Allegories of post-Fordism in 1970s New Hollywood: Countercultural combat films, conspiracy thrillers as genre-recycling

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This essay deals with some aspects of the New Hollywood cinema of the late 1960s and early 1970s, focusing on non-canonized works among the war movies and conspiracy thrillers of that period, and on some related diagnostic, critical and historiographic discourses. One concern of this is how such accounts of New Hollywood, in the historically narrow sense of the term, can be related to our present media-cultural experience, and what meanings the films in question can be made to reveal in a retrospective, allegorizing approach – in short: how to remember New Hollywood circa 1970. The retrospective frameworks employed here are (fragments of) a genealogy of subjectivities and temporalities characteristic of post-Fordist social production (which is where issues of "flexibility" and "recycling" and arguments made by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri will come in), and the pre-history of today´s blockbuster-oriented American cinema – the one which we know as New Hollywood in a larger sense.

Hollywood´s crisis and the countercultural pressure: redefining purposeful action

In 1971, *monogram* film magazine published a dossier on contemporary Hollywood in which the latter's overproduction crisis was interpreted as a crisis of its cultural, ethical and aesthetic presuppositions – of the conceptions of narrative orientation and meaningful action underlying its products. Peter Lloyd saw Hollywood as being in "crisis and transition" and as blindly grasping at trends in the youth market, largely due to "the gradual collapse of the efficacy of the heroic individual in the American cinema".[1] And Thomas Elsaesser pointed to massive differences between classical Hollywood´s "central protagonist with a cause, a goal, a purpose – in short, a motivation for action", and the "unmotivated hero" in recent films like *Easy Rider* (1969).[2] The "crisis of motivation" became a key term in Elsaesser's 1975 diagnosis

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[1] Peter Lloyd: "The American Cinema: An Outlook", monogram 1, 1971, p. 12
[2] Thomas Elsaesser: "The American Cinema: Why Hollywood", monogram 1, 1971, p. 9f

of the "pathos of failure" in American cinema during its contemporary transition from an "affirmative-consequential" conception of narrative action to an as yet undetermined mode. Referring mainly to New Hollywood's youth and road movies like *Easy Rider* and *Two-Lane Blacktop* (1971), Elsaesser wrote: "What the heroes bring to such films is the almost physical sense of inconsequential action, of pointlessness and uselessness, a radical scepticism, in short, about the American virtues of ambition, vision, drive."[3]

New Hollywood´s blocking of narrative goal-orientation was later summarised under the headlines negativity and nihilism by Chris Hugo. In his 1986 polemic retrospective view, *Easy Rider* again serves as the chief example for "the fashion for the supposed 'New Hollywood Cinema'" and its "beautiful loser" protagonists "who became, for a short period, the chief youth picture audience identification figures. They were the opposite to those characters in classic Hollywood pictures who found themselves able to take positive action in the world, because they showed a belief in the essential correctness of the dominant values that classic Hollywood cinema embraced." – "In general, the most frequent narrative strategy in *Easy Rider* could be summarised in terms of simply reversing the conventions of classic Hollywood from positive to negative. The central characters are passive, anti-social and goal-less."[4]

From a different perspective, Gilles Deleuze came to similar conclusions about 1970s New Hollywood (which he oddly subsumed under "post-war American cinema, outside Hollywood"). In 1983, he emphasized the failure of Hollywood´s action-oriented cinema to extricate itself other than negatively from its classical tradition. In Deleuze´s genea-logics of modern cinema, New Hollywood appeared as a dead end: to him, Altman´s "dispersive situations", the weak linkages between actions, perceptions and affects for instance in Scorsese, *Easy Rider*´s voyage form, detached from active and affective structures, or the no-win stories and loser heroes of Penn´s and Peckinpah´s neo-westerns were characteristic of a fundamental "crisis of the action-image" which coincided with the crisis of the "American Dream".[5]

In Deleuze´s latter formulation, a larger historical context in which to situate New Hollywood is invoked rather passingly. Elsaesser´s version of what one could call the "failure argument" indicates more specifically how to frame this critical moment of

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[3] Thomas Elsaesser: "The Pathos of Failure", monogram 6, 1975, (p.15) **in this volume** p. ?
[4] Chris Hugo: "Easy Rider and Hollywood in the '70s", Movie 31/32, 1986, p. 67, 69, 71
[5] Gilles Deleuze: *The Movement-Image. Cinema 1.* [1983] Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P 1986, pp. 167f, 207-210

American cinema culturally and politically: to Elsaesser, the pathos of failure, as the predominant narrative stance of New Hollywood´s youth movies, reflects "the moral and emotional gestures of a defeated generation" and "the experience of a rebellion whose impulse towards change aborted".[6] In the mid-1970s, New Hollywood´s inability to offer a narratively and ethically efficient substitute for the goal-oriented narratives and heroic subjectivities it had broken with could be read as a symptom of the defeat of the 1960s countercultures. But in the same period, a less pessimistic picture of this relationship was also possible: In an article on "New Hollywood Cinema" which in parts responded to Elsaesser´s critique of the pathos of failure, Steve Neale rated the impact of "the youth and students movement" and of "countercultures and ideologies generally" on Hollywood in more positive terms: "The very pressure of these groups and ideologies meant that the media had to 'give' at some point (even if this largely resulted in recuperation): Hollywood, certainly by the mid-1960´s, was the weakest point."[7] While differing in their evaluations, both Elsaesser´s and Neale´s views imply that with Hollywood´s short-lived orientation towards the (broadly) countercultural value-system of educated urban youth audiences, there is more at stake than just the marketing task of finding entertainment formulas for a preferred target group.

I want to address the question of social pragmatics and subjectivities underlying New Hollywood´s images and narratives, i.e., the conception of purposeful action that gives cultural meaning to these movies and allows them to be placed in a larger historical framework. I suggest that by taking New Hollywood´s countercultural dimension, commodified as it may be, seriously and by slightly shifting the film references to less canonized productions, the familiar "failure narrative" about New Hollywood can be reworked into a historical success story. To put it less teleologically, I attempt to revisit the crisis of Hollywood´s action-image circa 1970 and to identify symptoms of the emergence of a new conceptualization of purposeful, productive action. What distinguishes American industrial cinema circa 1970 from earlier versions of a "new" or "post-classical" Hollywood[8] is, to a large extent, its youth- and countercultural orientation. The latter´s negative gestures of refusal – a refusal (or inability) to perpetuate classical Hollywood´s affirmative-consequential narrative, generic and ethical norms of action, or a nihilism that "simply revers[es] the

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[6] Elsaesser: "The Pathos of Failure" (p. 17f), **in this volume** p. ?
[7] Steve Neale: "'New Hollywood Cinema'", Screen 17, 2, 1976, p. 119
[8] On historical usages and different meanings of the terms "New Hollywood" and "post-classical Hollywood" see Peter Kramer: "Post-classical Hollywood", in: John Hill, Pamela Church Gibson (eds.): The Oxford Guide to Film Studies. Oxford: Oxford UP 1998

conventions of classic Hollywood practice from positive to negative", as Hugo put it[9] – can be seen as preconditions of a positive, innovative moment.

Some concepts and perspectives suited to this kind of re-evaluation can be found in the genealogy of post-Fordism contained in Michael Hardt´s and Antonio Negri´s political theory of *Empire*. Hardt and Negri highlight a historical success of the 1960s youth and countercultures, in that these movements´ creativity in inventing new social subjectivities and standards of purposeful, productive action has been the driving force of capitalism´s shift away from Fordist discipline: "[...*T*]*he 'merely cultural' experimentation had very profound political and economic effects.* [...] The youth who refused the deadening repetition of the factory-society invented new forms of mobility and flexibility, new styles of living. [...] [T]he indexes of the value of the movements – mobility, flexibility, knowledge, communication, cooperation, the affective – would define the transformation of capitalist production in the subsequent decades."[10]

What follows is neither an attempt to annex New Hollywood to a history of anti-disciplinary resistance nor a contribution to a theory of countercultures.[11] Rather, I will first of all employ flexibility and affectivity as key terms to highlight American cinema´s role in an overall culture-driven redefinition of capitalist production – of what counts as purposeful active behavior productive of meaning and value, as well as of the social production of subjectivity in Hardt´s and Negri´s sense. My notion of a New Hollywood that explores these pragmatics and ethics is connected to the Benjaminian understanding of the cinema as a mass-cultural "rehearsal" of modernization, and to Jonathan Beller´s provocative equation of cinema and capital as modes of producing and organising experience. As   Beller claims in his Benjamin- and Deleuze-inflected argument, "cinema may be taken as a model for the many technologies which in effect take the machine off the assembly line and bring it to the body in order to mine it for labor power (value)." Cinema thus "functions as a kind of discipline and control akin to previous methods of socialization by either civil society or the labor process (e.g., Taylorization)"; it is "the potential cutting and splicing of all aspects of the world

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[9] Hugo: "Easy Rider and Hollywood in the '70s", p. 71
[10]   Michael Hardt, Antonio Negri: *Empire*. Cambridge, London: Harvard UP 2000, pp. 274f
[11] My rather loose usage of this latter term aims to interpret film-industrial practices and images at a historical conjuncture when, in the West, youth-culture and counter-culture are congruent to a higher degree than ever before or since. Regrettably, my approach here does not take feminist and African-American struggles within this counter-cultural context into account.

to meet the exigencies of flexible accumulation and to develop new affects."[12] The formation of Empire´s post-Fordist regime of production – in which distinctions between economy and culture as well as between productive and unproductive labor become contingent[13] – emphasizes cinema´s explorative role in processes of socialization as mediatization and capitalization. In Beller, "capital cinema" performs a "tapping of energies", a globalization of capital which is "less a geographical project and more a matter of *capturing* the interstitial activities and times between the already commodified endeavors of bodies. *Every movement and every gesture is potentially productive of value.*"[14]

The first half of this chapter suggests a (retrospective) look at New Hollywood´s part in this redefinition and re-evaluation of productive action: along with the crisis and failures of motivated, goal-oriented and purposeful action, I demonstrate that the American cinema circa 1970 also reveals lines of flight pointing from disciplined pragmatics and subjectivities to flexible and affective ones. My examples come from a genre which usually makes one think of rigid discipline rather than of New Hollywood: the American war movie – rendered flexible in its encounter with the countercultures.

Hippies at war: explorations of flexibility in *M*A*S*H, The Dirty Dozen* and *Kelly´s Heroes*

There is one American war movie which is generally considered to be a New Hollywood classic. Anticipating the noisy dispersiveness of situations and the crumbling of linear narratives in Robert Altman´s later work, *M*A*S*H* (1969) seems to plainly confirm the failure argument put forward by Elsaesser, Hugo or Deleuze. However, it is only from the vantage point of disciplined storytelling and behavior that the narrative stuttering and idle motion in *M*A*S*H*, its protagonists´ digressive escapades and extravagant self-fashioning appear as symptoms of nihilism or collapse. Pauline Kael´s review of the film offered a different interpretation, in terms that seem to echo and reverse some of the later New Hollywood criticism in advance: "The movie isn´t naive, but it isn´t nihilistic, either." – "[I]t´s hip but it isn´t hopeless."[15]

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[12] Jonathan L. Beller: "Cinema, Capital of the Twentieth Century", Postmodern Culture 4, 3, 1994; web publication: http://www.iath.virginia.edu/pmc/text-only/issue.594/beller.594, paragraphs 10, 7, 59
[13] cf Hardt, Negri: *Empire*, pp. 275, 402
[14] Beller: "Cinema, Capital of the Twentieth Century", paragraph 6
[15] Pauline Kael: "Blessed Profanity" [1970], in: Deeper into Movies. Boston, Toronto: Little Brown & Co. 1973, pp. 93, 95

The soldier protagonists´ "[a]dolescent pride in skills and games – in mixing a Martini or in devising a fishing lure or in golfing", all those micro-actions which would be written off as meaningless, disturbing or at best ornamental within a classical narrative economy of the genre, were seen by Kael as manifesting a new pragmatic orientation: "[P]eople who are loose and profane and have some empathy – people who can joke about anything – can function, and maybe even do something useful, in what may appear to be insane circumstances."[16] In *M*A*S*H*, the possibility of useful, productive action and of a socially functioning sense of self depends on the protagonist´s playful culturalization of work routine and undisciplined communication under conditions of industrialized warfare. *Sight and Sound*´s reviewer of *M*A*S*H* also hinted at the very usefulness of integrating jocularity and profanity into the military labor process and drew from the film a lesson in flexibilization: "[..I]f there´s one moral that can safely be drawn from the succession of gags and incidents which provide the film´s sprawling narrative structure, it´s that inflexible attitudes to war (chauvinistic, religious, bureaucratic or heroic) lead straight to the strait-jacket."[17]

Following Jeanine Basinger´s historical "anatomy" of the American "World War II combat film", one can place *M*A*S*H* (a "service comedy" set in the Korean War rather than an outright combat film) at the culmination point of the narrative abstractions, revisions and sometimes parodic inversions which Hollywood´s war movie genre underwent in the late 1960s. Two of the films which Basinger subsumes under that period´s revisonist "dirty group movies" warrant a closer look in the context of my flexibilization argument in relation to New Hollywood. Seen from Basinger´s genre-formalist point of view, Robert Aldrich´s *The Dirty Dozen* (1967) and Brian G. Hutton´s *Kelly´s Heroes* (1970), the former a major box-office success, exemplify the popularity during the 1960s of the war movie´s "commando raid" variant which highlights attack missions carried out by small, specialized "maverick units" in World War II.[18]

In *The Dirty Dozen*, a US Army major (Lee Marvin) is ordered to train twelve soldiers, who have been sentenced to death or long prison terms as criminals, for a special mission: in exchange for suspension of their sentences, they are to raid a chateau used as a brothel by the German military and kill as many generals as they can. Basinger emphasizes the "dirtiness" of these skilled combat workers and interprets

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[16] Ibid., p. 94

[17] Jan Dawson: review of *M*A*S*H*, Sight and Sound 39, 3, 1970, p. 161

[18] Jeanine Basinger: *The World War II Combat Film. Anatomy of a Genre.* New York: Columbia UP 1986, pp. 202f

their training process and the tricks they play on the US military establishment in terms which reflect, at the level of genre, the notion of Hollywood´s action-image in crisis. Pointing to the negativity of the film´s goal-orientation in contrast to traditional combat film ethics, she reads *The Dirty Dozen* as being about criminal tendencies put to work inside the system, about fudging its rules and "playing dirty".[19] *Sight and Sound´s* reviewer of *The Dirty Dozen* saw the film as displaying many "surface elements of more honest war films, but without the accompanying moral justification. The effect is arguably less a broadening of scope for the entertainment film than a devaluation of useful currency."[20] These accounts are versions of the failure argument: they invoke the "devaluation" of genre´s meaning-making capacities, or at best a "subversion" of the genre, which Basinger links to anti-Vietnam war sentiments strong among Hollywood´s youth audiences, thus acknowledging the countercultural impact on late 1960s American cinema.

The Dirty Dozen´s disruption of the moral and disciplinary norms underlying the narrative motivation and orientation of action in classical war movies might, however, be seen as negative preconditions for an exploration of new use values with respect to purposeful, productive action. Such a perspective brings to the fore a *creative* (as opposed to merely "subversive") dimension of the film´s address to – broadly defined – countercultural and anti-establishment audience positions. If, to quote once more from *Sight and Sound´s* review, in *The Dirty Dozen* "no effort is spared in establishing this assortment of recalcitrants, morons and psychopaths as a bunch of likeable characters, and the more they work as a team the more likeable they become", then the important point about this "unholy teamwork" (as Basinger puts it) is just that it *is* teamwork.[21]

Much of the narrative goal-orientation of Aldrich´s film as well as of its humourous and spectacular appeal is derived from the broadly displayed training process, especially its tactics of forging a team-identity alternative to the strategies of the military establishment.[22] The unusual training methods of Lee Marvin´s character explore and mine the usefulness of subjectivities, energies and types of behavior which would be wasted by the rationality of the Army´s disciplinary labor regime. With its stress on

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[19] Ibid., pp. 205ff, 201
[20] Philip French: review of *The Dirty Dozen*, Sight and Sound 36, 4, 1967, p. 201
[21] Ibid.
[22] Thus, one can see the film´s self-positioning as a war movie-novelty – opening up an old genre to young audiences – as being allegorically reflected in its narrative stressing of innovation and inventiveness.

unconventional (not just duty-based) motivation for the trainees and on their special, highly flexible skills at "project-oriented work", the concept of purposeful action underlying the film points towards a new, post-Fordist economy with its normalization of flexible social subjectivities.[23] What we can see anticipated in the film is the cohesive team-spirit and self-management of "professional subcultures" in performing non-routine tasks (to use the language of the "cultural turn" in post-1970 management theories), a system of production based on the "social capital" of affective labor, tacit knowledge and undisciplined communication (to put it in terms of recent Marxist work on post-Fordism).[24]

Understood as an index of a new productivity and sociality, the very dirtyness of the dozen is an aspect of the culturalization of team labor as well as of the film´s address to anti-establishment sensibilities within its audience. The key moment in the trainees´ self and collective team differentiation is when they proudly refuse to wash and shave with cold water and prefer to remain dirty and grow beards instead. When one of Marvin´s superiors threatens to have the dirty dozen bathed and shaved against their will, the scene is reminiscent of a late 1960s cliché (referenced, for instance, in *Easy Rider*) about the way representatives of hegemonic culture and social discipline would want to treat hairy, filthy hippies if given the chance. With its display of the soldiers´ rock-band type looks as a trademark of the film´s spectacle-values, this scene is one of the moments which might situate *The Dirty Dozen* in a closer connection to New Hollywood´s early youth movies than its generic affiliation would seem to warrant.[25] While Ed Guerrero perceives a certain "black power" sentiment expressed by a scene during the commando raid, in which

[23] Interestingly, among the few non-road movies to which Elsaesser referred in his "Pathos of Failure" essay is another Robert Aldrich film, *The Mean Machine* a.k.a. *The Longest Yard* (1974), with a prison plot focusing on the Burt Reynolds hero "turning anti-social convicts into loyal team-mates" at football. Elsaesser´s remarks on this film ("The Pathos of Failure", p. 16, **in this volume p. ?**) emphasize its narrative disintegration and cognitive unreliability, exposing its "motivational predicament: if characters have no moral history that can plausibly explain their behaviour, action is the spectacle of gratuitousness." Generally, the frequency (and obtrusiveness) of narratives of male bonding in Aldrich´s work might be of interest to a more auteurist approach.

[24] cf Hardt, Negri: *Empire*, pp. 273-276, 290-292; see also Michael Hardt: "Affective labor", Boundary 2, 26(2), 1999, pp. 89-100; web publication: http://www.aleph-arts.org/io_lavoro/textos/Hardt.doc, and Ronald E. Day: "Totality and Representation: A History of Knowledge Management Through European Documentation, Critical Modernity, and Post-Fordism", Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, 52, 9, 2001, pp. 724-735. web publication: http://www.lisp.wayne.edu/~ai2398/kmasis.htm. It should be noted that while my approach to the pragmatics of some combat movies of New Hollywood circa 1970 stresses the notion of teamwork, Hardt´s and Negri´s analysis of today´s "digital capitalism" gives much more prominence to the concept of network production.

[25] Latin-folk pop singer Trini Lopez played a minor character among the Dirty Dozen; admittedly, he was not a prototypical rebel-idol of late 1960s youth culture.

African-American football-star turned actor Jim Brown scores high in throwing hand grenades into ventilator shafts to blow up German officers[26], I think that *The Dirty Dozen* addressed countercultural attitudes and aesthetic preferences mainly in rather general terms of an undisciplined pop lifestyle. This is also shown by the film´s featurette *Operation Dirty Dozen* (1967), in which – according to descriptions on the Internet Movie Database – Aldrich´s cast goes on another special mission, visiting Swinging London´s pubs and dance clubs during a break in the film´s shooting. "So we have this advertisement which emphasizes the mod scene of London", commented an IMDB user in 2001, "But this is most strange: essentially the Beatles and the new drug culture (strictly anti-war) are being used to promote a pro-war film!" Already in 1967, the *Sight and Sound* reviewer of *The Dirty Dozen* had been astonished by the fact that this war film "can appeal to hawks and doves alike".[27]

The latter formulation relies on what obviously was a trope widely used in critics´ descriptions of the hybrid audience appeal of some New Hollywood war movies. Contemporary reviews of Franklin J. Schaffner´s war movie-biopic *Patton – Lust for Glory*, a big box-office hit in 1970, describe the film as "a far-out movie passing as square", aimed at "hawks" and "doves" alike by a "Hollywood now firmly entreched behind the youth barricades".[28] Seen in this perspective, countercultural influences render a mass-market genre product flexible – instead of subverting it. And while Lloyd cited *Patton* as one of the films in which "insanity" had replaced heroism in cinematic constructions of individual agency[29], Hollywood´s promotional discourse preferred to have such post-heroic insanity interpreted as a positive force of social innovation: "Patton was a rebel. Long before it became fashionable. He rebelled against the biggest. Eisenhower. Marshall. Montgomery. Against the establishment – and its ideas of warfare." To Robert B. Ray, this movie tagline exemplified a "free exchange of plots and motifs" between an ideologically conservative "Right cycle" and a counterculturally appealing "Left cycle" within what he retrospectively called the "'New' American Cinema" of the late 1960s and early 1970s.[30]

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[26] Ed Guerrero: "Black Violence as Cinema: From Cheap Thrills to Historical Agonies", in: J. David Slocum: Violence and American Cinema. New York, London: Routledge 2001, pp. 213f
[27] French: review of *The Dirty Dozen*, p. 201
[28] Kael: "The Man Who Loved War" [1970], in: Deeper into Movies, p. 99; David Wilson: review of *Patton – Lust for Glory*, Sight and Sound 39, 3, 1970, p.160
[29] Lloyd: "The American Cinema: An Outlook", p. 12
[30] Robert B. Ray: *A Certain Tendency of the Hollywood Cinema 1930-1980.* Princeton: Princeton UP 1985, pp. 314f

In 1970, the flexible management of countercultural elements within the war film´s generic framework allowed the ostentatious integration of hippie lifestyle into the narrative and spectacle-values of a World War II combat film. Set in France in 1944, *Kelly´s Heroes* centers its overtly anachronistic toying with drop-out fashion and rhetorics on Oddball, the long-haired, bearded commander of a US Army tank unit, played by Donald Sutherland (who also featured among the Dirty Dozen and the socially skilled jokers of *M*A*S*H*). The film stresses Oddball´s penchant for taking things easy, his habit of calling disturbances "negative waves" and his comrades "maaan" or "baby", his unit´s love for Oriental music, their commune life-style and souped up tanks. In carnivalizing the US war machine, *Kelly´s Heroes* also draws on contemporary pop styles other than hippie: the Hell´s Angels look which Oddball´s men display wearing captured SS uniform parts at the end, or the spinning of a would-be pop hit by Lalo Schifrin (performed by The Mike Curb Congregation) in several versions throughout the film. Compared to a canonized counterculturally oriented film like *Easy Rider*, these elements correspond to a rather broad, mainstream understanding of hippie and drop-out aesthetics: thus, ridiculing the long-haired in the eyes of the short-haired seems to be part of *Kelly´s Heroes´* audience address as much as is winking at the youth market. More importantly, the integration of countercultural elements into a combat film functions not just as a distraction from its narrative trajectory or as a subversion of the genre, but rather highlights the usefulness of playful creativity to the goal-orientation of its action. For instance, Oddball´s unit achieves a triumphant victory by staging a surprise tank attack as a near-psychedelic multi-media performance, with loud country music and custom-made shells containing pink (instead of Jimi Hendrix´s purple) haze fired at the Germans; the scene seems to anticipate the figuration of high-tech warfare as aesthetic spectacle in *Apocalypse Now* (1979) – though with a reversed evaluation, stressing success by innovation rather than the insanity of war.[31]

A similar point can be made with respect to *Kelly´s Heroes´* relation to European genre (or rather: formula-based) cinema. In the context of New Hollywood´s often noted susceptibility to influences from European cinema of the 1960s, *The Wild Bunch* (1969) has become the standard example for the impact of the Italian western on

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[31] Of course, there are New Hollywood war movies contemporary to *Kelly´s Heroes* which strongly emphasize a notion of the insanity of war; one could mention the crumbling of action-trajectories and the *Easy Rider*-style editing of Sidney Pollack´s World War II combat film *Castle Keep* (1969), or Mike Nichols´ *Catch-22* (1970), a rather dark and nihilistic World War II military satire in the wake of *M*A*S*H´s* success.

American movies. Whereas Peckinpah´s western is usually held to intensify the violence and cynicism of Spaghetti westerns to the point of insanity and self-destruction, *Kelly´s Heroes* feeds its even more overt stylistic and narrative borrowings from Sergio Leone into a success story. With its more or less dirty group of GIs going AWOL and advancing into enemy territory to steal a gold treasure from the Germans for personal gain, the film transfers the plot-motif of treasure-hunting between the front-lines from the Civil War setting of *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* (1966) to World War II. While *Kelly´s Heroes´* heist-plot can be regarded as a generic hybrid of combat and caper movie, the film quite explicitly acknowledges its debts to Leone: the scene in which the central gold-seeker trio Sutherland, Savalas and Clint Eastwood march to their confrontation with a German tank is a coarse allusion to the showdown (and to Ennio Morricone´s main-title theme) of *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* – the film which had propelled Eastwood to worldwide stardom four years before.

Beyond *Gung Ho!* – war movies as allegories of post-Fordist production

The extent to which New Hollywood´s war movies explore new pragmatics and subjectivities can be underscored by picking up a comparison suggested by Basinger as well as by Thomas Doherty in his study of Hollywood´s relationship to World War II. Both authors consider the combat film *Gung Ho!* (Ray Enright, 1943) to be the model for the late 1960s "dirty group" movies. Doherty writes: "However much the ante is upped in criminality, brutality, and irreverence, the rogues and rascals of *The Dirty Dozen* (1967), *The Devil´s Brigade* (1968) and *Kelly´s Heroes* (1970) are blood brothers to the misfits of *Gung Ho!* (1943)."[32] These accounts emphasize how in Hollywood films, the war machine makes use of destructive energies – the kind of rampage which is freqently referred to as cinematic "violence Gung Ho!-style". However, by positing a continuous link and family resemblance between *Gung Ho!* and New Hollywood´s combat movies, they overlook important differences in the films´ respective conceptions of violence as purposeful action and of its modes of socialization. With the US Marines accepting fanatics, a frustrated ex-boxer, a

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[32] Basinger: *The World War II Combat Film*, pp. 203f; Thomas Doherty: *Projections of War. Hollywood, American Culture, and World War II*. New York: Columbia UP 1993, p. 296. Interestingly, the focus on the violence of the actions in *The Dirty Dozen* – rather than on their cooperative and productive aspects – seems to allow for a smooth integration of Aldrich´s film within the established canon of New Hollywood classics. As Michael Hammond writes: "The Robert Aldrich film is notable for its violence and brutality at the moment when the new rating system replaced the old Production Code. The film acts as an important precursor to *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967), and later *The Wild Bunch*, of the new, violent tone the new system would foster." Michael Hammond: "Some Smothering Dreams: The Combat Film in Contemporary Hollywood", in: Steve Neale (ed.): *Genre and Contemporary Hollywood*. London: British Film Institute 2002, p. 64

cut-throat and some aggressive "no-good kids" from broken homes as volunteers for a special mission in the Pacific, *Gung Ho!* at first sight appears as innovative (and cynical) about productive teamwork as *The Dirty Dozen*. But *Gung Ho!*´s novel approach to combat efficiency – celebrated by numerous officers´ speeches and by a "semi-documentary" training sequence with propagandistic voice-over commentary – still adheres to a logic of duty-based teamwork and thus amounts to a mere intensification of Taylorist discipline: it´s all about "men fighting together with the precision of a machine", as the unit´s commander (Randolph Scott) phrases it, before he goes on to explain his unit´s training motto, which is also the film´s title. According to Scott, "Gung Ho!" – a phrase nowadays synonymous with rampant bloodshed – is "Chinese" for "work in harmony".

In the relentless speeches to the soldiers and to its audience, *Gung Ho!* invokes the task of winning the war in the name of freedom and equality and, most of all, the notion of the combat team as informed by the self-image of the USA as social and ethnic melting pot. The meaning-making framework of the melting pot is typical of classical Hollywood´s World War II (and Korean War) combat movies, and of the American action-image in general – or, to be exact, of its "large form" in Deleuze´s sense.[33] *Gung Ho!*s underlying concepts of purposeful action and social subjectivity can also be considered in light of Deleuze´s concept of the action-image´s "small form". In this perspective, the notion of functionally defined, no longer organically founded groups (as Deleuze detects them in Howard Hawks´ westerns) becomes relevant.[34] Apart from its melting pot ideology, *Gung Ho!*´s "harmoniously working machine" draws on the technology-based functionalism of many wartime combat films for which Hawks´ *Air Force* (1943) estasblished the paradigm. Instead of a people and its leaders (as in the films of the large form) these films show crews consisting of disciplined component parts and highlight the role of technology in forming them (social technologies such as the standardized division of labor; material technologies such as the submarine engulfing the Marines in *Gung Ho!* and the bomber plane in *Air Force*).[35]

In any case, *Gung Ho!* defines its pragmatics of violent action within horizons of meaning very different from New Hollywood´s war movies. The geopolitical mission of American democracy, the US Army as national melting pot, technology-based

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[33] cf Deleuze: *The Movement-Image*, pp. 144, 148
[34] Ibid., pp. 164ff
[35] On disciplined co-operation and functionalism in wartime combat movies, especially in *Air Force*, see Doherty: *Projections of War*, pp.103ff, 110ff

Fordist functionalism – all these encompassing meta-narratives are absent from the ethics and pragmatics of *The Dirty Dozen* and *Kelly´s Heroes*.[36] And yet, these films´ action-images of war are far from flirting with meaninglessness. In both films, the goal-orientation of the action-image depends not on fusing differences or reducing them to presupposed standards of efficiency, but on mining them for their use-values as potential productive forces. They are not about making misfits fit, but about misfits refitting and retooling the machinery. When in *The Dirty Dozen* the Army psychologist supervising the training process describes Lee Marvin´s team as "just about the most twisted anti-social bunch of psychopathic deformities I´ve ever run into", Marvin replies "Well, I can´t think of a better way to fight a war." The cynicism that one might sense in this statement is merely the guise and the precondition of a positive conception of productivity capable of integrating, valuing and unfolding those potentials which a disciplinary rationality excluded as deviant. In the totality of post-Fordist social production, "it is thus no longer possible to identify a sign, a subject, a value, or a practice that is 'outside'", as Hardt and Negri write.[37] Similarly, when in *Kelly´s Heroes* the Telly Savalas character faces Oddball´s hippie soldiers and shouts "That ain´t an army, it´s a circus!", this exclamation summarises the film´s celebration of a "diversity management" of labor which is indeed closer to a circus than to Taylorist or military discipline. Or rather, the becoming-circus of the army-factory resembles the "increasing indistinguishability of economic and cultural phenomena" which Hardt and Negri see as an effect of the countercultural "attack on the disciplinary regime" of the "factory-society", driving the transition to the post-Fordist productive paradigm of cultural experimentation, affective labor, flexible communication and non-standardized knowledge.[38]

Finally, an affirmation of post-Fordist productivity becomes manifest in these two war movies if one reads them as "allegories of production" in the way in which David E. James interprets *Easy Rider*. Exploring the metaphorical relation of *Easy Rider*´s plot to its production context (i.e., Hollywood´s overproduction crisis and negotiation with youth audiences), James´s version of the failure argument in relation to New Hollywood highlights how Dennis Hopper´s "35mm ersatz underground film" is unable to remain loyal to and even "denigrat[es] the social alternatives represented by the

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[36] This also goes for the historical greatness of military missions celebrated in several all-star war epics from the early 1960s to the mid 1970s.
[37] Hardt, Negri: *Empire*, p. 385
[38] Ibid., p. 273, 275

counterculture that gives it market value."[39] According to James´s critique, the film handles images of hippie-communal agrarianism or elements of avantgarde and psychedelic style as mere episodes and thus fails to present them as viable alternatives to technologized, capitalized cultural practices: "[...W]e may read Captain America´s remark 'We blew it' as an allegory of the film, of the failure of Hopper and Fonda to make a film adequate to the ideals of the counterculture [...]."[40] A clear case of "pathos of failure", to use Elsaesser´s term. In contrast to this, the "professional subcultures" in *The Dirty Dozen* and *Kelly´s Heroes* confront us with an overall "pathos of success". In order to read this stance as an allegory of production, one has to drop James´ somewhat Platonic concern for the film industry´s fidelity to countercultural ideals (or its lack thereof). Rather, the production context reflected in a self-congratulatory manner in *The Dirty Dozen* and *Kelly´s Heroes* is the post-Fordization of American filmmaking – Hollywood´s shift from the studio-based mass production of films to marketing fewer, more specialized films made independently and within transitory labor arrangements. This is the shift described as the adoption of the "package-unit system" of production after the mid-1950s by Janet Staiger.[41] Hollywood´s embracing of post-Fordist flexibility also involves a change in the consumer-cultural role of the industry´s products, gradually replacing films´ affiliations to the pre-established standards and genre disciplines of a studio´s factory-system with the now familiar conception of big-budget films as singular events, multi-generic textures, and consumer-driven industries in and of themselves. The film conceived as a special mission and norm-defying event, carried out by a package-team of maverick experts with non-standardized skills and no institutional ties – this is the logic of flexible production that is allegorized by the successes of the undisciplined in New Hollywood´s war movies.[42]

Mutation, adaptation, decline? The two New Hollywoods – and how they might be related

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[39] David E. James: Allegories of Cinema. American Film in the Sixties. Princeton: Princeton UP 1989, p. 14f

[40] Ibid., p. 17

[41] Janet Staiger: "The package-unit system: unit management after 1955", in: David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, Kristin Thompson: *The Classical Hollywood Cinema. Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960.* New York 1985

[42] The complete detachment of a professional subculture of treasure-hunters from the system´s overall effort in *Kelly´s Heroes* – "We´re just a private enterprise operation", as Eastwood explains his unit´s mission – is interpreted as an allegory of independent film production by Paul Smith. The author points to Clint Eastwood´s increased reliance on his Malpaso company (founded in 1968) after his dissatisfaction with a major studio´s production of *Kelly´s Heroes*, a film "whose central contradiction is that its servicemen do not actually serve, even though they are heroic entrepreneurs". Paul Smith: *Clint Eastwood. A Cultural Production.* London: University College Press 1993, p. 198

In my argument that New Hollywood explored a new pragmatic within the failure of an old one, I have so far emphasized its relationship to the earlier, classical period of American cinema. In the second half of this essay, I will focus on what followed the New Hollywood of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Murray Smith claims that "the sheer number of 'New Hollywoods' that one finds posited over the course of film history" recommends a careful attention to Hollywood´s constant "process of adjustment and adaptation to new circumstances [...]".[43] This "adaptation argument", as I would call it, is one way to resolve the inherent ambiguity of the term New Hollywood which becomes most urgent with respect to the question of how the American cinema of circa 1970 relates to that of today. In Smith´s words: "The notion of the New Hollywood [...] underwent a strange mutation, ending up designating either something diametrically opposed to the American art film, or something inclusive of but much larger than it."[44]

We can see the latter, extended definition at work in Thomas Schatz´s history of the New Hollywood, in which the term refers to the post-1945 genealogy of the blockbuster. According to Schatz, the "blockbuster hits are, for better or for worse, what the New Hollywood is about", and the establishment of this type of film, with its intermedia marketing potentials, as Hollywood´s key product after 1975 marked "the studios´ eventual coming-to-terms with an increasingly fragmented entertainment industry – with its demographics and target audiences, its diversified 'multi-media conglomerates, its global(ized) markets and new delivery systems".[45] To some degree, my rewriting of the failure argument into a success story of flexibilization is in line with Schatz´s account, in that *The Dirty Dozen* and *Kelly´s Heroes* can be situated among the many precursors of today´s blockbusters; as such, they testify to the gradual reconceptualisation of Hollywood´s main product in terms of a special event that replaces genre discipline with a playful, flexible, intertextual openness to a variety of cultural dynamics and viewing positions. However, in defining New Hollywood as a successful process of adaptation, Schatz downplays the creative,

[43] Murray Smith: "Theses on the philosophy of Hollywood history", in: Steve Neale, Murray Smith (eds.): *Contemporary Hollywood Cinema.* London, New York: Routledge 1998, p. 14
[44] Ibid., p. 11. Along with Janet Staiger, Murray Smith would probably object to a   conceptual connection of classical Hollywood´s production logic with Fordist discipline. However, Staiger´s remark that "[m]aking a film [in the classical studio system, D.R.] was not working on a Ford moving assembly-line" (in: "The package-unit system: unit management after 1955", p. 336), and Smith´s points on classical Hollywood´s ""'non-Fordist' peculiarities" (in: "Theses on the philosophy of Hollywood history", p. 8) do, in my view, not radically invalidate that comparison.
[45] Thomas Schatz: "The New Hollywood", in: Jim Collins, Hilary Radner, Ava Preacher Collins (eds.): *Film Theory Goes to the Movies.* New York, London: Routledge 1993, pp. 9ff

innovative aspect of Hollywood´s flirtation with the countercultures: in his view, "[...] Hollywood´s cultivation of the youth market and penchant for innovation in the late 1960s and early 1970s" mainly "reflected the studios´ uncertainty and growing desperation."[46] The adaptation argument, which understands New Hollywood in a broad sense (the rise of the blockbuster), and the failure argument, which refers to New Hollywood in a narrow sense (centered on youth and road movies made around 1970) share the negative terms of disorientation and crisis in which they describe cinema´s opening onto youth and countercultural value systems.

The other view which Smith hints at – New Hollywood turning from "American art film" into its opposite – gives an emphatically positive judgement on Hollywood circa 1970 and ascribes to it some of the virtues usually associated with notions of "art cinema". In placing Hollywood´s "second golden age" in contrast to the industry´s prevailing blockbuster orientation after 1975, this "decline argument" reveals a certain cinephile melancholia, as for instance in an article by J. Hoberman from 1985: "The cultural upheavals of the late sixties spawned a cinema of genre criticism and directorial nonconformity; the retrenchment of the mid-seventies brought the waning days and ultimate reversal of the *Bonnie and Clyde-Easy Rider*, small-and-weird-can-be-beautiful revolution. The past decade marked the decline and fall of the maverick genre revisionists (Robert Altman, Sam Peckinpah, Arthur Penn) [...]."[47] David A. Cook describes the decline of what he calls the "American auteur cinema" and its transformation into the blockbuster mode in particularly pessimist terms: "From the cinema of rebellion represented by films like *Bonnie and Clyde, Easy Rider,* and *Medium Cool*, America´s youth transferred its allegiance to the 'personal' cinema of the seventies´ auteurs without realizing how corporatist and impersonal it had become. And the auteurs themselves were transformed from *cinéastes* into high-rolling celebrity directors (many of them) with their own chauffeurs, Lear jets, and bodyguards [...] and recast their films as branded merchandise to be consumed along with T-shirts, action figures, Happy Meals [...]"[48]

A less moralizing thesis on the relationship of the two New Hollywoods was proposed in 1986 by Andrew Britton whose version of the decline argument is ideology-critical rather than cinephile. According to Britton, the "conservative reassurance in the contemporary Hollywood" has resulted in the "almost exclusive predominance of a

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[46] Ibid., p. 15
[47] J. Hoberman: "Ten years that shook the world", American Film 10, June 1985, p. 34
[48] David A. Cook: "Auteur Cinema and the 'Film Generation' in 1970s Hollywood", in: Jon Lewis (ed.): The New American Cinema. Durham & London: Duke UP 1998, p. 35

type of film-making which, during the `seventies, did not rule out the possibility of more interesting, contradictory and disturbing work. [...I]t would have been difficult to feel certain in 1974 that *The Towering Inferno*, for all its phenomenal success, was about to become the main tradition. At the time, the disaster cycle seemed to be reactionary in a relatively simple sense: it was a desperate attempt [...] showing up a value-system which was obviously in ruins. What was less apparent was a potential cultural vitality. [...] In 1974, *The Towering Inferno* looked merely exhausted."[49]

The 1970s disaster movies are one point at which the discourses on New Hollywood part ways. From the viewpoint of adaptation, films like *The Towering Inferno* appear as (proto-)blockbusters and thus as examples of the larger New Hollywood; but, as Smith suggests, they can also be seen "in dialectical tension" with a New Hollywood which is either criticized for its pathos of failure or valued as "interesting, contradictory and disturbing".[50] If we are cinephile enough to regard New Hollywood as *The Last Great American Picture Show*, then *The Towering Inferno* is probably not a part of this *Last GAPS*, but rather represents *the last gasps* of the Old Hollywood – of "a value-system which was obviously in ruins", as Britton put it. But since there have been so many movies after the last one[51] – among them many more American disaster films in the late 1990s –, what interests me is Britton´s notion of an "exhausted" cinema becoming the mainstream. The problem requires a look at Hollywood´s changing ways of dealing with its past, using 1970s New Hollywood as a point of departure.

Westworld, Coma and the "biopolitics of recycling": from New Hollywood´s conspiracies to the control society´s blockbusters

While the early period of New Hollywood in the narrow sense – from the commercial success of *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) to the box-office failure of *Two-Lane Blacktop* (1971) – is marked by the film industry´s relationship with countercultural values and audience positions, one trend discernible in the American cinema of the mid- and late 1970s is a cycle of conspiracy thrillers. These films (which have their equivalents in the Western European cinema of that period) approach the ruptures within American

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[49] Andrew Britton: "Blissing Out: The Politics of Reaganite Entertainment", movie 31/32, 1986, p. 2
[50] Smith: "Theses on the philosophy of Hollywood history", p. 10. In "The Pathos of Failure" (p. 14; **in this volume**), Elsaesser suggested a Hollywood landscape divided between the emotional involvement and spectacle offered by cop thrillers and disaster movies on one hand, and "emotional anti-stances" catered for by road movies with rebel heroes on the other.
[51] *The Last Movie* was a commercially unsuccesful, self-reflexive road-movie essay on Hollywood film-making, directed by Dennis Hopper in 1971 in the wake of *Easy Rider´*s success.

society from a different angle. Instead of exploring the new cultural visibility of what might lie outside the established order, they show attempts at investigating the order´s hidden inside, emphasizing its systemic character, obstinacy and near invisibility. In some 1970s conspiracy thrillers, the young rebel protagonist of the earlier countercultural cycle seems to be displaced into the figure of the liberal investigator (often a not-so-young, but long-haired journalist) who either falls victim to the secret politics of surveillance and state power, like Warren Beatty in *The Parallax View* (Alan J. Pakula, 1974), or achieves a narrow victory, like Robert Redford in *Three Days of the Condor* (Sidney Pollack, 1975), Dustin Hoffman and Robert Redford in *All the President´s Men* (Pakula, 1976), or Peter Fonda in *Futureworld* (Richard T. Heffron, 1976). In the latter film, a SciFi version of the trend, the Easy Rider turned journalist exposes a plot aimed at replacing politicians with remote-controlled cyborg doubles during their stay at a high-tech amusement park where humanoid robots serve the visitors´ pleasure. Looking back on the 1970s conspiracy thriller, *Futureworld* is of interest because it fuses elements of two better known films made by writer-director Michael Crichton. In his "techno-thriller" *Westworld* (1973), to which *Futureworld* is the low-budget sequel, the service robots of the same amusement park run out of control and attack the visitors of the Wild West, Ancient Rome and Middle Ages themed "worlds". And in Crichton´s *Coma* (1978), the conspiracy that turns living people into technologically controlled bodies is transfered to a hospital where patients are secretly sent into coma and kept alive in a computer-controlled storage space to provide organ transplants for sale on an international market.

Coma´s terrifying images of technologically reified life almost literalize some points of Fredric Jameson´s interpretation of the conspiracy motif as an allegorical figuration of contemporary capitalism´s invisible, systemic totality. In Jameson, the "hermeneutic content" of Pakula´s and other 1970s conspiracy thrillers – the promise of a "deeper inside view" into society´s "hidden abode of production" – points towards the "new world system" of capitalism "whose study is now our true ontology".[52] The bizarre clinic in *Coma*, both life support system and stock exchange, offers a paranoid, ontological, allegorical glimpse into existence pervaded by capital; or rather, existence immersed in a mode of capital power to which Hardt´s and Negri´s concept of "biopolitical production" or "biopower" (derived from Foucault) applies: "Biopower is a form of power that regulates social life from its interior, following it, interpreting it,

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[52] Fredric Jameson: "Totality as Conspiracy", in: *The Geopolitical Aesthetic. Cinema and Space in the World System.* Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana UP 1992, pp. 15, 82

absorbing it, and rearticulating it. [...] The highest function of this power is to invest life through and through, [...] the production and reproduction of life itself."[53] What the hermeneutics of New Hollywood´s conspiracy thrillers aim at is the new world system of capital´s globalization – globalization not just in the sense of transnational markets, but rather as the "real subsumption" of social life under capital: the intensive, biopolitical "working through" of an already formally subsumed social terrain, up to the point at which "[c]apital has become a world."[54]

In "Westworld", "Roman World" and "Medieval World" it is the accumulated symbolic capital of classical Hollywood genres that has become a world. In Crichton´s theme park, the western and two versions of the historical epic have been cybernetically reworked into experiential environments, spectacles to be travelled and lived in by tourists. The conspiracy motif implicit in *Westworld* – or rather, its suggestion of two conspiracies: that of the park´s invisible control system, and that of the robotic gunslingers, knights and gladiators who suddenly massacre the visitors – exemplifies the critical "consciousness of clichés" and the "condemnation of the plot", two of Deleuze´s characteristics of the American action-image in its crisis. In Deleuze, the plot which New Hollywood critically confronts is ultimately a global conspiracy of omnipresent media clichés which penetrate public spheres and minds. "But how can the cinema attack the dark organisation of clichés", Deleuze asks, "when it participates in their fabrication and propagation, as much as magazines or television?"[55] In some moments of the 1970s conspiracy cycle, the critical orientation of the action-image in crisis becomes self-reflexive: it shows the conspiracy as cinema, as in the psycho-killer test screening in *The Parallax View*, and the cinema as conspiracy – the conspiracy of outdated Hollywood genres whose clichés become dangerously alive in *Westworld*.

The horror of a *Westworld* fully subsumed under the capital of generic recognition value; the paranoia in Pakula´s thrillers, caused by the persistence of the system and by the infinity of secret state power; and also Britton´s critical dismay over the cultural vitality of a seemingly exhausted cinema, over the blockbusters that grew out of the ruins of *The Towering Inferno*: certain images and definitions of 1970s New Hollywood converge in an "epistemology of uneasiness" about the fact that

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[53] Hardt, Negri: *Empire*, pp. 23f
[54] Ibid., p. 386; on real subsumption see also Ibid., pp. 255, 272
[55] Deleuze: *The Movement-Image*, p. 210

something which should be dead is – still, again, or in as yet unknown ways – alive.[56] In these accounts of how the past, the already known, continues to rule over the present, the conspiracy metaphor figures prominently. According to Britton´s critique of Hollywood after 1975, the self-referentiality of cinema´s clichés turns entertainment into a solipsistic totality of knowingness, and the community-building role of genres is replaced by "a cosy conspiracy of self-congratulation and spurious familiarity".[57] Deleuze on the other hand, in his critique of American cinema´s inescapable entanglement in its own tradition, employs metaphors which become literalized in disaster and horror movie images: Hollywood´s genres "collapse and yet maintain their empty frame", he writes, and: "maltreated, mutilated, destroyed, a cliché is not slow to be reborn from its ashes."[58] Along these lines, Crichton´s two films can be read as allegories of a cinema unable to rid itself of its past. The movie clichés – the ones which New Hollywood´s shifting, critical revision, and occasional mutilation of genres rather innovated and perpetuated than destroyed – literally stalk their audience in the form of Yul Brynner´s robot-gunslinger. In *Westworld´*s history-land of Hollywood´s past, the stereotype is a zombie who refuses to acknowledge his death and stubbornly walks on; in *Coma*, it is a stiff body kept alive, serving as a reservoir for spare parts, and the film´s clinic presents itself as showroom for spectacular lighting effects and as storage space for frozen lives, in short: as a cinema.

Such an interpretation, however, can only make sense within the discourse on New Hollywood in the narrow, 1970s sense. Placed, however, in the context of a larger New Hollywood – the one which gravitates towards the blockbuster and today defines the framework of mass-cultural encounters with the movies on a global scale –, the allegories of *Westworld* and *Coma* point to a different relationship of Hollywood with its past. The terms of this relationship have shifted from a negative conception – the cinema as conspiracy of the exhausted, as comatose body and empty frame – to an affirmative, biopolitical working through of cinema´s history, a rearticulation of its "standing reserve" and recycling of its past. This is Hollywood´s rebirth from its ashes which Deleuze mentions only in passing; the action-image´s phoenix-like (technology-based) revival in the blockbuster mode is not the concern of his cinema

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[56] In a closer look at the amusement park as an allegorical location in mid-1970s "uneasy" Hollywood, one would encounter *Rollercoaster* (1975), a hybrid of disaster film and cop thriller, set in various amusement parks. As a companion film to *Westworld´*s and *Futureworld´*s horror of Hollywood genres cybernetically revived as virtual realities, one could mention *Welcome to Blood City* (1976): this British-Canadian co-production stars Jack Palance and *2001´*s Keir Dullea in an artificial Wild West environment remote-controlled   for training purposes by a conspiratory secret service.

[57] Britton: "Blissing Out", p. 5

[58] Deleuze: *The Movement-Image*, p. 211

books. But it clearly is Crichton´s, or rather: the name Crichton is now one of the brand-names associated with Hollywood´s vitality and its embracing of the high-tech theme park. The films in question are the three *Jurassic Park* blockbusters (1993, 1997, 2001).[59]

In his review, Peter Wollen called the first of these films a hybrid of *Westworld* and *Jaws* (the Spielberg film whose 1975 success is usually regarded as a watershed in the genealogy of the contemporary blockbuster); and he described *Jurassic Park* in terms reminiscent of Crichton´s theme park movie made twenty years earlier: "[..T]he monsters have not just run out of control, they have come back from the dead [...]."[60] Unlike *Westworld*, however, the all-encompassing reach of *Jurassic Park* is not a paranoid fantasy, but a positive consumer-cultural reality. What would be unimaginable with the former´s topography and monsters was key to the latter´s mass-cultural impact – the existence of a real Jurassic Park ride and of a great variety of dinosaur toys (famously displayed in the film itself), of servicves and commodities for consumers participating in one of those intermediatized long-term events known as blockbusters. As a history-land of genre cinema´s revived past (*King Kong, The Lost World* and other monster movies), *Jurassic Park* actualizes the virtuality of *Westworld*, i.e., a new conception of the theme park as inhabitable biotope and life-world to the cinema, and a temporality in which coming back from the dead is part of Hollywood´s biopolitical production.[61] Rising from the ashes applies to a cinematic life-cycle which is mirrored in the cultural-economic cycle of each big film – in the "multimedia reincarnation" of the blockbuster, of a "cultural commodity that might be regenerated in any number of media forms", as Schatz writes in his New Hollywood success story.[62] The near inexhaustibility of haunting clichés, which the New Hollywood of the 1970s glimpsed allegorically in images of conspiracy and horror, is fully explored as a life-affirming, future-oriented potential in the larger New Hollywood which thrives on the vitality of the blockbuster.

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[59] Crichton contributed the novel and screenplay to *Jurassic Park* and the novel to *The Lost World – Jurassic Park*; *Jurassic Park III* uses characters created by Crichton. From an *auteurist* point of view, one could highlight this writer-director´s ongoing fascination with technologically controlled, isolated spaces and with "imitations of life" – from his novel filmed as *The Andromeda Strain* (1971), through his SciFi thriller *Looker* (1981) to the TV series *ER* he created in 1994.

[60] Peter Wollen: "Theme Park and Variations", Sight and Sound 7, 1993, p. 8

[61] Observations on the relations between cinematic and theme park temporalities and experiential modes can be found for instance in Scott Bukatman "There's Always Tomorrowland: Disney and the Hypercinematic Experience ", October, no.57, Summer 1991, and (with regard to *Jurassic Park* in the light of post-Fordist production and consumption) in Constance Balides: "Jurassic post-Fordism: tall tales of economics in the theme park", Screen 41, 2, 2000.

[62] Schatz: "The New Hollywood", pp. 31, 29

Steven Spielberg – whose career began within the New Hollywood of youth and road movies – is an even more famous brand-name for the larger New Hollywood´s vitality and productivity. The latter are based on recycling. The distant pasts of one´s own childhood, of genre cinema history and of traumatic modernity, and also the near pasts of theatrical viewing experiences are "worked through" – re-told in rescue narratives, re-membered in rides and merchandise. "Something has survived!" is the tagline of Spielberg´s therapeutic realism of real subsumption: time, history, and what is lost to them – *The Lost World* – are re-appropriated, re-interpreted, really subsumed under the self-revitalizing "capital cinema" of the blockbuster.[63] Hollywood´s biopolitical vitalism seems capable of bringing everything, including its generic past, back from the dead. "Life finds a way", as a geneticist in *Jurassic Park* puts it, and: "Bio-technology, like the cinema, makes it possible for us to engage in a kind of time travel", as Wollen writes about that film.[64] Generally, today´s blockbusters act as media-cultural "time machines"; this is Elsaesser´s name for the temporal logic of a Hollywood whose newness his recent articles frame as post-classical.[65] While Wollen compares Spielberg´s dinosaurs which haunt the present to vampires, Elsaesser makes the vampire into a full-blown allegory of cinema´s post-classical afterlife. "The very theme of the undead lies at the heart of the cinema´s power and cultural presence", he writes; Hollywood affirmatively folds around its die-hard clichés, exerting its vampirist powers of infection-through-fascination, metamorphosis and revitalization.[66] Reading *Fantasy Island* (1978-1984), a TV series reminiscent of Chrichton´s Hollywood genres turned into worlds, as an allegory of its production, Elsaesser conceptualizes cinema´s position in today´s media-cultural temporality in terms of biopower – in terms of cinema´s "self-referentiality, repetition, revamping of genres, reiteration of formulas" as a "natural cycle", of movie history as a "natural history" to be rearticulated by television and the digital media.[67]

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[63] "Something has survived!" was a promotional slogan of the second *Jurassic Park* film, entitled *The Lost World.*

[64] Wollen: "Theme Park and Variations", p. 7

[65] see Elsaesser: "Specularity and engulfment: Francis Ford Coppola and *Bram Stoker´s Dracula*", in: Steve Neale, Murray Smith (eds.): *Contemporary Hollywood Cinema*, p. 199, and "The Blockbuster. Everything Connects, but Not Everything Goes", in: Jon Lewis (ed.): *The End of Cinema as we know it. American Film in the Nineties*. New York: New York UP 2001, p. 21f

[66] Wollen: "Theme Park and Variations", p. 8; Elsaesser: "Specularity and engulfment", pp. 197f

[67] Elsaesser: "Fantasy Island: Dream Logic as Production Logic", in: Thomas Elsaesser, Kay Hoffmann (eds.): *Cinema Futures: Cain, Abel or Cable? The Screen Arts in the Digital Age.* Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 1998, pp. 154f

Hollywood´s self-transmuting life-cycle and some other aspects of the above discussion can, finally, be grasped with a concept proposed by Deleuze. The term "control society" appears not in Deleuze´s cinema books, but in his essays on contemporary media and modes of social power (with conceptual links to his logics of film that remain implicit, virtual). Historically, the control society is the vanishing point of capitalism´s move from the rigid standards of Fordist discipline to a logic of flexible and dispersed power. Exploring this concept, Hardt and Negri see the formation of control societies as an outcome of the anti-disciplinary resistance and creativity of 1960s countercultures: with the production of hybrid social subjectivities, with institutions continually redefined according to the movements and temporal rhythms of the "multitude", capital power adapts to, integrates, normalizes and profits from the new pragmatic of flexibility and affective labor.[68] While disciplinary society´s "confinements" acted as social "molds", Deleuze writes, "controls are a *modulation*, like a self-transmuting molding continually changing from one moment to the next [...]."[69] In this definition, Deleuze falls back upon the terms of his description of the cinematic "movement-image" as it captures the ever changing duration of the material world: the film-image is a "modulation" which "constantly modifies the mold, constitutes a variable, continuous, temporal mold."[70] When controls modulate society like film modulates reality, "the world itself 'turns to film'", as Deleuze remarks on the pervasiveness of television as a technology of control.[71] The world turns to film as capital becomes a world, to the extent that "capital cinema" – cinema as a rehearsal ground and agent of socialization – is itself rendered flexible, entirely mediatized, pervaded by electronic technologies. Giving film-images unprecedented global reach, connectivity and cultural penetration, the contemporary blockbuster best warrants Beller´s notion of "capital cinema" and its place "at the heart of the society of control", as Patricia Pisters puts it.[72] In its blockbuster mode, cinema is deeply immersed in and at the same time rehearses the temporal logic of control societies, in which, according to Deleuze, "you never finish anything".[73] Life-long learning and

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[68] see Hardt, Negri: *Empire*, pp. 268ff, 318, 331

[69] Deleuze: "Postscript on Control Societies" [1990], in: *Negotiations 1972-1990.* [1990], New York: Columbia UP 1995, pp. 178f. On control societies in Deleuze, see also his conversation with Negri, "Control and Becoming" [1990], also in the *Negotiations* volume.

[70] Deleuze: *The Movement-Image*, p. 24. Deleuze derives his distinction between photographic mold and cinematographic modulation from André Bazin.

[71] Deleuze: "Letter to Serge Daney: Optimism, Pessimism, and Travel" [1986], in: *Negotiations 1972-1990,* p. 76

[72] Patricia Pisters: "Glamour and Glycerine: Surplus and Residual of the Network Society: from *Glamorama* to *Fight Club*", in: Pisters (ed.): *Micropolitics of Media Culture. Reading the Rhizomes of Deleuze and Guattari*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 2001, p.140

[73] Deleuze: "Postscript on Control Societies", p. 179

continuous self-control, the flexible redefinition and working through of identities – these ethics and subjectivities are turned into consumer-cultural experiences by the cinema of the blockbuster, which is cinema as time machine and hardly ever finished event. Blockbusters exceed the molds of genre and narrative closure; they rework (movie) history and consumer biographies, and modulate between markets and media, anticipations and memories, trailers and DVDs, novelty and nostalgia.[74]

The formation process of the control society offers a framework for reconsidering the genealogy of New Hollywood and some ambiguities surrounding the term. In this perspective, the relationship between the New Hollywood of disciplinary crisis and countercultural experimentation, and the New Hollywood of the blockbuster is less one of opposition, but rather one of virtualities that are actualized. In other words, *The Dirty Dozen* and *Kelly´s Heroes*, *Westworld* and *Coma* become meaningful as symptoms and anticipations of media-cultural, hence social, experiences which are flexible, affective, undisciplined – and controlled. Hollywood has displaced and reworked the *Westworld* into the *Jurassic Park*, and one can also see a kind of legacy of *The Dirty Dozen* in contemporary blockbusters: from the obvious example of *Armageddon* (1998) – with its rock band-like team of misfits and jokers on a special NASA mission, and with the *Dirty Dozen*-comparison circulated by promotional discourses and reviews of the film[75] – to *Twister* (1996) or *xXx* (2002), which contrast the productivity of affective labor and subcultural "tacit knowledge" with the failures of disciplined action.

But of course, the (virtual) flexibility explored in the American cinema circa 1970 and the (actual) flexibility rehearsed in today´s cinema of the blockbuster are not one and the same thing. A genealogical approach to our present global media culture probably has to consider processes of re-evaluation which have gradually turned flexibility and affectivity from indices of anti-disciplinary resistance into driving forces of today´s creative industries, lifestyle economies and experience cultures. This point (which demands further inquiry) can be illustrated by a last visit to a theme park running on movie software, with a detour through the contemporary diagnostics of late 1960s New Hollywood. In 1971, Elsaesser contrasted classical Hollywood´s motivation and goal-orientation of action with recent films like *The Wild Bunch* whose emotionally dislocated heroes "laugh uncontrollably for no apparent reason, only

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[74] see Elsaesser: "The Blockbuster", p. 21f
[75] For instance in Andy Richards´ review in Sight & Sound 9, 1998, p. 39.

suddenly to break into outbursts of unmotivated and wholly irrational violence".[76] In 2002, Warner Bros. Movie World at Bottrop, Germany, opened – next to the *Lethal Weapon, Eraser* and *Wild Wild West* rollercoasters, the *Batman* flight simulator, "Rick's Café Américain" and *Dirty Harry´s* BBQ diner – a "free-fall ride" tower named after Peckinpah´s western to end all westerns.[77] Advertised by the Movie World management as the worthy namesake of a "brutal and immoral" western´s "anti-heroes", and with the subtitle of the film´s German dubbed version added to its name, *The Wild Bunch – Sie kannten kein Gesetz* (literally *They Knew No Law*) now shoots up (or rather down) lawless theme park consumers who laugh uncontrollably under technologically controlled outbursts of violence. One New Hollywood´s crisis of motivation has become the name of another´s experience culture.

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[76] Elsaesser: "The American Cinema: Why Hollywood", p. 10
[77] see for instance the German website http://www.germancoaster.de/
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