

The cultural *déjà vu* or May the Farce be with You!

Residual cinema, old and new narratives, impure cinema, recuperated mythologies

As, Henry Jenkins suggested, the Star Wars universe is a “transmedia system”, where various media, like games, toys and comic books are co-existing with cinema, animations and books. This paper proposes an overview of the evolution of the Star Wars universe, starting with the hypothesis that a new form of impure cinematic narratives are created in the melting pot of this galactic saga. As George Lucas managed to recuperate in his fictional worlds elements that make them attractive for entire generations of children, it also influences our cultural imagination. Millions of viewers all over the world are fascinated by an infantile melange of religious and political themes, collections of previously unused myths, in a total symbiosis of images and fantasies joined together. The Star Wars saga created by George Lucas manages to mix in the same story Christian motifs and tropes, elements of Buddhist philosophies and half-digested psychoanalytical principles. This kind of mixing ushered a new era in popular culture, one that the director himself branded as the “Empire of Dreams”, one in which the materials of these “dreams” are coalesced from multiple disjointed media sources. Analyzing how these stories develop as a result of amalgamating fairy tale creatures with science fiction tropes, putting together ready-made gadgets and artifacts with easily recognizable characters I am describing an overall cinematic repetition of the same. From *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977) to *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* (2017) this study follows more than half a decade of transformations, considering that the multiple replications happening in Lucasverse make visible the inherent *déjà vu* of our contemporary cultural production modes. The transformation of storytelling strategies is followed in their transmedia dimension, by comparing various cross-media influences within the Star Wars franchise.

Doru Pop short bio

Doru Pop is a professor of film and media studies at the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj, Romania. He taught a course on the Romanian New Wave cinema at the Bard College, New York (2013) and a course in European film-making at Columbus State University, Georgia (2017). He published several books in visual culture, media and politics and essays in film studies. His latest publication was *Romanian New Wave Cinema: An Introduction*, Jefferson: McFarland, 2014.