

Hollywood and Germany: Notes on a History of Cultural Exchange¹

Paper for “Media in Transition: Globalization and Convergence”, an international conference at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, 10-12 May 2002 by Peter Krämer (School of English and American Studies, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ; e-mail: p.kramer@uea.ac.uk)

At the beginning of the new millenium, the annual chart of the top grossing movies in Germany revealed a picture that had become familiar to observers of the German market: Among the top twenty of the year 2000, there was only a single German production (*Anatomie* at no.15); the other nineteen films came from Hollywood, including, not surprisingly, big budget action films such as *Mission: Impossible 2* and *Gladiator*.² Even *Anatomie* was produced and distributed by a German subsidiary of one of the Hollywood majors, Columbia. It seemed, then, that Hollywood had yet again vanquished the German competition, getting German cinemagoers to watch pretty much what their American counterparts were seeing.

However, there also were some differences. For example, the no.1 movie was the gross-out teen comedy *American Pie*, surely a hit in the US, but a long way away from being no.1 over there.³ Three films in the top 10 were animated (*Pokemon*, *Toy Story 2* and *Dinosaur*), whereas only one of these made it into the US top ten.⁴ Furthermore, at no.4 *American Beauty* was much higher placed than in the US (where it did not make it into the top 10 of 1999, even if the substantial revenues in 2000 are counted in as well).⁵ Obviously, German audiences made distinct choices among the many American films offered to them.⁶ And these choices were important for the American film industry, which received about half of its theatrical revenues from outside the US, with Germany being the second largest foreign market (after Japan), accounting for more than 10% of Hollywood’s rental income from foreign markets.⁷ Finally, a closer look at the German top 20 for 2000 reveals that two of them were made by Germans, namely *The Perfect Storm* (directed by Wolfgang Petersen; at no.16) and *The Patriot* (directed by Roland Emmerich; at no.20). Both films also made it into the US top 20, *The Perfect Storm* at no.4 and *The Patriot* at no.16. What is more, two of the

¹Research for this paper in American archives was supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Board.

²“Top 100 Filme 2000”, *Filmecho/Filmwoche*, 6 January 2001, p. 10. The list is based on the number of tickets sold for each film.

³It was no.17 in 1999. “The Top 250 of 1999”, *Variety*, 10 January 2000, p.20.

⁴*Toy Story 2* was at no.3 in 1999.

⁵“The Top 250 of 2000”, *Variety*, 8 January 2001, p.20.

⁶Top ten lists up to 1990 are reproduced in Joseph Garnarz, “Hollywood in Germany: The Role of American Films in Germany, 1925-1990”, in David W. Ellwood and Rob Kroes (eds), *Hollywood in Europe: Experiences of a Cultural Hegemony* (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1994), pp. 122-35. For the hit lists since 1990 see the charts published annually in *Film-Jahrbuch* and in one of the January issues of *Filmecho/Filmwoche*. I am grateful to Joseph Garnarz for providing me with these lists.

⁷For figures for the years 1996-99 see “Int’l shrinks for studios, boosts indies”, *Screen International*, 28 July 2000, p.6.

top three hits of 2000 in Germany (*American Pie* and *The Sixth Sense*) were distributed by Constantin, a German company.⁸ This shows that Hollywood companies were not running the show on their own.

Taking my cue from this analysis of the box office chart for the year 2000, in this paper I want to examine the presence of Hollywood films in Germany and of German films and personnel in the US since the 1970s. To some extent this examination confirms received wisdom about Hollywood's global dominance and the 'Americanization' of European culture. However, I also provide a number of important revisions. In the first section of this paper which builds on the groundbreaking work of Joseph Garncarz, I show that before the 1970s the annual box office top ten in Germany included very few Hollywood films, and that even when Hollywood films became more prominent and eventually dominant in the German charts from the 1970s onwards, German audiences continued to make choices at the box office which differed significantly from those made by American cinemagoers. The second section argues that, despite their very limited commercial success in the US, German imports did receive considerable attention from the American press, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and select cinema audiences from the 1970s onwards (attention which they had not received to the same extent since the 1920s). However - in contrast to British producers, directors and other film personnel -, Germans had to relocate to California if they wanted to participate in the creation of truly international hits. This they did in the 1980s and 1990s. The concluding section highlights the importance of German finance and German media corporations in the international marketplace. What this paper sets out to achieve, then, is a more balanced account of Hollywood's interaction with German audiences, personnel and corporations, which sees this interaction as a two-way exchange rather than a one-way imposition.

US and German Box Office Charts in Comparison

Between the 1920s and the early 1970s, Hollywood had few big box office hits in Germany, although across this period it provided about half of all films released in the German market.⁹ In fact, many of the films (such as the James Bond films or David Lean epics) which would generally be regarded as Hollywood productions or co-productions, were officially registered as British films for their German release. Since many undoubtedly British productions (such

⁸Two more films in the top 20 were distributed by companies that were, at least in part, German owned: Highlight/Central and Tobis StudioCanal.

⁹See Garncarz, "Hollywood in Germany", op.cit., and Garncarz, Populäres Kino in Deutschland: Internationalisierung einer Filmkultur, 1925-1990, unpublished post-doctoral dissertation (Habilitationsschrift), University of Cologne, 1996. Also see Garncarz' contribution to this conference, "Germany Goes Global: Challenging the Theory of Hollywood's Dominance on International Markets". Germany here refers only to West-Germany for the years 1948 to 1990.

as The Third Man) in turn had significant American input, it makes sense to deal with American and British films together. During the years 1925-32 and 1950-71,¹⁰ there were on average only two American or British productions in the annual top ten; the other top ten hits were mostly German and Austrian films or, especially in the 1960s, Continental European imports. These figures force us to revise the received notion of Hollywood's early dominance of the German market,¹¹ and suggest instead that until the 1970s, German audiences by and large preferred domestic films and films from other European countries to American imports.

This is not so surprising if one assumes that initially most people will prefer that which is close and familiar to that which is somewhat distant and strange. Indeed, about two thirds of the British/American top ten hits in Germany during this period, ranging from Ben-Hur (no.4 in 1926/27 and no.1 in 1927/28) to Doctor Zhivago (1, 1966/67), had Biblical or European subject matter (to do with, for example, the Roman Empire, Russian history, the two World Wars or international adventure). Many of these were based on European source material such as novels and featured European stars, and, in the 1950s and 1960s, they were often made partly or wholly in Europe, by European-born Hollywood personnel or by directors and producers living in Europe.¹² While these films succeeded partly due to the familiarity of their subject matter to German audiences, another important group amongst British/American hit imports were youth oriented films from the mid-1950s onwards - from Rebel Without a Cause (9, 1955/56) to Easy Rider (3, 1969/70) - which appealed to the younger generation of cinemagoers precisely because of their distance from established German (and European) culture. This also probably applies to a number of romantic dramas and comedies, especially Doris Day movies dealing with the plight of the modern career woman.

With relatively few exceptions, American hits in Germany as well as many of the British hits, had also been successful at the American box office (but not always to the same degree).¹³ However - and this is a rather obvious point -, none of the non-American and non-British hits in the German top ten, be they of German origin or produced in other Continental European countries, in turn succeeded to get into the American top ten. With the possible exception of a few sex films from Sweden and France in the late 1960s and 1970s, as well as several Spaghetti Westerns of the mid to late 1960s, they did not even get close.¹⁴

¹⁰For the years 1933-1949, there are no reliable box office charts.

¹¹See, for example, Kristin Thompson, Exporting Entertainment: America in the World Film Market, 1907-1934, London: BFI, 1985.

¹²Cp. Peter Krämer, "Hollywood in Germany/Germany in Hollywood", The German Cinema Book, ed. Tim Bergfelder, Erica Carter and Deniz Göktürk, London: BFI, forthcoming.

¹³American box office charts can be found in Cobbett Steinberg, Film Facts, New York: Facts on File, 1980, and in the volumes of Scribner's History of the American Cinema series up to 1989. For the 1990s I have used the box office charts published annually in one of the January issues of Variety, and the Internet Movie Database.

¹⁴For information on the US gross of foreign language imports, see the all-time lists for selected countries compiled in "Pix from afar: National bests in the U.S.", Variety, 7 January 1991, pp.86-7, and the all-time chart

From 1971 onwards, the number of domestic productions in the German top ten declined dramatically, and their places were taken both by Continental European imports and, increasingly, by American films (as well as a few British-American co-productions). In the mid-1970s, German films largely disappeared from the top ten, and ever since there has been on average only one German top ten hit per year. By 1983, Continental European imports had also largely disappeared from the top ten, and ever since American imports (with the occasional British-American co-production) have taken up on average nine of the top ten chart positions. By and large, American hits in Germany since 1971 have been hits at the US box office as well. However, there are significant exceptions such as the sex films The Pigkeeper's Daughter (4, 1972) and Southern Comforts (9, 1972), which point to the continuing specificity of the German market.

In the late 1960s the German top ten became extremely polarized: On the one hand, each year they featured several sex films, of the comedic or educational variety (as for example the no.1 hit of 1967/68, Helga); on the other hand, they usually included several children's films (e.g. Die Lümmel von der ersten Bank, 2, 1967/68). Thus, the top ten for the 1969/70 season, for example, included three sex films and four children's films. While imports such as sex films from Sweden, Disney films (first ranked in the top ten in 1968/69 with The Jungle Book), and French animation (Asterix et Cleopatre, 4, 1970/71) played an important role in these two hit genres, until 1971 German films predominated. Afterwards imports took over, such as the two US sex films mentioned above, glossy and/or arty European erotic films (e.g. Emmanuelle, 3, 1975), re-releases of Chaplin classics (e.g. Modern Times, 7, 1972), new and old Disney films (e.g. The Aristocats, 8, 1971/72, and Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, 5, 1976), and French comedies starring Louis de Funes (e.g. Les aventures de Rabbi Jacob, 6, 1974). Sex films finally disappeared from the German top ten in 1977, but the extraordinary success of children's films continued. A comparison with the US charts during the period 1967-77 reveals that sex films and children's films were certainly present, yet they were far less prominent than in Germany.¹⁵

From 1977 onwards, the biggest hits in the US have consistently been what I have called family-adventure movies, that is action-adventure films and action comedies for the whole

in The Editors of Variety, The Variety Almanac 2000, London: Boxtree, 2000, pp.67-8. Spaghetti Westerns are not included in these lists, presumably because they were released in English language versions.

¹⁵On sex films, see Jon Lewis, Hollywood v. Hard Core: How the Struggle over Censorship Saved the Modern Film Industry, New York: New York University Press, 2000, Chs.4 and 5. On children's films cp. Peter Krämer, "'The best Disney film Disney never made': Children's Films and the Family Audience in American Cinema Since the 1960s", Genre and Contemporary Hollywood, ed. Steve Neale, London: BFI, forthcoming.

family - children and their parents as well as teenagers and young adults.¹⁶ These films also took top positions in the German charts, for example Star Wars (2, 1978), Superman (5, 1979) and E.T. (1, 1983). However, unlike the US charts, throughout the late 1970s and into the 1980s, the German charts became increasingly dominated by Disney animated features, e.g. The Rescuers (1, 1978), The Jungle Book (1, 1980), The Aristocats (2, 1981), and The Fox and the Hound (1, 1982) - long before they returned to the top ten in the US (with Beauty and the Beast in 1991). With few exceptions (The Jungle Book, 2, 1988; The Lion King 1, 1994 and 1, 1995), Disney did not sustain this extraordinary level of success at the very top of the charts, yet its new animated features and re-releases continued to be ranked regularly in the German top ten. Other children's/family films that did exceptionally well in the 1980s in Germany but, for obvious reasons, not in the US, included German bestseller adaptations (e.g. Die unendliche Geschichte/The Neverending Story, 1, 1984) and vehicles for German TV comedians (e.g. Otto - Der Film, 1, 1985).

From the mid-1980s, German and US charts also differed considerably with respect to the levels of success that what one might call 'women's films' (i.e. romantic comedies, weepies, costume dramas and musicals) could achieve.¹⁷ Although very occasionally women's films rose to the top in the US charts (most notably Ghost and Pretty Woman in 1990 and Titanic in 1997/98), in Germany they did so regularly, for example the romantic 'Zeitgeist' comedy Männer/Men (1, 1986), Dirty Dancing (1, 1988), The Bodyguard (2, 1993), While You Were Sleeping (2, 1995) and Notting Hill (2, 1999). The enormous German success of American Beauty, another (anti-)romantic 'Zeitgeist' comedy, may well be explained with reference to these established preferences of German audiences. A further example for differences in the two national charts are gross-out comedies. To a greater or lesser extent the 1990s hits of the Farrelly brothers, Jim Carrey and Adam Sandler fall into this category, yet in the US they rarely reached the high positions that German comic strip adaptations such as Werner - Beinhart (3, 1991) and its sequel Werner - das muß kesseln! (3, 1996) and, as we have already seen, American Pie (1, 2000) could achieve in Germany.

In conclusion, it is important to reiterate that before the 1970s, the German box office charts, and thus the cinemagoing experience of the majority of the German population, were dominated by, in this order, German films, Continental European imports, and European-themed British or American productions. Even when American films came to dominate the German charts in the course of the 1970s, national and genre preferences remained distinct,

¹⁶See Peter Krämer, "Would You Take Your Child To See This Film? The Cultural and Social Work of the Family-Adventure Movie", Contemporary Hollywood Cinema, ed. Steve Neale and Murray Smith, London: Routledge, 1998, pp.294-311.

¹⁷On women's films in the US see Peter Krämer, "A Powerful Cinema-going Force? Hollywood and Female Audiences since the 1960s", Identifying Hollywood's Audiences: Cultural Identity and the Movies, ed. Melvyn Stokes and Richard Maltby, London: BFI, 1999, pp.98-112.

and this distinctiveness continued into the 1980s and 1990s, for example with the continued appearance of domestic productions (and even the odd Continental European import) in the top ten, and indeed occasionally at no.1; and with the higher levels of success, as compared to the US market, for children's films, especially animation, as well as for women's films and gross-out comedies.

Finally, Hollywood films with European subject matter and/or with European personnel continued to perform particularly well in Germany throughout and after Hollywood's takeover in the 1970s. Examples range from Young Frankenstein (1, 1975), the James Bond series and numerous World War II combat movies, to Amadeus (8, 1985) and Schindler's List (3, 1994). Star vehicles for the Austrian bodybuilder Arnold Schwarzenegger and the half-German actress Sandra Bullock (who partly grew up in Germany and still speaks the language fluently, facts highlighted in the promotion of her films) entered the German top ten before they did so in the US - with Conan the Barbarian (4, 1982) and While You Were Sleeping (2, 1995). The same applies to the American productions of German directors Roland Emmerich (Stargate, 5, 1995) and Wolfgang Petersen (Outbreak, 10, 1995). The special affinity of German audiences for these 'Germans' in Hollywood certainly helped their careers in the American film industry.

German Films and Personnel in the US

Petersen and Emmerich belong to the large group of German (and Austrian) film personnel making the move to Hollywood from the 1970s onwards. In 1997, the Hollywood Reporter estimated that "(a)bout 300 German natives - actors, writers, directors, producers, editors, musicians and composers - are currently living and working in Los Angeles."¹⁸ This represents the largest influx of Germans into the American film industry since the refugees escaping Nazi Germany in the 1930s. In combination with earlier waves of German and Austrian immigrants and of Eastern European Jewish immigrants aiming for, or more or less accidentally ending up in Hollywood, from the 1920s all the way back to the late 19th century, the 30s refugees formed a very prominent and powerful 'ethnic' network in the American film industry, second only to Anglo-Americans.¹⁹ From moguls such as Universal's Carl Laemmle and producers such as Warners' Henry Blanke to commercially and critically exceptionally successful directors such as Billy Wilder and William Wyler, stars such as Marlene Dietrich, and towering figures such as composer Max Steiner and cameraman Frank Planer, Germans and Austrians were at the very heart of Hollywood from its beginnings to the 1960s. Many of them were centrally involved with the very European-

¹⁸Eric Hansen, "Germans Launch Blitz on L.A.; Resurgence of film scene back home spurs exodus to H'wood", Hollywood Reporter, 20 May 1997, p.13.

¹⁹See Krämer, "Hollywood in Germany/Germany in Hollywood", op.cit.

themed productions that did so well in Germany, when the rest of Hollywood's output by and large did not.

However, by the 1970s these German and Austrian born Hollywood veterans had mostly died or gone into (semi-)retirement, and the much smaller number of Germans and Austrians moving to LA, or being employed in Hollywood's European-based productions, in the 1950s and 1960s (an example would be Bernard Wicki who co-directed The Longest Day, 1962) failed to achieve the same levels of success as earlier generations of migrants, and rarely settled in Hollywood. Thus, in the 1970s very few Germans or Austrians worked at the top level in Hollywood.²⁰ So how did the new and highly successful German film migration of the 1980s and 1990s come about? Why were Germans so eager to work in Hollywood? And why was Hollywood so receptive for them?

As far as the last question is concerned, the reception of German films in the American market is of crucial importance. Although the history of German film exports to the US still needs to be written, available sources suggest that, with the exception of Ernst Lubitsch's Madame Dubarry/Passion (1919) and Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari/The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1921) - the success of which was an important reason for Hollywood's interest in Weimar film personnel in the 1920s -,²¹ German films have never competed successfully with Hollywood in its own market. However, in the late 1970s and through the 1980s, German imports in the US were able to hold their own in the small market for foreign-language films. Critical acclaim for the so-called 'New German Cinema', which culminated in the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 1979 for Volker Schlöndorff's Die Blechtrommel/The Tin Drum, translated into substantial (for this niche market) box office returns.²² The Tin Drum, for example, grossed \$4m in 1980.²³ Rainer Werner Fassbinder scored foreign-language hits with Die Ehe der Maria Braun/The Marriage of

²⁰There are two curious exceptions at executive level. Austrian born entrepreneur Charles Bluhdorn, who was chairman of Gulf and Western, took control of Paramount in 1966, and Austrian born Eric Pleskow became a top executive at United Artists, serving as the company's president for much of the 1970s.

²¹See Joel Finler, The Hollywood Story, London: Octopus, 1988, p.276, and Kristin Thompson, 'Dr. Caligari at the Folies Bergeres', The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari: Texts, Contexts, Histories, ed. Mike Budd, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1990.

²²On the critical reception of New German Cinema in the US see, for example, Thomas Elsaesser, New German Cinema: A History, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1989, pp.290-303. There were several German language films nominated for the foreign-language Oscar in the run-up to the success of Die Blechtrommel: Der Fußgänger/The Pedestrian (FRG, 1973), Jakob, der Lügner/Jacob, the Liar (GDR, 1976), and Die Gläserne Zelle/The Glass Cell (1978). After 1979, the profile of German language films at the Oscars remained high for a few years, with nominations for Das Boot ist voll/The Boat is Full (Switzerland, 1981), Bittere Ernte/Angry Harvest (FRG, 1985), Colonel Redl (Hungary/Germany, 1985), "38" (Austria, 1986), and Hanussen (Hungary/Germany, 1988), plus wins for Mephisto (Hungary/Germany, 1981) and Reise der Hoffnung/Journey of Hope (Switzerland/Turkey, 1990). See Steinberg, op.cit., pp.249-257; "The 1980s: A Reference Guide to Motion Pictures, Television, VCR, and Cable", The Velvet Light Trap, no.27 (Spring 1991), p.84.

²³"Pix from afar", op.cit. Mephisto also did well with \$3.9m in 1982.

Maria Braun (\$2.6m in 1979), Lola (\$1.9m in 1982) and Veronika Voss (\$0.9m in 1982), Werner Herzog with Aguirre, der Zorn Gottes/Aguirre, the Wrath of God (\$0.8m in 1978), Nosferatu, Phantom der Nacht/Nosferatu, the Vampyre (\$1m in 1979) and Fitzcarraldo (\$1.7m in 1982). These returns were negligible in Hollywood terms (even the films at the very bottom of the US top tens in the early 1980s grossed about \$50m), yet they were not that far behind the top grossing foreign-language imports of the late 1970s and early 1980s, films such as Luchino Visconti's The Innocent (\$4.1m in 1979), Akira Kurosawa's Kagemusha (\$4m in 1980), Ingmar Bergman's Autumn Sonata (\$4.2m in 1979) and Jean-Jacques Beineix's Diva (\$6.3m in 1982).

There were two breakaway foreign-language hits during this period, which left the competition far behind, and indeed were among the highest grossing foreign-language films of all time in the US: La Cage aux Folles (\$17m in 1979) and Wolfgang Petersen's Das Boot/The Boat (\$11m in 1982).²⁴ The success of Das Boot was remarkable in more than one way. To begin with, the film was received as a high quality genre movie rather than specialist arthouse fare. "While most imports from West Germany tend to be 'art films'", wrote David Sterritt in the Christian Science Monitor, "the latest by Wolfgang Petersen is a rough-and-tumble action picture."²⁵ That Das Boot could almost be treated as a Hollywood picture is also indicated by the fact that, instead of the picture receiving a Best Foreign Language Film nomination, Petersen received a Best Director nomination. Furthermore, reviews highlighted the fact that this was an expensive film; indeed, the production cost of DM25m/\$12m - which, according to Variety, made it "far and away the most expensive German film made since World War II, possibly in the history of German cinema"²⁶ - was slightly higher than the average budget of Hollywood releases in the early 1980s.²⁷ Finally, unlike almost all of the other successful German exports to the US, Das Boot also was a big hit in Germany, ranked no.6 for 1981 (of the other films mentioned above only Die Blechtrommel had made it into the German top ten).

The success of Das Boot in the US marked a turning point for Hollywood-German relations because it raised the possibility that big budget German genre films might succeed both in the German and the American market, and because it attracted more of Hollywood's attention (already stimulated by previous art house hits) to the talent and commercial acumen of German production personnel. In the wake of Das Boot, the film's German distributor Constantin, under its top executive and leading producer Bernd Eichinger, embarked on an

²⁴In 1999, La Cage aux Folles was still at no.6 of Variety's all-time foreign language hits in the US, and Das Boot at no.10; The Editors of Variety, op.cit., p.67.

²⁵Review, Christian Science Monitor, 11 March 1982, p.18.

²⁶Review reprinted in Derek Elley (ed.), Variety Movie Guide 2000, New York: Perigee, 2000, p.99.

²⁷"The 1980s", op.cit., p.79.

ambitious program of big budget English language films with international casts.²⁸ Like Die Blechtrommel and Das Boot these were mostly adaptations of bestselling novels, ranging from Umberto Eco's The Name of the Rose to Isabel Allende's House of Spirits. However, while most of these films succeeded at the German box office (and also in other Continental European markets),²⁹ only one became a moderate hit in the US, namely Petersen's follow-up to Das Boot, The Neverending Story, which grossed about \$20m in 1984 (as compared to the lowest ranked top ten film of the year which grossed \$70m).³⁰

From the mid-1980s, a number of leading German producers and directors were involved in expensive English language productions. In addition to Eichinger and Petersen, there was, for example, Doris Dörrie, who followed her huge German hit Männer/Men (1, 1986; US gross \$2m) with Ich und Er (1988), which was produced by Eichinger, was set and mainly shot in the US and starred Griffin Dunne. Uli Edel, who had had a big hit in Germany with Christiane F.: Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo (4, 1981; US gross \$1.2m) made Letzte Ausfahrt Brooklyn/Last Exit Brooklyn in the US in 1988 for Constantin (again Eichinger produced). In the low-budget sector, Roland Emmerich made a series of ambitious Science Fiction films in English, starting with Joey/Making Contact in 1985.³¹ While several of these English language productions were successful at the German box office (shown, of course, in German dubbed versions), none competed successfully in the US.³² Consequently, for those directors - and other film personnel - wishing to make big budget movies which were competitive all over the world, relocating to Hollywood became a necessity. Many made the move, among them Petersen and Emmerich.

Fortunately for them, Hollywood had been actively recruiting Germans (and Austrians) since the 1970s. This was a consequence of the critical prestige of German films as well as their commercial success within the foreign-language market in the 1970s and 1980s, which I have outlined above, and also a consequence of the recognition of a few exceptional talents. As early as 1972, for example, leading German set designer Rolf Zehetbauer (who later worked on Das Boot) and his team won an Academy Award for their work on Cabaret. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, regular collaborators of the leading New German directors

²⁸Cp. Andreas M. Rauch, Bernd Eichinger und seine Filme, Frankfurt am Main: Haag & Herchen, 2000.

²⁹For example, The Name of the Rose was the third highest grossing film in Germany in 1986 (with revenues of about \$45m), and also a big success in other Continental European countries. Despite its box office failure in the US, its worldwide gross was over \$120m. See Angus Finney, The State of European Cinema: A New Dose of Reality, London: Cassell, 1996, p.222. For further examples, cp. Martin Dale, The Movie Game: The Film Business in Britain, Europe and America, London: Cassell, 1997, p.328.

³⁰Lawrence Cohn, "All-time Film Rental Champs", Variety, 10 May 1993, p.C-96. The film's rentals (usually about half of the box office gross) were \$10.1m.

³¹See Jo Müller, Roland Emmerich: Eine Werkbiografie, Köln: vgs, 1998.

³²Somewhat ironically, during this period Wim Wenders' German art movie Der Himmel über Berlin/Wings of Desire did become a minor foreign-language hit in the US, grossing \$3.4m in 1988.

were very much in demand in Hollywood.³³ For example, Herzog's alter ego Klaus Kinski was a Hollywood regular in the 1970s and 1980s (also Kinski's daughter Nastassja), and Fassbinder's favorite cinematographer Michael Ballhaus became a favorite of Martin Scorsese's in the 1980s and has since received several Oscar nominations. Some of the directors of the New German Cinema also gained Hollywood contracts. Wenders, for example, directed Hammett (1982) for Coppola, and Schlöndorff made Death of a Salesman (1985) for American television. However, most of the US films of the directors of the New German Cinema succeeded neither commercially nor critically, neither in the US nor in Germany.

In addition to personnel closely associated with the New German Cinema, there were other Germans and Austrians making a big impression in Hollywood in the 1980s and 1990s.³⁴ Klaus-Maria Brandauer, for example, starred in Istvan Szabo's Hungarian-German trilogy of historical films, all of which were nominated for the Best Foreign Language Oscar, with Mephisto winning in 1981. He appeared in a wide range of Hollywood productions, and received a Best Supporting Actor nomination for Out of Africa (1985), in which he was billed third after Meryl Streep and Robert Redford. In 1985, Armin Müller-Stahl co-starred in two films nominated for the Foreign Language Oscar (Oberst Redl and Bittere Ernte), and soon afterwards embarked on a Hollywood career which included a Best Supporting Actor Oscar nomination for Shine (1996). Musicians received even greater recognition from the Academy. Giorgio Moroder won Best Score for Midnight Express (1978) and Best Song for Flashdance (1983) and Top Gun (1986). Composer Hans Zimmer has received several Oscar nominations since he started working in Hollywood in the late 1980s, winning for the score of The Lion King (1994).

The Hollywood success of these (and other) German and Austrian composers, actors and cinematographers (as well as editors, producers etc.) provided the context for Petersen's and Emmerich's move to Hollywood at the end of the 1980s, and their subsequent rise to the very top. Similar to Moroder and Zimmer, and unlike earlier New German filmmakers in Hollywood, the very commercially oriented Petersen and Emmerich focussed on genre films right from the start, Petersen on thrillers (starting with Shattered, 1991) and Emmerich on special effects and action oriented Science Fiction (starting with Universal Soldier, 1992). Helped by the success of some of their early Hollywood films in the German market, Petersen and Emmerich soon established themselves amongst the elite of Hollywood

³³Cp. entries in Thomas Elsaesser with Michael Wedel (eds.), The BFI Companion to German Cinema, London: BFI, 1999; also Heiko R. Blum, Meine zweite Heimat Hollywood: Deutschsprachige Filmkünstler in den USA, Berlin: Henschel, 2001.

³⁴Of course, the most famous Austrian in 1980s Hollywood was Arnold Schwarzenegger. However, it seems to me that he belongs into a category all of his own, since he did not come to America as an established actor but as a body builder.

directors. In the all-time chart of top grossing movies at the US box office (as of 9 April 2002), they have several films in the top 250: Petersen's The Perfect Storm (2000) is at no.51, his Air Force One (1997) at no.64, and In the Line of Fire (1993) at no.224; Emmerich has Independence Day (1996) at no.10, Godzilla (1998) at no.119 and The Patriot (2000) at no.180.³⁵ Some of these films are placed even higher in the all-time chart for the international (non-USA) market which lists, for example, Independence Day at no.5 and Godzilla at no.40.³⁶

It is quite an impressive feat for German directors to make some of Hollywood's most successful movies of the 1990s and the new millennium. However, another look at the all-time charts confirms that so far the inroads made by Germans into the international film market since the 1970s have remained very limited, especially when compared to the British. The international successes of the British are not limited to the work of a few Hollywood-based directors, although British directors are, of course, very successful in Hollywood, most notably Ridley Scott, who recently placed two films - Gladiator (2000) and Hannibal (2001) - in the all-time top 100 both in the US and internationally.³⁷ Beyond the success of its Hollywood expatriates, the British film industry has other achievements to look back upon. For example, unlike German studios, which have been used only rarely by Hollywood,³⁸ for many decades British studios have attracted some of Hollywood's top productions, including Star Wars (no.2 in the all-time US list, and no.13 in the international list) and Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (2001, no.7 in the US and no.2 internationally).

Furthermore, again unlike German productions which rarely gain access to Hollywood finance and distribution, British productions for decades have been (co-)funded and distributed by the major Hollywood studios. As a result, many British-American co-productions have become major hits in the US, most notably the James Bond series (the highest ranked entry in the series in the US is The World Is Not Enough, 1999, at no.139), but also films such as Notting Hill (1999, no.171), Chicken Run (2000, no.205) and Shakespeare in Love (1998, no.242).³⁹ Such films have been even more successful in the (non-US) international market, where Notting Hill, for example, is at no.34, GoldenEye (1995) at no.35, The Full Monty (1997) at no.53, Four Weddings and a Funeral (1994) at no.68, Bean (1997) at no.73 etc. This is a very impressive track record indeed, which, as we have seen, German productions, even when made in English and picked up by major

³⁵<http://us.imdb.com/Charts/usatopmovies>.

³⁶<http://us.imdb.com/Charts/intltopmovies>.

³⁷A list of the all-time US top grossers directed by Europeans (almost exclusively German and British) is given in Mike Goodridge, "Charge of the Euro brigade", Screen International, 15 September 2000, p.8.

³⁸Cp. Liza Foreman, "Teutons tout tempting location lures to pics", Variety, 1 January 2001, pp.9, 16.

³⁹Cp. Sarah Street, Transatlantic Crossings: British Feature Films in the USA, New York: Continuum, forthcoming; and Andrew Higson, English Heritage, English Cinema: The Costume Drama in the 1980s and 1990s, Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming, Chs.3-4.

American distributors, simply cannot compete with at all (the \$20m US gross of The Neverending Story, for example, is only a fraction of the \$100m that films like Shakespeare in Love gross in the US).

To conclude this section, let me review some of the major points: From the early decades of the last century the only chance for Germans to participate in the production of world-wide hits was to move to Hollywood. This they have done, for political as well as economic reasons, in successive waves, with many of those arriving before World War II becoming major Hollywood hitmakers several of whose films succeeded in the US as well as in key foreign markets such as Germany. Since the 1970s, the critical reputation of the New German Cinema and of certain key individuals as well as a series of moderate import hits from Germany made Hollywood again receptive to German personnel, who came in ever greater numbers throughout the 1980s and 1990s; many of them reached the heights of Hollywood success, including several Oscar nominees and winners as well as two leading blockbuster directors. Most recently, the success of Lola rennt/Run Lola Run (1998, US gross \$7.2m, a substantial amount for the foreign language market) reinforced Hollywood's interest in German personnel, and a new generation, including Lola director Tom Tykwer and the film's star Franka Potente, has since been trying to make it big in Hollywood.

Conclusion

My account of the relations between Hollywood and Germany since the 1970s is mostly descriptive rather than explanatory, and it raises as many questions as it answers, for example: Why did the preferences of German cinema audiences change so dramatically from the 1960s to the 1980s?⁴⁰ To what extent were the films that German directors such as Petersen and Emmerich made in the US influenced by their national origin?⁴¹ Why (apart from the obvious issue of language) have the German and British film industries developed such different relationships with Hollywood and the international marketplace? I want to finish this paper with some remarks on this last question.

Much more than their British counterparts, German distributors and the production companies associated with them dominated their domestic market until the 1960s. Even when German popular cinema largely disappeared (because of the increasing demand for foreign films, and the rise of the state-subsidized New German 'art' cinema), leading German distributors, most notably Tobis in the 1970s and Constantin since the 1980s, retained a

⁴⁰Joseph Garnarz addresses this question in his contribution to this conference "Germany Goes Global".

⁴¹I will address aspects of this question in "German Nationality/Hollywood Patriotism: The Transatlantic Tales of Wolfgang Petersen, Roland Emmerich and Oskar Schindler", paper to be presented at 'Trading Culture: An international conference on the themes of the indigenous and the exportable in film and television culture', Sheffield Hallam University, 18-20 July 2002.

substantial market share by distributing box office hits imported from Continental Europe and the US.⁴² In 2000, for example, despite the limited success of domestic productions in the German market (with a 12.5% share of total box office),⁴³ the leading German distributors (Constantin, Kinowelt/Arthaus, Highlight, Tobis StudioCanal and Senator) had a market share of over 30%, mainly due to their handling of a number of big Hollywood hits.⁴⁴

Precisely because German distributors, which also act as the main backers of domestic production, have always been so successful in their domestic market - first with German films, then with imports -, they may have been less motivated than major British companies, which were under much more pressure from Hollywood at home,⁴⁵ to form alliances with American companies so as to gain production finance and international distribution, especially in the US. Furthermore, it seems that, unlike Britain's focus on the US, Germany's main film export markets have traditionally been in Continental Europe (notwithstanding a few successful forays into the American market in the decade following World War I).⁴⁶

The one area in which the American film market has attracted a lot of attention from German companies is production finance - not the financing of German production by American companies (which is rare) but German investment into American production. Since the 1970s, German companies (including tax shelter funds, investment funds, dealers in film rights such as Leo Kirch as well as film distribution and production companies) have been a major source of production finance for the Hollywood studios, and in the late 1990s and into the new millenium, they have arguably been the most important source.⁴⁷ Initially, such investments had not been connected with any kind of influence on the actual production process, but in recent years it seems that German companies increasingly make deals which give them some measure of control.

⁴²Cp. Garnarcz, Populäres Kino in Deutschland, op.cit.

⁴³Martin Blaney, "Local films lose out in busy German BO year", Screen International, 9 February 2001, p.8.

⁴⁴Martin Blaney, "World Box Office: Germany 2001", Screen International, 13 April 2001, p.13. Constantin had the second highest market share of all distributors, surpassed only by UIP. Martin Blaney, "Downtime", Screen International, 9 February 2001, p.29.

⁴⁵Cp., for example, Margaret Dickinson and Sarah Street, Cinema and State: The Film Industry and the British Government, 1927-1984, London: BFI, 1985; and Andrew Higson, Waving the Flag: Constructing a National Cinema in Britain, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

⁴⁶Cp. Elsaesser with Wedel, op.cit., pp.82-4, and Joseph Garnarcz, "Made in Germany: Multiple-Language Versions and Early German Sound Cinema", 'Film Europe' and 'Film America': Cinema, Commerce and Cultural Exchange, 1920-1939, ed. Andrew Higson and Richard Maltby, Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1999, pp.249-73.

⁴⁷Cp. Toby Miller, Nitin Govil, John McMurria and Richard Maxwell, Global Hollywood, London: BFI, 2001, pp.46, 99; "Spotlight: Germany", Variety, 18 June 2001, pp.27-8; and, for the earlier period, for example, David A. Cook, Lost Illusions: American Cinema in the Shadow of Watergate and Vietnam, 1970-1979, New York: Scribner's, 2000, p.13.

If production investments are one way to profit from, as well as potentially exerting influence on, Hollywood's operations, then corporate takeovers are another. In this respect, the enormous size and global reach of the leading German media conglomerates is of crucial importance. Indeed, when in September 2000 *Variety* published a list of the world's major media conglomerates ranked by revenues, two German companies were highly placed: Kirch Group (which partly owns Constantin) at no.18 and Bertelsmann (whose film production and distribution activities so far have been marginal) at no.3.⁴⁸ Although Kirch Group's global ambitions have since collapsed, as has the company's whole debt-ridden corporate edifice, Bertelsmann continues to be a major player, indeed the only player at the very top that does not own a Hollywood studio. In future, then, it is entirely possible that, following the example of Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. (originally an Australian company), the Japanese consumer electronics giants Sony and Matsushita, the Canadian company Seagram and the French Vivendi, all of which have (permanently or temporarily) taken over major Hollywood studios since the 1980s, Bertelsmann could become a major force in international film production and distribution by taking over, or merging with, another media conglomerate.⁴⁹ However, to what extent such takeovers and mergers involving foreign companies translate into actual executive control over the operations of Hollywood studios is yet another open question.

Finally, it is useful to remind ourselves that despite the ease with which investments and corporate ownership reach across national boundaries, national preferences can remain stubbornly specific. An excellent recent example is the success of Der Schuh des Manitu/Manitou's Shoe (2001, released by Constantin), which the *Variety* reviewer, quite accurately, described as follows: "The sauerkraut oater goes Mel Brooks in Manitou's Shoe, a determinedly silly but frequently very funny spoof of the Winnetou & Old Shatterhand German Westerns of the '60s."⁵⁰ Quite surprisingly, this - for a non-German audience - most unlikely of films makes an appearance at no.62 in *Variety*'s list of the top-grossing movies worldwide (that is both in the US and outside) in 2001, with a gross of \$64.3m.⁵¹ The explanation is not that the film found a huge audience outside Germany. Instead the vast majority of its total gross (about \$53m) was generated at the German box office, where Der Schuh des Manitu became the highest grossing domestic production of all time.⁵² Despite Hollywood's global dominance, the preferences of the German cinema audience can indeed remain very distinctive.

⁴⁸"The Global 50", *Variety*, 28 August 2000, p. 88; Dale, op.cit., pp.141-3.

⁴⁹Rumors about Bertelsmann's designs on Hollywood are mentioned, for example, in Frederick Wasser, Veni, Vidi, Video: The Hollywood Empire and the VCR, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001, p.186.

⁵⁰Derek Elley, review, *Variety*, 3 December 2001, p.34.

⁵¹"The Top 125 Worldwide", *Variety*, 14 January 2002, p.23.

⁵²"Homegrown pix gain in Europe", *Variety*, 6 January 2002, p.7.