The hero figure in Business and Cinema

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Paper written in preparation for lectures and oral presentations given
- at the conference "Management and Film: The *pharmakon* of film & new media", at the American University of Paris, May 2nd–3rd, 2012,
- for the Learning and Development Unit, General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, Brussels, May 21st, 2012,
- within courses and research seminars at Telecom Paristech (Economics and Social Sciences Department).

Un préliminaire de ce travail a fait l'objet d'une conférence, à l'invitation d'Alain Lempereur, sous le titre "Le négociateur, héros du cinéma Américain?", dans le cadre du séminaire "Leaderhip Responsable", Négociateurs du Monde/Institut pour la Recherche et l'Enseignement de la Négociation en Europe/ESSEC Business School, 23 Juin 2011.

La partie consacrée au jeu d'acteur et à l'expression des signes d'intériorité dans les films Américains est approfondie dans l'article "La fabrique du héros hollywoodien. L'acteur et l'intériorité", *Communication & Langages*, n°172, Juin 2012.

Abstract.

Textbooks and manuals on management suggest that managers are heroes who deal with difficult problems of collective adaptation and change. American films are similarly built on the premise of a hero confronted with extremely difficult situations. What if this hero figure promoted for so long in both management literature and the American film industry was the same at the structural level? This paper will attempt to clearly define the performance of heroes that is perhaps shared by the imagination industry (Hollywood) and the image of human relations in the western industrial world. We shall follow this picture of the *Manager as Hollywood Hero* – or the *Managerial–Hollywood Hero* (*MHH*) – through multiple examples in both writings on management and American movies.

Contents

Introduction

"I'm king of the world," announces the hero of *Titanic* happily from the prow of the huge transatlantic steamer. The model of a hero Hollywood offers the world is no less than the body of a democratic king. The other kings of the world are, without doubt, the managers and intellectual workers to whom success in the workplace assures recognition, economic welfare, adventure and personal evolution. Both attract popular interest and tend to be admired or despised far beyond the boundaries of the United States and countries of the West. They are studied all over the world, their icons circulate everywhere. And it's not only those who have profited by globalization who are receptive to their charms. What is the secret of their power of attraction? What is the key to their success?

The relationship between movies and society.

In this paper I will focus on a single question raised by sociologist Ian C. Jarvie in his consideration of "the relationship between the societies that produce films and the societies created in films"[1]. This is particularly relevant when it comes to examining the relationship between management and American movies, that is to say between the fundamental ethics governing western economies and one of the most popular manifestations of the imagination industry, Hollywood.

Films are often used to illustrate management concepts. Well chosen extracts serve as great examples of how human beings relate to each other. For example, the book *Using films to visualize principles and practices* displays a table of contents typical of any management

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[1]   Ian C. Jarvie, *Movies and society*, Basic Books, Inc., New York, 1970, p.132.

textbook. Each chapter digs into a particular issue—"motivation", "team management" or "conflict"—and examines scenes chosen from over a hundred American movies[2].

Although not contradictory, my point here is different and more structural. What I am trying to show is that managerial thought and American cinema reinforce each other's attraction as they converge on a unique set of ethical and behavioural requirements that combines the power of mass media with the "spirit of capitalism"[3].

Research scope and method.

To give a quick glimpse of the scope and method of my research, I took notes on more than 200 American movies and over 30 textbooks and manuals on management and relational engineering as applied to leadership, negotiation and interpersonal communication in organizations. Content analysis was carried out through a parallel reading of textbooks and films[4]. The scope of the study covers a large period of time, from the late 1920's up to the present, for both the management literature and the movies. The movies analysed belong to very different genres (action, western, police stories, drama…) and exclude only comedies which are covered, anyway, in Stanley Cavell's *Pursuits of Happiness, The Hollywood Comedy of Remarriage*[5].

As to books on management, I shall be quoting authors who published during the years 1980, 1990 and 2000 such as Ancona, Badaracco, Buckingham, Crozier, Heifetz, Kleiner, Lax and Sebenius, and Malone. I will also quote Barnard, *The Functions of the Executive*, 1938, and

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[2]   Joseph Champoux, *Using film to visualize principles and practices*, South-Western College Publishing, Cincinnati, 2001. See also John Hassard, Ruth Holliday, *Organization Representation. Work and Organizations in popular culture*, Sage Publications, London, 1998. James G. March, Thierry Weil, *Le leadership dans les organisations*, Les Presses de l'École des Mines, Paris, 2003. Patrick Butteau, *Le management illustré par le cinéma*, A. Franel Édition, Paris, 2010. James March, *Passion and Discipline*, documentary film, 2003, where Don Quixote is considered a paradigm of modern leadership. In the international conference organized by Harvard University and ESSEC, "New trends in Negotiation teaching", 2005, Michael Wheeler of Harvard Business School, the keynote speaker opening the conference, used film extracts taken from *Tin Men*, 1987, and *Defending your life*, 1991. Three sessions were dedicated to "Teaching through film". The Program On Negotiation (PON) at Harvard Law School presented the "PON film series". In this program students watch films such as *Do the right thing*, 1989, *No man's land*, 2001, *Three kings*, 1999, *I am Sam*, 2001, *Twelve angry men*, 1957, *Chocolate*, 2000, *Hotel Rwanda*, 2004.

[3]   Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, [1904], and more recently, L. Boltanski, E. Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, Verso, 2006, translated from the French, *Le nouvel esprit du capitalisme*, Gallimard, Paris, 1999.

[4]   I fully agree with Stanley Cavell who calls his accounts of films "readings" of them, see *Pursuits of Happiness, The Hollywood Comedy of Remarriage*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1981.

[5]   *Cf*. note 4.

Leavitt's *Managerial Psychology*, 1958. I shall not be quoting but will always have in mind the works of Mayo, 1933, Lewin, 1935-46, Maier, 1946, McGregor, 1960, Mintzberg, 1989, Senge, 1998–99, and others…[6]

After a little initial blundering I settled on a set of six criteria that seem to embody and encompass both fields and both types of hero, *Managerial* and *Hollywood*.

The hypothesis of the *Management-Hollywood Hero* (*MHH*).

My contention is that the major figures in leadership as described in management literature and the profiles of heroes in American movies are the same on a structural level. In other words, what finally became obvious to me as I watched American movies or red manuals on leadership, is that readers or viewers are dealing with the same type of hero, a hero shared by the industry of imagination (Hollywood) and the image of industry (the human relations models produced by scholarly and professional publishing). I call this the *Manager as Hollywood Hero* or *Managerial–Hollywood Hero* (*MHH*).

If I may make a play on words, *MHH* could also stand for *Master of Human Harmonics*, a presumptuous metaphor perhaps, but one I shall try to justify later.

I have been working on this hypothesis for a long time. I have been giving courses on leadership, negotiation and human relations at Telecom Paristech using films as the main pedagogical tool for the past ten years. I had the chance last year to take a sabbatical and spent some of it documenting the parallels between management and films.

My paper is structured round three points:

- I shall first make two observations to forestall a possible basic misunderstanding of what is intended when I speak of *managerial heroes*.

- Then, getting to the core of the theory, I shall describe the profile of the *Manager as Hollywood Hero* more fully and spell out the nuts and bolts of its communicative power.

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[6] For a bibliography of the books I used, see the appendix down bellow, "Management bibliography".

- Having quoted several management manuals I shall then apply the *Managerial– Hollywood Matrix* to a few American movies.

1– What could a managerial hero be?

Let me now discuss two questions, preconceptions or objections that may come to mind.

Leadership as heroism.

The first is: why describe managers or leaders as heroes? Where does this come from? The basic answer is that manuals on leadership clearly suggest that managers are a species of hero faced with difficult problems of collective adaptation and change[7]. In a similar manner, American films are built on the premise of a hero confronted with highly complex or charged situations. This is their primary common ground.

On the management side let me quote one or two textbooks in which leadership is described as a matter of heroism: Buckingham asks managers to "create Heroes in Every Role" (p.200). Heifetz, in *Leadership without easy answers*, writes: "If we want to generate more leadership in our society, we have two options. We can embolden a greater number of people toward heroic effort, and we can investigate ways to lead that reduce the likelihood of personal injury, even to the hero, so that more people can step into the fray", Heifetz, 1994, p.235. Art Kleiner, in a 40 page chapter, compares the modern manager to Parzival, a knight of the Round Table, who, after many adventures, becomes the keeper of the Grail. In a book called *Managerial Psychology* published in 1958, Leavitt recognizes that the actions of business men resemble those of Hollywood[8]. Michel Crozier, a French sociologist who taught at Harvard, also speaks of heroes who bring innovation to companies[9].

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[7] Leavitt, 1958 ; Crozier, 1989 ; Heifetz, 1994 ; Kleiner, 1996 ; Badaracco, 1997 ; Senge, 2001 ; Ancona, 2007.

[8] In the French translation, *Psychologie des fonctions de direction dans l'entreprise*, 1973, p.244.

[9] Crozier, p.45, p.215.

Managers as everyday heroes.

The second question is: when speaking of heroes in management, should one speak only of "hero CEOs"? It is true that, just like Hollywood heroes, the stature of emblematic leaders such as Steve Jobs, Bill Gates or Jack Welch are larger than life in the public imagination. But it's not that easy.

Most management manuals are interested in a form of leadership that is much wider. Leadership begins with two people influencing each other. Anyone even temporarily assuming any kind of formal or informal authority, expertise or influence will be likely to face managerial issues. In *X–teams: how to build teams that lead, innovate, and succeed*, 2007, it says: "This book is the story of X–Teams. It is a story about ordinary people doing extraordinary things" (p.9). Badaracco speaks of "patient, unglamorous, everyday efforts" (Badaracco, 2002, p.9). Elsewhere he examines specific defining moments managers face and notes that "these situations are moments of potential greatness" (Badaracco, 1997, p.120). Buckingham praises leaders showing "cool heroism" (p.73). The kind of behaviour I am interested in is the everyday, a sort of common behaviour which is nevertheless heroic.

As for the superpowers of American film heroes, these present only one side of the character. The portrait requires filling out with far more common habits. For example, it may be thrilling to follow the risk–filled life of a secret commando in Spielberg's film *Munich* yet, as was commented on in the press when the film was first released, the way the group organizes itself does not look like the actual modus operandi of a secret service[10]. It is really far more like project management as explained in the most widespread textbooks on the subject.

2– The *Managerial–Hollywood Matrix*.

I now come to the core of the matter, the main features of the *Manager as Hollywood Hero*.

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[10] See for exemple, Thomas Sotinel, "Dans les coulisses de *Munich*", January 22, 2006. Jean Daniel, "Déroutant Spielberg", *Nouvel Observateur*, January 26, 2006. Henri Guirchoun, "*Munich*, la véritable histoire", et Elie Barnavi, "Les vrais messages de *Munich*", Nouvel Observateur, February 9, 2006.

If a comparison of the structures of leadership and of heroes in films is to have any sense, it can only be within the strict limits of what they have in common. If, on the other hand, we focus on differences, we will, of course, find they are not *exactly* the same.

I suggest a set of six criteria for examining the positions of leaders as presented in management literature and of heroes as they are presented in American films. I shall argue that the final heroic touch of both consists in a double challenge:

- the simultaneous intensification of all facets of the abovementioned six criteria,

- and the manifestation of a possible synthesis, "collage" or embodiment of these intensified and partly contradictory assertions which reach their highest point of tension in the *Managerial–Hollywood Matrix* (or, in other words, engulf the *Managerial–Hollywood Matrix* in the greatest possible tension), thus capturing he maximum public interest.

The six criteria giving meaning to the figure of the *Management–Hollywood Hero* are as follows:

Heroes take on roles [ROL]

The *Manager as Hollywood Hero* (*MHH*) assumes roles, especially social roles, and takes on different identities (private or public according to the situation and people with whom he or she interacts). Heroes in both the managerial field and Hollywood movies step into new functions or social environments in which they are forced to learn new customs and habits. They know how to play with signs, costume, style and voice, both to enhance their own self assertiveness and to promote ideas, projects and values. Heroes often play at being someone different from who they really are. They disguise themselves.

> Here are a few quotes chosen from among many others in textbooks and manuals on management that show how managerial heroes are propelled to take on roles. "When the stakes are high, people play the games of organizational life to win", writes Badaracco (p.98). His counsel to leaders is: "Sometimes play the lion, more often, the fox" (p.115, with an explicit reference to Machiavelli). Heifetz warns: "A person who leads must interpret people's responses to his actions as responses to the role he

plays" (p.263). Leaders are like Hollywood stars: "The charisma derives not only from the person's skills, personality, and devotion but also from the community's investment. As in Hollywood, the star steps into a role that the audience has made" (Heifetz, p.247). Buckghingam therefore advises leaders to "study your best in the role" (p.105).

Heroes have profound interiority [INT]

The *MHH* has depth—deep emotions and sensations—and reveals how strongly he or she relates to them. Heroes both in the managerial field and Hollywood movies feel deeply and are in full contact with their environment and the people around them. Constantly listening, they shape what they hear through their own interiority and build their actions on the basis of their inner voice. Through many signs and signals they exaggerate how strongly they are connected to their sensations, thoughts and emotions.

> "Leadership arouses passion", writes Heifetz (p.13). He demands of those who lead to "listen, using oneself as data", that is to become conscious of one's "own ways of processing and distorting what (one) hears" (Heifetz, p.271). "Self–discovery is the driving, guiding force for a healthy career", adds Buckingham (p.211). As Badaracco puts it, leaders "are responding to powerful, deep–rooted forces that are cultural, psychological, emotional, practical, and perhaps even biological" (p.50).

In short, heroes are actors and, at the same time, show how authentic theirs feelings are. They have to assume the roles in society into which they are thrown somewhat like an American actor taking on a new part. Just like actors following the acting style popularized by the Actors Studio, they listen to the world and their thoughts, emotions and sensations in a very visible manner. The *Managerial-Hollywood Hero* gives the idea that the character of the hero is an actor sent to assume specific roles in a society, or, in the case of a movie hero, in the society the film presents. Being a hero means being a skilful actor either in real life or in the "real life" of the film[11].

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[11] For that specific aspect, and the reference to the Actors Studio Method, see O. Fournout, "La fabrique du héros hollywoodien. L'acteur et l'intériorité", *Communication & Langages*, Juin 2012. This paper considers the figure of the hero in American films. Two characteristics appear to be shared by American movie heroes. The first is that heroes assume roles, disguise themselves, and the second that they must show how deeply they have dug into their interiority, sensations and emotions to build their roles. This second aspect calls to

Heroes are on a mission [MIS]

The *Managerial-Hollywood Hero* is on a mission. Heroes both in the managerial field and Hollywood movies work within a framework. They conform to the aims of the task and abide by some type of law, rule or objective, positive, negative or transcendent. This may be a Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct, but the hero always adopts some sort of normative behaviour.

> This criterion is most noticeable where it concerns managers. Managers assume responsibility for "setting the frame" (Heifetz, p.11–66). They produce "credos and mission statements" (Badaracco, 1997, p.27). They concentrate on what are "pegged as the highest priorities" (Ancona, p.98). The point for managers is "to focus people toward performance" (Buckingham, p.112).

Heroes are creative, unorthodox, divergent [DIV]

Management–Hollywood Heroes carry out their mission by making creative and unorthodox moves. They fall off the edge, step away from the framework. They take unexpected paths and move beyond the scope of normal courses of action. They work within and, at the same time, are outside the framework. They walk apart. They bring change and, with it, relative chaos and improvisation. They are innovative.

> Heifetz, for example, underlines the "creative deviance on the frontline" that leaders experiment with. Buckingham notes that leaders "first, break all the rules". X–Teams should work "outside their boundaries" (Ancona, p.6). Managers should think "creatively and imaginatively about their organization's role in society" (Badaracco, 1997, p.127). They look for an "imaginative recasting of problems and situations" (Badaracco, 2002, p.165). They are "heretics" and "radical thinkers" (Kleiner).

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mind the Method acting style popularized by the Actors Studio. In other words, heroes in American movies are American actors assuming roles in the society presented in the film. Their characters demonstrate how skilful they are in following the Method technique. The process of building the role in society is what defines them as the story unfolds. Heroes in the film make a show of the relationship between their interiority and their actions.

In short, heroes are both servants, undertaking a mission, and outsiders, troublemakers, unorthodox rebels.

Heroes are negotiators [NEG]

The *MHH* is a negotiator and gives dialogue a chance. He or she creates the conditions for a peaceful confrontation of differences and opens the door to win/win games, compromise and shared leadership.

> According to Lax and Sebenius in their book *The manager as negotiator,* negotiation is central to the everyday life of all managers. There are conflicts in any project or team work, but, from what Ancona detects in *X–teams*, there should be enough "psychological security" so that the fight becomes a "good fight" (p.93). In a highly creative team, task–coordination involves motivating people from outside the team (such as technical people from other teams or top–managers) or even outside the organization (like customers) to contribute, so managers and team members must have a sense of "distributed leadership" (Malone, 2003, p.162–167). They engage in building relationships in which they have to "convince, negotiate, and cajole" (Ancona, p.185).

Heroes are all–powerful [APW]

The *Manager as Hollywood Hero* acts in sudden bursts of all–powerful authority. He or she has a sense of omnipotence. Heroes in both the managerial field and in Hollywood movies need to show special strength. Despite the risks for themselves and for others, they have confidence in a certain form of violence. They impose their views in a win/lose game. Often their very lives are at stake with the corollary that the people around them are risking their lives too.

> For Heifetz, "Leadership is dangerous" (p.235). It is a matter of "Staying alive" (p.233–276). For Ancona, when X–teams have meetings, which is frequent, the meeting resembles "a war room" (p.104). Whence the heroism of leaders: "The myth of leadership is the myth of the lone warrior: the solitary individual whose heroism

and brilliance enable him to lead the way" (Heifetz, p.251). Chester Barnard, in a book called *The Functions of the Executive*, first published in 1938 and republished more than 40 times since, writes: "The struggle to maintain cooperation among men should as surely destroy some men morally as battle destroys them physically"[12].
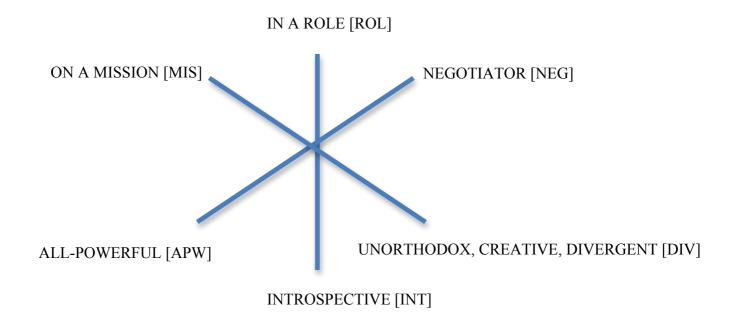
In short, the hero is a negotiator and, at the same time, a warrior.

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[12] *The Functions of the Executive*, 1938, republication 1982, p.278.

The heroic synthesis. The *Managerial–Hollywood Matrix*.

The big question the *Managerial–Hollywood Hero* has to face is how to intensify each of the criteria and bring all six together as a whole.

IN A ROLE [ROL]

ON A MISSION [MIS]   NEGOTIATOR [NEG]

ALL-POWERFUL [APW]   UNORTHODOX, CREATIVE, DIVERGENT [DIV]

INTROSPECTIVE [INT]

The *Managerial–Hollywood Matrix.*

My point here is that what really puts the final touch to the *Manager as Hollywood Hero* is that he or she has the capacity to activate all six criteria simultaneously. Leaders and heroes can deal with the tensions, contradictions and dilemmas brought on by the *Managerial–Hollywood Matrix*. In other words, when leaders have mastered all facets of the *Managerial–Hollywood Matrix*, they tend to become heroic. The managerial matrix becomes the heroic matrix. It produces a manager who is like a Hollywood hero even in his ordinary, everyday

course of action, regardless of questions of public recognition aside from that of close colleagues and the actual teams involved.

The Manager as Artist

I will not go into the different types of synthesis or collage that manuals and textbooks on leadership propose for solving the problem of bringing the different criteria together. I would, however, still like to mention one metaphor that perfectly serves the purpose and this is that of the manager as an artist[13]. The idea of management as working within an artistic sort of chaos and harmony is brought forward by many authors. For example, for Heifetz, leaders often find themselves "working amidst the cacophony of a multiple–band dance floor" (p.273).

Here is another quote from Heifetz's *Leadership Without Easy Answers* tagged with the acronyms of my six criteria:

"Music teaches that dissonance [DIV] is an integral part of harmony [HEROIC SYNTHESIS]. Without conflict and tension [NEG], music lacks dynamism and movement. The composer and the improvisational musician alike [ROL] must contain the dissonance [DIV] within a frame [MIS] that holds the audience's attention until resolution is found. Music also teaches to distinguish the varieties of silence: restless, energized, bored, tranquil, and sublime [INT]. With silence one creates moments so that something new can be heard [DIV]; one holds the tension [NEG] in an audience or working group, or punctuates important phrases [MIS], allowing time for the message to settle [NEG]. Creating music takes place in relation to structures and audiences. Structural limits [MIS] provide scaffolding for creativity [DIV]. (…) Because we do not think of creativity as a product of relationship [NEG], audiences often do not know their power [APW]. In a hall of five thousand, one person in the back of the second balcony talking to a neighbour or getting up to leave has all too real an impact [APW]. So too, in politics and organizations, people mistakenly look to an authority figure, presuming that he or she preforms independently of them [APW]" (Heifetz, p.6).

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[13] For a detailed investigation and analysis on the subject, see V. Pieterse, *From artist-as-leader to leader-as-artist: The Dutch Beat poet and performer Simon Vinkenoog as exemplar of leadership in contemporary organizations*, Real Life Publishing, Baarn, 2011.

This idea—that harmony in politics or organizations is a difficult work in progress that first resembles a "cacophony of a multiple–band dance floor"—really is a way of giving full credit to the six criteria involved in the building of a modern hero. I thus sometimes switch expressions and replace *Manager as Hollywood Hero* with *Master of Human Harmonics*. Granted, it's a play on words, but it shows that textbooks and manuals on management are looking for some kind of ritual, magical, philosophical or pragmatic process to bring unity and beauty to very diverse human claims.

I come now to the third part of my paper.

3– Movie heroes. Five case studies.

The central question remaining is where does the Hollywood hero stand in this managerial landscape? My answer is that the Hollywood hero stands right in the centre of the Managerial Matrix, and, after watching more than 200 American films I am convinced of it.

In this section I shall analyze five films/scenes I find somehow particularly representative, but I think the *Managerial–Hollywood Matrix* is pertinent for the vast majority of American films (except comedies which, as mentioned above, I did not study). The films I have chosen are of very different sorts and come from widely differing periods.

Avatar, 2009

Let's start with *Avatar*[14]. The hero assumes a role, he is thrown into the body of a strange creature called an 'avatar' [ROL]. He has a physical handicap which intensifies his introspection and inner struggle to live and love; furthermore, his sensations develop far enough to actually put him in touch with the living soul of the planet [INT]. He undertakes a mission which is no less than saving the planet and its native people [MIS], but acts in such a way that at some point he is rejected by all sides, both the human settlers and the natives

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[14] I could have chosen *Titanic* just the same.

[DIV]. He gives as much priority as possible to negotiation and tries to settle things by having both sides compromise [NEG], but finally goes to war, showing outstanding skills and powers [APW].

Green Zone, 2009

In *Green Zone,* Roy Miller is a young army officer whose mission is to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq following the American invasion in 2003 [MIS]. He reflects on what he sees, hears and understands about the situation on the ground and has doubts about the intelligence he receives [INT]. During a briefing session he is the only one openly questioning the faulty intelligence given by the army [DIV]. During the meeting he puts the problem on the table in the hope of some kind of joint problem–solving with superiors and colleagues [NEG]. He will ultimately change roles, working for the CIA and carrying out covert actions [ROL]. Risking his life, he fights against a section of his own army [APW].

Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde, 1932

Let me now jump back in time and analyze the beginning sections of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, 1932, *The Night of the Hunter*, 1955, and *Serpico*, 1973.

What I would like to point out is that the entire six criteria matrix is very often set forth during the first five minutes of a film and that, whatever the changes and evolution in the story line, the whole movie that follows is simply a repeated reinforcement of this matrix. At this structural level, the profile of the *Manager as Hollywood Hero* is characterized by a profound stability from beginning to end. As opposed to the hero–quest which follows stages and organizes the development/mutability of the character in time (cf. Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 1949), the *Managerial–Hollywood Matrix* furnishes an immutable behavioural reference for defining the existential position of the hero at each stage of the story.

In *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, 1932, right at the start, long before the audience recognizes the existence of Mr. Hyde, Dr. Jekyll is quickly propelled through the rapid build–up of the six criteria of the *Managerial–Hollywood Matrix*.

The first image of the film shows Dr. Jekyll playing the piano although he appears only as a shadow projected on the partition (which I class under the category of [ROL] since only the impression of his body is shown). Five seconds in, the audience realizes that it is seeing through the eyes of the character, that it is inside Jekyll's mind. The plan is shot with a subjective camera (which I class under the category [INT], interiority). His butler knocks on the door to remind him that it's time for him to leave for the university where he is expected to give an address. There follows a brief negotiation between the two as to who is going to win the contest, Bach or social obligation (which I class under the category of [NEG]). At this point, we are still seeing the whole scene through the eyes of Dr. Jekyll and have no idea of what he looks like. He finally appears in a mirror as he examines himself before leaving (for me this is a way of further accentuating the difference between the image, exteriority, role [ROL] and the inner feelings, the introspective sensation of self [INT]). Jekyll arrives at the university and is informed that the auditorium is full. He is rushed onstage like an actor [ROL], and, like an actor, is confronted with flattery (in his own words).

There follows a brief exchange between some students and colleagues awaiting his appearance in the amphitheatre:

> "I hope Jekyll's on form today."
> "He's always on form."

(which I understand as a message conveying the idea that Jekyll is quite a performer and shows some special strength, thus setting up the theme of omnipotence [APW]). One colleague continues:

> "Jekyll is always sensational, always indulging in spectacular theories."

(Thus announcing Jekyll's divergent twist that I term [DIV]).

Jekyll begins to talk. His first words define the mission of the scientist ("As men of science, we should be curious" says he). Jekyll, as a man of science, has a mission [MIS].

And thus the whole picture of the hero is established. At this point it is merely the foundation, a sketch, but nevertheless all the important facets of the character have been introduced: Jekyll has a mission he is dedicated to [MIS], he is bold in his theories, provocative, diverging from the common path [DIV], he is a great actor and performer when speaking in

public or playing the music [ROL], he enjoys discussing and negotiating his engagements, even with his butler, and, obviously, with his colleagues [NEG], and he is quite a character, manifesting some special power to the extent that he inspires awe around him [APW]. He loves music, and, by being put in his shoes in the subjective shot sequence, we view and hear the world from his perspective, we experience exactly what his subjectivity entails and just how he has a world of his own, an interiority [INT].

The Night of the Hunter, 1955

Let us now look at the opening sequence of *The Night of the Hunter*. Once again the hero is a negative hero, an anti–hero, which, by the way, shows that heroes according to the *Managerial–Hollywood Matrix* are not always moral heroes. Whatever their moral beliefs and personal values, they're more like a dramatic will, a tragic conscience, a body in action. Film heroes are mostly, but not always, positive. As for managers, Badaracco has a whole chapter on the "dirty hands" issues related to management.

Within the first few minutes of the film every facet of the hero is laid down. The opening monologue of Rev. Harry Powell (Robert Mitchum) brings together all aspects of the *Managerial–Hollywood Matrix*. In the scene, Mitchum is talking to God while driving a car on a small road in rural America. He is like an actor rehearsing a role [ROL]. Just prior to this we see a woman warning young children against "false prophets":

"Beware false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing [ROL] but inwardly are ravening wolves [INT]."

Then Mitchum's monologue begins:

"Well now, what's it to be, Lord ?" [NEG : this is the beginning of a negotiation with God].

"Another widow? How many's it been? Six? Twelve?" [DIV/APW : the hero is probably a murderer, a mixture of destructive omnipotence and deviance in the eyes of society.]

"I disremember it" [INT : the hero is a man of flesh and blood whose memories are fragile.]

"You say the word, Lord. I am on my way. You always send me money to go forth and preach your word." [MIS : the hero is on a mission, he is paid to spread the Good Word, he has a task to accomplish and obeys to the Lord].

"A widow with a little wad of bills hid away in the sugar bowl" [DIV/APW : the theme of negative omnipotence and deviance returns through this reminder of the victims.]

"Lord, I am tired" [INT : as this line is spoken by the preacher, we see only his back. It is a moment of introspection on a physical state, a sensation of tiredness. Only the voice is heard, as if from the inside.]

"Sometimes I wonder if you really understand. Not that you mind the killings, your Book is full of killings. But there are things you hate, Lord. Perfume–smelling things, lacy things, things with curly hair." [NEG : the negotiation with God develops into a search for common ground, a sort of bargaining.]

The whole monologue is cynical. The hero is playing a role [ROL], the role of "the false prophet" announced at the start. He is an actor playing the role of an actor in real life (in the society presented in the film).

Serpico, 1973.

In *Serpico*, the eponymous hero played by Al Pacino (and we are dealing here with a positive hero) definitely earns the title of a perfect *Management–Hollywood Hero*. The whole plot seems dedicated to building up a *Manager–Hollywood Hero* who, despite extreme difficulties, is never defeated. He manages to recruit help: just as Don Quixote convinces Sancho Panza to follow him, he, too, enrols people in his quest. Every scene supplies the *Managerial–Hollywood Matrix* with new developments.

Serpico is a New York cop during the 1960s and the start of the 70s. He blows the whistle on police corruption. His colleagues turn against him so that almost no one wants to work with him [DIV: unorthodox or divergent hero]. At first, he simply tries to do his job honestly [MIS: hero on a mission]. Very soon he sets himself apart in favouring non–brutal methods

of interrogation. He makes deals with criminals to get their information from them [NEG: the hero who negotiates]. Working undercover to catch drug dealers, he assumes the guise of a hippie, grows a moustache and long hair and wears colourful clothes. To the eyes of his colleagues, he looks like a clown in costume or a bum but this helps him be very efficient as an undercover officer working the streets [ROL: the hero playing a role]. On the other hand, this way of life is also his own choice. He likes to mix with the artists in Greenwich Village. He has a taste for 60s counter culture. He enjoys freedom, and manifests some sincere and genuine convictions. He has his dilemmas [INT: the hero deeply interiorizing].

Now a special note on acting technique. Pacino uses frequent eye and head movements to the side, quick glances and glimpses betokening moments of introspection rather than looking at something going on to one side. This glance to the side is a very common way of emphasizing interiority shared by many American stars such as Brando, De Niro, Pacino… It has, indeed, become the visual rhetorical expression of a moment of introspection, hesitation, emotion, dilemma, strong sensation [INT again: the hero deeply interiorizing].

Serpico has to face an increasingly hostile atmosphere in the police, and, to remain true to his ideals, has to fight many enemies while almost without friends. His life becomes hell. He is harassed and subjected to great pressure to the point where he risks his life [APW: the hero believing in a form of omnipotence and showing some special strength]. In doing this, he is simply helping to enforce the law in a democratic society, the normal mission of the police, and at the end he receives the medal of merit [MIS again: the hero on a mission]. However, disgusted by this final hypocritical decoration, he resigns from the police and immigrates to Europe [DIV: the diverging hero].

Let us now also examine the opening sequences of *Serpico.*

The six structural criteria of the *Managerial–Hollywood Matrix* appear almost immediately, right at the very start of the film:

[INT] The hero deeply interiorizing. During the first sequence Serpico, covered in blood, is close to dying, lying in the back seat of a police car racing towards hospital. We hear the siren blaring and the monotonous noise of the windshield wipers (it's raining outside). The noise is haunting, just as if Serpico's final remaining sense were his hearing and the spectator is inside his ears, hearing from the perspective of his sensations. At the hospital, the doctor looks into Serpico's eye which we thus discover in a close up. The eye moves from right to

left: a sign of remaining inner life. Serpico is thinking of his past and this is the starting point of a flash back. We are thrown into his own memories of the ceremony in which he was sworn in as a police officer in 1960. He is listening to a speech with intense, almost mystical, attention. He obviously feels profoundly implicated.

[ROL] The hero in a role. Serpico in the police car rushing to the hospital is dressed like a bum. He has a long beard a little like a South American guerillero or character from a Dostoyevsky novel. A few seconds later, during the ceremony (start of the flash–back) he is beardless and in uniform with short cropped hair. There are clearly two Serpicos, two distinct roles, two costumes.

[MIS] The hero on a mission. The speech during the ceremony is a reminder to the newly sworn in officers of their principal duties as policemen: to fight crime, obey the law and defend the dignity of all individuals. Serpico gives these goals full credence. The "heroic" is not arbitrary: it demands a link with a societal or cultural standard with an explicit code of conduct or commonly recognized and measurable benchmark. In *Serpico* this very soon becomes explicit.

[DIV] The unorthodox hero. As he is taken into the hospital, we see police officers talking to each other. Although we don't yet know why, we learn that he might have been shot in the face by another policeman. He is apparently threatened by his own professional community and in danger from his colleagues. The hero has obviously taken some kind of divergent initiative.

[NEG] The hero as a negotiator. Among the police officer's skills praised during the ceremony we hear of "tolerance", "courtesy" and "patience", skills Serpico will manifest in the exercise of his duty and which facilitate a negotiation approach to problems at hand.

[APW] The hero with a special strength, struggling for his life, displaying a sort of omnipotence. Shot at the face, Serpico struggles to stay awake. His life hangs by a thread. He is close to dying but resists. His will to live is unaltered. He manifests vital force.

Within three minutes the six criteria have fashion the very definition of what Serpico is and will remain throughout the whole film. A hero with a special strength, taking on risks [APW], diverging from the normal course of police department routine [DIV], negotiating wherever possible [NEG], but inflexible when it comes to his duty and mission [MIS], fully aware of

his own life, conscience, moral standards, passion and values for which he is prepared to fight [INT], and assuming different roles and different guises within society [ROL].

Different types of signs are used to emphasize the six criteria:

-   The three criteria of the hero on a mission [MIS], creative and diverging [DIV] and a negotiator [NEG] are mostly embedded in scraps of information conveyed verbally in the words of the dialogue and in the situation itself.

-   The other three, deeply interiorizing [INT], assuming roles [ROL], and omnipotence [APW], are more suggested in the images, non–verbal communication, set and setting, looks and physical appearance and the sound and music.

Serpico falls into the category of what Maurice Ronaï calls the "information hero", a hero whose task is to find and make public information that redounds to the good of society[15].

Conclusion: Is there a new chivalry being promoted by manuals on management, mythological Hollywood stories and ritual training?

In this paper I have used the same set of criteria to describe the position of the hero in both films and in organizations. According to my research, the same model is transmitted by both Hollywood and management texts and training. The figure of the hero promoted by management literature and the American film industry is—at a structural level—the same, and it has been built up over a long period of time, since the period of the first talking movies in the 1930s, in fact, when, for the first time in the social world, management issues also began to take the human dimension of industrial organization into account[16].

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[15]   Maurice Ronaï has written documentary films with Emilio Pacull (*Mister President*, Les Films d'Ici, 2008, on the way movies and TV series represent American Presidents; and *Hollywood Pentagone*, Les Films d'Ici, 2004, on the ties between Hollywood and the Pentagon).

[16]   Mayo, 1933 ; Lewin, 1935-46 ; Barnard, 1938 ; Maier, 1946 ; McGregor, 1960.

My aim has been to explore this hypothesis and I have provided a set of criteria that could describe the profile of both types of hero.

Such research may bring new understanding of the use of popular film in the business and academic fields.

Not only do films provide great illustrations of concepts and methods, but they also convey a more profound representation of the major type of modern hero shared by companies and the dominant producers of myth in our societies (Hollywood).

Just as the world of knighthood in the Middle Ages had its treatises on ethics and practice (its practical literature), its novels (its fictional works) and its rituals, all uniting in a form of social conduct, one might equally assume that management texts (practical literature) and management training (rituals) and the movies made by Hollywood (fictional works) also all tend toward the construction of a single hero, the *Management–Hollywood Hero.*

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