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National Identity, Gender, and Genre: The Multiple Marginalization of Lotte Reiniger and The Adventures of Prince Achmed (1926)

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Nationality, Gender, and Genre: The Multiple Marginalization of Lotte Reiniger and *The Adventures of Prince Achmed* (1926)

by

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DEDICATION

For Joni Bernbaum and Judi McBride, who taught me that justice doesn't come from a courtroom, but it sure helps. For Margit and Dr. Sipiora, who fought the good fight. For Dr. Ball and Cyndy, who inspired me to study English. For my parents, Whiz and Karen, who taught me the meaning of dedication. For Hannah and Kirsten, who are the future.

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary American visual culture is saturated with animation, from websites and advertisements to adult and children's television programs. Animated films have dominated the American box office since *Toy Story* (1995) and show no signs of relenting, as demonstrated by *Up* (2009) and *Alice in Wonderland* (2010). Scholarly interest in animation has paralleled the steady rise of the popularity of the medium. Publications addressing animation have migrated from niche journals, such as such as *Animation Journal* and *Wide Angle*, to one of the most mainstream English-language publications, the Modern Language Association's *Profession*, which included Judith Halberstam's article "Animation" in 2009, in which she discusses the potential of animation to transcend outdated notions of disciplinary divides and to unify the sciences and humanities. However, the origins of the animated feature film remain obscured. My dissertation clarifies this obscurity by recovering Lotte Reiniger, the inventor of the multiplane camera and producer of the first animated feature film, *The Adventures of Prince Achmed* (1926).

Because of the international and interdisciplinary qualities of animation, my project draws upon a wide array of disciplines including film theory, historiography, and criticism; European modernisms; animation studies; early German culture; folklore; and literary adaptation. In order to explore such diverse subject matter I utilize feminist, discourse, Marxist/cultural, and film theories.

My first chapter demonstrates inconsistencies concerning the development of the animated film throughout animation scholarship despite the recent proliferation of publications. Most of the scholarship misattributes the innovations of Reiniger, including her invention of the multiplane camera and the animated feature film, to the Disney Company. The related scholarship reveals a suspicious omission, or passing mention, of Reiniger. The conflicting and sparse scholarship prompts my inquiry into the causes of her critical marginalization.

In the second chapter I historically and culturally contextualize Reiniger by examining contemporaneous writers and artists, as well as the early German film industry. I argue that (German) national identity negatively impacted her and the film's discourse position. I contextualize *Prince Achmed* within Expressionism, Bauhaus, Constructivism, Dada, Surrealism, and the New Objectivity and measure it by contemporaneous critical standards represented by Kracauer, Balázs, and Arnheim. An analysis of the film as an adaptation of a popular literary text highlights its formal singularity: its status as an independent animated feature. Despite initial critical acclaim and use of elements from celebrated visual movements, the very elements that are unique to the film have historically contributed to its critical neglect. I posit that 1926, the year of *Prince Achmed*'s Berlin and Parisian releases, was a particularly difficult time for the German film industry. The difficulties of this era were intensified for independent productions, such as *Prince Achmed*. Hollywood had established hegemony after targeting its only competition, the German film industry. Americanism dominated Weimar culture, resulting in domestic critical neglect of German film. Anti-German

sentiment abounded internationally. The convergence of these events coincided with the release of *Prince Achmed* and further damaged its critical legacy.

In chapter three I consider the influence of gender on the discourse positions of Reiniger and *Prince Achmed*. An overview of contemporaneous female artists and filmmakers elucidates the complicated relationships between women and film and women and modernity. Invoking Guyatri Chakravorty Spivak's interrelated concepts of the "politics of interpretation," "cultural marginalia," and "masculist centrality/feminist marginality," I posit *Prince Achmed* as a feminist celebration of handicraft and a critique of modern culture. Reiniger embraces her relegation to the private/domestic/feminine realm by revolutionizing silhouette cutting in the form of animated (feature) film. In *Prince Achmed*she critiques the contradiction between imagery of the New Woman and the actual plight of women in modernity.

After situating animated film within the larger genre of film, in chapter four I reflect upon the scholarly tendency to relegate film to a status subordinate to traditional visual media, thereby further marginalizing animation. In this chapter I also define and debunk the Disney myth, which includes widespread misconceptions that Disney invented the multiplane camera and pioneered the animated feature film. I highlight contributing factors such as a noticeable lack of animation scholarship (Edera; Pilling) and a gap in interwar German history during which *Prince Achmed* was produced (Kracauer; Arnheim; Edera). The concept of "historical imaginary" developed by Elsaesser and Foucauldian "mechanisms of power" assist an understanding of the creation and nearly century-long perpetuation of the Disney myth, which has lost relevance to contemporary critical discourse.

Having established primary and tertiary causes of the marginalization of Reiniger and *Prince Achmed*, I determine that this is a timely project since, according to Walter Benjamin, all images become intelligible only in later corresponding epochs. This "synchronicity" renders *Prince Achmed* comprehensible to critics in contemporary American animation-saturated culture. Because each chapter focuses on an element of otherness, my project illuminates the individual and culminating effects of national identity, gender, and genre on film history and discourse. By restoring Lotte Reiniger and *Prince Achmed* to their rightful discourse positions, my dissertation challenges existing understandings of the origins of animated film and development of the medium of film. Furthermore, my project encourages interdisciplinary scholarship, ongoing recovery of women and other historically overlooked groups, and interrogations of literary and other canonization.

CHAPTER ONE--OVERVIEW

Die Geschichte des Prinzen Achmed (*The Adventures of Prince Achmed*) premiered May 1926 at Volksbühne on Bülowplatz in a remote northern Berlin theatre on an off-season Sunday, which was not typically a day to attend the cinema. The audience, which included Fritz Lang, Thea von Harbou, Karl With, László Moholy-Nagy, G.W. Pabst, and Bertolt Brecht, enthusiastically applauded throughout the film (Reiniger *Shadow* 4; Beckerman 40; Reiniger qtd. in Pilling 11; Ratner 48). Although it was not an official press screening, some members of the press attended the informal premiere thanks to the efforts of Bertolt Brecht (Reiniger, *Shadow* 3; Reiniger qtd. in Pilling 11). *Prince Achmed* also premiered in Paris in July at Louis Jouvet's Comédie theatre on the Champs Elysées and in Berlin in September 1926 at Gloria Palast (White, *Walking* 15; Reiniger, *Shadow* 3). French filmmakers René Clair and Jean Renoir attended the Paris premiere and admired Reiniger's work. At that premiere Reiniger and her husband Carl Koch met and became close lifelong friends with Renoir (Reiniger qtd. in Pilling 13; Grant 180). *Prince Achmed* was shown in Tokyo in 1929 (White, *Walking* 15; Council of the London Film Society 208). In 1926 the London Film Society administered write-in ballots to its members to determine which films they would most like to screen in upcoming seasons.[1]

[1] Throughout this dissertation, "film(s)" generally refers to individual or groups of films while "cinema" refers to films and includes related activities, such as marketing, promotion, merchandizing, and reception. In *Cinema's Third Machine* (1993) Weimar cinema scholar Sabine Hake points out the difference between cinema and film:

> While the term *Kino*, like its predecessors *Kientopp* and *Kinematograph*, still acknowledged the technological foundations of cinema, the term *Film* claimed independence from all external influences, and thus legitimized the critic's exclusive attention to the individual film and its particular artistic qualities. (107)

Prince Achmed ranked first in popularity alongside Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* among Film Society members (Council of the London Film Society 36). However, the lack of an American release stalled the film's international success. Aside from two elite 1931 screenings most American audiences would not see it until 1942. This lapse between the initial international acclaim for the film and its American debut began the tradition of obscurity that since has surrounded the film and its maker. According to animation scholar Donald Crafton,

> Although *Prince Achmed* was well-known in Europe, its American release was delayed…because the production company…sold exclusive rights to the University Film Foundation of Harvard, which did not actively promote it. Two benefit screenings were given in New York in 1931…. The 'official' American premiere did not take place until 1942. (366)

Without deviating from several contemporaneous filmic conventions, in *Prince Achmed* Reiniger pioneered the silhouette film genre; multiplane camera, which separates foregrounds from backgrounds to achieve a three-dimensional effect; and the full-length animated feature film. *Prince Achmed* was unlike any feature film seen by contemporaneous viewers. Audiences had seen the individual elements of *Prince Achmed* in other films, but the combination of these elements resulted in an entirely new genre. Films in the 1920s frequently featured animated sequences, and gag reels were standard elements of most film programs. Felix the Cat and Oswald the Rabbit represented familiar animated characters. But audiences had never seen an animated full-length feature film before *Prince Achmed*. Reiniger extended the use of animation to comprise the entire film, thereby challenging notions of the purpose and goals of animation. Early

films also contained elements of shadow play, as displayed in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920) and *Warning Shadows* (1923). But audiences had never seen an entire film based on shadow play and silhouettes before *Prince Achmed*. Reiniger appropriated the historically "high art" medium of shadow theatre and shadow play for the popular mass cultural medium of (animated) film by pioneering the silhouette film. *One Arabian Night* (1920) and *Thief of Baghdad* (1924) display the tendency of Twenties films to borrow elements of exoticism and Orientalism from *1,001 Arabian Nights*. But audiences had never seen their favorite folktales portrayed in animated form with figures on abstract backgrounds before *Prince Achmed*. Reiniger vivified familiar folktales from the *Nights* by inventing the cutting-edge technology of the multiplane camera. By accepting some filmic conventions while challenging and revolutionizing others, *Prince Achmed* embodied characteristic modern (Weimar) clashes between tradition and change, art and industry, elite and popular.

Since the 1926 Berlin premiere of *Prince Achmed*, scholarly and critical treatment of Reiniger's life, writings, and films has been sparse. On the rare occasions when Reiniger is mentioned in film and animation scholarship, it is often in passing. More frequently her major accomplishments are attributed to the Disney Company, among others. The conspicuous lack of in-depth scholarship about the sixty-year-long filmmaking career of the inventor of the silhouette film genre, multiplane camera, and the animated feature film genre seems groundless. Animation critic William Moritz notes,

> Such a distinguished biography--and a filmography of more than seventy items--begs the question of why Lotte Reiniger remains rather undervalued. Despite the occasional nod to her as having made one feature-length animation film before

> Walt Disney (when indeed she made two), most critics today still tacitly assume that silhouettes constitute a secondary or inferior form of animation, so that Disney's cartoon *Snow White* counts as a real first animation feature. ("Some Critical" 42)

The lack of scholarship on Reiniger correlates to the genre of (silhouette) animation in which Reiniger worked and presents an opportunity to recover and critically address the long-neglected *Prince Achmed*, but difficulties arise upon inspection of the extant scholarship throughout which there are discrepancies.[2] Recent attempts to familiarize contemporary audiences with Reiniger and her films include the 2001 Milestone re-release of *Prince Achmed* and Noga Wizansky's 2004 dissertation, "Crosscut: Handicraft and Abstraction in Weimar Germany," which was the first substantive (English-language) critical treatment of the film.[3]

The contributions of Reiniger to the development of film have historically been marginalized in film history and discourse due to a combination of her German national identity, gender, and genre in which she worked.[4] In combination these seemingly surface identifiers have resulted in the critical neglect of the film career of Reiniger. Feminist-Marxist-deconstructionist Guyatri Chakravorty Spivak warns that explanations

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[2] Biographical information about Reiniger and simple plot summaries of *Prince Achmed* often differ significantly. Critics who provide divergent plot summaries of *Prince Achmed* are Ensor, who claims Pari Banu is only transformed into a human long enough to bathe (106), and Horn, who conflates the characters of Achmed and Aladdin (71). Sources that offer differing biographical information are Elsaesser's *Weimar Cinema*, which mistakenly claims Reiniger worked at Ufa (387-390), as well as "The Films of Lotte Reiniger" (20).

[3] The Frankfurt film museum restored the film for the 2001 re-release; L'immagine ritrovata in Bologna handled the tinting and printing; and ZDF/Arte recorded the original score.

[4] "Film history and discourse" refers to English-language (or English translations of) scholarship, criticism, theory, and other published and documented discussions about audiences, reception, perception, distribution, production, marketing, and other related aspects of film. Lastly, "marginalization," "marginalized," and "marginal" refer to subordinate positions, usually within (film) history and discourse, that are typically occupied by independent, non-Hollywood, non-American, and otherwise other-ed films and filmmakers.

"exclude the possibility of the *radically* heterogeneous" (105). I proceed with her warning in mind.

Weimar Culture and Germanness

The debut of the cinema is frequently attributed to the Lumière brothers' 28 December 1895 screening at the Grand Café in Paris. However, a month earlier the German Skladanowsky brothers screened films in Berlin (Manvell and Fraenkel 1). The widespread misattribution of the first film screening mirrors the misattribution of the invention of the multiplane camera and production of the first full-length animated feature film. While I do not pretend to account for the oversight of the Skladanowsky brothers, the omission of Reiniger's inventions--the multiplane camera and animated feature film genre--and *Prince Achmed*'s century-long critical neglect from most film, animation, and visual arts scholarship invites exploration. It also invites explanation. At the risk of defying Spivak's warning against explanations, I posit that the historical tendency to ignore or misappropriate Reiniger's contributions to the development of film has been caused, at least in part, by widespread anti-German sentiment, gaps in German history, contemporaneous domestic critical neglect of German film, and the independent production and distribution of *Prince Achmed*.

Widespread anti-German sentiment, prevalent in post-WWI Western Europe, negatively influenced public perception of Reiniger and *Prince Achmed*. German national identity was a complex burden in the early twentieth century, a fact further complicated in subsequent decades by Hitler’s rise to power and the Holocaust. In *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film* Weimar cultural critic Siegfried

Kracauer documents the widespread interwar anti-German sentiment by citing Max Scheler's public lectures on the topic and the "influence anti-German films exerted everywhere abroad" (35).[5] The Weimar Republic, founded after World War I, hosted a flourishing cultural life; numerous influential artists, writers, and critics lived and worked in Weimar Berlin. Despite the efforts of the Weimar Republic to distance itself from the preceding Wilhelmine Empire, the international wounds left by WWI were still fresh and recognizably German.

In addition to international postwar anti-German sentiment, gaps in interwar Germany history have negatively impacted the critical legacy of Reiniger and *Prince Achmed*. Post-WWII Kracauer and Arnheim both note wide gaps in knowledge of interwar German history (*From* 9; *Film Essays* 3). According to film historian Kristin Thompson, "the reason for this essential gap in our knowledge is...because film history has concentrated on the productions of films (studios, financiers, film-makers) at the expense of exhibition and distribution" (*Exporting* x). Though scholars have recently attempted to remedy the neglected state of interwar German history, the intervening decades of neglect remain influential on knowledge transmission. Gaps in knowledge of German history and culture, as well as gaps in knowledge of German animation, partially explain the lack of accurate scholarship on the innovations of Reiniger. After all, if (German film) history in general is incomplete, then an incomplete recollection of a(n independent female) German (silhouette animation) filmmaker is less surprising. Moritz observes gaps in German animation from 1933 to 1945 and points out that even respected

[5] Kracauer's early criticism for the *Frankfurter Zeitung* offers contemporaneous insight into Weimar culture, but his retrospective *From Caligari to Hitler* (1947) presents a widely contested socio-historico-psychological analysis of Weimar film as a reflection of the mass psyche of the German population. After this reference, to distinguish between his two bodies of writing, those from the Weimar years will be attributed to "early Kracauer" and those from *From Caligari* to "post-WWII Kracauer."

catalogues have falsified dates of films made during those years to obscure the fact that successful and innovative animation was produced in Nazi Germany ("Resistance" 230). An unreliable and incomplete record of German animation partially accounts for, but in no way excuses, missing and faulty documentation of the innovations of an obscure German female silhouette animation filmmaker.

As discussed in chapter two, the culmination of intellectual opposition to Universal Film Aktion Gesellschaft (Ufa), which for many embodied the entire German film industry, manifested in widespread Americanism, fascination with Soviet culture, and critical dismissal of German film. This internal critical neglect in favor of American and Soviet films severely damaged the domestic status of early German film. The year that *Prince Achmed* was released, 1926, the German film industry experienced particular difficulties. Hollywood competition reached its zenith that year; it was one of "the only years when more American features than German were registered for censorship" (Thompson, *Exporting* 127). Intellectual opposition to conservative political interests within Ufa resulted in widespread rejection of German, in favor of American and Russian, films. Ufa remained unscathed by this internal critical neglect; however, it severely impacted independent productions, including *Prince Achmed*, resulting in an intensification of their marginal cultural positions.

The independent status of Reiniger and *Prince Achmed* has contributed to their respective critical marginalizations in film history and discourse. Reiniger worked independently not only of Ufa but also of the proliferation of contemporaneous avant-garde movements. Weimar Berlin was a time and place of experimentation. Contemporaneous avant-gardists, with whom Reiniger worked closely and by whom her

films were generally well received, founded and belonged to various artistic movements, such as Expressionism, Bauhaus, Constructivism, *Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity), Dada, and Surrealism. These groups and movements offered artists the opportunity to participate in group exhibits and events and to be associated in the public mind with the ethos of the group. Members were often unified by shared and easily identifiable, perhaps oversimplified, traits, values, and goals. Dadaists would have been perceived as outrageous and expected to use unconventional media. Expressionists would have been expected to visually express intense emotions and ideas. Though Reiniger befriended, collaborated with, and respected the members of various groups, as well as incorporated their prominent traits into *Prince Achmed*, she refused to closely align with any of them. Therefore, she forfeited potential participation in group-promoted exhibits and public familiarity with her basic artistic traits, values, and goals through familiarity with the group. In the national identity chapter I discuss the various opportunities Reiniger had to work within the mainstream German film industry and with various experimental, or what would perhaps nowadays be called indie, circles. Despite inroads into well-funded, widely distributed, and thoroughly documented areas of early German film, Reiniger consciously remained autonomous.

Reiniger remained independent not only of mainstream and avant-garde film circles but also of alignment with any of the prominent political positions and causes of the day. While remaining publically apolitical Reiniger privately held staunch political views. The socialist activism of her husband hints at Reiniger's politics, but she did not publicly discuss or overtly address political issues in her films or publications. Her apparently neutral political stance would have placed her under suspicion by

contemporaneous political activists, who generally opposed conservative ideology, as well as by the Nazis, who censored and denounced art and banned Jewish artists from working for pleasure or for wages. It is possible that Reiniger thought a neutral public persona would prevent obligations to any group, thereby verifying my observation of her perpetual independence, but contemporaneous Weimar film critic Rudolf Arnheim accurately notes, "regardless of whether you stood on the left or the right, one thing was clear: there was no safe place for disinterested bystanders" (*Film Essays* 4). Reiniger was by no means a disinterested bystander; she simply preferred to keep her political views private and occasionally express them subtly within her seemingly innocent animated silhouette films. Reiniger let her films speak for themselves. Moritz notes, "Lotte Reiniger did not talk much about her ideas, or the meanings of her films…because…she was confident that what she really had to say was contained in her films" ("Some Critical" 50). Her silhouette sequence within Renoir's *La Marseillaise* (1938) is "political theater of the revolutionaries" and her short film *Das gestohlene Herz* (*The Stolen Heart*) (1934) is an "anti-Nazi parable" (Moritz, "Some Critical" 49). Moritz also interprets the triumph of the female witch over the male sorcerer in *Prince Achmed* as an expression of Reiniger's concerns, shared by many 1920s progressives, about equality for women and homosexuals ("Some Critical" 49).[6]

Despite considerable discomfort and danger, as well as cultural and linguistic displacement, her social and political opposition to the German political climate of nationalist extremism, anti-Semitism, and artistic censorship eventually superseded her public persona of political neutrality, and she became an exile. Reiniger sacrificed

[6] In chapter three I analyze gender in *Prince Achmed*.

personal wellbeing, safety, stability, her spouse's health, and, I argue, her position in film history for her political views. Extremist German nationalists increasingly persecuted dissenters causing many, including Ernst Bloch, Siegfried Kracauer, Walter Benjamin, Thomas Mann, Bertolt Brecht, Julius Pinschewer, Erich Pommer, Conrad Veidt, Berthold Bartosch, Robert Wiene, and Fritz Lang, and many more, to seek exile. Reiniger was no exception. The various fates of Reiniger's contemporaries highlight the complications faced by German exiles in and beyond interwar Germany. Contextualizing Reiniger allows for a richer understanding of her relation to and interactions with Weimar culture. Her position in Weimar culture illustrates the negative influence of her German national identity on her filmmaking career and her subsequent marginal discourse position.

Femaleness

Combined with her national identity and genre, Reiniger's gender has contributed to her marginalization in film history and discourse. Despite the efforts of feminists and New Historicists since the 1970s to recover influential minorities and women from all eras and areas, Reiniger remains marginalized. To examine the lack of scholarship devoted to the inventor of the multiplane camera and animated feature film genre, feminist theory is a useful tool. In "The Woman at the Keyhole: Feminism and Women's Cinema," Judith Mayne notes, "Women have been most visible in the cinema as performers, and somewhat less so as spectators. As filmmakers, women have been virtually invisible" (51). Spivak's theories of cultural marginalia and "the politics of interpretation" are particularly applicable to discussions of female filmmakers.[7] Female artists have

[7] The theories of Spivak are more fully applied to the marginalized discourse position of Reiniger and *Prince Achmed* in the chapters dedicated to genre and gender respectively.

historically been undervalued; female filmmakers have been even further marginalized since film has historically been considered what Spivak refers to as cultural marginalia. Antonia Lant's *Red Velvet Seat* (2006) is a vast collection of women's writings about cinema from 1895 to 1950 that places Reiniger within a long, rich tradition of marginalized female filmmakers. The general underrepresentation of female filmmakers is intensified in the case of Reiniger, an independent German woman filmmaker working in an experimental multi-media genre (silhouette animation).

In *Prince Achmed* Reiniger transformed raw materials, such as cardboard, wire, paper, and glass, which were usually used in live-action film to construct sets, props, and backgrounds, into the major component parts of the film, thereby subverting the voyeuristic cinematic gaze by redirecting it to traditionally marginal materials. Mayne discusses the ways several female filmmakers "have turned around the voyeuristic gaze in order to critique the convention from within" (55). Dorothy Arzner turns the camera on an audience of men watching a female dancer; Chantal Akerman subverts the gaze "by focusing on what has traditionally been marginal" (Mayne 56, 58). Reiniger countered the gaze by displacing onscreen actors with onscreen figures by literally focusing on "what has traditionally been marginal."[8]

The 2001 Milestone re-release of *Prince Achmed* validated the existence, or "being," of the film.[9] What continues to remain obscured--despite the shifted focus of more recent feminisms--is the place of Reiniger and *Prince Achmed* in film history and discourse. Following the projects of feminism of the 1970s and early 1980s, which

[8] Throughout my dissertation "actor(s)" and “star(s)” refer to (typically human “live-action”) film (and theatre) actors and stars; "silhouette(s)" and "figure(s)" designate Reiniger's hand-made silhouettes. I rely on Ellis's definition of star, which I provide in the national identity chapter.

[9] Margit Grieb's forthcoming book discusses the effect of new technologies on the film canon since they allow wider audiences to access previously unavailable, and therefore marginalized, films.

transformed "what is at stake...[from] 'being'...[to] a position within discourse" (Doane, Mellencamp, and Williams 12), this dissertation seeks a "position within discourse" for Reiniger and *Prince Achmed*.

Animation and Animators

Animation has historically been an underrated and overlooked area of artistic production and filmmaking. The 1910s *Kino Debatte* began explorations of the purpose, aesthetic legitimacy, and communicative ability of film. Contemporary film scholarship attributes far more credibility to film than did 1920s writings, which were often conflicted about the social, artistic, and cultural role and value of film. Postmodern discourses have generally accepted popular culture as legitimate artistic and cultural expression.[10] Although critics who see themselves as bastions of "good taste" and "high art" continue to ignore and discredit film, in scholarship innumerable others have validated film's historical significance, artistic expression, unique language, aesthetics, and cultural value. Despite major advances certain elements of film continue to struggle for legitimacy as artistic and cultural forms worthy of serious scholarly consideration. This continuing struggle suggests that some film genres, such as "the weepies" and animated films, are even further removed (than their "serious" and live-action counterparts) from mainstream scholarship. Because animated film occupies cultural margins, it can be used to critique value assumptions and the politics of interpretation involved in (film) canon formation.

Animation is arguably the field to which Reiniger contributed the most; she invented the multiplane camera and produced the oldest surviving and *de facto* first full-

[10] According to Weimar scholar Andreas Huyssen, "One of the few widely agreed upon features of postmodernism is its attempt to negotiate forms of high art with certain forms and genres of mass culture and the culture of everyday life" (59).

length animated film, thereby inventing a genre. She perceived in animation great potential, much of which has been fulfilled by contemporary computer generated imaging (CGI) and other technological developments. The history and future of film and animation are inextricably linked because one has never existed without the other.[11] Animation appeared in the earliest films. One of many such examples is J. Stuart Blackton's *The Haunted Hotel* (1907), which used stop-motion animation to create the illusion of objects moving without physical cause. Beginning with those early trick films, animation has been used within live-action film to achieve different effects. The fundamental connection between the past, present, and future of animation and film--and, in the case of *Prince Achmed,* animated film--suggests that an accurate conception of the history of animation and film is integral to a clear understanding of the present and future of those media. Reiniger and *Prince Achmed* reside at the beginnings of the animated feature film genre, so integrating an awareness of the contributions of the filmmaker and film enhances critical perceptions of animation, film, and animated film. An alteration in perceptions of the complex relationships between the past, present, and future of animation and film enrich scholarly approaches to visual culture and media.

Since the 1990s there has been a steady increase in both popular and scholarly interest in animation (and film) in American culture, lending my project timeliness. The consistent box-office successes of full-length animated films since the 1990s indicate the interconnectedness of the futures of film and animation. Animated film is and has been box office gold since the debut of *The Little Mermaid* (1989), which was followed by a stream of animated films by Disney Productions, Pixar, and DreamWorks. *Toy Story*

[11] Beyond the relation of animation to film, which I contemplate in the genre chapter, there are considerations of the various types of animation: cartoon, drawn, 3-D object animation, digital animation, CGI, and mixed media. These distinctions are further constructed then interrogated in the genre chapter.

(1995) recouped and surpassed its thirty million dollar budget in its two opening weekends in the U.S. *Toy Story* is no anomaly; it is the norm. This can be determined from revenues of numerous films, including *Shrek* (2001), *Finding Nemo* (2003), and *Up* (2009) ("Toon;" Barnes C2).[12] The National Association of Theatre Owners notes, "since November 1995 (the month Pixar's 'Toy Story' was released), eight of the 10 highest-grossing 'toon features came out of a computer" ("Toon"). The most recent trend that highlights the continuing rise of animation in the film industry is the release of three-dimensional versions alongside "regular" versions of films, such as *Alice in Wonderland* (2010). Animation is expanding within realms it already occupies: 3-D versions of films are frequently released alongside "regular" versions. For example, in 2010 *Alice in Wonderland* and *Chronicles of Narnia* are but two of numerous films that offered multiple release formats. Additionally, in 2001 the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and, in 2007, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association added the Best Animated Feature Film category. For the first time in 2009 the HFPA nominated an animated feature for Best Picture.

In addition to a steady increase in animated films since the 1990s, animated television series targeting adult viewers, such as *The Simpsons*, *King of the Hill*, and *Family Guy*, currently pervade American television programming schedules. The longest comedic series in television history is animated; in January 2011 *The Simpsons* embarked on its twenty-second year. Scholarly interest in animation has been steadily growing alongside box office sales. Scholarly publications addressing animation have moved from

[12] A representative sample of box office revenues for animated films since *Toy Story*: *Shrek* earned $267.6 million domestic gross ("Toon"); *Finding Nemo* earned $70 million on its opening weekend and $339.7 million domestic gross ("Toon"); and *Up* earned $68.2 million on its North American opening weekend (Barnes C2).

"fringe," or niche, publications, such as *Animation Journal* and *Wide Angle*, to arguably the most mainstream English-language scholarly publication, the Modern Language Association's *Profession*, which included Judith Halberstam's "Animation" in 2009. The recent resurgence in animation in and beyond the academy demonstrates the need for rigorous investigations of the development of the animated feature film. This recent growth does not satisfactorily ameliorate the historical critical neglect of animated film. Edera observes, "in the sphere of full-length animated films…Very few works are devoted to this particular subject, especially to the period between the early days of the cinema and the end of the Second World War in 1945" (25). Animation scholar Jayne Pilling notes a similar lack of scholarship on animated films (*Women* 7).

For a (Weimar female animated) filmmaker and inventor who pioneered the animated feature film genre and whose films rarely receive scholarly treatment--but when they do, it is positive--the list of sources is suspiciously sparse.[13] Why, if an artist is universally admired when mentioned, is that artist given inadequate critical attention? Even in the contemporary American animation-saturated cultural landscape, animators generally remain unknown. While the titles of many animated films to which unknown animators contribute are sometimes internationally recognized, most animators, digital technicians, inkers and tracers, and other members of vast contemporary animation production crews remain obscure. Although animation has recently been incorporated

[13] Consistently positive critical attitudes toward Reiniger's works are displayed in brief but positive reviews of Reiniger's films. These reviews span from prolific Weimar film critic Rudolf Arnheim's two-page 1930 *Weltbühne* contribution, "Lotte Reiniger's Silhouette Films," to a paragraph on Reiniger's technique in Roger Manvell and Heinrich Fraenkel's 1971 *German Cinema*. Also included in this short but representative list are two reviews from *Sight and Sound:* Michael Brooke's 2008 review of Reiniger's *Die Tocher* (Scottish dialect for *The Dowry*) (1938) and Andrew Osmond's 2009 "Paper, Scissors;" these reviews follow the pattern of brief but positive recent coverage of Reiniger's works. A survey of brief but positive reviews may seem tedious and of dubious relevance in an academic dissertation, but they not only demonstrate the critical approval of *Prince Achmed* but also illustrate a resurgence in interest in animation studies since the 1970s, with interest increasing since the 1990s.

into numerous media and occasionally critically addressed, animators themselves "have not yet been given the recognition they deserve" (Edera 11). Animation scholar Bruno Edera notes that in the earliest films "the names of the animators rarely appeared in credits;" this began the continuing marginalization of animators, or "the tradition of obscurity" (11). Within this "tradition of obscurity" lies Reiniger's legacy, which deserves recovery and reevaluation.[14]

The Disney Myth

The "Disney myth" is the widespread misconception that Walt Disney's Burbank animation studio consisted of a unified team that admired its patriarch and perfectly balanced efficient production with artistic expression.[15] The concept of the Disney myth also refers to popular misconceptions of Disney as producer of the first full-length animated film and the technically and aesthetically superior creative fountainhead from which all other animation springs. The critical neglect of Reiniger and gaps in scholarship of the epoch and medium in which she lived and worked allowed the development of the Disney myth. The Disney myth is what Elsaesser calls an "historical imaginary" (*Weimar*). It disguises gaps in (German interwar animation) history. It also serves as a pleasant alternative to the (experimental, independent, avant-garde, non-Hollywood, non-cartoon/drawn) German female origins of the animated feature film. Over time this "historical imaginary" has become accepted as fact and has further relegated Reiniger to

[14] Though Reiniger produced over fifty animated (silhouette) shorts, several silhouette sequences within live-action films, advertisements, one live-action feature, and two animated features, her first feature, *Prince Achmed*, is the film for which her most radical innovations were made and so is the most relevant here.

[15] Unless otherwise specified, I use "Disney" interchangeably to refer to the man and the company and its productions since these elements were closely interconnected during Walt Disney's lifetime and, arguably, beyond. Any specific references to Walt Disney the person utilize his full name.

the fringes of film history. A substantive discussion of Reiniger inevitably debunks the Disney myth.

Methodology and Chapter Summaries

An eclectic, flexible, interdisciplinary methodology is required to effectively examine *Prince Achmed* and Reiniger since the film draws upon the various cultural traditions of shadow theatre, avant-garde art, literature, silhouette-cutting, and fantastic fairy tale films. My approach, in the spirit of New Historicism, recovers an important and previously overlooked visual artist and text while drawing on the critical traditions of feminist, Marxist, and discourse theories. An analysis of *Prince Achmed* and the discourse surrounding it--or lack thereof--reveals Reiniger's technological innovations; attempts to legitimize film as an art form; and efforts to democratize film production. Additionally, such as analysis uncovers her pitiable status in film scholarship. The historical neglect of *Prince Achmed* indicates its resistance to categorization and defiance of disciplinary boundaries. Is it a film for children or adults? Is it avant-garde art or mass culture story telling? Does it adhere to tenets of German Expressionist film or does it more closely align with other (experimental) contemporaneous (animated) films? These are some of the questions with which this study deals.

The following chapters elaborate upon the multiple marginalization of Reiniger and *Prince Achmed*. The lack of scholarship on the filmmaker and film leave them relatively unknown, so relevant biographical information and Reiniger's contributions to the development of film are included. Recent scholarly interest in Weimar cinema, female filmmakers, and animation offers a timely and relevant opportunity to recover and

examine Reiniger and *Prince Achmed*. The second chapter examines the cultural context in which Reiniger lived and worked. Historical and cultural contextualization enriches my investigation of Reiniger and *Prince Achmed*. Examinations of contemporaneous writers and artists, as well as the early German film industry, aid a fuller understanding of Reiniger's position within the vibrant modern Weimar culture. By holding *Prince Achmed* to prominent, representative contemporaneous critical standards and briefly analyzing the film as an adaptation of its literary source material, *A Thousand and One Arabian Nights*, I highlight the cultural interactions between the film, film criticism, and literature.

In the third chapter, the complicated relationship between women and film is examined in a survey of the changing role of modern women in film and the activities of other Weimar women (artists). A fuller understanding of the position of women in Weimar culture enriches an understanding of the effects of gender on the discourse position of Reiniger and *Prince Achmed*. Acker notes, "It's no news that women's work, whether inside or outside the home, has traditionally been devalued. But it's tough to pinpoint *how*" (xix): I attempt to pinpoint the various ways in which Reiniger's contributions to film have been devalued. Feminist film theory is invoked to explore the historical marginalization of women.

Chapter four illustrates the tendency of scholars to relegate film (and animation) to a status subordinate to traditional visual media and the resultant persistent marginalization of animation within film history and discourse. Animated film is situated within film in general. In this chapter, I define and debunk the Disney myth, a concept that includes the other myths that rush into its place on the rare occasion when it is

challenged, as well as other widespread misconceptions about Disney animation and animation history. The causes of the development of the Disney myth, such as a noticeable lack of scholarship on animation, specifically full-length animated film, and the gap in German history from the interwar era in which *Prince Achmed* was produced, are examined. The concept of "historical imaginary" developed by Elsaesser elucidates the nearly century-long perpetuation of the Disney myth. Despite her invention of the multiplane camera, which in large part enables cel animation, and pioneering of the animated feature film genre, Reiniger's marginal cultural position allowed the development and persistence of the Disney myth. That myth functions as an "historical imaginary" that best served the interwar era, which was dominated by international anti-German sentiment, gender inequality, and critical dismissal of (animated) film.

Reiniger significantly contributed to Weimar culture, the position of women in film, and the development of (animated) film as an art form. She also destabilized "high" and "low" cultural statuses by appropriating the traditionally "high" art form of shadow theatre in the first full-length animated film. This merging of "high" and "low" cultural forms assisted in the legitimization of film as an art form and to the democratization of filmmaking. This project recovers a seminal yet overlooked Weimar, female, film figure while positing causes of her omission from the annals of film history and discourse. Feminist film critics such as Lant and Mayne provide accounts of a "women's cinema;"[16]

[16] The writings about film by women from 1895 to 1950 in Antonia Lant's collection, *Red Velvet Seat*, resist a unified perspective, yet they "offer a potentially more historically valid and nuanced method for understanding film reception [by women] than the practice of hypothesizing old films' meanings for an earlier female audience solely through reanalyzing the film texts themselves" (15). In "The Woman at the Keyhole: Feminism and Women's Cinema," Judith Mayne identifies two types of "women's cinema": films made by females and Hollywood films that target audiences of women (49). Mayne embraces the ambiguity of the term "women's cinema" because it provides a method for examining women's roles as film producers and consumers (50). In my study, "women's cinema" refers to the ambiguous, dual meanings (cinema for and by women) and consequent ambiguity of the term.

critics such as Elsaesser and Kaes examine Weimar cinema. Reiniger contributed to women's and Weimar cinema; additionally, she contributed to the development of animated film. However, she remains excluded from studies devoted to any of these areas. An examination of her national identity, gender, and the genre in which she worked helps demystify the causes of her cultural marginality. By situating Reiniger as a German animated filmmaker in 1920s Berlin, my study relies on the seemingly surface identifiers of national identity, gender, and genre. These seemingly surface identifiers are integral to understanding of Reiniger's contributions to Weimar culture, women's cinema, and the development of film but have also resulted in the marginalization of Reiniger in film history and discourse.

CHAPTER TWO-- THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF NATIONAL IDENTITY ON THE DISCOURSE POSITION OF LOTTE REINIGER AND *PRINCE ACHMED* (1926)

National identity, gender, and the genre in which she worked have had the combined effect of marginalizing the life and works of Lotte Reiniger. The combination of these factors results not only in the marginalization of Reiniger and the first full-length animated film, *Prince Achmed*, but also allows the formation and perpetuation of the Disney myth.[17] Since few critics have examined Reiniger's position in Weimar culture, this chapter examines the cultural and historical context in which Reiniger produced films. A contextualization of Reiniger allows a clearer understanding of her contributions to, participation in, and deviations from Weimar culture. According to Weimar historian Bruce Murray, "Within the context of a swiftly changing German society, first expressionism, then New Objectivity, and ultimately even socialist realism and the *Protokult* movement influenced the development of mainstream as well as alternative models for film production and reception" (233). Instead of treating Weimar history and culture as a cohesive linear narrative, a montage-type approach that allows glimpses into various movements might be less restrictive and more productive. The role of German national identity in the marginalization of Reiniger suggests that national identity influences transmission of knowledge and canon formation.

[17] Important terms (e.g. marginalization, Disney myth, film history and discourse) are defined in the introduction or upon first use.

Modern Mass Culture

The new public sphere of the Weimar Republic offered Germany an opportunity to transform its national identity after its defeat in the First World War. After this loss and the end of the Wilhelmine empire, Germany attempted to (re-) build a national identity by founding the Weimar Republic. The 1919 Weimar constitution introduced proportional representation, granted women the right to vote, and required presidential elections every seven years. The Weimar Republic

> was the scene of an extraordinary cultural explosion. Hoping that identification with Weimar, the city of Goethe, where the Constitution was drafted, would revive an alternative form of German civilization after its recent militarism, successive governments of the Republic provided some of the conditions that made possible the pursuit of Expressionism in art and literature. (Petersen 925)

After the recent defeat in World War I, the new republic offered promises of equality, freedom, and opportunity to the German population.

The public sphere was quickly changing. The postwar Berlin population more than doubled to over four million (Lungstrum 130; Kaes, “Charting” 11). Exiles and émigrés from Eastern Europe and elsewhere flooded Berlin; women increasingly participated in public life (Lant and Periz 1; von Ankum 4; Huyssen 59; Wizansky 42; Ward 81-90); and class differences were largely leveled as inflation transformed previously white-collar middle-class people into the economic equivalents of the working class (Kracauer, “Film” 307; Elsaesser, *Weimar* 69, 156; Kaes, "Charting" 23; Murray 58). German industry was rationalized to increase productivity. Henry Ford's autobiography was translated into German and published in 1923, widening public

awareness of Fordist production principles. In 1924, a Ford factory in Cologne began producing cars. According to Weimar scholar Janet Ward:

> Taylorism's and Fordism's demiurgic principles of infinite expansion and efficiency…were adhered to in Weimar Germany with a unique fanaticism born of a collective need to repair wounded nationhood in the wake of the humiliations of the Treaty of Versailles and the ensuing loss of colonial and military strength. (9)

The newly rationalized urban masses sought distraction from the monotony of daily metropolitan life in new mass forms of media. Various types of entertainment appeared to satisfy the needs of the growing working class population. Jazz bars and clubs; "primitive" American revues featuring the famous Josephine Baker (Nenno); and mass spectacles, such as the Tiller Girls (Lungstrum 137; Kracauer, "Mass;" Nenno 149); proliferated. Cinema emerged as the "first mass entertainment form" in the changing Weimar public sphere (Thompson, *Exporting* 122). Movie theatres proliferated to accommodate the new masses of Weimar modernity:

> In 1920, there were 218 movie theaters in Berlin; by 1927, the number had risen to more than 350; and by 1928, there 387, including 33 *Großkinos* (i.e., more than 1000 seats), 31 with 750-1000 seats, and 57 with 500-750 seats.... Of 55,000 movie theaters worldwide, 3,600 were located in Weimar Germany" (Ward 172).

Berlin became the cultural capital of Germany and Europe, as well as the capital of the German film industry (Hake, *Cinema's* 215; Kaes, Jay, and Dimendberg 474-475; Petro 41). Cinema became the preferred pastime for middle- and working-class audiences alike.

The Marginalization of German Film

The American film industry, represented by Hollywood, was eager to profit from the new domestic and international mass cinema-going audiences. Hollywood film studios had attempted to expand into international film markets before WWI but were unable until conditions caused by WWI allowed their successful expansion (Sklar 215-20; Thompson, *Exporting* 128, 147). Only the German film industry obstructed post-WWI Hollywood hegemony.[18] Ufa remained Hollywood's prime competition for control of international film markets. High inflation permitted German filmmakers to invest in filmmaking, inexpensively produce films, and earn large export profits (Murray 55). Ufa dominated the early domestic German film industry and had a major presence in numerous international film markets; however, competition from Hollywood eventually weakened its position.

To neutralize the threat posed by Ufa, Hollywood targeted the German film industry, resulting in the marginalization of German film. The international success of *Madame Dubarry* (*Passion)* (1919) and *Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari* (*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*) (1920) signaled a "German invasion," which prompted Hollywood to recruit top German film talent in order to simultaneously damage Ufa and to reach previously elusive international audiences. In early 1918 nearly half of the films shown in Scandinavia were German films. Later that year, films from Allied countries--mostly films from Hollywood-- composed ninety percent of the Scandinavian market; German films accounted for only three percent (Thompson, *Exporting* 97). Similarly, in 1923

[18] "(Early) German film industry" refers to mainstream German film production and all related activities, usually represented by Universum Film Aktiengesellschaft (Ufa). "Hollywood hegemony" refers to the post-WWI dominance of Hollywood narrative style, marketing techniques, distribution practices, and production methods. Economically, Hollywood ownership of substantially more of any given film market than competitors signals Hollywood hegemony (Thompson, *Exporting* xi).

German films occupied ninety percent of the Austrian film market. By 1924 in Austrian markets American films outnumbered German films eight to one (Thompson, *Exporting* 104). Mainstream Hollywood film became the norm for all cinematic productions (Hake, *Cinema's*; Furniss 15; Thompson, *Exporting* 170). By the 1920s, Hollywood hegemony in the film industry was firmly established.

Despite occasional international success, by the 1920s the mainstream early German film industry was marginalized by Hollywood. Hollywood films used deadlines to create suspense while Weimar films were motivated by the gaze (Elsaesser, *Weimar* 90). Convoluted plots and lack of film stars also damaged the popularity of German films (Elsaesser, *Weimar* 129). The increased production costs, which accompanied the advent of film sound, and the substantial capital required to convert theatres to accommodate sound projection further contributed to international Hollywood hegemony.

Ufa was other-ed by Hollywood; therefore, independent German films produced outside of Ufa were more intensely other-ed, or multiply marginalized. Lotte Reiniger produced films independently of Ufa. Her outsider status situated her filmmaking career on the fringes of the already marginalized German film industry and resulted in her multiple marginalization in film history and discourse.[19] *Prince Achmed* deviated from the dominant Hollywood emphasis on stars; the lack of stars in the film negated its potential for a star-based following at a time when audiences were increasingly interested

[19] Although in *Weimar Cinema* Elsaesser states that Reiniger was employed by Ufa in the 1920s and 30s, she remained an independent filmmaker throughout her career. Her films were produced by: Institut für Kulturforschung (1919-1924); Comenius-film (1924-1930); Melophon, GMBH (1930); herself (1933); Uranus Films, Berlin (for the German Ministry of Transport) (1934); Reinigerfilm (1935) (on behalf of the German organization for music in the home); Carl Koch (1935-1936) (distributor *Papageno* and *The Little Chimney Sweep*: Rota Film A.G.); and G.P.O. (1939) (*Film Society Programmes*). She also produced several short silhouette films for Julius Pinschewer's advertising firm.

in the fashion, hairstyles, makeup, and lifestyles of film stars.[20] Weimar actors with devoted audience followings included Werner Krauss, Conrad Veidt, Emil Jannings, and transplant Pola Negri. Early American stars included Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, and Douglas Fairbanks, whose audience followings were unprecedented at the time. By the 1920s, Hollywood relied heavily on the star system to market films (Ellis 599; Elsaesser, *Weimar* 129; Thompson, *Exporting* 100). The lack of stars in *Prince Achmed* not only precluded a star-based following but also discouraged German distributors from screening it. After all, distributors observed marketing trends and knew "a major popular film star transcends national boundaries in a way that the film setting and subject matter often do not" (Elsaesser, *Weimar* 129). Although the stories on which *Prince Achmed* is based have international appeal, the film's lack of stars damaged its critical reception and limited its popular appeal.

Reiniger's silhouette figures, no matter how expressive and emotive, were doomed to obscurity since they could never be part of the dominant Hollywood star system. Despite the omission of actors from her all but one of her over fifty films, Reiniger was not averted to them. Her film career began in the theatre of Max Reinhardt, where acting was fundamental and where she worked closely with actors. One of these colleagues, Paul Wegener, supported her early filmmaking career. However, in her own films she resisted employing actors because "on the whole it is easier for the puppet to please than the actor" (Reiniger, "Film as Ballet" 162) and because "shadow-figures can…be very true to life…so that one completely loses the feeling that the silhouettes are not actual actors and actresses" (Reiniger, "Film Magic" 7). Reiniger exerted

[20] According to film theorist John Ellis, a star is "a performer in a particular medium whose figure enters into subsidiary forms of circulation, and then feeds back into future performances" ("Stars" 598).

substantially more control over her silhouette figures than did her contemporaries who hired actors for their films. Even Fritz Lang, a famously tyrannical and meticulous director, certainly exerted less control over his cast of actors than Reiniger did over her silhouette figures.[21] Nonetheless, the figures in *Prince Achmed* effectively convey the intended gestures, actions, and emotions. According to film critic Cecile Starr, "Few real-life actresses could match the expreessiveness [sic] with which Reiniger inspirited the gestures of her lead-jointed figures" (“Lotte”135). Although the expressive, emotive abilities of Reiniger's figures equaled or surpassed those of their human counterparts, the lack of stars in *Prince Achmed* negatively influenced the critical and popular reception of the film and its subsequent discourse position.

Aside from the damaging effects of Hollywood hegemony and the emerging star system on the German film industry, especially on independent productions, domestic critical neglect also contributed to the marginalization of German film and consequent critical dismissal of *Prince Achmed*. The German intelligentsia often promoted Russian and American, as opposed to German, films. The tendency of Weimar film critics to focus on Russian and American films indicated a collective rejection of bourgeois notions of value and tradition represented by Ufa. Weimar Germany became a cultural battleground. In the 1920s, “competition between the United States and the Soviet Union for influence in Europe began in Germany…. The film industry especially struggled as the influence of Hollywood and Soviet companies increased” (Murray 56). Hungarian-born filmmaker and influential Weimar film theorist Béla Balázs, among others, declined an offer to work for Ufa (Ralmon 14). Intellectual dismissal of mainstream German films was intended to target the conservative policies and practices of Ufa, but the dismissal

[21] For more on control and animation, see the genre chapter.

was more detrimental to independent films than to well-financed mainstream UFA productions.[22]

In the early 1920s Weimar artists and intellectuals were fascinated by American culture. Americanism reflected the ambiguous Weimar cultural reaction to modernity: "Part of the widespread fascination with things American, the almost-childish love for the American cinema was at once an expression of protest and resignation. Embracing the products of mass culture with a vengeance, the intellectuals hoped to salvage the utopian potential of mass culture" (Hake, *Cinema's* 128). The Weimar preference for Hollywood films "was the most important factor in the European process of Americanization in the period of relative stabilisation between 1924 and 1929" (Kaes, "Charting" 21). Weimar film critics Kurt Tucholsky and Bela Balázs generally discounted German, in favor of American, film criticism; this discounting was "typical of an entire generation of critics whose views on cinema were formed in the early twenties by the films of Griffith and Chaplin, and in the late twenties by the films of Eisenstein and Pudovkin" (Hake, *Cinema's* 128, 224). American film was just one aspect of American multimedia mass entertainment, which also included sporting events, jazz music and clubs, burlesques and revues, and variety theatre. Burlesque revues full of elaborately costumed dancers, the most famous of which is likely Josephine Baker, and female impersonators attracted the new Weimar masses.

Domestic critical neglect complicated the struggle of Weimar film for cultural legitimacy. German artists and intellectuals optimistically watched the effects of the Russian Revolution and organized councils for artists and workers, notably the 1918

[22] "Weimar film(s)" refers to German films made during the Weimar Republic (1919-1933); "Weimar cinema" refers to those films, as well as to extra-filmic events, such as distribution, reception, production, promotion, and consumption.

November Group. In their film criticism, Bela Balázs, Walter Benjamin, and Rudolf Arnheim frequently cite the films of Eisenstein to illustrate points. Between 1929 and 1933 the taste-making film journal *Close Up* introduced Western readers to the film theories of Eisenstein, as well as other Russian cultural figures, by printing nine English translations of Eisenstein's film theories. For Weimar intellectuals, American and Soviet films further challenged the eroding boundary between high and low culture.

The early German film industry, to compete domestically and internationally, needed to appeal to both middle-class bourgeois values and to the tastes of the working-class public. To appeal to the middle-class, Weimar cinema borrowed from literary, artistic, and theatrical conventions. Actors, directors, designers, and other core figures of German theatre transferred to the film industry; this encouraged previously theatre-going audiences to attend the cinema. To appeal to the working-class, Weimar films incorporated elements of magic lanterns, trick films, Theatre Optîque, superimposition, stop-motion photography, and shadow play. Shadow play had traditionally been associated with elite culture, but numerous Weimar films began incorporating its techniques (*Warning Shadows* 1922; *Nosferatu* 1922; *Secrets of a Soul* 1924), allowing previously excluded working class audiences to access it.

Reiniger combined the popular forms of animation and silhouettes with historically bourgeois shadow play in order to compromise between middle-class and working-class tastes. Working class viewers were already familiar with silhouettes; film offered new access to the previously middle-class form of shadow play. According to Reiniger, "the essential difference between a shadow and a silhouette is that the latter cannot be distorted. A silhouette can cast a shadow…. The silhouette exists in its own

right" (*Shadow* 13). Audiences often conflated silhouettes and shadow play, thereby destabilizing the cultural positions of both forms. Reiniger used the destabilized cultural position of silhouettes in *Prince Achmed* to expose a wider audience to shadow play. Distributors hesitated to screen *Prince Achmed* in their working-class supported theatres since "silhouette work was art and therefore not suitable for the masses" (Reiniger, *Shadow* 28). The onscreen appearance of shadow play resembles that of silhouettes, which were inexpensive, mass-produced alternatives to traditional portraiture, as well as decoration on various trinkets, such as jewelry boxes.

Expressionism

Distributors dismissed Reiniger's attempts to appeal to middle- and working-class audiences in favor of Expressionist films, such as Paul Wegener's *Der Student von Prag* (*The Student of Prague*) (1913) and Robert Wiene's *Das Kabinett der Dr. Caligari* (*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*) (1919). Expressionist film was described by Lotte Eisner in *The Haunted Screen* (1952) as a body of film influenced by Romantic literature of authors such as E.G.A. Hoffmann and Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff and Expressionist painting, as seen in the artwork of Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky. [23] Expressionist films share stylistic traits, such as chiaroscuro; outward visualization of inner states; abstraction; portrayals of the bizarre, horrific, and mysterious; unusual camerawork and angles; sinister characterization; preoccupation with setting and atmosphere (*Stimmung*); doppelgangers; stairs and hallways; mirrors and mirror-like surfaces; jerky, exaggerated

[23] Although Elsaesser has engagingly challenged Eisner's art-historical approach to tracing influence in early German film, this study relies on her concept of "Expressionist film" to contextualize Reiniger's films within Weimar culture, which was visually dominated by Expressionism in the early years of the Republic. In "The Problem of Form" (1912) Kandinsky addressed the various goals of Expressionism (270-275).

gestures; distortion; curves and slopes; starkly contrasting moods, lighting, and events; and exotic locations, or Orientalism. Expressionist film was a pivotal part of the struggle of Weimar film to simultaneously please taste-making intellectuals and working-class audiences. The early German film industry drew upon elements of German Expressionism to appeal to middle- and working-class audiences, thereby creating a successful balance in Expressionist film. Expressionism was the dominant visual mode well into the Weimar years, and this visual style influenced German films.

In *Prince Achmed* Reiniger uses traits of Expressionist film to meet audience expectations while experimenting with style, technique, and form. Much like Expressionism, which "constructs its own universe, [and] does not adapt itself to a world already in existence" (Eisner 153), Reiniger's *Prince Achmed* literally and figuratively constructed its own universe. The handmade construction of fantastic worlds, characters, and actions, along with the pioneering of full-length animated film, perfection of silhouette animation, and invention of the multiplane camera made *Prince Achmed* a literal and figurative construction of a universe. The most obvious Expressionist film trait in *Prince Achmed* is the use of light, on which silhouette animation technically relies. Aside from the reliance on light shared by the projection and production of all films, *Prince Achmed* literally requires light to exist. Without intense backlighting, the film would not be a silhouette film. The figures would be animated by the stop-motion technique, which was already used within various films. And although a stop-motion animated version of *Prince Achmed* might have been enjoyable, it would not have signaled the perfection of the silhouette film or exhibited the consistent, smooth appearance characteristic of filmed silhouettes. Strong backlighting effaces of the joints,

textures, and components of the silhouette figures and transforms them into expressive outlines.

Prince Achmed, much as other Expressionist films, repeatedly uses stairs and corridors. After Achmed lands on the roof of Pari Banu's palace, he descends stairs into a corridor that leads to a harem. Later when Pari Banu rejects the advances of the Chinese emperor, he ejects her from his palace onto the front steps. On his way to prevent Pari Banu from being forced to marry, Achmed climbs stairs and passes through corridors. The demons of Wak Wak arrive and fight Achmed in the corridor. When Achmed rescues Pari Banu for the final time, he carries her up the stairs of Aladdin's palace. In the nested narrative Aladdin also encounters stairs. When Dinarsade and her father come to visit the palace Aladdin built overnight, he descends the stairs to greet them. Aladdin later runs downstairs to escape the wrath of the Caliph. Upon return of the palace, Aladdin runs down a spiral staircase to find Dinarsade. Stairs figure prominently in the film, along with other elements of Expressionist film.

Settings and landscapes are Expressionist film traits that convey information to the audience and appear throughout *Prince Achmed*. Aladdin's subterraneous venture into the cave to retrieve the lamp is signaled by the predominance of a black outline, or frame, whereas in aboveground scenes black designates figures, props, and settings. In other words, the thick black frame contrasts the "open space" of previous "surface" scenes and signals that Aladdin is underground. The stylization of sets and preoccupation with landscape are yet more traits of Expressionist film in *Prince Achmed*. Settings and landscapes consistently signal and differentiate between the geographic location of the action: the Chinese landscape is stylistically different from the Arabic landscape and

from the Wak Wak landscape. The settings in *Prince Achmed* reflect other traits of Expressionist film: exoticism and Orientalism. Oriental screens, pagodas, dragons in the decor, and junkets all convey to the audience that the action takes place in China. Additionally, the tendency of Expressionist film to feature slopes, angles, and curves is also displayed in *Prince Achmed*. Figures in *Prince Achmed* often move diagonally, such as when Achmed flies away from the harem on the magic horse. Groups of figures are often arranged in symmetrical geometric patterns, as seen in the Caliph's birthday procession in the first act and in the emperor's wedding procession for Pari Banu in the third act. These geometric arrangements are typical of Expressionist film.

Another Expressionist film trait shared by *Prince Achmed* is the presence of mirrors and mirror-like surfaces. Early in the film, before presenting the magic horse to the Caliph, the African sorcerer checks his appearance in a hand-held mirror. On the Island of Wak Wak, Pari Banu and her maiden bathe in a reflective lake, which mirrors the surrounding scene. Furthermore, many Expressionist films feature fantastic plots and action. *Prince Achmed* is, from its literary source material to its animated form, entirely fantastic. Some of the fantastic elements of *Prince Achmed* include flying demons, a magical flying horse, a magic lamp that houses a genie, and magical transformations of the witch and sorcerer. One particularly fantastic sequence in the film is the epic battle between the witch and the sorcerer for control of the magic lamp; the two magical entities launch fireballs at each other as they transform into various creatures. Expressionist films also frequently feature Faustian pacts. *Prince Achmed* is no exception: in it, Aladdin agrees to help the sorcerer in exchange for a marriage to Dinarsade.

Expressionist traits in *Prince Achmed* indicate Reiniger's attempt to appeal to middle-class audiences with shadow play and literature and working-class audiences with animation and fantasy. While *Prince Achmed* fits comfortably--at least as comfortably as other so-called Expressionist films--in the category of Expressionist film, the film transcends limitations the label imposes.

Other Visual Styles

Prince Achmed reflects the encounter between various competing Weimar cultural movements by displaying traits valued not only by Expressionism, but also by Bauhaus, Constructivism, Surrealism, and New Objectivity. These literary and artistic movements influenced each other as members moved between groups. Weimar artists and intellectuals often belonged to several movements simultaneously; they published manifestos, formed institutes, organized exhibits, and attended meetings to express ideas about art and culture. Weimar culture "witnessed an explosion of forms, subject matter, and ideologies. Perhaps most remarkable about Weimar art was its syncretism, a propensity for blurring styles and genres which was as ubiquitous as the hyperbole of its manifestos" (Kaes, Jay, and Dimendberg 474). While there are notable differences between *Prince Achmed* and the tenets and artwork of various Weimar cultural movements, a focus on the similarities demonstrates the film's broad appeal and fulfillment of multiple cultural goals of Weimar movements and groups.[24]

[24] This should not suggest that Reiniger had no individual artistic style, technique, or goals. On the contrary, her films are easily recognizable. However, her ability, as displayed in *Prince Achmed*, to synthesize typically diverse and mutually excluded elements of Weimar culture reflects her relation to other Weimar films and Weimar culture in general.

In 1919 German architect Walter Gropius founded the Bauhaus, a Berlin institution that embraced the commercial potential of film and art, on the premise that art and handicraft are fundamentally similar. In “Manifesto of the Bauhaus, April 1919," Gropius emphasized the importance of architecture, the unification of various media, and a foundation of craftsmanship (301-2). Bauhaus artists included painters Kandinsky and Moholy-Nagy, weavers Anni Albers and Annelise Fleischmann, and performance artist Oscar Schlemmer. The craftsmanship Gropius valued was a fundamental trait of *Prince Achmed*, in which handmade construction and manual manipulation of figures and sets rely on craftsmanship. Since the figures were cut of paper and lead sheets and moved by hand for each shot, her films were literally handmade. Architecture is emphasized in *Prince Achmed*, especially in interior scenes, indicating Reiniger’s appreciation for buildings and structures, an appreciation shared by Gropius and the Bauhaus. *Prince Achmed* displays handicraft, architecture, and multimedia, which were all valued by the Bauhaus. Reiniger’s emphasis on the technical aspect of filmmaking connects her films not only to the Bauhaus but also to Constructivism.

Hungarian artist and photographer László Moholy-Nagy belonged to, among others, the Bauhaus and Constructivist groups in Vienna and Berlin between 1919 and 1923. Moholy-Nagy wrote “Constructivism and the Proletariat” (1922), in which he declared technology was an equalizing force in and the dominant trait of modern society (299-300). He promoted art as an effective alternative to ineffective words. Reiniger effectively used technology in *Prince Achmed* by producing a full-length animated film, designing and applying the multiplane camera, utilizing filmic montage, and

synchronizing music with images. *Prince Achmed* contains relatively little dialogue and few titles, paralleling Moholy-Nagy's Constructivist refutation of the word for the image.

Although the film is technologically advanced, *Prince Achmed* retains its magical sensory appeal, which is reminiscent of dream states promoted by another contemporaneous movement: Surrealism. According to French writer André Breton in *First Manifesto of Surrealism* (1924), Surrealism values childlike innocence, imagination, and the unconscious as understood by psychoanalysis. Breton identifies the ideal state of being as a compromise between dreams and reality and defines Surrealism as

> *n.* Psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express--verbally, by means of the written word, or in any other manner--the actual functioning of thought. Dictated by thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern. (309)

Prince Achmed expresses the imagination and dream states Breton outlines with magical lamps that contain genii, flying horses, sorcerers, witches, and the animation technique. As displayed in the proliferation of manifestos, many Weimar cultural movements chronologically paralleled and followed Expressionism.

However, Expressionism dominated the early Weimar cultural landscape until it was replaced in the later Weimar years by New Objectivity. Of the competing movements, New Objectivity was the only one to assume as prominent a cultural space as Expressionism had occupied. In the mid-1920s, widespread optimism turned into pessimism when promises of equality, economic security, and benefits of modernity were broken. Contemporaneous art and film reflected this turn. The New Objectivity was less of a cohesive artistic style and more of a common rejection of the abstraction and

emotional subjectivity valued by Expressionism. A 1925 Manheim art exhibition organized by German art historian Gustav Hartlaub titled "*Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity): German Painting since Expressionism" featured over one hundred and thirty works by over thirty artists and was a major public success. Artists from various backgrounds and artistic media practiced the New Objectivity; some artists commonly associated with the New Objectivity are Max Beckmann, Otto Dix, George Grosz, Carlo Mense, Rudolf Schlichter, Alexander Kanoldt, and Georg Schrimpf. In 1925 German art historian Franz Roh outlined the traits of the New Objectivity:

> plain objects; few religious themes; the explanatory object; representative; engrossing; rather strict, purist; static; quiet; sustained; obvious and enigmatic; close- and long-range image; also flowing backward; large size and many-columned; miniature; cool to cold; thin layer of color; smoothed, dislodged; like polished metal; work process effaced; pure objectification; harmonic cleansing of objects; rectangular to the frame; parallel; fixed within edges of image; civilized. (493)

Works of the New Objectivity were detached or cynical chronicles of bourgeois excess often set in domestic spaces, streets, and other sites of daily Weimar life.

The realist style of the New Objectivist films was part of an emerging cultural pessimism and a critique of modernity, technology, industry, and rationalization. By the mid-1920s, Weimar filmmakers followed their painter counterparts and predominantly rejected Expressionism in favor of the New Objectivity, "which ventured out into the streets to capture social reality.... Most films of the late 1920s and early 1930s, however, dealt with pressing issues of urban life and espoused an unambiguous social-critical

message while retaining stylistic elements of expressionism" (Kaes, Jay, and Dimendberg 618). Ufa experienced a financial crisis in 1926 and 1927; to survive the Great Depression Klitzsch transformed the company based on the rationalized Hollywood model after a visit to the United States (Elsaesser, "Hollywood" 15). Weimar films thematically addressed modern industrialization as well as the rationalization of film production and distribution at Ufa.

Although it is not a realist film, *Prince Achmed* showcases Reiniger's technical prowess; her innovations reflect the New Objectivity's emphasis on technology and modernization. New Objectivity valued surface, movement, formal innovations, and technological prowess. *Prince Achmed* literally relied on surface and created (the illusion of) movement; it was technologically progressive and formally innovative. Its formal innovations included the use of non-slapstick, non-drawn animation in a feature film; design and application of the multiplane camera; use of montage and rhythm; synchronization of images with the musical score through simultaneous composition; construction of program cards or orchestral pictograms; use of Oskar Fischinger's wax machine (Moritz, *Optical* 8-9; Grant 180); and perfection of silhouette animation.[25] *Prince Achmed* embodies the encounter between Expressionism, New Objectivity, and other competing artistic movements.

Affiliation and Discourse Position

Works of art that are radically independent of any genre, category, movement, or group become marginalized and excluded from the cultural canon. Movement and group affiliation allowed Weimar artists, writers, and intellectuals to be easily identified; they

[25] In the genre chapter I discuss the assumptions surrounding drawn cartoons and animated film.

offered identifiable public images based on common values, beliefs, media, technique, and purpose. The various movements also encouraged self and group promotion. Even if the public had not seen a particular artwork, its affiliation with a particular movement would have suggested its purpose, appearance, and medium. For instance, Expressionist painters would have been widely perceived as emotional abstractionists, Dadaists as raucous rebels, and artists of the Bauhaus as commercial craftspeople. Several of Reiniger's contemporary filmmakers have been recovered and introduced into film discussions. Most of these recovered figures were affiliated with various movements.[26] Other group-affiliated filmmakers include Dadaist and avant-gardist Hans Richter and New Objectivist and documentarian Walter Ruttmann. In the 1930s, Ruttmann and Leni Riefenstahl produced Nazi films, which have secured their respective discourse positions. The study of propaganda as manifested in Nazi films has legitimized the study of film for scholars working in multiple disciplines.

The differences in name recognition, or discourse position, between Hans Cürlis, director of the Institute for Cultural Research, and Hans Richter, an active Dadaist; between Institute filmmaker Carl Koch and Walter Ruttmann; and between Lotte

[26] Moritz has written extensively about Weimar experimental filmmaker Oskar Fischinger, culminating in his 2004 Fischinger biography *Optical Poetry*. Fischinger is the only exception to the movement/group affiliation argument that I can identify. He was a non-narrative experimental animated filmmaker and, therefore, affiliated with the avant-garde. While his brief, tumultuous, and disappointing employment at the Burbank Disney studios in the late 1930s might not qualify as contemporaneous movement/group affiliation, it does qualify as general movement/group affiliation, allowing Fischinger to become canonized through his association with the Disney empire. Even if one were to successfully argue that Fischinger was not technically affiliated with the Disney company, his recovery has been slow and in itself marginal. William Moritz, the chief scholar responsible for the recovery of Fischinger, was also one of the few English-language Reiniger critics.

Reiniger and Leni Riefenstahl indicate the differences between the discourse positions of movement/group affiliated and non-movement/group affiliated, or independent, artists.[27]

While Reiniger was not officially affiliated with any movement, *Prince Achmed* displayed characteristics valued by groups as diverse as Expressionism, Bauhaus, Constructivism, Surrealism, and New Objectivity.[28] Despite *Prince Achmed*'s identifiably Expressionist traits, the film's animated form has precluded it from being considered a strictly German Expressionist film; its fantastic content and literary source material has excluded it from inclusion in the canon of New Objectivity. Kaes, Jay, and Dimendberg see Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* as I see Reiniger's *Prince Achmed*, as a film that "occupies a curious stylistic and ideological middle position between expressionism (the revolt against machines and instrumental rationality) and New Objectivity (the fascination with machines and Americanism)" (618). *Metropolis*'s cultural position, like *Prince Achmed*'s, is "admittedly ambiguous but complex" (Kaes, Jay, and Dimendberg 618). *Prince Achmed* was an embodiment of numerous Weimar cultural movements and values. By borrowing from numerous Weimar movements, *Prince Achmed* defies categorization in the same strategic "refusal of commitment" that Gledhill identifies in 1920s British avant-garde cinema (25). Instead of ensuring the film's legacy, *Prince Achmed*'s multi-movement qualities, or non-movement/group affiliation (i.e. independence), and resistance to easy categorization, contemporaneous critics overlooked the film,

[27] I am not suggesting that without movement or group affiliation with the *Der Blaue Reiter* and the Bauhaus that Kandinsky and Klee would not be considered among the great artists or that without his Dadaist association Viking Eggeling would not have produced pioneering experimental films. I am suggesting that their affiliations with various movements, to which (self-)promotional mechanisms were integral, helped secure the artists' respective places in (art and film) scholarship and history.

[28] Early in her career she produced films at the *Institut für Kulturforschung* (Institute for Cultural Research) but soon branched out into independent production.

establishing a precedent of neglect that continues to effect the contemporary discourse position of the film.

Independent production and distribution have traditionally excluded Reiniger and her films from canonization. Reiniger worked independently of the mainstream early film industry, which was dominated by Ufa in Germany and by Hollywood in the United States.[29] For *Prince Achmed* Reiniger employed a small, independent filmmaking crew; relied upon handmade production; and lacked large-scale distribution and promotion. Reiniger's independence from Ufa would have made her virtually invisible to 1920s Hollywood talent recruiters who were only familiar with and pursuing the biggest names in the mainstream German film industry. Reiniger's work in animated film placed her in an unattractive category for Hollywood talent scouts; they were disinterested in animated film. After all, they already had Winsor McCay, Otto Messmer, the Fleischer brothers, and Disney. The medium in which Reiniger worked lay outside of the dominant Hollywood hegemony and precluded a Hollywood contract offer for Reiniger. Reiniger was well aware of the rarity of her independent production status. She notes, "Independent work of this kind is the exception rather than the rule" (Reiniger, "Film Magic" 7). Independent production and distribution and deviations from Hollywood hegemonic (animation) norms continue to contribute to the critical neglect, with inconsistent and perfunctory exceptions, of *Prince Achmed*.

[29] Hollywood dominated the international film industry by the 1920s, as explained in chapter two. Animation scholar Maureen Furniss notes, "It is impossible to understand independent animation as a cultural product without acknowledging its relationship to hegemonic forms, such as...Hollywood films" (29-30).

Experimentalism

Despite stylistic, political, and formal differences, most Weimar cultural movements espoused the artistic value of experimentalism. Experimentalism characterized modern visual culture and literature. Writers experimented with form to shock readers and thereby sharpen their perception; traditional narrative forms were abandoned. The Berlin-based intellectual journal *Das Querschnitt Buch* (*The Crosscut Book*), which was published from 1921 throughout the Weimar era, "compiled fragmentary views into Western art and culture in the form of essays and reproduced images...that could be...culled through quickly and non-linearly" (Wizansky 13). In “Dada Manifesto, 1918,” French writer Tristan Tzara emphasizes the importance of experimental creative writing: “Every page should explode, either because of its profound gravity, or its vortex, vertigo, newness, eternity, or because of its staggering absurdity, the enthusiasm of its principles, or its typography” (277). The manifesto contained sentence fragments and misused words in its refutation of traditional literary forms. Many modernist writers, such as Stéphane Mallarmé and Hugo Ball, were interested in typographical experiments. To capture the attention of readers, *The Eccentric Manifesto* (1922) featured experimental typesetting that emphasized nonstandard combinations of boldface, capitalization, font mixtures, lines and underlines, dashes, numbered lists, sentence fragments, spacing, and unusual layout (Kozinstev 295-7). The manifesto jumped from topic to topic, disregarding unity, comprehensibility, grammar, punctuation, and organization.

Visual artists also conducted experiments in their work. Russian-born painter Wassily Kandinsky and Swedish painter Viking Eggeling experimented with nonrepresentational art and visual abstraction. Dadaists from various German cities

produced montages, collages, and painted over preexisting images. German Dadaist Hannah Höch's photocollages incorporated, "unexpected juxtapositions…meant to shock viewers out of complacency and force them to question conventional assumptions about the media and its constructions of 'reality'" (Makela 108). German artist Max Ernst invented overpainting, which resembles collage but is watercolor over printed pages (Doherty, "Painting" 216, note 5). Fritz Lang noted in Weimar artists, writers, and filmmakers the shared and unprecedented attempt to seek in their respective media "new forms of expression" (622). Lang recognized in the relentless development of film technology an "uninterrupted drive for new modes of expression...[and] intellectual experimentation" (622). The experimental spirit of Weimar culture manifested itself in the absolute and abstract films of Ruttmann, Eggeling, and Richter. Richter and Eggeling sought meaning in a system of abstraction that resulted in several experimental animated films, including Eggeling's *Symphonie Diagonale* (1924) and Richter's *Rhythmus 21*, *Rhythmus 23*, and *Rhythmus 25* (1921-25). The Berlin screening of Ruttmann's hand-tinted abstract animated film *Opus I* (1921) was attended by members of the Institut für Kulturforschung, including Reiniger and Carl Koch. According to Reiniger, "we [members of the Institut für Kulturforschung] were all very enthusiastic about them [Ruttmann's films]. ...[H]e [Ruttmann] was so pleased to have people who appreciated his work" (qtd. in Pilling 10). Reiniger's support of Ruttmann's films; Diebold's proposed multimedia art form; Eggeling's and Richter's abstract system of meaning; Kandinsky's and Eggeling's non-representational paintings; and the movement of artists between various media display the Weimar emphasis on experimentation.

By relying on recognizable story material, Reiniger retained viewer identification and recognition while experimenting with form and technique. Although *Prince Achmed* is a narrative film, Reiniger and her crew experimented with wax and sand on backlit glass in several semi-abstract sequences. Reiniger's technical innovations extended to her pioneering use of montage and implementation of the multiplane camera. The immense popularity of the *Arabian Nights* tales in Weimar culture demonstrates public familiarity with the stories. Indeed, "German interest in the exotic tales of the *Arabian Nights* had been strong ever since the eighteenth century…but the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries witnessed especially lively publishing activity around the *Nights*" (Haase 261). Audiences had not previously seen an animated feature length film, so the content of the film needed to be familiar to audiences to allow Reiniger to conduct formal and technical experimentation while entertaining general audiences. Audiences were also familiar with feature films, animated shorts, silhouettes, and shadow play; it was the combination of these elements in *Prince Achmed* that made it a groundbreaking film that started the animated film genre. However, the experimentalism of *Prince Achmed* is undermined by the seemingly traditional subject matter: the fairy tale.

Contemporaneous critics emphasized the ability of film to experiment, portray fantastic content, and visually portray otherwise literary stories. However, critics predominantly overlooked Reiniger's successful experimentation, use of fantasy, and literary adaptation. When applied to *Prince Achmed*, early Kracauer's prominent and esteemed critical standards reveal the film's realization of artistic potential and contemporaneous expectations. Nevertheless, early Kracauer completely elides Reiniger's noteworthy film. Early Kracauer accuses Weimar film of predictability and claims that

Weimar filmmakers failed to conduct the experimentalism "that pushes film into new territory" ("Film" 307, 318). Reiniger decidedly claimed “new territory" for film. Instead of examining Reiniger's contributions to the development of the medium, early Kracauer identifies Walter Ruttmann's *Berlin: Symphony of a City* (1927) as the only Weimar film that attempts to innovate; he then declares its lack of plot, refusal of reality, and apolitical treatment ("Film" 318). For early Kracauer, *Berlin* conveys the increased tempo of rationalized modernity in the metropolis yet fails to create meaning ("Film" 318). He notes, "The capacity to stir up the elements of nature is one of the possibilities of film. This possibility is realized whenever film combines parts and segments to create strange constructs" ("Photography" 62-3). For early Kracauer, Ruttmann's *Berlin* fails to "stir up the elements of nature" and forgoes the artistic and expressive possibilities of film.

Prince Achmed met early Kracauer's critical challenge to "stir up the elements" in its employment of "parts and segments" united in "strange constructs." Consequently, it fulfilled the creative potential of film. The handmade construction of the silhouette figures, which consisted of "parts and segments" cut from lead and paper and joined by wire, were indeed "strange constructs" in the increasingly mechanized world of Weimar modernity. Reiniger's adaptation of "parts and segments" from the *Arabian Nights* further demonstrates the film's fulfillment of contemporaneous critical standards, represented by those of early Kracauer. Yet *Prince Achmed* remained overlooked not only by early Kracauer but also by other Weimar film critics, including Rudolph Arnheim, Walter Benjamin, and Bela Balázs.[30]

[30] Sabine Hake notes that early Kracauer lacked the ability to effectively praise film (*Cinema’s* 250), which could explain his neglect of Reiniger’s *Prince Achmed*. After all, if he were unable to effectively praise any film, then he would not have written about films that fulfilled his critical criteria.

Reiniger's adaptation of the ever-popular *Nights* tales fulfilled stringent contemporaneous critical standards. However, the fantastic, popular, and seemingly trivial literary source material on which *Prince Achmed* is based damaged the critical credibility of the film since intellectuals have historically shunned popular culture. Balázs views adaptations as potential vehicles for filmmakers to display the visual, fantastic elements of any given literary source or folktale. For Balázs, "the film script became a literary form when the film ceased to aim at literary effects, planted itself firmly on its own feet and thought in terms of visual effects" (*Theory* 247). Balázs perceives expectation as the means of producing tension in film (and the unexpected as unable to produce tension). By using familiar literary source material to meet viewer expectations, *Prince Achmed* presents the material in an unexpected format: the full-length animated silhouette film.

There was critical consensus in Weimar about the visual potential unique to film. Both Arnheim and early Kracauer consider film a medium specifically suited to the expression of visual qualities. Early Kracauer emphasizes the importance of visually based adaptations of literary sources. Arnheim claims film should depict improbable scenarios, events, and characters. Early Kracauer's sweeping critique of German film attacks producers for basing films on stories lacking visual potential, which prevents "filmic constructions" ("Film" 313). On the rare occasions when producers select appropriately visual source material, they fail "to disassemble the literary originals into their cinematically usable elements in order to then build something new" and instead transcribe unaltered source material directly from page to screen, with occasional and minimal alterations to conform to audience expectations (Kracauer, "Film" 313). This

direct transcription results in "illustration of a text foreign to it, whereas the film itself ought to be the text that is read" (Kracauer, "Film" 313). Early Kracauer emphasizes the careful selection of potentially visual scenes and the independence of the film from the source text.

The critical emphasis on proper selection of source material recalls Reiniger's selection of scenes from the *Nights* for the scenario of *Prince Achmed*. She chose the most fantastic scenes, which in many cases had previously failed to be successfully adapted. The scenario of *Prince Achmed* "was inspired by *A Thousand and One Nights*. I read the whole book until I found a story that would lend itself to animation… [sic] everything I liked about Prince Achmed went into the film: the horse, the magician…[sic]" (Reiniger qtd. in Pilling 10). The deliberate selection of the most appropriate scenes for filmic adaptation fulfills early Kracauer's requirements for independent, visually conceived filmic texts. For early Kracauer, the majority of Weimar films are "anticinematic: the narrative is not produced through the film but is tacked on, giving the impression that it could be detached from the screen" ("Film" 313). This critique seems appropriate when leveled at the magic horse scene in Fritz Lang's *Die Müde Tod* (Destiny) (1922). The horse seems "tacked on" as if it could be "detached from the screen," which according to early Kracauer is a result of its "anticinematic" narrative.

The magic horse sequence in *Destiny* appears artificial because it is not integral to the narrative. For the horse sequence to "attain its proper function, it must be an essential component of a completely visually conceived narrative" (Kracauer, "Film" 313). Although it is possible that the entire scenario of *Destiny* can exist independently of literary source material, the magic horse sequence remains largely unchanged from the

Nights; this causes the “individual visual unit”--that is, the horse--to fail “to attain its proper function” and to seem “tacked on." Conversely, as required by early Kracauer to achieve its fantastic purpose and seamlessly blend into the filmic narrative, Reiniger's conception of the magic horse is purely visual. The magic horse in *Prince Achmed* is essential to the entirely “visually conceived narrative” and as such performs its “proper function.” The magic horse in *Prince Achmed* motivates Achmed’s adventures. Even the creation of the magic horse within the narrative is visual. In the first act of the film, the sorcerer conjures the magic horse from a primordial mass, presumably by performing magical rites and spells. The horse passes through three visual--that is, visible--stages during this creation sequence. The amorphous mass vaguely resembles Vincent van Gogh’s *The Starry Night*; then it morphs into a seemingly child-drawn, primitive horse shape; and finally appears the stylized magic horse. The sorcerer’s creation of the magic horse correlates to early Kracauer’s “visually conceived” narrative, indicating the overall visual conception of *Prince Achmed*. The magic horse that in *Destiny* seemed “tacked on” in *Prince Achmed* successfully conveys the fantastic quality, which corresponds to its role within the film. The innovative depiction of details such as the magic horse is characteristic of Reiniger’s adaptation of the *Nights* in *Prince Achmed*. *Prince Achmed* met the contemporaneous critical standards of Balázs, early Kracauer, and Arnheim.

Fragmentation

Fragmentation is ingrained in the narrative structure of the *Arabian Nights*. The most literal aspect of fragmentation in the *Nights* is the literally fragmented ninth-century manuscript. By adapting the *Nights* Reiniger relies on its inherent fragmentation to

comment upon the fragmentation of modern life. Other fragmentation of the *Nights* resides in its multinational origins, use of narrative framing devices, and collage of thematically unrelated stories. The fragmentation of *Prince Achmed* displayed in (multi-) frame tales, including the Scheherazade/Reiniger master frame, lends the individual sequences a fragmented quality similar to filmic montage. With montage Reiniger parallels the nightly breaks between Scheherazade's stories to the fragmentation of modern life into work (day) time and leisure (night) time. Montage was used in numerous ways in Weimar culture; it was used in photocollage, feature films, journalism, overpainting, poetry, manifestos, literature, photography, and daily life, as fragmented into work time and leisure time. Josephine Baker's dance revue act was only "nominally linked by a narrative or thematic core… [and] worked more on the principle of montage, thus affirming the fragmented, stepped-up pace of urban life" (Nenno 149). Although it had previously appeared in the films of Griffith, montage

> was a distinguishing feature of Weimar cinema. The idea of crosscutting was articulated more obliquely in other printed and visual forums in the Weimar period.... The Weimar crosscut was an approach to artistic and intellectual work that acknowledged that modern life was apprehensible only in fragmentary form. (Wizansky 5-6)

White claims Reiniger used montage long before Eisenstein began discussing it as a formal element of film (*Walking* 26). Montage determines the narrative pace and rhythm of *Prince Achmed*. The tempo peaks at several points in the film, most notably in Achmed's initial ascent on the magic horse, the search for Pari Banu to prevent an unwanted marriage, and the epic battle between the witch and the African sorcerer.

Accelerated cutting increases tension and creates suspense. These peaks signify the tense and suspenseful aspects of fragmented modern life.

The narrative device of the frame tale is another prominent element of fragmentation in the *Nights*. The frame tale unifies hundreds of distinct stories. Despite variances between versions and translations of the *Nights*, all versions share one trait: they feature Scheherazade telling stories to her husband, King Shahriyar, for a thousand and one nights to avoid being killed the next morning. Every five pages the narrative is interrupted by the dawn of the next day when Dinarsade exclaims how fascinating her sister's stories are and Scheherazade boasts of an even more interesting story to be told the following night. This device recurs consistently in the original manuscripts although many compilers and translators omit it and situate the stories one after another (Irwin, *Arabian Nights Companion* 4). Without the master frame, the stories are fragmented and lack transitions or interconnections. A few of the tales are tangentially related, such as the barber's tales of his six unlucky brothers as told to the hunchback who then tells the tailor; however, there are no causal relationships between most of the tales. The recurring interruptions of the master frame tale form a connection between stories and realign readers with the narrative perspective of Scheherazade.

Reiniger positions herself as master "string puller" by replacing the familiar Scheherazade; this self-figuration allows Reiniger to comment upon her position within the film industry. Contemporaneous audiences would have known Scheherazade narrated the *Nights* and noticed her absence from a film adaptation that drew solely upon the *Nights* as source material. Scheherazade's presence would have been invoked by her absence. Awareness of her (presence-) absence would have correlated Scheherazade with

Reiniger, the filmmaker; audiences would have perceived Reiniger as the puppet master running the show, telling the story, playing with shadows, and manipulating the figures. By omitting Scheherazade, Reiniger replaces her. Reiniger inserts herself into the narrative by excluding Scheherazade; she implies her own presence. Self-figuration was a prominent tendency among Weimar filmmakers who portrayed themselves, often overtly, as showmen and wizards within their films to comment upon the ambiguous position of Weimar filmmakers as both artists and entertainers eager to use a new technology yet wary of the film industry (UFA) (*Weimar* 96-7). Early animation also frequently featured self-figuration (Thompson, "Implications" 109). Reiniger becomes the master narrator, which was previously Scheherazade, telling stories to a restless, murderous, powerful master. This analogy positions the audience as Shahriyar: demanding, violent, dangerous, angry, misogynist, hypnotized, and entrapped by the tale each night. The audience of Reiniger/Scheherazade is helpless in the spell of the storyteller, not expecting to be changed, only expecting to be entertained, excited, stimulated. Each night the audience (Shahriyar and the public) expects the teller (Scheherazade and Reiniger) to be gone--by murdering Scheherazade and by leaving the theatre after Reiniger's film. Conversely, neither teller, Scheherazade nor Reiniger, assumes she will survive another night. Only through meticulous, clever storytelling can either storyteller, Scheherazade or Reiniger, survive.

Reiniger's selection of stories from the *Arabian Nights* as source material for her first feature length film is also a commentary on the outsider, other status of Weimar film and filmmakers, as well as (independent experimental) animators.[31] *Prince Achmed* is

[31] For more on animation and Otherness, see the genre chapter. For more on gender and Otherness, see the gender chapter.

based on a mixture of characters, events, and settings from “Sinbad the Seaman and Sinbad the Landsman,” “Aladdin or the Wonderful Lamp,” “The Ebony Horse,” and “Prince Ahmed and the Fairy Pari Banu." Marzolph notes the function of the *Nights* to Western constructions of the East, the Orient, the other, and, therefore, of itself (xxiii). For Weimar audiences, the *Nights* symbolized the exotic Eastern other, but

> the Orient they [the *Nights*] present is remarkably innocent--on the surface at least. The Orient, which in other contexts may well be seen as threatening, alien, and other, has to be presented…by filmmakers as familiar and ultimately safe. (Irwin, *Arabian Nights Companion* 25)

The safety of the other presented by the *Nights* is integral to the function of *Prince Achmed.* By using a familiar tale that tamed the other, Reiniger offered audiences a safe, non-threatening version of the East/Orient/other embedded within the *Nights* and the threatening German (non-Hollywood), female (non-male), and animated (non-live action) other.

The ending of *Prince Achmed* completes the frame and stabilizes traditional narrative norms, suggesting the possibility of the simultaneous existence of traditional artistic forms and rationalized modern technology. While the radical technological innovations in *Prince Achmed* might seem to require a corresponding radical disruption of the traditional folktale content, the ending seems normative. Wizanksy considers the end of *Prince Achmed* problematic and unsatisfactory and posits, “this incongruous, rather conservative ending may have been chosen so as to signal the film’s end, by underscoring the difference between film and physical reality” (144). However, it is difficult to imagine Weimar, or any, audiences being confused about the boundaries

between the exotic settings, dangerous journeys, and epic battles of the animated silhouette fairy tale film and modern rationalized life when even the earliest film audiences could differentiate between onscreen and actual events (Gunning). This normative ending did not serve to prepare a naïve audience to re-enter reality but suggested to an increasingly pessimistic audience the possibility of traditional narrative forms to be transformed, not erased, by emergent technological forms.[32]

The ending posits the persistence of traditional narrative, represented by the *Nights* tales; handicraft, represented by the silhouette figures; symmetry, represented by the movement of the figures; and magic, represented by the flying horse, Aladdin's lamp, the witch, and the sorcerer even amidst technological advances, represented by the animated film; commercialism, represented by the trading of Dinarsade for the magic horse; and experimentalism, represented by the background effects, as well as the animated feature film. The seemingly normative ending suggests technological experiments of rationalized modernity nevertheless retain traces of magic, unity, coherence, and stability.

Conclusion

Because Reiniger worked independently of Ufa, refused to align with a specific cultural movement, and based *Prince Achmed* on the popular *Arabian Nights*, her films--specifically *Prince Achmed*--have been critically marginalized. The early German film industry, represented by Ufa, was Hollywood's only serious competition after WWI, so it

[32] Wizansky claims that *Prince Achmed* is a visual metaphor for the persistence of pre-rationalized qualities, which many feared would be extinguished by modernity, to be enveloped by rationalized technologies and artistic forms (81-2). Wizansky's conception of the function of *Prince Achmed* within Weimar culture can be effectively applied to the ending of the film.

became a target for Hollywood's ambitions, as displayed by Hollywood recruitment of major German film figures and the conquest of previously German-dominated domestic and international film markets. The combination of Hollywood hegemony and the preoccupation of Weimar intellectuals with American and Russian films relegated early German film to the margins of film history and discourse. This marginalization most negatively impacted independent film.

The independent non-movement/group affiliation of *Prince Achmed* continues to contribute to its critical neglect. The animation of Richter, Ruttmann, and Fischinger is treated in experimental, avant-garde animation texts (Russett and Starr; Moritz); the films of Wegener, Pabst, Lang, and Murnau are treated in German Expressionist film and Weimar cinema texts (Eisner; Kracauer; Elsaesser); the cartoons of Walt Disney are treated in animation studies texts (Kozlenko; Charlot; Telotte); and the films of Sagan and Riefenstahl are treated in feminist film texts (Rich; Erens; Johnston). All of the aforementioned films and filmmakers are treated in general film studies texts. While all of these groups have multiple points of entry, they can all also be reduced to a single genre without much critical consternation. *Prince Achmed* is made entirely of points of entry.

Critics have also historically ignored *Prince Achmed* due to the popularity of its literary source material. Popular culture only relatively recently became generally acceptable as an area of scholarly consideration. Reiniger anticipated this cultural shift. She challenged critical and popular assumptions about the *Nights*, as well as about animation and shadow play, in order to reach a broader audience.[33] Unfortunately, her work has been marginalized because of her innovations. *Prince Achmed* refuses to be a

[33] This is further discussed in the genre chapter.

cartoon by replacing drawings with silhouette figures; refuses to be "pure cinema" by invoking a literary source and telling a story; refuses to be New Objectivist by depicting fantastic elements in a floridly decorative style; refuses to be Expressionist by using innovative technology and pioneering the feature-length animated film genre; and refuses to be feminist by portraying apparently traditional representations of female characters. [34] The refusal of the film to be reduced to one genre, and its refusal of a satisfactory label (or its insistence on its own generic label, silhouette film); to adhere to the aesthetic tenets of one artistic school; to represent one national cinema has resulted in the refusal of film critics to substantively address it.[35]

By transcending disciplinary boundaries, *Prince Achmed* defies easy categorization. And films that defy categorization often defy critical and theoretical paradigms. Reiniger's contributions to the development of film become apparent upon examination of interdisciplinary scholarship. In order to obtain a more cohesive, accurate history of film, interdisciplinary approaches are necessary since disciplinary divisions and knowledge boundaries within post-WWII/contemporary scholarship result in fractured, incomplete (knowledge of (film)) histories at the expense of innovators from all fields. Critical paradigms have insufficiently approached *Prince Achmed*, and the film must be added to the pages of film history and discourse and considered from all angles instead of disappearing due to lack of any approach.

[34] As discussed in the genre chapter, Canemaker, Horn (71), and others do not consider Reiniger's films cartoons although she refers to them as such in *Shadow Theatres and Shadow Films* (1970). Gender representations in *Prince Achmed* are further discussed in the chapter on gender.

[35] While Reiniger was German, during WWII she frequently moved due to complications caused by her national identity. This nation-less existence continued throughout her life. For more on the international appeal and origins of the *Nights*, see Irwin, as well as Marzolph.

CHAPTER THREE--GENDER, LOTTE REINIGER, AND *THE ADVENTURES OF PRINCE ACHMED*

Modernity brought rapid and pivotal changes to Weimar Germany. Much like the rest of modern life, the role of Weimar women was radically changing, and many women optimistically endorsed the new Weimar Republic's promises of gender equality.[36] After receiving the right to vote in 1919, women became concerned with issues such as the prohibition of abortion, failure of political parties to follow through on various promises, equal pay for equal work, workplace treatment and conditions, and unrealistically glamorous images of women in the media (Kaes, Jay, and Dimendberg 195-6). Although the Weimar constitution initially granted women the right to vote and promised equality, they remained objectified, restricted, and subordinate. Before long "German society began…to renege on the promises made to women in the Weimar constitution" (Makela 121). Nothing much had truly changed since the Wilhelmine Empire for the working-class women of Weimar.

Increased public presence of the working-class mass public, which included women, disrupted cultural assumptions about the public sphere, cinema and other forms of mass entertainment, and gender roles. Modern male intellectuals grew anxious about the social, political, and cultural upheavals that they perceived as feminine in origin. In order to protect the realms of high art and civilized culture from infiltration by the new feminized masses, modernists attempted to fortify the boundaries between high art and

[36] Of course, this equality was restricted by contemporaneous gender essentialism.

popular culture. Huyssen observes that men feared mass culture introduced by modernity and develops the concept of the "feminization of the masses," or "the notion…that mass culture is somehow associated with woman while real, authentic culture remains the prerogative of men" (47). For Huyssen, the association of women with popular culture resulted from the "the very real exclusion of women from high culture and its institutions," which has been the historical norm (62). However, the industrial revolution and subsequent cultural modernization intensified bourgeois male anxieties and their imaginings of menacing masses consisted of women demanding entry to the realms of male-dominated "high" culture to destroy civilized (male) culture (Huyssen 47). The feminization of the masses feared by Weimar intellectuals reflects, after Spivak, traditional (Western) cultural tendencies toward a split between the masculine center and the feminist margin (107). To manage this anxiety, in poetry, painting, photocollage, film, fiction, and criticism male intellectuals depicted the metropolis as a simultaneously threatening and alluring female.

Female movement in the public sphere has always been regulated by legislation and social norms. However, the cinema offered women the opportunity to enter the public sphere during designated leisure periods and gaze unfettered at other audience members and the onscreen action. Cinema presented the first acceptable outlet for female spectatorship (Gleber 83). However, Weimar critics initially belittled and discouraged female (film) spectatorship.[37] For Weimar intellectuals, "the female viewer is…that spectator who is not only willingly duped by the image but also most easily deceived by its lies" (Petro 44). Modern male intellectuals were disconcerted by the increasing public

[37] Anke Gleber correlates the female cinemagoer with the female flaneur in "Female Flanerie and the *Symphony of the City*," especially pp. 83-5.

presence of women; they responded with attempts to eliminate or restrict the female gaze (Petro 58). Early Kracauer in "The Little Shopgirls Go to the Movies" depicts female cinemagoers as passive, impressionable recipients who mindlessly ape onscreen action (292). Early Kracauer associates the negative qualities of cinema with the new audiences of women. Male anxieties about modernity, gender roles, and mass culture were not limited to the audience; they also pervaded modernist film, art, and literature. In modern culture, "the fear of the masses…is always also a fear of woman" (Huyssen 52). This fear of women and the masses motivated the modernist (male) tendency to portray the masses as feminine in art, literature, and film. Famous representations of Berlin in the paintings of artists such as George Grosz and Otto Dix and imagery of the metropolis in the "city poems" of Bertolt Brecht, Erich Kästner, and Walter Mehring illustrate the tendency of modern writers and artists to imagine "Berlin as demonic, as alienating, and as female" (Petro 43). This tendency to conflate Berlin and women reflects the contradictory roles of disruptive presence and stabilizing conservatism historically ascribed to women by the patriarchy (Petro 42; Doane, Mellencamp, and Williams 12). Modernists frequently portrayed women as both conservative stabilizers and radical challengers. This imagery of women was incongruous with quotidian female existence in the modern metropolis. Women held little sway and were therefore incapable of conserving or radically challenging tradition.

The tendency of even the era's most progressive men to relegate women to a subordinate social status demonstrates the historical exclusion of women from the realms of sophisticated, important art and culture. Despite proclamations of gender equality by the avant-garde, it was "as patriarchal, misogynist, and masculinist as the major trends of

modernism" (Huyssen 60). German photocollagist Hannah Höch was initially attracted by the Dadaist support of women's suffrage and equal rights. However, she often experienced sexism within Dada circles, members of which "ultimately accorded Höch's professional achievements little if any genuine respect" (Makela 119). In his 1965 history of Dada, Hans Richter derisively called Höch "a good girl" with a "tiny voice" whose primary contribution to Dada was refreshments she served at meetings (150). In 1920 Höch excitedly prepared her artwork for display at the first International Dada Fair, but her colleagues George Grozs and John Heartfield opposed her involvement. Various German intelligentsia contributed to a 1929 collection of expectations for modern women; they hoped that instead of imitating masculine-associated behaviors such as "promiscuity and careerism, women [would]…use their maternal instinct in the interest of the future of humankind" (Ankum 5). The sexist attitude among the Berlin avant-garde was amplified in less progressive Weimar men, demonstrating the overall resistance faced by women in Weimar despite claims of equality.

The New Woman and Real Women

Despite imagery of the New Woman, proclamations of progressive social views concerning women's rights, and promises of equality in the Weimar constitution, contemporaneous women occupied a subordinate social status. The realities women faced in daily life differed significantly from imagery of the independent New Woman that pervaded Weimar visual culture. Films depicted women as independent, glamorous, socially and literally mobile members of the leisure class while women actually worked in unskilled positions for low pay all day and returned to domestic chores and

responsibilities in the evening. Pay gaps remained commonplace. Women "averaged approximately 30 pfennig to each mark made by their male colleagues" (Ankum 4). Germany's revolution was incomplete. Though the former Wilhelmine Empire had been replaced by the Weimar Republic, many of the previous social structures remained intact, notably gender roles and class differences. Since Weimar society was unable to fully abandon gender roles of previous eras, "the New Woman of Weimar Germany was, finally, really not all that different from her counterpart in the Empire" (Makela 119). Weimar women remained excluded from the traditionally male-dominated domains of "genuine" art and culture.

Women debuted in the public sphere after the First World War only to retreat afterward without making much tangible progress toward equality. During the deployment of their male counterparts during World War I, women emerged from the domestic sphere to run errands, earn wages, and conduct business. Contrary to widespread belief that a large number of German women precipitously became employed between 1916 and 1929, "in 1925, only 0.7% more (35.6%) women were working than in 1907" (Ankum 3). The few women who held jobs outside of the home worked in "the least modern sectors of the economy" (Petro 61). Employment did not liberate Weimar women from previous domestic drudgery. On the contrary, because of "the multiple demands placed on female labor during the 1920s…women often experienced modernity as merely intensifying traditionally defined gender roles and responsibilities" (Petro 61). In order to employ returning soldiers, German industry instituted a postwar "demobilization policy," which fired or transferred workingwomen to unskilled positions that paid less (Makela 119). Women understandably resented the legislated dismissal of

their wartime contributions, as well as society's failure to fulfill constitutional assurances of equality. Public disappointments were exacerbated by private ones when many returning husbands refused to accept the wartime independence earned by women: "discounted in their private lives, German women were similarly devalued in the public sphere" (Makela 119). Weimar society enforced gender essentialism by valuing "women's 'natural' roles as mothers over the female individual's autonomy" (Ankum 4). Although Weimar visual culture suggests that women were increasingly independent and liberated, post-war Weimar woman remained subordinate in every way.

Exceptions

There were a few female filmmakers who functioned as exceptions to the general exclusion of women from the realms of esteemed art and film. However, according to Spivak, these female exceptions allowed the masculine center to remain cohesive and in control. For Spivak, the center has always relied on the inclusion of a select few members of the margin to guard its centrality (107).[38] Furthermore, a few exceptions do not pardon the overwhelming situation of women in any given discipline or artistic practice. According to Spivak,

> The problem [of female exclusion] cannot be solved by noticing celebrated female practitioners of the discipline.... The collective situation of the ideologically constituted-constituting sexed subject in the production of and as the situational object of historical discourse is a structural problem that obviously goes beyond the recognition of worthy exceptions. (130)

[38] For more on Reiniger contemporaries who have been recovered see the national identity chapter, in which I argue that these recoveries are due to the artists' affiliations with (self-promoting) groups and movements.

In other words, familiarity with Leni Riefenstahl, Leontine Sagan, Germaine Dulac, and Dorothy Arzner does not remedy the widespread historical marginalization of female filmmakers. Furthermore, various alleged counter-examples of lauded early female filmmakers are rarely directly analogous to Reiniger. These women display different traits, so "to say that the category 'woman filmmaker' somehow transcends the important differences between these directors is patently absurd" (Mayne 59). Generic considerations also affect the legacies, or discourse positions, of filmmakers.[39] For instance, critics have more readily accepted live-action film than animated film. Therefore, filmmakers working in live-action film are more likely than those in animated film to be appreciated. National identity further distinguishes between various female filmmakers.[40] These are two of many distinctions that differentiate Reiniger from her (female) filmmaking contemporaries.

Several female exceptions to the male-dominated film industry worked within the dominant film production system, which in Germany was Ufa. Thea von Harbou worked on live-action film for Ufa. She also married and collaborated with the famous male filmmaker Fritz Lang. Her later work in Nazi cinema further secured her legacy. Leontine Sagan directed live-action film within the mainstream German film industry. Leni Riefenstahl began her film career roughly fifteen years after Reiniger began hers. Riefenstahl worked on live-action film at Ufa. Her beginnings as an actor, career as a documentarian, and involvement with Nazi film production accommodate various mainstream approaches to her career. Her documentaries allow historians to evaluate her work; her work for Ufa has become of interest to Weimar film critics. Germaine Dulac

[39] In the genre chapter I more thoroughly discuss the opposition between live-action and animated film.
[40] For more on national identity, critical reception, and discourse position see the national identity chapter.

produced live-action films in France.[41] Dorothy Arzner produced live-action narrative films in Hollywood. Some Reiniger contemporaries that have been recovered worked in other artistic media. Hannah Höch's photocollages were produced during her association with Dada. Anni Albers was a weaver and essayist at the Bauhaus. Reiniger remains distinctive not only because of her immense impact on film production and form but also because of her singular surface identifiers. She is not easily associated with any canonical group of filmmakers or organization or genre; this singular status relegates Reiniger to the margins of film history and discourse.[42]

Like other female artists, Reiniger was able to enter the male-dominated art world with the help of various male gatekeepers. She convinced her parents to allow her to attend Reinhardt's acting school where she met Wegener, who hired, promoted, and introduced her to the men at the Institute, including Cürlis, Bartosch, and Koch. Although the input of her husband was, according to Reiniger, indispensible to her filmmaking career, her career remained independent of his.[43] At the Institute she also met Hagen, whose financial support allowed her to fund the careers of Ruttmann and Bartosch, among others. According to Moritz, "Reiniger's support of these film artists helped them to develop and continue their own work" ("Some Critical" 48). More financial and moral support came from silhouette sequences Reiniger produced for advertising mogul Julius

[41] Experimental French filmmaker Germaine Dulac was arguably the contemporary with whom Reiniger had the most in common although national identity plays a prominent role in film discourse and history. While Dulac has earned praise for her contributions to avant-garde film and feminist film, Reiniger's refusal to overtly address social and political issues and her apparent embrace of traditional narrative form of the fairy tale has predominantly situated her under the feminist radar. While experimental or avant-garde film remains removed from mainstream filmmaking, its removal is privileged since avant-gardism is often associated with "high" culture, revolution, political significance, and social commentary.

[42] Only a filmmaker who shares Reiniger's precise surface identifiers could function as a sufficient and representative example for a comparison of discourse positions. However, in the course of this study, no such filmmaker has revealed herself. Perhaps non-English language or previously untranslated studies have located and examined such analogous filmmakers.

[43] Despite his association and collaboration with prominent filmmakers such as Renoir, the filmic contributions of Carl Koch never reached cultural prominence.

Pinschewer, as well as for live-action filmmakers such as Pabst, Lang, and Renoir. Prior to working on *Prince Achmed*, Lang hired Reiniger to create Kriemhild's Dream of Hawks sequence for *Die Nibelungen*, an internationally acclaimed film. Although she later relinquished the assignment and recommended Ruttmann as her replacement, her meeting with Lang offered her yet another portal to the dominant mainstream early German film industry. That she continually passed up opportunities to become involved with Ufa indicates her political opposition to the conservative policies of the company as well as her desire to remain an independent filmmaker. She proudly proclaims her industry outsider status in various articles (Reiniger, "Prince" 2). Although contemporaneous filmmakers affiliated with groups and movements to enhance their public profiles and artistic credibility, Reiniger only temporarily associated with groups to insure her independent filmmaking career.

Other men with whom Reiniger collaborated were Rochus Gliese, with whom Reiniger co-directed *Jagd Nach dem Glück* (*Running After Luck*) (1930), and British poet and musician Eric Walter White, whose book-length study of her silhouette films remains one of the only (English-language or translated) critical examinations devoted to her work.[44] Bertolt Brecht promoted the initial screening of *Prince Achmed*, which was attended by illustrious figures such as Karl With, Fritz Lang, Thea von Harbou, and G.W. Pabst. The enthusiasm of French filmmaker Jean Renoir for *Prince Achmed* contributed to the positive reception of the film in Paris (Weaver 505). With the assistance of a few supportive male peers, Reiniger was able to establish and pursue a career in film.

[44] According to Moritz, "critics praised Reiniger's script, direction and animation" ("Some Critical" 42) in *Running After Luck*.

Prior to 1920 women occupied many prominent positions in Hollywood. In fact, "The first director in history of a narrative film was a woman. The highest paid director in the silent days was a woman" (Acker xvii). Furthermore, "During Hollywood's formative years, many women were employed as writers, editors and directors. From 1913 to 1927, twenty-six women worked behind the camera, directing films" (Erens 125). Despite the contributions of women to the development of film and the fact that "women are as integral and transformative to the cinemas as...men...their stories have consistently remained untold" (Acker xvii). By the 1930s Dorothy Arzner was the only female director working in Hollywood; women had been relegated to other roles and for the most part had altogether receded from the Hollywood film industry (Lant and Periz 3-4). The 1940s was a particularly male-dominated filmmaking period. No women were working, beyond acting roles, in Hollywood, and France and Russia were the only national cinemas in which women produced major projects (Erens 127).[45] This industry-wide exclusion of females was countered by the emergence of independent American female filmmakers such as Maya Deren and Marie Menken, who inspired generations of female filmmakers in and beyond the mainstream film industry. While they would never again occupy as many major positions in any mainstream film industry as they had in the medium's earliest years, women re-emerged in film by the 1960s. Since the (Hollywood) film industry is "a homogeneous, male industry that has no interest in any challenge to its power structure" (Acker xxv), female filmmakers have continually remained marginalized. Despite obstacles for women throughout the history of film, they consistently contributed to the development of the medium.

[45] Even in the female-free 1940s, Reiniger never ceased independent film production although the transience of her exile presented logistic problems.

Women and Animation

Women have been involved in animation since it emerged. When there was no place for women in film, animation offered a refuge. Animation scholar Cecile Starr observes, "There were not women doing animation [in the 1920s]. She [Reiniger] was a very talented, very daring, very determined young woman who started her film career when she was 18 years old and finished it when she was 78 or 79" (qtd. in Liebenson F7).[46] Female filmmakers who began working in animation in the 1930s include Mary Ellen Bute and Claire Parker. Pilling notes the growth of women in animation since the 1970s, especially in contrast to live-action films (5). However, women in animation have remained historically overlooked (Beckerman 40; Kotlarz 101; Pilling 5; Furniss 4). Pilling observes, “If you go through any standard history book on animation--or in fact through most of what has been published on the subject--women are, to coin a cliché, notable largely by their absence” (5).[47] Acker notes, "their [women's] very omission from major historic film texts is a testament to how women's work has been marginalized" (xix). When women began to populate mainstream animation studios, they often occupied low-level positions (Beckerman 40). The relegation of women in animation to

[46] Not only did Reiniger defy gender contemporaneous gender roles concerning who did and did not produce films, but she also defied the expectations surrounding how, for, and by whom animation was made, as well as its purpose. For more see the genre chapter.

[47] Pilling further claims that Lotte Reiniger is an exception to the omission of women from animation studies, citing Reiniger as “the best known” (5). However, this is an optimistic outlook at best and a gross overstatement at worst. Although there is occasional acknowledgement and awareness of pre-/non-Disney animated films, widespread belief, within and beyond the academy, in the Disney myth persists. Reiniger is not the "best known" experimental German animator, much less (female) animator in general. Even the women and feminists who have taken risks on animation have failed to recover the films of Reiniger. An example of the earliest of these risk-taking women is Iris Barry, the first film director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, whose revolutionary column *Film Comments* in 1933 acknowledged animation as an art form worthy of collecting in a major museum. Barry further entrenched the Disney myth by praising Disney’s innovations, adding him to the museum board of trustees in 1944, and featuring his sketches, storyboards, and films at the exclusion of other animation (Mikaluk). Judith Halberstam’s praise of Disney in 2009’s *Profession* illustrates the more recent tendency of female critics to take risks on the medium of animation without challenging the Disney myth. I am admittedly simultaneously impressed and disappointed by Barry and Halberstam.

the subordinate position of inkers and tracers was a trend set by the Disney studio. To prepare for production of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* in the 1930s, Disney solicited male artists with promises of creative positions and a large support staff of women (Kotlarz 101; Furniss 234). Although the Disney company public relations documentary, *Inside the Disney Studio* (1941), depicts numerous female employees, they are all "in administrative or lower grades such as colour mixing or paint and trace" (Kotlarz 101). The same year Disney fervently denied rumors that circulated among his animators that lower-paid women would replace male animators (Furniss 234). Women interested in working within the realms of animation were predominantly relegated to menial jobs while their male counterparts were awarded more lucrative positions.

Even when the medium of film challenged lofty notions of artistic value, women remained on the outside looking in. On the occasions when they have successfully broken into the film industry their films were often relegated to the nursery and critically dismissed. As a result of their exclusion from the public realm women have traditionally been associated with domesticity, children, and the family (the private realm). Consequently, since a woman made *Prince Achmed* it became associated with children and family and so was critically dismissed, contributing to its marginalization. In *Prince Achmed* Reiniger addresses continuing gender discrimination faced by Weimar women.

Reiniger embraced her female exclusion from the realms of "high" art and culture by transforming silhouette cutting from a woman's pastime to a film genre.[48] Indeed,

> the genre of silhouette films…constitutes for Reiniger a kind of feminist validation of a women's folk art form. …after the middle of the nineteenth century

[48] Reiniger's esteem for mass cultural productions and practices, such as animation and silhouette cutting, prefigured postmodern tendencies to legitimize previously marginal forms.

> it [silhouette cutting] came to be practiced more and more by women who were not allowed access to other art training but who learned scissor-craft as part of their household duties. (Moritz, "Some Critical" 44)

Reiniger developed a filmmaking technique that would allow previously excluded potential filmmakers to produce films and challenge dominant production methods. According to feminist film theorist Claire Johnston, "our [women's] objectification…can only be challenged by developing the means to interrogate the male, bourgeois cinema…. Any revolutionary strategy must challenge the depiction of reality" (140). Certainly the technique Reiniger developed could "interrogate the male, bourgeois cinema" and "challenged the depiction of reality." Huyssen observes, "the problem is not the desire to differentiate between forms of high art and depraved forms of mass culture and its co-options. The problem is rather the persistent gendering as feminine of that which is devalued. This "persistent gendering as feminine" of devalued cultural forms damaged the discourse position of *Prince Achmed*. Its reliance on traditional female handicraft and female-lead production caused intellectuals to immediately associate it with mass feminized culture and consequently dismiss it from critical consideration.[49]

Through the female characters in *Prince Achmed* Reiniger comments upon the subordinate status of modern women. Although there were exceptions--Reiniger posits herself as one through her self-figuration as Scheherazade--the overwhelming majority of Weimar women continued to face gender discrimination. The discrepancies between claims of women's equality and unrealistic images of the New Woman and actual

[49] Furthermore, the traditional association of femininity with popular and therefore insignificant forms caused intellectuals to dismiss the *Nights*, on which *Prince Achmed* was based, as well as the animated film genre, to which the film belonged. The negative effects of literary basis and medium are discussed in the national identity and genre chapters respectively.

conditions for Weimar women are mirrored in the film. Since "it is possible to use icons, (ie conventional figurations) in the face of and against the mythology usually associated with them" (Johnston 134), Reiniger borrowed icons from traditional tales to subvert the mythology of the New Woman. She comments upon the actual controlled, misrepresented, and male-serving condition of modern women in her depictions of Dinarsade and Pari Banu.

Pari Banu appears to freely exert agency although she is actually controlled by the male demons of Wak Wak, the sorceror, the Emperor, the Emperor's favorite, and Achmed. She begins as a prisoner, then transforms to an object of the affection of an unwanted suitor, to a kidnap victim, to a purchased bride, to an unwilling fiancée, to a rescue cause, once more to a kidnap victim, and finally becomes the wife/property of Achmed, presumably because he is the lesser of several evils.

Dinarsade is a pawn used by characters that possess agency, as well as the master game-player Reiniger/Scheherazade, to achieve certain goals. In the fourth act as the sorcerer and Aladdin spy on Dinarsade, she plays a game of chess with her attendant. This game of chess offers a strategic position from which her position in the film can be considered. Chess signifies intellect, strategy, critical thinking, mathematics, leisure, introspection, and reflection. She moves the pieces, seemingly exerting agency, but her chess game is an inversion of her status as a pawn, not a master gamer. Dinarsade remains confined throughout the film. She begins in her father's palace and court until he trades her for a horse; later she marries Aladdin and moves to his palace from where the sorcerer kidnaps her until Aladdin retrieves her; the sorcerer offers her as incentive to Aladdin to engage his assistance; and the sorcerer kidnaps her and her palace. However,

the witch's triumph over the sorcerer for possession of the magic lamp eventually results in her reunion with Aladdin, Achmed, and Pari Banu. If in *Prince Achmed* Dinarsade represents women whose destinies were often predetermined by their husbands' and fathers' decisions and limited by a society that continued to perceive them as inferior, then Reiniger offers them a life of adventure albeit not freedom.

Prince Achmed externalizes female desire for access to previously male-dominated realms of (art and) film production. In the 1920s because their social status was devalued women were excluded from mainstream (art and) film production. Like Scheherazade, Reiniger is a trespasser in the male-dominated world of filmmaking and Shahriyar's marriage bed, respectively. If Reiniger replaces Scheherazade in the filmic adaptation of the *Nights* tales due to her omission of the familiar master narrator (as I posit in the national identity chapter), then Dinarsade becomes her sister. If Reiniger is Scheherazade, then women are Dinarsade. Reiniger/Scheherazade involves women/Dinarsade in a situation from which they presumed to be exempt. In the *Nights* because their father is his chief adviser Dinarsade (and Scheherazade) are immune to murderous marriage to Shahriyar. Without Dinarsade's nightly performance of interest in her sister's stories, Scheherazade's scheme to infiltrate Shahriyar's life and prevent him from murdering more of their fellow female citizens might fail. Despite the danger she tries to protect her fellow women. However, she has no qualms about involving Dinarsade even though if the plan failed Dinarsade would likely be killed. While clever yet dangerous (potentially self-sacrificial) female cooperation to manipulate a powerful man is the commonality between Scheherazade and Dinarsade, the commonality between Reiniger/Scheherazade and women/Dinarsade is the opportunity to produce films.

To portray gendered domains (private/emotional/insignificant and public/rational/valuable spaces), which men likely took for granted but which tangibly affected the lives of modern women, in *Prince Achmed* Reiniger creates interior and exterior spaces marked by boundaries. Interior spaces are defined by black frames; exterior spaces share boundaries with the film frame. Since the frames of exterior spaces are common to all film, interior spaces are doubly framed. This double framing of interior spaces indicates an intensified restriction of female movement. Women's movements were indeed restricted in Weimar modernity and remain to some extent restricted today. While flaneurs abounded in the 1920s, from Benjamin's descriptions of the Parisian arcades to early Kracauer's walks around Berlin, the female flaneur is missing from literary descriptions and records. Although wartime Weimar women traversed the metropolis for utilitarian errands, those who navigated the city streets unaccompanied, especially at night, were (and are) often presumed to be prostitutes, bag ladies, or other types of roustabouts. Furthermore, women are more likely the victims of rape, assault, and other intrusions. Indeed, "any woman walking in the streets on her own, even in the presumably emancipatory age of Weimar Germany, has to first justify, assume, and establish her stance" (Gleber 76). Female movement has always been subjected to legislative, psychological, and literal restrictions. Only with the advent of cinema was female flanerie socially accepted. With her doubly framed interior scenery, Reiniger comments on the doubly restricted movements of women, who have traditionally been associated with the domestic, interior realm.

By controlling every aspect of animation, Reiniger exerts control over the audience's gaze, thereby expressing her awareness of the restrictions placed on the female

gaze. Indeed, "in animation there is no pointing the camera at a chosen subject and allowing ‘reality’ to speak for itself; everything you see has been put there by the animator" (Kotlarz 102). The (animation) camera does not innocently record unmediated reality but rather meticulously constructed scenes. Reiniger counters the gaze by replacing the onscreen woman (actor/star) with the constructed, controlled (silhouette) figure that represents woman. Further, the absence of subjective shots in *Prince Achmed* disallows viewer over-identification with the camera's point of view.

While in *Prince Achmed* female characters retain a degree of complexity, the conflation between the two separate male protagonists of the *Nights* tales “Ebony Horse” and “Ahmed and the Fairy Pari Banu” suggests that modern male identity is interchangeable. The powerful witch, the mysterious Pari Banu, the flirtatious harem women, and the cloistered Dinarsade all signify the complexity of modern femininity, but the unremarkable Prince Achmed and Aladdin, the mass of Wak Wak demons, the African sorcerer, and the static Caliph all suggest the simplicity and interchangeability of masculinity. The Caliph’s passivity is demonstrated in the first act when he witnesses the unintentional aerial departure of his son and in the fourth act when Aladdin's nested narrative depicts his awareness of the disappearance of his daughter. Aside from brief appearances in the outermost frame tale and Aladdin's flashback, the Caliph is absent. Instead Reiniger/Scheherazade, the unseen master narrator, completely controls the action. The undistinguished Caliph could be replaced with any number of kings, emperors, and caliphs featured in the *Nights*, but (Reiniger/)Scheherazade is *sui generis*.

Conclusion

Reiniger's gender has negatively influenced her discourse position in several ways. Weimar women were forbidden to be engaged in cultural events, excluded from artistic circles, and relegated to the (inferior) domestic sphere. Even the most prominent exceptions, such as Thea von Harbou and Leni Riefenstahl, only served to allow the male center to continue to exert cultural dominance. Although some modernist female filmmakers (and artists and writers) have been recovered and properly critically examined and appreciated, Reiniger and *Prince Achmed* have been marginalized partly because of the historical exclusion of female artists and association of their art with mass culture. Indeed, "women, in being relegated to absence, silence, and marginality, have thereby also to a degree been relegated to the outskirts of historical discourse, if not to a position totally outside of history (and of culture), which has been defined as the history of white (usually middle-class) men" (Kaplan 2). The historical marginalization of female filmmakers has allowed an unquestioned "politics of interpretation" to influence canon formation and exclude "radically heterogeneous" texts (Spivak 105), such as *Prince Achmed*. A clearer understanding of the role of gender in Reiniger's marginalization will illuminate the "politics of interpretation" of canon formation.

Weimar visual culture presented imagery of women as independent, equal citizens of modernity, but women continued to be excluded from and undervalued in the traditionally masculine-dominated public realm. The few Weimar women in the workplace earned less than their male counterparts, experienced discriminatory policies and treatment, occupied positions in the least developed sectors of industry, and after work returned to chores, childrearing, errands, and other domestic obligations in the

private sphere. Weimar modernity restricted women's activities, movements, health, bodies, and gazes. Cinema emerged, providing women previously unknown access to the public sphere and unhindered wielding of the gaze.

Since women have historically been excluded from canonical artistic practices and consequently associated with domesticity and mass (i.e. insignificant) culture, Reiniger's films have faced substantial obstacles among intelligentsia, as well as with the cinema-going public because they have also been relegated to the realm of feminine irrelevance. Reiniger was familiar with the multifaceted challenges Weimar women faced in daily life. In *Prince Achmed* she comments upon the conflicting cultural messages surrounding femininity. Considering the restrictions placed on contemporaneous Weimar women, Reiniger's contributions to film are considerable. Nevertheless her over sixty-year filmmaking career remains marginalized in the history and discourse of film.

CHAPTER FOUR--GENRE: ANIMATION AS CULTURAL MARGINALIA

Animated film has historically been marginalized in favor of live-action film.[50] Generally, most film scholarship and criticism has addressed live-action film and ignored animated film, and the largest film marketing campaigns have been based on the (live-action) star system. Although Spivak warns against explanation of exclusionary cultural tendencies, such as the one that prefers live-action film to animated film, I consider the film canon young enough to be fruitfully questioned and thereby changed. Spivak's "politics of interpretation" provides a helpful paradigm from which to explore the cultural tendency to dismiss animated film in favor of live-action film. Although nearly one hundred years of scholarship has largely validated (live-action) film as a topic of scholarly inquiry, animated film remains on the periphery. If scholarly discourse has historically marginalized film in general, then it has further marginalized animated film. Halberstam, after Benjamin, notes, "we [animation scholars] study…classed modes of pleasure and technologies of cultural transmission" (47). "Classed modes" indeed. Similarly to other devalued film genres--such as romantic comedies, which along with

[50] Animated film, for the purposes of this study and according to most animation scholarship, belongs to the larger generic category of film. Throughout this dissertation, "animated film(s)" and "full-length animated (feature) film(s)" refer to well-documented, entirely animated--that is, they contain no live-action--animated films over fifty minutes in duration that are the centerpiece of a given film program. This definition is based on Bruno Edera's definition in one of the only English-language texts devoted entirely to animated film, *Full Length Animated Feature Films* (1977). Based on duration Edera breaks animated films into the following categories: of spot (10-60 seconds), pocket (50 seconds to two minutes), short (two to 20 minutes), medium-length (20 to 50 minutes), and full-length, which must be at least 50 minutes long and "the 'feature' in a film show" (11-12), as opposed to a filler or opener. Some types of films defined and omitted from his text are "compilation full-length film; full-length entertainment film with animation; non-fiction feature films with animation; and films in mixed media" (Edera 12-14). These omissions effectively narrow the scope of the concept of full-length animated feature film.

what Linda Williams calls "the weepies," have been derogatorily labeled "chick flicks;" summer blockbusters; and horror/slasher films, which have become known as "teen screams"--animated films are dismissed by many film critics because of a pervasive association of the animation genre with women, adolescents, children, mass, and other devalued audiences. While feminist (and other) film critics have challenged value assumptions by analyzing undervalued genres, the overwhelming attitude among those who accept film as worthy of analysis remains partial to live-action film at the expense of other types of film.[51] Canonization (of (animated) film) appears to organize an otherwise seemingly chaotic body of (film) texts but detrimentally impacts independent and experimental (film) texts by altogether excluding them. The marginal critical status of even the most mainstream animated films indicates the truly marginal discourse position occupied by independent, experimental, non-drawn/cartoon, non-Disney animated films.[52] National identity and gender have both negatively affected the discourse position of Reiniger and *Prince Achmed*; additionally, the (animated silhouette feature film) genre in which Reiniger worked and the independent production and distribution of *Prince Achmed* have further marginalized the filmmaker and film.

[51] For example, see Linda Williams on pornography, "chick flicks," and slasher films in "Film Bodies: Gender, Genre, and Excess" (1991), in Baudy and Cohen, pp. 727-741.

[52] Russett and Starr define "experimental" animation as that which involves "individual techniques, personal dedication, and artistic daring" (7). Furthermore:

> Traditionally, experimental animators have avoided the standard animation stand and the production-line procedures of the commercial studio. One common bond among all experimental animators is that, in varying degrees, they personalize their equipment and techniques... They also fulfill another important need by providing others with innovative and exciting technical directions. (Russett and Starr 7)

What is Animation?

Animation is contestable ground that draws upon and interacts with other visual media and overlaps with multiple disciplines in an ongoing dialectic. Animation has been considered graphic art, painting, design, chemistry, drawing, computer science, mathematics, and physics. Halberstam notes that animation scholarship "might track through popular culture, computer graphics, animation histories and technologies, [and] cellular biology" (47). Halas and Manvell consider animation a bridge between "kinetics in art" and film (12). Hall and Soar refer to the animated films of Reiniger, Fischinger, and Richter as "motion graphics," or mobile graphic design (28-37). Digital film production further challenges distinctions between art, electronics, physics, and mathematics. The 1965 Instruction by Design physics conference at the University of Washington featured computer-based precursors of CGI, animated films that merged art, math, and science (11-8), including filmmaker Trevor Fletcher's creative mathematics films *The Simson Line* (1953), *The Cardoid* (1954), *Four Point Conics* (ca. 1954), and *Dance Squared* (1961), as well as Philip Stapp's boundary-breaking *Symmetry* (1966).

Despite widely varying animation techniques, animation critics tend to agree that animation is defined by its frame-by-frame production.[53] One of the most widely cited animation definitions is that of animator Norman McLaren:

> Animation is not the art of drawings-that-move, but rather the art of movements-that-are-drawn. What happens *between* each frame is more important than what happens *on* each frame. Animation is therefore the art of manipulating the invisible interstices that lie between the frames. (qtd. in Weinberg 47)

[53] Among the many critics who agree upon the frame-by-frame definition are Stephenson (12), Solomon ("Notes," 10), and Lopez (12).

The first part of McLaren's definition contains the assumption that all animation is drawn, thereby privileging (drawn) cartoons at the expense of other types of (non-drawn) animation. Since silhouette animation does not necessarily contain drawings, McLaren's definition implies that silhouette animation does not qualify as animation at all. However, the second and third sentences of his definition remain useful. The second sentence reinforces the generally accepted frame-by-frame definition; the third sentence more specifically emphasizes the generally hidden animation process. McLaren lends the third sentence significance by placing it at the end of his definition. The manipulation of "invisible interstices" gains particular interest when applied to silhouette animation. In *Prince Achmed*, Reiniger manipulated unseen intersections between shadow play, silhouette cutting, literature, film, animation, fantasy, frame tales, montage, entertainment, technology, handicraft, experimentation, Expressionism, Bauhaus, Surrealism, and New Objectivity.[54] For Reiniger, animation "meant to give life to otherwise immovable objects" (*Shadow* 82). Reiniger's definition of animation retains effectiveness even in an age of computer-based image development because computer-based animation, three-dimensional object animation, and digital hybrid special effects all technically mobilize otherwise immobile objects.

[54] Reiniger's use in *Prince Achmed* of these varying elements is examined at length in the chapter on national identity.

Animation and Film[55]

Film is fundamentally related to animation: their histories, development, present, and futures are interconnected. Animation began with the cinema. Cinema began with animation. The earliest films utilized animation techniques and were called "animated pictures" (Thompson, "Implications" 106; Denslow 4); conversely, "the first animated films were concerned with making objects appear to move with a mysterious life of their own" (Crafton 7). The movement, or animation, of images was the initial attraction of cinema for early audiences (Gunning 873-6). The origins of film and animation might lie in magic lanterns, fantascopes, zootropes, phenakistoscopes, praxinoscopes, slide shows, shadow plays, Theatre Optîque, or other visual devices that relied on persistence of vision and manipulated light and shadows to create the illusion of movement. In fact, "technologically, the 'prehistory' of cinema and animation are inseparable…. [A]nimated film is a subspecies of film in general. Its history coincides with film history at large, running parallel, weaving in and out" (Crafton 6). Indeed, "Technologically…the animated cartoon was possible as soon as cinema itself existed in any form" (Thompson, "Implications" 106). Cel animation quickly became "defined…by its difference from live-action films and it has remained a secondary form ever since…. By trivialising animation, Hollywood has made it compatible with the classical cinema" (Thompson, "Implications" 108). According to Stephenson, film and animation developed differently due to the excess attention paid to photography in the early years of film; he claims that the attention of the science-oriented Enlightenment was redirected to the photographic

[55] Other manifestations of animation, such as its use in advertisements, television programs, medical practices, scientific diagramming, graphic design, and motion graphics (Hall and Soar) are not necessarily unrelated to *Prince Achmed* and other full-length animated films but are definitely beyond the scope of my dissertation.

image although "the moving cartoon did in fact precede the live-action movie all along the line" (8). Lopez notes, "Animation is an important branch of cinematography which precedes the invention of moving pictures" (12). For Cholodenko animation is always a part of film and film is always a part of animation.[56] While some critics claim that animation not only preceded film but also is an independent medium (Cholodenko; Brophy), between 1912 and 1920 animation became widely recognized as its own form of filmmaking (Thompson, "Implications" 107). Since animation and film share common precursors and developed simultaneously, animated film is a part of film in general.

Despite their differences in appearance, production, and audiences, the various forms of animation all remain just that: types of animation, which belongs to the larger generic category of film. Distinctions (and oppositions) between live-action and animated film--or dominant and other, center and margin--harbor more specific oppositions between child and adult oriented, comedic and serious, cartoon/drawn and non-drawn animation. Much like the false but culturally sanctioned distinction Spivak discerns between legends and jokes and the novel, the difference between animated and live-action film is “one of degree rather than kind” (120). The relation of animated film to various methods of animation, such as CGI, cel, and silhouette, is analogous to the relation of poetry to its various forms, such as sonnet, free verse, and haiku. These forms all remain types of poetry, which belongs to the larger category of literature; so, by extension, the relationship between animated film and live-action film is analogous to the one between poetry and literature. Animated film is a type of film as poetry is a type of

[56] This is arguably the position of most deconstructionists, who tend to question strict divisions between constructed categories and admit that even the particular position of deconstruction eventually becomes suspect to its own interrogations. Further, Cholodenko's arguments are not this simple and have been elaborated in various publications.

literature. Further, silhouette animation is a type of animation within animated film, which resides within film in general. Nested boxes serve as an appropriate representation of the relationship between types of animation, animated film, and live-action film.

Ultimately, film remains film even when it appears in new forms, such as (silhouette) animation. Balázs claims that artistic form determines content. He claims that film technique was known long before the medium attempted to convey certain meanings, or content. Once the film genre attempted to convey new content it developed into "a new form-language" (*Theory* 257). Once a form has developed, the laws of its medium

> determine by dialectic interaction the suitable, specific themes and contents [that] may for a long time be contained in older forms, setting up tensions and causing slight changes in them until…the new content bursts the old form and creates a new one. But this, too, is done within the bounds of the art form in question. (Balázs, *Theory* 256-7)

The development of the film form resulted in the selection of "suitable, specific themes and contents," which in this case were tales of the *Arabian Nights*. Early films continually portrayed *Nights* tales. These previously oral narratives had been transcribed in various parts of the world. The newly appropriated content was "contained in [the] older form" of live-action film. The use of the *Nights* tales in film form "set up tensions…until…the new content burst the old form and create the new one;" the new form that burst forth was animation. Animation developed to accommodate the fantastic content that live-action film had long been awkwardly appropriating, as displayed in superimposition and stop motion, to convey fantastic source material and showcase the

possibilities of the medium. The full-length animated film (e.g. *Prince Achmed*, *Reinicke Fuchs*, *Snow White*), which emerged from the existent live-action form, nevertheless remained "within the bounds of the art form in question" (Balázs, *Theory* 257): in other words, animation remains within the generic bounds of film.

Prince Achmed and the Conventions of Animation

Prince Achmed represents the ability of animated film to transcend limitations imposed by assumptions about the content, audience, purpose, and duration of the genre of animation. For many years, animation has been considered an inferior (to live-action) form of film "virtually always comic and/or fanciful, for children and trivial" (Thompson, "Implications" 111). Thompson suggests that assumptions about the medium of animation were "developed partly as a defence against the disruptive properties of animation" ("Implications" 108). Assumptions about animation damage the critical status of animated film, and more specifically, *Prince Achmed* since it defies audience expectations and assumptions. In animation, as

> In every type of cultural production, there are dominant forms of expression that tend to define it within the minds of people in the general public, if not specialists in the field. Within the realm of animation, one can identify at least four such traits: animation is (1) American and (2) created with cel artwork (3) made by famous men (4) at the Disney studio. (Furniss 13)

Reiniger was acutely aware that "animators who wish to present an alternative to the mainstream tradition and its political resonances…the techniques…are crucial" (Kotlarz 102). She presented an alternative to the mainstream tradition of animation through her

use of independently produced and distributed non-cartoon/drawn, non-slapstick, non-child oriented full-length (silhouette) animation. Reiniger was "among the first to develop new and distinctive styles of pictorial animation outside the bounds of the commercial animated cartoon" (Starr, *Experimental* 73). Animation has generally been associated with cartoons and drawings; slapstick comedy; audiences of children; and shorts and gag reels. *Prince Achmed* challenged these assumptions since it starred animated silhouettes not actors or drawings; contained humor but not slapstick; appealed to adult and child audiences alike; and substantially surpassed short gag reel duration.

The genre of (silhouette) animation was a revolutionary technique that functioned, for Reiniger, as a critique of dominant realist live-action film conventions by eliminating texture for shape, preferring flatness to depth, creating motion from stillness, replacing stars with figures, and presenting fantastic elements that despite attempts with special effects, montage, and creative camerawork, live-action film failed to convincingly depict. Its revolutionary quality is demonstrated by the long and continuing tradition of technological experimentalism and invention in (animated) film begun by Reiniger's silhouette films. Reiniger considered animated silhouette film, which she perfected and utilized to pioneer the full-length animated film, a type of trick film and part of the tradition of animation and film ("Film as Ballet" 163).[57] Neither the content nor the form of *Prince Achmed* was altogether original but were borrowed from previous traditions. This borrowing on established artistic traditions does not detract from the film's cultural

[57] Numerous scholarly sources discuss the development of shadow theatre and its meaning in a cinematic context, but these studies on silhouettes, shadow theatres, and shadow puppets often omit Reiniger. Olive Blackham's *Shadow Puppets*, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959, is a notable exception. For a thorough history of shadow theatre, see Fan Pen Chen "Shadow Theaters of the World," *Asian Folklore Studies* 62.1 (2003): 25-64. For a reading of shadow plays as representations of the Oriental elements in film, see Alice Maurice "What the Shadow Knows: Race, Image, and Meaning in *Shadows*." *Cinema Journal* 47.3 (2008): 66-89. For more on shadow theatres see Olive Cook *Movement in Two Dimensions*, London: Hutchinson, 1963.

impact. On the contrary: "the important, elementary moments of progress in art are novelties neither of content nor form; the revolution in technique precedes both" (Benjamin, "A Discussion" 626). Previous films had been based on content from the *Arabian Nights*; previous films had also included animated sequences. The revolutionary aspect of *Prince Achmed* was its (independent, silhouette, multiplane-camera based) technique.

Reiniger's contemporaries acknowledged the expressive potential of silhouettes. Arnheim, who generally dismisses fairy tale films since they fail to fulfill the vividness of youthful imagination, makes exception for the "incredibly expressive" films of Reiniger because she

> utilizes the ideal technique, the silhouette film. The silhouette is not as close to reality as a three-dimensional thing, no matter how imaginatively it may be thought out. It thus spares the viewer, particularly the child viewer, the fear that sets in when the fairy tale passes a certain point of vividness and becomes tangible reality. The movable silhouette charmingly maintains the right balance between the product of art and life; we believe it enough to be enthralled, and we do not believe it enough to get the goose bumps we get when experiencing the supernatural. ("Lotte" 141)

Arnheim considers silhouettes unique solutions to multiple problems posed by the filmmaking process. He notes four filmic examples of reconciliation of narrative demands and spatio-temporal limitations by employing silhouettes (*Film as Art* 52-4). He also posits silhouettes as capable of enriching filmic setting and landscape and determining mood. A familiar scene in Ruttmann's *Berlin: Symphony of a City* (1927)

shows an empty city street in the early morning fog. Later, several workers, who are silhouetted against the sky, inhabit the street. For Arnheim, "these figures in the somewhat lighter street help to emphasize the mystery of the dawn, the strange intermediate state between light and dark" (*Film as Art* 64). Narrative films could use "the silhouette of a mountain range against the evening sky" to invoke the desired mood (*Film as Art* 66). Arhheim attributes all formal artistic value in film imagery to the contrasts between black and white, particularly “black lines and a white ground, or white lines on a black ground," which distinctly distinguish between "shape, brightness, [and] size," thereby allowing "their formal qualities instantly spring to the eye” (*Film as Art* 64). The only method of achieving artistic value in film for Arnheim epitomizes the essence of silhouettes, which are fundamentally black lines on lighter or white backgrounds.

The earliest Weimar film critics held silhouettes in high esteem. Balázs sees in silhouettes the potential for artistic expression to surpass the realism of live-action film (*Theory* 107). When realist representations of live-action film are exhausted, silhouettes offer a creative alternative method of expression. According to Balázs,

> Often the most accurate and careful photographic views of a town convey nothing of its real physiognomy. The dark silhouette of a bridge, a gondola rocking under it in the water-reflected light of a lantern, marble stairs dipping into dirty water can reproduce far more the atmosphere of Venice than the most authentic and accurate photographs. (*Theory* 107)

Early Kracauer associates silhouettes with encounters with unfamiliar concepts and ideas. He notes,

> One conquers new spiritual/intellectual territory only by first embracing it as a whole. Only once he has made out its silhouette can one clearly perceive the pieces out of which it is composed and grasp the relationships that are developing between them one by one. (*Mass* 231)

This figuring of an encounter with the unfamiliar as a silhouette gains significance within the context of the development of the new medium of full-length animated (silhouette) film. While for early Kracauer the silhouette represented the changes in modernity, in *Prince Achmed* it represents the technological possibilities and development of the filmic medium.

Despite the limitations of the silhouette animation genre, by implementing the multiplane camera in *Prince Achmed* Reiniger effectively conveys depth, weight, space, time, and movement. Silhouette animation consists of a series of filmed poses of three-dimensional figures that during projection transform into moving outlines, differentiated from the background by absences (eye holes, mouth spaces, "vacant" space in each frame). While cartoon/drawn animation can signal perspective, movement, and other dimensionality with visual shorthand borrowed from graphic and traditional visual arts, silhouette animation is firmly restricted to two-dimensions. For example, a streak of colors in cartoon animation can signify the swift movement of a character. However, silhouette artistry precludes such visual conventions. The silhouette artist

> work[s] almost entirely in two dimensions instead of three…. [I]t becomes a hundred times more difficult to make the figures plastic and to give the backgrounds depth [yet] Reiniger overcomes these difficulties...[and] manages to persuade her audience to accept the shadow for the substance. (White 14)

Figures can only face one direction or the other, are (physically) unable to recede from or approach the horizon, and can only move horizontally on the plane of action. These problems are, for Leslie and White, similar to those Picasso confronted in his Cubist paintings: how to convey all three dimensions of an object without assuming the third dimension, and how to portray the sides, front, and back of the object without referring to the unseen sides. Picasso depicts all sides of the bust in *Bust of a Woman* but not according to the laws of perspective. Each side, including front and back, is depicted. The lines do not recede toward a naturalistic vanishing point on the horizon; Picasso painted every part of the three-dimensional sculpture in the two dimensions of painting. Similarly, Reiniger conveys depth, weight, space, time and movement in the two dimensions of silhouette animation by using the multiple layers of action and background of the multiplane camera.

Similar to the distinctions between live-action and animated film, the differences between cartoon and other types of animation are equally arbitrary and ideologically formed. Cartoons have become the dominant form of animation because of the overemphasis on Disney animation at the expense of the contributions and innovations of other kinds of animation, and "although experimental animation is a unique art form with a bold and exciting tradition that dates back over fifty years, it has remained relatively isolated and undocumented within an area of filmmaking long dominated by the comic cartoon" (Russett and Starr 7).[58] *Prince Achmed* is a narrative film but is non-cartoon/drawn, so it resists simple categorization. Animator John Canemaker

[58] For a detailed description and examination of the Disney myth, see below. Narrative film is excluded from most scholarship on experimental and avant-garde (animated) film, which has addressed several of Reiniger's contemporaries, such as Richter, Bartosch, Ruttmann, and Fischinger.[58] Conversely, non-drawn and non-cartoon animated films are generally excluded from scholarship devoted to (cartoon) animation. Bendazzi's *Cartoons: One Hundred Years* is a more inclusive exception that includes Reiniger.

differentiates between cartoons and animation: "'Snow White' could be called the first feature-length animated cartoon. That would be legit…. But for many [animation scholars], 'Prince Achmed' is the first animated feature" (qtd. in Liebenson F7). Canemaker's implication that cartoons belong to the larger category of animation is unusual in animation scholarship, which overwhelmingly tends to assume cartoons and animation are synonymous.[59]

Prince Achmed's lack of characters further distanced it from the conventions of dominant cartoon animation, especially since recurring characters became increasingly important to cartoon animation (Crafton 298, 347). John Bray and Earl Hurd patented the cel animation technique by 1915, and "there followed generation after generation of immensely popular cartoon characters" (Russett and Starr 32).[60] Cartoon animation tended to ape the reliance of Hollywood live-action films on stars (Thompson, "Implications" 108, 110). Character creation, or silhouette cutting, resulted in increased control for Reiniger during production, as well as decreased production cost, but the lack of recurring characters negatively impacted the public appeal and subsequent discourse surrounding the film. In animation "the artist is…in full control through…individual contact with the medium" (Halas and Manvell 12). Reiniger controlled every millimeter of movement performed by the silhouette figures. She created them, determined their appearance, and painstakingly arranged them in the shot-by-shot filming of *Prince Achmed*. While Reiniger retained an unprecedented amount of control over her figures, collaboration with Berthold Bartosch, Walter Ruttmann, and the rest of her crew necessarily introduced variables, which indirectly, and occasionally directly, challenged

[59] Among numerous other examples purporting this view are Stephenson, Crafton, Bendazzi, and Horn.
[60] For more on the star system, see the national identity chapter.

her directorial control. Reiniger recalls a conversation she had with Ruttmann about *Prince Achmed*: "'What has this to do with the year 1923?' said Walter Ruttmann. 'Nothing,' I could only say, 'But that I am alive now, and I want to do it as I have the chance.'" ("Achmed" 3). Reiniger delegated various sequences and tasks among the crewmembers; however, despite who was in charge of any given background effects, she retained control of the figures during production.

Prince Achmed is also unusual because of its lack of slapstick and comedy, elements that are typically associated with animation, further differentiating it from mainstream notions of animation. In the 1920s

> Animated films were supposed to make people roar with laughter…. Everybody to whom we talked in the industry about the proposition [to make a full-length animated film] was horrified. But we did not belong to the industry. We always had been outsiders and we always had done what we wanted to do. (Reiniger, "Adventures" 2)

Comedy has historically been capable of ignoring realist conventions, allowing it to achieve "the stylization thought 'natural' to the animated film" thereby establishing an assumption of "cartoons as comic" (Thompson, "Implications" 110). In *Prince Achmed*, Reiniger defies the realist conventions without the use of slapstick comedy.

Reiniger challenged the cultural assumption that animated film was intended strictly for audiences of children. The literary source material on which *Prince Achmed* is based, tales from *1,001 Arabian Nights*, was commonly associated with children and so was presumed to be frivolous. Historically, tales from the *Nights* have been relegated to the realms of childhood (Irwin, "*Arabian Nights* in Film" 23). These tales were prominent

in Weimar culture. Haase notes, "between 1895 and 1928, three major translations appeared in Germany..... [O]ver forty children's editions [were] issued by German publishers between 1880 and 1920" (261). The presumption of childishness was intensified by the rendering of the tales in the medium of animated film. Though animated film has become associated with family entertainment in large part due to Disney's marketing image of wholesome entertainment, from its beginning animation has been associated with children, women, and the masses and consequently "relegated to the nursery" (Kuhn and Radstone 338). Thompson suspects that the fairy tales, folktales, and legends on which much animation is based caused it to be associated with children, eventually causing "a trivialisation of the medium" (Thompson, "Implications" 111). However, Reiniger recognized the ability of animated film to transcend limitations imposed by childish associations.

Prince Achmed challenges adult viewers to reconsider animated film. While young people certainly enjoy animated film, Reiniger suspected some mature themes could be safely incorporated into *Prince Achmed* without compromising the innocence of children. Reiniger wanted to "express all that the story might suggest" and refused to "water it [a story] down so as to pander to the young audience" (*Shadow* 125). The film contains bawdy elements, such as Pari Banu's nude evasion of the enamored Prince Achmed and Achmed's playful encounter with the women in Pari Banu's harem. By basing *Prince Achmed* on historically adult-themed literary source material and using animation in a feature film, Reiniger anticipated the trend of contemporary (film and television) animation to retain child viewers while attracting adult audiences. Moritz denies that the films of Reiniger are strictly for children since she befriended leftists and

sought exile during Nazi control of Germany despite the hardships of exile ("Some Critical" 48-9). While animation "lent itself to children's films and fantasy works, she [Reiniger] thought consciously of a socialist responsibility to infuse these films…with constructive and thought-provoking ideas" (Moritz, "Some Critical" 49). Her adaptation of tales from the traditionally risqué *Arabian Nights* for *Prince Achmed* was an attempt to attract adult audiences.

Animation historically served as an expected yet dispensable element of film programs; *Prince Achmed* upended those generic expectations. Early films used animation in credits, commercials, special effects within live-action features, and as short films that quickly conveyed gags or stories (Edera 11-2). Reiniger notes that in the 1920s, "nobody dared to entertain an audience with them for more than ten minutes" ("Adventures" 2). Audiences were accustomed to seeing animation as filler prior to features. Gag reels, commercials, and shorts functioned as entertainment prior to the beginning of the feature film, which was the main attraction for audiences and main source of revenue for studios, distributors, and theaters (Thompson, "Implications" 108-10). In his discussion of 1930s animation, animator Leo Salkin recalls, "Nobody went to the theater to see a cartoon. At best it was an amusing filler till the feature came on" (58). If they missed shorts or newsreels, they might have been irritated but were not likely to miss the feature. Most people enjoyed viewing the newest animated shorts and gag reels, but they essentially went to the cinema to watch the feature. Balázs determines that the "old American slapstick" animated shorts are unable to last long without boring the

audience. *Prince Achmed* does not rely upon slapstick to convey meaning or to entertain the audience, allowing it to be ninety minutes long without losing audience attention.[61]

Primacy

Lotte Reiniger's boundary-breaking independently produced, full-length animated silhouette film, *Prince Achmed*, was the first full-length animated film not because no other full-length animated film could have chronologically preceded it but because such other films have not been recovered or satisfactorily documented.[62] Archival evidence verifies the primacy of *Prince Achmed* and qualifies it as the *de facto* first full-length animated film. Although prescient foresight would have prevented the destruction of the original *Prince Achmed* negatives in the Battle of Berlin, the nearly hundred-year survival of the film illustrates Reiniger's technological prowess and dedication. Over time the film could have quite easily been lost.[63] In fact, animation scholar Maureen Furniss notes, "many [animation] artists from the early days have died without proper documentation of their contributions" (3-4). Furthermore, recent animation scholarship tends to subordinate issues of primacy in favor of theoretical analyses (Wizansky; Halberstam; Cholodenko). Neither physical evidence of the status of *Prince Achmed* as the first full-length animated feature film nor the proliferation of recent animation and film scholarship have prevented *Prince Achmed*, or animated film in general, from being marginalized within film history and discourse.

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[61] At the time of *Prince Achmed*'s production, film projectors ran at 18 frames per second; now they run at 24 frames per second. Since its re-release this has resulted in a decreased running time, from 90 to about 70 minutes, for *Prince Achmed* (Ensor 107; Grant 180).

[62] *Prince Achmed* was widely screened in England and Europe, but Harvard purchased the film rights and failed to promote it. Roughly twenty years elapsed before its American premiere. This delay allowed Disney's *Snow White* to become the first widely familiar full-length animated film in the United States.

[63] German distributors marketed *Prince Achmed* as a detective film; Reiniger had to struggle to recover the rights to her film **(**Milestone 14**).**

The interdisciplinary and international qualities of animation problematize the process of establishing the primacy of any given animated film. Artists working in various disciplines and genres from various countries participated in the development of animation; concomitantly, equally diverse contributors assist contemporary developments in digital imaging. Animation, much as other art forms, did not develop in a neatly linear fashion. Factors that have complicated the history of animation include inconsistent technological developments, inconsistent print value, and undependable documentation (Crafton 4-5).[64] Animation scholar Donald Crafton notes, "The internationality of early animation cannot be ignored" (10). Language barriers, cultural differences about notions of artistic value, political and military turmoil and hostilities, shifting national borders, and displaced populations further complicate historical documentation. Animation is an interdisciplinary practice that entails history, mathematics, graphic design, physics, animation studies, computer science, painting, music, literature, folklore, women's studies, and Weimar (film) studies. Following Foucault, Halberstam perceives disciplines as century-old irrelevant categories, which have lost contemporary relevance and act as vehicles for power, that "chop up knowledge into pieces that, like a character in an animated film, quickly reassemble themselves into monstrous and fabulous new forms" and considers animation an interdisciplinary form transcendent of and therefore able to critique them (44-5). Though the establishment of *Prince Achmed*'s primacy as the first full-length animated film is a secondary concern in my dissertation, it necessarily aids a fuller understanding of the development of film.

[64] See Donald Crafton *Before Mickey* (1985, 1993) for a detailed account of the problematic of establishing primacy in the development of animated films, especially pp. 4-6.

Animation permeates contemporary American visual culture from advertising to television to film, so Reiniger's relevance at this particular historical moment is compelling. Benjamin developed the concept of synchronicity, which posits that images correspond to certain later time periods only during which the images can be comprehended.[65] He claims

> for the historical index of the images not only says that they belong to a particular time; it says, above all, that they attain to legibility only at a particular time…. Every present day is determined by the images that are synchronic with it; each 'now' is the now of a particular recognizability. (Benjamin, *Arcades* 462-3, convolute N3, 1)

Contemporary culture provides synchronicity with Reiniger's films, rendering them legible. Now is "the now" that can comprehend the images produced by Reiniger, which are fundamentally related to the origins of animated film. *Prince Achmed* is synchronic with contemporary animation-saturated American culture so must be recovered and analyzed. The longest comedy series in television history, *The Simpsons*, celebrates its twenty-second anniversary in 2011. Nowadays, animation is branching out even in realms it already occupies: 3-D versions of films are frequently released alongside "regular" versions. Animated film has been box office gold since the 1989 debut of *The Little Mermaid*, which was followed by a stream of animated films by Disney, Pixar, and DreamWorks. Additionally, animation is one of the remaining areas of film undergoing technological advances. If these technological advances parallel those of early film, they

[65] Although Benjamin develops the concept of synchronicity throughout his work, especially in "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility," the concept is named in Convolute N3, 1 (462-3) of *The Arcades Project*, from which this quote is taken. Also see Jennings, et. al., "The Production, Reproduction, and Reception of the Work of Art," especially pp. 15-8.

indicate a forthcoming creative explosion in film, similar to that of the early twentieth century displayed in the films of Reiniger, Fischinger, Richter, Eggeling, McCay, McLaren, and Disney.[66]

The Disney Myth

The contributions of Lotte Reiniger to the development of film have been replaced with the Disney myth, which disguises gaps in historical textuality. Weimar film scholar Thomas Elsaesser refers to such a cultural explanation as a "historical imaginary" that functions to explain otherwise seemingly inexplicable cultural trends and events. The particular historical imaginary that is the Disney myth serves as an explanation for the omission of Lotte Reiniger and *Prince Achmed* from animation and film history. The omission of Reiniger from film and animation scholarship allows the Disney myth to flourish. Stephenson notes, "It must be rare that an art has been dominated by one man in the way Disney has dominated the cartoon. To many people...the cartoon has simply meant Walt Disney's work" (35). The Disney myth responds as an historical narrative, or, following Spivak, an explanatory textuality, that disguises the German, female, and independent origins of full-length animated film. A better understanding of the effects of genre on the marginalization of Reiniger and *Prince Achmed* and the perpetuation of the Disney myth enhances an understanding of the Spivakean "politics of interpretation" involved in canon formation. Although scholars have retrieved some of Reiniger's

[66] This also might prefigure a new genre of animation or film. CGI and other digital imaging could be considered new genres. Either way this is beyond the scope of my current discussion.

contemporaries, few scholars have addressed the contributions of Reiniger to the development of film, impairing a thorough understanding of culture and history.[67]

Although a margin exists in all explanations, the inversion of the marginal/central explanatory structure of animated film history allows Reiniger to be treated as a relevant and important filmmaker. The formation of the Disney myth cannot be effectively separated from the existence of the myth itself, which is always closely aligned with its origins and perpetuation (Spivak, "Explanation" 105). However, the various factors that contribute to the perpetuation of the Disney myth act as practical means by which the marginalization of Reiniger can be examined. The Disney empire and the discourse surrounding it is a tangible point of comparison that reveals the contrasting lack of scholarship about Reiniger's *Prince Achmed*. While Disney's influence and impact on animation as an art, practice, process, and genre is undeniable, the overwhelming critical attention devoted to Disney films prevents critical considerations of other animators. Since he so overwhelmingly dominates the scholarship on animation and film, Disney must, for the duration of this text, be relegated to the margins. This temporary suspension of the center is dangerous, for to debunk the Disney myth is to introduce logic into and therefore spoil the magic of an American fairy tale. To debunk the Disney myth is to question the American Dream. To debunk the Disney myth is to be unpatriotic, perhaps even a Communist, a cynic, a skeptic, an intellectual.

The Disney myth was created and continues to be perpetuated by Foucauldian "mechanisms of power." These mechanisms of power act as a "multiplicity of discourses

[67] In the national identity chapter, the reasons specific artists have been recovered are further examined. In short, contemporary filmmakers who lived and worked in conditions comparable to Reiniger's have been recovered because of their affiliations with artistic movements or groups. Some examples of this phenomenon include Viking Eggeling (Dada); Hans Richter (Dada); Walter Ruttmann (New Objectivity; documentary; Nazi); and Oskar Fischinger (avant-garde; experimental).

produced by a whole series of mechanisms operating in different institutions" (Foucault 33). The power that perpetuates the Disney myth "is incapable of doing anything, except to render what it dominates incapable of doing anything either, except for what this power allows it to do" (Foucault 85). This power is not a productive power but has the stagnating force of inertia. Simply by remaining in place this power retains control. By disallowing the debunking of the Disney myth, it prevents the recovery of Reiniger. Paralleling Foucauldian discourses of sexuality, film discourses have also experienced "discursive growth…a dispersion of centers from which discourses emanated, a diversification of their forms, and the complex deployment of the network connecting them" (34). Certainly the field of film has experienced such "discursive growth." Since the advent of (Western) film theory in the 1920s, there have been increasing numbers of film media outlets, scholars, and interested parties. The twentieth century emergence of the Internet has multiplied the outlets, destabilized qualifications for specialists, and allowed a wider public than ever before to access information about film production and meaning. Although the entire historiography of film cannot be effectively examined here, it is safe to say that compared to the 1920s, contemporary culture has substantially more access to, ability to contribute to, and interest in receiving information about film.[68]

The Disney myth emerged in post-WWII American culture as a pleasant alternative to the "unnatural" and "unpleasant" German, feminine, and avant-garde origins of animated film, as originating in Reiniger's *Prince Achmed*. Elsaesser formulates the "historical imaginary" to refer to cultural explanations based on unverified

[68] The widest history of film available in this study is located in the national identity chapter.

but widely accepted situational conventional wisdom.[69] According to Elsaesser, "false histories…let us glimpse so many different 'other' histories…. [I]n the cinema little seems to separate a 'false' history from a history of the 'false'" (*Weimar* 436). The historical imaginary known as the Disney myth has become accepted as fact and has resulted in the marginalization of other (independent, experimental, non-slapstick, non-cartoon/drawn, non-American/Hollywood/Disney) animation. Edera coins the phrase "Disney myth" in reference to the widespread misconception that the Burbank Disney studio functions as a unified team using a flawless Fordist-Taylorized, or rationalized, assembly-line method to produce animated films, claiming, "reality or legend, the Disney myth is well and truly established today, though we must to some extent de-mystify it" (31). Beyond the misconception about Disney Studios as a flawless animation-producing system, the Disney myth must include the widespread but false assumption that Disney produced the first full-length animated film, invented the multiplane camera, and is the creative fountainhead from which all other animation springs.

Disney received recognition for artistic and technical achievements that were not actually his.[70] Disney is often mistakenly credited with production of the first animated feature film; he is also often mistakenly cited as the inventor and pioneer of the multiplane camera, which creates the illusion of depth in animation.[71] Table 1 presents a

[69] Elsaesser develops the historical imaginary to account for the persistence of the Weimar cinema/Expressionist film dichotomy developed by post-WWII Kracauer and Lotte Eisner, respectively. These two labels function, for Elsaesser, as convenient categorizations for a far more complex historical actuality.

[70] Kunzle contests the 1935 designation of Mickey Mouse as an "'International Symbol of Good Will'" by the League of Nations, as well as the 1964 bestowal upon Disney of the President's Medal of Freedom (17-8). These two awards are not necessarily directly related to my definition of the Disney myth, but Kunzle makes an interesting argument concerning Disney's questionable impact upon various (indigenous) populations. Any unethical and immoral activities in which the Disney Company participates inevitably lends to the debunking of the Disney myth.

[71] See Tables 1 and 2.

representative sampling of sources that mistakenly credit Disney with production of the first full-length animated film. Although this list is not meant to be exhaustive, it includes texts that most animation scholars and film historians encounter in the course of researching the history of animated film. The table illustrates that the Disney myth is not limited to a particular medium of publication, decade, or discipline.

Table 1. A Representative Sampling of Sources That Incorrectly Credit Disney with Production of the First Full-Length Animated Film

Name and Title	**Year**	**Medium**	**Discipline**
Robert Field, *The Art of Walt Disney*	1942	Book	Animation Studies, Biography
Christopher Finch, *The Art of Walt Disney: From Mickey Mouse to the Magic Kingdom*	1973, 1995 (rev. ed.), 2004 (rev. exp. ed.)	Book	Film Studies and History, Animation Studies
Leonard Maltin, *The Disney Films*	1973, 2000 (4th ed.)	Book	Film Studies and History, Animation Studies
Irene Kotlarz, "Working Against the Grain: Women in Animation"	1993	Scholarly Article in Edited Volume	Film Studies, Women in Film
Mary Ellen Snodgrass	1998	Entry in a Reference Book	Folklore Studies
Scott Smith, *The Film 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential People in the History of the Movies*	1998	Reference Book	Film Studies
J.P. Telotte, “The Changing Space of Animation: Disney’s Hybrid Films of the 1940s”	2007	Article in a Scholarly Journal	Animation Studies and History
Keith Booker, *Disney, Pixar, and the Hidden Messages of Children's Films*	2010	Book	Film History and Criticism, Animation History and Criticism

The Academy for Motion Picture Arts and Sciences awarded Disney two Oscars in 1937 for inventing and applying the multiplane camera to production of *The Old Mill* (Academy). However, more than ten years earlier, between 1923 and 1926, Lotte

Reiniger employed a functional multiplane camera on the production of *Prince Achmed*.[72] Disney's 1937 multiplane camera was possibly more technically advanced than Reiniger's, but hers was made and used well before his. Table 2 provides a representative sampling of sources that mistakenly attribute invention and application of the multiplane camera to Disney. Much like the sources that mistakenly credit Disney with production of the first full-length animated feature film, these sources span various publication media, decades, and disciplines.

Table 2. A Representative Sampling of Sources That Incorrectly Credit Disney with Invention and Application of the Multiplane Camera[73]

Name and Title	**Year**	**Medium**	**Discipline**
Ralph Stephenson, *Animation in the Cinema*	1967	Book	Animation History and Studies
Robert Sklar, *Movie-Made America*	1975	Book	Film History, Film Criticism
Kristin Thompson, "Implications of the Cel Animation Technique"	1980	Article in Edited Scholarly Volume	Film Criticism and Theory, Film History
David Smith, "New Dimensions--Beginnings of the Disney Multiplane Camera"	1987	Article in Edited Volume	Animation Studies and History
Philip Brophy, "The Animation of Sound"	1991	Article in Edited Scholarly Volume	Animation Theory and Studies
Stephen Prince, *Movies and Meaning*	2007	Textbook	Film Studies

The samplings listed on these two tables of interdisciplinary sources that mistakenly attribute production of the first full-length animated film and invention and

[72] It is possible that Reiniger's multiplane camera was constructed and implemented as early as 1919 at the Institut für Kulturforschung for use in her first film, *Das Ornament der verliebten Herz* (*The Ornament of the Sacred Heart*).

[73] Critics who attribute the development of the multiplane camera to longtime Disney friend, animator, and co-worker, Ubi Works, include J.P. Telotte "Ub Iwerks' (Multi)Plain Camera" in *Animation: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 1.1 (2006): 9-24 and David Kunzle, "Introduction" in *How to Read Donald Duck* by Dorfman and Mattelart (17). More frequently, critics mistakenly attribute the invention of the multiplane camera to Disney, as displayed in Table 2.

application of the multiplane camera to Disney accurately represent the majority of scholarship available on the subject. While the mistaken attribution to Disney of the production of the first full-length animated film occurs more frequently and within more diverse areas of scholarship than does the misattribution of the multiplane camera to Disney, the representative samples illustrate interdisciplinary and temporal spans of scholarship that perpetuates these aspects of the Disney myth. The samples further reveal that the Disney myth is not nearly an outdated issue; it retains relevance to contemporary scholars and historians.

Much post-WWII animation and biographical scholarship that mistakenly attributes production of the first feature-length animated film, invention of the multiplane camera, and perfection of the animation technique to Disney was funded and/or authorized by the Disney Company.[74] Oftentimes Disney employees or even Walt Disney himself wrote this scholarship. Disney's own account of the development of animation "provided a reliable documentation for the animated cinema on a world-wide basis" (Edera 25). After all, "He who has access to major publishers gets to make history" (Acker xix). Disney's autobiographical influence on allegedly objective historical documentation recalls Acker's contestation of "the myth of history as a collection of unchangeable data recorded by 'objective' and unimpassioned record keepers" (xvii). A history of animated film written, authorized, and/or funded by Disney, a man dedicated to financial success and domination of the genre (Stephenson 35-6; Mikaluk 62; Grant 74; Kanfer 63), suggests that this history overvalues the output of the Disney Company at the expense of other animators. This overvaluing of Disney within the English-language

[74] A few examples are Salkin, D. Smith, and Maltin. One exception is Richard Schenkel's *The Disney Version* (1968), which, according to Sklar, was one of the few post-WWII studies of animation that was not funded or authorized by the Disney Company (327).

historical narrative of animated film reveals Disney's colonization of animated film histories at the expense of other animation and consequent formation of the Disney myth, which has further marginalized Reiniger's *Prince Achmed* within an already historically obscured and devalued branch of film.

Another myth immediately replaces the Disney myth anytime a given scholar attempts to debunk it. Some replacement myths include attributing the first full-length animated film to Winsor McCay's *Sinking of the Lusitania* (1918) and Argentinean filmmaker Quirino Cristiani's *El Apóstol* (1918).[75] Animation scholar Giannalberto Bendazzi replaces the Disney myth with the Cristiani quandary but adds the caveat: "No copy of this film [*El Apóstol*] exists today and we must rely on a few written sources and Cristiani's memory. Whether or not *El Apóstol* was actually a feature film is uncertain" (50).[76] Despite the widely acknowledged destruction of *El Apóstol* and all related materials in a 1969 fire at the Argentinean Cinematheque, the Cristiani quandary is frequently installed when the Disney myth is debunked (Bendazzi 26). The layers of myths have become so entangled that they seem inseparable from any verifiable, reliable account of the first full-length animated film. This layering of myths reinforces the default Disney myth.

The lack of scholarly attention devoted to animation in general has contributed to the creation and persistence of the Disney myth. Film scholars and critics tend to acknowledge pre-*Snow White* animation; some even acknowledge that Reiniger produced

[75] See Mikaluk (71); Stephenson (29); and Furniss (115). Edera debunks the Disney myth and disputes numerous claims that Winsor McCay's *The Sinking of the Lusitania* (1918) was the first full-length animated film by categorizing *Lusitania* as a medium-length film (Edera 14-5). Unfortunately, Edera replaces the Disney and *Lusitania* myths with the Cristiani quandary.

[76] Bendazzi labels *Prince Achmed* "one of the first animation features in the world and the first in Europe" (33).

those films, yet they hesitate to further explore the matter.[77] Many critics are reluctant to contribute to the body of animation scholarship because of the marginal cultural status of animation. Critical neglect of animation as a topic of scholarly inquiry implies the inferior status of the medium. Historically, scholarship devoted to animation has been sparse (Stephenson 23; Edera 25; Pilling, "Women" 7; Pilling, *Reader* x; Cholodenko 10). Although much scholarship has been devoted to live-action film, "In the sphere of full-length animated films, references are scarce. Very few works are devoted to this particular subject, especially to the period between the early days of the cinema and the end of the Second World War in 1945" (Edera 25), which includes Reiniger's Weimar years and ends about the time Disney joined the Museum of Modern Art board of trustees, securing his legacy (Mikaluk 62). The scarcity of animation scholarship continued into the 1960s and paralleled a scarcity of animation screenings. In 1967,

> Even the National Film Theatre, despite its remarkable range and the showing of many films (including cartoons) not available elsewhere, has not presented a full season of animation films since 1959, and England's most serious film magazine, *Sight and Sound,* has not published an article about them since 1962 when it printed a short comment, *The Unknown Cartoonists*, by Derek Hill. (Stephenson 22)

Particularly relevant to the lack of animation scholarship are Foucauldian "instances of discursive production (which also administer silences, to be sure), of the production of power (which sometimes have the function of prohibiting), of the propagation of

[77] I am not suggesting that scholars are altogether unfamiliar with her name and work. What I am suggesting, following Spivak, is that despite a possible general awareness of Reiniger's existence production of *Prince Achmed* prior to Disney's *Snow White* does not negate the need for extended critical attention to *Prince Achmed*, Reiniger's published and unpublished film theory, and her over sixty-film opus.

knowledge (which often cause mistaken beliefs or systematic misconceptions to circulate)" (12). These silence-producing discursive instances have generally silenced and prohibited the critical study of animation by relegating it to a marginal cultural status; they have also propagated knowledge that has resulted in "mistaken beliefs or systematic misconceptions," that is, various aspects of the Disney myth. Without substantive analysis of animation, false assumptions, such as the Disney myth, will remain in circulation even among animation and film experts. The Disney myth functions as a distraction from, or explanation for, the lack of reliable, consistent animation scholarship.

Gaps in German history also partially account for the lack of scholarship on animation and consequent emergence of the Disney myth. Post-WWII Kracauer and Arnheim both note gaps in knowledge of postwar German history (*From* 9; *Film Essays* 3). Despite the recent correction of the neglect of German history, preexistent misconceptions about and omissions from German cultural history continue to influence all subsequent scholarship. The omission of Lotte Reiniger from German film history is one of these preexistent omissions that remains uncorrected, resulting in the security of the Disney myth. Gaps in (German film) history display the "negative relation" of power. According to Foucault, "power can 'do' nothing…what it produces…is absences and gaps; it overlooks elements, introduces discontinuities, separates what is joined, and marks off boundaries. Its effects take the general form of limit and lack" (83). The absences produced by power are notable in animation studies as well as (German) film histories. If German history in general is incomplete, then an incomplete or incorrect recollection of the contributions of an independent avant-garde silhouette filmmaker such as Reiniger is less surprising.

Postwar anti-German sentiment was pacified by the Disney myth, which credits an American/Hollywood male, rather than an independent German female, with production of the first full-length animated film. Disney's rationalized, Hollywood-based, slapstick-themed, short, drawn cartoon animation better represented the potential of animation to entertain, uplift, and preoccupy a war-torn U.S. population than silhouette films by a female German exile. For Johnston, "it is the purpose of myth to fabricate an impression of innocence, in which all becomes 'natural'" (142). Certainly, the Disney myth has achieved this "impression of innocence," which has allowed its cultural naturalization.[78] To debunk the Disney myth is to question the relevance of a post-WWII historical imaginary to contemporary cultural discourses.

The imperialist drive represented by the Disney Company, or "the American animation empire" (Edera 11), has resulted in the marginalization of all other (that is, non-Disney) animation.[79] The oppositions--male/female, Hollywood/Berlin (Ufa), live-action/animation, cartoons/silhouettes--thrown into relief by Disney's successful colonization of animation and film scholarship favor Disney and marginalize other

[78] I am not suggesting that the Disney myth is guilty per say. I hope my argument has clarified that, following Spivak, I don't believe the myth arose or is perpetuated by one person. Ideology is larger than any individual or the will of that individual. “Ideology in action is what a group takes to be natural and self-evident” (Spivak, “Politics” 118). The Disney myth is an ideological apparatus of a self-identified group (film and animation scholars): the group takes the Disney myth as what is "natural and self-evident." Further, I don't think it is a conscious effort on the parts of scholars and critics. I do think it serves a specific purpose in historical explanatory textuality. This purpose is the object of my attention, along with the recovery of alternate, marginalia embodied by Reiniger's work.

[79] Several sources use the term “empire” to describe the Disney Company: see Grant (60-76); Kunzle (17); Dorfman and Mattelart; Allan (241); and (Brophy 73). The imperialist urge in Disney (the man and the company) is examined in the texts of Dorfman and Mattelart, Hiaasen, and Kanfer, among others. The in-depth analysis conducted by Hiaasen begins in the 1950s and is relevant if the discussion of the imperialist urge in Disney is considered through the contemporary practices of the company. Dorfman and Mattelart's 1971/75 examination of post-WWII Disney comics claims ideological messages therein negatively effect "dependent" countries, specifically Chile. The Marxist critique attacks the depictions of women, nature, capital, work, interpersonal relations, and natives in Disney comic books. Although the comic book medium is entirely separate from film, the Disney comics and Disney animated films are both products of the Disney Company and displays of its capitalist, imperialist, rationalized methods.

animators, including Reiniger.[80] Although marketing techniques and technologies have changed, Disney's fundamental urge to own history, to own animation, to own land, to colonize various cultures, and to rule the world has remained intact. Numerous times Disney openly stated his desire to conquer the world (Kanfer; Mattelart and Dorfman; Hiaasen; Sklar). Disney was not anomalous in his American/Western, capitalist, imperialist, masculist urge to dominate history. The imperial drive displayed by Disney was a prominent trait of the entire (American) film industry from its beginnings. In the 1920s and 1930s, "American movies presented American myths and American dreams, home-grown for native audiences, yet only man-made boundaries kept them from conquering the world" (Sklar 215). To locate the colonizer, one looks at the colony. The colony bears marks of the empire, in this case Disney's empire. Disney is dominates film and animation scholarship. He ran out the natives, cleared the land, imposed his language as the official language, and stamped out difference.

Disney's involvement with institutions of power further insured his legacy. The Disney myth is perpetuated through Foucauldian mechanisms of power to which Disney belonged and from which Reiniger was excluded, or other-ed. She was not American: she was other. She was not male: she was other. She did not make cartoons: she made other. The mechanisms of power have perpetuated the Disney myth since WWII in order to guarantee their own power and advance their own interests. Those in power control the systems of communication. Those in power historically have been wealthy white men; in

[80] Universal Film Aktion Gesellschaft (Ufa), which embodied the mainstream early German film industry, was Hollywood's only postwar competition. Reiniger was not a part of that system. She occasionally visited the studios and collaborated on films produced within its confines, but she did not produce her films or pursue career opportunities there. She openly admits that she was an industry outsider. See the national identity chapter for more detailed account of Reiniger's relationship to early German film, Ufa, and Weimar culture.

the film industry historically Hollywood/American men have held the power.[81] As a white American man working within the confines of the Hollywood studio system, Disney belonged to the dominant group. Therefore, the mechanisms of power promoted his interests at the expense of outsiders such as Reiniger.

Aside from the inadvertent formation of the Disney myth, there is some evidence of Disney's intentional colonization of animation and film histories. Disney's intentional self-insertion into historical narratives exhibits what Spivak calls "masculist centralism." Disney wanted to be remembered as the most important animator and to be credited with the most animation firsts (Mikaluk 66). The epistemic violence inflected by Disney--the man, the myth, and the company--upon historical textuality results in the repression of other animation. However, "this critique should not be understood as merely an accusation of personal guilt; for the shifting limits of ideology...are larger than the 'individual consciousness'" (Spivak 130). The Disney myth is larger than the individual will although Disney actively attempted to assert his individual will to be remembered as the first and most important animator.

When William Day, the founder of the first cinema history museum, tried to sell his collection in the late 1920s, Disney's attempt to purchase it was refused (Robinson 239). Disney's failed attempt to purchase the entire history of (Western) cinema was quickly eclipsed by another opportunity. Disney accepted a 1935 dinner invitation from Iris Barry, the first film curator of the New York Museum of Modern Art (Mikaluk 62). This meeting marked the beginning of a career-long mutually beneficial relationship

[81] Women were active participants in the development of the early American film industry. For a more detailed account of early women in Hollywood see Anthony Slide, *Early Women Directors*. Additionally, many of the original Hollywood studio moguls were of German origin. For a substantive account of German-speaking influences on Hollywood, see Peter Krämer in *German National Cinema*, ed. Bergfelder, Carter, and Göktürk, pp. 228-37.

between the two and the institutions for which they stood. Disney regularly contributed animated "firsts" to MOMA's film collection, and by 1944 he was a member of the museum's board of trustees (Miklaluk 62). Disney's influence on MOMA collections insured his place in (film) history. MOMA's treatment of film as an art form worthy of collection and animation as a genre of film "with its own technological and aesthetic innovations" benefited Disney, who "found a way to convert aesthetic appreciation into fine art marketability through sales of production art from his films" (Mikaluk 57, 65). MOMA's "circulation of film programs also offered a nucleus around which many schools were able to base film courses. To the extent that artistic reputations in film are influenced by academic efforts at canon formation, the museum's contributions cannot be overstated" (Mikaluk 57-8). If MOMA influenced the film and animation canons as heavily as Mikaluk suggests and the films of Disney dominated MOMA's circulated film programs, then the formation and persistence of the Disney myth is somewhat demystified. Disney's relation to MOMA insured his place in film history; conversely, the exclusion of *Prince Achmed* from MOMA precludes its inclusion in the (Western) animation canon.[82] In 1951 Disney adapted Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* into a full-length animated film, motivating Disney to erase a competing adaptation, Lou Bunin's *Alice au pays des merveilles* (*Alice in Wonderland*) (1951), from film history (Grant 74). Even if Disney had not attempted to forcefully insert himself into (film and animation) history, he would remain at the center since "it is the center that offers the official explanation; or, the center is defined and reproduced by the explanation that it

[82] Although some of Reiniger's short films from the 1930s occasionally appeared in some of MOMA's alternate programs, Disney's entire career was thoroughly documented in the museum's collections.

can express" (Spivak 107). The glorification of Disney at the expense of all other animators signals a repression of cultural marginalia.

Disney's desire for fame and fortune paid off in post-World War II America; he became world famous and unfathomably rich through his animation. Disney practiced Taylorist-Fordist assembly line, or rationalized, methods of production and valued financial success; was driven by a market mindset based in the tenets of capitalism (Schickel 229). For Spivak, "the practice of capitalism is intimately linked with the practice of maculism" (107). Disney removed himself from the animation tables as soon as financially possible.[83] He strove to quickly and inexpensively produce animation to increase returns, and his marketing campaigns were unstoppable. He consistently attempted to abolish all traces of individuality from animators within his productions. Stephenson accepts rationalized animation production unless the system becomes more important than individual artistic input and expression (21). Of his contributions to Disney's *Fantasia*, experimental German (animated) filmmaker and Reiniger contemporary Oskar Fischinger comments, "the film 'Toccata and Fugue by Bach' is not really my work. Rather, it is the most inartistic product of a factory…. One thing I definitely found out: that no true work of art can be made with that procedure used in the Disney Studio" (qtd. in Moritz, *Optical* 85). Subsequent animation scholars have widely acknowledged the inevitable: "sooner or later individuality and creativity tended to subserve assembly-line techniques, deadlines, and marketability, as in any mass-production enterprise" (Russett and Starr 32).

[83] According to Stephenson, Disney stopped drawing in 1928 (46). Grant claims Disney did not draw animation after 1924 (60). Kunzle says Disney stopped drawing after 1926 (17).

Since Hollywood dominated the world film market, it was the only reasonable place for Disney to base his animation studio. According to animation critic Robin Allan, “Hollywood came to dominate the industry and Disney allied himself to the centre of American popular film culture by basing himself in Hollywood rather than in New York where most of the animation studios were established” (241). His journey from Kansas City to Hollywood and subsequent successes embody the American Dream: a poor but ambitious country boy went to the big city armed only with persistence, a dream, and a knack for business and made it big. Despite the setbacks, his dream became a reality and earned him wealth, power, and fame. This narrative of hard work leading to success for the industrious, determined entrepreneur appealed to post-WWII America and manifested itself as the Disney myth. Over time, the boundary between biography and history became blurred: Disney's story became the (hi)story of animated film. Animated film became identified as American/Hollywood, male, white, capitalist, modern, rationalized, optimistic, determined, and triumphant. If Hollywood produced the narrative structures and content with which the rest of the world was familiar, then Disney animation set expectations and viewer familiarity with animation devices, methods, characters, structures, and content.

Debunking the Disney Myth

Animation will continue to struggle for legitimacy without an established tradition or generally accepted historical narrative. A general consensus about the history of the medium would greatly assist the legitimization of the medium. The relinquishing of the Disney myth is an integral part of such a consensus formulation. Whether or not

archivists later discover a provably extant full-length animated film that preceded *Prince Achmed* is less important than the general acceptance that Disney's *Snow White* was not the first full-length animated film. The establishment of *Prince Achmed*'s primacy as the first animated feature film is not the overriding concern of the present research project, yet the film's status retains relevance since its primacy fundamentally challenges a major part of the Disney myth. No matter how much the Disney myth invites clarification, any effort to do so inevitably meets with resistance since Disney is a beloved figure in American culture, ranking in popular fondness with early Elvis, blue jeans, and muscle cars. His name invokes magical images, wholesome fun, tender moments, and Mickey Mouse. Debunking the Disney myth will require a mass cultural shift in perception. This shift does not require a rejection of all things Disney, as proposed by Dorfman and Mattelart, Hiassen, and Schweizer and Schweizer. However, the shift does require an open-minded re-consideration of the development and origins of the multiplane camera and the full-length animated film, as well as the impact of national identity, gender, and genre on transmission of knowledge and canon formation. The 2001 DVD re-release of *Prince Achmed*

> only revises animation history to those people who are willing to revise…. Columbus discovered America, and it doesn't matter that there were people who came before. That's the way the story goes and that's the popular version, and it's going to be very hard to shake it. Disney will always be first to those who are going to believe the Disney version, no matter what evidence is presented to the contrary. (Starr qtd. in Liebenson F7)

The role of Reiniger in the development of animated film demands recognition and clarification. Such recognition and clarification automatically debunks part of the Disney myth by displacing *Snow White* as the first feature-length animated film. The origins and perpetuation of the Disney myth represses other (non-Hollywood, non-Disney, non-male, non-cartoon, non-drawn) animation, a neglect that impacts knowledge transmission and canon formation. Since "what inhabits the prohibited margin of a particular explanation specifies its particular politics" (Spivak, "Explanation" 106), that Reiniger's specific identifying attributes are German, female, independent silhouette animation filmmaker suggests that the Disney myth explanation attempts to repress that particular combination of nationality, gender, and genre.

Conclusion

The combination of Reiniger's national identity, gender, and genre has resulted in her perpetual marginalization. The silhouette animation genre in which Reiniger worked has been historically marginalized. For Spivak, ideology becomes most apparent at the margins of culture. Since animation is a marginal medium largely ignored by film, visual arts, and graphic design scholarship, it is particularly suited to critique the center. Considering the prominent presence of animation in contemporary culture, the marginal status Reiniger occupies becomes highly suspect. She is the pioneer of a key cultural medium and must be reconsidered. *Prince Achmed* is synchronous with contemporary animation-saturated culture, so a contemporary effort for its recovery and analysis is necessary. Animation increasingly appears in contemporary culture. Many films feature animated sequences, graphic creations, and digital alterations. Animated film is box

office gold; it has been since the debut of *The Little Mermaid* (1989), followed by the animated films of Pixar and DreamWorks. Animation is prevalent in (American) television programming. The longest running comedy series in television history is animated; *The Simpsons* is entering its twenty-second year in 2011. Animation is branching out even in the realms it already occupies: 3-D versions of films frequently accompany "regular" releases. Contemporary manifestations of animation in mass culture make Reiniger relevant since she is fundamentally tied to the origins of animated film. Since she began the animated feature, she is responsible for all animated features. She started it all with *Prince Achmed*.

The growth of scholarly interest in television, advertising, and animation indicates a broadening of scholarly boundaries and disciplinary boundaries, but there is still much academic hesitance to allow this discourse any real credibility. Some scholars continue to discredit popular culture as unsuitable for serious academic inquiry. Efforts to separate academic discourse from increasingly dominant cultural forms are unrealistic and nostalgic attempts to reclaim the past and protect imaginary borders between high, proper culture and low, meaningless culture. When poetry was the main academically accepted form of study, many (bourgeois European) people read it. Most people no longer do as often, so it seems unreasonable to insist literature, in this example poetry, is the only legitimate academic area of study and inquiry. This is not a suggestion that public interest should directly influence and determine academic acceptance of art forms; however, the longstanding tendency of intellectuals and academics to consciously scorn anything enjoyed by the mass public seems an outdated reaction in a postmodern, postindustrial culture. However, the efforts of feminist, New Historicist, and post-colonial scholars

have validated the value of historically ignored and dismissed forms, such as etiquette guides, diaries and journals, and diaspora literature. These validations have been publicly permitted, or tolerated, within the academy.[84] Increasingly, the study of film has been accepted as a credible academic pursuit although limitations remain on which films are suitable for scholarly analysis. Much as (Western academic) literature canon formation, which is influenced by educated European elite (male) values, the film canon seems to be informed by similar politics of interpretation.

Critical dismissal of animated film indicates that canonical filmmakers and genres are attributed higher value, if not some semblance of autonomy or aura, and in the age of technological reproducibility the possibility that some films retain authenticity while others cannot seems illogical. Griffith, Welles, Lang, and Godard represent the canonical camp. Likewise, film noir, silent film, French New Wave, and Italian neo-realism have become widely accepted genres. Conversely, some terms and genres, such as animation, sequel/trilogy, horror/slasher/"teen scream," (summer) blockbuster, "chick flicks"/romantic comedy, pornography, and literary adaptation, historically have caused academics to immediately recoil.[85] At a glance, my perfunctory list of canonical filmmakers and genres seems to be produced by (and promoting the interests of) men, while the marginal list seems to reflect productions of (and for) females, children, and adolescents. The latter list also tends to entertain, often by using special effects and other digitalization; involve serialization; offer mass appeal; engage in fantasy; provide humor;

[84] I specify "publicly" because one never knows what goes on in ivory towers and academic "locker rooms" unless the Wayne Booths of the world reveal these privileged conversations and the hidden resentments and fears that motivate them.

[85] There are critical exceptions to these very general value assumption categories. For instance, film theorist Linda Williams has studied the meanings and values of pornography. However, the general perception of the former as artistic enough for serious academic inquiry and the latter as unsuitable for scholarly attention remains.

and visualize written texts. Since film canon formation is relatively young, now is the time to make changes and question various politics of interpretation that contain value assumptions and influence canon formation.

CHAPTER FIVE--CONCLUSION

The historical and continuing critical marginalization of Lotte Reiniger and *Prince Achmed* is not only a symptom of Reiniger's German national identity, gender, and the animated film genre in which the film was produced but also of its full-length silhouette form, literary source material on which it is based, *1001 Arabian Nights*, small-scale handmade production, and independent promotion and distribution. The neglected discourse positions of Reiniger and *Prince Achmed* are further exacerbated by Reinger's status as an exile, her non-group/movement affiliation, and her politically neutral public persona. Separately these elements might not have had such a severe negative on Reiniger's and *Prince Achmed*'s legacy. However, the culmination of these multiply marginalizing, culturally subordinated traits has forced her into the cultural fringes. Rabinovitz aptly summarizes one aspect of the multiple marginalization faced by Reiniger and *Prince Achmed*: "However much independent cinema may be viewed as a 'marginal' practice within the Hollywood hegemony, women filmmakers--and animation as a cinematic form--lie at the outskirts of those heterogeneous cinematic margins" (74). Therefore, independent animation by a female filmmaker who also happens to be a German exile during an era of concentrated gender inequality, widespread anti-German sentiment, and star-based Hollywood hegemony truly relegates Reiniger to a nearly invisible, or even transcendent, cultural status.[86]

[86] By "invisible, or even transcendent" I am referring to the unique quality of *Prince Achmed*, to which I devoted considerable attention within the previous chapters, to defy categorization and confound critics. In other words, the invisibility is related to the inability of film criticism to comfortably label Reiniger's films.

Reiniger defied numerous cultural assumptions, not only in her films but also in her life. At a time when Hollywood hegemony became internationally entrenched; the star-system emerged as the standard marketing strategy; intellectuals and artists formed groups to streamline promotion and exhibition; cartoon animation was slapstick filler on live-action Hollywood programs; and Ufa dominated the German film industry, Reiniger independently produced and distributed a non-cartoon/drawn, non-slapstick, non-avant-garde (it included experimentation but, nevertheless, was a narrative film), non-group/movement affiliated, non-star based, non-Disney/Hollywood animated feature film. Sure, there were exceptions in each of these seemingly surface categories. For example, independently produced and distributed, non-drawn, non-slapstick animated films by German filmmaker Hans Richter, Swedish filmmaker Viking Eggeling, and German filmmaker Oskar Fischinger have been critically recovered and addressed by various scholars; however, these filmmakers are male and their films are shorts, marking their difference from Reiniger's specific situation. Furthermore, the affiliation of Richter and Eggeling with Dada circles and Fischinger's non-narrative experimental films qualify these filmmakers as experimental, or avant-garde (Russett and Starr; Moritz *Optical*). Furthermore, the scholarly attention devoted to these avant-gardists has been infrequent.

Reiniger believed that devoting individual attention to the cutting of silhouettes was mandatory to their creation. Reiniger invented her own worlds, which she considered quite tangible ("Adventures" 3). She bypassed financial success and international renown in favor of artistic and personal freedom. She never bragged about her accomplishments;

That category defiance has devastatingly influenced the position of Reiniger's films in film history and discourse and suggests that categorization is an insufficient critical tendency that must be abandoned in order to include other, heterogeneous texts before the film canon is solidly established.

blatantly promoted her films; or regretted her post-World War II obscurity. She continued cutting silhouettes despite historical, political, cultural, and social obstacles.

The influence of Reiniger's films can be detected throughout the history of film and continues to the present day. Truly, "she [Reiniger] remains a potent influence on many new animators" (Foster 319). The silhouette animation of Michel Ocelot most blatantly pays homage to Reiniger. The fairy tale story material on which his films are based, the intricacy of detail in his silhouette figures, and his filmic nostalgia for a simpler time all allude to Reiniger. *Kirikou and the Sorceress* (1998), *Princes and Princesses* (2000), and *Azur and Asmar* (2006) all use silhouette animation to reconfigure and retell folk and fairy tales. The animation of Pedro Serrazina in *Story of the Cat and the Moon* (*Estória do gato e da lua*) (1994) is also reminiscent of Reiniger's silhouette films. The dynamic curves and smooth metamorphoses echo Reiniger's emphasis on the plasticity of animation and the juxtaposition of curves and diagonals. The silhouette animation of Marjane Satrapi in *Persepolis* (2007) illustrates the influence of Reiniger. While Satrapi's politically charged, autobiographical film content differs significantly from Reiniger's seemingly apolitical content, the outlines, expressivity, hand gestures, and abstract sequences recall Reiniger and *Prince Achmed*. Reiniger's influence exceeds the film genre; the artwork of artist Kara Walker also displays it. Walker's 2007-08 exhibit, *My Complement, My Enemy, My Oppressor, My Love*, toured the United States and featured silhouette figures cut from black paper depict historical events to explore race, power, control, dominance, sexuality, gender, and freedom.

Reiniger also inspired her contemporaries, but her influence is often underestimated or entirely overlooked. According to Moritz, *Prince Achmed* "must have

inspired Oskar [Fischinger] to make his own silhouette animation" (*Optical* 17). Live-action Weimar cinema often features silhouettes and shadow play; films such as *Metropolis* (1927) and *The Blue Angel* (1930) include detailed shadow sequences.[87] Alfred Hitchcock utilized the impact of the silhouette to symbolize his artistic presence. For Hitchcock, the silhouette functions as a metonym that foreshadows the filmic text, identifies the filmmaker, and establishes viewer expectations. The Hitchcock silhouette signals the macabre, the psychotic, the monstrous, the underbelly.

Another filmmaker influenced by Reiniger also explores the monstrous underbelly. Traces of Reiniger's influence can be detected in contemporary films such as Tim Burton's *Nightmare Before Christmas* (1993), which features Pumpkin Jack silhouetted against a full moon during one of his solo performances within the first ten minutes of *Nightmare*. Burton's use of shadows and silhouettes is integral not only to the production design, or appearance, but also to the narrative development of several of his films. *Nightmare*, similarly to other animated films, is currently experiencing a contemporary renaissance. The film has already been released in 3-D but October 2010 witnessed a limited run of the film in Los Angeles at the El Capitan Theatre. Accompanied by *Tingler*-esque smoke and wind effects, the film-going experience bordered on 4D. In 2009 MOMA featured a tribute to the filmmaking career of Burton, further indicating the general contemporary appreciation for unconventional animation. The cohesiveness of Burton's aesthetic reflects Reiniger's artistic and thematic cohesion. While Reiniger focuses on movement and background detail as she portrays familiar fairy tales, legends, and myths, Burton focuses on character development to endear the

[87] Distinguishing the influence of Reiniger from the general tendency toward shadows as visual metaphor would require a separate extended study. Perhaps the meaning and genealogy of shadow play in Weimar cinema will be of interest to another scholar.

monstrous and upset audience expectations about the "good guys" and the "bad guys" as he reinvents legends and myths. This "good guy/bad guy" disruption and legend reinvention appears in *Beetlejuice* (1988), *Edward Scissorhands* (1990), and *The Corpse Bride* (2005).

Contemporary cultural prevalence of animation lends a particular timeliness, or Benjaminian synchronicity, to *Prince Achmed*. After all, the oldest-surviving full-length animated film is in some way responsible for the stream of multi-million dollar animated features since the 1990s. The contemporary synchronicity of *Prince Achmed* suggests that its imagery has only recently become intelligible and therefore must be recovered before passing back into oblivion. Reiniger's contemporaries, such as Renoir and Brecht, were critically acclaimed and their discourse positions have been secured. However, not everyone has seen a French art film or a play, but most people have seen an animated feature film. The general trend toward interdisciplinary, international (film) scholarship allows a unique opportunity for scholars to approach Reiniger and *Prince Achmed*. Furthermore, the largely neglected state of scholarship on animated film, Reiniger, and *Prince Achmed* invites application of a multitude of theoretical or disciplinary approaches to various animated films.

Of the omission of Alice Guy Blaché from film histories, Acker wonders, "If the history books forgot to convey this not-so-small detail, does it make the fact of it any less true? Does it make the work that these women produced any less significant? What was the difference...between an omission from history and a lie?" (xviii). My dissertation posits responses to Acker's inflammatory inquiries. In the previous chapters I advance several possible responses to these provoking questions. While citizens of a postmodern,

postindustrial civilization might perceive these questions as inflammatory, or even outdated, my research reveals that they are as relevant now as they ever were. For if an understanding of the contributions of non-English speakers, women, and animators, as well as other historically marginalized members of society, are not yet clarified and appreciated, then when will they be? If the impact of traditionally overlooked groups on the development of film remains critically neglected, then how valid are the degrees of expertise that typify contemporary film critics, reviewers, theorists, scholars, historians, and general audiences? If the critical discourse position occupied by Reiniger is any indication of an entire history (of (animated) film) that lies in forgotten ruins, then recovery efforts seem crucial to the field of film studies, as well as a general art history.

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APPENDIX I--LOTTE REINIGER'S BIO-FILMOGRAPHY

1899 - 2 June, Born Charlotte Reiniger in Berlin.

1915 - Attended Paul Wegener's lecture on special effects in the cinema.

1916-7 - Enrolled in Max Reinhardt's drama school in Berlin; created silhouette subtitles for the live-action feature *Rubezahls Hochzeit* (*Rumpelstiltskin's Wedding*), dir. Wegener, prod. Projektions AG-Union Berlin; created costumes, set, and special effects for *Die schöne Prinzessin von China* (*The Beautiful Chinese Princess*), a live-action silhouette film in which actors were only seen as onscreen shadows, dir. Rochus Gliese.

1918 - Created intertitles and assisted stop-motion animation sequence for live-action feature *Der Rattenfänger von Hameln* (*The Pied Piper of Hamelin*), dir. Wegener; created intertitles for a live-action short called *Apokalypsi* (*Apocalypse*), dir. Gliese, scen. Wegener, prod. Projektions AG-Union Berlin; introduced by Wegener to Dr. Hans Cürlis and his filmmaking associates at the Institut für Kulturforschung (Institute for Cultural Research) in Berlin.

1919 - *Das Ornament der verliebzten Herz* (*The Ornament of the Enamored Heart*), dir. and scen. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, asst. Berthold Bartosch and Kucharsky, prod. Institute for Cultural Research.

1920 - *Amor und das standhafte Liebespaar* (*Cupid and the Steadfast Lovers*), a short film that combined live-action and silhouettes, dir. and scen. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, prod. Institute for Cultural Research; created intertitles and a shadow sequence for the live-action feature *Der verlorene Schatten* (*The Lost Shadow*), dir. Gliese, scen. Wegener, prod. Projektions AG-Union Berlin; *Das Geheimnis der Marquise* (*The Marquise's Secret*), a reverse silhouette film, dir. and scen. Reiniger, prod. Julius Pinschewer advertising firm; *Die Barcarole* (*The Barcarole*) for Pinschewer's advertising firm.

1921 - *Die fliegende Koffer* (*The Flying Coffer*), dir. and scen. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, prod. Institute for Cultural Research; *Der Stern von Bethlehem* (*The Star of Bethlehem*), dir. and scen. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, prod. Institute for Cultural Research; married Carl Koch.

1922 - *Aschenputtel* (*Cinderella*), dir. and scen. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, asst. Toni Rabold and Alexander Kardan, prod. Institute for Cultural Research; *Dornroeschen* (*Sleeping Beauty*), dir. and scen. Reiniger, prod. Pinschewer advertising firm.

Appendix I (Continued)

1923 - Co-created Kriemhild's Dream of Hawks sequence with Walter Ruttmann for *Die Nibelungen*, dir. Frtiz Lang, prod. Decla Bioscop AG Berlin; began production on *Die Geschichte des Prinzen Achmed* (*The Adventures of Prince Achmed*), dir. and scen. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, asst. Walter Ruttmann, Kardan, Bartosch, Walther Türck, comp. Wolfgang Zeller, prod. Comenius-Film Berlin.

1926 - 15 Jan. Completed version of *Prince Achmed* submitted to censorship board, 2 May press screening in Berlin; July Parisian premiere of *Prince Achmed* at Louis Jouvet's theatre on the Champs Elysees; Sep. *Prince Achmed* officially premiered at Gloria Palast in Berlin.

1927 - Created silhouette effects within *Heut' tanzt Mariette* (*Today Marietta Dances*), a live-action feature, dir. Friedrich Zelnik.

1928 - 15 Dec. Berlin premiere of *Doktor Doolittle und seiner Tiere* (*Dr. Doolittle and His Animals*), Reiniger's second feature-length silhouette film, dir. and scen. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, asst. Bartosch, comp. Paul Dessau, Kurt Weill, Paul Hindemith, and Igor Stravinsky, prod. Deutscher Werkfilm Berlin; *Der scheintote Chinese* (*The Seemingly-Dead Chinaman*) was originally a thirteen-minute sequence within *Prince Achmed* but was cut by German censors and international distributors and released separately, dir. and scen. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, prod. Comenius-Film Berlin.

1930 - *Jagd nach dem Gluck* (*Running after Luck*), dir. Gliese, perf. Jean Renoir, Catherine Hessling, Amy Tedesco, and Berthold Bartosch, cinematog. Fritz Arno Wagner, prod. Comenius-Film Berlin; *Zehn Minuten Mozart* (*Ten Minutes with Mozart*), scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, comp. Zeller, prod. Melophon Film Berlin.

1931 - *Harlekin* (*Harlequin*), dir. and scen. Reiniger, comp. Eric Walter White, cinematog. and prod. Koch.

1932 - *Sissi*, a ten-minute silhouette sequence to be shown between scenes of Fritz Kreisler's Viennese operetta of the same name, dir. Reiniger.

1933 - Created silhouette sequence for the live-action feature *Don Quichote* (*Don Quixote*), dir. G.W. Pabst; *Carmen*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, asst. Arthur Neher, comp. Peter Gellhorn, prod. Lotte Reiniger Film Berlin.

1934 - *Das rollande Rad*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, asst. Neher, comp. Gellhorn, prod. Lotte Reiniger Film Berlin; *Der Graf von Carabas* (*Puss in Boots*), scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, asst. Neher, comp. Gellhorn, prod. Lotte Reiniger Film Berlin; *Das gestohlene Herz* (*The Stolen Heart*), scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, asst. Neher, prod. Lotte Reiniger Film Berlin for the Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Hausmusik in der Reichsmusikkammer.

Appendix I (Continued)

1935 - *Der klein Schornsteinfeger* (*The Little Chimneysweep*), dir. Reiniger, scen. White, cinematog. Koch, asst. Neher, comp. Gellhorn, prod. Lotte Reiniger Film Berlin; *Papageno* (*The Cheerful Bird-Catcher)*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, asst. Neher, comp. Gellhorn, prod. Lotte Reiniger Film Berlin; *Galathea*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, asst. Neher, comp. White, prod. Lotte Reiniger Film Berlin.

1936 - *The King's Breakfast*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, asst. Martin Battersby and Neher, comp. Frazer Simpson, prod. Facts and Fantasies, London.

1937 - *Tocher* (Scottish dialect for *The Dowr*y), scen. and dir. Reiniger, prod. General Post Office film unit.

1938 - Created a silhouette sequence for the live-action feature *La Marseillaise*, dir. Jean Renoir, prod. Societé de Production et d'Exploitation.

1939 - *H.P.O.*; *Dream Circus* (unfinished).

1940 - *L'Elisir D'Amore*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, prod. Scalera Film (Itlay).

1941 - Assistant director on *Tosca*, dir. Koch and Renoir, prod. Scalera Film.

1942 - Co-wrote (with Koch) *Una Signora dell'ovest* (*Girl of the Golden West*), prod. Scalera Film.

1944 - *Die goldene Gans* (*The Golden Goose*) (unfinished), scen. and dir. Reiniger, prod. Reichsanstalt für Film und Bild Berlin.

1949-50 - Produced several advertising films, including *The Daughter*, *Post Early for Christmas*, *Greetings Telegram*, and *Wool Ballet*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, prod. G.P.O. Film Unit (London) and Crown Film Unit (London).

1951 - *Mary's Birthday*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, asst. Godfrey Jennison and Jane Phillips, prod. Crown Film Unit (London).

1953 - *Snow White and Rose Red*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, asst. Kardan, Stanley Newby, and Gerry Lee, comp. Freddie Phillips, prod. Primrose Productions (London); *Aladdin*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, asst. Kardan, Stanley Newby, and Gerry Lee, comp. Freddie Phillips, prod. Primrose Productions; *The Magic Horse*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, asst. Kardan, Stanley Newby, and Gerry Lee, comp. Freddie Phillips, prod. Primrose Productions; *You've Asked for It*, scen. and dir. Reiniger.

Appendix I (Continued)

1954 - *The Three Wishes*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, comp. Phillips, prod. Primrose Productions; *The Grasshopper and the Ant*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, comp. Phillips, prod. Primrose Productions; *The Frog Prince*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, comp. Phillips, prod. Primrose Productions; *The Gallant Little Tailor*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, comp. Phillips, prod. Primrose Productions; *Caliph Stork*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, comp. Phillips, prod. Primrose Productions; *Hansel and Gretel*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, comp. Phillips, prod. Primrose Productions; *Thumbelina*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, comp. Phillips, prod. Primrose Productions; *The Sleeping Beauty*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, comp. Phillips, prod. Primrose Productions; *Cinderella*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, comp. Phillips, prod. Primrose Productions; *Hansel and Gretel*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, comp. Phillips, prod. Primrose Productions.

1955 - *The Gallant Little Tailor* won a Silver Dolphin in the short television film category at the Venice Biennale; *Jack and the Beanstalk*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, asst. Lee, comp. Phillips, prod. Primrose Productions.

1956 - *The Star of Bethlehem*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, comp. Gellhorn, prod. Primrose Productions.

1957 - *Helene La Belle*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, asst. Lee and Jane Phillips, comp. Ludo Phillips, prod. Fantasia Productions (London).

1958 - *The Seraglio*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, comp. Gellhorn

1960 - *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, prod. Coventry Theatre (London).

1961 - *The Frog Prince*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, prod. Coventry Theatre.

1962 - *Wee Sandy* was shown during intermission of a theatrical performance, scen. and dir. Reiniger, asst. Koch, prod. Glasgow Theatre (Scotland).

1963 - *Cinderella*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, cinematog. Koch, prod. Coventry Theatre; 1 Dec. Carl Koch, Reiniger's longtime husband and cinematographer, passed away.

1972 - Awarded the Filmband in Gold for longstanding and excellent work in German film.

1974 - *The Lost Son*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, comp. Phillips.

Appendix I (Continued)

1975 - *Auccassin et Nicolette*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, prod. National Film Board of Canada; assisted and narrated *Bewegte Bilder--Deutsche Trickfilme der zwanziger Jahre Film im Schatten--Der Trickfilm im Dritten Reich*, dir. Rudolf J. Schummer, prod. ZDF Mainz.

1979 - *The Rose and the Ring*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, prod. Gordon Martin.

1980 - *Düsselchen und die vier Jahreszeiten*, scen. and dir. Reiniger, prod. Filminstitut Düsseldorf.

1981 - 19 June, died.

1986 - New York Museum of Modern Art dedicated a tribute to Reiniger's filmmaking career.

APPENDIX II--ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF PUBLISHED WRITINGS BY LOTTE REINIGER[88]

[88] Although my research is limited to English-language texts, during the course of my research I was unable to locate a complete and accurate bibliography of the (published) writings of Lotte Reiniger. Admittedly the ideal Reiniger bibliography would include previously untranslated and unpublished texts, but this version could assist other Reiniger scholars and is therefore included. When information is omitted, I have been unable to locate or translate it.

Reiniger, Lotte. "The Adventures of Prince Achmed, or What May Happen to Somebody Trying to Make a Full Length Cartoon in 1926." *Silent Picture* 8 (1970): 2-4. Print.
In this short article, Reiniger provides readers with perfunctory biographical information about her initial introduction by Paul Wegener to the filmmakers at the Institute for Cultural Research in Berlin, production of her earliest silhouette films, and acquaintance with Louis Hagan and subsequent offer to produce an animated feature. She supplies interesting details about production conditions for *Prince Achmed*, selection of literary source material on which to base the film, the effects of inflation upon production, and interpersonal relations of crewmembers. She devotes most of the article to the informal premiere of *Prince Achmed*.

---. "Film as Ballet." *Life and Letters Today* 14.3 (1936): 157-63. Print. Rpt. in Lant and Periz 166-72.
This article features Reiniger and her familiar discussing the relationship between ballet and animation. Notable topics of interest are rhythm, formalism in silhouette films, democratization of classical music, eighteenth-century music, image and sound synchronization, repetition, mathematics, onscreen focal points, curves and diagonals, and close-ups.

---. "Film Magic in Scissors." *Film Weekly* 5 Apr. 1930: 7. Print.
In this brief article, Reiniger discusses the development of film language, diversity of film production techniques, live-action versus trick film, stop-motion animation methods, filmmaking expenses, and the potential of animation within the film industry.

---. "Die Geschichte meines Prinzen Achmed." *Der Film Spiegel* 5 (1926): 30-32. Print. Rpt. in Milestone press kit for *Prince Achmed*.[89]
The press kit in which this article appears positions this article as Reiniger's original introduction to *Prince Achmed*. The content is quite similar to the content of "The Adventures of Prince Achmed, or What May Happen" as listed above.

---. "Lotte Reiniger: An Interview with Alfio Bastiancich." 1980. Trans. and ed. Jayne Pilling. *Women and Film: A Compendium*. London: BFI, 1992. 9-15. Print.
Excerpt from *Lotte Reiniger*. By Bastiancich. Turin: Assemblea Teatro; Compagnia del Bagatto, 1982.

[89] Although this article originally appeared in 1926 and was reprinted in the 2001 Milestone press kit, it also must have appeared in a post-1970 version since Reiniger refers to the musical score of Freddie Phillips and the film's 1970 restoration.

Appendix II (Continued)

This interview features Reiniger discussing her biography, early silhouette films and advertising films for Julius Pinschewer, contemporaries, the premiere of *Prince Achmed*, Wolfgang Zeller's original and Freddie Phillips's updated musical score, animation techniques, life in exile, materials used in silhouette films, close ups, and production companies.

---. "Moving Silhouettes." *Film Art* 3.8 (1936): 14-18. Print.

Lovely illustrations accompany this article. Reiniger emphasizes the importance of motion and rhythm to all film production. She also discusses chase scenes, evolution of the film industry, silhouette and cartoon animation, the implications of sound film, mathematics and animation, and storyboards.

---. "Scissors Make Films." *Sight and Sound* 5.17 (1936): 13-5. Print.

Reiniger provides a brief biographical sketch then addresses the two questions she was most frequently asked: where the idea originated and how the figures move onscreen without revealing her hands. In the process of answering these questions, Reiniger discusses the synchronization of sound and image,

---. *Shadow Theatres and Shadow Films*. London: Batsford, 1970. Print.

In this illustrated book Reiniger each of the three major sections of the book address a different aspect of shadow theatre, shadow play, and shadow film. In the first section Reiniger offers an historical overview of shadow theatres of the world. Secondly, she approaches shadow play practically by instructing readers about small, medium, and large shadow theatres; figure creation; lighting; supplies and materials; backgrounds; backstage space; and set construction. In the third part, she discusses the development of animated film; her experiences on Wegener's *Pied Piper of Hamelin* (1918); different techniques of animation; the trick table, or animation stand, and the multiplane camera; lighting; animation studio organization; film stock; storyboarding; studying movement of animals and people; set design and construction; practical matters such as sleeves and seating; arrangement of figures during the process of animation; methods of creating sudden appearances, transformations, and vanishing; panning; the shooting book; and abstract animation. The book concludes with a short section describing the production of *Prince Achmed*, a suggested beginner's exercise; tips for selecting stories for shadow play; a glossary of animation terms; and a list of suppliers in Great Britain and the United States.