

image by the test of a dramatised separation whose internal form is alternation, orchestrated at its multiple levels in order to serve the principle which carries the narrative, by its repetition, towards its resolution.

Shot 96 refines this terminal movement by means of a final alternation: the alternation of frames which places, between the two shots which reunite the five protagonists (95 and 97), a close-up of the object with which the heroine held the two thieves in check. Hermeneutic resolution. The non-seen, or the badly-seen, appears in its true colours: a monkey-wrench instead of a revolver. A rhyming effect, too: with the revolver held by the young man, which re-establishes the distribution of objects according to that of sex.

But this close-up, the only one in the film, also acknowledges an added meaning, stemming from the rhymed difference which it inscribes between the man and the woman: it unites, as if over and above the action which reforms it, the couple, by isolating fragments of their bodies which suddenly seem to be made, despite the contrast in the clothes (smooth white of the bodice, black and white stripes of the shirt), of a continuous material, wherein can be read the subject of the fiction, in the meaning of the principle which determines it.

NB Another print has since shown me another ending (quite simply ten to twenty seconds cut from the copy on which I worked), which completes the perfection of the system. Same shot, same frame: the two thieves leave, then the second driver; the hero and the heroine embrace: the kiss gently refused in shot 4 is accepted in the final shot. Repetition—resolution. The conjunction of the couple, of the two terms posed by the inaugural alternation, constitutes the substance of the narrative.

Notes

First published in English in *Australian Journal of Film Theory* no. 15/16, 1983.

1. In 'Segmenter/analyser', *L'Analyse du film* (Paris: Albatros, 1979); and in 'Alternation, enunciation, hypnosis', an interview with Raymond Bellour by Janet Bergstrom, *Camera Obscura*, No. 3, 1979.
2. Production Biograph, 1911; 998 feet (16.30 to 16 images/second); actors: Blanche Sweet (telegraphist); Frank Grandon (driver).

Translated by Inge Pruks

Spatial and Temporal Articulation in Pre-classical Swedish Film

JOHN FULLERTON

In an article concerned with narration in early film, Tom Gunning identified four syntagmatic principles.¹ He notes that each syntagmatic type not only represented different and successive responses to the issue of temporal and spatial organisation, but constituted genre-specific narrative forms. Towards the end of the article, he goes on to propose that the cut-in inaugurated, in rudimentary fashion, the development of scene dissection.²

In establishing his narrational paradigms, Gunning privileged spatial and temporal articulation. While these priorities established with regard to the classical style are appropriate for the analysis of prototypical and pre-classical film, they should not be seen as the only analytic criteria available to us for films where intertitles were a standard narrational device. Given that pre-classical narration incorporated the written word (almost certainly the mark of a narrator inherited from the lecturer), it can be argued that the status of spatio-temporal articulation is problematic. The examination of this issue in pre-classical Swedish film will lead us to question the apparently self-evident notion that filmic (as opposed to narrational) continuity constituted a major organising principle in pre-classical film. The point I wish to make is that questions of editing and staging in early cinema should be extended to include a consideration of the role of language in narration. The argument in this chapter will be based largely on a three-reel film, *Trädgårdsmästaren* (Victor Sjöström, Svenska Biografteatern, 1912).³

Why select Swedish film in this period for investigation? The answer involves the comparative history of early cinema, for, while there is much to confirm Gunning's proposition that the cut-in, the eyeline match and the shot/reverse-shot system constituted a series of successive formal innovations in American and Danish film, Swedish film is notable if only because there are no cut-ins in surviving films before 1913,⁴ and scene dissection does not occur until 1917,⁵ when, on a comparative basis, its incidence is very late. This may suggest that Swedish film was stylistically 'retarded'. However, given that the example of American and Danish practice was available to film-makers in Sweden, Swedish film may constitute a practice which, different to that of the classical paradigm, requires us to question the model's pertinence also in a more general account of the development of narrative film.

More specifically, since Swedish film is overwhelmingly concerned with the autonomy of profilmic space, it raises three fundamental issues. First, if Sweden developed a divergent practice to that of America during this period, are

its modes of narration nationally specific? Second, given that Swedish films are formally different, what logic determines their narratives, and how do they address the spectator? Third, how do intertitles and image interact in its narrational system? Although the last point forms the subject of this chapter, the two former questions will necessarily be touched upon. My central argument can be formulated as follows: if intertitles (particularly narrative intertitles) are part of a narrational system based on spatio-temporal continuity, then Swedish films are comparable to those Gunning calls continuous in the American context. If, however, intertitles in Swedish films have discontinuous⁶ or other narrational functions, then spatio-temporal continuity might not have had the same stylistic priority.⁷ In arguing for the latter, close attention will be paid to shot transition (to determine the appropriateness of spatial and temporal criteria) and the modes of address of intertitles. In this discussion, narration will be taken to imply, as David Bordwell and Edward Branigan have argued, two distinct operations: the filmic inscription of specific spatio-temporal relations between a given series of shots and the cognitive, active process of meaning construction undertaken by the viewer across larger segments of the film.⁸ As we shall see, the latter can overdetermine and thus render continuous what at the filmic level is discontinuous. A segment from *Trädgårdsmästaren* which can serve as an example of how shot transition constitutes a rudimentary form of filmic continuity occurs early in the first reel of the film:

Title 7 'In the tea gardens.' *Cut to*

Shot 8 Exterior, long shot (L.S.), the tea gardens. As the shot opens, Cedric's mother (the head gardener's wife, towards mid-field, frame left) is serving students seated at a table, foreground centre, with drinks. The head gardener enters from foreground right, crosses over to her, and they converse. The gardener points towards off-frame right (see Plate 1), whereupon his wife leaves the garden at rear right. As the gardener begins to walk towards rear left, *cut to*

Shot 9 Exterior, L.S., yard. Rose, Cedric's girlfriend, left of centre and with back to camera, is feeding chickens. Shortly, a gate at foreground left swings open, and Cedric's mother, holding an apron, comes into the yard. She walks towards Rose as Rose turns to greet her. While they converse, Cedric's mother, turning towards camera, points towards off-frame left (see Plate 2), hands Rose the apron, and, as Rose begins to put apron on, *cut to*

Title 8 'An energetic help.' *Cut to*

Shot 10 Exterior, L.S., the tea gardens, same camera set-up as in shot 8. A waitress carries drinks on a tray to a group of students seated at mid-field left of centre. As she serves them, Rose enters at rear right, comes towards frame left, and, as she approaches the group of students seated around the table at foreground right, she ties up her apron. Rose picks up the ice bucket on the table, places it on a tray, and leaves the shot, rear left. *Cut to*

Title 9 'A noble patron.' *Cut to*

Shot 11 Exterior, L.S., another location in the tea gardens with shrubs towards foreground right framing right-hand half of shot. Rose, without a tray, is walking across the foreground of the shot towards foreground left. The General (the noble patron referred to in intertitle 9) advances towards her. As they approach one another, the camera pans slightly left to reframe them at left and centre of the shot. They converse. Rose points towards off-frame right (see Plate 3). As Rose turns away from camera and walks away from the General, the General walks towards front right and leaves the shot at medium (M.) L.S. The shot is held without Rose and the General for a moment before *cut to*

Shot 12 Exterior, M.L.S., a table at foreground centre, behind and to the right of which, a bench screened from the rest of the tea gardens by shrubbery. The General is seated on the bench, and appears to be talking to himself. As the film cuts to the next shot, a woman's arm is visible entering at frame right (when projected, this imminent entry into shot of Rose (see Plate 4) is not registered by the viewer). *Cut to*

Shot 13 Exterior, L.S., tea gardens with shrubs, same camera set-up as at the conclusion of shot 11. Shortly, Rose enters from behind shrubbery carrying a tray. She crosses towards foreground right, and exits at frame right. The shot is held for a moment. *Cut to*

Shot 14 Exterior, M.L.S., a table, same camera set-up as in shot 12. As shot opens, Rose enters from foreground right, crosses over to left of shot, and serves the General his drink. He pays her for the drink, and, as Rose makes to leave, he, much to her surprise, offers her more money (a not inconsiderable sum for he paid for the drink with coins, but here (see Plate 5) offers her a note). Taking the money, Rose tries to kiss the General's hand, but he makes to halt her and, in turn, kisses her hand. Turning towards the foreground, Rose, with a quizzical expression on her face (see Plate 6), crosses the shot and begins to exit at frame right close to camera. *Cut to*

Title 10 'A troubled idyll.' *Cut to*

Shot 15 Exterior, L.S., the veranda of Rose's cottage.

If one considers the spatio-temporal relations which obtain in this extract, one notices that at the end of shot 8, Cedric's mother, at the request of her husband (i.e. prompted by his gesture), leaves the shot at rear right. Shortly, she enters shot 9 from frame left. Although a brief temporal ellipsis may be inferred between shots 8 and 9 (sufficient, in diegetic terms, for Cedric's mother to get an apron to give to Rose), the manner in which her exit from shot 8 matches, in directional terms, her entry into shot 9 establishes, through action, a strong causal link and inscribes spatio-temporal continuity. Similarly, though an intertitle separates shots 9 and 10, Rose's entry in shot 10, motivated by Cedric's mother's gesture towards off-frame left in the preceding shot, reinscribes spatial contiguity, while the action of putting on the apron, accomplished over both shots, secures a near-continuous sense of temporal progression. In the context, then, of these three shots, unity of action together with directional matching

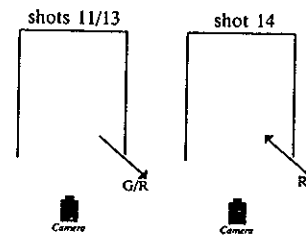
define the extract's spatio-temporal relations despite the insertion of intertitle 8.

However, while continuity of action secures temporal coherence in the remaining part of the extract, spatial relations are more problematic. First, the spatial coherence between the two parts of the extract is only loosely inscribed. Rose leaves shot 10 at rear left. After intertitle 9, she enters shot 11 at frame right and crosses the picture plane in the direction of the General. Though action across shots 10 and 11 secures a sense of spatial contiguity with the first part of the extract, the precise relationship of shot 11 to the previous action is not specified. An indeterminate temporal ellipsis occurs between shots 10 and 11 (evidenced in the fact that Rose leaves shot 10 carrying a tray, but enters shot 11 without it), and the location of action, though still set in the tea gardens, does not match any details seen in the two previous locations. Second, the space between shots 11 and 14 is ambiguous. Rose points towards off-frame right in shot 11, and the General exits in that direction at the end of the shot. Given, however, that shot 12 opens with the General seated on the bench, the continuity of action across the shots which is necessary to define the spatial relationship of shot 11 to shot 12 is not inscribed. As a result, it is difficult to determine whether Rose's entry into shot 14 (from frame right) is consistent with her exit at frame right in shot 13. If the two spaces are parallel (see Fig. 1), the relationship between the two shots is spatially inconsistent. If, on the other hand, shots 12 and 14 denote an adjacent though reverse field to that of shots 11 and 13 (see Fig. 2), Rose's entry into shot 14 is spatially coherent, though it should be noted that such an inscription of space is not typical of the later classical style.

The problem of the film's spatial coherence, however, does not end here. Given that Rose's entry into shot 14 is anticipated in the last few frames of shot 12 (as close inspection of the 35 mm viewing copy held at Svenska Filminstitutet reveals), we can assume that this scene was filmed as a two-shot sequence. Shots currently numbered 11 and 13 would have constituted the first shot of the sequence, and shots numbered 12 and 14, the second shot of the sequence. After filming, the two shots were edited, so that they now constitute a four-shot alternating syntagm, with a degree of temporal simultaneity between shots 12 and 13, but, overall, temporal succession between shots 11, 12/13, and 14. Although, therefore, temporal progression and a certain spatial coherence characterise this part of the extract, why was the film edited in this fashion, why was action thus intercalated? The answer points towards a different conception of screen space to that of the classical period, so different that it calls into question our conception of spatio-temporal continuity for this period.

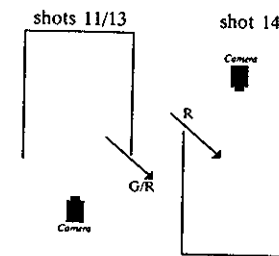
At the end of shot 11, Rose exits behind the shrubbery. If shot 13 was actually a continuation of shot 11, Rose would have left the shot only to reappear, sooner or later, with a drink for the General. Given this description of action, Rose's reappearance would either have been too early to be plausible, or entailed a considerable lapse of time. Whichever narrative logic guided the filmmakers, Rose's absence, it would appear, was perceived to violate a fundamental principle regarding screen space. Hence, the pressure to edit the sequence in its present form. By so doing, a single and developing narrative line, accomplished

Figure 1. Relationship of exits and entry into shot within parallel fields

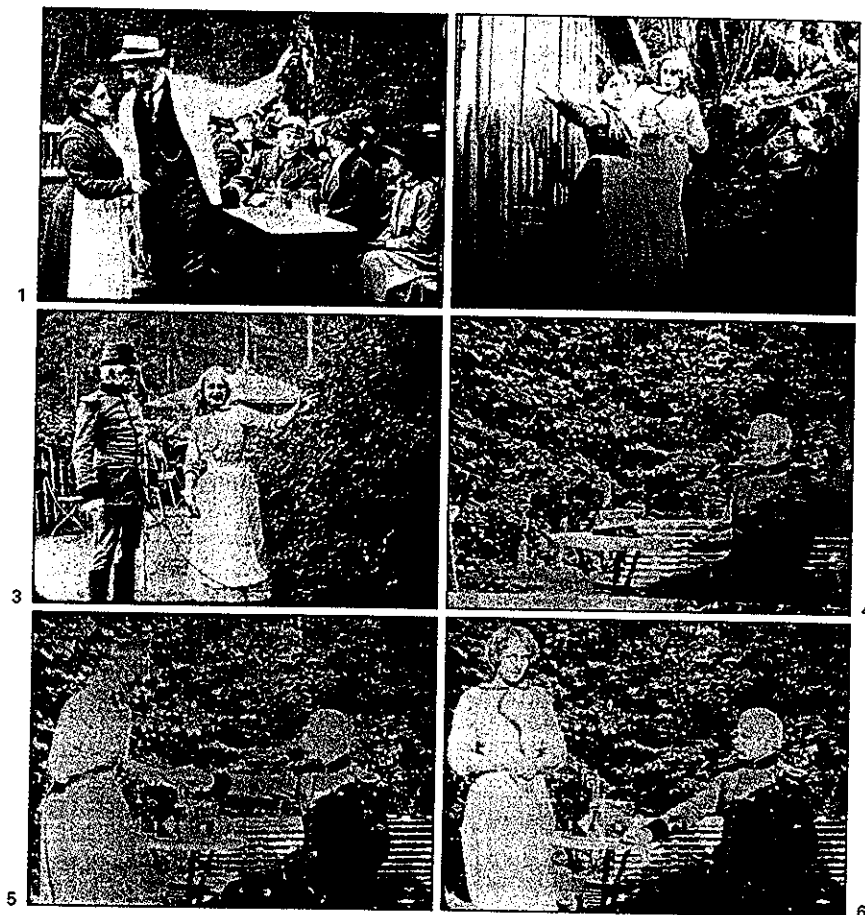


G = Direction of movement by General in shot 11
R = Direction of movement by Rose in shots 13 and 14

Figure 2. Relationship of exits and entry into shot within reverse and adjacent fields



G = Direction of movement by General in shot 11
R = Direction of movement by Rose in shots 13 and 14



over two shots and inscribing continuity through gesture towards off-frame space, was intercut with the General sitting on the bench. In short, the preferred solution favoured action of some kind on the screen rather than the absence of action, even if this risked confusion in shot 12 where the General apparently sits talking to himself.

If one accepts this as the reason for editing the film in its present form, why do I assume that Rose's absence at the end of shot 11 and the beginning of shot 13 was deemed a violation of screen space? Primarily, her absence contradicted a dramatic principle which, in the context of fictional narratives, favoured anthropomorphic presence in any given shot. With Rose and the General leaving shot 11, the shot becomes, in effect, a descriptive shot, a scene without anthropomorphic or narrative interest. While the descriptive syntagm was used by film-makers in non-fiction genres in this period,⁹ surviving Swedish fiction films do not use a single descriptive shot introducing a fictional narrative before 1916,¹⁰ and a three-shot descriptive syntagm does not appear before 1917.¹¹ Rose's absence, therefore, transgressed what we may posit, on intertextual grounds, as an operational principle with regard to fictional narratives, and editing was adopted as a means of retaining human interest while achieving narrative progression.

Although further corroboration from other films would be needed to draw more general conclusions, one can, none the less, suggest that while narrational continuity could be achieved (principally through the relaying of action via gesture to off-frame space),¹² spatio-temporal continuity was not a fully determining operational principle of narration in *Trädgårdsmästaren*. Thus narrational disjunction not only constituted a viable and possible alternative mode of organising a given narrative, but at this point in the diachronic development of Swedish fictional narratives, had a status more or less equal to that of spatio-temporal continuity. As a working hypothesis this can be corroborated by looking at the deployment of intertitles.

Intertitle 9, which announces 'a noble patron', serves an obliquely informational function. It also has a structural function in that it inaugurates the development of narrative action. Intertitle 9 thus has a narrational status equal to that of gesture towards off-frame space. The intertitle binds, in other words, the image chain through language in a manner similar in degree, though not in kind, to action which binds, as we have seen, shots 8 to 9, 9 to 10, and shot 11/13 to shot 12/14. While, therefore, intertitles 7 and 9 define different types of coherence (respectively, a coherence of space and a coherence for upcoming action centred on the General), intertitle 8, placed after the first two shots in the extract, renders discontinuous what at the level of the action is continuous. Moreover, given that Rose's willingness to work is more than evident from the speed with which she sets about serving in the tea gardens, intertitle 8, in referential terms, verges on redundancy. Unless, that is, intertitles generally serve another, as yet unidentified, narrational function. A further extract will enable me to examine the issue of temporality more closely, and will raise a major narrational issue, before returning me to a reconsideration of the role of intertitles in the first extract.

The second extract is the opening of the film:

- Title 1 'The Broken Spring Rose. Part 1.' *Cut to*
Title 2 'Chief Actress. Mrs Lilli Beck [sic] of Copenhagen.'¹³ *Cut to*
Title 3 'The Playmates.' *Cut to*
Shot 1 Exterior, ELS, a woodland bank. Rose, visible to right of centre behind a tree, runs down woodland bank at right of centre pursued by Cedric. He tries to catch Rose as they dodge around the tree. As they run towards foreground left, the camera pans left to reframe the teenagers at left of centre foreground. They embrace, and, as Cedric draws Rose towards the extreme foreground, *cut to*
Title 4 'Three years later. A joyful message "Cedric arriving to-morrow from school."' *Cut to*
Shot 2 Interior, L.S., Rose's cottage framed towards right-hand corner of the living room. Rose stands at foreground left looking eagerly at her jacket as she prepares to go to meet Cedric. She puts jacket on table at centre foreground, and goes quickly towards rear right of centre to bring a mirror from on top of mantelpiece by stove to the table. She places mirror on the table, and looks at herself. She puts on jacket, turns away from camera to look at her rear view, then, turning back, begins to button up her jacket. *Cut to*
Title 5 'At home again(.) The young student.' *Cut to*
Shot 3 Exterior, L.S., ferry landing-stage. Rose and her father stand with backs to camera towards foreground left. Other people awaiting the ferry (also with backs to camera) stand, mid-field, on the landing-stage. A small steamboat draws up, people disembark and greet those on the landing-stage. Cedric, wearing a student cap, disembarks, greets his parents at mid-field, centre of shot. He kisses his mother, and, glancing over his right shoulder towards foreground of shot (see Plate 7), catches sight of Rose. Rose and her father turn towards Cedric (i.e. towards camera profile) as he approaches them. Cedric, at foreground centre, greets Rose. As Cedric's parents approach him and his mother moves towards foreground right, Cedric's father draws Cedric away from Rose (see Plate 8). Cedric and his parents exit front right past camera as Rose, approaching M.L.S. (see Plate 9), gazes past camera towards front right in the direction of the departing (now off-frame) figure of Cedric. She looks on spell-bound, then exits front right past camera. As her father begins to exit front right past camera, *cut to*
Shot 4 Interior, L.S., Rose's cottage, framed slightly to the left of the camera set-up for shot 2. The table, at foreground centre, has been moved slightly.¹⁴

First, a look at the intertitles with regard to their temporal denotation. Title 3, 'the playmates', primarily designates the couple whom we see in shot 1. It also denotes the relationship between the two protagonists, and determines our reading of the action, youthful play, rather than, say, a prelude to seduction. To what extent, however, does this shot denote a repeated state of affairs rather than

a singulative action? In the context of the first part of the following intertitle which denotes the passing of three years, the action of the shot is not strictly iterative (we do not infer, for instance, that the couple are forever chasing one another round the tree), yet its temporal mode is, none the less, modified by the time given in the following intertitle. Thus, the opening of the film confirms the function intertitles perform in specifying the narrative focus of a scene. But it also is an example of the reading and viewing process typical of narrative film which requires the spectator to reappraise a given action through information supplied, as in this instance, by a subsequent intertitle.

A further instance of the dual nature of the reading process is the relationship of shot 3 to its preceding intertitle. Shot 3 marks the time of intertitle 5 as successive to shot 2. However, the intertitle, taken out of the context of the following shot, could be construed as indicating simultaneity and initiating an alternating syntagm. Such a reading, however, is quickly resolved in favour of a sequential and causal reading. Thus, there is in fact an ellipsis between shots 2 and 3 as Rose, now standing on the landing-stage, awaits Cedric's return. Unity of action in this instance determines the preferred reading of the narrative's temporality, so removing the ambiguity contained in the intertitle itself. In arguing that the first title-image conjunction allows for two temporal readings, and that the ambiguous time frame of intertitle 5 is resolved by action in the following shot, I want to question the notion that a temporally specific diegesis is only inscribed through shots or titles and point to the important relationship which obtains in pre-classical narration between intertitle and shot. This has obvious implications with regard to narrational address.

Title 4 informs us that a joyful message is received. Joyful for whom? Evidently for Rose, as shot 2 shortly confirms. However, if the message is joyful for Rose, from whom does it originate? Cedric? Hardly, for the intertitle shows no trace of the personal pronoun 'I'. Unless, therefore, authorship of the message is attributed to an as yet unidentified diegetic source, one must assume that the joy spoken of in the intertitle serves not only a referential function (designating, like title 3, a state of being), but implies a narrating instance which invites the spectator to share a position of omniscience by providing an intimation of Rose's (but, possibly, also Cedric's) psychological state. Interestingly, the action of the following shot at no point confirms the narrative purport of the intertitle: we see Rose neither receive nor read a message. Rather, the intertitle functions primarily to inscribe a narration that is focalised. Furthermore, so used are we to narrational omniscience from the novel that we do not doubt for a moment the authority of the narrating instance. Not only do we take on trust the authority of the extradiegetic narrator, we are also willing to ignore the temporal ellipsis designated in intertitle 4. While the ellipsis may be insignificant in diegetic terms, given that shot 3 institutes a hermeneutic, ellipsis may, in this instance, retrospectively acquire narrational significance. This becomes evident when we consider the action of shot 3 in relation to the ellipsis inscribed in title 4.

Shot 3 opens with Rose and her father standing towards foreground left. With their backs to camera, we cannot, during the first part of the shot, read Rose's face, although something of her emotional state may be inferred from the



7



8



9

manner in which, contrary to her animated presentation in the two previous shots, she stands rather statically looking towards mid-field space. Her emotional state in shot 3 is thus signalled as different to that earlier in the film. The position of her figure in the frame also means that we look past Rose towards the recessed space of the scene, so enabling us to see clearly the developing action. From this spatial arrangement, we infer that Rose is able to see what we see: what we deduce, she, too, is capable of deducing. The boat draws up, Cedric disembarks, he greets his parents, he greets Rose. No sooner does Cedric greet Rose, however, than his father draws him away from her. Why should the father act in this fashion? This question cannot be resolved at this point: it hinges, as the narrative later implies, on the issue of class, the threat which Rose is deemed to represent to Cedric's filial devotion, and rivalry between father and son for the attention of Rose. What alerts the spectator, however, is that neither Rose (as is evident from the manner in which she leaves the shot) nor Cedric detects anything untoward in the father's gesture. His action inaugurates what Ben Brewster, in considering other pre-classical films, has identified as a hierarchy of relative knowledge. This aspect of the narration involving action and intertextual address is further amplified through generic convention and what we may presume was Lili Bech's known screen persona.¹⁵ It starts a series of narrative enigmas not fully articulated until Cedric is banished from home by his father. By constituting a hermeneutic, narration is rendered dynamic as the viewer mentally returns to the ellipsis in intertitle 4 in the hope of gaining explanation. However, given that explanation is not forthcoming in the narrative at this point, the ellipsis, in narrational terms, now becomes a paralipsis, propelling the viewer onward into the narrative. Narration, in other words, withholds motivation for the father's action until a later point in the narrative. Expository material, therefore, when distributed along the syntagmatic axis of narration, may, in some instances, become narratively integrated, not at the level of spatio-temporal continuity, but as part of a process of supra-syntagmatic reading.

So far, I have argued that narrational coherence in *Trädgårdsmästaren* depends on a reading process that integrates, but at the same time moves backwards as well as forwards through, the syntagmatic chain, as in the opening of the film where, in strictly spatio-temporal terms, there is little evidence of continuity. Text and image, though interdependent, are relatively autonomous, and distil action in concentrated form in any one title or shot. This strategy seems largely typical of the film's narrational style, and suggests that narration regulates and paces the narrative by alternating between discontinuous passages and passages which, more continuous, can be characterised as being more expansive. The film's more general narrational principles allow one to identify one further function with regard to the deployment of intertitles, indicative of the manner in which pre-classical narration may have offered narrative pleasures different to those later instituted in the classical period.

I began by noting that intertitles functioned to secure coherence of space, action and, as in the instance of the title which introduced the General, narrative momentum. I have since noted their metadiegetic, discursive operation. The question arises whether issues of narrative momentum and discursi-

vity are also appropriate to the intertitles in our first extract. When I initially discussed this extract, it seemed that intertitle 8 was in fact redundant. At the risk of pleonasm, one could say that intertitles mark an insistence on the part of the narrating instance to punctuate each stage of the narrative with an intertitle. In the context of the first extract, intertitle 8 not only singles out Rose (rather than Cedric's parents) as a central protagonist in the developing action, but, in so doing, focalises her activity. Shortly, intertitle 9 introduces the General, and, as mentioned earlier, secures narrative progression. In other words, intertitles focus more spectatorial attention on a particular protagonist, yet, as in the case of the General's introduction, they do so very obliquely: for, why a noble patron rather than, say, *the General*?

When I considered the narrational hermeneutics of the second extract, I noted that a particular hierarchy of relative knowledge was inscribed between the narrative and the spectator. It seems that in the way in which the General is introduced the intertitle encodes a hermeneutic which momentarily makes his introduction an enigma. Given a historically specific spectatorial competence familiar with generic encoding, i.e. a familiarity with the type of narrative constituted in a melodrama such as *Järnbäraren* (Gustaf Linden, Svenska Biografteatern (1911)) in which a lower-class, well-meaning *ingénue* falls foul of a wealthy, aristocratic male, the oblique introduction of the General inaugurates a narrative situation predicated on a class discourse. More specifically, 'A noble patron' does not so much serve as the oblique introduction of the General to the viewer as mobilise a discursive field associated with a given film genre. In this context, the sequencing of intertitles and action in the tea gardens episode – 'In the tea gardens', 'An energetic help', 'A noble patron', the action of shot 14 in conjunction with the following intertitle, 'Troubled idyll' (irrespective of what the following shot reveals) – activates a predictive narrative itinerary. Elsewhere in the film, such a narrational strategy is clear: 'Destroyed dreams of youth', 'Turned out' (i.e. dispossession), 'Seized by a stroke', 'Again without a home and bare of protection', all foreshadow narrative events, and, in so doing, forecast a narrative of pain, anguish and humiliation. In short, intertitles (singly or in concert) act as signifiers of anticipation, which, relayed through subsequent shots, work to confirm or postpone a predictive scenario itself established by intertitles. In so doing, they demonstrate that narration can activate an intertextual regime and vectorise a given narrative situation. Narration and action, text and image, work together in a process which, different to the phantasmal and synthetic conceptualisation of space associated with the later classical period, involves a predictive scenario.

Conceived thus, narration in pre-classical film offers a very different conception of readerly pleasure. As in the instance of this Swedish melodrama, it is a quasi-formulaic, aggregative process in which trauma is signalled ahead of its delivery, a well-posted route similar in kind to that which earlier constituted a major genre of film-making elsewhere in Europe, the Passion Play. In this context, we can perceive the hallmark of the discontinuous style: a foreshadowed chronicle of travail and humiliation ending, as in the instance of *Trädgårdsmästaren*, in death. Only then can the chronicle be concluded, only

then can intertitles admit to the past tense.¹⁶ Narrative closure, inscribing both the end of the story and its telling, signals the end of reading, but not its extinction for, although other stories remain to be told, similar anticipations await to be mobilised.

Intertitles thus play a central role in generating and regulating narrative momentum. To secure narrative progression, they may mark the invocation of an intertextual field, so evidencing a historically specific, readerly competence with regard to generic convention. They also instance an extradiegetic origin to whom, finally, responsibility for invoking a given diegesis may be delegated. The text-spectator relationship, then, requires readerly involvement, but finally absolves the viewer of culpability, a vicarious pleasure indeed. Whether this defines a more general or nationally specific pleasure with a consistent mode of address, only further work can identify. However, given that such a practice constituted a mode of address not confined to the cinema in the pre-classical period, we can reasonably adduce that it was increasingly threatened as Swedish films moved towards that type of narrational pleasure constituted in the classical period. In the light of this scenario, the diachronic history of narration in pre-classical film can no longer be characterised as a process in transition. Rather, it can only be characterised as one increasingly in crisis or, at the very least, dynamic contest. In charting that process and in characterising its conflicts, a new historiographic project can be identified.

Notes

An earlier version of this paper was first presented to a Graduate Studies Weekend School in the Film Department of the University of East Anglia, 2–3 December 1988. I would like to thank Thomas Elsaesser for his close reading of my manuscript and the helpful suggestions he made.

1. Tom Gunning, 'Non-continuity, Continuity, Discontinuity: A Theory of Genres in Early Film', pp. 86–94 of this volume.
2. Gunning has since indicated (in conversation, Pordenone, 4 October 1988) that he now regards the eyeline match and the shot/reverse-shot system as more typically constitutive of the development of the classical paradigm.
3. The title of the film, usually translated as 'The Head Gardener', may also be translated as 'The Master of the Garden'. The English-language title of the film (discovered in the collection of the Library of Congress in 1979) is 'The Broken Spring Rose'. In preparing this paper, I have viewed a 35 mm print of the film held at Svenska Filminstitutet, Stockholm. This print, restored from the Library of Congress print, is, from internal evidence, incomplete, and its intertitles almost certainly differ from those that would have been prepared for the film's Swedish release. Given that the original Swedish intertitles list has not survived, there is, at present, no means of checking the English-language intertitles against the original Swedish intertitles. It should also be noted that the film was banned in Sweden on 20 August 1912.
4. In *Ringvall på äventyr* (Georg af Klercker, Pathé Frères, Stockholm, premièred 3 September 1913).
5. In films such as *Thomas Graals bästa film* (Mauritz Stiller, Svenska Biografteatern, premièred 13 August 1917) and *Tösen från stormyrtorpet* (Victor Sjöström, Svenska Biografteatern, premièred 10 September 1917). It should also be noted that in 1917 Georg af Klercker, working for Hasselbladfilm, Göteborg, employed a rudimentary form of scene dissection involving an extended use of cut-ins and reverse shots in films

such as *Förstadsprästen* (premièred 3 September 1917), *Reveli* (premièred 26 December 1917) and *Fyrvaktarens dotter* (premièred 2 April 1918).

6. It should be noted that I do not use the term 'discontinuous' to denote that type of syntagmatic construction identified by Gunning. I use the term in its more general sense, to denote a narrational process which, in filmic terms, is other than continuous.
7. Given, however, that all pre-classical film deployed narrative intertitles on an increasingly regular basis before the development of dialogue intertitles, the example of Swedish film may have more general application.
8. For a general consideration of these and other issues, see David Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film* (London: Methuen, 1985), and Edward Branigan, *Point of View in the Cinema: A Theory of Narration and Subjectivity in Classical Film* (New York: Mouton 1984). See also Edward Branigan, 'The spectator and film space – two theories', *Screen*, vol. 22 no. 1, Spring 1981, pp. 55–78, and Elena Dagrada, 'The diegetic look. Pragmatics of the point-of-view shot', *Iris*, vol. 4 no. 2, 1986, pp. 111–24.
9. Consider the use of the descriptive syntagm in, for example, panoramics and scenics, or in Swedish films such as *Badlif vid Mölle* (Viking, 1911, premièred 29 August 1911), the numerous scenics evidenced in Svenska Biografteatern company records with regard to *Vechorevy* (see *AB Nordiska Filmsfabriken* (unpublished company production ledger) for the period 2 March 1914–21 December 1914, pp. 154–73), or a film such as *Emigranten* (Robert Olsson, Svenska Biografteatern, 1910) where in one sequence thirteen shots out of a total narrative of forty shots include six shots of an emigrant steamer leaving port, five actuality shots of passengers on board the steamer during its voyage, and two shots taken from on deck during the voyage. While this last film is, ostensibly, a fictional narrative, there is a strong 'realist' interest which overdetermines the narrative interest at one point in the film. Of course, even though we lose sight of the protagonists in the narrative during the actuality syntagms, most of the shots retain some human interest.
10. In the opening shot of *Terje Vigen* (Victor Sjöström, Svenska Biografteatern, 1916, premièred 29 January 1917).
11. In the opening syntagm of *Tösen från stormyrtorpet* (Victor Sjöström, Svenska Biografteatern, 1917, premièred 13 August 1917). In the context of our discussion, it is interesting to note that the second and third shots of this syntagm are constituted as pans across the natural landscape.
12. A procedure adopted as late as 1915 by Georg af Klercker in a film such as *I minnenas band* (Hasselbladfilm, premièred 3 January 1916).
13. Lili Bech (variously spelt, elsewhere, as Lili Beck, Lilly Bech, Lilly Beck and Lilly Beck) entered the Danish film industry from Folketeatret, Copenhagen in 1911 (see Marguerite Engberg, *Dansk Stumfilm* (Copenhagen: Rhodes, 1977), vol. 2, pp. 537, 631). She was contracted initially to Det Skandinavisk-Russiske Handelshus (see Engberg, *Dansk Stumfilm*, vol. 1, p. 328), and appeared in three films which received their premières in Copenhagen in 1911: *Morfinsten*, *Taifun* and *Den Utro Hustru* (see Marguerite Engberg, *Registrant over danske film 1896–1914* (Copenhagen: Institut for Filmvidenskab, 1977), vol. 2, pp. 302, 303, 306). In the following year, three further films made for Det Skandinavisk-Russiske Handelshus received their Danish premières: *Den Staerke Magt*, *Den Flyvende Cirkus* and *Bjørnetaemmeren* (see Engberg, *Registrant*, vol. 2, pp. 503, 505, 507). Of these Danish productions, *Den Utro Hustru* (submitted to the Swedish censor on 13 October 1911 under the Swedish title of *Pengar*) was banned outright in Sweden (see Engberg, *Registrant*, vol. 2, p. 303), while *Taifun* (Swedish title, *Hämnden*), *Den Flyvende Cirkus* (Swedish title, *Den Flygande Cirkus*) and *Bjørnetaemmeren* (Swedish title, *Björntämmeren*) received certificates permitting their exhibition to adult audiences from the Swedish censor on, respectively, 13 October 1911, 30 March 1912, and 18 May 1912 (see Engberg, *Registrant*, vol. 2, p. 303). During 1912, when she was under contract to Svenska Biografteatern, Bech worked (in order of production) on *Vampyren* (Phoenix/Svenska Biografteatern (Phoenix was an affiliated distribution company), Mauritz Stiller, premièred Fenix and Röda Kvarn's Sveasalen, Stockholm, 17 February 1913) which was shot in the second half of May (see Lars Åhlander (ed.), *Svensk Filmografi* (Stockholm: Svenska Filminstitutet, 1986), vol. 1, p. 198). She then worked on *Trädgårdsmästaren* which was banned in Sweden (see

Åhlander, *Svensk Filmografi*, vol. 1, p. 198), and in the first half of June, worked on *Barnet* (Mauritz Stiller, premièred Röda Kvarn's Sveasalen, 13 May 1913, see Åhlander, *Svenska Filmografi*, vol. 1, p. 195). This production was followed, in the second half of July and early August, with the production of *De Svarta Maskerna* (Mauritz Stiller, premièred Röda Kvarn's Sveasalen, 21 October 1912, see Åhlander, *Svenska Filmografi*, vol. 1, p. 186). *De Svarta Maskerna* was thus Bech's first appearance in a Swedish film before a Swedish audience. The film was a spy drama set in a circus milieu (see Gösta Werner, *Mauritz Stiller och hans filmer, 1912–1916* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1969), pp. 80–4). Although the film is no longer extant, given Bech's appearance in Danish material such as *Den Flyvende Cirkus* and *Bjørnetaemmeren*, it is likely that *De Svarta Maskerna* would have confirmed, if not her specific screen persona associated with Danish films, at least a social milieu encountered in previous Danish films exhibited in Sweden. In this regard, it is interesting to note that for the Russian market where, according to Engberg, Bech was particularly popular, *De Svarta Maskerna* was provided with an alternative, tragic ending (see Engberg, *Dansk Stumfilm*, vol. 1, p. 322, Bengt Idestam-Almquist, *När Filmen kom till Sverige* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1959), p. 491, Åhlander, *Svensk Filmografi*, vol. 1, p. 186, and Gösta Werner, *Mauritz Stiller*, pp. 97, 100). For a brief, contemporary characterisation of the Russian market and its predilection for tragic endings, see 'Linsen', 'Svensk filminspelning just nu. Ett besök i Svenska Biografteaterns ateljé a Lidingsön', *Filmsbladet*, vol. 1 no. 14, 1 August 1915, p. 177.

14. For a consideration of the way in which furniture, placed in a different position, was used in the context of *Ingeborg Holm* (Victor Sjöström, Svenska Biografteatern, 1913, premièred 3 November 1913) to denote the passing of time, see Ben Brewster, 'Deep Staging in French Films, 1900–1914', pp. 45–55 of this volume.
15. See Noël Burch and Anita Fernandez (co-scriptwriters), *What Do Those Old Films Mean?*, programme 3, Eleventh Hour/Channel Four, first UK broadcast, July 1986. Lili Bech's participation in *Trädgårdsmästaren* would likely have inscribed a different screen persona to that constituted in Danish film or in a Swedish production such as *De Svarta Maskerna* (see Note 13 above). In a Danish film such as *Den Flyvende Cirkus* she was cast not only as a threat to male sexuality, but as the embodiment of female independence. Such a forceful screen persona should, however, be qualified by her appearance in other Danish films such as *Bjørnetaemmeren* (which I have not seen) where, according to Ron Mottram, she was presented as a much weaker character (see Ronald James Mottram, 'The Danish Cinema 1896–1917', Ph.D. Dissertation, New York University, October 1980, pp. 204–5). Until work on the intertextual address of Bech's screen persona can be conducted, the full meaning of her presence in this film can only be surmised. We may propose, however, that it was a complex if not contradictory locus of meaning derived, principally, from the Danish *sensationsfilm*. For a consideration of Bech's work in Denmark, see Engberg, *Dansk Stumfilm*, vol. 2, pp. 534, 544–6.
16. In full, the final intertitle reads: 'Broken spring rose(.) With the dawn of day they found her dead.'

The Student of Prague

LEON HUNT

The real creator of the film must be the camera. Getting the spectator to change his point of view, using special effects to double the actor on the divided screen, superimposing other images – all this, technique, form, gives the content its real meaning. (Paul Wegener¹)

A particular regime of textual repetition is, of course, specific to each individual system, contributing, with its multiple modes, to defining the system's status with regard to the fiction. (Raymond Bellour²)

Eisner, Kracauer and Film History

The original version of *The Student of Prague* was made for Bioscope in 1913, written by Hanns Heinz Ewers and directed by Stellan Rye, with Paul Wegener as the student Baldwin. Seeing it today, one is aware of the way a similar teleological construction which used to inform histories of American film has also determined approaches to early German cinema, subsuming everything that precedes the pivotal film *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (1919) under the retrospective construction 'German Expressionism'.

In this respect *The Student of Prague* is in the position which Noël Burch ascribes to Porter's films, namely having one foot effectively in the past and one in the future,³ and displaying the features of classical narrative alongside evidence of a more primitive mode of representation. The danger, however, is to see the film as simply falling between two stools; a primitive film which is almost, but not quite, classical. Where the film has been dealt with – and it has not been written about very much – it has occupied precisely this position, as in Lotte Eisner's comments that this film, coming six years before *Caligari*, already exhibits many of the properties which one finds in the so-called classical films of the 20s,⁴ and Kracauer's complementary assertion that 'its significance undoubtedly rests less on the camera work than on the story proper.'⁵

It is worth drawing attention to the extent to which these historians of Expressionism have failed to come to terms with the formal properties of this fascinating film. Eisner's statement, for instance (that the film's images 'lack the quality and depth of focus to which the German cinema of the twenties has accustomed us: the real interiors . . . seem rather flat'⁶) is not only misleading but should be contrasted with the comments of the film's star, Paul Wegener, quoted at the beginning of this paper. What Wegener says is significant for three reasons:

1. Terms such as 'spectator' and 'point of view' imply a discursive (as opposed to a purely performative) text, making the film's 'primitivism' highly problematic.