

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Importing Asta Nielsen:
The International Film Star in the Making 1910–1914

Series: KINtop Studies in Early Cinema – volume 2

A catalogue entry for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 9780 86196 708 7 (Paperback)

Cover: Cut-out of a poster from Det Danske Filminstitut.

Published by

John Libbey Publishing Ltd, 3 Leicester Road, New Barnet, Herts EN5 5EW, United Kingdom

e-mail: john.libbey@orange.fr; web site: www.johnlibbey.com

Direct orders (UK and Europe): direct.orders@marston.co.uk

Distributed in N. America by **Indiana University Press**, 601 North Morton St,
Bloomington, IN 47404, USA. www.iupress.indiana.edu

© 2013 Copyright John Libbey Publishing Ltd. All rights reserved.

Unauthorized duplication contravenes applicable laws.

Printed and bound in China by 1010 Printing International Ltd.

Internationale Film-Vertriebs-Gesellschaft
m. b. H.

BERLIN SW 68

Zimmerstr. 16-18



Titeldruck-Radio-Oravare Richard Falk, Berlin

Martin Loiperdinger

“Die Duse der Kino-Kunst”
Asta Nielsen’s Berlin Made Brand

The film market in Germany ranked third in size only to that of the US and the UK and was first to see a systematic combination of the long-feature format with exclusive renting called *Monopolfilm* and branding the new product by using the name of the leading actress or actor. Introducing this innovation into film production, distribution and exhibition was an economic venture undertaken by film businessmen from Cologne, Frankfurt, Berlin and Vienna who engaged Asta Nielsen and Urban Gad exclusively for a period of three years to make 30 long-feature films. The contract was signed by the end of May 1911 in the office of Projektions-AG Union, Kaiserstrasse 64, Frankfurt. The film trade in Germany had already been suffering for three years from the overproduction of short films, inside and outside of the country. The Frankfurt contract with the artist couple from Denmark proved to be a decisive action to overcome the crisis by introducing a new film product which, in economic terms, worked very differently from selling short films. As always in the film business, the investments of film producers, distributors and exhibitors had to be amortised with considerable interest by box-office proceeds. It was the public that played the final and decisive role. Producers and distributors relied on exhibitors who booked their films with Asta Nielsen in the leading role, and exhibitors relied on audiences that flocked into the cinema theatres to watch Asta Nielsen on screen.

**AFGRUNDEN, HEISSES BLUT, NACHTFALTER:
long-feature films with Asta Nielsen, 1910/11**

The fundamental transformation of film as a commodity began in the Danish cinema industry in 1910. The transition from short films of a maximum length of one-reel to multiple-reel films started with Fotorama’s DEN HVIDE SLAVE-HANDEL (THE WHITE SLAVE TRADE), which was 706 metres long and ran 35 minutes (when projected at 16 fps). Urban Gad, the artistic advisor and stage

Facing page:
Erste Internationale Film-Zeitung, no 23 (7 June 1913).

designer of Copenhagen's New Theatre, directed for the Copenhagen cinema theatre Kinografen an even longer film of 970 metres on the Danish-Prussian war, EN REKRUT FRA 64 (A RECRUIT OF 1864). And Gad wrote the script of the third Danish long-feature film, the erotic melodrama AFRUNDEN (THE ABYSS), for his ensemble colleague Asta Nielsen. Gad's friend Hjalmar Davidsen, who owned the cinema theatre Kosmorama in Copenhagen, invested 8,000 crowns for a week's shooting in June of 1910. Asta Nielsen played Magda Vang who runs off with the 'cowboy' of a travelling variety theatre. On stage, she performs the highly erotic 'gaucho dance' with her lover. She ropes the 'cowboy' with her lasso and ties him up to make him suffer tantalising tortures while she dances around him, dressed in a long, tight leather skirt, sways with her hips, rubs her body against his – yet he must remain still and must not touch her. The couple is fired after an argument. Magda then earns money by playing the piano in cafés while the former 'cowboy' drinks away her money. During an argument she stabs him in self-defence.

Anticipating 'better audiences' by featuring actors from reputable Danish theatres, AFRUNDEN was a 'sex and crime' drama intended only for adults. Asta Nielsen's debut film achieved a long run of seven weeks at the Kosmorama.¹ Davidsen sold exclusive rights to foreign countries.² He awarded the film distributor Ludwig Gottschalk, who owned the Düsseldorf Film-Manufaktur, the exclusive rights to distribute and exhibit AFRUNDEN in Germany.³

Beginning on 16 November 1910, Gottschalk promoted AFRUNDEN under the title ABGRÜNDE on the German market with an advertising campaign the likes of which had never before been seen for a single film.⁴ Almost every week, up to January 1911, he ran numerous full-page text adverts in trade papers such as *Der Kinematograph*. Gottschalk offered German cinema owners the opportunity to secure the unrivalled premiere rights to this hit in their town for up to ten weeks.⁵ Gottschalk demanded graduated prices for this offer, a tactic thus far unknown. Exhibitors who booked ABGRÜNDE could be certain that no other cinema in town could show this film at the same time. This exclusive mode of distribution was called *Monopolfilm*.⁶ ABGRÜNDE was the first *Monopolfilm* to be distributed in Germany.

On 26 November 1910 the German premiere of ABGRÜNDE took place at the Palast-Theater in Düsseldorf. Gottschalk promised enormous box-office revenues if cinema owners decided to programme long-feature *Monopolfilms* for long periods of time. ABGRÜNDE ran for three weeks in Düsseldorf,⁷ a unique occurrence at the end of 1910 for an extremely long single film with a running time of 45 minutes. It seems that ABGRÜNDE was an attraction for middle-class audiences influenced by the taste of Düsseldorf's community of artists:

Up to now, it was assumed that all film dramas were 'kitsch'. But ABGRÜNDE, showing at the Palast-Theater, has all of a sudden made artists enthusiastic fans of cinema pantomime. [...] I have met almost no artist or actor there who had not seen ABGRÜNDE for the third, fourth, fifth or even the eighth time. [...] At any rate, ABGRÜNDE has contributed a great deal, if not the most, to turning the

conversation in society more than usual to film theatre and to leading people whom you would never expect to go to the cinema.⁸

To drum up business, the daily press printed large-format adverts, and local exhibitors highlighted the number of their screenings of ABGRÜNDE in their promotion of the film:

The talk of the town in Cologne still remains the showing of the theatre drama ABGRÜNDE DES LEBENS, for everyone is full of enthusiasm about the fabulous true-to-life drama never before seen. By now, this fantastic drama has been shown 42 times in our Cologne cinema, and the crowds are still coming. So don't miss coming to our theatre named above.⁹

According to an advert two days later, ABGRÜNDE had already been screened 66 times (within only five days), in the two venues of the Cinéma-Palais, in Cologne.¹⁰ In Breslau (today Wrocław, Poland), then the German centre of the Silesian border region, ABGRÜNDE was shown altogether 86 times in the 450-seat Palast-Theater, and in the Monopol-Theater, both owned by Franz Thiemer, who apparently 'bicycled' one print between his two theatres.¹¹ Introducing one-film showings with ABGRÜNDE was only another promising way to increase proceeds at the box-office. As entrance fees for these one-hour shows were equal to those for the usual two hours of short film programmes, exhibitors could double their income, at least for evening shows. After a while, Thiemer in Breslau programmed ABGRÜNDE this way in response to the great demand. To combine one-film showings and the 'bicycling' of reels between two venues was most promising – and was practiced not only in Breslau but also in Cologne and other cities.

The most convincing evidence for fundamental changes emerging in programming practices is the case of ABGRÜNDE in Hamburg. In 1910, Hamburg was an industrial agglomeration with a population of 1.2 million inhabitants. According to cinema adverts in the *Hamburger Fremden-Blatt*, there was obviously no print of ABGRÜNDE available for the Christmas 1910 programmes. Screenings of ABGRÜNDE in the Hamburg area started in the middle of January 1911, and by mid-March, the number of screenings had added up to altogether 223. No cinema programme or single film by far had previously been offered so many times to patrons in Hamburg over such a long period. The capacity of seats reserved by Hamburg cinema owners for possible audiences to watch ABGRÜNDE amounted to 184,182 seats.¹² What does that mean in respect to the potential audience in the Hamburg area? According to the 1910 census, about 35% of the German population was under fifteen years of age (and was banned from screenings of ABGRÜNDE); in addition, five per cent was over 65 and probably did not attend cinema showings at all. Taking this into account and applying it to the Hamburg area, we see a potential audience of up to 700,000; that is, one seat was available for every 3.8 potential patrons.¹³ The major portion of this capacity was located in five cinemas owned by James Henschel who was called the 'cinema king' of Hamburg.

The Danish film industry made no further offers to Urban Gad and Asta Nielsen. Their next two films, HEISSES BLUT (BURNING BLOOD) and NACHT-

FALTER (RETRIBUTION), were produced by the Deutsche Bioscop in Berlin. HEISSES BLUT was distributed as a so-called *Terminfilm*, so that every cinema owner was free to order the film and was guaranteed to receive it on the announced release date. Deutsche Bioscop placed full-page adverts in trade papers, sometimes even on the cover pages, from 11 March 1911 onward, announcing 22 April as the day on which this “Weltschlager” (world hit) would be released.¹⁴ For interested parties, Deutsche Bioscop offered daily showings of the film at its premises in Berlin at 10 am and 5 pm.¹⁵ Distributors avidly took up this offer. From the end of March to the end of May 1911, altogether 19 companies advertised in the trade journal *Erste Internationale Filmzeitung* prints of HEISSES BLUT which they had bought from Deutsche Bioscop to rent them out to cinemas. Martin Dentler, distributor and cinema owner from Brunswick, offered ten prints, and the Deutsche Film-Gesellschaft, Cologne, offered five prints for rent.¹⁶ Two weeks later Martin Dentler had already made contracts for eight first-run weeks. It took him three more weeks to place the two remaining first-run weeks with his customers.¹⁷ At this time, that is five weeks after the first advert, Martin Dentler still had three second-run weeks on offer. HEISSES BLUT was in demand by the cinema owners, but the second long-feature film with Asta Nielsen was not exactly snatched from the distributors. As it was, her name was not yet to play a role. The Deutsche Bioscop focussed on the title of the film. In its first advert the company asked the rhetorical question: “Do you like the title?”, and maintained: “You will like the film even better!”¹⁸ In their adverts, the 19 distributors advertised in most cases the length of 860 metres along with the film title. Only Martin Dentler mentions Asta Nielsen and Urban Gad in some adverts, both in respect to ABGRÜNDE.

On 13 May 1911, only three weeks after HEISSES BLUT, Asta Nielsen’s third film, NACHTFALTER, was released by the Aktien-Gesellschaft für Kinematographie und Filmverleih [Stock Company for Cinematography and Film Distribution] in Strasbourg. The largest German film company had bought the exclusive rights for Germany and the world from the producer, the Deutsche Bioscop. Rental prices were fixed from 40 pfennigs per metre for the first-run week to 10 pfennigs per metre for the 11th-run week.¹⁹ The adverts focused again on the title, but also stated that Asta Nielsen would play the leading role:

Asta Nielsen, the famous Danish actress, plays the leading role in this pictorial drama. There’s no need to explain to film consumers who Asta Nielsen is. The connoisseur knows and understands the significance of this dramatic artist who has already earned everlasting laurels with her creation of true-to-life figures in THE ABYSS and in BURNING BLOOD.²⁰

This advert sheds some light on the emerging film star Asta Nielsen. In his advertising campaign, Ludwig Gottschalk had underlined the author’s part by announcing ABGRÜNDE as “theatre drama in 2 acts by Urban Gad”.²¹ Only in his last advert did he mention for the first time six ‘main personae’, featuring “famous members from Copenhagen theatres”. First on the list was Asta

Nielsen in the role of Magda Vang.²² After the debut film ABGRÜNDE had become a box-office success, promotion for her third film placed Asta Nielsen in the foreground without saying one word about her writer-director yet. A later advert even calls Asta Nielsen the “Schöpferin der ABGRÜNDE” (creator of ABGRÜNDE).²³ With these words, author’s credit was given to the leading actress. After the breathtaking box-office success of ABGRÜNDE in Germany, this clearly indicates a shift in importance from the writer-director (Urban Gad) to the actress who played the main character (Asta Nielsen).²⁴ This shift grows from the positive audience response to ABGRÜNDE. The entire film industry – producers, distributors and exhibitors – immediately reacted by creating an innovative business model to incite and exploit the public’s enthusiasm for the Danish actress. The idea of making Asta Nielsen a film star was just around the corner.

Mülleneisen’s coup: the exclusive engagement, May 1911

On 22 June 1911, in the column “Continental Notes”, the British trade journal *The Bioscope* informed readers on upcoming film productions in Germany:

The Internationale Film Vertrieb Gessellschaft [sic], whose headquarters are in Vienna, has opened a branch at Frankfurt a/M. The well-known writer Urban Gad and the Asta Nielson [sic] Company of artists have undertaken to produce fresh subjects for the above-named firm in the immediate future.²⁵

What was behind this news? The above-mentioned advert for NACHTFALTER informed readers that the exclusive rights for ABGRÜNDE for Austria-Hungary were held by the Lichtspiel-Gesellschaft in Cologne.²⁶ The owner of this company was Christoph Mülleneisen Sr. He ran several cinemas in the Western parts of Germany, and he was the film distributor who gave Asta Nielsen’s career the decisive turn. Her autobiography calls him “Mr. X”. Mülleneisen devised for the exploitation of future Asta Nielsen films a business model to introduce the star system to the German film industry and, with his successful coup, provided “an example still impressive today in its professionalism, visionary elegance and audacity”.²⁷

With his two *Monopolfilms*, HEISSES BLUT and NACHTFALTER, Mülleneisen encountered diverging reactions in Vienna and Budapest. Regardless of the success of ABGRÜNDE, the distributors wanted nothing to do with Asta Nielsen. The cinema owners, however, were prepared to pay almost the complete copy sales price as rental fee just for the first week. Mülleneisen had, as he himself said, “the satisfaction of seeing what Asta Nielsen was worth to the public”.²⁸ He effected Asta Nielsen’s prolonged engagement with the Deutsche Bioscop, with which he concluded at the same time a “contingency contract” for exclusive distribution of future films in Europe outside Austria. Mülleneisen evidently pursued the idea of exclusive film distribution, that is, trade with exclusive screening rights linked to expanding the production monopoly to the work of the sought-after film actress. However, Asta Nielsen was initially engaged by Deutsche Bioscop for further filming as it was customary at the time, only by the month, June and August. For the free months of July and



After signing the ground-breaking contract. Sitting left: Asta Nielsen; to her right Christoph Mülleneisen Sr., cinema owner and film trader from Cologne. Standing from left to right: Erich Zeiske, head of Deutsche Bioscop; Dr jur Kühnelt, manager of Österreichisch-Ungarische Kino-Industrie Gesellschaft; Urban Gad; Paul Davidson, head of PAGU. [Deutsche Kinemathek.]

September, she had already signed a contract with the Danish Nordisk Film. Mülleneisen recognised the risk for his lofty plans. To retrieve the intended monopoly on the acting achievements of Asta Nielsen, he travelled immediately to Copenhagen. He attempted to effect a dissolution of the engagement with Nordisk, failed, however, because of the hard-line position of the Danish competition. But he did succeed in concluding an eleven-day temporary contract with Urban Gad and Asta Nielsen to engage them exclusively for several years.

To acquire an associate and partner for his ambitious plans, Mülleneisen immediately conducted personal negotiations with Erich Zeiske, the manager of Deutsche Bioscop, with the Strasbourg Stock Company for Cinematography and Film Distribution as well as with the Austro-Hungarian film industry. As he himself vividly described three years later, Mülleneisen was underway without interruption eleven days and nights between Copenhagen and Lugano, Vienna, Strasbourg, Frankfurt am Main and Berlin.²⁹ Three days before the expiration of the temporary contract, he received confirmation from Vienna and from Deutsche Bioscop in Berlin, pledges which were in no way sufficient financially. By telephone, Paul Davidson, manager of the PAGU, agreed to participate in negotiations. Mülleneisen called Urban Gad and Asta Nielsen to Frankfurt am Main to the offices of PAGU. In her autobiography Asta Nielsen offers a graphic description of the course of the negotiations.³⁰ They threatened

to fail because the actress insisted on receiving a third of the films’ box-office take. Asta Nielsen remained adamant – the consortium of film businessmen agreed only after a long tug of war. The Danish artist couple committed themselves to collaborating exclusively on ten long-feature films each year over a period of three years. Asta Nielsen was to play the leading role in each film, and Urban Gad was to write the script and direct. On 27 May 1911, in Frankfurt am Main, Mülleneisen Sr., PAGU and Österreichisch- Ungarische Kino-Industrie founded the Internationale Films-Vertrieb- Gesellschaft (IFVG), with headquarters in Vienna. They named Paul Davidson as managing director. Before the First World War, Asta Nielsen and Urban Gad made altogether 29 films with Deutsche Bioscop and PAGU respectively – they almost completely fulfilled the three-year contract. Unfortunately, this important contract must be considered lost.

Three exclusive ‘Asta Nielsen series’, 1911–1914

By “proclamation” on 7 June 1911 in the trade journal *Der Kinematograph*, the German exhibitors received immediate news of the founding of the company and the commitment of the artistic couple.³¹ Six weeks later, on 19 July 1911, came the announcement of the first two *Monopol*films for the season 1911/12 – with a bang. The new company intended to make a turnover of 1,400,000 marks by distributing *Monopol*films with Asta Nielsen up to 3 February 1912. “That’s gutsy!” chimed the advertisement.³² Banking on the appeal of Asta Nielsen and Urban Gad, IVFG, however, had “no fear of placing this bet”.³³ The film businessmen concluded from the resounding success of *ABGRÜNDE*, *HEISSES BLUT* and *NACHTFALTER* that Asta Nielsen guaranteed the value of their future films for the entertainment needs of the public. Asta Nielsen and Urban Gad, “both of these names have gone into the flesh and blood of cinema-goers and guarantee full houses!” claimed the advert.³⁴ At Deutsche Bioscop “700,000 running metres of Nielsen films were ordered at 1 mark per running metre for 1911 and 1912”.³⁵

The distribution of the films produced with Urban Gad and Asta Nielsen was organised in exclusive ‘Asta Nielsen series’. The first ‘Asta Nielsen series’ in the 1911/12 season comprised eight films, followed by eight films in the second series in 1912/13 and by seven films in the third series in 1913/14. There were seven more films made in 1914, which were released in Germany only in the 1915/16 season because of the First World War. The first film of the first series was *DEN SORTE DRØM* (*DER SCHWARZE TRAUM*, *THE CIRCUS GIRL*) which was bought from the Danish producer Fotorama to avoid harmful local competition against the exclusivity of the first ‘Asta Nielsen series’. Apart from *ABGRÜNDE*, *HEISSES BLUT* and *NACHTFALTER*, which had already been circulating for some time, exclusivity was still threatened by another fresh Danish long-feature film with Asta Nielsen available on the free market: *BALLETDAN-SERINDEN* (*BRENNENDE TRIEBE*, *THE BALLET DANCER*), which Nordisk Film was not willing to give away for exclusive distribution by the IFVG.

Branding a series of exclusive long-feature films with the name of the actress who played the leading role was a ground-breaking innovation in the film trade. Films which belonged to an 'Asta Nielsen series' were 'Asta Nielsen films' – and thus a new film commodity was introduced to the market requiring a new habit of cinema going: films which were made attractive for mass consumption not by subject, genre, plot or action but by the actress whose appearances on screen characterised them as being *her* films, 'Asta Nielsen films'. Thus Asta Nielsen was made the star of this undertaking and, as such, had to ensure that exhibitors booked the exclusive 'Asta Nielsen series' in advance, even before the films were produced – the only way to get their hands on fresh 'Asta Nielsen films'. The star needed to be promoted. First of all, the brand 'Asta Nielsen' was equipped with a resounding epithet: In the above-mentioned advert of 19 July 1911, Asta Nielsen is called "die Duse der Kinokunst" (the Duse of cinema art) for the first time, equating her with Eleonora Duse, the world-famous Italian theatre diva. This epithet was invented by Arthur Mellini, chief editor of the German trade journal *Lichtbild-Bühne*, a man who had been hired for the promotion of the first 'Asta Nielsen series'.

The sale of the 'Asta Nielsen series' was conducted by travelling salesmen who transacted contracts with exhibitors concerning the respective series. As early as the first "proclamation" of 7 June 1911, it says: "Do you want to have your theatre sold out daily in the 1910/11 season? Then don't sign a contract for *Monopol*films before the representative of Internationale Films-Vertrieb-Gesellschaft has paid you a visit in the very near future".³⁶ Following the announcement of the release dates of the first two *Monopol*films, the second advert promised "Our general representatives are underway!"³⁷ Large-scale advertisement campaigns in the trade press, as was otherwise customary for *Monopol*films and *Termin*films, were not run for the first 'Asta Nielsen series'. The customers who had booked the entire series sight unseen for one of ten weeks learned of the dates for their films according to the contract. In the trade journal *Der Kinematograph*, only four adverts were published for the first 'Asta Nielsen series'. On 11 October 1911, an unadorned portrait photo of Asta Nielsen and enthusiastic news about the initial success of the 'Asta Nielsen series' attempted to encourage exhibitors to book the whole series of "10 Monopol-Films" in advance.³⁸ In contrast, the third advert on 28 February 1912 was full of confidence: A pyramid-like graphic showed the exhibitors the foundation of their business success and announced in the form of a question the last building block, the eighth film of the 'Asta Nielsen series'.³⁹ The last advert flirts with self-satisfaction with only one sentence: "Nobody can explain the unequalled monumental success of the Asta Nielsen series".⁴⁰

Along with the customary advertising material such as posters, stills, programme booklets, the exhibitors' promotional adverts in the local press played an important role. An article by Mellini in the *Lichtbild-Bühne* offers the cinema owners tips with good and bad examples for designing an effective newspaper advert.⁴¹ The cinema adverts on the newspaper pages which published the

“Die Duse der Kino-Kunst”. Asta Nielsen’s Berlin Made Brand

Der Kinematograph — Düsseldorf. No. 270.

Asta Nielsen

Der 6. Film aus dem grossen
Asta-Nielsen-Cyclus
wird mit Spannung erwartet.

Man wende sich an die
Projections-Actien-Gesellschaft
„UNION“
Frankfurt a. Main
Kaiserstrasse 64
Tel. 1. 1234
1. 1235

Der
schwarze Traum

In dem grossen
Augenblick

: Zigeunerblut :

Der fremde Vogel

Die Verräterin

Die Macht des Goldes

Die arme Jenny

Advert for the first ‘Asta Nielsen series’. *Der Kinematograph*, no. 270 (28 February 1912).

Auch
in diesem
Winter



bringen wir
sämtliche
Films der

„Asta Nielsen Serie“

Advert announcing a slide promoting the ‘Asta Nielsen series’,
addressed to cinema owners. *Der Kinematograph*, no. 313
(25 December 1912).

A few remarks about Asta Nielsen:

The name awakens great enthusiasm in the hearts of those who were able to marvel at this incomparable artist in *ABGRÜNDE*, in *HEISSES BLUT* or even *NACHTFALTER*. This woman seems to possess a sheer supernatural power; she can do anything in any situation, "as if written for her and her alone". Whether the artist is playing a loving wife, a hapless mother or the fallen lover of a degenerate fellow, she always knows how to enthrall the viewer with her vital acting. She portrays a lady of high society with the same mastery as that of a dancer or a circus rider who storms through the ring on her white horse. For everyone who has seen it, the boundless expression of her eyes remains unforgettable; those eyes can tell more than the loveliest words; their portrayal artistry removes all hindrances, eyes capable of replacing the most artistic speech with only a few movements. She has reached the zenith of her own artistry because she never gives more than she should, never too little, never too much and, at the height of emotion, she can always add a crowning touch. Never to exaggerate, that is the greatest of arts, and she possesses that art to the utmost degree.

During the season 1911/12, the public will be offered ten new films in which Asta Nielsen plays the starring role, directed by her ideally matched author, Urban Gad. Asta Nielsen, who knows how to bring her fellow actors to unheard-of masterly achievement through her inspiring acting, and the circumspect yet relaxed directing by Urban Gad, who does not overlook even the smallest detail – all this offers the best guarantee for dramatic and acting quality in the film. Technically as well, this film is on a level which has never before been achieved. Brilliant photogrammes, mostly hand in hand with well-shaded tinting which always sets the right mood, turn hours into minutes for the delighted viewers, who never tire from the tension-filled images undisturbed by flickering or dancing about. The eyes of the viewers follow the continually mounting dramatic situations.

Asta Nielsen received a fee of 85,000 marks for playing in these ten *Monopolfilm* dramas, the so-called "Asta Nielsen Series" (filmed over about 5 months).

I have secured for Trier the rights to the first showings of all *Asta Nielsen* dramas from the Internationale Film-Gesellschaft, [recte: Internationale Films-Vertrieb-Gesellschaft, IFVG], and, with these works of cinematographic art obtained only at colossal cost and licence fees, I promise my guests artistic pleasure as they might be offered only in the *pre-eminent theatres of the world*.

A picture will appear every month. (...)

Increased prices: Preferred seating: 100 p., 2nd rank seating: 70 p., 3rd rank seating: 50 p.

School children under age 14 are not admitted to the showings.

From the cinema advert of Peter Marzen's Central-Theater, Trier, for *DER SCHWARZE TRAUM*, first film of the first 'Asta Nielsen series'.

announcements for local entertainment offers such as theatre, variety shows, concerts, lectures and cinema programmes were, in fact, clearly larger and more elaborate, as can be demonstrated, for example, in the case of Mannheim.⁴² Some cinema owners took over texts passages from the information material the distributors provided to familiarise their local audience with the special features of the innovative film commodity of the 'Asta Nielsen series'. For example, the cinema owner Peter Marzen in Trier placed an advert of almost an entire newspaper page for *DER SCHWARZE TRAUM* to announce the new programme format of the 'Asta Nielsen series' and to introduce Asta Nielsen as the new type of an enormously versatile actress.

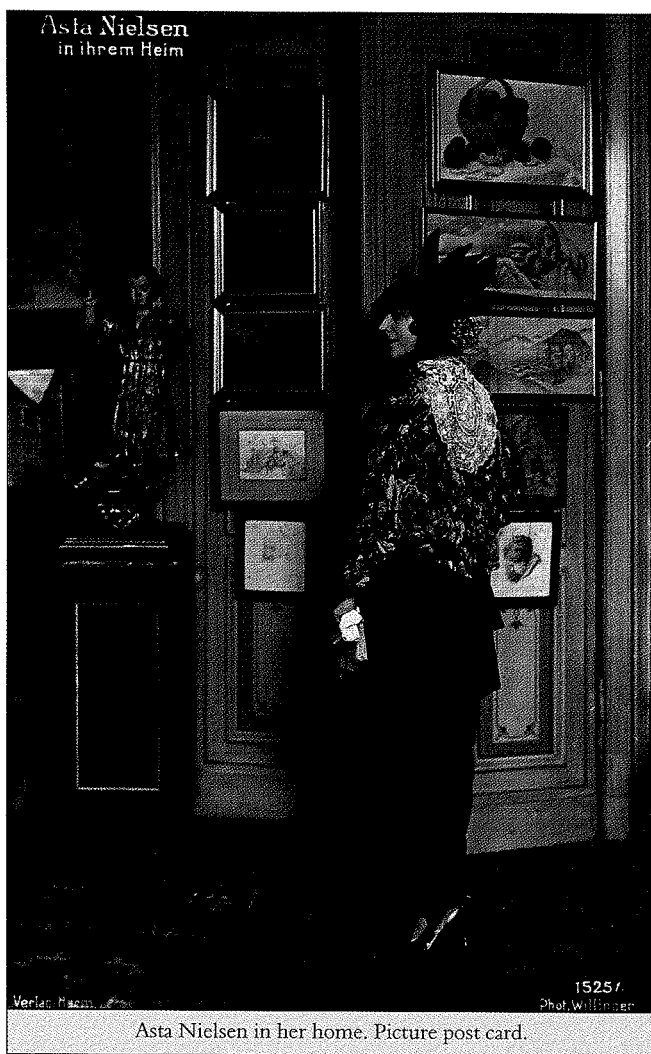
In contrast to short film series with cowboys, detectives or comics, who remained in a single genre with always recognisable roles, the 'Asta Nielsen series' followed the principle of variety. With each new film, the audience saw

the star of the series in a new role. Apart from one historical drama, the first ‘Asta Nielsen series’ admittedly consisted of social dramas which, with one exception, ended tragically and founded Asta Nielsen’s reputation as a ‘great tragedienne’. To demonstrate to the audience on an emotional level the depths to which the leading lady falls, the dramatics of these films inserted humorous accents as well. Furthermore, Asta Nielsen played a diversity of social characters: In the first ‘Asta Nielsen series’ she played in turn a circus rider, a serving maid, an home worker, a Gypsy girl, the daughter of an English nobleman, the daughter of a French count, a country girl, a proletarian girl in Berlin as well as an office clerk in a Berlin architect’s office. Her roles were similarly diversified in the second and in the third ‘Asta Nielsen series’, which expanded the genre canon of social dramas and morality films by a ‘comedy of errors’ (*JUGEND UND TOLLHEIT, IN A FIX*), a topical drama set in the Balkans (*DAS MÄDCHEN OHNE VATERLAND, A GIRL WITHOUT A COUNTRY*), a political social drama set in England (*DIE SUFFRAGETTE, THE SUFFRAGETTE*), a teenage comedy (*ENGELEIN, UP TO HER TRICKS*) and an adventure comedy set in the mountains of Italy (*ZAPATA’S BANDE, ZAPATA’S GANG*).⁴³ Thus, IFVG and PAGU presented the newly branded commodity in widely varied fashion for a week’s run every four to six weeks to the buyers of the ‘Asta Nielsen series’ and their audiences.

Local case studies of cities in south-west Germany demonstrate that this system worked very well in large cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants such as Mannheim and Saarbrücken. All three ‘Asta Nielsen series’ were also shown in Metz, a garrison city of 68,000 inhabitants, but only the first series was booked in Trier, a garrison city of 50,000 inhabitants.⁴⁴ Further research into local distribution may outline the limits of the ‘Asta Nielsen series’ business model in environments where exhibitors were not able to rely on audiences large enough to return the investments required to screen an exclusive ‘Asta Nielsen series’. Anyway, in many large cities of the German Empire, the Asta Nielsen series had no trouble with sales because the films could be shown in the first week in the Union-Theaters of the PAGU. The PAGU commissioned Deutsche Bioscop, which manufactured the first and second ‘Asta Nielsen series’; the third one was manufactured by PAGU itself. The distribution was handled by the IFVG, which had been founded by PAGU and its partners. PAGU’s head, Paul Davidson, was also head of IFVG. PAGU’s Union-Theater chain was the first buyer of the three ‘Asta Nielsen series’, which means that PAGU actually anticipated what was later called ‘vertical integration’, in the Hollywood studio system.

Asta Nielsen – a Berlin Actress in Berlin’s Union-Theater Chain

In the early 1910s, Berlin, capital of the German Empire, was a city of nearly four million people, third in the world to London and New York.⁴⁵ The PAGU Union-Theater, U.T. for short, was the largest cinema chain in Germany. As in other large cities, the well-equipped Union-Theater cinemas were centrally located in Berlin as well and appealed to all levels of the public. Every new Asta



Nielsen film was placed on the programme in all Union-Theater cinemas in Berlin for one week at the same time. In the 1911/12 season, while the first 'Asta Nielsen series' was running, the five Union-Theater cinemas in Berlin had, according to their own adverts, up to 14,000 viewers daily.⁴⁶ In 1913 four additional Union-Theater houses were founded in Berlin. From 1912 to 1914, the weekly *Union-Theater-Zeitung* was published every Saturday, the day of programme change. Chief editor Paul Ehren addressed the patrons of Berlin's five Union-Theater houses as "a large community".⁴⁷ An examination of the available years of the *Union-Theater-Zeitung*, 1912 and 1913, indicates that Asta Nielsen was presented as the definitive star persona of Berlin's Union-Theater chain. No one else appears in the programme overviews or film descriptions of the *Union-Theater-Zeitung* so often or so regularly. Each Asta Nielsen Film

All Round the Cinema

Chief Superintendent of Police von Jagow has been kind enough to issue a permit for an extremely dangerous cinema shooting taking place on Monday, 1 April. From 1:00 to 1:30 p.m., he will personally carry out a strict blockade of Friedrichstrasse at the corner of Leipzigerstrasse with the assistance of 60 policemen. Following prolonged negotiations, the Traffic Commissioner’s office at police headquarters has just now given the long-sought written approval. In the sensational film ‘Opfermut einer Mutter’ (a mother’s willingness to make sacrifices), now in preparation, wild lions play an important role. Sitting on one of the circus wagons coming into the city is the lion tamer, who has an unrequited passionate for the married daughter (Asta Nielsen) of the circus director. Unsuspectingly, she goes with her small child behind the wagon, and suddenly the lion tamer opens the cage doors in his insane jealousy, and two wild beasts jump onto the street, empty of people because of the blockade. The two lions start to attack the child, but mother love lends the courageous Asta Nielsen superhuman strength. A mighty struggle ensues; the attacked mother succeeds in driving the beasts back into the cage, and mother and child are saved. The dehumanised lion tamer sees that his horrible plan has failed and flees into Kronenstrasse. – Incidentally, Ms. Nielsen will be in no danger, for the scene has been carefully rehearsed in the Sarransani Circus for several weeks. The lions have become so sweet-natured by the ingratiating personage of the great artist that their bestial nature will not assert itself against her. – The business owners on Friedrichstrasse, corner of Leipzigerstrasse have already received instructions from the police to leave their shutters closed during the critical half hour. Electric trams and omnibuses are to be diverted. The government will have

April Fool’s Joke. *Union-Theater-Zeitung* 1:3 (29 March – 5 April 1912): 15.

received an announcement, some an additional advert as well as a detailed description in the column “The story in the film”. Remarkably, neither Asta Nielsen films nor other long-feature films are prominent in the programme lists published in the *Union-Theater-Zeitung*; rather they are listed as just a number in the film programmes, which contained up to nine “numbers”. Only at the end of March 1913 was the title of an Asta Nielsen film printed in boldface and emphasised in capital letters for the first time with DER TOD IN SEVILLA (SPANISH BLOOD), something which became the rule from then on. Each film programme of the Berlin Union-Theater chain featured from then on, emphasised in conspicuous letters, a main film or a so-called hit. In addition, stills from Asta Nielsen films displaying the actress were placed in the newspaper remarkably often – with or without the addition of a text.

Marketing and public relations clearly focussed on the visible Asta Nielsen – Urban Gad was kept in the background. He wrote and directed the 29 Asta Nielsen films made under the exclusive contract signed by both Nielsen and Gad.⁴⁸ In the *Union-Theater-Zeitung* credits, the programmes of the Berlin Union-Theater chain listed Asta Nielsen “in the starring role”, and it was only from 20 February 1913 onward that Gad’s authorship was given credit with the phrase “by Urban Gad” added to the title and genre of the Asta Nielsen films.⁴⁹ The film descriptions either do not mention Urban Gad at all or just mention him as a helping hand, who, for example, wrote for Asta Nielsen “the very roles for this sensuous actress”.⁵⁰ True, the chief editor Paul Ehren wrote a double-page cover essay on “Regiekunst” (the art of directing) dedicated to Urban Gad as the writer-director who, “modestly remains in the shadows”.

Ehren claims: "Urban Gad, the Danish writer, is the master of the modern art of film directing." The essay underlines Gad's "art of lighting effects" (which may also be attributed to the cameraman, Guido Seeber), and his mastery in arranging location shootings (which may once again be attributed to Guido Seeber).⁵¹ Urban Gad remains invisible in the background. An unusual exception to this marketing practice is an IFVG advert in the trade journal *Erste Internationale Filmzeitung* which shows Asta Nielsen in three figures somehow emerging from Urban Gad's head: the leading actress as the brainchild of the writer-director!⁵² It goes without saying that Urban Gad's backstage status in the marketing of the 'Asta Nielsen series' also seduced film historians into focussing quite exclusively on Asta Nielsen and leaving her partner behind the scenes.⁵³

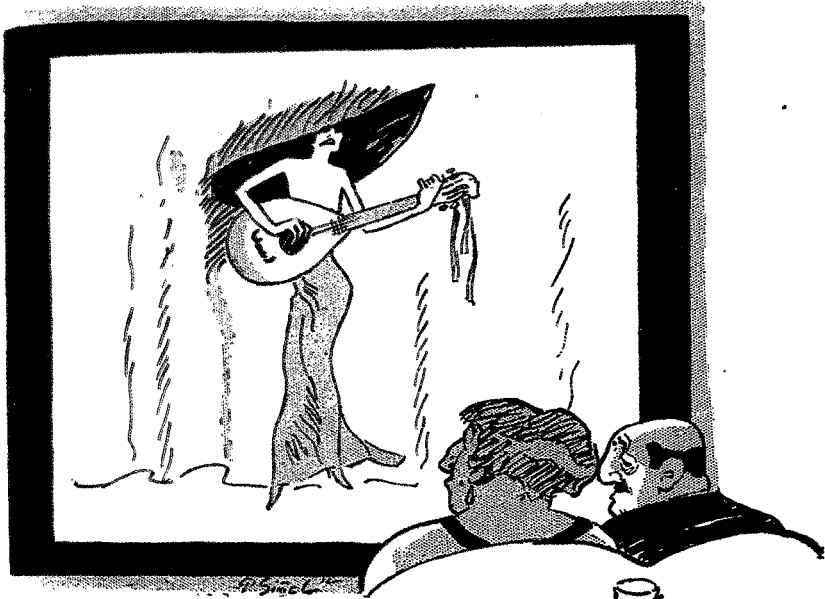
The editors of the *Union-Theater-Zeitung* cover and promote Asta Nielsen as a star persona even without referring to any of her films in distribution. At the end of March 1912, the *Union-Theater-Zeitung* announced sensational filming out on the Berlin streets: With her bare hands Asta Nielsen has to drive two released lions back into their cage – a successful April Fool's joke!⁵⁴ In April, the newspaper featured a full-page photograph titled "Die Duse der Kino-Kunst" showing "Asta Nielsen in her home" (as the caption states) standing before a mirror as if she were checking her dress before going out for an evening's entertainment. A chandelier visible in the mirror symbolises prosperity. A further caption adds to a number of attributes which indicate her status:

The famous Danish actress, whom audiences will see today in a new film drama, enjoys unchallenged popularity. Her acting, the vivid expression of her gestures, have earned her the honorary title of a 'Duse of cinematic art', and the films in which the 'Asta' plays have become her own popular brand for the literary connoisseur of the cinema. The celebrated tragedienne, whose achievements are honoured with enormous fees, has now returned from a study trip in Spain and sends the readers of the U.T.Z. this portrait and best regards from her Copenhagen home.⁵⁵

One month after this remarkable exhibition of Asta Nielsen's ostensible privacy in Copenhagen, promising news followed that "Asta Nielsen, our famous Copenhagen actress and film tragedienne, has taken such a liking to Berlin that she is considering exchanging her residence in her northern home country for Berlin".⁵⁶ And after two months, she finally fully arrived in Berlin:

The 'Duse of cinematic art' has now furnished a cosy as well as tasteful home, and the colourful, diversified life of the young cosmopolitan metropolis of Berlin is just the right place to chase away not only the last remains of home sickness but also to learn to love the new home more and more.⁵⁷

If that was not enough, Asta Nielsen "has also become a citizen of busy, industrious Berlin [...] to add to the glamour of the city herself", for example, to make new Asta Nielsen films. "Thus Asta Nielsen is very industrious, is making surprising progress in learning German, which she earlier considered 'wery hart' and, as a soon completely acclimated Berliner, has asked us to send



Mitleid.

„Gott, muß sich die Asta Nielsen tief waschen!“

Compassion. “Oh Gosh – how deep down this Asta Nielsen must wash herself”.
Union-Theater-Zeitung 1:30 (12–18 October 1912).

her kindest regards to her new countrymen”.⁵⁸ The Danish émigré ‘now belongs’ and has been taken into the community of Berlin because she has moved to Berlin to work. With the expression “new countrymen” the public relations office of the Berlin Union-Theater had raised the residence change from Copenhagen to Berlin to an internal metamorphosis of citizenship: as if Asta Nielsen, through her move, had changed her Danish nationality to a kind of Berlin nationality, distinguished by her special diligence. Thus Asta Nielsen then became predestined to play Berlin characters in Berlin. At the end of September 1912, *DIE KINDER DES GENERALS* (FALSELY ACCUSED) was introduced to Berlin audiences as a “heimatlicher Film” (home-based film): “Asta Nielsen plays a Berlin child in this film, a brave, clever and proud girl.” But not only that:

For the first time Asta Nielsen is playing *in* Berlin. We have, however, already seen her in dramas where the Berlin streets served as the milieu; but now she is here for the first time in the Berlin marches; Berlin’s surroundings appear before our eyes and with those realistic details that only film can express; we can take in the whole atmosphere emanating from this, in a sense, home-based film.⁵⁹

Between the spring of 1912 and the autumn of 1913, in the public relations

To the Editor,

In the paper what I like, the *Berliner Morgenpost*, I just read the bosses at the U.T. Kintop have a newspaper of theirs own. I were glad to hear that, cause I go to the pictures in Wedding evry week with my other half and our littluns and it's a bit embarrassin when me people ask me fings I don't know about them films wot we watched. I mean, wot do I know about them foreign lands shown in them pictures? I didn't learn nofing about all that at my rubbish ol school! So I want to kindly ask the honourable editors that they might please explain them pictures properly in their paper. See, how it is with my boy, he's learnin more at school now than I ever learnt them 30 years ago! But still, he don't learn nofing about them foreign lands neither. And then there's that Asta Nielsen. They really got somefing going there, right! My girl, she's doin her apprenticeship in some department store, but she wants to play Asta Nielsen, of all people! On Sundys, all the day, she stands front the mirror and plays wot she seen in the films. O course, I gave her wot for. I mean, wot's a department store apprentice sposed to do with all that? She'd be better off usin her time to help her ol mum doin the dinner. Still, tis nice when she pretends to be Asta Nielsen, so touchin, that girl! And we can always hardly wait for Saturdy night, when the newest film with Asta comes. Anyway, back to the grindstone for me, now, but I have a look forward to your paper!

August Bäcker, locksmith

Answer from the Editor

Our column "The story in the film" will show you that we have followed your suggestion. Where your daughter is concerned, we do not in the least doubt her talent, which we do not know about. Let the young lady play "film". One can't start too early to become an Asta Nielsen!

Letter to the editor, written in Berlin dialect. *Union-Theater-Zeitung* 1:1 (16–22 March 1912): 5

statements of the *Union-Theater-Zeitung*, Asta Nielsen mutated from a foreign Danish actress to a "fully acclimated Berliner" among her Berlin compatriots. Why this advertising campaign was conducted remains open to speculation and might be answered by further historical research. Did chief editor Paul Ehren think it was disadvantageous to her popularity with the Berlin audience to promote an actress from a foreign country as a foreigner? In any case, it is a fact that the public relations department of the Union-Theater used the occasion of Asta Nielsen's move from Copenhagen to Berlin to make the star of the 'Asta Nielsen series' produced in the Berlin area more accessible to Berlin audiences.

Not only the content but also the persistence of the Asta Nielsen brand was cultivated very carefully by the editors of the *Union-Theater-Zeitung*. For the readers of this newspaper who attended the Union-Theater, it was just a matter of course to encounter Asta Nielsen again and again. The difference between the in-the-flesh presence on the stage and the technical reproduction of the cinematographic image on the screen was thus obliterated. She was announced as if she were a theatre diva: "The highly celebrated artist will appear before audiences today in her role in the Balkans film drama DAS MÄDCHEN OHNE VATERLAND (A GIRL WITHOUT A COUNTRY)" reads the caption of a full-page photographic portrait.⁶⁰ The *Union-Theater-Zeitung* stylised Asta Nielsen as a greatly honoured resident of the Union-Theater houses who regularly appeared to her cult following – not on the balcony of a palace but on the screens of the cinema chain.

Ambivalent audience response

Pointers to the audience's attitude toward Asta Nielsen hardly appear in the *Union-Theater-Zeitung*. A letter from a locksmith invented by the editors, written in Berlin dialect refers to Asta Nielsen and her audience right in the first issue: The daughter, apprentice in a department store, allegedly stands in front of the mirror all day Sunday and imitates Asta Nielsen.⁶¹ This fictional story corresponds to the report of a cinema reformer who attended the second examination of Asta Nielsen's debut film *ABGRÜNDE* at Berlin police headquarters:

This film was released by the censors only after a fairly lewd scene – a gaucho dance representing a disgustingly sensual belly dance – was cut. Where the film (it comes from Denmark) has been permitted to be shown unrestrictedly, it can happen (as in Hamburg) that young girls can be seen to practice these snake-like belly movements in the street.⁶²

A prize competition by the Union-Theater asking cinema goers to write literary film descriptions brought in "hundreds of submissions", but only three of them were fit to print. As an "interesting aside", the editors stated, "that the greater number of writers by far had turned their interest to the Asta Nielsen films".⁶³ At the end of 1913, the audience magazine *Illustrierte Kino-Woche* conducted a survey among the presumably mostly women readers about their favourite film actor. The winner far and away was the Danish male actor Valdemar Psilander with 382 votes, followed by Asta Nielsen with 271 votes and by Henny Porten with 258 votes.⁶⁴ Six months before this survey, Emilie Altenloh, a Heidelberg student of economics under the supervision of Alfred Weber, concluded her dissertation *Zur Soziologie des Kino. Die Kino-Unternehmung und die sozialen Schichten ihrer Besucher* [On the sociology of the cinema. Cinema companies and the social classes of their viewers]. She conducted her audience survey in Mannheim during the 1911/12 season as an outsider and may thus be considered an unprejudiced observer of cinema theatres in the early 1910s. Altenloh called the "Asta Nielsen dramas" "Kassen-Stücke" (box-office hits).⁶⁵ The interest of the inner city audience in the cinema theatres centred around these hits, whereas the number of viewers for the Asta Nielsen film *ZU TODE GEHETZT* (*DRIVEN OUT*) in a Mannheim suburban cinema declined:

If we consider those programmes which proved to be especially popular, the success can be traced for the most part to certain dramas. For example, without exception, the Asta Nielsen dramas were the preferred ones in the inner city cinemas. (In contrast, the effect was the reverse in the suburbs. The number of viewers sank even below the average for the film *ZU TODE GEHETZT*, with Asta Nielsen in the leading role).⁶⁶

In her categorisation of individual classes, Altenloh underscores twice 16- and 17-year-old "Gehilfen im Kaufmannsstand" (shop assistants), who go to the cinema "extremely often", that they named "most frequently" Asta Nielsen films when asked about their favourite films.⁶⁷ The shop assistants have "a quite pronounced class consciousness" and "are looking for any ways to differentiate

themselves from workers: [...] For example, they never go to the small cinemas in the suburbs".⁶⁸ They are among the patrons of the cinema theatres in the city centre of Mannheim.

A series of clues points to the fact that Asta Nielsen polarised the cinema-going audiences in Germany.⁶⁹ This may have limited her box-office records in some sectors of the cinema business in Germany as well as her popularity among some classes of the cinema-going public. Audience response to Asta Nielsen films and to Asta Nielsen as star persona in Germany is a difficult task belonging to further research. The texts of numerous contemporary publications of essays in magazines and film reviews in the daily and trade press should be critically examined to explore the profile of German public discourse about Asta Nielsen. However, texts inspired by distributor and cinema advertising must be strictly distinguished from statements by independent authors. Conversely, the varied distribution and exhibition in different regions, localities and social milieus can be *indirectly* established by the popularity of Asta Nielsen films with audiences in Germany.⁷⁰ Apart from the statements by the large number of professional writers and teachers, comments by the cinema audiences referring directly to Asta Nielsen and her films were seldom printed.⁷¹ It is therefore all the more important to investigate answers to prize contests and surveys as well as letters to the editor, likewise unpublished reports by cinema viewers written for local authorities or clubs involved with supervision of the cinemas. Asta Nielsen polarised. She had fans – and detractors ...

Notes

1. In the Kosmorama, AFGRUNDEN was screened from 12 September to 30 October 1910, with 10 to 13 showings daily, according to local newspaper adverts (information kindly provided by Stephan Michael Schröder, e-mail to the author, 17 March 2009).
2. See Andrzej Debski's, Outi Hupaniittu's and Lauri Piispa's essays in this volume for the example of Russia, including the Grand Duchy of Finland and the Polish territories.
3. See Marguerite Engberg, *Filmstjernen Asta Nielsen* (Aarhus, Klim 1999), 53–54.
4. See in detail Martin Loiperdinger, "Afgunden in Germany: monopolfilm, cinema-going and the emergence of the film star Asta Nielsen", in Daniel Biltereyst, Richard Maltby and Philippe Meers (eds), *Cinema, Audiences and Modernity. New perspectives on European cinema history* (London: Routledge, 2012), 142–153.
5. *Der Kinematograph*, no. 204 (23 November 1910).
6. The German word 'Monopolfilm' has no English equivalent. Rachael Low uses the term 'exclusive film' in her ground-breaking *The History of the British Film, 1906–1914* (London, George Allen & Unwin, 1949), 42–49. According to Low, the first film handled in Britain as an exclusive was Nordisk Film's IN THE HANDS OF IMPOSTORS (DEN HVIDE SLAVEHANDELS SIDSTE OFFER), in March 1911.
7. According to the adverts from the Düsseldorf Palast-Theater, ABGRÜNDE had a run of three weeks. See the adverts in *Düsseldorfer Neueste Nachrichten*, no. 276 (26 November 1910) and no. 288 (10 December 1911).
8. Niko, "Düsseldorf im Januar 1911", *Kinematograph*, no. 213 (25 January 1911).
9. Advert from the Cinéma-Palais and Theater Hohe Pforte 10, *Stadt-Anzeiger* (Cologne), no. 555 (6 December 1910).
10. Advert from the Cinéma-Palais and Theater Hohe Pforte 10, *Stadt-Anzeiger* (Cologne), no. 559 (8 December 1910).
11. Advert from the Breslau Palast-Theater, *Breslauer General-Anzeiger*, no. 31 (1 February 1911); see

also Martin Loiperdinger, “ABGRÜNDE - początek długometrażowych filmów fabularnych we Wrocławiu”, in Andrzej Debski and Marek Zybura (eds), *Wrocław będzie miastem filmowym. Z dziejów kina we Wrocławiu* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo GAJT 1991, 2008): 55–63.

12. See for details Loiperdinger, “*Agrunden in Germany*”, 150.
13. For seating capacities in Hamburg cinemas see Film- und Fernsehmuseum Hamburg: www.film-museum-hamburg.de, and Michael Töteberg. “Neben dem Operetten-Theater und vis-à-vis Schauspielhaus. Eine Kino-Topographie von Hamburg 1896–1912,” in Corinna Müller and Harro Segeberg (eds), *Kinoöffentlichkeit (1895–1920) – Entstehung, Etablierung, Differenzierung / Cinema’s Public Sphere – Emergence, Settlement, Differentiation (1895–1920)* (Marburg: Schüren Verlag, 2008), 105–125.
14. Cover advert, *Der Kinematograph*, no. 221 (22 March 1911).
15. See *Der Kinematograph*, no. 220 (15 March 1911) to no. 223 (5 April 1911).
16. *Erste Internationale Filmzeitung*, no. 14 (8 April 1911): 40; and no. 17 (29 April 1911): 44.
17. *Erste Internationale Filmzeitung*, no. 12 (25 March 1911).
18. *Der Kinematograph*, no. 220 (15 March 1911).
19. Advert from the Aktien-Gesellschaft für Kinematographie und Filmverleih, Strasbourg, *Der Kinematograph*, no. 224 (12 April 1911).
20. Ibid.
21. *Der Kinematograph*, no. 206 (7 December 1910); 209 (28 December 1910); 211 (11 January 1911).
22. *Der Kinematograph*, no. 212 (18 January 1911).
23. *Der Kinematograph*, no. 228 (10 May 1911).
24. *Der Kinematograph*, no. 228 (10 May 1911).
25. *The Bioscope*, no. 245 (22 June 1911): 625.
26. Ibid.
27. Corinna Müller, *Frühe deutsche Kinematographie. Formale, wirtschaftliche und kulturelle Entwicklungen* (Stuttgart and Weimar: Metzler, 1994), 144.
28. Christoph Mülleneisen Sr., “Wie ich Asta Nielsen engagierte”, *Erste Internationale Film-Zeitung* (25 April 1914); repr. in: Renate Seydel and Allan Hagedorff (eds), *Asta Nielsen. Ihr Leben in Fotodokumenten, Selbstzeugnissen und zeitgenössischen Betrachtungen* (Berlin, GDR: Henschelverlag Kunst und Gesellschaft, 1984), 48–49.
29. Ibid.
30. Asta Nielsen, *Die schweigende Muse* (Berlin, GDR: Henschelverlag Kunst und Gesellschaft, 1977), 139–140.
31. Advert “Bekanntmachung!”, *Der Kinematograph*, no. 232 (7 June 1911).
32. Advert “Ein Unikum in der Kino-Branche!”, *Der Kinematograph*, no. 238 (19 July 1911).
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. Mülleneisen Sr., “Wie ich Asta Nielsen engagierte”.
36. Advert “Bekanntmachung!”, *Der Kinematograph*, no. 232 (7 June 1911).
37. Advert “Ein Unikum in der Kino-Branche!”, *Der Kinematograph*, no. 238 (19 July 1911).
38. PAGU advert “Asta Nielsen-Serie”, *Der Kinematograph*, no. 250 (11 October 1911); the next PAGU advert was placed in no. 256 (22 November 1911).
39. PAGU advert announcing the eighth film of the first ‘Asta Nielsen series’, *Der Kinematograph*, no. 270 (28 February 1911).
40. PAGU advert, *Der Kinematograph*, no. 277 (17 April 1912).
41. Arthur Mellini, “Reklame-Kunst im Zeitungsinserat”, *Lichtbild-Bühne*, no. 33 (19 August 1911); see Corinna Müller, *Frühe deutsche Kinematographie*, 151.
42. See Andrea Haller’s essay in this volume.

43. See the lavishly illustrated documentation of all Asta Nielsen films: Karola Gramann and Heide Schlüpmann (eds), *Nachfalter. Asta Nielsen, ihre Filme* (2nd edn) (Vienna: filmarchiv austria, 2010).
44. See Andrea Haller's essay on Mannheim and Pierre Stotzky's essay on Metz in this volume. For Saarbrücken, Saarbrück and Trier, see Christina Rönz, "Asta Nielsen kommt" – Der Filmstar und die Kinobetreiber im Deutschen Reich", in Heide Schlüpmann et al. (eds), *Unmögliche Liebe. Asta Nielsen, ihr Kino* (2nd edn) (Vienna: filmarchiv austria, 2010), 187–193.
45. In 1910, Berlin had around two million inhabitants, and the cities which formed Greater Berlin in 1920 had nearly another two million inhabitants.
46. See Union-Theater adverts in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, no. 342 (8 July 1911) and no. 448 (3 September 1911). Thanks to Jeanpaul Goergen for this clue.
47. Paul Ehren, "Unsere Zeitung", *Union-Theater-Zeitung* 1:1 (16–22 March 1912): 2.
48. Only the script of ZIGEUNERBLUT (GIPSY BLOOD) was not written by Urban Gad, and it is not quite clear who wrote and directed DIE FALSCHER ASTA NIELSEN (THE FALSE ASTA NIELSEN); see Gramann and Schlüpmann, *Nachfalter*, 33 and 173.
49. The phrase "by Urban Gad" was added for the first time when DER FREMDE VOGEL (THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE) appeared in the programme lists; see *Union-Theater-Zeitung* 2:8 (20–27 February 1913).
50. Announcement of JUGEND UND TOLLHEIT (IN A FIX), *Union-Theater-Zeitung* 1:42 (27 December 1912 – 2 January 1913): 7.
51. Paul Ehren, "Regiekunst", *Union-Theater-Zeitung* 1:35 (8–14 November 1912): 1–2.
52. IFVG advert, *Erste Internationale Filmzeitung*, no. 23 (7 June 1913).
53. See Stephan Michael Schröder, "Und Urban Gad? Zur Frage der Autorschaft in den Filmen bis 1914", in Schlüpmann, *Unmögliche Liebe*, 194–210.
54. *Union-Theater-Zeitung* 1:3 (30 March – 4 April): 15.
55. *Union-Theater-Zeitung* 1:5 (13–19 April 1912): 3. Unfortunately, *Union-Theater-Zeitung* is accessible only on microfilm. Due to the poor quality of microfilm reproduction, this photograph of Asta Nielsen cannot be printed here.
56. "Asta Nielsen bleibt dauernd in Berlin", *Union-Theater-Zeitung* 1:11 (25–31 May 1912): 12.
57. "Asta Nielsen als Berliner Bürgerin", *Union-Theater-Zeitung* 1:19 (20–26 July 1912): 15.
58. Ibid.
59. "DIE KINDER DES GENERALS", *Union-Theater-Zeitung* 1:30 (5–11 October 1912): 8.
60. *Union-Theater-Zeitung* 1:38 (29 November – 5 December 1912): 3.
61. *Union-Theater-Zeitung* 1:1 (16–22 March 1912): 5.
62. Ernst Schultze, *Der Kinematograph als Bildungsmittel. Eine kulturpolitische Untersuchung* (Halle Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1911), 86–87.
63. "Unser Preisausschreiben", *Union-Theater-Zeitung* 1:33 (25–31 October 1912): 12.
64. "Das Resultat unserer Rundfrage", *Illustrierte Kino-Woche*, 2:1 (1914): 7. For details see Annemone Ligensa's essay in this volume.
65. Emilie Altenloh, *Zur Soziologie des Kino. Die Kino-Unternehmung und die sozialen Schichten ihrer Besucher* [1914], edited by Andrea Haller, Martin Loiperdinger and Heide Schlüpmann (Frankfurt and Basel: Stroemfeld, 2012), 57.
66. Ibid.
67. Ibid., 84 and 86.
68. Ibid., 82.
69. See Annemone Ligensa's essay in this volume.
70. See Andrea Haller's and Pierre Stotzky's local case studies in this volume.
71. Quotations from the "prize survey" of *Illustrierte Filmwoche* on the "most popular film artist" from the spring of 1918 are located in Andrea Haller, "Nur meine Asta! Und damit basta! Ein Blick in die Frauen- und Fanzeitschriften der 1910er Jahre", in Schlüpmann, *Unmögliche Liebe*, 325–336.