

"The Star Wars Saga, myths and autobiography, a Freudian approach to George Lucas' script."

Episode I "The Emperor Freud of the Lucas' Galaxy"

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"Le cinéma (ce qu'on appelle cinéma), qui n'est pas encore qu'au principe, deviendra au terme de son évolution la plus formidable trouvaille du monde, en ce sens qu'il dressera devant l'humanité une surhumanité ainsi qu'en face de la création une surcréation. Ce cinéma futur multipliera de ses natures la Nature »

Saint-Pol-Roux (1925-1930), Cinéma Vivant, Rougerie, 1972, p. 15.

Our analysis will be based on the Freudian theories applied to the narration of the three first movies which chronologically form the "second trilogy" of the Star Wars 1) Saga: Star Wars (1977, re-baptized Episode IV, A New Hope in 1999), 2) The Empire Strikes Back (1980, Episode V), 3) Return of the Jedi (1983, Episode VI), and the first edition of the biography of Georges Lucas written in 1983, Skywalking: The Life and Films of George Lucas by Dale Pollock.

At first, we will try to make a "psychoanalysis' approach of the main characters of the saga and then, we will sort the various objects and planets location where Lucas has established his story line.

We will try to prove that the Freudian theories applied to the Lucas' script, help us to consider that there is a real narrow relationship between the moving images and Lucas' subconscious.

In other words, Lucas seems to express his unconsciousness through the images of his saga, accessible to all audience. Our study will try to prove that the universe built up by Lucas takes its roots not only in the imagination and the influence of Joseph Campbell theories, but also from Lucas' reel universe of his past.

From the point of view of the narrative approach, the trilogy created from Lucas' imagination is telling the story of a conflict between a minority of rebels, who are fighting for freedom and the Emperor of the Universe who exercises his despotic power, because of his supernatural ones. This status refers to the basis of the narration of the western film genre, but transferred in space, that we call among science-fiction specialist and fans "space opera".

Moreover, this traditional figure, so simple in terms of narration, is going to be very complex, on one hand because of the elements involved and on the other hand very surprising because the universe depicted on the screen is calling a very imaginative creativity from its author, and this universe is the redundancy of Lucas' internal world, taking a root in his past memory and experiences.

Indeed, when we consider the biographical elements of George Lucas' life, we see that Lucas has always fought for his independence in the movie industry. We can see that in 1969, Lucas and Coppola started to create The American Zoetrope, a society in which "the principal objective was to involve in various fields of making movies, in cooperation with the most innovating and youngest talents,

using as much as possible techniques and contemporary materials". These words were at the time of 1969, in the press release of the foundation of the American Zoetrope. But Lucas saw the company invaded by official unions, and decided to resign from it.

After this first battle, and his first victory, as the Star Wars rebels, he will temporary abdicate with the Hollywood system, similarly as the Empire Strikes back rebels. While Return of the Jedi will express Lucas' complete victory against the studios (especially the 20th Century Fox), with the reinforcement of the position of the Lucasfilm Ltd, with the politic of long term contracts, especially those merchandising, started in 1977, in order to win against the hegemony of the studios.

From a general point of view, the narration of the rebellion against the Empire, expressed in the Star Wars Saga has a correspondence in the real world to Lucas', Coppola's and their friends' rebellion against the Hollywood system.

However, in this main general idea of Rebellion who has been analyzed later on from the mythical point of view, introducing Joseph Campbell as his mentor (after the Star Wars release in 1977) with Obi Wan Kenobi inspired character and Indologist Heinrich Zimmer (Yoda) himself Campbell's mentor, can be connected Lucas' unconsciousness that contribute to an unusual and totally original relationship between things, in the way of Manet's Portrait of Pertuiset, the Lion hunter. In this painting, Manet has represented Pertuiset with a costume which has nothing to do with a hunter and the lion looks like more a stuffed rug in a set which has nothing in common with the jungle.

Now, it is important to identify the main characters of the Saga, searching for correspondence in George Lucas' life. The main character, Luke Skywalker, seems to be from the formal and functional point of view the reflection of Georges Lucas himself. In fact Luke and Lucas have the same sound effect and actually there is no coincidence when we know that George's nickname in high school was "Luke." Luke S. = Lucas. Luke in Star Wars lives in Tatooine, a deserted planet, a planet far away from everything, as it is neutral in the rebellion against the Empire. In this fact, it express Luke's solitude, and show the two parallel worlds of Luke and Lucas, who was living in Modesto, California, in the South of San Francisco, in which the characteristic was the extreme weather (+ 35 Celsius, in average in the summer). The parallelism of life is more and more obvious when Lucas' family left Modesto for a ranch, lost in the deserted lands. George was 15 and Luke was 17 when he was living among his uncle and auntie and saw his destiny totally changed because of Obi-Wan Kenobi's intervention, old Jedi master, controlling the Force, a kind of flow of energy present in all the universe and created from humans' aura built up from the dead who believed in the existence of the Force.

It is interesting to see that Lucas's life totally changed after his fatal accident of June 12th 1962, where, as he describes himself, he should have not survive to it.

It is indeed his seat belt that cut while it was suppose to do so which saved his life". That's the reason why he asked himself why he miraculously survived from

this car crash and tried to found out the reason behind... and as he said "start to be confident in his instinct". Kenobi got the same words when he said to Luke: "Your destiny lies along a different path from mine.¹(The Force will be with you... always!"). In brief, Lucas by this accident, Luke by the intervention of Ben Obi-Wan Kenobi, and the extermination of his guardians, his uncle Owen and his aunt Beru, see their respective "destiny lies along a different path". During the development of the story of the three films of the Trilogy, Luke will try to direct his destiny, as well as Lucas who, after this car crash will try to do so.

Two characters will take a considerable importance in the complete Saga. Darth Vader that we know is the key vault of the 6 movies saga since the prequel trilogy has been released while Princess Leia Organa is the major female character of the 1977-1983 Trilogy. Vader seems to be the visual expression of the oedipal complex. The Vader's extra-sensorial domination that Luke/Lucas will fight all over the trilogy, express what Lucas has always hated: "the authoritarian figures, I was afraid of the adults and I bear them a grudge. Apparently in this oedipal conflict, the image of the mother is absent; but it is not really the matter, because we can find her in the elements that seems to us secondary.

The mother is from the beginning, the Force, which is the manifestation of the ideal of Luke/ Lucas' Ego. She is the absolute principle of pleasure. We can get a kind of communion with her, in any place of the universe. That's the reason why Lucas gave the dark side of the Force to Vader that symbolized the conflict father and son in the will to possess the image of the Mother-Force. Moreover, this conflict father/son is characterized by the various space, symbolic ones and realistic ones.

The expression of the father's Force is symbolized by the planet Tatooine in Return of the Jedi. Tatooine is a world with a desert surface, and two twin suns, with no water, no vegetation, so a planet that will have a "male" (mal(e)) characteristic. Only robots (and indeed R2D2 and C3PO) can pretend to move on its hostile surface, where human and humanoids live in natural caves (The Jawas) and collect water (Uncle Owen & Aunt Beru's farm). Some other inhabitants take refuge in the darkness of their fortress that looks like Plato's cave and its myth (Jabba the Hutt the Godfather of the Galaxy, surrounded by a court of ugly subjects).

Then another "male" planet, the Hoth planet, appears in The Empire Strikes Back and seems to play a real ambiguity. It is indeed, the planet of the rebels and it has a paradox terminology because "Hoth" without the final 'h' means "hot" and we have an icy planet, that the Imperial forces will won after a battle. The terminology of this planet seems to symbolize the conflict Vader/Luke (father/son) for the domination of the Mother Force.

In other terms, the Force is the ambiguous expression of the women mother and spouse symbolized by the dark side and the good side of the Force. From the good side, the Force is the expression of the re-conquest of the affective value of

¹ Lucas, Georges (1997) Star Wars, A New Hope, Faber & Faber, London, Boston, p.83.

the mother, it is the materialization of the victory of the son upon the father for the re-conquest of the mother. This image of the mother is emphasized by the materialization of the space where is living the last master/mentor of the Force: Yoda, Dagobah, humid planet, foggy, natural, full of waters, a “female” planet with a life source. Yoda is the representation of the reference of Luke’s ego. He possesses the Truth (His characteristic is to speak reversing the verb and his complement). He confirms Luke’s Destiny. He is really wise in a way that he loves to do not show it as a hermit from the original Christian monks (Mount Athos). His character is inspired from Tolkien’s ‘Lord of Rings’. His death will push Luke to become his spiritual heir and to confront his father, Vador and to dominate him, even to dominate by him the Emperor of the Universe, the absolute master of the Dark Side of the Force.

The second character after this dominating image of the father who was Vador, is the princess Leia character who is at the same time the reflection of Wendy, Lucas’s sister and Lucas’ wife of these times, Marcia Lucas. Indeed, if we finely analyze the evolution of the character of Leia, during the trilogy, we can see a double reverse parallelism status. Leia in Star Wars, A good Hope is a character quite strong in her apparent felinity who is defending Luke as well as Lucas was defended in his childhood by his sister Wendy (“... and she made bleeding more than a wild guy who was attacking the little George”²). However, in Episode IV, nothing indicates that Leia is indeed Luke’s sister. She, nevertheless, appear unclear in her choice of “companion” between Luke and Han Solo, the seductive smuggler, who was able to help the rebellion if he was of course paid for it, using his star fighter, the Millennium Falcon, the fastest spaceship in this galaxy sector. But it’s seems that the values in term of ideology, put into the Episode IV, give the preference to Luke. We can deduct that the couple Luke/ Leia is the materialization on the screen of the unconscious desire of incest of George Lucas. However, this idea is revealed only at the end of the saga when Leia’s real identity will be revealed, as Luke’s sister. It’s from that moment in the trilogy that Leia takes at the same time, in her behavior, the status of woman and the status of sister, in the ultimate revelation of her destiny.

In that way, she appears as a key character, which plays a balance in Luke’s feeling, with a change of status in a reverse parallel in the reality of George Lucas’ life. We can summarize by the following:

LEIA	A GOOD HOPE	THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK	RETURN OF THE JEDI
Identity in the pseudo-reality: cinematic reality	Woman without feminine aspect (preference to Luke)	Woman with feminine potential (1)	Sister with confirmed femininity (2)

² D. Pollock, p.8

Identification in the reality lived by George Lucas	Wendy (Lucas’ sister)	Wendy/ Marcia (30	Marcia (Lucas’ wife)
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- (1) We can see the way she is dressed. Leia is wearing a uniform of warrior at first, then a cloak and a suit (in the Clouds city). She also has a change in her hair cut, more feminine in Episode V.
- (2) In fact, in Return of the Jedi, she lose, step by step her royal distinction, and almost all her cloths (Jabba the Hutt’s headquarters
- (3) Duality between Wendy: Lucas’ sister and Marcia, Lucas’ first wife.

The changing of Identity, is in fact a status change as in this table, shows us that Lucas knew to express and even to sublimate one of the element of the second Freudian topography formed by the integration of the parental ban, here the incest brother/ sister. In fact, this social ban is not revealed to the audience in the Episode IV. In other words, Lucas has hijacked in profitable way, the principle of reality, by do not revealing the true identity of Leia. In this way, he has involved himself in an incest Luke-Lucas/ Leia-Wendy, to change suddenly of direction by the fact that his unconsciousness was externally revealed by the revelation of identity to the audience. This implies to put into the narration in Return of the Jedi, the notion of banning incest, not only for a script reasons, but also as psychological one, after having played, in Episode IV and V, with the notion of incest in a half liberal way.

The relationship between Han Solo and Luke, is related to the moments lived between Lucas and Coppola, in the way that Coppola was an essential figure in Lucas’ life. They have founded together, the American Zoetrope, an independent film company, where Coppola, as Han Solo was searching for making a financial success. However, Lucas/Luke and Solo/Coppola did not have the same ideals. Lucas/Luke was interrogating himself about his destiny and tried to dominate it while Solo/ Coppola took a sinusoidal rhythm in the conquest of the financial success; Coppola did not sale the Zoetrope studios? Solo did not spend some times in hibernation?

The great absent of this first 1977-1983-trilogy is the mother, but it is substituted by the Force. But we can see that the second trilogy released between 1999-2005 have put in light Luke’s mother with Senator Queen Amigdala who will be an essential character who will push indirectly Anakin Skywalker, Luke’s father to become Darth Vader, in order to save Padme’s life. After talking about the planets hosting the Force: Tatooine and Hoth for the dark side of the Force, Dagobah, and Yavin (unpopulated, cover by a deep forest, where the Rebellion has established its base – Episode IV), and Endor that we have to give some explanation.

Endor is a planet inhabited by the Ewoks, who have an appearance of little teddy bears. They have a connotation of George Lucas’ favorite tale

"GOLDILOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS"³ This last seems to represent the image of the maternal protection, symbolized by these little creatures called the Ewoks. We have to notice that the Ewoks have no technology. We can compare them as a mother to who, will take the child, but will succeed to find him because of her will and cleverness.

Finally another type of planet represent the devil, they are the two Death Stars. The first destroyed in the New Hope, reveals its vulnerable point in the center of its architecture. The second is not yet achieved, not only for the script reasons, but also for symbolic reasons. It is indeed the technological incarnation of a Manichean conflict within the human soul. In fact this gigantic space station, made of a sphere shape, a form symbolizing the perfection is unachieved, so destructible. We could compare it with Darth Vader. They both possess the characteristics of wearing a metallic shell, the one of Vader is completed but evil is not yet operational. This comparative study brings us to believe that the sphere and Vader are not totally negative and contain some good inside. Vader can't sacrifice his son for the Emperor, and sacrifice himself, because his metallic shell plays the role of a mask which helps him to live with the bad on him and not within.

For the Death Star, the sphere possesses an internal void where takes place its weak point. We can feel in this way that the sphere possesses in its center the void of the good, which will be liberated during the final explosion. By the way this void looks like the structure of the city of Tokyo as described by Roland Barthes in "Empire of Signs"⁴ explaining the role of the Emperor palace in Tokyo. Maybe this is again another oriental influence on George Lucas' mind.

From the aesthetic point of view the Star Wars 1977-1983-Trilogy seems to match the primitive form of a symphony, Italian overture in 3 movements: allegro: Episode IV, andante: Episode V, allegro: Episode VI. Such hypothesis is possible by the fact that indeed the rhythm of Episode IV and VI, is faster with the common point in the script of the destruction of the Death Star, while The Empire Strikes Back ended on the departure of Lando Caldrissian with Chewbacca, characters relatively secondary in this trilogy.

This study brings us to consider the Lucas cinematic 1st trilogy as, apparently a world shaped from his imagination, but it is indeed the reflection of his unconsciousness. In other words we are witness of a mythification in a cinematic symphony of the intimacy of a generic human as we are all. It's maybe the answer of the non stop growing world success in the History of Cinema

³ D. Pollock, opus cit. p. 27.

⁴ Published in France in 1970. 1English paperback edition in 1983.