

THE SKYWALKER SAGA: THE HERO, THE VILLAIN, THE UNDERWORLD

Šprlje, Toni

Master's thesis / Diplomski rad

2023

Degree Grantor / Ustanova koja je dodijelila akademski / stručni stupanj: **University of Split, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Split / Sveučilište u Splitu, Filozofski fakultet**

Permanent link / Trajna poveznica: <https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:172:992300>

Rights / Prava: [In copyright](#)/[Zaštićeno autorskim pravom.](#)

Download date / Datum preuzimanja: **2024-07-23**

Repository / Repozitorij:

[Repository of Faculty of humanities and social sciences](#)



UNIVERSITY OF SPLIT



SVEUČILIŠTE U SPLITU

FILOZOFSKI FAKULTET

Odsjek za engleski jezik i književnost

SKYWALKER SAGA: HEROJ, ZLOČINAC, PODZEMLJE

Diplomski rad

Student:

Toni Šprlje

Mentor:

izv. prof. dr. Simon Ryle

Split, 2023.

UNIVERSITY OF SPLIT
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
Department of English Language and Literature

**THE SKYWALKER SAGA: THE HERO, THE VILLAIN,
THE UNDERWORLD**

Master's Thesis

Student:

Toni Šprlje

Supervisor:

Dr Simon Ryle, Asst. Prof.

Split, 2023

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION 1

2. GEORGE LUCAS – THE AUTHOR AND FILMMAKER 5

 2.1. *EARLY WORK AND KEY INFLUENCES* 5

3. STAR WARS..... 8

 3.1. *STAR WARS AND SPIRITUALITY IN 1970’S AMERICA* 9

 3.2. *STAR WARS IN A POLITICAL CONTEXT* 11

 3.3. *STAR WARS COMPARED TO IDEOLOGIES*..... 12

 3.4. *“THE HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES”* 15

4. LUKE SKYWALKER 17

 4.1. *LUKE AS A HERO* 20

5. CONTINUING THE SAGA..... 23

6. CONCLUSION..... 25

REFERENCES 27

SUMMARY..... 30

1. INTRODUCTION

In 1977, the first *Star Wars* movie debuted, and it immediately became a huge hit with the American public. It was a cultural phenomenon that outperformed all predictions and sparked the interest of millions of people. The movie's groundbreaking special effects, compelling narrative and relatable characters, like Luke Skywalker, connected with audiences. Luke's transformation from a common farm boy to an epic hero captivated viewers. They admired his tenacity, resolve, and unwavering faith in the goodness of people. Luke became an inspiration, standing in for the courage and hope that many Americans were looking for during a period of social unrest and political turbulence.

Across all age groups, from children to adults, Luke Skywalker found a loyal following. While older viewers found comfort and nostalgia in his journey, evoking the heroic tales of their youth, the younger generation saw in him the embodiment of their dreams and aspirations.

In addition to having a compelling plot, the movie also succeeded because it managed to appeal to the audience's collective memory in America. In *Star Wars*, viewers were taken to a galaxy far, far away where the forces of good overcame the forces of evil, providing a much-needed escape from the realities of the time. Additionally, *Star Wars* became a cultural touchstone, permeating every sphere of American society with its merchandise, catchphrases, and iconic characters. In addition to spawning a devoted fanbase and serving as a base for numerous discussions and debates, Luke Skywalker and characters like Han Solo and Princess Leia rose to fame.

As a central character in George Lucas's groundbreaking franchise, Luke's likability raises intriguing questions about the factors that contribute to his enduring popularity. This thesis aims to delve into the complex interplay between the counter-cultural movement of the 1970s, movie-making techniques, and the archetypal hero's journey to understand the sources of Luke Skywalker's appeal.

On the one hand, Luke Skywalker personifies some characteristics that are in tune with the counterculture. His transformation from a farm boy on Tatooine to a Jedi Knight fighting the oppressive Galactic Empire exemplifies the countercultural desire for individual liberation, growth, and resistance to social norms. The values of individualism, spiritual exploration, and societal change cherished by the countercultural movement are in line with Luke's quest for a higher purpose, his connection to the mystical Force, and his rejection of conformity. In the

Star Wars saga, Luke Skywalker's rejection of conformity echoes Herbert Marcuse's "One-Dimensional Man" in terms of its themes. Luke, a representation of individualism and resistance, rejects the restrictions of his life in the desert and searches for adventure outside the bounds of conventional expectations. This echoes Marcuse's call for the "Great Refusal" against a conformist society and is consistent with the countercultural movements of the United States in the 1970s (Marcuse 1964). Marcuse's writing emphasizes the value of people escaping the confines of consumerism and technological control in order to rediscover their true selves, a sentiment that was echoed in the time's rejection of societal norms, much like Luke's challenges in the Galactic Empire.

However, we must also take into account the role of filmmaking techniques and the classic hero's journey in order to fully comprehend Luke Skywalker's likability. Lucas, a master storyteller and filmmaker, used a variety of strategies to make Luke popular with viewers. The filmmaking played a significant role in forging an emotional connection between viewers and the character, from the epic space battles to the stirring musical score, the seamless integration of visual effects, and the use of compelling dialogue.

Additionally, Luke Skywalker's character development adheres to the traditional hero's journey, a mythic narrative framework that has strong resonances with both storytelling conventions and human psychology. With its three phases of departure, initiation, and return, the hero's journey offers a structure that piques interest and strengthens the bond between the audience and the protagonist. Luke's transformation from an ordinary young man to a hero who must deal with moral dilemmas, personal struggles, and the final conflict between good and evil fits the universally appealing archetypal hero's journey.

Despite being a fictional character, Luke Skywalker, the main character of the enduring *Star Wars* film series, stands out as a personable character. His appeal is woven into the complex tapestry of the political, social, and cultural characteristics of his time rather than being based solely in the fantastical world of interstellar adventures. Luke's appeal is a remarkable illustration of how fictional characters can reflect and resonate with the dominant ideologies of their time. Beyond his Jedi training and lightsaber battles, Luke's charisma and endearment are intricately linked to the countercultural movements and societal undercurrents of the 1970s and early 1980s in the United States.

This thesis seeks to illuminate the complex nature of Luke Skywalker's likability and its significance within the larger cultural context by looking at these interrelated factors. In the end, figuring out the reasons behind Luke's appeal in *Star Wars* will not only deepen our appreciation for the series but also provide insights into the intricate interactions between popular culture, historical context, and the drive for compelling narratives in human beings.

The hero's journey, the conflict between good and evil, and the pursuit of redemption are recurring themes and mythical archetypes that *Star Wars* purposefully incorporated. The historical setting of the 1970s also had an impact on these motifs, which nevertheless have a universal appeal. The story of a motley crew of rebels taking on a strong and oppressive empire resonated with viewers, reflecting the countercultural resistance against ingrained institutions and power structures.

In the case of the United States, individualism has a rich historical background and is closely related to the nation's founding ideals. This focus on personal choice and opportunity is exemplified by the American Dream, which encourages aspirational goals and the pursuit of success. Further fostering the culture of individualism was the frontier spirit of exploration and self-initiative that characterized American history.

By referencing these components, *Star Wars* connects with the psychological elements of human storytelling and provides a mythic framework that appeals to people's innate desires for meaning, adventure, and transcendence (Segal 2004).

The characters in *Star Wars* are likable and allow viewers to empathize. Characters like Luke Skywalker, Han Solo, and Princess Leia go through struggles, dream, and growth that mirror aspects of the human experience. *Star Wars* taps into emotions like love, friendship, and the pursuit of justice by centering the narrative on the individual journeys of these characters. Since audiences are emotionally involved, they can imagine themselves as characters in the story and relate to its psychological elements.

Luke's unwavering belief in the forces of good and determination to confront the dark forces of the Galactic Empire reflected a collective yearning for change and a better future. The Rebel Alliance, a group fighting against Imperial oppression, reflected the counterculture movement of the time. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, protests, dissent, and calls for civil rights and social justice increased.

Like these movements, the Rebels challenged the status quo and sought to restore democracy and freedom to the galaxy. Luke Skywalker embodied the spirit of rebellion that resonated with the youth of America at the time. Like many young Americans who questioned authority and advocated for change, Luke (whose actions were also influenced by Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*) defied expectations and sought self-discovery and repression against an oppressive regime.

Luke Skywalker became a representative of American idealism and values associated with democracy. His struggle against a corrupt empire, and ultimately saving his father, Darth Vader, was the dominant sentiment in America in the 1970s and his 1980s: hope for reconciliation and good against evil. Aside from ideas, stories, spiritual ideas, ancient sagas, and classic movies from the past, George Lucas was consistently motivated by the politics of the day. In this case, the first chapter of his epic tale, *A New Hope*, was greatly influenced by both domestic American politics and involvement abroad, such as in Vietnam. Due to the fact that Lucas is a director, not a historian, he tells fictional stories that may draw inspiration from real-world developments, so his memories or understanding of current political developments and causes must not always be accurate and unbiased (Kempshall 2022).

At the same time, *Star Wars* can be seen as a component of a larger cultural shift away from a predominately Christian nation and toward a culture looking for new mythologies and philosophical foundations. Growing interest in alternative spiritualities and the examination of various belief systems peaked in the 1970s and 1980s. With its blend of mythological storytelling, spiritual themes, and a diverse cast of characters, *Star Wars* responded to this cultural shift and provided audiences with a new mythos that resonated with their developing worldview.

2. GEORGE LUCAS – THE AUTHOR AND FILMMAKER

George Walton Lucas Jr., a pioneering filmmaker and visionary, was born in Modesto, California, on May 14, 1944. His influence on film and popular culture is immeasurable. Lucas is best known for creating the enduring *Star Wars* franchise, but his impact goes far beyond the screen.

Lucas's interest in literature and film started at a young age. The University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts is where he studied film, honing his craft and starting a journey that would change the face of the entertainment business. His masterpiece, *Star Wars*, which was released in 1977, propelled Lucas to legendary status. Lucas made contributions to film technology as well, which is part of his legacy. He started Lucasfilm Lt., a company that pioneered visual effects and created the THX sound system, and Industrial Light and Magic (ILM), a cinematic innovation leader.

Lucas is a committed philanthropist who supports arts and education initiatives in addition to his filmmaking accomplishments. His influence on popular culture, cinematic storytelling, and technological development confirms his position as a creative force whose effects will be felt for many years to come.

2.1. EARLY WORK AND KEY INFLUENCES

The iconic space saga was created with a great deal of help from George Lucas' earlier work before *Star Wars*.

Lucas's first film as a director, *THX 1138*, displayed his fascination with dystopian settings and technologically advanced societies. The movie portrayed a totalitarian society where there was rigid control and conformity. In particular, the way the Galactic Empire and the Rebel Alliance were portrayed in *Star Wars*, the themes of oppressive governments and the fight for individual freedom that were present in *THX 1138* rang true. In the 1960s coming-of-age drama *American Graffiti*, Lucas demonstrated his talent for developing likable characters and capturing the feel of a particular era. His skill at developing compelling stories and evoking strong feelings in the viewer was on full display in this movie. In order to create characters in *Star Wars* that audiences could relate to and fall in love with, *American Graffiti's* character-driven storytelling technique was a major influence.

Joseph Campbell's work on mythological storytelling greatly influenced George Lucas before the creation of *Star Wars*. He adopted Joseph Campbell's theory of the hero's journey and used it to inform the *Star Wars* story's structure. Lucas's approach to creating the epic space opera and Luke Skywalker's hero's journey was heavily influenced by the archetypal elements and character development found in mythological tales.

Lucas became passionate about pushing the limits of visual effects technology through his early work and collaborations with pioneers in the field, like John Dykstra. His exposure to movies like *THX 1138* and *American Graffiti* allowed him to experiment with new methods, laying the groundwork for the ground-breaking visual effects used in *Star Wars*. The unique look and feel of the *Star Wars* universe are a result of Lucas's love for building captivating, visually stunning worlds.

The way Lucas approached making *Star Wars* was influenced by his early experiences as an independent filmmaker and his dissatisfaction with the established studio system. He founded Lucasfilm and adopted a more entrepreneurial approach to filmmaking because he yearned for creative control and independence (Lacey 2000). This enabled him to maintain creative control over the *Star Wars* franchise while realizing his ambitious vision for the franchise.

Lacey (2000: 216) adds:

“*Star Wars* (created by George Lucas, 1977) is often cited as a turning point for the use of genre in Hollywood. It was more than just a mix of science fiction, western and fairy-tale fantasy, the film also harked back to the Saturday matinee adventure serials, such as *Flash Gordon*, of the 1930's and 40's.”

Lucas was able to produce a distinctive cinematic experience that connected with audiences thanks to his understanding of the influence and allure of the genre. With the help of then-current technology and visual effects, *Star Wars* transformed blockbuster filmmaking by fusing the exciting action and fantastical elements of adventure serials with these elements, like for example space operas. Although the genre of space opera was well-established in literature and comic books, Lucas brought it to the big screen with unmatched grandeur. To create a vast universe filled with epic battles and oversized characters the *Star Wars* saga included elements like interstellar conflict, brave heroes, and sinister villains. Lucas incorporated elements from Japanese samurai movies and Westerns into the *Star Wars* story. Han Solo, for instance, embodies the stereotypical renegade with a good heart that is frequently depicted in Westerns.

The ethos of samurai warriors is similar to the Jedi Code, which resembles a code of honor. These influences gave characters and situations depth and relatability.

The movie's success not only changed Hollywood's face but also established a new bar for genre-based storytelling.

3. STAR WARS

Besides the main plot of Luke Skywalker fulfilling his destiny, the stories in the *Star Wars* films feature underworld themes. These themes frequently center on the criminal underbelly and shady dealings that go on in galactic society. Outlaw or smuggler archetypes are best embodied by figures like Han Solo and Lando Calrissian. They operate outside the boundaries of the law, taking part in illegal adventures like smuggling illicit goods or running covert operations. These characters move through the underworld, dealing with crime gangs, avoiding capture, and frequently getting caught up in morally gray circumstances. Han Solo and even Luke Skywalker are likened to the Western cowboy, a lone hero facing obstacles head-on. Han's tough individualism is reminiscent of Western heroes, as evidenced by his snide demeanor and use of the Millennium Falcon as his "space cowboy" vessel, straddling the line between a lawbreaker and a hero.

The underworld of the galaxy is home to numerous crime gangs, which are depicted in the films. The Hutts are a well-known illustration. Jabba the Hutt, who controls a criminal organization that engages in activities like smuggling, gambling, and bounty hunting, is the leader of the Hutts. These crime gangs stand in for the organized criminal elements that proliferate in the shadows and wield influence and power illegally.

Bounty hunters who work in the underworld are a common sight in the *Star Wars* universe. Mercenaries who hunt down valuable targets in exchange for pay include figures like Boba Fett. Bounty hunters operate as ruthless individuals willing to do anything for money, which adds a level of danger and intrigue to the underworld (Reynolds 2006).

The cantina scenes in the franchise show bustling centers of underworld activity, like the well-known Mos Eisley Cantina. A wide variety of people, including criminals, smugglers, and other questionable characters, gather in these establishments on a regular basis. Gambling, a popular pastime in these cantinas, emphasizes the presence of the underworld further because people play high-stakes games that frequently involve illegal bets.

The *Star Wars* universe depicts instances of corruption within legitimate governing bodies, exposing the interaction between the underworld and those in positions of power. The distinction between the underworld and authority can become hazy, as evidenced by figures like Lando Calrissian, who was initially portrayed as a smuggler. Additionally, underground trade in rare goods, illegal technology, and hazardous materials thrives on black markets.

The *Star Wars* universe is given depth and intrigue by these underworld themes, which show the complexity of galactic society outside of the conflict between the Rebel Alliance and the Empire. They reveal the moral ambiguity, mystery, and danger that lurk in the galaxy's shadowy corners as they explore its underbelly. By including these ideas, the franchise broadens the scope of its narrative, providing glimpses into a society where people don't always follow the rules and highlighting the complex web of criminal activity that permeates its vast universe.

Beyond the personal conflict between Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader, *Star Wars* explores larger themes of corrupt systems and the fight against them, which in fact struck a chord with the American audience at the time. The aftermath of the Watergate scandal in the 1970s is one instance of this resonance. The Nixon administration's abuse of power, political corruption, and betrayal of the public's trust during the Watergate scandal left an enduring impression on the American psyche. The idea of a transparent and dependable government was destroyed. *Star Wars'* themes of rebellion against an authoritarian and corrupt regime resonated with audiences who had lost faith in real-world political corruption at the time of its 1977 release, which happened to be the immediate aftermath of the Watergate.

3.1. STAR WARS AND SPIRITUALITY IN 1970'S AMERICA

The 1970s and 1980s saw a significant cultural shift in the United States as people looked for new spiritual and ideological paths to help them deal with the issues of the day.

Countercultural movements that first appeared in the 1960s continued to grow and change during the 1970s. These movements eschewed conventional social mores in favor of opposing ideologies based on spirituality, Eastern thought, and unconventional faiths (Ferguson 1987). The counterculture put a strong emphasis on finding meaning and fulfillment outside of the box, as well as on personal development, self-expression, and exploring new ideas. During this time, Eastern spiritual practices like meditation and Buddhism as well as Hinduism experienced a surge in popularity. In order to cultivate inner peace, personal change, and a sense of spiritual connection, Americans turned to these teachings and practices. The teachings of individuals like the Dalai Lama, Paramahansa Yogananda, and Ram Dass gained popularity and altered the spiritual climate of the time.

According to Buddhist philosophy, mindfulness is a means of "purifying the mind of all conceptions and discriminations, leading to a preconceptual stage of perception." From a Jedi

viewpoint, this makes sense: by practicing mindfulness, Jedi are able to access the Force and gain insights into their most inner mental realms. The Jedi can block out distractions as they connect to the Force, which grants them special abilities and gives them a significant advantage over attackers who lack the Force. We can infer from the movies that meditation practices are probably widespread within the Jedi Order. For instance, the Jedi engage in breathing exercises (Luke does this on Dagobah), and some of their practices are strikingly similar to certain yoga poses (Ross 2021).

To create the term "Jedi," whose etymology comes from the Japanese word "jidai", director George Lucas reportedly looked to Samurai warriors for inspiration. *Jidaigeki*, a film subgenre that frequently features Samaria warriors, is abbreviated as "Jidai". Many of the names of the Jedi even have an Oriental or other East Asian sound (e. g. Yoda, as well as Obi-Wan Kenobi).

The parallels, however, go further. Samurai warriors were deeply spiritual beings who, at least in the representations of *jidaigeki* films, were motivated by their moral principles, which are comparable to the Jedi way. Samurai warriors were taught how to calm their minds in accordance with Zen teachings so they could increase their focus in the present, for example, during sword fighting. The importance of compassion - giving without expecting anything in return; unconditional love - as well as self-control and thriftiness are stressed in both Zen and Jedi teachings (Ross 2021). This way, *Star Wars* was showing the viewers how to deal with uncertainty and mental issues and therefore, considering a huge number of fans, contributed to delving Buddhism thoughts and ways into American society.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the *New Age* movement became a popular cultural trend. It combined elements from various traditions, including astrology, complementary medical techniques, channeling, and the study of higher consciousness, and covered a broad range of spiritual and metaphysical beliefs (Kyle 1995). The movement gave people a feeling of personal empowerment, autonomy, and a wider spiritual framework outside of conventional religious institutions.

During this time, the pursuit of self-knowledge and development of the self became major concerns. Many Americans sought to discover more about themselves, to discover their inner selves, and to develop a stronger sense of authenticity and purpose. In order to provide tools for self-reflection, emotional healing, and personal empowerment, practices like psychotherapy, encounter groups, and self-help literature grew in popularity (Schulman 2002).

The emergence of environmentalism and the growing consciousness of ecological problems also had an impact on the ideological and spiritual movements of the day. As part of their philosophical and spiritual framework, many people adopted holistic living, organic farming, and a relationship with nature. The holistic approach covered a wider range of interconnections, ecological responsibility, and sustainable lifestyles.

3.2. *STAR WARS* IN A POLITICAL CONTEXT

A moment that captures the sociopolitical atmosphere of America in the 1970s occurred in the scene where Luke Skywalker, a young farm boy from Tatooine, meets Obi-Wan Kenobi, a wise and experienced Jedi Knight. Luke is initially apprehensive about the prospect of assisting Obi-Wan in the fight to free Princess Leia and overthrow the oppressive Galactic Empire. Luke receives his father's lightsaber, a tool used by Jedi Knights, from Obi-Wan who sees his potential and the need for his assistance. This scene is a reflection of the generational gap and shifting societal dynamics that characterized America in the 1970s.

Younger generation representative Luke Skywalker personifies the spirit of rebellion and a desire for change. He initially shows reluctance to support Obi-Wan's cause, reflecting the skepticism and disappointment many young Americans experienced at the time with the country's established institutions. On the other hand, Obi-Wan Kenobi stands for the older generation, who are wise and knowledgeable about the ways of the world. Luke has the potential to effect positive change, and he is aware of how important mentoring and guidance are in influencing the future. The widespread opposition to the Vietnam War and the emergence of the anti-war movement made the 1970s a transformative decade in American history. Dissenting voices and pleas for peace resounded all over the nation as it struggled to deal with the complexities and effects of the conflict. As Howard Zinn (1980: 452) states:

"Young men began to refuse to register for the draft, refused to be inducted if called. As early as May 1964 the slogan "We Won't Go" was widely publicized. Some who had registered began publicly burning their draft cards to protest the war."

This period of activism and resistance found a special reflection in the cinematic landscape. Themes of anti-imperialism and the effects of unchecked power are incorporated into *Star Wars*, echoing criticisms of the U.S. participation of the government in Vietnam. The anti-war

movement's critique of imperialistic foreign policies is reflected in the Empire's desire for dominance and control.

Luke's initial reluctance can be interpreted as a reflection of the doubt and skepticism that characterized the generation's youth. Many American youth had lost faith in the political system, institutions, and established hierarchies. In addition to questioning the ideals and values upheld by earlier generations, they were looking for their own path. The scene also emphasizes the value of intergenerational cooperation and mentoring, though. Luke receiving Obi-Wan's lightsaber represents the passing of the baton and the belief in the younger generation's capacity to bring about change. It stands for the optimism that the youth can create a better future with guidance and a sense of direction.

Tiffin (1999: 70) adds:

„The appeal of the *Star Wars* series to adolescents particularly is now readily explicable; the attraction is in recognition, the film's dealing intrinsically with issues of identity, self-worth, and family.“

Due to the way it addressed generational conflicts and hopes for a more just and equitable society, this scene struck a chord with American audiences in the 1970s. Recognizing that only through the combined efforts of various age groups could meaningful change be brought about, it reflected the desire for intergenerational dialogue and collaboration.

The scene also perfectly captured the notion of personal accountability and empowerment. A turning point in Luke's journey occurred when he chose to accept the lightsaber and start the mission. It stood for his determination to make a stand, his acceptance of his potential, and his willingness to support a greater good.

3.3. STAR WARS COMPARED TO IDEOLOGIES

The creator of *Star Wars*, George Lucas, has freely admitted that his work has been influenced by a variety of historical, mythological, and cultural sources. He wanted to create a contemporary mythology that would appeal to audiences everywhere. He was influenced by many different things while creating this, including traditional hero's journeys, medieval epics, Eastern philosophies, and, to a lesser extent, the political and aesthetic conventions of the 20th

century. There are parallels between the Galactic Empire's rise and some aspects of Nazism in its imagery and ideology (Page 2017; Telegraph 2017).

The stark, authoritarian architecture found in the *Star Wars* universe, Emperor Palpatine's totalitarian rule, and the iconic Imperial uniforms all have echoes of the Third Reich about them. The franchise can be interpreted in a variety of ways depending on the interpretive framework used. Some critics contend that by equating the actions of the Empire with historical examples of imperialism - Lucas is criticizing US imperialism. Others view *Star Wars* as a postmodern pastiche with no overt political message that draws from various cultural and mythological sources. These interpretations demonstrate how difficult and subjective it is to evaluate the political implications of a fictional work.

In the end, there are many facets and angles that can be taken into consideration when analyzing the connection between *Star Wars* and politics (Rickman 2004). George Lucas has acknowledged drawing inspiration from historical incidents and addressing larger issues of power and resistance. *Star Wars'* precise political message and intent, however, are still up for debate, allowing viewers to interact with the narrative and its themes in whatever way they choose.

The use of emblems like the Imperial insignia, which resembles stylized versions of the Nazi swastika, deepens the visual connection. Numerous authoritarian governments, including Nazi Germany, have been compared to the Galactic Empire in the franchise. The militaristic organization, hierarchical structure, and oppressive control over its citizens resemble those of totalitarian states in the real world. Some critics compare the Stormtroopers of the Empire to the uniformed troops of Nazi Germany, pointing out visual parallels and the idea of a faceless, submissive army (Telegraph 2017). Some studies compare Emperor Palpatine to authoritarian leaders because he serves as the main antagonist in the original trilogy. His scheming methods, capacity for playing on people's fears, and desire for absolute power are reminiscent of those of past dictators. Some see the Emperor's ascent to power as a cautionary tale about the perils of charismatic leaders who manipulate and capitalize on societal fears, even though it makes no direct reference to any particular person.

There have been comparisons made between the Holocaust and the destruction of the planet Alderaan by the Galactic Empire's superweapon Death Star. Genocide's horrors are brought to mind by the massive loss of innocent lives and the disregard for personal liberties. This link

highlights how the movie examines the effects of unchecked power and the dehumanization of others.

The intent behind the creation of *Star Wars* was not explicitly to directly parallel Nazism, and these interpretations are open to analysis and debate. *Star Wars* is a fictional work that examines universal themes like good versus evil, personal development, and the fight against oppression (Pollock 1990).

Critical reflections on authority and power were pervasive in the environment that these events produced, which was also characterized by a general disillusionment with institutions and traditional power structures. It is possible that discussions of imperialism, authoritarianism, and the abuse of power intersected with ideas about Nazism and had an impact on how *Star Wars* was interpreted.

Allegorical elements are used in *Star Wars* to explore larger themes of injustice, resistance, and oppression. Although the Galactic Empire can be seen as a fictional representation of totalitarian governments, such as Nazi Germany, it is crucial to remember that the franchise does not explicitly draw a parallel between the two. Instead, it makes use of historical allusions in order to arouse a sense of familiarity and heighten the narrative's thematic impact.

Luke's training as a Jedi under the wise guidance of Obi-Wan Kenobi and Yoda served as a metaphor for the pursuit of self-actualization and enlightenment. In a similar vein, a large number of Americans looked to spirituality and unconventional ideologies to help them deal with the challenges of the time. The idea of the Force had similarities to Eastern philosophies, especially Zen, Buddhism and Taoism, which were becoming more and more well-liked in the West in the 1970s and 1980s (Kapell 2006). The Force, as portrayed in *Star Wars*, reflects the principles of Taoism, a philosophy that focused on the balance of opposites and the interconnectedness of all things, according to the author of *The Tao of Star Wars* (Porter 2015), who explores the relationship between *Star Wars* and ancient Eastern wisdom. Luke Skywalker's journey is comparable to the pursuit of harmony and self-realization, which strongly resonant with a generation looking for spiritual meaning.

It is essential to look into the sources of *Star Wars* and its creator, George Lucas, in order to comprehend the significance of Luke Skywalker's relevance in the political context of America in the 1970s and 1980s. As I explore in greater detail in the following section, numerous factors, such as mythology, history, and his personal experiences, influenced Lucas. Joseph Campbell's

writings, particularly *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Campbell 1949), which had a profound impact on Lucas, were one of his major influences. Lucas had a framework to work with thanks to Campbell's investigation of the hero's journey and common mythological patterns.

Furthermore, Lucas drew inspiration from his own upbringing in the turbulent and socially transformative 1960s. He experienced the consequences of the Vietnam War, the civil rights movement, and political scandals, which influenced how he saw the world. These elements were incorporated into the plot of *Star Wars*, with Luke Skywalker serving as the embodiment of the values of justice, rebellion, and hope. In an interview with *The New York Times* in 1999, George Lucas said, "I wanted to make a kids' film that would strengthen contemporary mythology and introduce a kind of basic morality." Lucas wanted to create a hero who embodied the challenges and aspirations of his time while also telling a timeless story that would appeal to audiences of all ages. This is what he achieved with Luke Skywalker.

3.4. "THE HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES"

Joseph Campbell's book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Campbell 1949), which had a significant impact on George Lucas' creation of the *Star Wars* saga, explores the mythological and archetypal patterns present in hero narratives. Campbell's work highlights the transformative nature of the hero's journey, therefore Luke Skywalker's journey "follows" the archetypal pattern of the hero's adventure, as seen throughout mythological tales. Luke embodies the universal hero's journey that speaks to the human experience, from his call to adventure and encounters with mentors to facing his own darkness and emerging with newfound wisdom. The movies offered a narrative framework for people seeking to navigate personal development and spiritual fulfillment in a time of social change and uncertainty through the metaphor of the Force.

In the saga, Luke Skywalker's journey is based on a rich mythic tradition that uses time-tested narrative archetypes and themes. Luke's journey starts with a call to adventure, just like many mythical heroes. The message Princess Leia sends through the droids R2-D2 and C-3PO serves as his response to this call. Luke is propelled into a bigger world, leaving behind his routine life on Tatooine to set out on a quest that will determine the course of his life.

In the mythic tradition, heroes frequently receive guidance from mentor characters and supernatural assistance. Luke has Yoda and Obi-Wan Kenobi as mentors. Yoda teaches him the

Jedi ways, while Obi-Wan serves as a wise mentor who imparts knowledge and instructs him on the Force. Luke receives direction, assistance, and the resources he needs from these mentors to complete his journey.

Tests, allies, and enemies play crucial roles along the hero's journey. Luke faces a variety of difficulties and trials that put his bravery, aptitude, and resiliency to the test. His alliances with people like Han Solo, Princess Leia, and Chewbacca help him in his quest. At the same time, he battles foes like Darth Vader and the Emperor who stand in for the evil forces and opposition the hero must face.

Along with facing challenges from without, the hero's journey also involves growing internally. Throughout the saga, Luke struggles with his own uncertainties, apprehensions, and temptations. As the son of Darth Vader, he must confront both his own lineage and the temptation to ally himself with the dark side of the Force (Kapell 2006). As a result of these internal conflicts, which mirror the ongoing struggle between light and darkness in all of creation, the hero's journey comes to represent the personal journey toward self-knowledge, atonement, and change.

Often, the ultimate ordeal—a time of great difficulty and peril—is part of the hero's journey. In *Return of the Jedi*, Luke's final confrontation with Darth Vader and the Emperor occurs. As he struggles with the dark side and ultimately makes a decision that results in his redemption as well as that of his father, he is put to the ultimate test of his character. The hero's transformation and the victory of light over darkness are both represented by this moment of resurrection. According to mythology, the hero's journey usually comes to an end with a return and the establishment of an enduring legacy. Luke's journey is similar to this. Luke returns to the Rebel Alliance as a hero after the Emperor is vanquished, imparting his knowledge and lessons. As he transmits the Jedi legacy and encourages a new generation of heroes to rise, he turns into a ray of hope.

Luke Skywalker's journey in *Star Wars* connects with viewers on a profound level by adhering to the mythic tradition. It draws on universal themes such as self-discovery, bravery, self-giving, and the conflict between good and evil.

4. LUKE SKYWALKER

While Luke Skywalker's battles with the dark side of the Force do not turn him into a villain but rather highlight the complexity of his character, they do not override the fact that his actions in the original *Star Wars* trilogy establish him as a hero.

Throughout his journey, Luke exemplifies unflinching courage and determination. In order to save Princess Leia, he puts his life in danger. He also faces dangerous foes and commands the Rebel Alliance in conflicts with the oppressive Galactic Empire. Luke consistently demonstrates compassion and altruism. He puts his own safety in danger to save his friends, demonstrates compassion for others, and works to create a galaxy that is fairer and more peaceful. One of the main characteristics of Luke's heroism is his choice to follow the Jedi path and usage of the Force for good (Lev 2000). He commits himself to upholding the light side and battling the dark side after undergoing extensive training, learning to control the Force, and becoming proficient in it.

Decker (2005: 210) adds:

“Luke’s faith saves him, as Vader kills the Emperor before the Emperor can destroy Luke. But Luke’s faith is not only beneficial for himself. It also saves his father, for his faith turns Anakin back to the Light side of the Force before he dies.”

The trilogy includes instances where Luke is tempted and has doubts. Particularly during his battles with Darth Vader, he feels resentment, anger, and a desire for vengeance. These conflicts bring to light his internal conflict and the ongoing conflict between the light and the dark side of the Force. In the end, Luke resists the dark side's allure and makes decisions that are consistent with his morals and the greater good. His moral compass and strength of character are on display by his refusal to give in to hatred or give up on his father.

Luke Skywalker has elicited a variety of responses from the audience, and not all of them have been favorable. Fans of *Star Wars* are numerous and ardent, and each person has their own ideas about how certain characters ought to act. Some viewers might have been disappointed or dissatisfied because their expectations for Luke's character arc were not met. Luke deviates from the stereotypical image of the heroic figure in his battles with the dark side and self-doubt. Luke had internal conflicts that made him more relatable and human but also more morally

ambiguous, which may have made it difficult for some viewers to reconcile with their perception of him as a perfect hero.

The original *Star Wars* trilogy has been around for many years, and different generations have reacted to it in various ways. In contrast to younger viewers who were introduced to the franchise through the prequel trilogy or sequels, some older fans who grew up with the original trilogy may have a nostalgic attachment to Luke as the good-hearted hero.

Luke Skywalker continues to be a recognizable and adored figure for many *Star Wars* fans despite mixed reactions. His journey, struggles, and ultimate victory continue to motivate audiences, serving as a reminder that bravery is not without its hardships and that each person has the power to triumph over evil (Lev 2000).

Different filmmaking techniques were used in the original *Star Wars* movie, which helped to add to Luke Skywalker's endearing appeal and win the audience over. Through clever character development, the movie made Luke Skywalker into a relatable and sympathetic lead. Luke was first introduced to the audience as a young, idealistic farm boy with aspirations of adventure. He was an immediately likable and relatable character because of his modest beginnings and relatable aspirations. As introduced by Joseph Campbell, Luke's character arc adhered to the traditional hero's journey narrative structure. This method of telling a story, which has been used in myths and legends throughout history, has a strong emotional impact on audiences. Viewers were captivated by Luke's transformation from a commoner to a hero, facing hardships and gaining wisdom along the way. This journey sparked feelings of admiration and emotional attachment in the audience.

His popularity and likability were greatly influenced by Mark Hamill's portrayal of Luke Skywalker. Luke became likable and endearing thanks to Hamill's sense of innocence, tenacity, and vulnerability. Audiences were drawn into Luke's emotional journey by his performance, which struck a balance between impetuous youth and the weight of responsibility. Luke Skywalker appeared in several iconic scenes from the movie that have since become part of popular culture. These scenes exhibited Luke's courage, bravery, and selflessness, from his encounter with Obi-Wan Kenobi and the introduction of the lightsaber to his trench run in the Death Star battle. An immersive and breathtaking experience was greatly aided by *Star Wars'* ground-breaking visual effects, which were especially innovative for their time. George Lucas envisioned the action in *Star Wars* with the camera swinging across it like the real World War

II documentaries that had served as his inspiration. Motion-control was the method that provided the answer. A motion-control camera was able to take duplicate passes one after the other by using a mechanical system controlled by a computer to move on a path that was specified to the nearest fraction of an inch. The footage that was produced could then be accurately composited (Lucasfilm 2021)

The ILM team (*Industrial Light and Magic*) created their own unique system, which became known as the "Dykstraflex" (after John Dykstra), using hand-built custom hardware at a time when the personal computer was still decades away. *Star Wars* breathtaking fly-bys and aerial dogfights were made possible by the camera's adaptable precision. When it was first released in 1977, the tool played a significant role in the vigor and energy that so enthralled audiences. The portrayal of lightsaber duel, space battles, and other fantastical elements through special effects increased the appeal of Luke Skywalker's character. The visual spectacle captivated viewers, and Luke's participation in these scenes further enhanced his likeability and heroism.

The emotional impact of Luke Skywalker's journey was aided by the John Williams' iconic musical score, which has come to be associated with the franchise. A sense of adventure, heroism, and hope were evoked by the enduring themes connected to Luke, such as *Binary Sunset* and the *Force Theme*, which improved the storytelling. Luke's character became more endearing to viewers as a result of the emotional connection the music made with the audience and them.

The movie was successful in making Luke Skywalker's emotional stakes high. His own journey became entangled in the wider conflict between the Galactic Empire and the Rebel Alliance. In addition to Luke's own character development and the outcome of the rebellion, the audience developed an interest in Luke's success. The impact of Luke's actions and decisions were heightened by the audience's increased emotional investment in him.

Luke Skywalker is featured in an apparently mysterious and reflective scene in *Star Wars: Episode V - The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), which provides profound insights into both his journey and the themes of the *Star Wars* universe. Luke's character and his relationship with the Force are complex, and the vision in the cave on Dagobah highlights this. It also offers a distinctive blend of narrative and cinematography. Luke's inner conflicts are depicted on a blank canvas by the cave's sparseness, dimly lit entrance, and eerie atmosphere. The stark contrast

between the surroundings and Luke's complex emotional turmoil is striking. The juxtaposition of Luke's illuminated face and the shrouded figure of Darth Vader creates a visual duality. This serves to highlight the Force's inherent balance as it reflects the ongoing struggle between good and evil. The scene is given depth and symbolism by the water's reflective surface. It emphasizes the idea that the external conflict is a reflection of Luke's internal journey by acting as a metaphorical mirror to his psyche. Luke's confusion and intrigue as he looks at the vision are expertly portrayed by Mark Hamill in his acting. The audience's ambiguity regarding the significance of the vision is mirrored in the fluctuating emotions on his face. Vader's breathing in the distance is audibly echoed in the background, adding to the eerie atmosphere, and heightening the audience's sense of dread.

How Luke Skywalker's mythical hero's journey was incorporated into a modern context is one of the reasons why his character connected with audiences so strongly. According to Joseph Campbell, myths and legends from all cultures and eras share a common narrative structure called „the hero's journey“. This common storytelling structure served as the basis for George Lucas' *Star Wars*, which he adapted for a modern audience. Lucas made the adventures of Luke Skywalker more relatable to viewers while also introducing them to brand-new, fantastical worlds by setting the story in a galaxy of the future.

4.1. LUKE AS A HERO

The scene usually called *The Binary Sunset* in *Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope* (1977) is one of the first scenes that depict Luke as a potential hero; when Luke Skywalker stands on Tatooine and looks at the twin suns setting on the horizon, it is one of the most well-known scenes from *Star Wars*. Several filmmaking techniques are used in this scene to highlight Luke's portrayal of a hero. Luke's stature and distinction as a significant figure are highlighted by the use of wide shots and a low-angle perspective. Luke is on the verge of a big adventure because of how the framing depicts the vastness of the desert landscape. To reframe the idea of heroism in a fresh setting, Lucas draws inspiration from traditional American iconography, such as the cowboy mythos. The cowboy, who is frequently portrayed as a lone figure on the frontier, stands in for the independent and self-reliant nature of the United States. This cowboy way of life is reimagined in Luke Skywalker in a galaxy far, far away. Luke, like the cowboy, must make his way through a hostile and lawless frontier while defending those who are oppressed

and unjustly treated. The countercultural values of individualism and resistance are in line with this reinvention of the cowboy archetype.

The warm, golden tones of the setting suns produce a striking and emotional atmosphere. Luke's tenacity and desire for something greater than his present circumstances are highlighted by the lighting, which stands for his desire for adventure and meaning (Lev 2000). The Force Theme by John Williams, also referred to as *Binary Sunset* or *Luke's Theme*, gives the scene a richer, more emotional feel. The grand orchestral score emphasizes Luke's yearning and his sense of impending destiny. The metaphorical representation of Luke's dual nature and his path to becoming a hero can be found in the twin suns setting in the scene. It anticipates his involvement in the struggle between good and evil and represents the fusion of his humble beginnings with his greater destiny.

Few events in George Lucas's complex *Star Wars* saga are as memorable and influential as the lightsaber duel between Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader in *Star Wars: Episode V - The Empire Strikes Back* (1980). The fight acts as a turning point in Luke Skywalker's story. It stands for a confrontation with his family history, his knowledge of the Force, and his determination to thwart the influence of the Dark Side.

A visual metaphor for the moral ambiguity of the conflict is provided by the setting of Cloud City, with its gleaming white corridors and menacing architecture. In stark contrast to the surroundings, Vader's imposing jet-black armor symbolizes his ominous power. A visual representation of the conflict between Light and Dark is created by the color contrast.

The filmmaking uses dynamic camera angles to reflect the emotional dynamics. Vader is often depicted from low angles to emphasize his dominance and his role as the embodiment of the Dark Side. On the other hand, Luke's vulnerability, underdog status, and room for improvement are highlighted by high-angle shots of him.

Luke's inner turmoil is captured in close-up shots of his determined expression and eyes. The hidden conflict within the iconic antagonist is similarly revealed by close-ups of Vader's masked face, occasionally revealing his eyes. The emotional intensity of their struggle is revealed in these shots in addition to the physical struggle.

A form of storytelling is created by the intricate lightsaber visuals. Vader moves carefully and methodically, in contrast to Luke's earnest but generally crude fighting style. This reflects their different points in the journey of the Force: Luke as the untrained but passionate novice, and

Vader as the experienced but conflicted master. The duel represents more than just a physical conflict in the collision of content and cinematography; it also represents a collision of ideologies, destinies, and the very nature of these characters.

In the last movie of the original trilogy, *Star Wars: Episode VI - Return of the Jedi* (1983), Luke Skywalker's heroism and inner conflict are prominently displayed in the pivotal scene where he faces off against Darth Vader and Emperor Palpatine on the second Death Star.

The emotional journey of Luke is depicted by the lighting in this scene. As Luke fights the temptation of the dark side, the lighting gradually changes from the room's menacing red glow to a softer, more natural lighting. The use of contrasting colors emphasizes his heroism in choosing the path of light by representing the internal struggle between good and evil. The intense and spectacular nature of the scene is enhanced by the visual effects used to create the lightsaber duels, such as the vivid blade colors, lively choreography, and seamless integration of special effects. Luke proves his command of the Force and establishes himself as a formidable hero with his quick and deft movements against Darth Vader.

Dramatic tension is emphasized in the scene by the use of lighting, especially the stark contrast between light and dark. The Emperor's throne serves as the focal point of the gloomy, dimly lit throne room, which gives the space a sinister feel. Luke's shining presence amid the gloom represents his valor and ability to withstand the dark side's allure.

The intensity of the conflict is increased by the use of special effects to depict Force lightning and other paranormal components. As well as giving their characters depth, the make-up and practical effects used to depict Emperor Palpatine's physical transformation and Darth Vader's facial scars highlight the conflict between good and evil.

Luke Skywalker's inner conflict and emotional journey are marvelously depicted by Mark Hamill's performance. Luke is determined to save his father and reject the evil side, which is clear from his expressions, body language, and speech delivery. The performances of David Prowse/James Earl Jones as Darth Vader and Ian McDiarmid as Emperor Palpatine give the scene weight and complexity.

In this scene, there is significant symbolism. Luke's decision to put his lightsaber in the trash and decline to kill his father exemplifies his dedication to the Jedi ideals and his reluctance to give in to their seductions. Luke's heroism is demonstrated by this deed of selflessness and mercy, which also prepares the ground for his eventual atonement (Hanson 2002).

5. CONTINUING THE SAGA

The franchise has continued to uphold its fundamental ethos of individualism, resistance to oppression, and hope ever since it began in the 1970s. The more recent *Star Wars* films, television shows, and spin-offs, however, have embraced their own distinct political visions, reflecting shifting cultural contexts and appealing to modern audiences. The celebration of individualism was one of the original *Star Wars* trilogy's defining elements. Characters like Luke Skywalker and Han Solo exemplified this ethos by challenging social expectations and determining their own fates. The more recent *Star Wars* content continues to be driven by this theme.

The main character of the sequel trilogy, Rey, carries on this tradition as she travels through a galaxy in turmoil, discovering who she is and what she is meant to do along the way. In later iterations, the fight against oppressive regimes, which served as a pillar of the Rebel Alliance's struggle in the first trilogy, continues to be a major theme. The Rebel Alliance's unwavering resolve in the face of the First Order's authoritarian rule is mirrored by the Resistance in the sequel trilogy. This continuity serves as a reminder of the resistance to tyranny's appeal even today. *Star Wars* has embraced this change as modern storytelling has increased its emphasis on inclusivity and diversity. A dedication to a more diverse cast and inclusive storylines is demonstrated by characters like Finn, Rose, and Jyn Erso. This evolution reflects the shifting demographics of the audience and is consistent with the larger social movement for representation.

The moral complexities of our time are acknowledged in newer *Star Wars* content. Themes of leadership, moral ambiguity, and the effects of war, for instance, are explored in *The Last Jedi*. It challenges conventional heroism and questions the duality of good and evil, reflecting a more morally nuanced time when clear-cut lines between good and evil are muddled. In response to the larger cultural shift toward gender equality and empowerment, strong female characters like Rey, Ahsoka Tano, and Cara Dune have been introduced. Contemporary ideals of gender equity and representation are reflected in these characters, who also inspire female viewers.

The sequels raise ethical questions about technology, surveillance, and artificial intelligence. The use of advanced weaponry and surveillance systems by the First Order mirrors concerns about the ethical implications of technological advancements, privacy, and government surveillance in the 21st century.

The Disney trilogy, *The Force Awakens*, *The Last Jedi*, and *The Rise of Skywalker*, address current political issues. *The Force Awakens* reintroduces a galaxy beset by political unrest and a rise in authoritarianism, drawing comparisons to worries about the emergence of populist leaders in our own society. Environmental concerns are briefly mentioned in *The Force Awakens*, though they are not as prominent as other themes. The star-draining weapon “Starkiller Base” can be seen as a commentary on resource depletion and environmental issues, two issues that gained attention in the 2010s. Older characters from the first trilogy appear in the sequel trilogy, emphasizing the themes of legacy and nostalgia. This is a reflection of the 2010s' popular culture, which saw a rise in the number of film and television reboots, sequels, and revivals of beloved franchises.

6. CONCLUSION

Few sagas have left such a lasting impression on cinematic history as *Star Wars*. This space opera has stood the test of time, bridging generations across cultures and continents from the moment it was conceived by the imaginative mind of George Lucas to its contemporary resonance. The ethos of the 1970s and 1980s are carried along on this journey through cultural eras as well as galaxies, captivating both the present and the future while retaining its appeal.

It's possible that people's opinions will differ, but for me, a devoted fan of both *Star Wars* and the larger canon of cinema, it's clear that the saga's enduring allure stems from its remarkable capacity to act as a time capsule of the counter-cultural spirit of the 1970s and 1980s. In a unique way, the *Star Wars* universe captures the revolutionary spirit of these decades, which was characterized by anti-establishment feelings, the pursuit of individualism, and a push for social change. As he makes his way from a farm boy to a galactic hero, Luke Skywalker, the personification of hope and transformation, personifies the values of the time, reflecting the tenacity and desire for change that characterized those days.

Furthermore, the corruption and deterioration of democracy following the Watergate scandal have startling similarities to the rise of the Empire. Comparatively speaking, the political climate of the time is reflected in the secrecy, deceit, and unchecked power displayed by Emperor Palpatine. The development of the Death Star can be compared to the Cold War-era arms race and military-industrial complex. However, in my opinion, *Star Wars* was never about politics or scandals; it was always about humans and human behavior that sparked the will of change in characters and their actions. George Lucas is not a historian, but a human being with desire and capability to show how internal feelings and conflicts determine who we are and what we do.

The use of special effects in *Star Wars*, which were undoubtedly revolutionary in their heyday but now provide a window into the past, adds to the film's charm. It's more than just a nostalgic exercise to see how early cinematic techniques brought intergalactic battles and fantastical creatures to life. We can learn from it about the inventive problem-solving that was necessary when technological limitations were very real. This link between the past and present proves how timeless the story is and how storytelling has the enduring power to cross eras.

The popularity of the saga has endured outside of the original trilogy. After many years, the release of sequels and spin-offs has reignited interest among younger generations. This

emphasizes how the struggle between good and evil has persisted throughout history and across cultures. The fact that new stories, characters, and conflicts set in the same universe continue to captivate audiences is evidence of the saga's universal themes.

A cultural phenomenon that both shaped and was shaped by the society of the 1970s, *Star Wars* was more than just a cinematic experience. Mysticism, spirituality, and the conflict between light and darkness were themes that connected with a variety of religious and spiritual groups. The saga's spiritual undertones resonated with audiences of various beliefs, providing them with a new perspective on their faith. These undertones ranged from the Jedi's meditation techniques to the overarching conflict between the mystical Force and the Dark Side.

Of intriguing note is the role of Luke Skywalker in this evolving narrative. As the saga expands, Luke's transformation from protagonist to mentor reflects the cyclical nature of growth, passing on the torch of wisdom and experience to a new generation. The ability of *Star Wars* to maintain its allure is a testament to the power of storytelling to span generations and cultures in a world marked by constantly improving technological innovations and cinematic techniques. Its messages of redemption, hope, and the ongoing conflict between light and darkness still have a powerful impact on people today. Luke Skywalker's journey is more than just a valiant quest; it is a reflection of the progress of humanity as a whole. *Star Wars* will continue to shine as a beacon in the night sky, guiding us through the turbulent yet stunning galaxy of human existence, as long as our society struggles with problems, looks for inspiration, and dreams of better days ahead, even in the galaxies far, far away.

REFERENCES

- Campbell, Joseph (2004) *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*. Princeton University Press.
- Decker, Kevin S.; Eberl, Jason T. (2005) *Star Wars and Philosophy: More powerful than you can possibly imagine*. Chicago: Open Court.
- Ferguson, Marilyn (1987) *The Aquarian Conspiracy: Personal and Social Transformation in the 1980s*. Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher.
- Hanson, Michael J.; Kay, Max S. (2002) *Star Wars: The New Myth*. Bloomington: Xlibris Corporation.
- Kapell, Matthew W. (2006) *Finding the Force of the Star Wars Franchise. Fans, Merchandise and Critics*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Kempshall, Chris (2022) *The History and Politics of Star Wars; Death Stars and Democracy*. London. Routledge.
- Kyle, Richard (1995) *The New Age Movement in American Culture*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Lacey, Nick (2000) *Narrative and Genre: Key Concepts in Media Studies*. New York: Palgrave.
- Lev, Peter (2000) *American Films of the 70's - Conflicting Visions*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Marcuse, Herbert (1964) *One Dimensional Man; Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Pollock, Dale (1990) *Skywalking - The Life and Films of George Lucas*. Samuel French Trade.
- Porter, John M. (2015) *The Tao of Star Wars*. Humanics Publishing Group.
- Reynolds, David W.; Luceno, James (2006) *Star Wars - The Complete Visual Dictionary*. London; DK Publishing.
- Rickman, Gregg (2004) *The Science Fiction Film Reader*. 229-252. New York: Limelight Editions.
- Robinson, Andrew (2010) *Herbert Marcuse: One Dimensional Man? In In Theory*. Ceasefire.

Schulman, Bruce J. (2001) *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics*. Free Press.

Segal, Robert A. (2004) *Myth - A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tiffin, Jessica (1999) Digitally remythicised: Star Wars, modern popular mythology, and Madam and Eve'. In *Journal of Literary Studies* 15 (1): 66-80.

Zinn, Howard (1980) *A People's History of The United States*. HarperCollins e-books.

SOURCES

Abrams, Jeffrey Jacob (Director) (2015) *Star Wars. Episode VII: The Force Awakens* [Film]. Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures.

Abrams, Jeffrey Jacob (Director) (2017) *Star Wars. Episode VIII: The Last Jedi* [Film]. Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures.

Abrams, Jeffrey Jacob (Director) (2019) *Star Wars. Episode IX: The Rise of Skywalker* [Film]. Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures.

Lucas, George (Director) (1971) *THX 1138* [Film]. Warner Bros Pictures.

Lucas, George (Director) (1973) *American Graffiti* [Film]. Universal Pictures.

Lucas, George (Director) (1977) *Star Wars. Episode IV: A New Hope* [Film]. 20th Century Fox.

Lucas, George (Director) (1980) *Star Wars. Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back* [Film]. 20th Century Fox.

Lucas, George (Director) (1983) *Star Wars. Episode VI: Return of the Jedi* [Film]. 20th Century Fox.

ONLINE SOURCES

Lucasfilm (2021) *Lucasfilm Originals: The ILM Dykstraflex*. Retrieved August 22nd 2023 from <https://www.lucasfilm.com/news/lucasfilm-originals-the-dykstraflex/>

Page, Thomas (2017) CNN. Edition. *Building an empire: Exploring the architecture of “Star Wars”*. Retrieved June 29th 2023 from <https://edition.cnn.com/style/article/star-wars-architecture-one-square-meter/index.html>

Ross, James C. (2021) The Human Front. *Buddhism in Star Wars*. Retrieved August 25th 2023 from <https://www.thehumanfront.com/buddhism-in-star-wars/>

Telegraph. *Star Wars Episode IV – A New Hope review: „a most spectacular trip“*. Retrieved June 29th 2023 from <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/films/0/star-wars-episode-iv-new-hope-review-spectacular-trip/>

The Conversation. *What Star Wars can teach us about the decline of democracy*. Retrieved June 29th 2023 from <https://theconversation.com/what-star-wars-can-teach-us-about-the-decline-of-democracy-171711>

The New York Times. *George Lucas: A Galaxy of Myth, Money and Kids*. Retrieved June 28th 2023 from <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/03/21/movies/moviesspecial/george-lucas-a-galaxy-of-myth-money-and-kids.html>

SUMMARY

This thesis aims to explore the complexity behind *Star Wars*' appeal. The thesis discusses different socio-political aspects of the 1970s, particularly in America, and the meaning *Star Wars* had on people's lives, due to the fact it was shaped and helped shape the cultural, religious and cinematic characteristics of the time. After a brief introduction on the author, George Lucas, and the franchise in general, the main part of the thesis focuses on specific details from the *Star Wars* movies and parallels them with real-world similarities and the book called *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* by Joseph Campbell.

Key words: Star Wars, George Lucas, Luke Skywalker, Joseph Campbell

SAŽETAK

Ovaj diplomski rad ima za cilj istražiti složenost iza privlačnosti *Ratova zvijezda*. U radu se raspravlja o različitim socio-političkim aspektima 1970-ih, posebice u Americi, te o značenju koje su *Ratovi zvijezda* imali na život ljudi, budući da su bili oblikovani, ali i pomogli oblikovati kulturne, vjerske i filmske karakteristike tog vremena. Nakon kratkog uvoda o autoru Georgeu Lucasu i franšizi općenito, glavni dio diplomskog rada fokusira se na određene detalje iz filmova *Ratovi zvijezda* i uspoređuje ih sa sličnostima iz stvarnog svijeta i s knjigom pod nazivom *Junak s tisuću lica* autora Josepha Campbella.

Ključne riječi: Ratovi zvijezda, George Lucas, Luke Skywalker, Joseph Campbell

**Izjava o pohrani i objavi ocjenskog rada
(završnog/diplomskog/specijalističkog/doktorskog rada - podcrtajte odgovarajuće)**

Student/ica: _____

Naslov rada: _____

Znanstveno područje i polje: _____

Vrsta rada: _____

Mentor/ica rada (ime i prezime, akad. stupanj i zvanje):

Komentor/ica rada (ime i prezime, akad. stupanj i zvanje):

Članovi povjerenstva (ime i prezime, akad. stupanj i zvanje):

Ovom izjavom potvrđujem da sam autor/autorica predanog ocjenskog rada (završnog/diplomskog/specijalističkog/doktorskog rada - zaokružite odgovarajuće) i da sadržaj njegove elektroničke inačice u potpunosti odgovara sadržaju obranjenog i nakon obrane uređenog rada.

Kao autor izjavljujem da se slažem da se moj ocjenski rad, bez naknade, trajno javno objavi u otvorenom pristupu u Digitalnom repozitoriju Filozofskoga fakulteta Sveučilišta u Splitu i repozitoriju Nacionalne i sveučilišne knjižnice u Zagrebu (u skladu s odredbama *Zakona o visokom obrazovanju i znanstvenoj djelatnosti* (NN br. 119/22)).

Split, _____

Potpis studenta/studentice: _____

Napomena:

U slučaju potrebe ograničavanja pristupa ocjenskom radu sukladno odredbama Zakona o autorskom pravu i srodnim pravima (111/21), podnosi se obrazloženi zahtjev dekanici Filozofskog fakulteta u Splitu.

SVEUČILIŠTE U SPLITU
FILOZOFSKI FAKULTET

IZJAVA O AKADEMSKOJ ČESTITOSTI

kojom ja _____, kao pristupnik/pristupnica za stjecanje zvanja magistra/magistrice _____, izjavljujem da je ovaj diplomski rad rezultat isključivo mogega vlastitoga rada, da se temelji na mojim istraživanjima i oslanja na objavljenu literaturu kao što to pokazuju korištene bilješke i bibliografija. Izjavljujem da niti jedan dio diplomskoga rada nije napisan na nedopušten način, odnosno da nije prepisan iz necitiranoga rada, pa tako ne krši ničija autorska prava. Također izjavljujem da nijedan dio ovoga diplomskoga rada nije iskorišten za koji drugi rad pri bilo kojoj drugoj visokoškolskoj, znanstvenoj ili radnoj ustanovi.

Split, _____

Potpis