have introduced another spirit in the studios. There came Pola, Lubitsch and Seastrom. All were alike and took work most seriously, which nobody had done before out there. And this has contaminated the whole of Hollywood![29]

Nagel thus pointed out what he considered to be a European influence on the studio system, if not in the manner of organizing the work, at least in the spirit. The Europeans are framed as "different", as "other", but according to Nagel, the "otherness" also succeeded in contaminating the Hollywood norms. Only fragmentary comments that might be of help in measuring such a "contamination" have survived.[30] British critic Frank A. Tilley offers a good example of the same viewpoint as a comment from 1923 demonstrates:

> Seastrom had some little difficulty in acclimatising himself to America. There the methods are almost exactly opposite from those in Sweden, where perfection of theme and convincing sincerity of story, direction and acting are the first considerations. He found the atmosphere of the American studio entirely different. There the first consideration is putting the "movie stuff" into the picture which inevitably means casting the story in a stereotype mould.[31]

In addition to the already mentioned different production practices, to the recycling of plots or the acclimatization of directors, this question of stereotypes about both European and US cinema plays an important role within the transitional process described between film cultures which is here taking place. Sjöström's own comments concerning audience expectations also testify to a similar genre of dichotomies between European seriousness and American superficiality or playfulness: "The old world has an older cultural heritage. And Americans are a happy race. They don't care about feeling pain in their free time. They don't care very much about truth. Mostly, they care for entertainment."[32] Both these stereotypical comments share one implicit assumption that seems to have become conceptualized towards the mid-1920s, not least by Europeans: the idea of two entirely different production cultures. The first one is represented by the giant in the west, and the other one by several comparatively small national cinema industries in Europe, which are often compared to each other or even considered interchangeable.

Stylistic Variations

In this study I privilege analyzing the style of extant films in order to come to achieve a concrete comparison between the two film cultures. This allows me, for example, to explore the extent to which the possibilities of Sjöström's contract were exploited. A first case study will be offered by NAME THE MAN, where the close reading of certain sequences of the remaining parts of the film may provide both a general sense of Sjöström's way of dealing with the new system and as well as a more detailed perspective on his ability to determine how he carried out his work, such as his use of certain characteristic stylistic devices.

Even at first glance, it becomes clear that NAME THE MAN is largely based on thematic contrast. The New World is contrasted to the Old World, urban life to rural, sophistication and wealth to primitive life and poverty, a certain depravity to strict moral standards. But the juxtaposition of these two thematic strands wouldn't be apparent had it not been for the thorough work on the level of style. As Graham Petrie observed: "Contrasts between town and country, rich and poor, privileged and deprived, are made through extensive crosscutting, some of it quite effective."[33] The contrasting of ideas is conveyed by concrete, almost emblematic images representing different values, like the prison van crosscut with the fancy car, with both the visual contrast between them and with all the respective connotations they carry. What is particularly obvious in this as well as many other sequences, however, is the consequent use of crosscutting, which must be seen as a result of Sjöström's introduction within the classical Hollywood paradigm. But there is more to the picture.

In a letter to his wife, actress Edith Erastoff, Victor Sjöström comments on the task, unusual to him, of shooting a film – NAME THE MAN – on the basis of someone else's script, in this case Paul Bern. "I have quite a few details that he hasn't got, and details usually make all the difference."[34] When comparing the script to the film, it becomes clear that these details consist of stylistic devices, which Sjöström in Sweden had been used to including at the script stage, but which are now added afterwards. Thus, NAME THE MAN contains a dissolve combined with a cut across the line, which shows exactly the same space from the reverse angle.

While the dissolve remains quite conventional in its function, bridging a spatial transition, its combination with the violation of the 180-degree rule creates an interesting effect. In fact, this cut is one of the few examples that may be found in Sjöström's Hollywood films of one of his most consistent stylistic patterns from the earlier Swedish period. In NAME THE MAN, where the perspective is reversed twice, as well as in the numerous Swedish examples, the cut

across the line occurs at a turning point in the narrative, where the perspective on the diegetic level in one way or the other seems to be reversed as well. In this case, Victor is named a judge.

The Phantom Carriage, which contains no less than eighteen cuts across the line, may help to illustrate the point. Here, Georges, the future driver of the phantom carriage, is just about to tell its fatal story when there is a cut across the line of him sitting at a table leaning forward, his head in his hands, surrounded by his three listeners. Directly on this cut follows an intertitle:

> 110.
> LONG SHOT OF THEM /from the other side/. The light from the lamp faintly illuminates their faces, where they stand leaning over Georges. He lifts his head, looks up at them in fear and starts to speak again.
> Title: "There is an old, old carriage – ".[35]

This clearly shows that this cut had already been planned at the script stage, and that it is not a mistake in continuity editing, but a conscious narrative device. Another occasion where a cut across the line occurs is the scene where David with an axe cuts his way through the door to access the other side, where his wife and children try to hide, and where the cut unites the two separate rooms to one, single 360-degree cinematic space, which lets the spectator take part in the drama from the point of view of both the main protagonists.[36]

Interestingly, this device was used by other Europeans as well, not least by Sjöström's contemporary in Soviet cinema, Eisenstein. Vladimir Nizhny, his pupil, tells in his book *Lessons with Eisenstein*:

> how the master theorized his doctrines of the "montage unit", which advocates dividing up a given sequence into subsequences defined by successive crossings of the 180° line. These "bad" position/direction matches were, according to Nizhny, of course meant to emphasize privileged moments of tensions in the narrative flow.[37]

As I have suggested elsewhere, the dissolve in Name the Man might serve the particular purpose of softening the spatial reversal.[38] This seems all the more likely as it did not figure in the original script but was precisely one of those details added during shooting and editing, thus appearing only in the cutting continuity script.

The only time that a reverse camera position is inscribed into Bern's script is, quite conventionally, on the occasion of a subjective image which Bern clarifies by adding the phrase: "showing [...] what he sees".[39] Likewise, the dissolve is planned for quite conventional use in the script, first between the credit titles, and then also introducing the only flashback in the film.

In the finished film, however, two more dissolves worthy of attention are added. An exterior medium shot of Bessie in a rainstorm, cuddling a lamb on

her lap, dissolves to an iris on a small dog, which, on its opening to an interior medium shot, is revealed to be on Fenella's lap, who is sitting comfortably at home talking to Victor. An iris down on the dog is followed by a new dissolve and an iris opening, back to a medium shot of Bessie and the lamb. Whereas these dissolves are clearly marked in the cutting continuity script, it is easy to miss them in the existing copy of the film, as Graham Petrie does, who mentions the scene as an example of crosscutting.[40] This was also the original intention. In Paul Bern's script, there is no dog and hence the parallel as such is weaker, and the scene transition is also marked by the words "Cut sharply".[41]

Here again, a comparison to The Phantom Carriage might illustrate the function of the dissolve. The whole narrative development in the film could be said to be condensed within one contrasting dissolve, where a triangle with David's wife, himself and his brother is changed for an almost identical triangle where the wife has been replaced by the drinking companion, Georges, and the picnic by the bottle. This dissolve, which appears as part of the driver Georges' story, is one of the most condensed transitions between two shots in the film: in an ellipsis, it contains the whole transformation of the main character David Holm from happy family man to miserable human wreck. It also has an ironic function: the wife with the food changed to Georges with the bottle, as a metonymy for alcoholism. This transition between shots is also included at the script stage, with the exact parallelism between the two shots marked, which provides the effect of an analogy:

> 201.
> Long shot of them. There is a happy and, at the same time, peaceful atmosphere over the picture. While they serve themselves of the food and start eating, the picture fades away and another appears instead.
> 202.
> On the same spot. David Holm is seated exactly at the same place as before, but is now rather poorly dressed. In Mrs. Holm's place, Georges is sitting, dressed in his long, stained coat and big scarf. David's brother also sits at the same place as in the previous shot – he also looks rather decayed. He sits and plays his mouth-organ and is seemingly rather drunk. Some empty bottles lie between them where the table was laid in the previous shot. Georges sits and sucks the stump of a cigar and beats time with his stick. David Holm mixes beer and aquavit in a bottle and shakes it, the image fades out.[42]

In The Phantom Carriage as in Name the Man, the clear structural parallel between the two images adds a new dimension to the interpretation of the film's meaning.

These examples of style clearly indicate continuity between Sweden and Hollywood, where Sjöström has preserved his characteristic signature in spite of

the shift between two production cultures. This shift, also evoked in the title of the chapter, takes on a double significance, as it of course refers to Sjöström's own shift from one production system to another – but also to a historical shift between two systems, which, however, seems to have taken place gradually and with considerable overlappings.

The differences between the European versus the American system of production may thus be traced in general through the different production practices, as well as through the different perspectives on production revealed among other things by the recycling of plots in Hollywood, but also through the different degrees of acclimatization of European directors, or through the various stereotypes, expressed not least in the press, about European and US cinema.

These conclusions, in turn, point in two directions. From an American perspective, Hollywood – as Kristin Thompson puts it – "could simply imitate this [the Pan-European] style itself and sometimes do a better job of it", in other words: through the directors imported from Europe, Hollywood turned international and sometimes more European than the Europeans themselves.[43] From a European point of view, however, it is also clear that this internationalization to an important extent qualifies the Hollywood monolith.

From Scientist to Clown – He Who Gets Slapped

Sjöström's second film in Hollywood, He Who Gets Slapped, was shot under the aegis of the newly established MGM company, which launched "Seastrom" as one of its first directors. After finishing Name the Man, Sjöström was offered a new script called "A Tree in the Garden", written by Hjalmar Bergman, but to Bergman's great disappointment, he expressed his scepticism towards this scenario, in which he had himself been involved. It should be noted that Sjöström had already made four films based on Bergman's scripts in Sweden, and it was to a large extent through Sjöström's mediation that Bergman had come to Hollywood.

However, "A Tree in the Garden" also had a prehistory. Upon his arrival in Hollywood, Hjalmar Bergman was asked by Goldwyn Pictures to write a script for Sjöström based on another novel by Hall Caine: *The Bondman: A New Saga* (1890). This project, however, was declined due to financial reasons. Bergman then took an initiative of his own: to write a synopsis based on Ibsen's play *Bygmester Solness* (*The Master Builder*) (1892). This project, however, was refused by Abraham Lehr, head of production at Goldwyn, as it was considered as "not commercial". It was only then that he, upon invitation from Goldwyn, undertook the project based on the novel by Edwin C. Booth, *The Tree of Knowledge*, which Bergman turned into the synopsis called "A Tree in the Garden". By that time, the new company MGM had taken over from Goldwyn, which considered this new script to be "not commercial". Upon Sjöström's comment that this script actually was chosen by Goldwyn for commercial purposes, after declining the *Bygmester Solness* script for the same reason, Irving Thalberg sarcastically responded that Goldwyn's pictures had generally suffered from being "not commercial".[1]

Instead, Sjöström now received the suggestion from Irving Thalberg to film Leonid Andreyev's play *He Who Gets Slapped*. This play had been published in English translation in 1922 and had been staged on Broadway in the same year. The Broadway run was a success and, as a result, Thalberg wanted to bring it to the screen. An original outline for a film script had been written by Albert P. Lewis as early as September 1922. Sjöström himself was already familiar with the playwright since one of his most successful interpretations as an actor was the lead role in Andreyev's play *Professor Storitzyn*, which had been staged at Intiman in Stockholm in 1920.

In addition to this, Bengt Forslund also argues that there is a resemblance between He Who Gets Slapped and the heroes that he both directed and acted during his Swedish career in A Man There Was and The Outlaw and His Wife. Both characters are cheated as they try to do what is right, and they have to leave their dear ones behind and fight alone for their human rights.[2] In any case, Sjöström decided to sign a new contract with MGM, and immediately started working on the script himself. He Who Gets Slapped is the only film from the American period for which Sjöström actually wrote the entire script, though he was obviously involved in later revisions of the script concerning other films as well.[3] In the case of He Who Gets Slapped, staff writer Carey Wilson finalized the script and received equal credit for the work with Sjöström, which greatly irritated Sjöström according to Arne Lunde.[4]

In this chapter, I will first outline some examples of media and paratexts surrounding He Who Gets Slapped. From this general cultural-historical perspective, I will move on to a close textual reading, departing from a short discussion of Sjöström as Hollywood scriptwriter and moving on to tracing his presence as narrator in the work, both textually and visually: through intertitles adding to the original text of the play, and through symbolic images of the key figure of the clown. In analyzing the use of one of Sjöström's preferred devices, the dissolve, in this film, the argument of transformation as both a stylistic and a thematic key figure in his work is further developed. But the various possible implications of the circus theme are just as important, from Arne Lunde's reading of the film as a performance of "whiteface" to a more general emphasis on circus films, for which I will argue, and finally looking into the afterlife of the film in a Swedish context. Here, the basic plot with the circus as an arena where questions of life, love and death may be performed stands out as an exemplary case study from Sjöström's Hollywood career, with far-ranging connections.

The story of the film is as follows: Paul Beaumont (Lon Chaney), a scientist working on his dissertation on the origin of mankind, only cares for his work and his wife. His patron Baron Regnard (Marc MacDermott), however, doubly betrays him: as the dissertation is about to be defended, the Baron claims the results as his own and it turns out that he has not only stolen Beaumont's career, but also his wife. The Baron slaps him in the face and his wife calls him "fool" and "clown". This turns out to be decisive for what is to come; he transforms himself into a clown called "He". This "He" – according to Lewis' script outline – "has a brilliant notion he will make the groundlings laugh by being slapped and his name will simply be He-He, Who Gets Slapped".[5] In his new role, in telling obvious truths to the audience and being constantly slapped, "He" enjoys great public success. Five years later, Consuelo (Norma Shearer), the daughter of a ruined Italian count (Tully Marshall), has joined the circus. "He" falls in love with her, but she in turn is in love with Benzano (John Gilbert) at

the circus but her father wants to marry her off to Baron Regnard. As the latter is recognized by "He", it all comes to a dramatic ending. "He" prepares the lion's cage, Consuelo's father stabs him, and in the upcoming chaos, the count and Baron Regnard try to escape, but are caught by the lion. "He" stumbles out into the arena with a bloody piece of cloth, a heart, in his hand, and dies. This is followed by a new bareback act, which is applauded by the audience.

The film was shot during one month, starting 17 June and, according to the production reports, was finished no less than six weeks later.[6] It premiered on 9 November 1924 at the Capitol in New York. According to Sjöström in his "unwritten memoirs" published in the Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, the whole working process was a positive experience:

> as if I had made a film during the good old times. Like at home in Sweden, in other words. I was allowed to make my script without interference, and the shooting was made quickly and without a hitch. In a month, the whole film was finished.[7]

He Who Gets Slapped was hailed by both critics and audience, and new box office takings were recorded at the Capitol, which celebrated its fifth anniversary: it made "a one-day world's record business with $15,000, a one-week's record business with $71,900, and a two-week's record with $121,574. The same success was reported throughout the country."[8] In Sweden, however, an influential critic like the writer Sven Stolpe discovered an American influence in the film, and thus expressed a certain ambivalence:

> *He Who Gets Slapped* is a strong dramatic piece, rich with intensely captivating scenes. Some might be considered as too "American" – in any case, they would have been unthinkable in Sjöström's Swedish films. We think of such a horrible scene as the one where the lion dashes into the small room and before the eyes of the dying clown tears his two enemies to pieces! Still, the boundary between the sensational and the tasteless is never crossed.[9]

Voices in the American press were unanimously positive, the *Photoplay* critic comparing it to Name the Man, which he considered a failure, but stating that "this adaption of Leonid Andreyev's 'He Who Gets Slapped' is a superb thing – and it lifts Seastrom to the very front rank of directors, and Mordaunt Hall in *The New York Times* commenting that "Mr Seastrom has directed this dramatic story with all the genius of a Chaplin or a Lubitsch, and he has accomplished more than they have in their respective works".[10] The comparison with Lubitsch, another European, is particularly interesting as he, like Sjöström, had come from Europe – but was discussed as an American director. The tendency is similar in the treatment of Sjöström's later works in the United States; apparently, the imported directors became naturalized rather quickly. Still, in Seastrom's case, critics seemed to be sensitive about his past with its low-key effects,

as a comment from *Exceptional Photoplays* reveals: "The picture is full of typical Seastrom effects. He is the master of light and shade and knows how to get the most out of his groupings without using huge mobs."[11]

In retrospect, it is striking that both Name the Man and He Who Gets Slapped were featured in *Motion Picture Magazine* in January 1924 and January 1925 respectively (the last issue of the magazine that was devoted to film stories appeared in September 1925).[12] The aim of these film stories issues in the monthly magazine was to further exploit the films produced by retelling their plots in new versions, as short stories, along with publicity photos and 'behind the scenes' profiles of popular movie personalities. As the concept had become quite established, the fact that Sjöström's first two films in Hollywood were actually included also testifies to the importance ascribed to them. The magazine was independent in relation to the production companies, but in reality, it also helped to attract new audiences to the films chosen.

Photoplay editions, which had been used systematically since the 1910s, were another way of recycling film material for commercial purposes. They were cheap reprints of original novels, released to coincide with the premiere of a motion picture, with film stills both on the cover and illustrating the text. One of the largest publishing houses in this context was New York-based Grosset & Dunlap. In the case of He Who Gets Slapped, however, the photoplay edition is particularly interesting. Here, a tie-in was produced; a novelization of Andreyev's play and the Sjöström film, by a totally unknown writer, George A. Carlin, which combined elements from both sources. The fact that Carlin was anonymous as a writer is interesting; usually, the commercial concept of photoplay editions was based on the successful combination of a well-known writer and a newly released picture. Here, however, the editors seem to have relied almost uniquely on the picture, as stated on the front page: "With scenes from the photoplay, A Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Picture". (FIG. 3)

For Sjöström's next Hollywood film, Confessions of a Queen, another publishing house, A. L. Burt Company, took up the competition in publishing Alphonse Daudet's *Kings in Exile*, with an added explanation on the cover: "Screened as Confessions of a Queen". This choice of a non-American literary source was an exception in Sjöström's case.

The two stories by American novelists later brought to the screen by Sjöström during the Hollywood years, The Scarlet Letter and The Wind, were again published by Grosset & Dunlap, a publishing house which seems to have had a flair for success, as they published editions of the three films that have generally been considered the most important during the Hollywood years. The fact that no less than four of his films were released as photoplay editions also testifies to the recognition of Sjöström as a successful American director, an acknowledged part of the Hollywood dream factory.

Fig. 3: A Tie-In: The complete novel based on He Who Gets Slapped *with illustrations from the photoplay.*

Sjöström as Hollywood Scriptwriter

The idea that Sjöström had changed the play radically, which seems to be generally accepted by most scholars, must, however, also be related to the intermediary stage of Lewis' script outline.[13] A suggestive headline following the title of the play in this outline reads: "(Sensational and symbolic melodrama of circus life, with tragic ending)".[14] This short summary seems to have inspired Sjöström in his work on script and film. Also, this script outline, in contrast to Andreyev's play, isn't limited to one single space but, rather, seems to suggest multiple spaces for the plot development, just like in Sjöström's later script. It also suggests a past for "He" as "a man of distinction, fashionably dressed", but also, more specifically, as "a great thinker and a great writer", in Sjöström's script, as we have seen, turned into a scientist.[15] But in Andreyev's play, a past for "He" is suggested: among other things by a line put in the mouth of one of his former acquaintances, here called The Gentleman:

> I really don't know... Everything here strikes me so... These posters, horses, animals, which I passed when I was looking for you... And finally, *you*, a clown in a circus! [...] Could I expect it? It is true, when everybody there decided you were dead, I was the only man who did not agree with them. I felt that you were still alive. But to find you among such surroundings – I can't understand it.[16]

Forslund also states that Sjöström's revision of the original play was, above all, related to the end – as Consuelo and "He" both die in the play, as a result of him poisoning her.[17] But a change that, in retrospect, turns out to be just as important is the fact that two characters in the play – the so-called Gentleman who had stolen his work and his wife, and Baron Regnard who is intending to marry Consuelo – are changed into one and the same in the film version. This testifies not so much to a simplification of the story as to a more complex character portrayal, and could thus rather be seen as a development of the kind of complex split personalities that Sjöström introduced in 1916 in The Kiss of Death.

However, another interpretation might be made from the revision of the end. In Lagerlöf's novel, *The Phantom Carriage*, the mutual love between Sister Edith and David Holm is the main reason for him wanting to make up for his evil deeds, and her support from the other side, together with his hopes for their future reunion beyond death, is the driving force that leads to his final conversion. Sjöström, however, downplays this sublime aspect. In contrast to Lagerlöf, he insists on the reunion of the husband and wife. The unearthly love has to give away to the earthly, and the lyrically sublime is replaced by lyrical intimacy.

"He" poisons Consuelo in the play because he wants to rescue her from the evil Baron and he believes that only her death will achieve that goal. He hopes that they will be reunited after death and describes to her future scenes of happiness. To her question: "Is that the ring?", "He" answers: "No, it is the sea and the sun... what a sun! Don't you feel that you are the foam, white sea-foam, and you are flying to the sun? You feel light, you have no body, you are flying higher, my love!"[18] And, as the Baron shoots himself, "He" is disappointed: "You loved her so much, Baron? So Much? My Consuelo? And you want to be ahead of me even *there*? No! I am coming. We shall prove then whose she is to be forever."[19] However, just as in The Phantom Carriage, Sjöström, both in his script and in the final film, gives priority to the earthly love between Consuelo and Benzano over the unearthly love between "He" and Consuelo described in the play, and therefore changes the ending.

Traces of the Narrator

If Sjöström's role as a scriptwriter has generally been emphasized, little has been said about the actual results of his work, apart from more general comparisons of the plot in the play and the film respectively. A closer look at the cutting continuity script – that is, also, in the finished film – would thus be well motivated. How, if at all, could the voice of the implicit narrator be traced in the script? In which ways has Sjöström as screenwriter left his actual imprint in the script, and thus in the finished film? The question is all the more interesting as he generally follows his scripts very closely as a director. This would, then, be a unique opportunity to discern a possible authorial presence at several stages of the work, operating also within the more limited system of production in Hollywood.

A first addition to the play is made by the introductory intertitle in the film, which, by its proverbial reference, strikes a note for what is to follow:

> In the grim comedy
> of life, it has been
> wisely said that the last
> laugh is the best –

Moreover, on the subject of laughter, another intertitle in the beginning, as Beaumont is slapped by the Baron and ridiculed by the whole academy of scientists, reads:

> Laughter – the bitterest and most subtle death to hope –

Likewise, later in the film (in the third reel), two more intertitles appear which both share a similar function as general, philosophical statements. The first occurs as Consuelo and Benzano talk, as "He" is looking at them, in turn falling in love with Consuelo, at the same time as their mutual love is revealed both to the spectator and to him:

> A strange thing, the heart
> of man – that loves, suffers,
> and despairs – yet has courage
> to hope, believe – and love – again.

The second is formulated as a rhetorical question, and appears as the Baron has been shown looking into the programme to discover that "He" is the next to appear on the arena. The intertitle is immediately followed by "He" making his entrance, getting up on stilts.

> What is it in human nature that
> makes people quick to laugh
> when someone else gets slapped
> – whether the slap be spiritual,
> mental – or physical – ?

Finally, towards the end of the film (in the seventh reel), three more rhetorical questions are posed, which Graham Petrie has mistakenly interpreted as the dying man's last attempts to express his thoughts. However, as the intertitle appears, "He" is already dead; "He" has been shown falling to the ground, having a final talk with Consuelo, but then "He" "stops smiling, falls away from her and out of scene".[20] The shot immediately preceding the intertitle shows his hand in close-up, holding the bloody heart of cloth, followed by a final fade-out, which definitely marks his death. This title, just like those previously cited, should thus rather be interpreted as voiced by an implicit narrator.[21]

> What is Death – ?
> What is Life – ?
> What is Love – ?

As this intertitle fades out, it is followed by a fade-in on the circus ring, where a horse enters at a gallop – as Forslund writes, "the show must go on, Consuela [sic] and Benzano are allowed to ride out... and people applaud...".[22] In this case, however, the rhetorical questions posed also seem to be inspired by Andreyev's play, where Consuelo on three occasions questions "He" on matters of life and death: "What does 'love' mean?"; "And what is – death?"; "What is sickness?"[23] In spite of the fact that "the show must go on", this intertitle functions as an ending point to the film, to which the following, final images only seem to respond.

The fact that only one of these reflective intertitles has any background at all in the play clearly underlines their importance as a vehicle for the narrator. They communicate to the spectator a dimension that he obviously wanted to add to the original story. Also, these intertitles must be seen in their historical context, against the backdrop of general practices in Hollywood in the mid-1920s. As Kristin Thompson has pointed out, expository titles were severely limited, and replaced – to the extent that it was possible – by dialogue:

> Dialogue titles also insured that most of the spectator's understanding of the narrative came directly from the characters themselves – from their words and gestures – rather than from an intervening narration's presentation.[24]

The function of these intertitles in Sjöström's film is nothing else than a breaking of this rule – a narration that intervenes – though they rather represent an at-

tempt to include a dimension which would not be possible by any other means of expression; a philosophical dimension, commenting on abstract issues which would not easily lend themselves to being expressed in the dialogue.[25] However, the film in general – with only these noteworthy exceptions – seems to conform to the norms of the time; to a large extent, it is also carried by dialogue titles, and the visual aspects of the narrative, including an equally symbolic dimension, is just as important as the words.

The Symbolic Clown

It is not only through his intertitles, adding a new dimension to Andreyev's play, that Sjöström as a narrator could be discerned in the script. Another important aspect, added by Sjöström, is the image of the clown with his ball. In the cutting continuity script, this scene is described as follows:

> 21 FADE IN
> M.S. Symbolic clown with whirling globe looks away, laughs, looks back at globe, strikes globe to make it turn. – Clown Fades out. Globe fades to geographer's globe Scientist fades in, strikes globe to make it whirl.[26]

This "Symbolic clown" reoccurs throughout the film, which will also be discussed in further detail later in relation to transitions between shots. However, the general function of this image in the narration has hitherto been overlooked. The first time, it appears directly after the first intertitle, as a visual effect doubling the function of striking a note for the narrative. The second time, it concludes the whole introductory sequence. From a medium shot of the symbolic clown laughing, the globe fades in, and the clown turns his head to one side and laughs. A close-up of the symbolic clown laughing, looking to his left, is followed by a close-up of a spinning ball, which in turn is dissolved to the globe of the world spinning. There is a cut back to a close-up on the clown laughing, followed by another cut back to the globe spinning, where clowns now appear from above "and sit down on meridian round globe". A cut back to the clown laughing in close-up is followed by a final cut back to a close-up of "globe clowns seated about it. Globe dissolves to Circus Ring. Clowns seated around ring, small boy turning somersaults in ring."[27] (FIG. 4)

When the Symbolic clown appears for the third and fourth time, these two shots serve as a frame for the love story between the wife and the Baron. The fifth and sixth time, they serve equally as a frame, but now for the counterpart of the same story: that of the Baron leaving the wife. Towards the end of the film, upon the death of the clown, the visual theme of the revolving globe with

the clowns standing on the meridian is once again taken up, as the clowns pick up the body of "He", throwing it out of the ring, which is followed by the final fade-out of the film. Thus, the Symbolic clown offers a number of different framings: first that of the introductory sequence, leading to Beaumont becoming "He", and secondly and thirdly also the two stories of the wife and the Baron. However, the image of the spinning globe, then surrounded by the meridian, and the clowns entering the ring – that is, the arena – also serves as an overlapping framework, containing the whole circus story.

*Fig. 4: The symbolic clown: conditions of life on the globe (*He Who Gets Slapped*).*

This image is also interesting in relation to Hollywood conventions of the time. The Symbolic clown, in white, is turned halfway towards the spectator – and thus towards the camera – as he first rotates the ball on the palm of his left hand. He then glances furtively and mockingly towards the audience, as if he wanted to suggest a secret understanding, as he keeps the ball spinning with his right index finger. The direct address to the audience, which seems to be the main function of these images of the Symbolic clown, is quite unique in Hollywood cinema of the mid 1920s. In his definition of the cinema of attraction, Tom Gunning starts by pointing to "this different relationship the cinema of attrac-

tions constructs with its spectator: the recurring look at the camera by actors. This action, which is later perceived as spoiling the realistic illusion of the cinema, is here undertaken with brio, establishing contact with the audience."[28] In a decade obsessed with "natural effect", where overt narration, in general, had become reserved for certain codified moments, such as in the beginning and ending of the film, looking into the camera was banished.[29] Just like the intertitles mentioned above, this clear break with the norms in the dominant system of production calls for interpretation. They make He Who Gets Slapped into another kind of film than most of its contemporaries. It is not a continuous fictional story, made in the invisible style that had by this time been established as Hollywood's landmark.[30] Rather, the film seems to aim at delivering a general, philosophical statement on the conditions of life on the globe, using the clown as metaphor; it is construed as a film essay in a style that would reappear much later in film history.

Transformed Identities

This construction of the film as an essay is, as has already been discussed, to a large extent based on the consequent use of certain devices which privilege the intersection between style and thematics, between cinematic form and general, philosophical content. In a ground-breaking analysis from 1985, Swedish film historian Örjan Roth-Lindberg discusses Sjöström's visual fantasy in He Who Gets Slapped, concentrating, in particular, on his aesthetics through some carefully analyzed examples of dissolves which, as it turns out, also contribute to a complex play with identities and transformations.[31] In He Who Gets Slapped, the dissolves occur on five occasions. The first and the second dissolves have already been discussed above – the image of the symbolic clown with his large ball dissolved into a man who turns out to be the film's main character, the scientist Beaumont, spinning a globe, as well as the clown with his ball being dissolved into a globe which, in turn, is dissolved into a circus ring. The third instance is made up of a series of several transformations, some of which take place through dissolves. The scientist, who has now become the clown "He", is in the ring in front of a group of other clowns. The image dissolves, and instead of the clowns the spectator now sees an academy of scientists with stiff appearances, a visual memory of an earlier humiliating situation that "He" found himself in. After a cut back to "He", there is a new cut to the men, who are now wearing clown hats and laughing. After yet another cut to "He", the same scientists in clown hats re-emerge. This image is finally dissolved into the original group of clowns. On the fourth occasion, we see the film's villain, the Baron

(who is the reason for "He" having had to become a clown) in the company of the greedy Mancini, who is about to give his daughter away in marriage to the wealthy Baron. He is absent-mindedly fingering a necklace, which is focused upon through an iris closing. However, this closing is not completed; instead, the image is dissolved to another pair of hands fiddling about with a garland of flowers, followed by an iris opening to reveal the girl's beloved who is holding the garland. Last, "He" is shown in clown make-up again, with a dissolve reverting to his actual self – the scientist Beaumont – and, thereafter, back again to the clown. This final dissolve marks the Baron's discovery of the clown's true identity. (FIG. 5, 6 and 7)

*Fig. 5-7: A series of dissolves: The Baron's discovery of the clown's true identity (*He Who Gets Slapped*).*

With the exception of the dissolve from ball turning into globe and then into circus arena, or from necklace to garland, these dissolves function in the same way, to establish a parallel between two different images of one or several persons, where the change of costume also seems to imply the dissolving of the previously established identity.

As for the other dissolves in the film, these also establish an analogy between two shots, but here, the analogy is based on the visual contrast between two different objects. In the case of the ball and the globe, this may seem as the simplest kind of dissolve, as it merely evokes a resemblance in form. Arne Lunde, who in his book *Nordic Exposures* has devoted a chapter to He Who Gets Slapped, has suggested an allegorical interpretation of the globe:

> In its opening moments the film thus introduces globes and "globalization" as a semi-veiled thematic. Back at the Baron's study [...] the doubly betrayed Beaumont hurls his scientific manuscript at the desk globe and sends the orb spiralling onto the floor. When it finally stops rolling, the North America continent is laying face-up toward the camera. This scene occurs just before Beaumont vanishes to reemerge as the circus star "He". Narratively, the circus exists on the outskirts of Paris, but, on the level of allegory, the insistent close-up shot of a spinning world map finally reaching stasis points toward a different geographical destination – America and Hollywood.[32]

This could indeed be interpreted in relation to Sjöström's change of production culture, from Europe to Hollywood – a remark that is most relevant also in the context of this study. The clown, indeed, might be interpreted as a tragic hero in a changing culture of images, struggling in vain to find his new identity in a new, globalized production context. However, in the even wider perspective of a film essay on the conditions of life on the globe that has been outlined here, the dissolve also opens for yet another interpretation. When the globe is dissolved into the circus ring, this, on another level, also seems to imply the more general analogy of a global circus; the circus: as metaphor for life itself. The necklace and the garland of flowers, on the other hand, appear as opposites, but also as metonymies for the people handling them; on one hand, the greedy Baron and, on the other, the unselfish lover. It is left to the viewer to draw the conclusion that the value of the garland is higher than that of the pearl necklace, that true love is more valuable than wealth without love.

The Question of Whitefacing

If the metaphor of the globe might thus be read in different perspectives, it might nevertheless be worth to follow up more consequently the more specific discussion on Arne Lunde's reading of the film, as he situates his analysis precisely in the intersection between the two production systems, Sweden and Hollywood. Lunde interprets the film by discussing, as the subtitle to his essay reads, "Ethnic Whiteness and Assimilation in Victor Sjöström's *He Who Gets Slapped*."[33] That is, as it turns out, "by examining the film's underlying thematics of transnational hybridity and the performance of whiteness", as "an allegorical exploration of the terrain between 'Sjöström' and 'Seastrom'", a self-reflexive assessment of "the director's own (re)assimilation into American identity in the 1920s" through Beaumont's "self-reinvention through the performance of 'whiteface'".[34] According to Lunde, "Seastrom's thematic manipulations of clown whiteface point to a more complex social dynamic – 'whiteface' as a self-conscious practice of racial masquerade, passing, and assimilation", just as Jewish or Irish immigrants used to "black up" themselves "in order to paradoxically 'become more white' in Anglo-Protestant America".[35]

By citing a number of historical sources, Lunde first quite convincingly argues that Scandinavian ethnicity had to "become" white, or to claim whiteness, in America. Lunde's examples, however, are all quite general and concern American society as a whole rather than in a more specific context. Thus, the question is whether this may be generalized to the extent that it automatically includes He Who Gets Slapped, insofar as this film uses – as stated in a pre-

sentation from the New York Film Festival in 1969 – "a dazzling white-on-white technique".[36] Lunde also argues that no thorough analysis has previously been devoted to this film, although he actually quotes Roth-Lindberg's in-depth analysis.

Another problem with Lunde's analysis in this connection is that he seems not only to want to reread He Who Gets Slapped from the perspective of critical whiteness studies, developed in a later scholarly context, which in itself may be a both interesting and valid approach to the film, but also to prove that Sjöström himself conceived his film in this perspective of whiteness, as a kind of cinematic critical whiteness study *avant la lettre*. He bases his convictions on Sjöström's transnational identity; his growing up in the United States and thus in a certain sense being a re-émigré, returning to the country of his childhood when going to Hollywood.

Apart from this general observation, however, the only contemporary source to prove his engagement with questions of ethnicity is a rather meagre one: the comment cited by Lunde from Märta Lindqvist's interview with Sjöström, where he talks about his wife, Edith, taking English lessons "in an evening school together with Negroes, mulattos, Chinese, and other colored individuals".[37] Lunde's translation "colored", however, does not render the slightly ironic touch of the original expression "kulörta individer", a Swedish term used mainly in connection with coloured lanterns. The quotation in Swedish would rather suggest a "motley collection" of different individuals. As proof of Sjöström's engagement with – or even the degree of his awareness of – questions of hybridity, transnationality and whiteness, which Lunde seems to imply, could barely be considered as convincing.

Another problem occurs when trying to review the full consequences of Lunde's analysis. If he is right, and Sjöström in He Who Gets Slapped is consciously developing a cinematic discourse on whiteness, then this discourse seems an extremely pessimistic one. If He appears as Sjöström's own point of identification in the film (as Lunde seems to suggest), what happens to this whiteness – and indeed to the possibility of integrating Swedishness in an American context at all – since He dies at the end of the film? From what followed during the next six years in Hollywood, little seems to confirm this pessimistic view of Sjöström's position in the new cultural context.

But even if whiteness could be a possible historical context in which to interpret the film – which after all might be plausible – how about considering its being part of another historical tradition: that of circus films, a context that seems just as relevant? This tradition contains several early films from the silent era, but a number of later examples followed He Who Gets Slapped, which have been pioneering, not only in developing the clown character, but also the circus theme. Among the early films, some are Scandinavian, such as the Danish

Dødsspring til Hest fra Cirkus-Kuplen, directed by Eduard Schnedler–Sørensen for Nordisk Films 1912, and the Swedish Dödsritten under cirkuskupolen, directed by Georg af Klercker for Svenska Bio the same year, both based on the same historical event. Other Danish examples include Den flyvende cirkus and Bjørnetæmmeren, both from 1912 and directed by Alfred Lind. Among other examples of circus films from the period, a Russian film version of He Who Gets Slapped (Tot, kto poluchaet poshchechiny) from 1916 should be mentioned, directed by Aleksandr Ivanov-Gai and I. Schmitt. In 1917, A. W. Sandberg directed the Danish Klovnen (The Clown), which also involves a man whose wife leaves him for a nobleman. The film was remade in Denmark in 1926 by the same director, immediately following the release of He Who Gets Slapped. In 1923, Dimitri Buchowetski also directed a film for Svensk Filmindustri, Karusellen, where both the triangle drama of adultery and the circus theme intersect. Interestingly enough, Sjöström's film was also followed by a number of other circus films from émigré directors: Danish director Benjamin Christensen's The Devil's Circus (1926, his first Hollywood film), Hungarian director Michael Curtis' The Third Degree (1926, also his first Hollywood film), Irish director Herbert Brenon's Laugh, Clown, Laugh (1928, Brenon was an experienced Hollywood director), F. W. Murnau's 4 Devils (1928, the director's second Hollywood film) – or, for that matter, Chaplin's Circus (1928).[38] What, then, happens to the critical whiteness perspective proposed by Lunde in relation to these circus films? Should this perspective be reserved for Sjöström only, as Lunde seems to suggest, by using arguments anchored in his biography in relation to his own transnationalism as an individual, or because of his particular stylistic choices, his already-mentioned "dazzling white-on-white technique"? However, as white-facing may also be considered an important element in a film like Laugh, Clown, Laugh, the interesting question remains whether this reading could also be extended to other circus films. This, however, is another story.

A more general perspective on the circus theme is offered by Helen Stoddart, in her cultural history of clowning and the circus, *Rings of Desire*.[39] She notes that the circus is "at once one of the most entertaining and the most frustrating of arts upon which to attempt research", as history and mythology are here entwined to such a large extent.[40] She argues that the "features of the circus which make it so characteristically modern are also those which suggest its fascinating challenge to representation", namely the fact that it provides an immediate, physical sensation – which of course, one might add, also links the circus theme in a particular way to the early cinema of attractions.[41] Whereas Stoddart, who does include cinema in her study, mainly focuses on later film examples (such as Fellini or Wenders), it is tempting to draw out the full consequences of her introductory remarks, arguing that the circus indeed might function as a central

metaphor for early sensational cinema. In his groundbreaking study on the circus film, Matthias Christen discusses at length the media historical locus of early circus films, particularly emphasizing the "circus-cinematographs" from the first decades of the twentieth century. With their close association between the circus and cinema, they indeed seem to suggest an intersection or even integration between the two.[42]

This early sensational cinema is also modern not only in the sense that it provides a particular form of performative energy, but because these early circus performances on screen have indeed provided the main aspect, according to Stoddart, of the modernity of the circus itself: "figures which draw attention to the limitations of the very forms of inscription and narration through which we continually attempt to describe ourselves as such".[43] Also, and more importantly in this context, He Who Gets Slapped, not least through its numerous followers, may serve as bridge for this vital metaphor, paving the way into classical and post-classical cinema.

It has already been suggested, in connection with the circus films of this period, that the circus theme – in addition to its attractional or sensational character, which seemed to be the main motivation for the films from the 1910s in the genre – has dramatic potential as a powerful metaphor for life itself. Matthias Christen opens his introduction with a quote from Paul Bouissac: "It [the circus] is a kind of mirror in which culture is reflected, condensed and at the same time transcended; perhaps the circus seems to stand outside the culture only because it is at its very center".[44] Christen here offers a thorough study of the circus genre in cinema as such, particularly focusing on the themes of exotism, conformism and transgression, where he also deals explicitly with He Who Gets Slapped.[45] This analysis takes into account the double identity of "He", and thus also the transgressive character of the clown, which interestingly varies the melodramatic theme of doubling. The comic part of clownery is here doubled by the empathy for his main, "true" character, which also demonstrates to what extent the stereotype is actually widened in this film by the extension of the original psychodrama into a more universal metaphor, as *theatrum mundi*.

This double role of the clown in He Who Gets Slapped, both in the traditional function as unfortunate lover and as model figure for a more general outsidership in history and society, has its forerunners in nineteenth-century literature by the romantics, as both Jean Starobinski and Louisa E. Jones have aptly demonstrated; if, according to Jones, "neither pierrots nor clowns were sad" in the 1820s, the clown as the alter ego of the artist in the screen versions some hundred years later nevertheless remains a tragic figure.[46] The theme of cruelty in the circus has also been a theme in art; in an article that Sjöström wrote about his Hollywood years, he explicitly mentions an 1878 Nils Forsberg painting entitled *Akrobatfamilj inför cirkusdirektören* (*Acrobat Family before the Circus Director*)

that came to mind when picking an actor to play a child in one of his films.[47] (FIG. 8) He Who Gets Slapped also features a picture composition in which the Forsberg influence clearly shines through. Thus, both literary and pictorial frameworks may serve as historical and intertextual references to Sjöström's work.

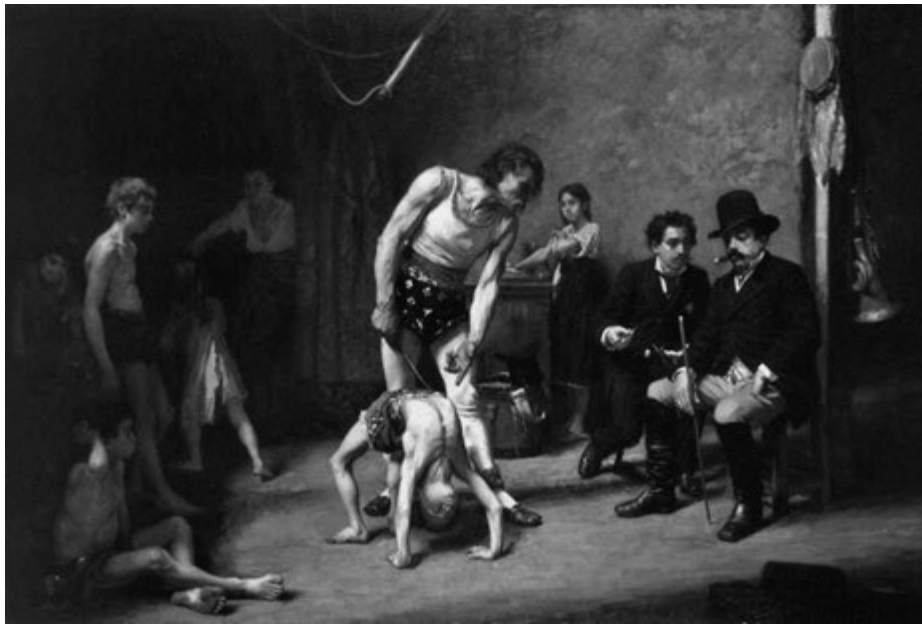

Fig. 8: Nils Forsberg: Acrobat Family before the Circus Director – *a source of pictorial inspiration.*

As already discussed, the general metaphor of the circus as a privileged arena for life itself as well as for outsidership in society is suggested in He Who Gets Slapped by Sjöström's additional intertitles as well as by the presence of the symbolic clown and the dissolves from globe to circus ring. But it also becomes obvious, not least in comparison to The Devil's Circus, where an actual circus is represented, but the title must be read as symbolic, as an image of earth itself, with its inhabitants performing strange acts in what may appear as precisely a devil's circus.[48] Thus, it would seem just as relevant to interpret He Who Gets Slapped in relation to these more fundamental questions – questions of love, of how to lead one's life – though probably at the same time not unrelated to the director's own life and his change from Sjöström to Seastrom.

It is also quite obvious that these films, just as I have shown to be the case in connection with Name the Man, were attempts to recreate a number of other films within a framework that had already proven to generate both commercial and critical success, as seen in Christensen's The Devil's Circus, where Norma

Shearer (from He Who Gets Slapped) also starred, though most obviously so with Brenon's Laugh, Clown, Laugh, where Lon Chaney starred, which further develops the clown theme from He Who Gets Slapped.

He, the Clown

When discussing the ways in which He Who Gets Slapped has had an afterlife, being used as source of inspiration or point of departure for other works, it is impossible not to mention Hjalmar Bergman's novel *Jac the Clown*. The novel was written in 1929 and is generally interpreted as Bergman's reckoning of his experiences as a screenwriter in Hollywood, which for him, was a massive failure, not least because his old friend Sjöström refused to shoot the script Bergman wrote and decided instead to write a script of his own. Arne Lunde comments in a footnote that:

> this bizarre, modernist novel reads as an anti-Hollywood allegory about a successful American émigré clown in America who has sold out as an artist and lives in a huge Southern California mansion, despising himself and his new mass public – a narrative with suggestive thematic parallels to He Who Gets Slapped.[49]

To mention a few of these parallels: In Sjöström's film, the scientists are turned into clowns as "He" remembers the original scene of his humiliation. In Bergman's novel, *Jac the Clown* makes a grand performance on the verge of collapse, and addresses his audience as fellow clowns. Likewise, his repeated formula, "Rattle, clown, rattle. Tremble, heart, tremble", recalls the heart that He carries in the film.[50] And just like "He", Jac transgresses the basic assumption that a clown should never engage with feelings: "I? Talking about love? A clown discussing love? Damn it, how disgusting – ."[51] Jac also states, as part of his long "clown catechism", that:

> The clown's love life is like everything else about him – it's methodical, calculating – mental gymnastics. His heart must stay in shape. Precision is essential. Like shooting practice – it must respond within a tenth of a second to the instructor's sharp, hasty commands: 'Love! Hate! Have fun! Suffer!'[52]

"He" in the film and Jac in the novel share one basic condition: they are both tragic heroes who in different ways use the circus arena to perform the grand questions of life, love and death. Jac, however, seems to suffer just as much from the commands of the system of production, which can be compared to a factory assembly line. Thus, it seems obvious that Sjöström's film about the tragic

clown's destiny actually did inspire his old friend and colleague in Hollywood, Hjalmar Bergman, though not without an undertone of bitterness and irony.

In his book on images of Sweden in the United States, Jeff Werner discusses the fact that the film seems to have been interpreted by some critics as a hidden self-portrait, where the clown in the film is a portrait of Sjöström, the director, himself, and the slaps represented the injustices that he had endured in Hollywood. Such an interpretation, however, seems to transfer misunderstandings, failures and disagreements alike to a purely personal level.[53] But, as Werner also writes, "both Sjöström himself and his critics more often saw the problems as an expression of cultural differences".[54]

An important aspect of its Swedish afterlife is of course the fact that Ingmar Bergman drew considerable inspiration from this Sjöström film; firstly, as the programme directors for New York Film Festival in 1969 stated, that: "this tale of humiliation in a circus reminds one curiously of Bergman's *The Naked Night*. Not so curiously, actually, considering the close relationship between Bergman and Seastrom. But the phantasmagorical circus scenes which are the exciting heart of the film are unique in film history."[55] Matthias Christen also links He Who Gets Slapped to Bergman's Gycklarnas afton [The Naked Night, aka Stardust and Tinsel], as this film has clearly drawn its inspiration from plot structures deriving from He Who Gets Slapped and its predecessors.[56] Secondly, in Wild Strawberries, the last role created as actor by Victor Sjöström, it is clear that Bergman in his script for Sjöström obviously also draws the parallel to Sjöström's own script, as he includes Isak Borg's nightmare of his humiliation during an academic public defence; here, however, it is not the scientists but the woman supposed to be dead who laughs at him.

In retrospect, it is clear that He Who Gets Slapped was Sjöström's greatest success during his career in Hollywood, and it was only his second film in the new system.[57] When Sjöström talks about his work on the film as a positive experience, as quoted above, he seems to offer little support for such an interpretation at this stage of his career. Still, there is evidence to interpret the film, at least partly, as a comment on the Hollywood system. However, it seems more apt to interpret the symbolic clown, the visual narrator, as Sjöström's alter ego in the narration, and perhaps also to see "He" as a personification of Hjalmar Bergman, an anticipation of *Jac the Clown*, both figuring and mirroring the ironical twist that Hjalmar Bergman would provide to the clown story.

This tale of life narrated through the circus metaphor is at the same time the most elaborated narration, both stylistically and thematically, that Sjöström actually accomplished throughout his whole Hollywood career. He has provided a highly original account not only of the clown theme, but also of the question of cinematic globalization, one that is relevant to the question of production

cultures, as well as of the stylistic mode which remains one of his particular characteristics: a truly transformational mode.

But even though Sjöström, as I hope to have shown, remained free within the American mode of production to make the kind of film that he might have wanted to, and actually did make several important changes in relation to the original play, he still remained faithful in spirit to Leonid Andreyev, the Symbolist poet, and seems to have tried to include his symbolism in the film, be it in a way adapted to the cinematographic style. In spite of the fact that Sjöström's inserted philosophical intertitles were mostly additions to Andreyev, framing his own cinematographic reinterpretation of the play, they still remain faithful to the spirit of the play, "a symbolist exploration of the dispossession of the righteous in a world of false values".[58] Sjöström as a film director, however, would be better equipped to express this than Andreyev, as he stated in an interview in 1924: "Many of the things we know are learned through imagery and symbolism. The screen is the best medium to get these things to the audiences of the world."[59] In spite of these convictions on the superiority of the screen, however, Sjöström mostly chose to remain true to his original sources. In his next film, Confessions of a Queen, based on Alphonse Daudet's realist novel, the differences in approach would become all the more apparent.

A for Adultery – The Scarlet Letter

If He Who Gets Slapped represents to some extent an exception in Sjöström's American career (during which he was able to develop his auteur qualities in a unique way), The Scarlet Letter (1926) also brought forward certain specific aspects of his auteurism, perhaps most notably his "Swedish" quality as director. This fifth film in his career as a Hollywood director was based on the classic mid-nineteenth-century novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne and was scripted by Frances Marion. The year before Lillian Gish had been offered a contract by MGM that gave her the right to choose her own scripts as well as her director and paid her $800,000 for a maximum of six roles over two years. Gish had wanted to make The Scarlet Letter for some time. This had, however, not been possible as the Hays Office had put the film on an unofficial blacklist, in spite of the novel's status as a literary classic. But now MGM producer Irving Thalberg agreed to pursue Gish's choice for her next film, but only on condition that she promise to deal with the story properly. Her personal guarantee immediately led to the lifting of the ban by both women's committees and church groups, which had hitherto been strongly opposed to the making of the film.

In her dissertation *Feeling Through the Eyes*, a study of the films of Mary Pickford and Frances Marion, Anke Brouwers deals at length with The Scarlet Letter. She notes that this lift of the ban confirms Gish's symbolical status as "a moral woman of impeccable reputation".[1] Gish had already found the ideal Dimmesdale in Lars Hanson, whom she had seen and appreciated in his role in Gösta Berling's saga (The Story of Gösta Berling, Mauritz Stiller, 1924). Her choice of Sjöström as director, according to general film history, "seemed perfectly suited to Nathaniel Hawthorne's story of love and retribution. His sense of landscape emerged even more strongly here."[2] In Lillian Gish's own words, however, the explanation was even simpler:

> I wanted to make a film of *The Scarlet Letter* ... I was asked which director I would like, and I chose Victor Sjostrom, who had arrived at MGM some years earlier from Sweden. I felt that the Swedes were closer to the feelings of New England Puritans than modern Americans.[3]

The film was shot in February and March 1926 and became an immediate success with the public and critics alike. (FIG. 9) The story, which is set in a Puritan colony in New England in 1645, opens with a sombre establishing title: "Here is recorded a stark episode in the lives of a stern, unforgiving people, a story of bigotry uncurbed and its train of sorrow, shame, and tragedy – ."

The young Hester Prynne is branded as a sinner and is put in the stocks for her innocent games in front of the mirror one Sunday morning. The Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, one of the pastors leading the Puritan flock, falls in love

with her and proposes to her, but it turns out that she is already married to an older man who has never made it to America. When Dimmesdale returns from a long journey, he discovers that Hester has given birth to their child but has refused to disclose the father's identity. He arrives only to see her being publicly punished for her adultery on the scaffold, being doomed to carry forever the letter A for "adultery" on her clothing. Later her husband appears and realizes what is going on. After many years, she wants to flee together with her beloved, but the husband, who has sworn to get his revenge, has found out their plans and tells her that he will leave on the same ship. After his sermon on Election Day, after which they were supposed to leave, Dimmesdale publicly confesses his paternity and reveals a letter A that he has branded on his chest. He dies in Hester's arms of the self-inflicted injury.

*Fig. 9: On the set with four cameras (*The Scarlet Letter*).*

In the following, in dialogue with earlier readings, which have emphasized the aspect of "the spectacle" as well as "the aesthetics of light" of the film, I will try to develop further my own close reading of the novel and its visual dimensions, in relation to the stylistic devices developed by Sjöström, both on the representational level and as concerns the film's stylistic devices, perhaps most notably

the characteristic use of dissolve. Finally, I will briefly discuss the construction of this film as particularly "Swedish", grounded already in Gish's original choice of director.

Frances Marion recounts in her autobiography her experiences working with Victor Sjöström on both The Scarlet Letter and his next film, The Wind. She mentions that he "gave to his direction the rare quality of reality, and never permitted a dramatic scene to become flagrant melodrama", and equally points to Sjöström's praise for Lillian Gish, and that he claimed always to be able to tell when an actor had worked for D. W. Griffith: "He expects stark realism and the stamina that it takes to make it believable."[4] This image of Sjöström as a realist director has been prevailing, but will, as we shall see, be further nuanced by Symbolist elements.

In her analysis of Marion's scripts, Anke Brouwers in addition to her analysis of The Scarlet Letter also briefly mentions Marion's second script to be directed by Sjöström, that for The Wind. According to Brouwers, a main contribution by Marion as scriptwriter to those two films was the comic accent that she put to the stories, first in "the otherwise quite faithful adaptation of Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*",[5] where Brouwers distinguishes not only two comic scenes, but also one slapstick scene, when the town-beadle raps Giles on the head with a long stick when he cannot refrain from sneezing in church. In the same vein, Brouwers also notes the comic duo of Lige and Sourdough in The Wind, characters around which several funny scenes in the film are centred. According to Brouwers, "compared to the type of material usually handled by Victor Sjöström, whose (Swedish) films had been invariably bleak explorations of moral dilemmas or tragic lives, the comic relief can be considered to be a-typical".[6]

In this case, however, Brouwers does nothing but follow other interpreters, as for example Graham Petrie, who states that "As Sjöström had rarely included comic interludes of this kind in his Swedish films, it seems likely that they were a deliberate concession to the presumed taste of an American audience and its unwillingness to sit through ninety minutes of unrelieved seriousness."[7] While Brouwers (and others) may be right about Marion as scriptwriter being responsible for including these particular comic scenes, she is however far too schematic in making them the antithesis of Sjöström's supposedly always tragic moralities from the Swedish years. The reason for this might be that those of his films that are lighter in tone are perhaps less known internationally.[8]

However, a film like Hans nåds testamente (His Lord's Will) directed by Sjöström in 1919 and scripted by Hjalmar Bergman, is no less than a comedy throughout, and even other films, for example, The Girl from the Marsh Croft, his first Selma Lagerlöf adaptation from 1917, included several comic moments.[9] Thus, it might rather be concluded that Sjöström as a director gener-

ally chose to stay close to the content of scripts written by others rather than himself, and remained faithful in rendering both their tragic and comic dimensions. As I will be arguing in this chapter, if Sjöström adds anything, it is rather on a purely stylistic level, as he captures central thematic aspects of his story to instead express them visually, through symbolic or metaphoric images.

Hester Prynne and the Spectacle

In her analysis of The Scarlet Letter, the main argument put forward by Brouwers is that Hester Prynne, Hawthorne's seventeenth-century heroine, is turned into a modern flapper girl in the screen version. Daring, or even ahistorical, as this hypothesis may seem, the urban flapper girl of the 1920s seems to have little to do with Puritan settlers around 1650. Brouwers grounds her argument in a thorough analysis of both the portrayal of modern woman in The Scarlet Letter and of the society of the spectacle of which Hester in Marion's and Sjöström's version is clearly a part: "Hester as a filmic creation is all about seeing and being-seen, a seeing that is always communal, as the film experience was originally meant to be communal."[10]

Brouwers also reflects on the slightly anachronistic relation between Hawthorne's literary portrayal of his heroine in 1850 and of the Puritan society from around 1650 – "shaped by nineteenth-century discourse on 'true womanhood' as well as the growing presence of women's voices in public discourse" – an anachronism reoccurring in the formation of the same roles seventy years later in another medium: "so the film's Hester comes closer to notions of womanhood that prevailed during the twenties". [11]

The discussion focussing specifically on the flapper may evoke counter-arguments in relation to this particular screen representation: the Hester Prynne character, which may seem too historically distant from the flapper for the parallel between them to be drawn in its entirety. However, the main argument of Brouwers' analysis, that of the idea of portraying the modern woman in the script, born from the society of the spectacle, and making her the focus of the film, seems valid enough. Whereas Hester in Hawthorne's novel fully remains a Puritan, permanently conscious of her own sin and struggling for reconciliation and peace of mind, her inner life in the film is not that apparent. She appears as more rebellious and also seems more opposed to the Puritan society, separated from them by different visual cues.

The most obvious example of the two different readings of Hester is the history of the letter A, which is different in the novel and the film. In the film and in the novel, Hester tears it off during a brief moment of freedom with her be-

loved in the forest, as she hopes for an escape and an opening towards a new life for the two of them. But their daughter, Pearl, puts it back in place soon enough, as for her it is an indistinguishable part of her mother. In the end, however, the two versions differ. In the film, the dying Dimmesdale, after having revealed the A branded on his chest, in a last gesture rips off Hester's A. In the novel, Hester leaves the Puritan colony together with her daughter upon Dimmesdale's death, only to return several years later to lead a life in the service of others, and still carrying the letter A. Hawthorne, however, also comments on a change that takes place: from having been the badge of shame, the letter now rather appears as a sign of selection.

Still, it must be noted that in Hawthorne's novel, which starts with Hester being led to the scaffold to receive her sentence (which is to wear the letter A for "adultery" for the rest of her life), relies to a large degree on the visual construction of the scene and on the exchange of looks taking place. When Marion wrote her script, she starts with the sequence of events that led to Hester being condemned, i.e. with the love story between Hester Prynne and the Reverend Dimmesdale, obviously enough for both dramatic and commercial reasons. In the novel, Hester's husband Roger Chillingworth, seeking revenge, only gradually casts his suspicions on Dimmesdale, whereas, in the film, Dimmesdale involuntarily betrays his guilty secret the first time that he meets Roger, as he – believing that he is alone with Hester – cries out: "Our Child!" Also, in Hawthorne's novel, their love affair is never dealt with directly, and is only discovered gradually by the reader.

Among other things, the first part of Marion's script includes a scene where Hester indulges in the sight of her beautiful hair. Marion didn't have to search far for inspiration, however, as Hawthorne already offers a most vivid and detailed description of Hester's appearance: her hair, her features, her eyes, though in a different context, and – just like in the script – he takes side with her against the Puritan onlookers.[12] The same insistence on her beauty occurs when Hester in the novel looks back on her own past: "She saw her own face, glowing with girlish beauty, and illuminating all the interior of the dusky mirror in which she had been wont to gaze at it."[13] This description might well have inspired the mirror scene included in the beginning of Marion's script, where Hester checks her looks in a "mirror" – a piece of polished metal – covered by a wall-hanging with the words "Vanity is an Evil Disease". When Hester's bonnet in the script (as well as in the film) shortly thereafter falls off, so that her long hair loosens and the rays of sunlight seem to flood down over her head, this also seems to be a mere visualization of the description in the novel of "dark and abundant hair, so glossy that it threw off the sunshine with a gleam".[14]

Brouwers makes this scene at the beginning of film the starting point for her argument "that their [Sjöström's and Marion's] interpretation of Hester is somewhat different – freer, less restrained – from the heroine of Hawthorne's novel".[15] However, the fact that several aspects of the scene seem to be well grounded in passages from the novel, though they then appear in different contexts, must also be taken into consideration, and this provides a counter-argument to Brouwers' somewhat too simplistic dichotomy between novel and script. After having described Hester's physical appearance in detail in the novel, as she is about to step onto the scaffold, Hawthorne immediately goes on to discuss her ladylike posture and her radiance:

> Those who had before known her, and had expected to behold her dimmed and obscured by a disastrous cloud, were astonished, and even startled, to perceive how her beauty shone out, and made a halo of the misfortune and ignominy in which she was enveloped. It may be true, that, to a sensitive observer, there was something exquisitely painful in it. Her attire, which, indeed, she had wrought for the occasion, in prison, and had modelled much after her own fancy, seemed to express the attitude of her spirit, the desperate recklessness of her mood, by its wild and picturesque peculiarity. But the point which drew all eyes, and, as it were, transfigured the wearer, – so that both men and women, who had been familiarly acquainted with Hester Prynne, were now impressed as if they beheld her for the first time, – was that SCARLET LETTER, so fantastically embroidered and illuminated upon her bosom. It had the effect of a spell, taking her out of the ordinary relations with humanity, and inclosing her in a sphere by herself.[16]

To endure the long hours on the scaffold, in her "intense consciousness of being the object of severe and universal observation", Hester seeks refuge in "memory's picture-gallery", where "the whole scene [...] seemed to vanish from her eyes or at least, glimmered indistinctly before them, like a mass of imperfectly shaped and spectral images"; "the scaffold of the pillory was a point of view that revealed to Hester Prynne the entire track along which she had been treading", and she is relieved by these recollections from "her subsequent life; one picture precisely as vivid as another; [...] by the exhibition of these phantasmagoric forms".[17] Hester's experience on the scaffold is close to that of the spectator of magic lantern shows, or of the later cinemagoer, as she sees her own life pass by in tableauesque pictures. Moreover, they seem to appear in a montage-like succession, or even in superimposition, with the dim images from the present overlapping with a series of inner pictures from her past, one emanating from the other.

But if Hawthorne's novel, as we have seen, is imbued with references to visuality and the gaze through the intermediary of the characters, it could also be argued that Sjöström's film – based as it is on Marion's script, "all about seeing

and being-seen" – takes the relationship to the visual to the next level, as it also makes explicit the spectatorial position as such. The gaze construed by the film does convey a message of its own, in particular in its including of the spectator's point of view, as it is built up through gestures directed towards the film spectator (as when Dimmesdale reveals the A on his own chest and rips off Hester's A). So does Sjöström's particular cinematic language, which will be discussed in the following, with its superimpositions and the associative quality they bring, or with the use of off-screen space, which all seem to emphasize the presence of the spectator.

An Aesthetics of Light

As should have become obvious, the novel already includes a visual dimension to which Sjöström adds his specific cinematographic quality. This is true also of the instructions for lighting, the optical scenography, which may be discerned already in the novel as ideas or conceptions in the text. In discussing the relationship between Hawthorne's novel and Sjöström's film, Swedish film historian Örjan Roth-Lindberg argues that the cinematic version of the story is carefully construed through what he calls "an aesthetics of light", grounded in the metaphorical use of light in the novel so dear to Romanticism and Symbolism, operating through analogies with nature, expressing a mental or spiritual cause of events through dualist images of light and dark. Roth-Lindberg also notes that the reader, if taking the film as the point of departure and looking at the novel from this point of view – much in the same way that I have done in discussing the visual cues above – may actually make "the amazing discovery that the whole direction of light is already there in the narration".[18] He therefore makes an inverted comparison from film to novel in order to uncover Sjöström's mise-en-scène as "a hermeneutic approach to the original text, a sensitive reading of its visual potential". In the film version, these literary conceptions are concretely represented in cinematic space as a presence of light. It might, therefore, be productive to extend Roth-Lindberg's analysis to an examination of the film as a whole.

Reverend Dimmesdale's head is surrounded by light, like a halo, the first time he is presented in profile against the church wall. He is also brightly lit as he stands in the pulpit during his sermon, where he reproaches Hester for having profaned the Lord's day, and behind his head, there seem to be white clouds in motion, so that his sermon acquires an almost prophetic quality as he says: "If ye sin, ye must pay – there is no escape"; indeed a prophecy loaded with significance.

Hester, too, is associated with this light from the beginning of the story. A key example is the scene where a source of light off screen – the hidden mirror, reflecting the sun – casts its reflection in screen space, but without being noticed by the passers-by of the story other than precisely as a reflection. The light in this scene has a second effect: that of awakening the caged bird, which then starts to sing in the dancing light, followed by a harsh remark by the stinging Mistress Hibbins: "Hester Prynne's bird singing on the Lord's Day! What is Boston coming to?"[19] As the bird flees, Hester chooses to try to capture it instead of obeying the command of the church bells, which will lead to her later conviction as sinner. The image of the bells function as a stern contrast to the freedom she enjoys for a short moment in the forest. Roth-Lindberg writes:

> As she follows the bird, she seems, in a dissolve to the bell tower, to be running right through and away from the commanding bells. And when she has reached the deep forest, which in the book and even more so in the film, is the space of love and forbidden acts, she all of a sudden melts into the landscape through a long shot, transformative through light and movement.[20]

Only as the bells stop, Hester realizes that her hair has been left loose, and she hastily tries to pull it together under her bonnet before entering the church. Now, the forest all of a sudden looks darker, as the dark shadow of Puritanism been cast upon it. When the pastor later follows Hester home after her punishment, a soft light again seems to flood down on her. He is shown looking back at her from behind a bush, as if the contact with Hester had already made him part of nature, of the force that will eventually conquer him.

In the next scene, the pastor walks in the forest in pious meditation, and Hester, like the other women, has washed her underwear – which according to the Puritan regulations "are immodest though necessary/They must be washed in secret & hidden from masculine eyes". On meeting the pastor, Hester first tries to hide her "guilty" secret, but on his orders, she shows the garment hidden behind her back. He is embarrassed and tries to rush away, but she follows him and begs him to talk to her about her sins. As they walk they seem to come deeper into the forest, the natural, lyrical landscape, where the sunlight is soft – a central chapter in the novel, which takes place in the forest, is entitled "A Flood of Sunshine" – but merciful shadows also allow for a freedom from the sharp, pitiless light of the Puritan community which seeks to penetrate into every angle of life.

The forests in the film strongly resemble those of the painter, Jean-Honoré Fragonard (1732-1806), whose lines seem to trail playfully through his pictorial compositions. They stand in contrast to the images of the community which in turn resemble paintings such as Rembrandt van Rijn's (1606-1669) *The Syndics of the Clothmakers Guild* or Frans Hals' (c. 1580-1666) *Regents of the St Elizabeth Hos-*

pital of Haarlem or *The Women Regents of the Haarlem Almshouse*. Thus the images are solidly anchored in a pictorial tradition spanning the time when the novel is supposed to take place to Hawthorne's own time. Sjöström himself also talked about drawing inspiration for his films from paintings, visiting museums in order to study lighting and picture composition, and buying countless reproductions.[21] This method of his is indeed not limited to a few examples only – another pictorial reference has been mentioned in relation to He Who Gets Slapped – but rather appears to have been a consistent ingredient of Sjöström's craft, noted already in A Man There Was, The Monastery in Sendomir or The Phantom Carriage.[22]

Bushes also reappear repeatedly as a metonymy for nature, first as Dimmesdale chases Hester round a bush to make her reveal what she is hiding. She then throws the garment away onto the bush. Later, bushes hide them for a moment, and when they reappear, they hold hands. As they later walk out of frame to the right, the camera pans to the left and stops at the image of the underwear hanging on the bush as a metaphor for their forbidden intimacy.

After a fade-out, there is a fade-in to a scene where we now see the reflection of the two lovers in the water. At first, the image is blurred, as the pastor throws twigs into the water, but then it becomes still and clear as a mirror. Next to the water, there is a bush, which hides the lover's embrace. But their mirror reflection in the water in the previous image seems to betray their secret, at least to the spectator. They are already involved in what is to become a play with doubleness; the reflection in the water repeats Hester's reflection in the hidden mirror from the first reel. There is a third mirror scene, doubling the first one in the forest. Now it is Pearl's image that is reflected in the water as she plays with a garland that she puts in her hair. Then there is a cut to an image of Hester and Dimmesdale lying down and resting on the grass. As they talk about their escape, Hester tears off the A and loosens her hair. The scene therefore also functions as a double of the first mirror scene when her hair was loosened for the first time, the happy days before the A would forever be imprinted on her bosom. In the conclusion of his essay, Roth-Lindberg argues that:

> the fugitive, simple, almost playful images in the montage are – on one level – expressing the "mirror relation" in all of Sjöström's films, which is revealed – and possible to notice – only with the new observations and language of psychoanalysis during the 70s and 80s. This relation of mirroring or doubling exists between the living and the dead (*The Phantom Carriage*), between the I and the masks (the play with double identities in *He Who Gets Slapped*), between man and his image – in the mirror and in the child (*The Scarlet Letter*).[23]

To him, this mirror relation – with its unique cinematic expression through the dissolve as well as its classic symbolic expression through the mask, the mirror and the body double – thus remains an important key to Sjöström's work.

The play with shadows, however, is just as important as the light. A key scene in the film is where Dimmesdale proposes to Hester, only to find that she is already married. In contrast to their previous meetings – except for the initial one in the church – this does not take place in exterior space, in the landscape that allowed them their freedom. It is winter, and the pastor visits Hester in her house. The interior is lit, not least by the fire, but in the beginning, as he enters, the dark shadow he casts seems to prefigure what is to come. As they talk, shadows of a chair or of the spinning wheel are cast on the walls, which seems to visualize the sombre and fateful character of their meeting. When Dimmesdale understands the full truth, he walks away from Hester and is hidden by a wall in the foreground. Only his giant, black shadow is visible in the background as he sits down, leaning his face into his hands. The usual evening call in the village is then heard: "Lights out! All is well!", upon which the room is darkened. The darkness serves as cover for their final embrace, now with a new dimension of guilt added, before Dimmesdale hastily leaves, and Hester, left alone in the house, desperately puts her hands on her breast, in the form of an A. Shortly thereafter, Hester – as if driven by an inner force impossible to retain – rushes out after him, a dark shadow against the white snow. As she returns to her house, she leans against the door as she closes it, and the shadow of the spinning wheel now covers her. The composition seems to suggest an image of a martyr having been condemned to the wheel, a frequent motif in religious iconography. (FIG. 10 + 11) This image of the wheel is then cast upon her several times as she walks back and forth in the room. It may not be too far-fetched to read this image as a pictorial allusion prefiguring her martyrdom to come, as Hawthorne in his novel makes another reference to religious iconography in relation to Hester:

> Had there been a Papist among the crowd of Puritans, he might have seen in this beautiful woman, so picturesque in her attire and mien, and with the infant at her bosom, an object to remind him of the image of Divine Maternity, which so many illustrious painters have vied with one another to represent.[24]

This Madonna-like image of Hester also appears in the film as she is led to the scaffold with the child in her arms.

*Fig. 10: Caught in a web or condemned to the wheel – An Iconographic Reference (*The Scarlet Letter*).*

Fig. 11: German woodcut from the Middle Ages (exact date and creator unknown).

Stylistic Devices

A question that remains is, then, whether these thematic elements, which are consequently expressed in the mise-en-scène of the film, also appear on the level of cinematic devices such as the dissolves that we have shown to be Sjöström's most characteristic stylistic feature?

In the second reel, as Hester has been put in the stocks while people are passing by, a sign above her head indicates the nature of her crime. Immediately upon this follows a dissolve to a close-up of the sign: 'FOR RUNNING & PLAYING ON Ye SABBATH' (which in the script had read: 'PUNISHED FOR LAUGHING AND SINGING ON THE SABBATH'),[25] the previous image still being visible for a while in superimposition. The change from the original script into a more visual or 'cinematographic' version of the ordeal appears as quite significant. In addition, the figure of Hester is here brought together with the A of 'PLAYING' so that her body appears to be merging into the letter. The close-up of the sign is followed by a second dissolve back to a full shot of Hester in the stocks, but now at a lesser distance. Once again, the two images overlap for a moment, the A now instead overshadowing Hester's face so that it becomes completely covered by the A. This A reappears time after time in her life as she is condemned for adultery to wear upon her breast the letter A. Her daughter playfully writes an A in the sand whereas her beloved fatally brands the letter upon his own breast. (FIG. 12)

The very last images of the film contain a dissolve of the same kind, analyzed in relation to the thematics of the film by Örjan Roth-Lindberg:

> Here follows a last image of Hester Prynne – a close-up of her face turned upwards, which dissolves into an image of the front of the church with the bell tower – the building is situated right behind her as she sits at the pillory. For a moment, her face is inscribed into the form of the building; she literally unites with the temple. The outcast, who here, more than anyone else, mirrors the presence of love, is identified – in a very concrete manner – with the Church of Christ. It is possible to interpret this dissolve as a visual metaphor expressing the parable of the "true" Church as Christ's body: the despised who has refused to compromise with her love incarnates the sacred.[26]

An alternative approach, however, could also be suggested, where the contour of the church, with its roof formed like a widened A, recalls the sign of adultery prefigured in the first dissolve. Thus, the church might be interpreted as the institution that has judged and rejected Hester, which forever has imposed the letter A on her, an interpretation that seems all the more motivated as the crowd which has condemned her is present in the image in front of the building; they

appear in superimposition through her face. This kind of dissolve, then, may create highly ambiguous images as they don't always deal with clear-cut parallels or simple meanings.

*Fig. 12: The Letter A for adultery prefigured (*The Scarlet Letter*).*

Not least striking is the fact – which seems rather unique in this case, compared to other Sjöström films in Sweden and in Hollywood – that these dissolves do not appear in the original scenario; instead, they seem to have been added during the shooting or editing process. Thus, not only is there a continuity from the use of dissolves in the director's Swedish period, but the device has also been further developed and elaborated, in spite of the more standardized mode of production in Hollywood. How, then, did Sjöström manage to maintain some aspects of his style in Hollywood? Part of the explanation probably lies in the fact that he, like other European directors, was hired from outside. At least for a while, this might have granted him a special status: he was not just one of the ordinary workers of the film factory. His contract mentioned above, regulating his rights and obligations, also seems to confirm his exceptional status in the system.

On a more general level, this continuity between The Scarlet Letter and the director's earlier "Swedish style" was observed by many contemporary

critics at the time. Their particular emphasis on continuity, as far as The Scarlet Letter was concerned, may paradoxically be due to the fact that this was actually the first time that Sjöström made a film based on a novel by an American author – but the insistence of the critics in this case is particularly noteworthy as the film that he had made immediately before was The Tower of Lies, which was based on a Lagerlöf novel. Sven Stolpe in the earlier cited article even dared to call the film "Swedish", whereas the magazine *Filmjournalen* proclaimed that "Sjöström has rediscovered himself, his old Swedish identity. [...] The fact that the film strikes us as more Swedish than American recommends it all the more. It is Swedish in the sense that characterized our films during their glory days – its literary and artistic eminence is worthy of a master."[27] *Picture Play* also wrote that "Victor Seastrom's direction is that of a master, and the Scandinavian sympathy with the traditions of our rock-bound New England is strongly manifested in every scene."[28]

If contemporary critics on both sides of the Atlantic thus agreed on the Swedish or Scandinavian feeling conveyed by the film, this has become a commonplace in later film historical accounts. It is striking to what extent not only the reception in the contemporary press, but also the reception of researchers throughout the decades, appears as uncritically uniform in the assumptions made. Several Swedish historians emphasize the thematic and stylistic continuity with the director's earlier Swedish works.[29] In his book on the age of the silent feature picture, Richard Koszarski writes:

> Choosing a Swedish director, Victor Seastrom, and a Swedish co-star, Lars Hanson, Gish succeeded in giving the picture the aura of the early Swedish cinema classics. Time and place became powerful characters, compensating for the necessarily delicate handling of the adultery theme.[30]

In this connection, Gish's statement about the Swedes being "closer to the feelings of New England Puritans", quoted in the beginning of this chapter, might again be recalled. Her initial wish to make the film, and to make it with Sjöström as director, was grounded precisely in this vision, of a specific relationship between the idea of "Swedishness" and the central themes of the story.

Also, according to Graham Petrie, "the film has the 'Lagerlöf' elements of adultery, illegitimacy, the pressures of an intolerant public opinion, guilt, punishment, atonement and repentance", and he continues that: "Besides its 'Swedish' themes, the film allows for more interplay between human beings and their natural environment, again along the lines of the Lagerlöf adaptations, than had been the case in Sjöström's American work so far."[31]

Thus, continuity may be traced on a general, thematic level as well as stylistically, in the handling of light or landscape, and down to the smallest details, such as the use of one specific device, the dissolve, which perhaps more than

any other has characterized Sjöström as a director. Working with Gish and Hanson again in his next film, The Wind, according to Koszarski "now considered one of the finest of silent features but barely released in 1928 during the transition to sound", Sjöström would be able to develop some of these stylistic elements further.

Conquering Nature – The Wind

"Man – puny but irresistible – encroaching forever on Nature's vastnesses, gradually, very gradually wresting away her strange secrets, subduing her fierce elements – conquers the earth!" This introductory intertitle from Victor Sjöström's sixth Hollywood film, The Wind (1928), based on a 1925 novel with the same title by Dorothy Scarborough, opens the story in evoking a grandiose register.[1] Scarborough, however, interestingly enough, was not only a novelist, but also an English professor, whose dissertation dealt with Gothic themes which she then developed in her own writing, not least in *The Wind*.[2] The script credit was, as with The Scarlet Letter, given to Frances Marion. In the following, the film will be examined in close detail: not only its text, but also the relation to some of its contexts: the Western genre, Gothic tradition, Scandinavian landscape. These relationships are not entirely unproblematic. According to Susan Kollin, who has analyzed the novel in depth, "the film overlooked much of the novel's critique of frontier attitudes about labor, race, and national identity", not surprisingly in the hope of a more general appeal to the potential film audience.[3]

The story of the film itself is easily summarized: Letty, an orphan, seeks refuge with her cousin, whose wife, however, views her as a rival. Left with no other choice, she marries their neighbour, Lige, but she finds him frightening and abhorrent, and he resolves not to force himself on her. During a storm, the cattle dealer Roddy rapes Letty. This is shown only symbolically, in Graham Petrie's words: "through the physical violence of the wind itself and the traditional sexual symbolism of the stallion".[4] She shoots him in self-defence. Despite her shock, she struggles to bury him in the sand, an impossible task in the very strong wind. Finally nature does the job itself, the wind covering him with sand. The initial version of the film ends with the crazed Letty receding into the storm, just like in Roddy's initial account of what – according to an Indian legend – happens to women; they become mad in the wind. In the final version, however, a happy ending was tagged on at the request of Irving Thalberg (in spite of the scriptwriter's protests: "But no happy ending, Irving, Please not that!").[5] The decision was based on one of Thalberg's famous preview screenings, to which Sjöström's films among many others were repeatedly subject.[6] In the added ending, Lige returns and Letty is capable of loving him now that she – by a baptism of the wind – has been liberated from her fear.

Lillian Gish, who had chosen the novel as well as written a four-page treatment serving as starting point for the screenplay, also insisted on having Lars Hanson play opposite her in this film, as in The Scarlet Letter, and on having Sjöström, rather than Clarence Brown, MGM's initial suggestion, to direct. Meanwhile, Sjöström demanded that the exteriors be shot on location in the

Mojave Desert. Given 120–degree temperatures and nine wind machines whipping up the sand that was the visually most distinctive feature of the film, it was an extraordinarily taxing ordeal. Gish later called it "one of my worst experiences in filmmaking".[7] (FIG. 13)

*Fig. 13: 120-degrees temperatures and wind machines: according to Lillian Gish "one of my worst experiences in filmmaking" (*The Wind*).*

The Wind was shot as a silent film, but it opened too late (23 November 1928) to be wholeheartedly received as such by the critics and public. The talkies had just made their breakthrough (The Jazz Singer was first shown in 1927). This general reluctance towards the film probably had other reasons as well, such as the sombre story; that the producer Irving Thalberg considered it a risky project is revealed by a telegram to Sjöström where he gives instructions in order to try to save its commercial potential:

> After careful discussion with Frances and getting opinion of several people definitely [sic] decided we must have Hanson clean shaven from time of her washing dishes on to finish of picture otherwise there will be no conviction of growing romance and certainly no audience desire to see it come about stop we are taking enough chances

> on picture without destroying only hope of making it commercial stop please dont worry about this regards Irving Thalberg.[8]

In Stockholm, the film was screened for the first time on 3 December 1928 at the China cinema. The most prestigious venue in Sweden, it had opened shortly before – in October – with Edmond Goulding's Love. In connection with this opening, an ambitious advertising programme was distributed, *Chinas Filmnytt*, where The Wind was also introduced: "[I]ts story about loving and struggling is told with a fury, an absorbing intensity that brings Sjöström's Swedish masterpieces to mind."[9] Likewise, Swedish reviews of The Wind emphasized the connection to Sjöström's Swedish period: "There is a striking resemblance between this mystic of no man's land and the mystic developed by Selma Lagerlöf in 'Körkarlen' – secret forces are at work through supernatural impulses that poor earthly creatures are not able to penetrate."[10] It is striking that this film presents the clearest divergences between Swedish and American reviews. Whereas the Swedish critics seemed to be even more enthusiastic than usual, their American colleagues on the contrary were quite negative; whereas Swedes saw the film as "national" in its imagery of nature, Americans tended, as we shall see, to judge this symbolic quality as being too obvious. Interestingly enough, in one review, Sjöström had become American; he is mentioned among "our" directors, sharing their problematic qualities, and he is criticized for having forgotten his special Scandinavian touch. The obviousness with which he is now accused turns out to be the same characteristic of Hollywood cinema – which has been named an excessively obvious cinema – that he was previously said to have avoided in The Tower of Lies:

> The film shows one bad tendency of our directors and scenarists, its atmospheric chord is twanged too often. In the present case in their anxiety to make the wind felt and heard (and sound synchronisation will only make matters worse), they have blown the bellows and shovelled the sand over-long and with too much energy. It is surprising that Victor Seastrom, noted in his Scandinavian days for his eerie touch and delicate hintings, should so far have lost sight of the art of suggestion in a story made exclusively to his hand as to have, so to speak, piled it on until the illusion is well nigh buried under and winnowed away. What might have become imaginative cinema has been made obvious movie, no mater what excellent movie it may be.[11]

Mordaunt Hall in *The New York Times* was even more sharp in his comments on the film. Sjöström this time is accused of having overworked the film, the result thus becoming too obvious:

> Victor Seastrom hammers home his points until one longs for just a suggestion of subtlety. The villain's sinister smile appears to last until his dying breath. Mr. Seastrom's wind is like some of the vocal effects in sound pictures, for nobody can deny

> its power, but it comes in strict continuity, with seldom the impression of a gust. And instead of getting along with the story, Mr. Seastrom makes his production very tedious by constantly calling attention to the result of the wind. If it were realistic, it would all be very well, but it isn't. Sand and dust are discovered on the bread, on the dishes, on the sheets, and wherever Letty (Miss Gish), a spiritual young Virginian, turns.[12]

But in retrospect, The Wind has often been considered Sjöström's greatest Hollywood masterpiece and one of his best works ever. Film historians have particularly pointed out that Sjöström in this film succeeded in rendering the invisible – the wind – visible through its effect: the sandstorm, which plays such an important role in the film. It has been noted that Sjöström, precisely at the time where silent cinema turned to sound, made a last effort to explore the forms of the visible in order to make a silent record of sound, these silent sounds being a characteristic trait in several of his earlier Swedish films.[13]

Here, Bengt Forslund among others have stressed the importance of close-ups during the director's Swedish period, particularly those that stretch the narrative limits of silent film by appearing to generate sound, like in The Girl from the Marsh Croft, where the male hero Gudmund is falsely accused of murder:

> Or take the effectively inserted close-up of Gudmund's coffee cup, which falls to the ground when Gudmund's mother reads out from the paper the news of the murder – a sound effect one in fact *hears*, in spite of the silence, and one experiences the conflicting proceedings still more strikingly when the whole wedding comes to a halt simply as a result of the *lay assessor's hand interrupting a fiddler's bow.* One feels the silence in fact, as intensely as though it had occurred in a sound movie.[14]

Several of the scenes from The Wind which will be discussed in the following include and make use of violent sounds in much the same way as in Forslund's description above. There is of course the whirling storm itself, but just as much its results: a herd of cows breaking their fence, a table lamp being overturned and starting a fire, hands knocking, doors supposedly slamming in the wind. All those images – shown in close-up or cut-in – suggest sound effects to the extent that they seem to have functioned as such. As a matter of fact a "sound version" of The Wind was also released, with a soundtrack containing sounds of the wind, with some added effects (like dogs barking) together with a musical *leitmotif*: "Love Brought the Sunshine", all in order to compensate for the film's lack of sound. It is striking that several critics of the period actually complained about the added sound being redundant in its doubling the sound already mediated through the images, which also testifies to the effectiveness of Sjöström's method of making "a silent record of sound".[15]

Landscape of the Origins

In The Wind, the landscape seems to take centre stage once again. On the one hand, there is the Western aspect, where Scarborough's novel – to borrow Susan Kollin's expression – "restores white women's agency to 'the winning of the West"'.[16] In the film, too, the traditional theme of woman in domestic space overlaps with woman striving to conquer and dominate landscape. On the other hand, there is also a Gothic aspect to the landscape in both novel and film. The winning of the West has not been an unambiguous enterprise; on the contrary, white man's conquests have brought destruction to landscape and led to death or displacement of the original, American Indian population. Supernatural images of nature appear repeatedly in the story, often combined with references to the region's indigenous peoples, dispelling the myth of the frontier. Thus, "a Gothic nature operates to unsettle Western myths".[17]

But there is yet another aspect to be taken into account, namely the relation to Scandinavian landscape; perhaps the feature most often discussed as a main characteristic of Sjöström's earlier films, and thus in his case a particularly strong sign of the continuity between Sweden and Hollywood. According to Peter Cowie, landscape in A Man There Was (Terje Vigen) – for the first time in film history – reflects the conflicts both within and between the characters in the narrative.[18] In an article on A Man There Was, John Fullerton also touches upon this characteristic:

> The most striking aspect of *Terje Vigen* is its finely-wrought narrative structure; a narrative such that the sea is not merely a symbol for the object of revenge but the very embodiment of the revenge motif . [. . .] Not only do the people of Grimstad fare by the sea and live beside the sea – the economic and the geographical basis of their livelihood – but in a very strict sense the sea is both an instrument for their protection and a source of potential danger.[19]

Widening the scope of his analysis, Fullerton also discusses The Outlaw and His Wife where snow and ice play a similar double role; they function as protection against the arm of the law, but at the same time they cause the death of the two central characters. Landscape in both these films appears as strongly metaphorical. Fullerton points to the dialectics in the relationship between human and landscape, which establishes analogies between them.[20]

In his review of The Outlaw and His Wife, French filmmaker and critic Louis Delluc had already mentioned "a third interpreter, particularly eloquent: landscape!", which echoes several other comments from the period.[21] Henri Agel repeats the same point, talking about a fascinating "fusion between man and landscape".[22] In my own analysis of The Outlaw and His Wife, I have

shown in detail how man's exposure to the overwhelmingly powerful forces of nature seems to make the latter more and more hostile.[23] Thus, the shape of landscape in the film functions as a series of visual presages, which to the spectator forebodes the dark conclusion of the narrative. In a similar manner, the central element in The Wind appears as an ever-present, overwhelming force in the film that makes all attempts at human resistance appear futile and ineffectual. The original ending of the film seems particularly close to its Swedish forerunner. Graham Petrie, however, emphasizes the difference between The Wind and its Swedish predecessors:

> In *The Wind* [. . .], there is little grandeur in the natural environment; rather it is a relentless, omnipresent force that steadily saps the willpower and the energy of the central character and demonstrates in its unpredictable eruptions into violence that human attempts to resist it are puny and ephemeral. Nature here is neither an awe-inspiring, almost mystical force, as in the Swedish films, nor a challenge to be overcome through human courage and endurance, as in an American Western.[24]

Petrie may be right in tracing a divergence in the way of dealing with landscape in The Wind. Still, what unites this film with both A Man There Was and The Outlaw and His Wife is that the portrayal of landscape is far from idyllic or romantic, as in so many other Swedish films from the silent era. Instead, it is, as in The Wind, a natural force or an original, primordial power which was there long before any human being entered the stage. And man's attempts to conquer this force, evoked in the first intertitle of The Wind, are doomed to be in vain, or in Petrie's words, the statement is "quickly shown to be a premature and overconfident assumption".[25] This also seems to point in yet another direction, namely that the causes for the dominance of the wind, as well as the woman's problematic position, "stem less from some meta-physical force of nature than from ideologies that shape the social position and power of white, middle-class women".[26]

This film, however, produced in a new context, also comes close to embodying what Mikhail Iampolski, following Laplanche and Pontalis, has labelled the "phantasm of origins", which according to Iampolski keeps haunting the entire problematics of influence.[27] In the case of Swedish cinema this "phantasm of origins" is particularly associated with the original quality of landscape. At the same time, it is separated from the culture that generated the phantasm and integrated within a new cultural framework. The vitality of the phantasm, however, is clearly demonstrated in an article from 1924 by Chicago critic Clary Berg on the Swedish origin of Sjöström's films:

> The secret lies in their style rather in the way of achievement. It lies in their method of letting the simply magnificent act by its own efforts. It is precisely the simplicity that grants their film productions the great effect that appears. We decorate our Christmas

> trees with tinsel, in order to make people believe in them. The Swedes show us their pine trees the way they are in reality, striving towards the sky.[28]

In fact, this "phantasm of origins" serves as a way of accounting for the influence from Sjöström's Swedish films to the American ones, with particular focus on landscape portrayal. As Robert Herring put it in an essay from 1929, "Landscape is image in Seastrom".[29] The iconographic symbolism of the landscape, however, paradoxically also sheds light upon the specific cinematic context within which these films were produced. The Wind thus also serves as a kind of essay on the twofold capacity of the cinematic image – the feeling of movement created by "framing" the wind – as well as the palpable sensation of wind that the composition gives rise to by rooting it in actual temporal experience. The visual power is systematically heightened during the course of the film by the connection which, for better or worse, is forged between Letty and the wind. As it is stated in one of the first titles: "This is the story of a woman who came into the domain of the winds." Indeed, this title condenses the central idea of the story, where the construction of landscape is increasingly merged with the portrayal of female subjectivity. The key theme of the film is the gradual intertwining between Letty and the natural forces represented by the wind and the sand, finally collapsing the boundaries between subjective and objective, inner and outer space. Emmanuelle André has convincingly argued that every episode in the film consists in a displacement of the original shot-countershot structure, where Letty progressively advances towards the doors and windows that she faces, thus also confronting the wind to an ever-increasing degree:

> Any advancement of the body towards the frame engages a supplementary degree of fragility, corresponding to three levels of occupying space: first of all, the wind is framed (in the train, at the farm), then the frame is shattered (during the feast and the storm), then the body crosses the frame (the final aggression).[30]

Framing the Wind

The theme of The Wind is introduced in the first sequence of the film. In the establishing shot, a train crosses the prairie, accompanied by smoke and dust, prefiguring the wind and sand that will soon take over the scene completely. In a few interiors from the train, Roddy and Letty are introduced, he gazing at her from behind and then, approaching, brushing sand off his sleeve. This gesture later turns out to be the most frequently reoccurring throughout the film, and is used on numerous occasions by the male characters Roddy, Lige, and his comic counterpart, Sourdough, often as sign of embarrassment or defensiveness.

These interiors are followed by a new exterior shot, now closer to the train, which shows the sand drifting about, and in the next cut back to the compartment is shown whirling into the train through the open window. Roddy's first narrative function thus is to help Letty close the window, thereby indicating the central line of division between inner and outer space. Having laughed at first at Letty's naïve remark that she wished that the awful wind would stop blowing, Roddy, however, soon predicts her dark future in the domain of the winds. "Injuns call this the 'land o' the winds' – it never stops blowing here," and in the next title: "day in, day out; whistlin' and howlin' makes folks go crazy – especially women!" This is the first, but definitely not the last time, that "Injuns" are mentioned in the film, and closely connected to its Gothic side. As Susan Kollin states in her analysis of Scarborough's novel, "the Gothicized Indian operates as a ghostly reminder of a national past that was once dangerous and enticing, deadly but intriguing"; here, however, the novel also adds a critique of "the nation's expansionist ideologies".[31] The film hovers between these two positions; while downplaying any explicit critique, it still sticks to the novel's "refusal to grant white characters a place of innocence in the text".[32]

During the train sequence, the wind is introduced visually by repeated shots of the window frame covering the film frame almost entirely. These shots are inserted three times during the train sequence, with the sand hitting the window more and more violently. On the second occasion, the window frame with the sand is dissolved into the next shot of Letty and Roddy. For a moment their image is entirely covered by the whirling sand, both inscribing them visually into the "domain of the winds" and introducing, for the second time, the central theme of the crossing of borders – windows, doors – separating protected space from unprotected. This particular sequence also introduces the use of dissolves, a device used throughout the film and often combined with another central feature: the close attention to certain important details, which in most cases are foregrounded by close-ups.[33] The dissolves also introduce on a stylistic level another important Gothic trope of the film: the doubling, in this case, of space.

The dominant theme of The Wind stays in focus for the narrative as Letty and Roddy leave the train, primarily through the visual means of the whirling sand, now directly exposing her to its force, but also on a secondary level, as a continuous subject of conversation. In Letty's first conversation with Lige, as he has picked her up on her arrival, he tells her the frightening story of "Old Norther", once again associating the wind with the Indians. Thus, the "phantasm of the origins" is evoked in a figurative sense as the original force of nature is connected to the original inhabitants of the land: "Mighty queer – Injuns think the North wind is a ghost horse that lives in the clouds." This is followed by a cut to Letty after which the image of a horse galloping up in the clouds is inserted for

the first time. Its subjective character is confirmed by a cut back to Letty, her eyes wide open in horror. This subjective shot is to be followed.

The first key sequence in the gradual progression of "the domain of the winds" is the dance party, which is introduced by a shot of an orchestra playing, where the shadows and the movement of people dancing in the foreground are strangely reminiscent of sand blowing. Apart from this symbolic reminder of the threatening forces of nature, however, the party scene takes place in a closed and seemingly protected indoor space, where no windows or doors give an inkling of the ever-presence of the wind outside. Within this apparently safeguarded sphere, Roddy offers Letty a mirror, first shown from behind, which makes it appear as a framed picture. When a cut to the opposite perspective reveals Letty's face in close-up within the frame of the mirror, this on the one hand marks the culmination of intimate space, but, on the other hand, also reveals its profoundly illusory character. The contrast is enormous when the doors immediately afterwards are flung open, and the announcement of the cyclone is confirmed both visually by its menacing black shape, rapidly approaching, and through the movement of the sand blowing into the building and people fleeing in panic. This is the first time that the clear line of division between interior and exterior space, which was established in the first scene of the film through the train window, is violated. But it is still only a dark foreboding of what is yet to come: this movement, collapsing the distinction between inner and outer space, will be accomplished throughout the film.

Shattering the Frame

This dramatic peak is followed by comic relief in the next scene, where Lige and Sourdough both propose to Letty who bursts out into laughter, commenting to Cora, her cousin's wife: "And for a moment, I thought they were serious . . .". However, as Cora reacts with hostility to this comment, and in jealousy throws Letty away from her husband, who has entered the room, the tone of the scene is sharpened, and Letty's unprotected position is clearly revealed. It is only logical that the next shot shows her wincing, obviously at the sound of the wind, as the following cut shows the whirling sand once again.

After Letty's unsuccessful attempt to join Roddy, who now confesses that he is already married, the wedding scene follows, which is exemplary in its concentration on significant details in close-up, joined together by dissolves. Leaving Roddy's hotel in a carriage, Cora makes clear to Letty the destiny that awaits her in an intertitle: "Two men want to marry you – make up your mind, which one you'll accept." This is followed by a frontal shot of the two women, after

which there is a fade-out to black for a few seconds. Then a fade-in shows a couple of anonymous hands in the foreground, one slipping a ring on the other's finger, with an open book and the chest of a person with a sheriff star in the background. A slow dissolve transfers the spectator to an unknown space: a close-up of dirty dishes on a sandy sink. Then a new dissolve reveals a table with a lit lamp in focus, surrounded by a bottle and other dirty dishes. Yet another dissolve reveals Letty within this space, for a second overlapping the lamp in the middle. This series of dissolves thus both include and enclose her in the interior space of Lige's house to which she is constrained by marriage. The film thus gradually isolates its heroine in a position of victimization. She remains almost constantly enclosed in a prison-like shelter which, however, turns out to be insufficient as enclosure. According to Ray Tumbleson, this all corresponds well to the construction of domestic femininity in the eighteenth-century novel.[34]

In the following scene, Letty and Lige are alone for the first time after their wedding. Graham Petrie calls this a strong sequence:

> The intensity of Lillian Gish's performance combines with Sjöström's directorial skill to create a complex pattern of repulsion and attraction, conciliation and antagonism, evasion and misunderstanding, through gesture, movement, facial expression, camera angle, and the bare, uncluttered setting that both allows the emotions to evolve without visual distraction and serves as a reminder of the bleak future awaiting Letty in her married life.[35]

How, then, is this pattern created? Lige approaches Letty awkwardly, and then shows her the bedroom, brushing sand off the bedspread. As he leaves the room and closes the door, she lets down her hair, as he is shown in a crosscutting, preparing coffee. She reacts once again to some off-screen sound, which is followed by a cut-in of an exterior shot of the house in the whirling sandstorm. He enters again, offering her the coffee, which she pours out while he isn't looking. She picks up the comb again and frantically tugs at her hair in order to divert his attention. He leaves the room. At that point, the cutting alternates between the two rooms, where husband and wife are each pacing back and forth – bound together by the same frustration and by the cut-in shots of wind howling outside the house – an image of dysfunctional, or unconsummated sexuality.

Lige marches rapidly out of the bedroom, leaving her there and closing the door behind him, thus creating a double space with the couple separated by the door, not dissimilar to the previously mentioned scene in The Phantom Carriage with husband and wife on each side of the door: this scene is repeated twice, first as he threatens her with an axe, and then when he seeks reconciliation before it is too late. It thus suggests the double possibility of the door, to

separate or reunite the couple. In The Wind, a dissolve from Lige to Letty behind the closed door is followed by another dissolve from her to a close-up of his boots, as he walks across the room and turns around. Then another dissolve from his boots to an exterior shot of the house in the sandstorm, an image inserted earlier in the preceding scene where it was presented as a subjective image, introduced by a shot where she obviously reacts to the sound of the wind. Here, it is immediately followed by a dissolve back to Letty walking around, her eyes opened in horror in the characteristic way that associates the wind, confirming once again the subjective status of the image. At this point, the dissolves are replaced by cuts. First to his boots, as he once again walks across the room and turns around, aiming at the can in which he previously had served her coffee, and then – for the first time – to her shoes turned in the direction "toward him." A new cut back to his boots shows him kicking the can, which is followed by a cut across the line to a reverse angle where it lands in the direction of the door. After the next cut, there is only a brief glimpse of her shoes as she tramples on the spot. The following cut takes the spectator back to his shoes as he takes a run. Then, in a shot of the lower part of the door, it is flung open and his boots are seen entering and then hesitating for a moment. In the next cut, her shoes are shown as she takes a step backward – cut to his boots moving forward – cut back to her shoes, showing his boots arriving into the same image frame. The last cut in the scene changes from the previous low angle to a medium shot of the couple as he embraces her violently, which leads to her disgust and hatred.

Lige then leaves Letty alone in the room, promising never to touch her again, and closes the door between them with a definitive gesture; it confirms that she is now forever enclosed, alone, into the space that she never wanted to enter. The frontier between these two indoor spaces is much more absolute than the fragile borderline between the house and the surrounding outdoor space. This is revealed when she starts sobbing, hiding her face in her hands, but soon enough she takes her hands from her eyes again, listening, which is followed by an exterior shot of sand whirling in the direction of the camera, seemingly towards her. This demonstrates the increasing degree of her tension; her reaction to the sound of the wind is not only shown as before, by the more neutral exterior image of the house in the storm, but it is further emphasized by the wind and the sand attacking her. An intertitle summarizes her sombre state of mind: "Wind . . . sand . . . sand . . . wind . . . yesterday . . . tomorrow . . . forever . . . –".

From Physical Space to Mental Space

The next shot returns at first to the low angle close-up device dominating the preceding sequence, showing Letty's feet together with a broom as she sweeps the floor in the apparent calm of the morning. Lige's feet pass by and leave the house as he picks up his hat and closes the front door in a gesture repeating that of the night before, the sand blowing into the house. She looks out through the window at a group of men gathered in front of the house, her solitude being accentuated, firstly, by her indoor isolation and the sand whirling outside, and secondly by Lige returning to pick up his jacket before leaving. This is confirmed by the next intertitle, as she begs: "Take me with you Lige – I'll go mad here – alone with that wind –." Her initiative makes her dominate the doors for a while: she closes the door separating the rooms of the house and then opens and closes the front door as she leaves, for the first time voluntarily entering the domain of the winds. However, the attempt ends in a fatality: first, she has to get off her own horse in the strong wind, and then she falls from Lige's horse, seemingly blown off; thus Sourdough has to take her back to the ranch. After the insertion of a shot of several carrions, Lige for the first time predicts the arrival of the northern wind, discovered through his binoculars.

In the shot following their return, Sourdough stands by the window singing a sombre tune –''Oh bury me not on the lone prairie" – after which he starts talking about "norther weather" and "when that Satan hoss o' the Injuns starts to snort–!," thereby doubly announcing the arrival of the northern wind. Letty responds to this by turning her gaze inwards. A dissolve to the phantasmatic ghost horse evoked by Sourdough leaves the image of the horse in double exposure, only gradually disappearing from the screen over the image of the thoughtful Letty, who seems slightly dizzy. Upon the arrival of a visitor a few minutes later who announces the imminent arrival of an injured man, Sourdough throws out a handful of sand, only to let more sand blow in. As the man is carried into the house, wounded and wrapped in a blanket, Letty fears for a second that it might be Lige – the first sign of her caring about him – but as it turns out to be Roddy, she fears instead that he is going to stay. Throughout the film, the two men are doubled on several occasions, where Letty mistakes one for the other. This doubling of men, associated with the image of the horse in double exposure, adds strongly to the Gothic quality of the film, but also underlines their shared narrative function: both represent the threat of sexual violence. They are both on the side of the wind, constraining and invading.

In the next shot, the exhausted Roddy covers his face with his hand. In a dissolve, where the subjective character of the image is marked by the same intense staring from Letty as in the sequences with the ghost horse, he is shown looking

up, smiling towards her with sadistic pleasure and widened eyes. Another dissolve takes the spectator back to the real image of his hand covering the face. After a cut back to the staring Letty, her eyes are instead turned off screen, and a new cut to the exterior with the sand violently blowing shows what has captured her attention, after which the image fades out to black. All the more violent is the contrast to the next shot, where Letty stands in front of a blossoming hedge, in an airy dress and a wide-brimmed summer hat. This picture dissolves into an extreme close-up of a pair of widened eyes seen looking through a stereoscope, indeed a scaring image – the most extreme example of the attention to details cited above as a reoccurring feature in the film's stylistic design. The stereoscope also adds yet another aspect to the already introduced Gothic theme of doubling. A new dissolve, slightly reassuring, presents Roddy in medium shot as he looks through the stereoscope at Letty's image on what turns out to be the photograph that filled the screen shortly before. His smile when he takes out the photo, however, is all but reassuring.

In the following sequence, the announced threats come true, with the arrival of the wind. Letty, who is washing dishes in sand, listens as he reminds her of what he told her when they first met in the train, that the wind drives people – and women in particular – crazy. As she tears out her hair reacting to this, Roddy adds, ominously: "Well – *it's doing it*!" To her original claustrophobia as a housewife is now added an increasingly hysterical and neurotic response to her entrapment. Immediately after her lame protest –"I'm not afraid of the wind. I – I – like it!", the frame is covered by an image of a window opening towards the uncontrolled forces of wind and sand. The next cut shows her looking towards the sky, whereas the cut introduces her subjective image of the dark clouds. In the following cut, the same window is shown from the outside, still with her regard turned upwards. The verbal threat prefigures the visual threat of his embracing her, showing her being completely lost in the wind while he still strives to maintain control both over Letty herself and her whereabouts. He talks of the spring in Virginia while she looks out at the sand, deeply frightened. Their conversation is momentarily interrupted by Lige's return: "– old norther's here! Hosses are comin' down from the mountains in thousands –!" He takes Roddy with him – "Every man is needed for the round up" – leaving Letty behind, alone in the empty house, her hand reaching out as for help and her eyes wide open in despair. For a moment, she goes out in the wind, reaching out in the empty air once again, but she is forced to go back into house after a short moment. This is her first attempt to dominate the wind actively, which thus turns out unsuccessfully.

Immediately after joining the group of men, Roddy is seen turning back to where he came from. After a crosscutting sequence showing the group of men disappearing into the desert-like landscape and Roddy alone riding in the op-

posite direction, a shot of the men absorbed into the prairie, visually covered by the whirling sand, dissolves into an interior with a lamp swinging back and forth from the ceiling. This creates a pattern of stripes on the wall that makes the whole space seem turned over. This introduces the most central scene as concerns the gradual intertwining between Letty and the wind, and the most elaborate subjective sequence in the film, where Letty's state of mind seems to dictate the whole course of events. Through the dissolve, the sand and the lamp overlap for a moment, finally merging interior and exterior space. A cut to Letty cowering in a corner is followed by an exterior shot in the storm, blowing the sand over the house and partly effacing it, the big distance to the house further emphasizing its smallness and vulnerability, and its exposure to the merciless forces of nature. Next cut, back to interior, shows her raising her eyes with a savage look, while the house seems to be vibrating. The following exterior shot shows a herd of cows breaking their fence, after which a cut back to interior space shows that the boundary between them has been crossed once and for all, as the sand whirls into the house through a hole in the wall. Furthermore, this is confirmed by crosscutting between inner and outer space where the sand keeps whirling ever more violently. At first, Letty seems completely paralyzed as the table lamp is overturned and starts a fire, but finally she pulls herself together and puts out the threatening flames. The ceiling lamp keeps swinging as she drifts about the room, overwhelmed by her dizziness, and the whole space around her seems to be swinging. In Emmanuelle André's words,

> Letty alone fights the wind during the nocturnal storm, thus her body becomes the carrier around which space is organized, submitted to disturbances such as the soil giving away under her feet. [. . .] The frame (of the film) has taken hold of space, which implodes against the figure of Letty until the creation of a purely mental space.[36]

Then a hand is shown knocking at the front door, which is almost blown open at this point. Another shot of the hand knocking is followed by her opening of the door, but only to be knocked down by the wind. In the close-ups of the hand, however, it remains unclear whether it is a real hand or just a subjective vision attributed to Letty in her tense state. Subjective space has merged with objective, and inner and outer have become one. Interior space offers no longer any protection or safety. As she finally lets the visitor in, she is blown down by the storm. The visitor closes the door behind him and embraces her violently. Upon her discovery, taking off his hat, that it is Roddy, the door is blown open again, interrupting the embrace. Consequently, as inner and outer have merged, the wind also seems to blow her out and about again into the whirling sand, roving about; where her vision of the ghost horse – the force of the northern – is once again cut in as her subjective vision. As she literally blows back into inter-

ior space again, scared more by her vision than by the blowing sand, the vision returns, confirming that no protection is to be found, neither outdoor nor indoor. Her feminine enclosure has now definitely been violated. Upon this insight, she faints. Roddy carries her to bed and bars the door behind her, in a vain attempt to close-up the house. This turns out to be a highly ambiguous movement, which is just as threatening as it might be securing. The next shot of the galloping horse has been interpreted as a means of visualising his outrage. In Letty's imagination, the wind is now seen "as a sexual threat, 'a demon lover' intent on violating her body and mind".[37] In Scarborough's phrasing: "She saw the wind as a black stallion with mane-a-stream, and hoofs of fire, speeding across the trackless plains, deathless, defiant!"[38]

This is followed by a shot of a black screen, creating a pause in the narrative flow. This way of visualizing – or, rather, avoiding to show – the rape described in the novel deserves further comment. The Production Code, which had just begun to take hold in the late 1920s, stated that representations of rape "should never be more than suggested, only when essential for the plot, and even then never shown by explicit method", as part of a general strategy to strive for the "elision or effacement of sensitive subjects".[39] This was not only the case within cinema. On the contrary, film culture seemed to rely heavily on other, earlier forms of representation – within literature and drama in particular – in its avoidance of an explicit dealing with the subject; probably a result both of a certain "textual anxiety" (to use a term coined by Lynn A. Higgins and Brenda R. Silver), which also tends to reproduce itself in contradictory discourses, and of censorship, explicit or implicit. In Higgins and Silver's intermedial analysis of rape and representation they show that: "What remains is a conspicuous absence: a configuration where sexual violence against women is an origin of social relations and narratives in which the event itself is subsequently elided"; moreover, this is pointed out as a "basic conceptual principle" both within social and aesthetic contexts.[40] Here, as we have seen, this elision coincides with the merging of images of natural forces: the stallion, the wind.

The Final Crossover

The next shot, to exterior, reveals the landscape in the unexpected calm of the morning, which is followed by an interior: a shot from behind, gradually closing in on Letty's head and shoulders. This recalls the first shot of Letty in the train, captured from behind by Roddy's gaze, thus holding her in his grip. Here, the circle closes. But the way out of this grip is also indicated in the next shot, by a close-up of Roddy's holster on the table beside her. When Roddy

opens the front door later in the sequence, a sandbank wells in, and he tries in vain to bar the door with a spade. This shows first of all that he has become unable to dominate and enclose her in interior space. Secondly, it prefigures Roddy's own burial in the sand. Thirdly, it also affirms for the last time the definite merger between indoor and outdoor space. It is as though this shot in the calm of the morning finally confirms what had already been revealed in the dramatic images of the evening before.

*Fig. 14: The female avenger pulling the trigger (*The Wind*).*

As Roddy in the next shot-countershot sequence tries to convince Letty to leave with him, threatening with the fact that Lige would want to kill them both, the wind keeps blowing in their hair. As she struggles to get away from him, the barking dog – which already barked in her support during the preceding sequence – seems to take her party. During the whole sequence that follows, their visual separation is emphasized. (FIG. 14) They are united only as she unexpectedly pulls the trigger, killing him, which immediately separates them once again. This leads to a series of shots of the dog barking, of Roddy lying dead on the floor, of the sand blowing into the house and of her trying in vain to dig his

grave in the storm. The outcome of these vain attempts, however, remain completely unclear until the moment when she is captured through the window from the exterior, staring out madly, apparently at the sight of something horrifying. The next sequence, followed by a more desperate shot of Letty, shows Roddy's face appearing in the sand outside the house. This, which was originally supposed to be the ending, follows Scarborough's novel closely, where the wind refuses to cover her secret. In Susan Kollin's description: "After she discovers the exposed corpse on the ground outside her home, the wind revealing the guilty act she has tried to keep hidden, Letty loses her already tenuous grip on reality and runs frantically outside into the punishing wind."[41]

The earlier sequence where Roddy knocked at the door is now, interestingly, revisited in the added last sequence of the film. Here, an anonymous hand tries to open the door and move the spade in a manner similar to that of Roddy's before, just as Letty has had her vision of Roddy's face and rediscovered his hat left behind on the table. Letty's subjective fear is all the more accentuated by the fact that the cut-in to the hand – which afterwards turns out to be Lige's – is followed by shots of her turning over the table and throwing herself on the bed, her previously well-arranged hair now once and for all let loose by the wind. In a complete reversal of the earlier ending, Lige – after having looked out in vain in the sand for proof to support her account of having killed Roddy – now concludes: "Wind's mighty odd – if you kill a man in justice – it allers covers him up!" The subjective sequence in the film immediately following Lige's statement about the wind administering justice, that momentarily unites Letty with Roddy, is also closely related to the following reconciliation scene at the end of the film when Letty and Lige finally embrace. After this, the front door is blown open once again, repeating the involuntary opening in the earlier scene with Roddy embracing Letty, but now following Lige's and Letty's embrace. Lige, hesitating, asks: "But the wind, Letty – won't you always be afraid of it?" In response, Letty walks across the room and stands before the door, her face to the raging wind as it flings her unbound hair backward: "I'm not afraid of the wind – I'm not afraid of anything now – !" Even though this has been added to the original ending, it is well integrated in the film in several respects.[42] (FIG. 15) First of all, her mad look of fear associated with the wind throughout the film reappears for a short moment just before her final statement on not being afraid, which questions the whole happy ending revealing that the conflict between the woman and the wind might still be there, unresolved. Secondly, it parallels exactly an earlier scene where she flees from Roddy out into the threatening landscape dominated by wind and sand, where she finally collapses, becoming a prey to Roddy. Visually the two scenes are constructed according to exactly the same pattern, as she exits the door, facing the wind with her arms wide open. Here, on the contrary, emphasis is placed on the contrast between

her being dominated by the wind and her fears, incarnated by Roddy who was the first to announce them, and her newly acquired hope of freedom together with Lige.

*Fig. 15: "I'm not afraid of the wind – I'm not afraid of anything now –!" Happy ending? (*The Wind*).*

Through the close reading of the subjective sequences and the development of the story of the wind, a specific connection between the wind and the men in the story is revealed. This connection is also intimately associated with the problematic image of masculinity that the film provides. And the new environment in which Letty arrives is indeed a man's world. Men riding over the prairie chasing wild horses, or men competing by shooting – the conditions for life in this context are exclusively set by men. The only woman in the film, except for Letty herself, is Cora, her cousin's wife. In a key sequence in the first part of the film, which characterizes their relation, Letty, still merry and girlish in her way of acting, is wearing a light dress and ironing another. Cora, in countershot, dressed in a big butcher's apron, is tearing out the heart from a dead cow hanging from the ceiling, with an enormous knife in her hand. Their conflict is thus as much grounded in the contrast established in the narration between the one's

femininity and the other's masculinity, as in the suggested jealousy between them. The story also seems to indicate that any ambivalence in Letty's relation to the cousin would be on his side. Letty's girlish manners and childlike spontaneity in the first part of the film also contrast to the cousin's, carrying her over the threshold like a bride, as she enters his house for the first time.

Throughout the film, the wind is portrayed as a penetrating force; windows and doors are repeatedly violated by its power. Thus, Letty is gradually more and more exposed to her double fear: that of men – Lige, Roddy – and that of the northern wind, represented by the stallion of her phantasmatic visions, the two fears being more and more intertwined, as shown in the analysis above. The novel as well as the film reverse "the conventional gendering of landscape as female", as Letty "describes nature and the wind as male entities".[43] Gradually, however, she also strives to conquer her general fear of masculinity.

In the first step, she makes an attempt to penetrate by her own force the domain of the wind, only to be overpowered by its force. In the second step, she is blown out in the wind, after discovering that the wrong man has entered her private space, but through the merciless force of the wind, she is unresistingly blown back into the house. Thirdly, she actively penetrates the space of the wind as she tries to bury Roddy, after shooting him. According to her own judgement, in retrospect, her own project to free herself has failed, but Lige upon his return assures her that she was right, in the intertitle quoted above. Only through Letty's victory over Roddy by means of his own weapon – the revolver left behind on the table – is she able to conquer surrounding space by her own force. Thus, in the fourth step, she is eventually capable of overcoming her fear, if not unambiguously, so at least through the victory of her will. Here she is reconciled both with Lige, the man that she has married, and with the wind, which she is finally facing without being afraid, though still actively evoking her previous short-comings. Through Letty's multiple victory over the wind in the end, its domination is questioned, and consequently also the male dominance which throughout the film has become one with the wind.

Ray Tumbleson, who has compared *The Wind* to Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* (1748), the most influential novel of the eighteenth century, notes that the endings of the novels are identical in spite of almost 200 years separating them. The classic story of victimization is repeated, where a woman who has been raped, even in a state of unconsciousness, may never be restored, but has to be sacrificed, as – in Tumbleson's words – "bodily pollution [is] irremediable, final and fatal, and – as in the Roman legend of Lucretia – reconcilable with spiritual purity only through death".[44] However, it is particularly noteworthy that the film version brought about a change, as the dominantly female collective behind the film – Gish and Marion – tried hard to keep the original version. Frances Marion comments in her memoirs:

> Then came the blow – not from the Texas wind, but from the Eastern office – the picture must have a happy ending! Naturally, we created our own storm, to no avail. [...] I made some genteel remark like, "Oh hell, what's the use? If that's what they want, we'll write a happy ending to Romeo and Juliet!"[45]

And Gish recalls in an interview: "One unhappy ending could ruin your career, and I had already had seven! So we were forced to tack on a happy ending, which we all felt was morally unjust."[46] Their main argument was to defend art, partly perhaps as they strove to claim a legitimate place as artists within a male-dominated film industry. As Ray Tumbleson somewhat ironically puts it:

> The exhibitors, the crass money men – and they generally were men – forced the artists to compromise their standards in order to propitiate perceived mass-market preferences; or, to put the matter another way, they refused to let the heroine suffer death for the crime of having been raped.[47]

For purely commercial reasons, they thus had to accept the change of ending, and Lillian Gish, instead of appearing in yet another role as a virginal, Victorian victim, as she had already done in her seven earlier films with unhappy endings, now paves the way for a new heroine who not only survives, but is allowed to triumph both over her fear and over physical violation, and to appear in the end as man's equal.

The domination of man over nature, quoted initially in the film from Scarborough's novel, is thus displaced throughout the film. Its imagery of male dominance over female nature, "gradually wresting away her strange secrets, subduing her fierce elements", is transformed into a story of a woman conquering nature, in the double guise of man and of the wind, of a woman who has "come into the domain of the winds" to stay there.

Fragmented Pieces: Writing the History of the Lost Hollywood Films

The historiographical question of how to deal with lost or only partly preserved material has been asked repeatedly by film scholars and archivists, in particular those dealing with the silent era. Perhaps the most elaborate account of the question has been offered by Giuliana Bruno in her groundbreaking study *Streetwalking on a Ruined Map*, on the films by Elvira Notari.[1] Notari's films are to a large extent unpreserved, and there is little documentation on the production company in which she was the driving force. In this book, the author thus aims at "looking differently": "While dissecting the minute and the microhistorical, my study maps out epistemological paradigms. Like a filmmaker using a rack-focus, I attempt to connect the analytic detail with a panoramic vision."[2]

In the present study, the aim is more modest, though the method is similar, to quote Bruno again: "The fragmentary textual body [...] called for an 'archaeological' textual approach."[3] As she notes, this is just as true of Notari as of many other cases of loss within silent cinema; indeed, research in film studies often comes close to the tonality or the mode of archaeology, its subject being made up to a large extent of gaps and voids. Also, film history seems to share the very process of knowledge with archaeology, as both are made up by the investigation of indexical signs. Just like Bruno's work on Notari, my study of fragments in the case of Sjöström also "involves analysis that wanders across a field marked by various lacunae whose texture is larger than the remanence of complete texts".[4] However, as far as Sjöström is concerned, the preserved material offers at least some possibilities to approach the films, especially if the research question, as in the present study, encompasses the larger question of film cultures with all their different aspects included, and not only the (non) preserved copies of the works themselves. Here, the Hollywood mode of production, with its rigorous systems for different stages of scriptwriting or documenting the filmmaking process in general, has proved to be helpful to the historian. In any case, both lost and preserved material turns out to be equally important; as Éric de Kuyper so aptly put it, the holes count just as much as the cheese.[5]

The method, however, is not that different from the one adopted for this study as a whole, where the dynamics between lost and preserved is constantly

present. In discussing this relation, Paolo Cherchi Usai takes on an even more radical standpoint by claiming that: "it is the destruction of moving images that makes film history possible" at all – as it is only the past that "presents us with a limited set of choices on which to exercise such knowledge as we are able to glean from the range of perspectives that remain".[6] As Cherchi Usai rightly reminds the researcher, "history is filled with traps", and the first trap for a film historian "is a very treacherous one: however much a film may seem to be complete, some parts of it may not belong to the 'original' work".[7] Indeed, as he concludes: "The 'original' version of a film is a multiple object fragmented into a number of different entities equal to the number of surviving copies."[8] This insight indeed diminishes the gap between lost films, surviving film fragments and preserved and restored "complete" copies; they should all be dealt with and analyzed as fragments of a larger cinematic or cultural history.

Two of Sjöström's Hollywood films seem to be (at least to this date) completely lost – The Tower of Lies and The Masks of the Devil – whereas two – in addition to Name the Man – are partly preserved: from Confessions of a Queen, the first to the fourth reels remain, as well as a fragment from the seventh reel.[9] In the case of The Divine Woman, the third reel is preserved almost in its entirety.[10] In these four cases, however, the cutting continuity scripts are preserved, in addition to the original scripts in the two cases of The Divine Woman and The Masks of the Devil. In the case of the latter, a preserved Daily Production Report has also been recently discovered.[11] All this material offers good opportunities to study at least the original conception of the films, if not their realization on screen, and in the cases of the remaining fragments, also to compare the different sources in the "virtual" and (parts of the) "actual" versions of the films.

The aim in this chapter is thus not to try to make up for the losses by analyzing the films as a whole, as this "whole" can be nothing other than a construction. Rather, what I attempt to do is to look for traces of Sjöström's authorial signature in the sense that this signature has emerged through the analyses in the previous chapters, and, to the degree that it is possible, also look at these films in the context of their production.

Authorial imprints: Confessions of a Queen

The shooting of Confessions of a Queen started only two weeks after the premiere of He Who Gets Slapped, in mid-November 1924. The film took only four weeks to make and it premiered on 30 March 1925. The script, by Agnes

Christine Johnston, was based on Alphonse Daudet's novel *Kings in Exile* (*Les rois en exil*, 1879). The change of the narrative perspective from king to queen is worth noting. The film stands in interesting contrast to Sjöström's previous success; neither the critics nor the audience liked it. Bengt Forslund speculates on the possibility that the film might originally have been intended for Rex Ingram to direct, as his wife, Alice Terry, as well as Lewis Stone, who both starred in Ingram's Scaramouche (1923), produced by Metro, also play the leading roles in this film.[12]

The plot is simple: King Christian of Illyria (Lewis Stone) leads a decadent life. He has married the princess from a neighbouring kingdom (Alice Terry), but he cares more for his mistress Sephora (Helena d'Algy) than for his country or for his wife. The queen in turn is courted by the king's cousin, Prince Alexei (John Bowers). The king's behaviour leads to revolution. The king is willing to abdicate, but his wife refuses, and they both flee to Paris. Here, however, he discovers that he really cares for his wife after all. His life is put in danger as his mistress turns out to be in league with the revolutionaries. As he abdicates in favour of his son, the couple remain united.

This film in several respects is less elaborate than the director's other Hollywood films. This may partly have been due to the film being produced in such haste, but probably partly also to the previously mentioned fact that he, as a director, to a large extent seems to have chosen to subordinate his wishes to the demands of the script which was, in this case, a straightforward, realist story. However, adapting to the Hollywood system with its normally very strict division of labour between scriptwriter and director also seems to have been difficult for Sjöström (perhaps particularly so after having worked himself as scriptwriter for He Who Gets Slapped), as a letter to writer – and former Sjöström scriptwriter, with whom he had worked in close collaboration during the Swedish years – Hjalmar Bergman about Confessions of a Queen (1925) and the script for his next film The Tower of Lies (1925) indicates:

> In any case, I may delight your false heart with the news that I have made a bad film since I last wrote to you. At least, so I'm afraid. But it isn't all that easy, I must say, as there are so many things to take into consideration, and the limitations so sharp. My desire to quit this job becomes stronger from day to day. For the moment, I am in the midst of searching for a new film subject. Selma Lagerlöf's "The Emperor of Portugallia" has been brought up, but I still don't know what will become of this idea. I'm afraid there will be so many changes – "in order to suit the American audience" – that nothing will be left of the book, as in my last film.[13]

This letter, however, should perhaps not be interpreted literally. It seems plausible that it may voice Sjöström's scruples, having refused to shoot a Hjalmar Bergman script which, in turn, led to his leaving Hollywood. Still, in addition

to the letter to Bergman, Sjöström also wrote to Julius Jaenzon the same day complaining about the photographers and their lack of courage to do anything new: he feels as if he was working in a factory, where trash work is given priority and both innovation and care are set aside.[14] Swedish critics, like Sven Stolpe, also remained ambivalent on a more general level:

> The great problem for Victor Sjöström during his stay in Hollywood – may it soon come to an end – has been to avoid being transformed into Seastrom. So far, he has been successful. In spite of great difficulties, which have to be kept in mind by anyone who picks up a pen in order to evaluate his American productions, Sjöström has remained European. The rustling dollar bills have not made him give up the invaluable cultural tradition which places the European one step higher than the American. On the other hand, Sjöström has learned a great deal from the Yankees. His art is still essential, it has remained serious and kept its human truth, but he has sharpened his eye and become more light-handed.[15]

Other critics found the film to be minor, but still "incomparably superior to the standard productions that the dollar country spreads over the world: if it doesn't move, at least it entertains and diverts".[16] This duality between the great Swedish artist and the gigantic Hollywood machinery reappeared as a favourite figure in the rhetorics of many critics.

It is striking that the images from the preserved fragment of the film bear a strong resemblance to the illustrated facsimile of the novel, with which Sjöström was undoubtedly familiar. This recalls his working method from the Swedish period, where, more than once, illustrations from the novels directly inspired the mise-en-scène of the films. John Fullerton has shown in an early essay on A Man There Was that a number of scenes were inspired by Christian Krogh's illustrations for the 1905 edition of Ibsen's poem, which Sjöström undoubtedly had seen.[17] A similar connection between book illustrations and film images is also possible in the case of The Monastery of Sendomir – Franz Grillparzer's novel from 1828 and Sjöström's film from 1920. Here, the first Swedish version of Grillparzer's novel, with vignettes by David Tägtström, has clear similarities to Sjöström's compositions.[18]

Two details from the preserved fragment of the film are also particularly noteworthy, as they still seem to evidence Sjöström's authorial signature in a work with which he was otherwise rather unhappy. The first detail occurs in connection with the opening titles, where the narrator's hand – according to the title of the film: the queen – is seen opening a diary. However, this diary seems to bear the characteristic handwriting of Sjöström himself. The diary reads: "The world has heard many stories of the reign of that gay monarch Christian II, whose behavior was the scandal of Europe. But the world has not yet heard the truth _ _ _ ." As a signature, this recalls the imprint of Lang's

hand in his films, which also seems to mark the imprint of his films "on the audience, on film history".[19]

The other scene occurs as the king, under pressure from the revolutionaries, pretends to give in to their demands, but at the very moment where he is supposed to sign his abdication he, instead, sketches, or rather draws, a caricature of the leader of the revolution. The leader – and even more the portrait – shows a striking resemblance to that of Swedish social democrat leader, Hjalmar Branting, who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1921 and died in 1925, the same year Sjöström's film premiered. The importance of the portrait is underlined as it occurs twice in the narration: firstly as chaos breaks loose when the revolutionaries realize that the king has not signed his abdication, and secondly, in the prolonged chaos as they search for the king who has disappeared. Something then appears wrapped in a package that at first seems to contain the remains of a corpse, but instead turns out to be the portrait sketched by the king, wrapped in cloth. This creates a complex circuit between portrait and text, as well as between fiction and reality. It also makes the example a *construction en abîme* in Iampolski's sense. In his phrasing, inspired by Gérard Genette: "A quote becomes a hyperquote whenever one source is insufficient for its integration into the fabric of a text."[20] Thus, a "hyperquotation", according to Iampolski, is dependent on the connections not only between image and text (in this case, the novel) but also includes at least a third part: the relation between film, novel and reality reference.[21] This, too, connects to Bruno's discussion of hypertextuality, which shows various nuances of textual relations, as well as on the "dialogic palimpsest", a concept equally derived from Genette, as the "working on *vacuum*, gaps, and journeys of intersection with other text (ur)al forms" does open for new intertextual relations.[22] Yet another dimension to this circuit is added when Sjöström, back in Sweden in the 1930s, plays the role of Hjalmar Branting in the film Mot nya tider (Towards New Times, Sigurd Wallén, 1939), where, significantly, he seems to bear a resemblance to the revolutionary leader in Confessions of a Queen. (FIG. 16 and 17)

In this sense, this scene in Confessions of a Queen creates an infinite mirroring effect, where film and reality meet in an ultimate interplay. Thus, Sjöström clearly seems to have sought to mark his presence in this work, in spite of the scepticism that he had voiced on its behalf. It is tempting to assume that the fact that he was not able to do so in any sense that would really make a difference, especially not compared to the film that he directed immediately before, led to those ideas of a more marginal influence, but still perfectly discernable as such.

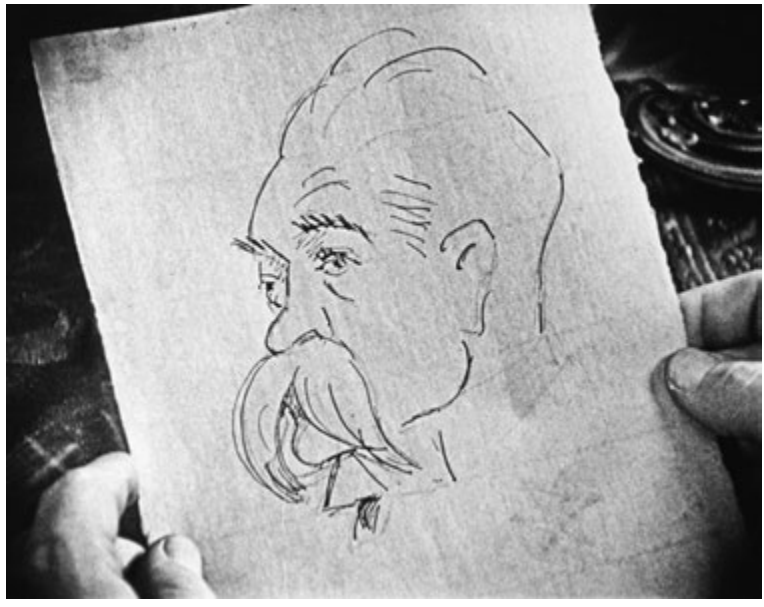

Fig. 16: A caricature of Hjalmar Branting in Confessions of a Queen*?*

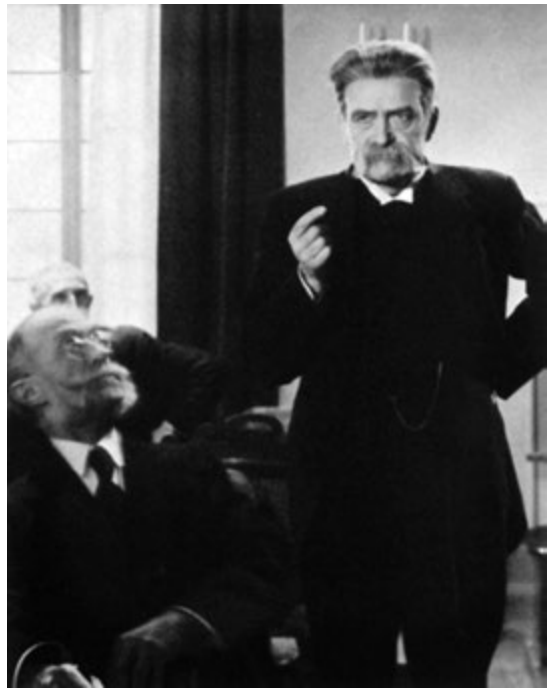

Fig. 17: Victor Sjöström as Hjalmar Branting in Towards New Times.

Lagerlöf in Hollywood: The Tower of Lies

The Tower of Lies is probably the film by Sjöström of which the complete loss has been the most regretted by film historians, as it was based on a novel by Selma Lagerlöf: *The Emperor of Portugallia*. Had the film been preserved, it would have offered unique possibilities to compare Sjöström's work within the two different modes of production, as it is the only American screen version of a Lagerlöf novel, the Swedish Nobel Prize winner whose literary sources brought Sjöström his greatest fame as a director during the Swedish period. Still, the surviving cutting continuity script provides some clues, as well as other preserved source materials, such as production stills, reviews and comments.

The film was scripted by Agnes Christine Johnston, the same scriptwriter on Confessions of a Queen, together with Max Marcin, who later made an unsuccessful attempt to write a script for The Scarlet Letter. The film starred, as in the successful He Who Gets Slapped, Lon Chaney and Norma Shearer. The farmer Jan has one daughter, Glory (in Lagerlöf's novel, she is called Klara-Gulla), whom he adores and idealizes, and who brings joy to his hard life. When their landlord dies, his ruthless son withdraws credit from his tenants. Glory goes to the city to get the money, but the son follows and seduces her. She gets the money and returns, but Jan goes mad when realizing that his daughter has sold her body. Glory is about to leave again on a boat, as the landlord's son falls into the paddle wheels and dies. Jan, trying to follow, falls off the pier and drowns. Glory then returns and marries her childhood sweetheart, August (William Haines). The film was shot during one month, starting on 6 May 1925, and premiered on 11 October. (FIG. 18)

The film was ambiguously received by the critics. Mordaunt Hall, as usual, commented it in *The New York Times*, this time quite sceptically: "As this Swedish narrative is told, it is more of a short story or a sketch than a photodrama."[23] However, he concludes that: "in certain stretches, the hand of Victor Seastrom, the artist, is revealed."[24] In *Photoplay*, the critic states that: "If the director had been as concerned with telling the story as he was with thinking up symbolic scenes, this would have been a great picture. As it is, Victor Seastrom was so busy being artistic that he forgot to be human."[25]

This is the first time that a new theme appears in the reviews, where Sjöström is accused of being a formalist at the cost of precisely those human, dramatic or psychological qualities that formerly had been celebrated, not least in his Swedish productions. However, the film was also praised in particular for its narrative techniques, this time more elaborated. Forslund has also quoted an American critic in this connection:

Fig. 18: Production still from The Tower of Lies*; Norma Shearer in front.*

> [It is] an excellent reason for going to see *The Tower of Lies*. Provided, of course, that you are sincerely interested in the progress of picture making and experimentation. For this picture is different. It is an attempt to tell a story largely through the powers of suggestion and calls upon the audience to use its imagination instead of anticipating the obvious.[26]

It may thus seem even more strange that the film apparently didn't leave any real imprint in film history. Forslund quotes an essay from 1928 on The Tower of Lies, in a volume on American silents: "One of the finest of the past decade... seems doomed to fade silently into motion picture oblivion, unheralded and unsung."[27] However, before the premiere Sjöström had been granted a trip to Sweden by Mayer, to "study European production methods, gathering ideas for pictures a s o [and so on]".[28] This should also be considered in relation to having received an offer from SF and the German company Universum Film AG (UFA) to take part in a new consortium formed to provide a counterbalance to Hollywood.[29] The offer from Mayer in its turn is interesting as a contrast to the general view of American cinema as the norm; obviously, Hollywood still

thought it might have something to learn – or at least to fear – from European cinema. Any European active in Hollywood might act as a kind of industrial spy, with privileged access to their former cultures of production.

Lacking evidence in form of a print, it remains unknown whether Sjöström was right when he feared that little would be left in the Hollywood version of Lagerlöf's original conception of her story. However, at least, The Tower of Lies contains – according to the cutting continuity script – a type of dissolve familiar in other Sjöström films; a dissolve of the kind establishing a parallel between two different images of one or more persons, by means of which the previously established identity or person is dissolved into the other. This dissolve takes place when the daughter returns and condenses into three shots the transformation of the girl with her changing guises: the returning girl of the present, the city girl and the girl in the role assigned to her by the father in her childhood games.

No 125 (Reel 5)	MS Glory
	Dissolve to
	Party Dress
	Dissolve to
	Empress Dress
126CS	Jan in door
127	Empress Dress
	Dissolve to
	Glory[30]

Analogies are established between Glory's different identities, as imagined by Jan; they represent different or even contradictory aspects of her personality as they have been established throughout the plot. These contradictions all converge in the image of the father looking. It is through his eyes that the spectator discovers the multiple identities of the daughter. This kind of dissolve recalls those in He Who Gets Slapped, but just as much in crucial dissolves from the Swedish period, like the one already mentioned from The Monastery of Sendomir, but perhaps especially those in Love's Crucible.

The plot of Love's Crucible unfolds in the late Middle Ages. Charged with having poisoned her husband, Ursula, the female protagonist, must walk through fire towards a large crucifix in order to prove her innocence. An initial shot in which she is about to embark on her ordeal is followed by an image of a crucifix. A dissolve transforms Christ on the cross into her dead husband, who is brought back to life. The following dissolve returns her husband to an earlier stage of his life as the cross fades out. Back to Ursula in the fire, whereby she also dissolves to a previous period of her life. After a cut, you see her husband walking towards her with his arms outstretched. As they take each other's hands, he steps back and leads her to the right. After a dissolve back to the fire, Ursula's

dead husband escorts her off to the right in the same manner. Once Ursula has finally made her way through the fire, she looks up and sees her husband still hanging there, apparently alive. But he lowers his head to the posture of the dead Christ and then becomes Jesus himself in a final transformation. Thus, the scene employs five successive dissolves. There are several thematic factors that account for and condense the sequence: Ursula's husband was a sculptor, Ursula had modelled for a sculpture of the Virgin Mary, her husband dies of a heart attack and assumes the posture of Christ on the cross. The dissolves serve both as metaphor and as a means of alternating among different timeframes. While Ursula doesn't poison her husband, her intention of doing so is the cause of his heart attack. Thus, the use of metaphor allows for the expression of a twofold forgiveness, both by Christ on the cross and by Ursula's husband.

In this case, just like in The Tower of Lies, another type of *construction en abîme* is created, in Iampolski's phrasing emphasizing "the play of codes, the palpability of representation, structural isomorphism, and, behind all of this, the flickering gleam of shifting meanings".[31] Because, as he underlines, "no reflection is fully accurate, always involving a variation, a transformation that is stressed by the repetition itself" – which leads to the spectator's witnessing of "the very birth of meaning", which s/he shares with the father in The Tower of Lies.[32]

But The Tower of Lies also seems to have contained another kind of dissolve (which occurred in Name the Man and He Who Gets Slapped, and which would later appear in The Divine Woman). This was mentioned by a Swedish critic who attributed its use to American "modernities":

> If one is supposed to find some directional modernities, it would be possible to point to the many "trick transitions", which is the professional term, for example, his trick to let one image fade into another by dissolving a spinning power-loom wheel with a car tire. Sjöström seems to have fallen in love with this particular kind of transition, which in his latest film appear almost too frequently.[33]

This Swedish critic was obviously not aware of the frequency of the device in Sjöström's previous work, as The Tower of Lies contains fewer dissolves than his other films – seventeen in all, of which six may be said to function as analogy, in the way that has been revealed as Sjöström's particular style.

According to the Swedish trade press, a particular national version of the film was made preceding distribution in Sweden. *Filmjournalen* claims that this version lets the action take place in a Swedish home in America through an intertitle, "in order to avoid all anachronisms", but above all, the happy ending already mentioned, where Glory returns home to marry her love from childhood, has been cut out:

> *The Emperor of Portugallia* is in its Swedish version a tragedy without any redeeming features. The film ends with the poor farmer in his fantastic costume and with death

> in his heart running down to the pier to catch up with his daughter. He is too late, and falls into the water. The last image shows his stick and hat floating on the dark surface... This is the only consequent ending.[34]

The same debate on happy endings would later reoccur, as we have seen, in connection with The Wind. This question of happy endings indeed seems to have become a commonplace in critical discourses on American cinema in the 1920s; a metonymy for the supposed superficiality of Hollywood film culture.

The Divine Woman – From Bernhardt to Garbo

The story in The Divine Woman was originally supposed to portray The Divine Sarah, as the film was scripted by Dorothy Farnum, after a play by Gladys Unger: *Starlight*, about the life of Sarah Bernhardt. However, in the end little seems to have remained of the original Sarah, as the role had been completely adjusted to suit the American image of Garbo the actress: she who would become The Divine Garbo. Thus, this is the picture of the simple country girl who arrives in the big city and meets all of its temptations, making her the biggest of stars. But this means nothing compared to true love...

Marianne (Greta Garbo), a young woman from Brittany neglected by her impoverished parents, longs to be an actress and moves to Paris. Here, she meets theatrical producer Henry Legrande (Lowell Sherman), who had once had an affair with Marianne's mother and now takes care of her daughter. Marianne falls in love with a young deserter, Lucien (Lars Hanson). He steals a dress for her and ends up in jail. Now, Henry starts to court her, and Marianne is thus torn between her love and her loyalty towards the paternal figure. According to the original script, she was supposed to flee to South America with her beloved, but in the film, according to the cutting continuity script, she makes a suicide attempt that fails, whereupon the two lovers are happily reunited.[35] (FIG. 19)

Bengt Forslund has noted that it was the fifth script version of The Divine Woman that received preliminary approval from Irving Thalberg, after which, however, the approval was withdrawn and three more script versions had to be submitted before final approval. Forslund also quotes Sjöström's wife, who is supposed to have said that he shouldn't make "those kinds of films".[36] The Swedish critic in the leading film magazine *Filmjournalen*, though, was rather positive, attributing the film to "our own" Victor Sjöström.[37] These possessive traits appear only late in the director's American career; it is as if the need to remind the audience of his Swedishness became more urgent as time passed, but there is also a vein of Swedish national pride in the comments: through Sjöström, as well as through Garbo, who was also mentioned in the reviews,

Sweden was put on Hollywood's map. Bengt Forslund quotes an American critic who stated that: "Here is a new Garbo, who flutters, who mugs. This interesting reserved lady – the Swedish marvel at emotional massage – goes completely Hollywood, all at once."[38] Obviously, Sjöström's American films were recognized as being more or less in the "Hollywood style", with all that this brought along for better or for worse, depending on the values of the critic or other commentator. (FIG. 20)

*Fig. 19: From a rediscovered fragment: Greta Garbo and Lars Hanson (*The Divine Woman*).*

Most noteworthy in relation to this particular film, however, is that it – perhaps more so than some of the director's other Hollywood productions – appears as a form of popular culture where all kinds of polyphonic voices enter into the text, which, as Bruno has put it, "are interwoven and disseminated with other cultural and narrative forms".[39] If this is less a work by Sjöström the auteur – as the complaint from Edith Erastoff seems to suggest – it takes on new significance as testimony of his integration into the new production context; the predominant fabric of popular culture.

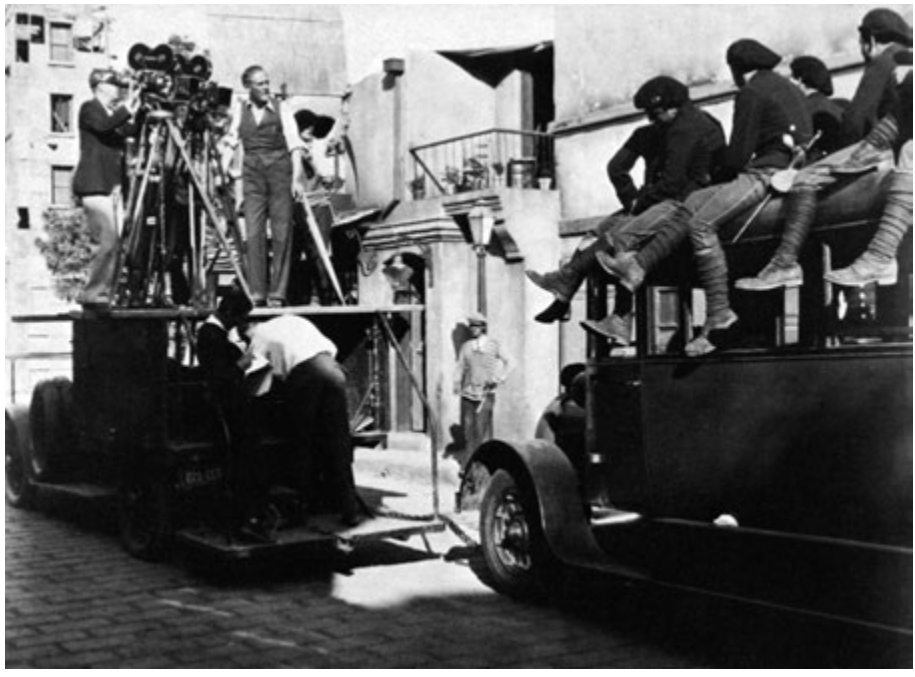

Fig. 20: Production still from The Divine Woman.

However, the authorial imprint is not absent from this work either. In contrast to The Tower of Lies, The Divine Woman contains – according to the cutting continuity script – no less than 54 dissolves, of which only five function as analogies. The majority serve the main purpose of marking spatial transitions, but in several cases, they are organized in a series of several dissolves back and forth in space. The surviving reel of The Divine Woman contains a series of dissolves effectively showing the rapid passing of time, as Lucien visits Marianne and has only a limited time to stay:

> CU Lucien lying on floor – Marianne bends over him.
> CU pendulum-swinging DISSOLVE TO lamp slowly burns out – DISSOLVE TO face of clock to 12 o'clock – DISSOLVE TO LS Lucien on window seat – Marianne sitting a little below him leaning up against him – DISSOLVE TO Lucien and Marianne – she is singing.[40]

In addition, in a part of The Divine Woman which is lost, the cutting continuity script indicates a combination between iris and dissolve similar to that already analyzed in Name the Man:

> No 127 (Reel 5) 1/2 fig. CU Marianne – her hands folded – iris down – showing hands – DISSOLVE TO man's handcuff, IRIS UP revealing Lucien – DISSOLVE TO Ext. Jail

> Wagon – Lucien enters with other prisoners – DISSOLVE TO 3/4 S Marianne and Legrande – he starts to exit.[41]

Not only are the different kinds of bracelet contrasted, but the first sequence appears at a crucial moment summarizing the basic conflict of the story; it is through his love for Marianne, and a theft in order to help her, that Lucien has been caught, while she has got her expensive bracelet as a gift from her rich lover with whom she has betrayed Lucien. This dissolve fills the classical Sjöström function of an analogy. The two dissolves follow within the same sequence mark two spatial transitions, first a transition between two adjacent spaces in the dissolve to the jail wagon, and then to a more distant space, back to Marianne and Legrande which still narratively remains close. Thus, first by analogy and then by spatial transition, this series of dissolves also condenses the triangle drama. This particular series of dissolves was also noted by a critic from the period: "Mr Seastrom revels in sharp contrasts. You see Marianne, who has won wealth and fame on the stage, wearing a sparkling bracelet, and this ornament fades out into a glimpse of the handcuffed wrist of Lucien, the hero." [42]

Interestingly enough, The Divine Woman also contains a prefiguration of a character entering screen space, of the kind that had already become famous during Sjöström's Swedish period in The Outlaw and His Wife, through a shadow cast on screen; though this time, yet another dimension is added as the shadow appears in a medium close-up in a mirror, as a doubly indirect appearance. According to the script: "MLS Mirror-man's shadow enters it from left."[43]

The frequency and variation of the dissolves in this film, together with other devices, shows that the film, though thematically a disaster according to Sjöström's wife, at least stylistically shows a clear continuity to his earlier work. Just like the case of the intruding shadow, they are brought one step further in The Divine Woman by introducing the mirror theme (which, as we have seen, is also familiar from Sjöström's previous work). His next film, The Masks of the Devil, would take both the mirror and the dissolve yet another step further by introducing mental images as an integral part of the narration.

A Strange Interlude: The Masks of the Devil

For The Masks of the Devil, Frances Marion, with whom Sjöström had collaborated in the two Gish classics also starring Lars Hanson, once again wrote the script, this time together with the Dane, Svend Gade, based on Jakob Wassermann's novel, *Die Masken Erwin Reiners* (1910). Marion's scenario dates from 8 February. Svend Gade started co-working on the project in March. Other screenwriters were consulted for further advice. In a letter from Paul Bern, scriptwriter

for NAME THE MAN, he offers a number of critical remarks in early June, as does Monte M. Katterjohn in mid-June. The shooting started on 23 June and lasted for a month. The male lead had been written for John Gilbert; Eva von Berne, who had just been imported to Hollywood by Irving Thalberg, and thus made her American debut, was engaged for the female lead. According to the Daily Production Report, there seems to have been some hesitation concerning this role.

The Daily Production Report from the shooting thus reports in the column "Reason For Delay" on July 2: "Mr. Seastrom in conference with Mr. Thalberg deciding whether the part is to be played by Miss Page or Miss von Berne. Decided to shoot with Miss von Berne, Sent to wardrobe for her dress and touching up her hair."[44] However, the decision still seems to have been preliminary, as the "Reason For Delay" the next day reads: "Looked at Rushes with Mr. Thalberg at 8-15 to decide on part of Virginia. Decided on Miss Berne. Started with dissolve at fireplace at 9-20."[45]

In this connection, it is also interesting to note that there were few retakes; the last report states that the number of retakes during the whole process of shooting was only 42.[46] Instead, there are frequent mentions of rehearsals in the morning, followed by the shooting of the scenes in the afternoon. On 2 July, however, in connection with the decision on the female lead, there were no less than thirteen retakes. Thus, it is clear that, as a rule, retakes weren't made, with the exception of mishaps or exceptional circumstances, such as the hiring of a completely new actress within the Hollywood system. This also testifies to the efficiency of the system – to the benefit of production, but less so for the individual director, who – together with the cutter – had no possibility to choose among takes in the end. This, indeed, is a film factory. (FIG. 21)

On 26 July, the report states: "Company closed last night. Will lay off until Miss von Bern [sic] is able to work." There also exists a report from 27 July, which only states "Production closed as of July 25, 1928", and "Days To Finish (3)". However, there are additional production reports from no less than ten more days in August, where completing scenes with von Berne and one or two other actors who had to be present in the scene were shot, and the number of "Days To Finish" vary from one to two, whereas the number of "Days Behind" are summed up to six in all.[47]

The story is about a Viennese baron, Reiner (John Gilbert), who spends his life pursing beautiful women, and one day falls in love with his best friend's fiancée, Virginia. His former mistress, as she learns of this, kills herself in despair. Her husband then tries to kill Reiner but is, instead, himself killed by accident. Reiner confesses to his friend who also tries to kill him, but in the end, he is saved, and wins the heart of the girl.

Fig. 21: Production still from The Masks of the Devil.

This Sjöström film, like his next and last Hollywood production A Lady to Love, was never reviewed in *Filmjournalen*. Instead, short stories containing summaries of the plots, with some quotations from its dialogues, was published with rich illustrations. It is both tempting and quite plausible to draw the conclusion that this choice resulted from an aesthetic evaluation of the films as being inferior to previous productions. To summarize the general attitude of Swedish critics during Sjöström's American years, the quality of the human drama is often pointed out as the director's distinctive mark. Still, it is clear from the reviews that American know-how is much admired. In conclusion, European qualities or projects have to be cunningly implemented and/or energetically defended in the United States. This mixture of admiration and contempt reoccurs in several reviews. In American reviews, where the same general attitude dominates, the critics still remained quite sceptical about his last Hollywood films, as in the case of The Masks of the Devil: "The characters in this production, which was directed by Victor Seastrom, dangle rather than live, and yet their weird conduct is not uninteresting."[48] As concerns A Lady to Love, after praising Edward G. Robinson, the critic also notes the "striving of the other players toward realism that just misses being excellent".[49] Now, he is

treated as if he were American, i.e. as part of the system. Thus, the emphasis is altered: instead of discussing the particular "Seastrom qualities", with more or less explicit references to his Swedish background, American critics now undertake a general evaluation of his directorial know-how, noting, in particular, his shortcomings.

In The Masks of the Devil, too, dissolves filling the function of analogies appear. However, the most interesting dissolves in this film rather seem to express thoughts or images that would normally only be visible to the inner eye of one of the characters.

A dissolve functioning in a similar way to those in He Who Gets Slapped and that from the cutting continuity script of The Tower of Lies, also occurs in the cutting continuity script of The Masks of the Devil, in the first part of the script, where Count Palester (Theodore Roberts), an artist, is painting the archangel Michael and the Devil, while Baron Reiner poses as Michael.

> No. 14 (Reel 1) MS of Count Palester standing beside painting of Michael, CAMERA MOVES UP past Count Palester to CU of Michael's head
> DISSOLVE TO
> 15 BIG HEAD CU of Baron Reiner, CAMERA MOVES BACK to MCU of Baron Reiner – .[50]

This dissolve may appear as a simple device, with the only function of establishing a link between the painting and the model. However, as it is gradually revealed during the unfolding of the story, the short sequence contains a highly ambiguous subtext, not least through the ironic juxtaposition of Michael and the person who, despite his posing as an angel, appears to be quite devilish. A link between Michael and the Devil as the two main characters of the painting (or a glass window, for which the painting serves as a preliminary study) was established in an introductory title which, according to the script, was followed by an insert of the window. Later in the script, in a couple of superimpositions combined with a mirror, Baron Reiner appears talking to a double, who seems to be the Devil. This also recalls Örjan Roth-Lindberg's discussion referred to in a previous chapter on the general importance of mirrors, doubles and masks in Sjöström's films.

Paul Bern's critical remarks on Marion's original script deserves to be quoted in relation to the dissolves, as they are of importance for the technique developed during the work on the film:

> Most of the dream pictures are merely picturized thoughts along the old-fashioned line. They lack the power of the same device as used by O'Neill in THE STRANGE INTERLUDE, because what he did constantly was to contrast thought and action. Thus, when Helene comes to the studio, if the shadow figures of Reiner crosses to her in the presence of her husband, and kisses her passionately, then you would have

> exactly the effect which O'Neill achieved. I also think this effect can be used in two or three more instances.[51]

The soliloquy technique used by O'Neill that Bern refers to, is indeed one of few examples in modern plays; the characters here speak their inner thoughts to the audience, mostly in brief side comments to the dialogue. In the change from script to film, and thus to cutting continuity script, Bern's advice also seems to have been taken *ad notam*. The scene which Bern refers to reads as follows in the original script:

> 14 CLOSEUP REINER
> We are to learn at once that it is only a pose... for Reiner is thinking... DISSOLVE over this CLOSEUP the Dining room of the Reiner villa. Beautiful girls and attractive men at the table. Evidence of much drinking. The little dancer in a ballet costume spinning like a top... now she drops into Reiner's arms. As he plunges his lips upon hers DISSOLVE into Reiner looking at Helene Zurmuhlen. He speaks rather tragically:
> TITLE: "I am the loneliest man in the world."[52]

In the cutting continuity script, the meeting between the Baron and the Countess is staged through a dissolve which is totally in line with O'Neill's play, but just as much with Sjöström's particular way of working with dissolves. Now, the Baron's evil inner fantasies are revealed while outwardly his speech is hypocritically virtuous, as he actually dreams of seducing his friend's fiancée while in reality he is bowing politely to her. "CU of Reiner – SUPERIMPOSE over Reiner's CU MS of Count and Countess, Reiner steps in, pushes Count away and kisses Countess – BACK TO Reiner's CU."[53]

In the end, it remains unclear to whom the original idea of these dissolves expressing inner images should be attributed, and this might not be all that important either. Forslund, however, in underlining that Thalberg and Sjöström went to the theatre together to watch O'Neill's play, seems to suggest that they should be attributed to the director.[54] But the question of authorship in this case is clearly less interesting than the general observation, most clearly expressed in Bern's remark to Thalberg, which shows that there seems to have been a development of the script from its original stage, trying to include effects from the stage that would develop the story in a way that would also be important to the development of cinematic narrative devices. This, indeed, is an observation that might be of importance for the whole of Sjöström's career in silent cinema, as he started as a man of the theatre and ended up in the same vein, though in a completely different cinematic and cultural context. During this lapse of time, a number of important narrative developments did take place, which would also profoundly change cinematic language as such. Here, the tension between national and international perspectives once again takes on its full significance.

In mapping out intertextual references from a limited Swedish political context with the Branting-inspired caricature, as well as from different literary contexts – Selma Lagerlöf, Eugene O'Neill – this archaeological work places Sjöström's lost films or film fragments within the much larger context of global cinema in the 1920s, incorporating very different social, political and cultural issues. The intratextual references, most notably in the development of the use of dissolves but also the insights in the conditions of daily production work, that may be traced from cutting continuity scripts as well as from the Daily Production Report in the case of The Masks of the Devil, give evidence of another kind. They speak of the cultural passages provided by cinema, down to the smallest details in the system of production, but on the other hand also of the unity of textual space and of cinematic devices allowed for within the system. In all these fragmented pieces, one important factor remains constant: they are all more or less stories of depravity which, all to different degrees, might challenge the norms of the Hollywood system, with the auto-censorship that took place by its very establishment. Of course, they may share this feature with other films by Sjöström or films made during the period, but the interdisciplinary intertextuality mapped out by the analysis would also allow for the construction of a different look, one which – following Giuliana Bruno – would reclaim "marginality and difference", thus revealing "discontinuous, diverse, and disqualified areas".[55]

However, the consideration of these fragments from the Hollywood years unavoidably leads to a further question: what knowledge do we actually have of Sjöström as a director, considering the fact that most of his early films for Svenska Bio are also lost?

The only answer to this rhetorical question would lie in another question: given that we have no actual knowledge in detail, apart from the necessity to rethink both spectatorship and authorship within a general transnational panorama of cinematography, is it at all possible to give a statement on Sjöström's work as a whole?

In the light of Bruno or Cherchi Usai, this should perhaps rather be regarded as the wrong question. However, Sjöström's particular discourse in the Foucauldian sense of the terms – in the intersection between archaeology and history – should be possible to trace, not least given the different openings that his work as a director offers in all directions, and thus construed "as a distribution of gaps, absences, limits, and divisions".[56] Also, in the light of Bruno's visual and cultural archaeology, a mobile theory of spectatorship is required, as well as an epistemological topography, in the form of a grand panorama, which may include both narratological aspects and intersubjective dimensions of a general revision of realism, not least called for by Bruno herself. The panorama of Sjöström's lost films or film fragments from the American period puts this question

on its edge. The answer must be as fragmented as are the films. If it is at all possible to discern an authorial mark of Sjöström as director, beyond "remanufacturing the missing part of a text in the name of an originary authenticity that would emanate from authorship's intentionality", this would indeed be a case in point.[57] The films, or their contexts, however, offer at least some kind of preliminary conclusion, where certain stylistic markers and thematic details do give a framework for further investigation, within the general context of a larger cultural history. This points at least to a larger framework of alternative practices within the general field of Hollywood authorship.

The Shadow of the Silents – A Lady to Love

The story of Sjöström's last film in Hollywood has mostly been told as a story of failure, though the fact that the film has recently been rediscovered has made it difficult for later historians to judge the work itself.[1] In the following, I will not make any judgements of the work as such, but rather try to frame the film historically as an early sound film. This question will be approached first by presenting the two language versions that were made, but then also by discussing the way that the film expresses the transition to sound in various ways, in the use of dialogue, sounds or music, as well as the way that it still keeps certain stylistic traits from earlier films, thus also expressing the transition from silent cinema. By the specific problems of language and culture that the sound brings along, this film also evokes themes that seem to encompass Sjöström's whole career as a European director in American exile.

Bengt Forslund noted that the project seems to have been conceived all of a sudden, that the short time lapse between the original idea and the shooting was probably not ideal, as this was Sjöström's first sound film, and that "not much has been noted about the shooting, but I don't think that Sjöström was at ease – not even with the actors".[2]

After having spent a sabbatical year in Sweden, Sjöström returned to Hollywood in September 1929. He was then immediately offered to direct a film of a play by Sidney Howard, *They Knew What They Wanted* (1924), which had played on Broadway from November 1924 to October 1925, and which had won the Pulitzer Prize in 1925. Sidney Howard himself had presented a synopsis to MGM in early September, followed by a first script version – the working title was "Sunkissed" – and received approval from Thalberg a month later, on 15 October 1929. Sjöström started shooting on 8 November.

A Lady to Love premiered on 28 February 1930, and was politely received by the critics, though, as Forslund has noted, *The New York Times* complained about its lack of "pictorial mobility", and *The Telegraph* followed up: "Mr Seastrom has directed the piece with a great deal more patience than imagination. He has put into it every word, every gesture, every shading; nothing has been left undone."[3] However, the acting was almost unanimously praised; Edward G. Robinson enjoyed a first breakthrough, and even the heavy accent of Vilma Banky was considered as "charming".[4] But A Lady to Love would, as already noted, become the director's last film in Hollywood. On 24 April 1930, Sjöström left: he

had been granted "permission" to go to Sweden to possibly shoot a film there. He never returned to America.

The films tells the story of Tony, an aging Italian grape grower on a ranch in America, who is in search of a wife. In a restaurant, he spots the beautiful waitress, Lena, and asks her to marry him in a letter where he encloses a photograph. However, at the last minute, he fears that she might turn him down upon seeing his picture, and instead encloses that of his young, handsome friend and assistant Buck. In waiting for Lena to arrive, Tony is anxious and gets drunk. He has an accident on his way to the railway station, and Lena is picked up instead by the mailman. When meeting Buck upon her arrival, Lena recognizes him from the picture. As they start talking, Buck is still unaware of Tony's picture having been replaced. As Tony is later carried home on a stretcher, Lena is shocked as she learns about his real identity. However, they marry – but on the wedding night, as her husband has been put to bed, there are hints that she spends the night with Buck. He, however, leaves the ranch in the morning, and she is left behind to take care of her crippled husband: she washes him and tries to help him walk again. However, as time passes, she falls in love with him. When Buck reappears, he arrives thus rather as an intruder. Lena, being threatened and feeling guilty, thinks she has to leave with him, but as Tony awakes to see her fully dressed, on her way to leave, she decides to confess to him. She is forgiven, and the couple remain united in the end, as Buck leaves.

One Film, Two Versions

The film was made simultaneously in two versions, the original one in English, A Lady to Love, and one in German, Die Sehnsucht Jeder Frau. This practice, which started in 1929, had led to competition between studios to establish themselves in foreign-language production. According to Donald Crafton, Paramount was the leading company in multiple-language production, followed by MGM. In 1930, MGM thus shot 45 foreign-language features, to be followed by 33 in the spring of 1931 – after which the practice was abruptly abandoned.[5] The versions in other languages seem to have been poorly received by European critics, and as the development of noiseless recording facilitated dubbing, this less expensive practice took over.

Both the English and the German version of A Lady to Love starred Broadway actor Edward G. Robinson as Tony – he was born in Romania and spoke German – and as Lena in both versions, Hungarian-born Vilma Banky, who had come to Hollywood during the 1920s, and spoke with a heavy accent, but also spoke German. This tactic of hiring stars and directors who could speak several

languages became a general strategy, not least by MGM, but this still didn't resolve the problem with accents.[6] The third central role, as Buck, was created by Robert Ames in the English version and Joseph Schildkraut in the German. Three of the minor roles also had different actors in the English and German versions. (FIG. 22)

Fig. 22: Production still from the German version of A Lady to Love, *with Victor Sjöström as photographer.*

Immediately before A Lady to Love, Banky had made her first appearance in a sound film, a romantic comedy called This Is Heaven, directed by Alfred Santell in 1929. Donald Crafton gives account for the debates surrounding its release, where Samuel Goldwyn had chose to highlight his star's accent, casting her as an immigrant girl, instead of trying to hide it, but still became uncertain as to whether the dialogue was acceptable. At first, it was eliminated, only to be put back again after a test screening. In the trade press, the film was advertised as bound to be a hit:

> That's going to be glad news to millions of Vilma Banky's following. Her beauty and her marvellous work on the screen has won friends wherever her pictures have

> played. Add to these box office assets the fact that now they can hear her speak for the first time and what you've got is a picture to sell the public that's sure to get the big business.[7]

When the film finally opened, the reactions were varying; where a trade magazine like *Film Daily* was positive, many other critics complained about her accent. As Crafton concludes: "Of course, it did not help the film that, by mid-1929, part-talking sound tracks were passé. In the final tally, Goldwyn lost $200,000, Banky's career was nearly over, and Goldwyn, the story goes, tried to deduct $50 from her $5000-a-week salary to pay for the voice lessons."[8] Her double role in A Lady to Love and Die Sehnsucht Jeder Frau was actually to become Banky's last part in Hollywood.

The case of Banky – and not least Goldwyn's hesitation – serves to highlight the continuously shifting landscape of Hollywood production at the turn of the decade, where the rapidly improving technologies led to constant changes in production policies; orientation, indeed, was difficult, and it was even harder to predict the developments to come. Anna Sofia Rossholm, in her dissertation on early European sound film, states that the question of "whether conversion to sound is marked by continuity or disruption" has been subject to intense debates; I would agree with her conclusion that "the early years of sound film was both a period of uncertainty, experimentation and cultural diversity, and a period of homogenisation and standardisation which reinforced the 'universal' model of story telling".[9]

The utopia of universalism, in Rossholm's words "a matter of film politics and film culture, hinged on the historical processes of cultural differentiation", which here seems to be "deconstructing itself from inside, depicts both sides of the myth of the Tower of Babel, the utopia of a perfect language and the barriers and obstacles preventing perfect communication".[10] During the early years of sound, interestingly enough, universalism was also often equalled to Americanism, as Miriam Hansen has shown in her analysis of discourses on Hollywood cinema, which were linked to ideas of universal values of democracy and the American dream.[11]

The making of multi-language versions remains on the side of diversity; here, concrete dialects, accents and sociolects in different spoken languages enter the public sphere through sound recording, but the concept of the film as a unified work with a potential for universalism is also challenged. Through extensive use of accents, early sound film also exploited speech as a signifier of social or regional identities, thus expressing both linguistic and cultural differentiation.

That the question was first and foremost linguistic becomes clear in the case of A Lady to Love as the two film versions actually remain very similar to one another, apart from the casting of different actors in several roles as previously mentioned. There are a few minor changes in camera angles. However, the

main difference between the two versions concerns the central scene of the night after the wedding. The American version shows Buck and Lena in a quick embrace, followed by a fade-out, marking the lapse of time. The next shot shows her sitting at Tony's bedside in the morning. The German version is much longer, and follows Sidney Howard's script more closely. Here, the embrace is followed by a cut-in on Tony in his bed, calling out in his sleep: "Mitzi, Mitzi..." (the name of the Lena character in this version). A cross by the bedside is doubled by a shadow on the wall, as a device strengthening the message. There is a cut back to Buck and Mitzi embracing, as he says "Mitzi", echoing Tony. She tears herself away from him and runs off screen to the left. He runs in the opposite direction and in the next shot, is seen entering the house where he looks into Tony's bedroom. A new cut-in on Tony in his bed, sleeping, follows. Buck closes the door, puts out the light and disappears. Mitzi comes back into the house, and as she tries to find her way in the dark, the earrings, which she had got from Tony and taken off earlier, fall to the floor. They are then shown in close-up after a cut, a device characteristic of the silent era. She picks them up again, enters the bedroom and looks at the sleeping Tony, standing by his bed, brightly lit in the dark room. Then she goes and looks out of the window where Buck is standing outside, but then walks away. The next shot corresponds to the second shot in the American version, with her sitting at Tony's bedside in the morning.

It is obvious that the Production Code – in spite of Thalberg's approval to the script – had led to censoring the events at night. However, the more explicit German version leaves less room for fantasies on what may have happened between shots, as Buck's and Mitzi's first embrace is interrupted by Mitzi leaving, and they then occupy different spaces through the rest of the sequence, and Buck is shown to walk away in the last shot. Here, the embrace may be interpreted as a metonymy. In addition, the German version changes the portrayal of Mitzi by actually showing her to be more firm, which makes the psychological character portrayal more plausible. The consequence of the prudency in the American version, which led to the abandoning of the original script to confirm to the demands of the Code, is thus, ironically enough, that the ellipsis rather seems to suggest quite clearly that the couple actually spent the night together.

This question of censorship, however, important as it may be not least for the overall interpretation of the different film versions, only covers part of the specific questions that may be evoked in this transitional period of cinema. The transfer to sound film is just as important as part of this transition, also in motivating the different film versions.

The Transition to Sound

The conversion to sound, of course, represented new challenges to filmmakers in general. Sjöström, however, seemed eagerly to anticipate its arrival, as in a Swedish interview published in October 1928 when he was temporary back in Stockholm, the subheading claims: "Victor Sjöström Enthusiastic about Sound Film, Which He Himself Hopes to Do". This view is further developed in the text:

> Then we throw ourselves into the burning question on sound film, which apparently has an enthusiastic supporter in Mr Sjöström. Of course there are still many difficulties that have to be overcome, says Mr Sjöström. But there lies the future.[12]

The issue of sound film was indeed a burning question not least for the film company. In October 1929, Louis B. Mayer wrote a memo to Irving Thalberg: "M-G-M is still behind the other studios in sound production, but quantity is not important. [...] What matters is that M-G-M becomes identified with the quality talking picture."[13] This, interestingly, also seems to close the circle for Sjöström: from the shift in Swedish production policies that led to his first breakthrough with A Man There Was, which was motivated by the change from quantity to quality, to his last Hollywood production, where, again, the transfer to sound film for MGM is motivated with quality as guiding star.

However, this strive for quality was highly tactical in practice, as Donald Crafton states: "MGM's strategy attributed to Thalberg, was to let the other studios perfect the technology, then enter later to avoid the trial and expense of initial experimentation".[14] Richard Koszarski describes it in a way less flattering for Thalberg: "He dragged his feet on the introduction of sound for so long that despite MGM's eventual success with the medium, rival studios had already seized a large share of the market."[15] The fact remains that for the 1929-30 season, MGM had scheduled sixteen silents, forty talkies and seven synchronized releases.

Also, the transition to sound was not such a unified process as it is sometimes regarded in retrospect. As late as in 1929, Nicholas M. Schenck, president of MGM and Loew's, argued that silents and sound films would remain complementary options on the market:

> I believe they [silents] will continue to be a very positive factor in motion picture production. [...] My personal opinion is that the silent film will never be eliminated, since certain stories are naturally suited for silent treatment and must be completely rearranged to serve as dialogue vehicles. [...] Most of the stars at the M-G-M studio seem to feel that the silent picture will remain for certain types of stories.[16]

Still, despite several similar statements in favour of silent films, the practices were gradually changing.[17] According to Bengt Forslund, Joseph Cohn, who was head of production for Sjöström's first sound film, stated that the director had no problems in adapting to sound, which Cohn attributed to his long experience from theatrical direction.[18] However, the sound equipment at the time was both heavy and hard to handle. For a director who, like Sjöström, had been used to creative camerawork, this must have meant a change in working methods and thus, possibly, also in style.

It is, therefore, of particular interest, in analyzing A Lady to Love, to discuss the different points where the transition to sound become apparent in the film. To start with the dialogue – the most obvious device in sound cinema – these mostly occur either within the frame or within the already-established pattern of classical cinema, of shot-reverse shot. However, there are a few noteworthy exceptions using off-screen space which all also occur at critical turning points in the narration. The first of these is when Tony announces to the priest and to Buck that he is going to marry. He then appears in medium shot, making the announcement, which is followed by questions and comments coming from two directions, from his interlocutors who both remain off screen, in a dialogue sequence contained within one single frame:

21 388 8 CU TONY draining his glass. He puts it down and speaks:
Tony
Well, now I'm ready for tell everybody everyt'ing.
Buck
Yeah? What about?
Tony
About me – Tony; I'm gonna get married.
Padre
What!
Tony
Uh-huh!
Buck
You?
Tony
Yeh.
Padre
Married?
Tony
Yeh.
Buck
Who to?
Tony

I dunno
Buck
What do you mean, you dunno?
Tony
Justa-what I say. I'm going get married but I dunno who I get married wit. I'm gonna take trip to San Francisco to look for wife – nice – young and fat.[19]

A second example occurs when Lena realizes that the seemingly paralysed man on the stretcher is Tony. She then appears in medium shot, asking: "Who is he?", to which Buck responds off screen: "It's Tony." The third time is during the wedding ceremony, as we see Tony on his stretcher and Lena by his side, and hear the priest, again off screen, say: "in sickness and in health, until death do us part". The fourth example, still during the wedding, first shows only Lena in close-up, as she is sitting next to Tony on his bedside, and he talks off screen while people are singing "Addio a Napoli" in the background. The couple are then reunited in the next shot, and thus, this central scene also prefigures their later, closer relationship:

Tony
I w'ispra in your ear, Lena. You ain't mad wit Tony for being so crazy wild in love wit you, huh? You know you come in da house – lik-a de spring come in de winter. You – you come in da house lik-a da pink flower on da window sill, when you come –
5 88 12 BIG CU Lena. (MUSIC: People still singing; words indistinguishable)
Tony's voice
– da whole world is just turn like inside de wine cup. You understand, Lena? I can't help to talk this way, you dis –
6 121 14 MCU Tony and Lena.
– and I got no English language for tell you. Oh, my Lena is so good. Oh, she's so pretty.[20]

A second occasion when the transition becomes audible is when off-screen space is made present through sound effects other than dialogue. This effect appears a number of times in the film. To mention only one, central example, the most important from a narrative point of view would then be when Buck and Lena are involved in an intimate conversation, but are all of a sudden interrupted by a terrible noise off screen, announcing the injured Tony's arrival.

If the latter scene could have occurred in any sound film, the inventive use of off-screen space within dialogues testifies to Sjöström's first sound film as belonging to an experimental period, where the conventions of sound cinema had not yet been fully established. Hence, instead of strictly subordinating sound in dialogue to the shot-reverse shot pattern of classical cinema, it is here used to

expand cinematic space in different directions. But it is also used metaphorically, like in the case of the scene where Tony expresses his love for Lena, where his off-screen monologue serves to underline his position as an "outsider", as well as it introduces a subjective perspective; what he has to say clearly focuses on Lena, and thus it is only logical that she remains in focus of the image as well.

In addition to dialogue and ambient sound, music is of course the third important aspect of the overall "sound picture" that must be considered in analyzing this film. A Lady to Love uses – which is typical of the time – only diegetic music. The first occasion is the song opening the film, which reappears later in the narrative; a sentimental Neapolitan folk song (composer unknown): "'Tis now the hour of parting, Farewell, farewell, I leave thee; Napoli, fairest city, I part forever now!"[21] This song reoccurs later in the film. Secondly, we see the pianola in Lena's restaurant on which the camera tracks in, and which we then hear off screen later in the evening, as she is in her room, thus suggesting the proximity between these two spaces, and showing that she has no home except her small room at work. Thirdly, there is the song and music during the wedding, which plays an important role for the ambiance, and is followed by applauses from the guests – but also turns out to be quite significant in the narrative.

The first song, by Eduardo di Capua, is called "Maria, Mari": "Wide, open wide, o window, Maria's face displaying, Here in the road I'm staying, one glimpse of her to gain; No hour of peace is left me, night into day I'm changing, While round her house I'm ranging, to talk with her in vain."[22] This song rather seems to emphasize the lover's perspective. The second song, "Funiculi, Funicula", by Denza, contains among several verses the following: "That is the place where the fire is hot, And I will fly and let you be, And I will not force my love nor annoy you; Even to look at you, even to look at you."[23] The cutting continuity script states that: "This song is sung during the following dialogue", which contains a conversation between Tony and the Doctor, where Tony asks the latter to look after Lena and see "if she's having good time", and being informed by the Doctor that she is having a splendid time, Tony responds: "Oh, that's good, that's verra good", thus echoing the promise of unselfish love from the song, and expressing the husband's perspective.[24] Finally, there is also orchestra music – Canzone, by Drigo – as well as the familiar song "Sulmare Lucia", which is repeated several times during the film.

Another key to these music scenes is contained in a conversation between Tony and the Doctor. Tony complains: "Oh, poor Tony, he missa da fiesta." Doctor: "It's time that coyote shut up." Tony: "Angelo is no coyote, Doc." Doctor: "He's been howling for the last five hours." Tony: "Oh, you no ondrastand music, Doc. (Sings:) La – la – la – ."[25] The music, throughout the film, not only

communicates "points of view" from different characters, but also seems to underline the presence of an Italian culture that the American "Doc" won't understand. The presence of the pianola in the restaurant, which is heard from Lena's room too, therefore also serves the purpose of creating a musical link between Tony and Lena. Thus, the music does not only function as a background, but it plays an equally important role in the narrative.

The Transition from Silents

Another occasion – this time visible rather than audible – when the transition to sound has left its mark on the film would be the more limited screen space that is an obvious result – a necessity in order to handle sound equipment adequately. Most of the story takes place at the ranch, with only a few exceptions, characteristically enough both related to Lena's irruption into Tony's closed universe at the ranch: the scene at the restaurant where she works and lives, and the scene at the railway station, as Lena arrives. The fact that Tony has broken both his legs is rather convenient in the context of the newly-introduced film sound: it offers a plausible narrative framework for immobility. A scene at the photographer's is completely neutral in its account of spatiality; it could just as well be that the photographer has come to the ranch.

In addition to this general change of screen space, there are also at least four occasions in the film where examples of devices from silent cinema surviving in the era of sound cinema may be found. Here, a first important example in the film is that of the insert of a framed still – perhaps a postcard – of a farm, placed on Lena's desk, including an explanatory printed text, which reads: "Swiss farm" (in the German version, "Hungarian farm"). Apart from its function as a form of intertitle, strongly reminiscent of the silents, this also serves multiple purposes in the narrative. It motivates the accent of the actress, both in English and in German. It also provides the character with a past, motivating her being lost in a new, foreign context, and thus more likely to accept the offer of marriage from a stranger.

A second example, perhaps more invisible, follows immediately upon the scene described above, when Lena has discovered Tony's identity, as he has been carried home on the stretcher. She then withdraws, leaning back against the wall, with a horrified look in her face: a typical example of silent acting which in a silent film would have served as the means to convey the message. (FIG. 23)

Fig. 23: The transition from the silents: Vilma Banky in A Lady to Love.

The third example also represents a classical device of silent cinema, which once again enlarges the screen space to contain off-screen space. As Buck returns, his reappearance is first introduced by his shadow falling across the ground, which is first observed and interpreted by Lena who (according to the script) "looks up and sees it, then her head comes rigidly away from Tony's shoulder and her eyes go wide with dismay at what she sees."[26] This recalls a familiar scene from The Outlaw and His Wife, where Kari (Berg-Ejvind the outlaw, played by Sjöström) discovers his future rival Arnes for the first time by his shadow cast on the ground. But The Outlaw and His Wife is not the only example where Sjöström used a complex play of shadows during his Swedish years. In The Kiss of Death, which also includes a theme of rivalry, the burglar enters the scene by night, his silhouette being distinguishable in the darkness. In The Monastery of Sendomir, the husband discovers his rival through a silhouette on the window. As we have seen, the device also figured during his Hollywood years in The Divine Woman. The triangle drama where the intruder casts his dark shadow is thus repeated in this Hollywood sound film. Moreover, at the

end of the film, the last image is again that of Buck's shadow, remaining for a short moment on screen as he has left the ranch; as if he was hesitant to leave.

A last example of silent devices surviving is offered in the scene where Lena, after having sewed "against time with desperate speed" to get pads over the arm rests on Tony's crutches before she intends to leave, "carefully places the crutches back where they were outside of the window. One of them falls with a clatter to the porch floor. She stands still listening."[27] This was filmed almost exactly as stated in the script; however, as the crutches fall (both of them actually fall in the film) and we hear the sound, there is also, simultaneously, a cut-in to a completely new angle, focusing on the falling crutches. This kind of cut-in on "sound" is indeed, as has already been discussed in relation to The Wind, familiar from Sjöström's films in the silent era – not least from his Swedish period, like in the previously mentioned example from The Girl from the Marsh Croft, where he cuts in on a cup of coffee hitting the ground, splashing and breaking –where he repeatedly made this kind of cut-in to suggest sound effects before it was actually possible.[28] Likewise it was used during the American years in He Who Gets Slapped as the "sound" of the audience's applauses, which is suggested by a cut-in, drowns the desperate attempts from the Baron and the Count to attract attention in their desperate struggle against the lion.

Last but not least, it is worth noting that the dissolves – which, as we have seen, may be regarded as Sjöström's stylistic device par excellence both in Sweden and in Hollywood – still remain in the new context of sound, but now they no longer serve the complex narrative purposes that they used to during the silent era. Here, they function simply as markers of lapses in space or time, as in the scene when Lena washes Tony, who sits upright in his bed and complains, and two dissolves during her work mark the seemingly never-ending duty.

Already in Confessions of a Queen, however, according to the continuity script as well as to remaining parts of the film, Sjöström seems to have limited himself to this more conventional use of dissolves. Thus, it is not possible to make any clear-cut distinction between his use of dissolves in silent versus sound cinema. Still, in this case, the absence of more elaborated dissolves, which had become something of the director's hallmark, with their symbolic or metaphoric dimensions, may suggest that something actually did change in his use of stylistic devices with the transfer to sound. Possibly, the new technology as such presented a challenge to the production, which may have limited the visual innovativeness of its director. More importantly, though, sound also added new stylistic possibilities, like the different uses of off-screen dialogue, which must have appeared as more relevant to explore. The symbols or metaphors expressed in his earlier dissolves are indeed among the most refined examples of silent film style.

Europeans in Hollywood

In the case of A Lady to Love, no parallels were drawn to Sjöström's Swedish career, possibly for the reason that the transition to sound has generally been considered to mark such a break in film history that sound cinema didn't seem to allow for comparisons to the silent era – though, as we have seen, elements of a former "silent style" could still remain. The theme as such was also without any real counterpart in Sjöström's former career, though even here, central elements – adultery, conflicting loves and loyalties, guilt, forgiveness – are reminiscent of his previous films.

The "phantasm of origins" associated with Swedish landscape, as it appeared for example in relation to The Wind, thus seems to have disappeared completely here – as has the landscape as such. Only a few images in the film seem to suggest a Californian vineyard. At the same time, the phantasm instead reappears in another guise, now rather on the thematic level connected to the characters, as a phantasm of Europeanness in an American context.

What is perhaps most striking with this film, however, is its multicultural character.

As Film Europa had come to an end, European perspectives were included in an American film. The European aspects in the film would probably have passed unnoticed had the film been a silent feature, whereas within sound cinema, they became almost too obvious. Indeed, even the way that the film was conceived seems to have been the result of the transition to sound – a possibility to handle narratively the different ethnicities involved in the shooting, by inscribing them into the plot, and thus also turning a possible problem into an advantage, in addressing spectators of different ethnicities in a multicultural American society. Last but not least, with the different versions, the concept would also allow for export.[29]

The different ethnicities are most obviously marked by the heavy accents already mentioned, in the case of Tony's character only further emphasized as he is supposed to play an older Italian immigrant, but also in Lena's case it is motivated by the plot. The role of music, underlining his Italianness, has already been discussed. The fact that Lena is a foreigner is also clearly marked, as we have seen, by the photo of her old home, located respectively in Switzerland or Hungary. Tony's status as Italian is also marked visually, not least by the numerous crucifixes present in several shots, but also by a portrait of Benito Mussolini, *Il Duce*, hanging on the wall together with a portrait of the US president, Herbert Hoover, under an American and an Italian flag, hanging side by side in the room where the couple marries. This is even more apparent in the German version of the film during the wedding scene, as the priest is shot from another

angle. Lena, against all odds, chooses Tony, the European, rather than Buck, the American.

It is also tempting, therefore, to interpret the film on a metaphorical level, as an image of Europeans in America, as the film tells its bittersweet story of two Europeans in exile meeting and getting together in a new context within American culture.

With the advent of sound, the importing of Europeans to Hollywood had come to an end. Some – like Ernst Lubitsch – remained, whereas many – even a relatively successful director like Sjöström – returned. The early sound film period was also a period of struggle between "European" and "American".[30] With its theme – as close to the director as to its actors – A Lady to Love on a meta-level thus may seem to conclude Sjöström's whole career as a European in Hollywood.

The Genius and the System – Some Concluding Remarks

Contemporary critics just like later film historians seem to have read the history of Victor Sjöström's years in Hollywood in a quite ambiguous manner: as both a story of success and a story of failure. This, of course, relates to the different degrees of critical or public success of each film at the time of its release. These ideas of success or failure have since then also undergone historical changes, in Sjöström's case particularly concerning the reception of The Wind. The fact that only three of Sjöström's silent films have survived in their entirety has, of course, also added to their relative importance in a historical perspective, as Sjöström is above all considered a director of silents. The fact that all these three films are available on YouTube or Google Video confirms their particular status; they seem to incarnate the very aspect of success in the director's American career.[1]

But this ambiguity is also related to certain judgements of value, depending on the perspective of the critic. According to some commentators, mostly international, the director was successful in Hollywood to the extent that he adapted to Hollywood, just as Thompson argued in the case of Lubitsch: that he was actually transformed into a Hollywood director by the transition to a new film culture. It has even been argued that he actually contributed to introducing a higher degree of naturalism in Hollywood cinema.[2] From a quite opposite perspective, several Swedish commentators express quite strong opinions on which films during the Hollywood years could be considered as "Sjöström films" and which should not. Here, it is striking that the perspective of researchers does not differ all that much from that of other commentators. From such a perspective, too, the Hollywood years were considered a success only to the extent that the director was able to free himself from the supposedly damaging restraints of the Hollywood system. The lack of variation is striking in these comments from critics or researchers from both sides, who – apart from certain specific judgements – all seem to agree upon the general continuity between Sweden and Hollywood without, however, being able to argue their point in any detail.

For example, Bengt Forslund also seems to argue that Sjöström's last two films, The Masks of the Devil and A Lady to Love, which he considers as failures, were in some sense unworthy of Sjöström as director, and that the choices of the Hollywood producers for him to direct these films seem to have been completely arbitrary.[3] However, as I have shown, The Masks of the Devil was in its technique directly related to the recent Broadway success *The Strange Interlude* by Eugene O'Neill, which had been awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1928, just as Sjöström's last Hollywood film A Lady to Love was directly

based on Sidney Howard's own script from his Broadway play, which had also been awarded the Pulitzer Prize three years earlier. Thus, these two films were in perfect continuity with Sjöström's long series of films based on Nobel Prize winners and former theatrical successes. It also seems clear that while in Hollywood Sjöström carried on with the close relationship to the literary sources that he had followed during his Swedish years, and did not rely only on the intermediary of the scripts, not least in the case of The Scarlet Letter.

Moreover, the scripts assigned to Sjöström as director all seem to have carried some at least potential possibilities to develop aspects of his particular style. This is as true of the films which have been considered as successes as of those which film historians have tended to consider as failures or impasses. In all cases, it was at least in some sense evident from the scripts that they would contain a potential as to innovative visual cues; Sjöström would thus possibly be able both to repeat and renew his earlier "tours de force", either from the earlier "golden age" of Swedish cinema, or from his previous Hollywood successes. Thus, after all, the Hollywood policy of distributing scripts to potential directors does not seem all that arbitrary.

Sjöström's strategy turned out to be successful. First of all, in several of his films he kept what has sometimes been discerned as a Swedish "national style", the style that had once brought him international fame as director. This style is revealed in the mise-en-scène, and has to do, in particular, with the portrayal of landscape, with light or with what I have called lyrical intimacy. At the same time, the phantasm of origins, which in Sjöström's case was closely associated with landscape, seems to keep hovering over his Hollywood films and the discourses surrounding them.

A second aspect of the Sjöström style surviving in Hollywood films is located on the level of the particular details that characterized his Swedish period and reappear in Hollywood. Of these, the cut across the line creating a 360-degree space, survived in his first film, but then disappeared, most likely as it represented too much of a violation of Hollywood norms. The shadow cast on screen from a character arriving from off screen, just like the general use of shadows, is by no means unique to Sjöström, but had still become an important marker from his Swedish period. A more recurrent aspect, which is also more difficult to pinpoint in the absence of more specific source material, is the integration of pictorial aspects both from book illustrations and from art history in general.

Throughout most of the films, Sjöström also kept his perhaps most significant stylistic device where the dissolve is used as analogy, sometimes in connection with a superimposition. This way of using the transition between shots as an analogy, or even an expression of a transformation, was developed during the Swedish years and became almost, as I have shown, his trademark as director.

And not only does Sjöström keep his particular use of the dissolve, but – as we saw from the cutting continuity script of The Masks of the Devil – he also develops it as a means of expressing thoughts or inner feelings, thus expanding the narrative possibilities of silent cinema. This is all the more remarkable as an exception to the rule, as film historians have shown that the norm for the dissolve in Hollywood was quickly reduced to serve as an expression of spatial shifts in the viewer's perspective, ordinarily within the same room.[4]

The use of the dissolve, however, is far from being a mere addendum or decoration to the films, neither in Sweden, nor in Hollywood. On the contrary, as we have seen, the dissolve is right at the intersection between style and story; a privileged way to express an inner drama. Sjöström's films are all about the play with mirrors, doubles and double identities, transitions and transformations. They portray the world as we know it – only to then transform it and thus to reveal another dimension, which hitherto had remained hidden as in He Who Gets Slapped, where the dissolve seems to make visible an internal reality that would otherwise have remained invisible; matter transcended and memory transfigured.[5]

It could, of course, rightly be interpreted as a sign of Sjöström's authorial genius that he succeeded in leaving his imprint in opposition to the strong Hollywood norms. However, from the perspective that I have adopted in this study, I would rather suggest that it may be seen as a clear indication of the possibilities that this system of production actually contained, as Sjöström in some cases was able to add at shooting stage dissolves of the kind that were not originally included in the script.

It would be just as misleading, however, to view Sjöström as a director who uniquely succeeded in challenging or even changing the Hollywood system. The problem with such a view, as I also hope to have shown, is not least its too rigid conception of "the system". From Sjöström's original contract, it was clear that he enjoyed certain privileges, as did other Europeans. There were several other exceptions to the rule, for example, that of Lillian Gish, who enjoyed a unique position in the industry – of which her collaboration with Sjöström in The Wind, however, seems to have been the last example, though she made one more feature with MGM after that.[6] The system thus did allow for variations; it was even built just as much on those exceptions to the rule as on the underlying norm, which to a certain extent is revealed to be nothing else than a construction. However, it would be naïve to believe that the exceptions were up to the individual to decide. Rather, the Hollywood production culture of the 1920s in its entirety appears as a field of negotiations and tugs-of-war, where ultimately the box office successes, but to a certain extent also critical appreciation and international potential – and, to a certain extent, the moods of the producers, as several examples from Sjöström's career have shown – determined

the rules of the game.[7] It seems equally evident that by the time of the transition to sound – in Sjöström's case somewhere between the release of The Wind in November 1928 and the making of A Lady to Love a year later – the demands of the industry were hardening, as earlier concepts of success were no longer of use. In times of transition, where the commercial potential was no longer as easy to predict, the possibilities for a Gish or a Sjöström to navigate more freely within the system seem to have become more limited.

When Goldwyn first brought over Sjöström and other Europeans, the critics were, as we have seen, quite ambivalent. While complaining about the "invasion of the Norsemen", they also expressed admiration for the special Scandinavian or European film tradition. Judging by the reaction of the critics, Sjöström grew to be accepted during his years in America.[8] Although he was regarded as alien and exotic at the beginning, his last works seem to have turned him into just another Hollywood director. The rediscovery of A Lady to Love has shown that he was just as able as any contemporary director in the studio system to handle the transition to sound. However, his contract with the studio at the time he returned to Sweden included three additional films, but the parties apparently reached a tacit agreement not to pursue the matter any further. It is hard to avoid the paradoxical conclusion that Sjöström's assimilation into Hollywood culture robbed him of his appeal, the aura of early Swedish silent film that had hovered over his first years there.

If the myth of the completely uniform Hollywood system may to a certain extent be deconstructed, this study has also tried to deconstruct the myth of Sjöström as the unique auteur defying this system. As Sjöström gradually grows into his Seastrom identity, this takes place through a complex interplay between individual and system, as well as between texts and contexts. Because Hollywood, as we have seen, did not limit Sjöström's freedom as a director, it provided him with new possibilities to make use of the cinematographic apparatus in its Hollywood version, towards which he had at first expressed such ambivalent feelings. He had, indeed, reached a point of no return; the few directorial attempts that he later made in Europe have not made it into any canon of film history.[9] The stylistic changes brought about by Sjöström's moving to Hollywood may not have been as definite as film history would have it according to the paradigm. Still, the story of Sjöström was transformed by his transition to Seastrom.

Notes

Introduction – From Sjöström to Seastrom

1. A copy of A Lady to Love has actually been deposited in the Warner Bros. archive, though earlier researchers have believed it to be lost.
2. For a short general overview of his films, see Bo Florin, *Regi: Victor Sjöström/Directed by Victor Sjöström*, Stockholm: Svenska Filminstitutet, 2003.
3. Richard Maltby, "New Cinema Histories", in Richard Maltby, Daniel Biltereyst and Philippe Meers, eds, *Explorations in New Cinema History: Approaches and Case Studies*, Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, 8.
4. Kristin Thompson, *Herr Lubitsch Goes to Hollywood: German and American Film After World War I*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005, 18.
5. Bo Florin, *Den nationella stilen. Studier i den svenska filmens guldålder* [*The National Style: Studies in the Golden Age of Swedish Cinema*], Stockholm: Aura förlag, 1997, 22 f.
6. Thomas Schatz and Alisa Perren, "Hollywood", in John Downing, Denis McQuail and Philip Schlesinger, eds, *The Sage Handbook of Media Studies*, London: Sage, 2004, 495.
7. Thompson, op. cit.
8. Tom Gunning, *The Films of Fritz Lang: Allegories of Vision and Modernity*, London: BFI, 2000, 3-5.
9. Bengt Forslund, *Victor Sjöström. Hans liv och verk*. Stockholm: Bonniers, 1980.
10. See, for instance, Örjan Roth-Lindberg, "Den dolda spegeln. Victor Sjöströms berättarkonst i *The Scarlet Letter*", *Chaplin* 194-195, vol 25 no 5-6, 1984, 236-241, 316; Roth-Lindberg, "Den bedrägliga bilden. Om den visuella fantasin i Victor Sjöströms *He Who Gets Slapped*", *Chaplin* 196, vol 27, no 1, 1985, 28-36; Roth Lindberg, "En värld av masker", *Chaplin* 197, vol 27, no 2, 1985, 102-107 (English translation: "The Deceptive Image: On the Visual Fantasy in Victor Sjöström's *He Who Gets Slapped*", 25th anniversary issue, *Chaplin* 1984, 58-71); Arne Lunde, "Scandinavian/American Whiteface: Ethnic Whiteness and Assimilation in Victor Sjöström's *He Who Gets Slapped*", in the author's *Nordic Exposures: Scandinavian Identities in Classical Hollywood Cinema*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010, 38-63.
11. Graham Petrie, *Hollywood Destinies: European Directors in America, 1922-1931*, rev. ed., Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2002.
12. See, for example, Barbara Klinger's argument that "factors that accompany the presentation of a film, including such material as film reviews and industry promotions as well as specific historical conditions, serve as signs of a vital semiotic and cultural space that superintend the viewing experience." Barbara Klinger, *Melodrama and Meaning*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994, xvi.
13. Sabine Hake, *The Cinema's Third Machine: Writing on Film in Germany, 1907-1933*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993, xi.
14. Janet Staiger, *Interpreting Films: Studies in the Historical Reception of American Cinema*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992, 95.
15. Scripts or scenarios and cutting continuity scripts are preserved at the Cinematic Arts Library's Archives of Performing Arts at University of Southern California. Hereafter: Script and CCS.

16. An exception is Emmanuelle André's essay "Corps dans le Vent", in *Cinergon* 10, 2000, 27-36.
17. Florin, 2003.
18. In John Fullerton & Jan Olsson, eds, *Nordic Explorations: Film Before 1930*, Stockholm Studies in Cinema, Sydney: John Libbey & Co., 1999, 249-262.
19. "Europäer in Hollywood. Eine Analyse von Produktionssystemen und Filmdiskursen der zwanziger Jahre am Beispiel von Sjöström und Lubitsch", *Montage /AV*, 9/1/2000, 9-28.
20. "From Sjöström to Seastrom", *Film History*, vol 11, no 2, 1999, 154-163.
21. "Confronting the Wind: A Reading of a Hollywood Film by Victor Sjöström", *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture*, vol 1, no 1, 2009.
22. Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell, *Film History: An Introduction*, 3rd ed., Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2010, 54.
23. Ibid., 145.
24. Thompson, 16.

Sjöström – From National to International

1. For an account in Swedish of Sjöström's life and career, see Bo Florin, "Victor D Sjöström", in Åsa Karlsson, ed., *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*, vol 32, Stockholm, 2006, 408.
2. Manuscript of informal reminiscences. 3. Swedish and American Film. C. Swedish Film. Victor Sjöström's archives, vol 7, Swedish Film Institute.
3. See Jan Olsson, "Förlorade attraktioner, klassiska närbilder, Anteckningar kring ett gränssnitt", *Aura*, vol 2, no 1-2, 1996, 34-90, or Florin, 1997.
4. "Filmens nationella uppgifter", *Filmen* 3, 1919, 1.
5. "En fosterlandssång I bilder", *Filmen* 3, 1920, 10.
6. Leif Furhammar discusses this crisis in his *Filmen i Sverige*, Höganäs: Förlags AB Wiken, 1991, 105 f.
7. Forslund, 182 f.
8. Ibid., 184.
9. Florin, 1997, 182, 209.
10. Tösen från Stormyrtorpet, Script II, SFI archives.
11. *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning* March 18, 1919.
12. Bertil Wredlund and Rolf Lindfors, eds, *Långfilm i Sverige 1910-19*, Stockholm: Proprius, 1991, 224.
13. *Lichtbildbühne*, March 1, 1924.
14. Fritz Lang in an interview in *Ciné Revue*, May 14, 1927.
15. Florin, 1997, 194.
16. Kristin Thompson, "National or International Films? The European Debate During the 1920s", *Film History*, vol 8, 1996, 281-296.
17. P-l, "*Det omringade huset*", *Aftonbladet* October 24, 1922.
18. Quelqu'une (Märta Lindqvist) "*Eld ombord*", *Svenska Dagbladet*, February 6, 1923.
19. Forslund, 182 ff. According to Forslund, Mathis also played a crucial role in recommending Sjöström as a director for Metro to import to Hollywood.

20. "Critical Report on 'The Girl from the Marsh Croft', compiled from answers to the questionnaire distributed at the private review held under the auspices of National Board of Review of Motion Pictures", March 4, 1919, The Swedish Film Institute Archive.
21. Ibid.
22. *The New York Review*, February 28, 1920.
23. Helen Rockwell, "A Man There Was – Good Dramatic Feature", *Exhibitor's Trade Review*, March 6, 1920.
24. Carolus, "Amerika får upp ögonen för vår film", *Filmjournalen* 8, 1922, 244; 9, 1922, 299.
25. Florin, 1997, 48 f.
26. *Variety*, November 25, 1921, 44; *Photoplay*, July 1923, 28; *Photoplay*, February 1926, 76.
27. *Photoplay*, July 1926, 134.
28. *Film-Journal*, October 8, 1926; *Lichtbildbühne* March 8, 1926, 1; *Filmjournalen* March 20, 1927, 130.
29. Ibid.

A European in Hollywood – Name the Man and the Shift of Production Systems

1. As Bjarne Thorup Thomsen shows, she actually had made a "u-turn in the evaluation of cinema" in the period from 1909 to 1921. Thomsen, "Ibsen, Lagerlöf, Sjöström and Terje Vigen: (Inter)nationalism, (Inter)subjectivity, and the Interface between Swedish Silent Cinema and Scandinavian Literature", in C. Claire Thomson, ed., *Northern Constellations: New Readings in Nordic Cinema*, Norwich: Norvik Press, 2006, 193-204. For an account in Swedish of Stiller's life and career, see Bo Florin, "Mauritz (Mowscha) Stiller", Åsa Karlsson, ed., *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*, vol 33, 2011, 493.
2. Frances Marion, *Off with their Heads: A Serio-Comic Tale of Hollywood*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972, 155-156.
3. Mauritz Stiller, to mention only one example, met with considerable difficulties in Hollywood, and several of his projects had to be taken over by other directors.
4. Hjalmar Bergman, *Jac the Clown*, trans. and intro. by Hanna Kalter Weiss, Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1995, 174.
5. Thompson, 1996, 295.
6. Romulus, "Vad menas med svensk film?", *Biografbladet*, March 1, 1923, 240.
7. Agreement between Victor Sjöström and Svensk Filmindustri, Stockholm January 9, 1923, Victor Sjöström Archives, vol 5, Swedish Film Institute Archive.
8. *Biografbladet*, March 1, 1923.
9. Sven Stolpe, "Stiller som modernist", *Filmjournalen* 3, 1927.
10. Robert Ramin, "Kolonie oder Konkurrenz", *Der Kinematograph*, January 30, 1927, 9.
11. Thomas J. Saunders, *Hollywood in Berlin: American Cinema and Weimar Germany*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994, 200.
12. Märta Lindqvist, *Hos filmstjärnor i U.S.A. Snapshots från New York och Hollywood*, Stockholm: Hugo Gebers förlag, 1924.
13. Ibid., 53.

14. Ibid., 56.
15. Ibid., 130.
16. Ibid., 125.
17. Manuscript of informal reminiscences 1, Victor Sjöström Archives, vol 7, Swedish Film Institute Archive.
18. Lindqvist, 127.
19. Manuscript of informal reminiscences 4, Hollywood c. Hollywood II, Victor Sjöström Archives, vol 7, Swedish Film Institute Archive.
20. Kristin Thompson, "Early Alternatives to the Hollywood Mode of Production", *Film History*, vol 5, no 4, 1993, 388.
21. Forslund, 270.
22. Agreement between Victor Sjosthom [sic] and Goldwyn Pictures Corporation, January 25, 1923, Bengt Forslund's archive concerning Victor Sjöström, vol 7, Swedish Film Institute Archive.
23. Sabine Hake, *Passions and Deceptions: The Early Films of Ernst Lubitsch*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992, 62.
24. The Master of Man, Complete Continuity by Paul Bern, May 14, 1923, Scene 1.
25. Thompson & Bordwell, 145.
26. Thomas Schatz, *The Genius of the System: Hollywood Film-Making in the Studio Era*, London: Faber & Faber, 1996, 60 ff.
27. "Röda Kvarns public hyllar Victor Sjöström", *Filmnyheter* 9, 1924, 1.
28. "Victor Sjöströms amerikanska film", *Filmjournalen* 6, 7, 1924, 122.
29. Carl-Gerhard Wallman, "Ett vittnesbörd", *Filmjournalen*, 6, 1924, 60.
30. Ibid.
31. Frank A. Tilley, "With Seastrom in Culver City", *Pictures and Picturegoer*, vol 6, no 35, November 1923, 8.
32. "Amerikanska ord om Victor Sjöström", *Filmnyheter* 7, 1924, 7.
33. Petrie, 133.
34. Victor Sjöström, Letter to Edith Erastoff, April 8, 1923, Victor Sjöström's Archives, vol 21, Swedish Film Institute Archive.
35. Körkarlen, script II, scene 110, Swedish Film Institute Archive.
36. As is well known, this shot inspired Stanley Kubrick in The Shining (1980). I discuss this at more length in my dissertation, Florin, 1997, 168 ff.
37. Noel Burch, "Film's Institutional Mode of Representation and the Soviet Response", *October*, vol 11, no 102, Winter 1979, 91. See also: Vladimir Nizhny, *Lessons with Eisenstein*, trans. and ed. by Ivor Montagu & Jay Leyda, New York: Da Capo Press, 1979, 80.
38. *Film History*, vol 11, no 2, 1999, 59.
39. The Master of Man, Complete Continuity by Paul Bern, scene 202.
40. Name the Man, Silent Cutting Continuity, Part 4, Scenes 91-93; Petrie, 133.
41. The Master of Man, Complete Continuity by Paul Bern, Scene 154.
42. Körkarlen Script II, Scenes 201-202, Swedish Film Institute Archive.
43. Thompson, 1996, 295.

From Scientist to Clown – He Who Gets Slapped

1. Sverker R. Ek, Marianne Ek, Hjalmar Bergman, Korrespondenser 1900-1930, http://www.hjalmarbergman.se, Letters 533, 551, 553; Victor Sjöström, Letter to Hjalmar Bergman, April 23,1924, Victor Sjöström's Archives, vol 21, Swedish Film Institute Archive.
2. Forslund, 215.
3. Frances Marion, in a quotation from Irving Thalberg concerning The Wind: "You'll have to make a few changes in the story to build up Lars Hanson's part. You and Victor Seastrom can work out that together." Marion, 159.
4. Lunde, 50.
5. Albert P. Lewis, He Who Gets Slapped, Script Outline, September 30, 1922, 1.
6. Forslund, 215-216.
7. Victor Sjöström, "Oskrivna memoarer", *Dagens Nyheter*, May 14, 1933.
8. *Motion Pictures News Booking Guide*, vol VIII, 1925, front page advertisement.
9. Sven Stolpe, "*Han som får örfilarna*", *Filmjournalen* 7, 23-24, 1925, 394.
10. "*He Who Gets Slapped*", *Photoplay*, January 1925; Mordaunt Hall, "The Clown's Revenge", *The New York Times*, 10 November 1924.
11. "*He Who Gets Slapped*", *Exceptional Photoplays* 5, 5, October-November 1924.
12. "Name the Man! By Peter Andrews (Told in short-story form, by permission, from the Goldwyn production of the scenario by Paul Bern, adapted from the Hall Caine novel, 'The Master of Man'. Directed by Victor Seastrom" (including six film stills), *Motion Picture Magazine*, January 1924, 43-47, 89; "He Who Gets Slapped, By Saxon Cone", *Motion Picture Magazine*, January 1925, 35-36, 78. (Formerly *Motion Picture Story Magazine*, from its first issue in 1911; the title was changed in March 1914.)
13. Forslund, 217 f; Lunde, 50.
14. Lewis, 1.
15. Ibid.
16. Leonid Andreyev, *He Who Gets Slapped*, trans. by Gregory Zilboorg, New York: The Dial Publishing Company, 1922, 99.
17. Forslund, 218.
18. Andreyev, 188.
19. Ibid., 193.
20. He Who Gets Slapped, Cutting Continuity of Silent Picture, September 30, 1924, Reel 7, Scene 1083.
21. Petrie, 139, who also talks about "Hate, Life, Love".
22. Forslund, 219.
23. Andreyev, 82, 130, 131.
24. David Bordwell, Janet Staiger and Kristin Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style & Mode of Production to 1960*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985, 188.
25. Thompson distinguishes between dialogue titles and literary titles, claiming that the latter serve mere decorative purposes. However, even though these titles could be called "literary", their function is not "decorative" but essential to the understanding of the plot. Ibid., 187.
26. He Who Gets Slapped, Cutting Continuity of Silent Picture, September 30, 1924, Reel 1, Scene 6.

27. Ibid., Reel 2, Scenes 123-180.
28. Tom Gunning, "The Cinema of Attraction[s]: Early Film, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde" in Wanda Strauven, ed., *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006, 382.
29. Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, 79, 258.
30. During the Swedish years, Mauritz Stiller rather than Victor Sjöström made frequent use of this kind of meta-perspective, in films like Thomas Graals bästa film (Thomas Graal's Best Film, 1917) or Thomas Graals bästa barn (Thomas Graal's Best Child, 1918), where Sjöström played the leading male, or in Erotikon (1920).
31. Örjan Roth-Lindberg, "Den bedrägliga bilden", 1985.
32. Lunde, 53.
33. Ibid., 38.
34. Ibid., 40.
35. Ibid., 54.
36. Forslund, 217.
37. Lunde, 50.
38. Forslund claims that the latter was inspired by Sjöström's film. Forslund, 228.
39. Helen Stoddart, *Rings of Desire: Circus History and Representation*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.
40. Ibid., 1.
41. Ibid., 5.
42. Matthias Christen, *Der Zirkusfilm. Exotismus, Konformität, Transgression*, Zürcher Filmstudien, Marburg: Schüren Verlag, 2010, 54 ff.
43. Ibid., 8.
44. Christen, 12 ff.
45. Ibid., 181-191.
46. Ibid., 188 ff; Jean Starobinski (1970), *Portrait de l'artiste en saltimbanque*, Genf: Skira, 1985; Louisa E. Jones, *Sad Clowns and Pale Pierrots: Literature and the Popular Comic Arts in 19th-Century France*, Lexington, KY: French Forum, 1984.
47. *Folket i Bild* 50-51, 1940.
48. This has become a commonplace to the extent that among other references, it is mentioned as self-evident in the IMDB article on The Devil's Circus. http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0016783/usercomments.
49. Lunde, 187.
50. Bergman, 175.
51. Ibid., 177.
52. Ibid., 176.
53. Jeff Werner, *Medelvägens estetik, Sverigebilder i USA*, Del 2, Hedemora/Möklinta: Gidlunds förlag, 2008, 114.
54. Ibid.
55. New York Film Festival, 1969, quoted in Forslund, 217.
56. Christen, 191 ff. These films are dealt with under a common heading, "Gesellschaftlige Randlagen, liminale Existenzen".
57. Ibid.
58. Backpage of Leonid Andreyev, *He Who Gets Slapped and Other Plays*, adapted by Walter Wykes, Los Angeles, CA: Black Box Press, 2007.

59. Jim Tully, "The Greatest Director in the World", *Motion Picture Classic*, vol 19, no 2, 1924, 85.

A for Adultery – The Scarlet Letter

1. Anke Brouwers, *Feeling Through the Eyes: The Legacy of Sentimentalism in Silent Hollywood – The Films of Mary Pickford and Frances Marion*. Diss., University of Antwerpen 2011, 292.
2. Thompson and Bordwell, 145.
3. Quoted in Pauline Kael, *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1965.
4. Marion, 134 ff.
5. Brouwers, 273.
6. Ibid., 275.
7. Petrie, 140.
8. Cf the similar, already noted characteristic in Thompson and Bordwell, 54.
9. I develop this discussion in my unpublished licenciate thesis, "Från Terje Vigen till Körkarlen – en studie över stilen i sex filmer av Victor Sjöström", Stockholms universitet, 1993.
10. Brouwers, 307.
11. Ibid., 289.
12. Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter and Selected Tales*, London: Penguin Books, 1986 [1850], 80.
13. Ibid., 85.
14. Ibid., 80.
15. Brouwers, 288.
16. Hawthorne, 81.
17. Ibid., 84-87.
18. Örjan Roth-Lindberg, 1884, 238.
19. The essay is entitled "The Hidden Mirror", ibid.
20. Ibid., 240.
21. Robin Hood (Bengt Idestam-Almquist), *Den svenska filmens drama, Sjöström och Stiller*, Stockholm: Åhlén och söner, 1939, 13.
22. John Fullerton has discussed the influence of Christian Krogh's illustrations in the 1905 edition of Ibsen's poem "Terje Vigen" on Sjöström's film; Fullerton, "The First Swedish Film Masterpiece: *Terje Vigen*", *Focus on Film* 20, 1975. In my dissertation, I have discussed both the influence of the illustrations in the first Swedish edition of Franz Grillparzer's 1828 novel *Klostret i Sendomir* (1918), as well as the Rembrandtesque light in several compositions from The Phantom Carriage. It is also obvious that this method was not unique to Sjöström, even though he may have developed it more consequently than some of his colleagues. But the fact remains that several of the directors from the Swedish "golden age" of 1917-1924 drew inspiration from particular paintings or illustrations, such as Mauritz Stiller in The Treasure of Arne or John W. Brunius in Synnöve Solbakken; Florin 1997.
23. Roth-Lindberg, 316.
24. Hawthorne, 83.

25. The Scarlet Letter, Scenario by Frances Marion, Scene 73.
26. Roth-Lindberg, 316.
27. "En glänsande renässans", *Filmjournalen*, 2, 1927, 43.
28. *Picture Play*, November 1926; www.silentsaregolden.com., August 1, 2011.
29. E.g. Forslund, 245; Roth-Lindberg, 316.
30. Richard Koszarski, *An Evening's Entertainment: The Age of the Silent Feature Picture, 1915-1928, History of the American Cinema, Volume 3,* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990, 293.
31. Petrie, 143.

Conquering Nature – The Wind

1. Dorothy Scarborough, *The Wind* [1925], Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979.
2. The title of the dissertation was *The Supernatural in Modern English Fiction* (1917). See Susan Kollin, "Race, Labor, and the Gothic Western: Dispelling Frontier Myths in Dorothy Scarborough's The Wind", *Modern Fiction Studies*, vol 46, no 3, 2000, 679.
3. Ibid.
4. Petrie, op. cit.
5. Marion, 159.
6. See, for example, Cynthia Littleton, "Thalberg Saw Power in Previews", *Variety*, 5 March 2011.
7. Katherine Albert, "A Picture That Was No Picnic", *Motion Picture* 3, October 1927.
8. Western Union telegram, May 17, 1927, SF archives. The question of shaving as a marker visually distinguishing between good and evil was as typical of Hollywood as of Sweden. See Florin, 2003, 59-60.
9. "Sjöström – Gish – Hanson", *China Filmnytt*, October 1928.
10. "*Stormen* – Texastornados och *Körkarl*-mystik", *Filmjournalen* 10, 1928, 14.
11. "*The Wind*", *Exceptional Photoplays* 6, 4, November 1924.
12. Mordaunt Hall, "Lillian Gish", *The New York Times*, 5 November 1928.
13. Forslund, 246–257.
14. Ibid., 111.
15. Ibid., 251; *The New York Times*, 5 November 1928.
16. Kollin, 685.
17. Ibid., 682 f.
18. Peter Cowie, *Le cinéma des pays nordique*, Paris: Éd. du Centre Pompidou, 1990, 109.
19. Fullerton, 54.
20. Ibid.
21. Louis Delluc, quoted in Georges Sadoul, *Histoire générale du cinema: Le cinéma devient un art, 1909-1920*, Paris: Denoël, 1952, 212 f .
22. Henri Agel, *Les grands cinéastes*, Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1959, 43.
23. Florin, 1997, 81-84.
24. Petrie, 150.
25. Ibid.
26. Kollin, 689.
27. Mikhail Iampolski, *The Memory of Tiresias, Intertextuality and Film*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, 9.

28. Quoted from *Filmjournalen* 15, 1924, 206.
29. Robert Herring, "Film Imagery: Seastrom", *Close Up* 1, 1929.
30. André, 31.
31. Kollin, 683 f.
32. Ibid., 684.
33. See Florin, 1999, 154-163.
34. Ray Tumbleson, "Potboiler Emancipation and the Prison of Pure Art: *Clarissa*, *The Wind* and Surviving Rape", *Literature/Film Quarterly*, vol 25, no 3, July 1997, 195.
35. Petrie, 154 f.
36. André, 32.
37. Kollin, 688.
38. Scarborough, 175.
39. Sarah Projansky, in her "The Elusive/Ubiquitous Representation of Rape: A Historical Survey of Rape in U.S. Film, 1903-1972", *Cinema Journal*, vol 41, no 1, 2001, 63-90, offers a thorough historical analysis of the subject.
40. Lynn A. Higgins and Brenda R. Silver, eds, *Rape and Representation*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1991, 2-3.
41. Kollin, 680.
42. Not least, its influence on film makers – as the image from James Cameron's TITANIC (1997), to mention only one example, where Kate Winslet and Leonardo di Caprio stand together in the stem of their doomed ship – references the original image from THE WIND.
43. Ibid., 688.
44. Tumbleson, 194.
45. Marion, 160.
46. Gish in an introduction to THE WIND on Turner Network Television, Summer 1990.
47. Tumbleson, 194.

Fragmented Pieces: Writing the History of the Lost Hollywood Films

1. Giuliana Bruno, *Streetwalking on a Ruined Map: Cultural Theory and the City Films of Elvira Notari*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993.
2. Ibid., 3.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., 147.
5. Éric de Kuyper, "Fragments de l'histoire du cinéma. Quelques remarques sur la problématique du fragment", *Hors Cadre* 10, 1992 ("Arrêt sur recherches"), 45-52.
6. Paolo Cherchi Usai, *The Death of Cinema: History, Cultural Memory and the Digital Dark Age*, London: BFI Publishing, 2001, 18 f.
7. Paolo Cherchi Usai, *Burning Passions: An Introduction to the Study of Silent Cinema*, London: BFI Publishing, 1994, 56.
8. Ibid., 84.
9. 1,170 metres, 47 min (22 fps).
10. 250 metres, 10 min (22 fps). 16 metres from a later reel were also recently discovered.

11. The Masks of the Devil, Daily Production Report.
12. Forslund, 233.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Spes. (Sven Stolpe), "*Kungar i landsflykt* – Viktor [sic] Sjöströms tredje Amerikafilm", *Filmjournalen* 8, 1, 1926, 8.
16. See, for example, *Filmnyheter* 2, 1923.
17. Fullerton, 53.
18. Florin, 1997, 100.
19. Gunning, 3.
20. Iampolski, 35.
21. Ibid., 35-47.
22. Bruno, 150.
23. Mordaunt Hall, "A Swedish Story", *The New York Times*, 28 September 1925.
24. Ibid.
25. A. S. "*The Tower of Lies*", *Photoplay*, November 1925.
26. Forslund, 234.
27. Ibid., 236.
28. Ibid., 235.
29. Ibid.
30. The Tower of Lies, Cutting Continuity Script.
31. Iampolski, 37.
32. Ibid.
33. em> *Spes. (Sven Stolpe),* "Kejsaren av Portugallien", Filmjournalen, *vol 8, no 16, 1926, 505.*
34. Ibid.
35. The Divine Woman, Cutting Continuity Script, Reel 8, Scenes 66-93.
36. Forslund, 260.
37. T. V. "*En gudomlig kvinna*", *Filmjournalen* 10, 5, 1928, 18.
38. Ibid.
39. Bruno, 152.
40. The Divine Woman, Cutting Continuity Script, Reel 3, Scenes 84-85.
41. Ibid.
42. "The Actress's Old Love", *The New York Times*, January 16, 1928.
43. The Divine Woman, Cutting Continuity Script, Reel 7, Scene 37.
44. The Masks of the Devil, Daily Production Report.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
48. Mordaunt Hall, "Satan's Ruse", *The New York Times*, 26 November 1928.
49. "Film of Play is Effective", *The New York Times*, 1 March 1930.
50. The Masks of the Devil, Cutting Continuity Script, Reel 1, Scene 14.
51. Inter-Office Communication from Paul Bern to Mr Thalberg (c/o Miss Marion), 6 June, 1928, Bengt Forslund's archive concerning Victor Sjöström, Swedish Film Institute Archive. Forslund quotes Einar Lauritzen, who in turn quotes a speech by Sjöström in 1949, about the fact that Sjöström and Thalberg saw the O'Neill play on Broadway.

52. The Masks of the Devil, Scenario by Frances Marion, Scene 14, Bengt Forslund's archive concerning Victor Sjöström, Swedish Film Institute Archive.
53. The Masks of the Devil, Cutting Continuity Script, Reel 1, Scene 85.
54. Forslund, 262.
55. Bruno, 5.
56. Ibid., 149.
57. Ibid., 150.

The Shadow of the Silents – A Lady to Love

1. See Introduction, note 1.
2. Forslund, 267. He probably bases his assumption on the fact that Edward G. Robinson in his autobiography *All My Yesterdays* talks about the film in all but positive terms: "I was ready, of course, to read the play and rehearse. But there was no reading and no rehearsal. We plunged into the middle of the film, and it did not take long to realize that Miss Banky was seriously out of her depth. My heart went out to her, and I tried to help. Mr. Seastrom didn't seem to try at all. He was as frightened as Miss Banky." Edward G. Robinson, *All My Yesterdays*, New York: Signet, 1975, 104.
3. *The New York Times*, March 1, 1930; *The Telegraph*, March 2, 1930.
4. Ibid.
5. Donald Crafton, *The Talkies: American Cinema's Transition to Sound, 1926-1931, History of the American Cinema, Volume 4,* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, 425, 436 f.
6. Ibid., 427.
7. United Artists, 1929; see ibid., 462.
8. Ibid.
9. Anna Sofia Rossholm, *Reproducing Languages, Translating Bodies: Approaches to Speech, Translation and Cultural Identity in Early European Sound Film*, Stockholm: AUS, 2006, 52.
10. Ibid., 51.
11. Miriam Hansen, "Universal Language and Democratic Culture: Myths of Origin in Early American Cinema", in Dieter Meindl and Friedrich W. Horlacher, eds, *Mythos und Aufklärung in der Amerikanischen Literatur/Myth and Enlightenment in the American Literature*, Erlangen: Universitätsbund Erlangen-Nürnberg e. V., 1985, 321-351.
12. "Victor Sjöström åter i Stockholm", October/November 1928, Bengt Forslund's archive concerning Victor Sjöström, The Swedish Film Institute Archive.
13. Crafton, 326 f.
14. Ibid., 169.
15. Koszarski, 253.
16. Crafton, 169.
17. Ibid.
18. Forslund, 268.
19. A Lady to Love, Dialogue Cutting Continuity Script, Reel 1, Scene 21.
20. Ibid., Reel 6, Scenes 4-6.

21. Ibid., Reel 1, Scene 7.
22. Ibid., Reel 5, Scene 3.
23. Ibid., Reel 5, Scene 7.
24. Ibid., Reel 5, Scene 9.
25. Ibid., Reel 5, Scene 6.
26. Sunkissed, Play and Dialog Continuity by Sidney Howard, October 15, 1929, Scene 253.
27. Ibid., Scene 283.
28. Florin, 2003, 67.
29. A comparison could be made to the much later "Europuddings", resulting from the fact that the European Union provided central funding for filmmaking, with similar language problems as a result.
30. Cf. Rossholm, 52.

The Genius and the System – Some Concluding Remarks

1. He Who Gets Slapped is available on Google Video, The Scarlet Letter and The Wind on YouTube.
2. Hans Pensel, *Seastrom and Stiller in Hollywood: Two Swedish Directors in Silent American Films, 1923-1930*, New York: Vantage Press, 1969, 77.
3. Forslund, 261, 267.
4. Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, 72 f.
5. Cf Örjan Roth-Lindberg in *Chaplin*, 25th Anniversary Issue, 1984, 66.
6. As Richard Koszarski states: "By then MGM was actively trying to rid itself of Gish's contract. In a controversial discussion of MGM's handling of Greta Garbo and Gish, Louise Brooks suggests that MGM tried to build up the Swedish actress (over whom they had more effective control) in an effort to damage Gish's position in the industry. Not only was Gish earning a fabulous salary, but she was excercising the sort of control that the studio preferred to reserve for itself." He also notes that she made another "ineffective" feature with MGM, "then signed with United Artists for $50,000 a picture, a small fraction of her previous salary." Koszarski, 293.
7. For example, when Paul Bern had the possibility to comment on Marion's script to The Masks of the Devil, or the last minute changes to a happy end in The Wind.
8. Florin, 1999, 259-60.
9. Markurells i Wadköping (Sweden, 1931), and Under the Red Robe (England, 1937).

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