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Comparison of the Male Stereotype in American and European Motion Pictures in the 20th Century

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Abstract

The Iron Horse (1924) and The Stagecoach (1939) directed by American director John Ford. Theoretical part presents the western genre, the importance and function of mythology and a short introduction of stereotype theory. Analytical part examines several aspects of each movie. It also describes possible outside sociocultural influences on each movie. After analysing frontier myth and selected stereotypes in each movie, these aspects are compared with each other and the hypothesis is made concerning their change.

Introduction

The Western genre is undoubtedly part of the American psyche. Its popularity is attributed to the fact that the depiction of the frontier and expansion to the west in the western movies serves as American mythology. The American nation, a diverse medley of immigrants from innumerable corners of the world was in desperate need of a binder, which would create a feeling of togetherness with their new countrymen.

One of the cement that were binding the newcomers to American society were the movie pictures. Western was among the most popular genres until the massive immigration was restricted by The Immigration Act of 1924.

Western movies during the 20th century were filled with a myriad of stereotypes. Then it was desirable for the viewers to identify themselves with certain types of characters, who were fighting against certain types of villains.

This thesis mainly focuses on stereotypes in western movies. Nowadays, we deem most of the stereotypes as wrong or unfair, but at the time the society's point of view was different. Therefore, it is important to explore these stereotypes and try to determine the reasons and motivations behind the form of stereotypes during the time period between chosen movies.

The goal of this thesis is to investigate stereotypes in chosen westerns of John Ford and compare whether their form changed in any way. Another objective is to find out whether the frontier myth is present in those movies and if so, how it is portrayed.

I would attempt to analyse these movies because of the impact that they had not only on the American culture and forming American psyche, but also because its important to look at history and its representation critically, especially in current political and social climate.

1. Theoretical part

The goal of the theoretical part of this thesis is to outline basic terminology concerning stereotypes, mythology, film and western genre. It is structured into four chapters, in each chapter are presented theories of prominent authors from in picked fields of studies from various viewpoints that are necessary for the thesis's analysis.

Each of the chapters is part of a theoretical construct that will be applied when analysing both of the chosen movies.

1.1 Mythology

The next chapter deals with mythology, and its importance for human societies and various functions mythology conveys. The western genre is considered as American mythology in multiple sources (Bazin, Westerns: American Mythology or Cultural History, Slotkin: Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America). For the purpose of this thesis, I will adopt this claim as a premise and use it for analysis of stereotypes in selected western movies. Presenting mythical theories will help to outline how western functions as American mythology. In subsequent subchapters, theories by Joseph Campbell and Mircea Eliade are introduced.

1.1.1 Function of mythology

The concept and function of mythology were explored and examined by numerous scholars. It is however not the primary goal of this theses to focus only on mythology. For this reason, Joseph Campbell one of the most prominent theorists in the field of mythology was picked. Campbell came up with his theoretical concepts during the 20th century and was first to come with the monomyth concept. In this chapter, his viewpoint at mythology. Afterwards, I will present his outlook at how mythology functions in this society, as well as few other for comparison purposes.

In his book Creative Mythology, Campbell describes four functions/prospects mythology can have:

1. Mystical/Metaphysical Prospect: a myth fulfils the spiritual/religious function. Through the power of myths, people can experience the connection with divinity in

their lives and the transcendent feelings of common humanity, the awe of the world and universe. (Campbell, 1976, p. 609)

From various stories about people abducted by aliens, miraculous rescues by angels to the scientific theories that became widely known such as the Big Bang theory or the Schrodinger's cat, the mystical function is particularly important for relating the mind to the mystery that something exists rather than nothing. People use mythical stories to comprehend and cope with their mortality and reconcile with living in the universe that lacks meaning apart from the meaning they can bestow upon it. (Campbell, 1976, p.610)

2. The Cosmological Prospect: the second function of a mythology according to Campbell "is to render a cosmology, an image of the universe, and for this we all turn today, of course, not to archaic religious texts but to science." (Campbell, 1976, p.611) This function is helping us to formulate the picture of the universe in which we are placed in. The universe known to mankind is so unconceivably vast, enigmatic and full of things yet to be discovered that human mind is incapable of understanding it entirely.

Campbell mentions several scientific discoveries throughout history which managed to contradict then believed cosmological myths and eventually cast humanity into the embrace of science. However, the cosmogonic myths still remain at the very core of every earthly culture. According to Bierlein myth is: "a telling of events that happened before written history, and of a sense of what is to come. Myth is the thread that holds past, present and future together" (Bierlein, 1994, p. 5).

3. The Social Prospect: myths also function as "the validation and maintenance of an established order" (Campbell, p. 621). Inherited sociological myths were used to promote the beliefs and opinions that the ruling class deemed as desirable. The moral system of societies is often based on their mythology. For example, Western civilization has its moral system based on Christian mythology and parables included in Bible which are filled with moral formulas how good believers should behave and what kind of behaviour is acceptable and what is not. Myths and stories also work as a binding force for tribes and societies. (Campbell, 1976, p. 621-623)

Bierlein sees mythologies as: "Myth is the glue that holds societies together, it is the basis of identity for communities, tribes and nations" (Bierlein, 1994, p.6)

4. The Psychological Prospect: the last function of mythology considered most important by Campbell is Psychological/Pedagogical. The pedagogical myths carry an important role not only in upbringing individuals to specific values and ideals in societies and guide them throughout their whole life. Jewish and Christian Ten Commandments, the Parables of Christ, Noble Eightfold Path taught by Buddha and other significant stories of guidance provide patterns on how to live meaningfully, how to face the absurdity of the surrounding world. (Campbell, 1976, p. 623-624)

To explain how myths function in modern society the theory of Mircea Eliade will be presented.

According to Eliade in our society, there is still some kind of mythical behaviour, which was transformed from an archaic mentality. People always like to return to their origins. During reformations or revolutions, e.g. French revolution took their ideals from Spartan or Romans or the infamous Aryan myth. (Eliade, 1968 p.131) For modern history, most influential myths in scale according to Eliade were Marxism and German national socialism. (Eliade, 1960, p. 15) We can also find mythical structures of images and behaviours, which we see in mass media e.g. detective stories (good vs evil), how mass media can give a mythic status to a public figure or our obsession with success. (Eliade, 1968, p. 133)

1.2 Stereotypes

Stereotypes are one of the most familiar concepts in the fields of political science and sociology. (La Violette, s.257). However, they do not belong to single academic discipline or subdiscipline. (Hamilton p.9) In this part of thesis, there will be introduced several key concepts, that will highlight the main aspects of this complicated term and at the end, it will present a definition, that this thesis will work with. The actual word was first created in 1798 by the French printer Didot to "describe a printing process involving the use of fixed casts of the material to be reproduced." (Hamilton, 1981, p.1)

It was introduced as a social concept in 1922 in publication *Public Opinion* by Lipmann. However, there was no single explicit definition of stereotype. Lipmann only formulated a set of ideas regarding stereotypes (Hamilton, 1981, p. 2). For him, stereotypes are basic human cognitive and linguistic function, that by simplifying and categorizing helps us navigate through complex life (Forsman, 2017, p. 194).

Another significant milestone was when Katz and Braly conducted an empirical study of stereotypes in 1933. First, they discovered that stereotypes of certain groups are parallel with how they are portrayed within "the popular stereotype to be found in newspapers and magazines" and secondly, they linked stereotypes to attitude and prejudice. (Hamilton, 1981, p. 6)

In 1950, a group of authors (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson and Sanford) published two-volume work called *The Authoritarian Personality*. In this work, they work with a theory of prejudice. For them, stereotypes are rigid beliefs about social groups (Hamilton, 1981, p.7). Tajfel in 1969 implied that stereotypes are derived from deep-seated needs of prejudiced persons (Hamilton, 1981 p.8). This thesis is focused on a media portrayal of stereotypes, therefore Forsman, while referring to Cawelti, Dyer or Schwinitz describes media stereotype as "static characters in fiction and drama, with a limited set of characteristics and recurrent plot structures and aesthetical formulas" (Forsman, 2017 p. 194).

1.2.2. Stereotype vitalization

While stereotypes are important, without ever changing them the audience would soon get tired of them. Therefore, the subsequent stereotype theory formulated by John G. Cawelti is essential for this thesis. The first way how to vitalize a stereotype is when the stereotypical character also has qualities that seem contrary to the stereotypical traits. One of the examples are characters in westerns played by Gary Cooper. Cooper's characters are violent and proficient with guns but also very shy and gentle – the character is itself contradictory (Cawelti, 1976, p.11). The second way is "the addition of significant touches of human complexity or frailty to a stereotypical figure" (Cawelti, 1976, p. 11-12).

1.3 Western

Western is a film genre which is based on conflict of civilization and wilderness. Its environment is rough, inhospitable and dangerous. It is a separate world dominated by

hypermasculine characters. This chapter presents film genre and concept of masculinity, which are closely connected with western and also examines what is western as a genre based on.

1.3.1 Film genre

We can trace the origins of the genre from Aristotle to 20th-century theories of Wellek and Warren. However, contemporary theorists mostly agree, that genres do not have precise definitions. Generally, genres are concepts that the audience and filmmakers agree on in a certain cultural environment. Some genres can have typical themes, for example, the gangster films feature criminality in town, in sci-fi films, it is about technology and science, or in western the story is usually about living on the frontier (Altman, 1999, p. 1).

For some genres, themes or topics are not as important. For example, musicals are recognized because of their presentation – songs are entwined into the story's narrative. Detective films have a specific plot, that always contains a particular type of investigation. Genres are generally more about feelings that they cause, like entertainment in comedy films or tension in suspense films (Bordwell and Thompson, 2013 p. 421).

Another thing that complicates this matter is the definition of the genre, which is confounded by the fact that separate genres may differ considering the amount of content. Thrillers contain genres like horror, detective or hostage films. Comedies can be either slapstick comedies, romantic comedies, parodies or gross-out comedies. For some movies, its genre is more apparent than the other, and it is vital to take into account that film can consist of several genres (Bordwell and Thompson, 2013 p. 423).

Genres are essential for the film industry. According to their popularity, some genres are produced in large numbers. In the 1960s plenty of high-budget musicals was produced (e.g. The Sound of Music 1965, West Side Story 1961, Mary Poppins 1964 or Oliver! 1968). Nowadays, production of such musicals is significantly smaller and less expensive, e.g. Chicago (2002) or Mamma Mia! (2008).

In recent years, action and horror movies are becoming far more popular. Genres are also essential for marketing and characterization of films considering the general public is aware of what to expect from specific genres. The genres are helpful for moviegoers to choose movies that would appeal to them. Certain people are fans of particular genres, and they can use knowledge about the genre to search for new films in the same category (Bordwell and Thompson, 2013 p. 423).

Some critics refuse to use such trivial generalization, because they are too elementary and films are then inclined to follow some formula, however, it is important to keep in mind that genres are mostly used to describe and analyse the picture. (Bordwell and Thompson, 2013, p. 424). According to Schatz, in genre film there is a kind of generic formula, which is established by repetition – generic elements are repeated (Schatz, 1981, p. 10).

The genre also serves a precise function in the overall economy of cinema; it involves every aspect of this economy. It is a complex of concepts with multiple meanings: genre can be seen as a blueprint, a formula that preceded programmes and patterns industry production; as a structure, a formal framework on which each film is founded. As well as a label, as a name of a category, as a catalyst to the decisions and communications of distributors and exhibitors and lastly as a construct, a viewing position required by each genre film of its audience. (Altman, 1999, p. 14)

1.3.2 Western genre

The western genre had been appearing since the early days of the film industry and had swiftly established among the mainstream genres. It is based on historical facts: the protagonists of western movies such as cowboys, bandits, settlers, and Native American tribes had actually appeared on the American Frontier. The central theme that later became a template for the whole genre has become a clash between the settlers who represent civilization and the untamed wilderness occupied by the outlaws and bandits who do not obey any laws or restrictions and savagery that was solely associated with Native American tribes. In the early westerns, civilization is rarely defeated by savagery; the viewer can guess the outcome of the film from the very start. Throughout the 20th century, the western went through several changes; however, its foundations remained unchanged and had maintained popularity for the significant part of the century. (Bordwell and Thompson, 2013, p. 333)

Few viewpoints about cinema are widely shared as knowledge about agreeing what was first Western: The Great Train Robbery (1903) by Edwin S. Porter. It was called "first real movie" or pioneering movie of westerns. (britannica.com) Altman is not describing the beginning of western in contemporary terminology that is applied retrospectively, but in terms actually used by contemporaries to describe the films that today are recognized as genre's early masterpieces (Altman, 1999, p. 30).

For westerns, there is an unspoken assumption that it is a straightforward extension of the 19th-century treatment of the "American Western as Symbol and Myth." However, initially, it

was recognized as a railway subgenre of the currently popular travel genre. Later in the first decade of the 19th century, Western began to be acknowledged as a genre, which was an unusual situation since western as a fiction already existed in the 19th century, it also existed as major film production category although it was not accepted as a film genre. (Altman, 1999, p. 34)

Altman confirms one of his hypothesis that "even when a genre already exists in other media, the film genre of the same name cannot be simply borrowed from non-film sources, it must be recreated". Much of what was written about early westerns derived from the assumption, that any visual or plot element associated with the post-teens Western is always a sign of the western, ever prior to 1910. Altman gives the example of Indians, which next to cowboys are the most prominent figure in the Western. (Altman, 1999, p.35)

Due to this, some scholars assumed some of the movies in pre-1910 are Westerns for its use of Native Americans. However, in that time Indian films constituted a separate genre featuring noble red men mistreated by white colonizers. Such films fail to identify as westerns, as they are primarily associated with other genres. This fact raises the question of what Altman sees as first westerns. In its early manifestation, Westerns could take on any of a multitude of different plots, characters or tones (Western chase film, Western comedies, Western romances, Western epics, e.g.). By 1910, thanks to implied geographical designator, were possibilities explored, shifted and codified. Western became a term (designation) for a loosely defined film genre capitalizing on public interest in the American West. (Altman, 1999, p. 36).

Westerns early development points to the combination of the travel genre's exotic locations with the crime genre's suspenseful situations. It also demonstrates the impact of redefining Indian roles according to melodramatic model as well as the localizing effect of casting Indians as villains (Altman, 1999, p. 37).

Altman considered essential to note, that even though as genre Westerns were very popular in Europe, it was complicated to produce (different scenery, no authentic props or trained cowboys). Western from a cultural point of view is essential to highlight the Western's value as a plainly American genre in a period of growing unrest regarding virtually unrestricted immigration. Western, same as musicals Altman points out, consolidated its identity through criticism. Castigating Westerns as artificial, unrealistic and violent made to appeal to young boys and Europeans undoubtedly helped to solidify the new genre (Altman, 1999, p. 38).

According to André Bazin, Western is the only genre whose origins are almost identical with those of the cinema itself and is still alive after half of the century with uninterrupted success (Bazin was a French and critic and wrote this in the 1950s) and is immune to most of the influences from the outside (Bazin, 1971, p. 140).

For Bazin, its worldwide appeal is even more astonishing than its historical survival. He tries to determine what makes Western so popular (Bazin, 1971, p. 141). However, he finds that it is hopeless to try to reduce the essence of the western to one or other of these manifest components. Those formal attributes, like galloping horses, fights, strong and brave men in the wildly austere landscape are simply signs or symbols of its profound realist, namely the myth. According to Bazin, Western was born of an encounter between mythology and a means of expression, since Westerns exited before in literary or folklore form. Bazin cites Rieupeyrout's *La Grande adventure du western* for emphasizing the little-known aspect of Westerns, that is its faithfulness to history (Bazin, 1971, p. 142).

While not always historically accurate, historical references in westerns cannot be denied. For him, ideal western is made up solely of unalloyed myth. (Bazin,143) Next important information that is learned from Bazin's essay that distinction between good and bad applies only to the men, while no matter of the social status of woman, everyone one of them is worthy of love, esteem or pity. In the world of the Western, women are good and men are bad so much, that they must redeem themselves from the original sin of their sex. The downfall of the woman is the result of men (Bazin, 1971, p. 144).

There are sociological conditions for this. In primitive western society horses and women were scarce and had to endure the hard conditions in the burgeoning world, therefore it was important to safeguard them. The Myth of Western illustrates and both initiates and confirms woman in her role as vestal of the social virtues. These myths can be reduced to an even more essential principle – forces of evil versus knights of the true cause (Bazin, 1971, p. 145).

Western is in the epic, or even tragedy category, for the superhuman level of its heroes and their feats of valour. Social good and evil in Western exist as two primary and basic elements (Bazin, 1971, p. 147). Naive greatness of Western is recognized by everyone. The epic and tragic hero is a universal character, the American Civil War was turned into the Trojan War of the most modem of epics, migration to the West is American Odyssey. Exaggerations and being at odds with history functions as the foundation of Western aesthetic and its psychology. Its Collection of historical events which signals the birth of a new order and new civilization. Myths are

necessary for the confirmation of history. For Bazin, cinema was only language capable of expressing this, giving its aesthetic dimension. (Bazin, 1971, p.148)

There is a number of reasons why the western stayed popular for such a long period of time. According to Douglas Pye (Grant, 2012, p.29–43), the main reason is that there is a wide range of possibilities and combinations how to transform the same or similar plots, characters, iconography and themes in order to make each individual work unique. Pye also claims: "The number of more or less familiar elements within the total work is very large and the movement, both on the screen and in the narrative, creates a dynamic that produces new combinations at each moment of the film" (Grant, 2012, p.29–43). This gives the filmmakers an enormous number of possibilities to create something new and unique within the western genre.

By the beginning of the Second World War, the western had reached a definitive stage of perfection. Established directors returned or turned to western at the peak of their careers, eg.: Michael Curtiz, Fritz Lang or John Ford (Bazin, 1971, p. 148). This phenomenon can be explained by widespread publicity given Westerns between 1937 and 1940. Bazin sees the national awareness which preceded the war in the Roosevelt era contributed to this. However, during war years western was almost removed from Hollywood's repertoire. As soon as the war ended, western reappeared and was again made in large numbers. Bazin calls this form adopted by the post-war western the "super-western". This evolution must be explained in relation to the level of perfection reached in 1940 but also in terms of the events of 1941 to 1945 (Bazin, 1971, p. 149).

The world conflict provided Hollywood with spectacular scenes, but also provided and forced some subjects to reflect upon. History became subject, not just material of western. In Fort Apache by John Ford (1948) we see the beginning of political rehabilitation of Native Americans. Most of the influences were, however, indirect ones, e.g. eroticism, which derives from the triumph of the pin-up girl. (Bazin, 1971, p. 151)

Filmmakers treated Western as a form in need of content – they set out to justify the Western by the Western. They tried to extract explicit themes from implied myths. For Bazin, if western disappeared, the super-western would be the perfect expression of its decadence. However, the appearance of the super-western has only affected A-film production and blockbuster production. The traditional Western survived in lower layers of the film industry and is important for the general health of the genre. (Bazin, p.152-153)

Bazin gives few examples of Westerns that demonstrate it is possible to make a genuine Western based on the old dramatical and spectacle themes, without distracting our attention with some social thesis, e.g. Red River (1948), The Big Sky (1952) or Saskatchewan (1954). Bazin calls western of 1950's sincere – their directors played fair with the genre, even though super-westerns replaced naivety by cynicism; they have fun with the genre, but do not make fun of it e.g. Johnny Guitar (1954). The last subgenre of Western that Bazin analyses is novelistic. Novelistic Westerns do not depart from traditional themes – they enrich them from within by the originality of their characters, their psychological flavour and engaging individuality e.g. In Run for Cover (1955) or Broken Lance (1954) (Bazin, 1971, p. 153-154).

1.3.3 Masculinity

The 20th century Western has been exceedingly masculine genre, thus for the purposes of this thesis the social concept of masculinity will be shortly introduced.

Cultural accounts of gender can be found in every society, however not every one of them is familiar with the concept of "masculinity". The masculinity has been omnipresent in the western culture. Manliness was seen as the guardian of existing order against the undesirable novelties, yet it was also seen as most essential attribute of revolutionaries who brought change to the status quo. During the 19th and first half of the 20th century the urges "to be a man" became a commonplace (Mosse, 1996, p. 3).

Masculinity consists of attributes commonly associated with the male half of the population. From a conservative point of view, men are acting as providers and protectors for their families, enjoy taking risks and competing against other men. Men enjoy watching and playing sports. They are considered more influential socially and politically than women. From the male perspective, housework and childcare are seen as less important, although they relish family life. To express emotions publicly is considered undesirable among the male community. To feel an asset to society, they need work that affirms their masculinity (Clatterbaugh, 1996).

More contemporary view by Mosse considers masculinity "a stereotype, presenting a standardized mental picture, the unchanging representation of another" (Mosse, 1996, p.5). Even though there is currently no universal answer to the question what masculinity exactly is, the present attitude towards it is summarized subsequently: "The closest answer to this question

is to state that masculinity consists of those behaviours, languages and practices, existing in specific cultural and organizational locations, which are commonly associated with males and thus culturally defined as not feminine. So, masculinity exist as both a positive, in as much as they offer some means of identity significations for males, and as a negative, in as much as they are not the 'Other' (Feminine)" (Flourish Itulua-Abumere, 2013, p.42).

1.4 Western as a myth – frontier myth

This chapter examines the claims about mythological aspect of Western through the frontier myth. Frontier is, as Szreniawska explains "a zone of unsettled land outside of the region of already existing colonial settlements" (Szreniawska, 2012, p.64). In the book, *Gambling with the Myth of the American Dream*, Aaron Duncan explores frontier myth further. He claims it is "a powerful and enduring myth intimately connected to American psyche" (Duncan, 2015, p.74).

Turner in his essay about American frontier describes in great detail that further Europeans went from their settled land, they became more "American" and moved from the European influence. Later on, civilization slowly overtook wilderness as its emptiness propelled people forward. This promoted democracy, which Turner deems as the most important part, where selfishness, anti-socialness and individualism are very prominent. Colonization of the frontier created a new type of personality, where cowboy is its embodiment. Frontier closed around 1890s thanks to dispersal of settlements through regions (Turner, p. 2-6).

For Harter, the frontier myth is a mix of individualism and organization form. (Harter p.89) Everson and Fenin describe the Western movie phenomenon as "not merely a casual entertainment, but rather a serious and dignified visual discussion of an era which had already passed into the nations heritage (Everson and Fenin, 1973, p. 27).

Ceyhen and Boşnak claim, that image of a cowboy helped Americans develop their new self, since they rejected the European one. (Ceyhen and Boşnak, 2013 p. 175) Cowboy is always on the side of good and in opposition, thanks to racism, Indians and Mexicans which are on the negative side. They were portrayed in very stereotypical way with plenty of negative characteristics (Ceyhen and Boşnak, 2003, p. 177).

Tirman deals with presumably the most important aspect of the frontier myth, which is how civilization confronted wilderness and Native Americans. In this way, Americans got their national identity (Tirman, American School). Cowboy must be individualistic but also heroic. He has hypermasculine traits, as the West was very patriarchal, and women had passive roles.

They were either considered good, if they represent civilization and are dependent on men or a bad woman, who represents the contrary: independent and sinful (Duncan, 2015, p.75-76).

Essentially, frontier myth is about the battle of wilderness and civilization.

2. Analytical Part

For the purpose of this thesis, two western movies by American movie director John Ford are analysed to examine the cultural stereotypes in those movies and determine how they changed throughout Ford's carrier.

Both of the selected movies had a great impact on the western genre in their time. The Iron Horse (1924) was Ford's breakthrough movie, which confirmed the recent rise of the western genre. The Stagecoach (1939) is considered a western masterpiece, and it managed to revive westerns from B- list movie status (britannica.com). The analysis of each movie is divided into three parts:

- First part examines how each movie fulfils the frontier myth. Another aspect of this part of the analysis is how the film works with American history.
- Second part is the analysis of chosen stereotypes: Cowboy and Native Americans
 in particular. Their role, overall character and how they represent their stereotype
 is examined.
- In the last part of the analysis, a hypothesis is introduced concerning American social-cultural context and how it might influence the movie.

2.1 John Ford – early life and carrier

Before starting the analysis of both movies, John Ford's early life and carrier will be briefly presented.

John Ford was born as John Martin Feeney on February 1, 1894, to a pair of Irish immigrants in Cape Elizabeth Maine. He was tenth of eleven children, six of whom lived to adulthood. (imdb.com) During childhood, he was influenced by books of Robert Louis Stevenson, Grimm brothers, Mark Twain and many more. These books had a great impact on young John, who would later utilize this storytelling preparation in his directing carrier (Matheson, 2016, p.19).

Young John Feeney followed his older brother Frank, who renamed himself to Francis Ford, to Hollywood. Francis, who was an established actor and also director, started using John in every profession needed around the filmmaking industry, from the stuntman to an actor. After a while, following his elder brother's example, John changed his name to Jack Ford (imdb.com).

Several years later, Ford established himself as a director of silent horse operas. The proficiency with this genre led to his first big opportunity to film a big budget movie – The Iron Horse. (imdb.com)

2.2 The Iron Horse

The first Western movie to be analysed is The Iron Horse from 1924. Thanks to its major commercial success it became Ford's breakthrough movie that ascended his directing carrier to the A-list titles (Matheson, 2016, p.9.). The movie is silent, the narrating and key dialogues between the characters are provided by intertitles. Due to this fact, the characters are psychologically lean (poor) with only a small amount of personality traits and the acting performances may seem exaggerated.

2.2.1. The Iron Horse plot overview

The movie starts with a Prologue before the Civil War in Springfield Illinois, introducing main characters Davy, son of the surveyor Brandon who loves his childhood friend Miriam Marsh, daughter of a local contractor Thomas Marsh. Davy's father's dream is a railroad that would connect the western part of the continent with the eastern part and intends to scout the route through the continent for the future railway.

Before starting his quest, Brandon tells his plan of scouting the railway path to local lawyer Mr. Abraham Lincoln. Three months pass and Brandon with his son discover a passage through the mountains suitable for the future railroad. After they make camp for the night a group of Indians lead by a two-fingered white man attacks them and kills Brandon in front of his son's eyes. Davy survives because he remained hidden in the bush and is later found by a group of trappers.

The story skips forward to the year 1862, where Abraham Lincoln, now the President of The United States authorises the construction of the transcontinental railroad. A Year later, the construction of the railroad is already in full swing. Mr. Thomas Marsh is the head of the Union Pacific – the company responsible for building the railroad westward and his daughter Miriam is betrothed to his chief engineer Jesson.

A problem with financing the construction arises and Mr. Marsh is forced to look for a shorter path through the mountains, otherwise, his resources will run out before the railway is finished. He orders Jesson to survey the mountains, whether there is a suitable pass for the railway. The richest landowner in the area, Deroux, who owns the land where the original

railway route is planned learns about this and bribes Jesson to ensure the railway will lead through his land.

Just before Jesson is about to ride to the mountains, Davy Brandon enters the plot again. Davy tells Mr. Marsh about the gorge in the mountains his father discovered before he was murdered. Mr. Marsh assigns Davy to inspect the suitability of the gorge with engineer Jesson. Before they set out, Deroux persuades Jesson to kill Davy, pointing out that Miriam is in love with him and their engagement will be cancelled because of it. After arriving at the gorge, Davy wants to descend to it on the rope. Jesson agrees but after his rival starts climbing down, he cuts the rope and returns to town, reporting there is no passage through the mountains and about Davy falling to his death.

However, Davy lands in the treetop and survives. After some time, he returns to town and reveals the truth about the mountain passage. When he finds out that the railroad continues to be built on the original longer route, he confronts Jesson and after Jesson shoots at him, Davy kills him in self-defence even though he promised Miriam that he will not fight him. Miriam is disappointed that Davy broke his promise.

Desperate Deroux convinces Cheyenne tribe to attack the railroad workers, but the message of the attack reaches town and whole train of armed defenders including women comes to the rescue. In the climactic finale, Davy fights Deroux in hand to hand combat and kills him. The workers and the railway are saved. Davy sets out west to join the Central Pacific Railroad team to help complete his father's dream about the transcontinental railway. Eventually, both parts of the railroad meet and this historic feat is celebrated with the golden spike to unite both railroads together.

2.2.2 The Iron Horse Connections with frontier myth and American history

This part of analysis will examine how this film portrays and fulfils the frontier myth. The essence of the frontier myth is the conflict between civilization and wilderness and celebrating the value of individualism as well as the community. (see Chapter 1.4)

The civilization in the movie is represented by several attributes. The United States of America as a country is portrayed as a pioneer of civilization, represented by its 16th President Abraham Lincoln. In the movie, he is presented as a wise "father of the nation" who signs the bill that launched the construction of the transcontinental railway. He is presented as a visionary who understands the far-reaching benefits of the railway:"The far-seeing wisdom of the great rail-splitter President is the beginning of The Empire to the West."(The Iron Horse, 1924,

24:33) Furthermore, Lincoln is depicted as caring for his citizens, he recognizes Miriam and advises her to wait for Davy instead of marrying engineer Jesson.

Another representation of civilization in the movie is the construction of the transcontinental railway and the railway itself. Despite having melodramatic romantic storyline provided by Davy and Miriam to keep the viewer's attention, the real main character of the movie is the railway. It functions as a symbol of progress and greatness of the American Nation.

Wilderness is represented by the Cheyenne tribe and their savagery. They are the main obstacle that stands in the way of progress. Other obstacles are of natural origin – rivers, mountains and overall vastness of the American territory.

Davy Brandon's character represents individualism in the story. He fulfils the requirements of the romanticized independent cowboy that is indispensable for the Frontier Myth. These traits are represented by his fervour for the cause of railway construction and his readiness to sacrifice his own happiness for it. After the defeat of Deroux and Cheyenne tribe, he sets out to assist the Central Pacific Railroad construction team to finish their part of the railway instead of reconciliation with Miriam.

2.2.3 The Iron Horse Stereotype Analysis

The first part of stereotype analysis focuses on cowboy stereotype. The character of the cowboy is always physically strong, rugged, proficient with the gun and often romanticized. When the climax of the story arrives, the cowboy is there to save the day.

In the first Ford's film, this stereotype is manifested in the main hero, Davy Brandon. We first meet him as a young kid in Springfield, Illinois, who is about to leave with his father. His father dreams of a railroad that will connect eastern and western parts of the United States. When Davy and his father prepare to leave the town, they meet Abraham Lincoln, who practices law in Springfield and shares his father's dream. Davy also has to say goodbye to his childhood friend and love, Miriam Marsh. His father manages to find the pass, but when Davy is hidden in bushes, his father is killed by Cheyenne tribesmen led by a man with only two fingers on his right hand. Davy buries his father and is later saved by a group of trappers.

We see him later as a grown man, fleeing from the Cheyenne war riders. At this moment he represents the stereotype of a lonely cowboy who, until this moment, lived alone. He is very quiet and masculine. He immediately wants to help them with building railroads. In a way, he became an embodiment of Lincoln's vision for America and his father's dream. His character is very flat, in an almost archetypal way for a simple reason: even though he is the main human protagonist, the film is centred around the railroad and much of the screen time is focused on it.

The second part of the analysis focuses on Native American and foreign workers stereotypes which were chosen to show how racial stereotypes were used by Ford in this movie.

Ford uses Native Americans as a tool to drive the plot forward. Even though he never shows them as originators of violence, they are easily manipulated into it in both cases in the story. There are several scenes that are used to portray them negatively. First, they assault Mr. Brandon at the start of the movie under the leadership of a man with two fingers on his right hand who personally kills him, leaving Davy orphaned and making him lonesome cowboy avid for his father's dream. Along with the villain, they are the main movers of the plot.

Later they chase Davy who became a dispatch rider until he is rescued by the soldiers on the train. Their next appearance in the movie is near the end when the main villain Deroux needs to stop the construction of the railway through the gorge Davy's father discovered. He approaches the Cheyenne tribe and tries to convince them to assault the railroad workers. They do not recognize him at first, but they do not attack him. Still, the intertitle describes them as "hostile". The Cheyenne are shown incapable of an independent decision making, they are just a plot instrument for main villain Deroux.

A further hint of the negative role of Native Americans in the movie is manifested by the fact that whenever Deroux is about to commit vile deeds, he disguises himself as an Indian. The villain manages to get them on his side and together they attack the unfinished railway and are conclusively shown in a bad light when the retreating Cheyenne warrior shoots one of Davy's friends.

Another racially stereotyped group in the movie are the railroad construction workers. The railroad in the movie is being built by 4 nations and ethnics – Americans, Irish, Italians, and Chinese. The Irish and Italians are portrayed as undependable and malcontent – they stop working when the wages get delayed or when the buffalo meat is the only thing they get to eat. They function as a contrast to the Americans, who do not complain and just focus on finishing the magnificent structure.

The Chinese appear in the second part of the movie and are only shown during the labour, never complaining, that implies they are dependable and hardworking. Before the final clash between the Cheyenne tribe lead by Deroux and construction workers led by Davy, the Italians and Irish refuse to board the train headed to the battleground. This reluctance is used once more to glorify the Americans, who are ready to fight and die for the greater cause, even the women take the guns and board the train. The foreign workers board the train only after a cattle herd is incited against them. Apart from their function as a contrast to the great American Nation, the foreign workers are used for comical situations such as the visit to the dentist or the usage of the Italian accent in intertitles, such as: "For the beautiful signorina, Tony he build the beeg ra'lroad heemself – alone!" (The Iron Horse, 1924, 45:10).

2.2.4 The Iron Horse Social-Cultural context

The movie was produced as the 20th Century Fox's answer to the widely successful Paramount picture "The Covered Wagon" (1923) which managed to revive the declining interest of the audience in westerns. The Covered Wagon was shot on an epic scale and provided with an enormous budget for a time - \$500,000 which eventually rose to \$750,000. The decision-makers in the 20th Century Fox studio decided to play the card of nationalism with a movie of their own and assigned the direction the movie to John Ford. Ford received a significantly lower budget than The Covered Wagon creators, about \$ 280,000 and managed to shoot the picture on schedule and within the budget (Kiehn, The Iron Horse-article). Another influence on the movie's form might have been anti-immigration moods among the Anglo-Saxon Protestant majority. In the early 1900s, the influx of immigrants from Italy, Russia and the former Habsburg empire resulted in passing the temporary Emergency Quota Act of 1921, which became permanent as an Immigration Act of 1924 (eu.commercialappeal.com).

This might have resulted in the stereotyped characters of foreign construction workers, who are caricatured in the movie. The reason for this might have been the Fox studio's aim for the public majority who were against immigration. Fox studio could see it as a way to increase the yield from the movie.

2.3 The Stagecoach analysis

The second selected movie for the analysis is The Stagecoach (1939). The movie was selected since it is regarded as one of the defining films of both Ford and the whole western genre. It helped to elevate the declining genre back to the mainstream. Also, it is considered as the first "adult" western (britannica.com).

2.3.1 The Stagecoach plot overview

The movie depicts a journey of an unlikely group of stagecoach passengers from Tonto, Arizona to Lordsburg, New Mexico through a dangerous territory raided by the Apache tribe under command of their infamous chief Geronimo. At the beginning of the movie the stagecoach is about to set off, the coach driver Buck is looking for a guard to accompany him on the dangerous journey. The local sheriff Wilcox decides to travel with him, after hearing that Ringo Kid, a local outcast, escaped from the prison.

The passengers that board the stagecoach are as diverse as the reasons for their departure from Tonto. Dallas, a prostitute, and a local alcoholic doctor Boone got evicted for violation of "proper morals" by the local Law and Order League — an association of virtuous local ladies who consider themselves moral supervisors of the town. They are joined by Mr. Peacock, a timid whiskey drummer, Mr. Gatewood, a banker who embezzled \$50,000 from local bank and tries to flee before anyone finds out, Mrs. Mallory, a wealthy wife of an army officer travelling to visit him while pregnant and Hatfield, an ex-soldier and a gambler who joins the stagecoach to protect Mrs. Mallory.

When the stagecoach is about to depart, a cavalry unit joins them, because news of Apache activity in the region arrives. Along the way to the first station, they find Ringo Kid who is stranded in the prairie after his horse died. He wants to go to Lordsburg to punish the Plummer brothers who murdered his father and brother. Sheriff arrests Ringo who completes the stagecoach's passenger crew. As they reach the first refreshment station in Dry Fork, the housekeeper tells them that the cavalry detachment under the command of Mrs. Mallory's husband, that was supposed to be there, left for Apache Wells. The cavalry commander refuses to escort them to Lordsburg and the passengers have to decide what to do next.

The decision is made, and the stagecoach continues in the journey. When they arrive in Apache Wells, they learn that Mrs. Mallory's husband had been wounded in a skirmish with Apaches. Shortly after she faints and goes into preterm labour. Doctor Boone is drunk as always, but after a while, he gets himself together and with the help of Dallas he manages to deliver the baby. After that Ringo reveals to Dallas that he is in love with her and asks her to marry him. She refuses because Ringo does not know about her past. Later she tries to convince him to run away and meet in New Mexico and live together. Ringo decides to escape but then he sees the Apache war signal and stays with the group to protect them.

When Mrs. Mallory recovers after childbirth, the stagecoach sets off to Lordsburg. The Apache assault them on the way and pursue them through the prairie. The passengers manage to fight them off, Hatfield is killed and some of them get wounded in the process until the 6th Cavalry comes to their rescue. After arriving in Lordsburg, Gatewood is arrested for fraud and Mr. Mallory and her daughter are being taken care of in the hospital. Ringo achieves his vengeance and shoots the Plummer brothers. Afterwards, Sheriff Wilcox allows him to leave with Dallas to pursue a new happier life together.

2.3.2 The Stagecoach Connections with frontier myth and American history

In the Stagecoach, the clash between civilization and wilderness is present throughout the movie. It is represented not only by the environment in which characters appear throughout the movie but also through the inter-relationships within the small group of passengers, who must cooperate to achieve the common goal.

The civilization in the Stagecoach is represented by several features. The most significant one is the very stagecoach the passenger group boards. It is a vehicle that connects distant settlements in the frontier territory. The stagecoach clashes with the yet unbound wilderness between civilized stations on its schedule. It is one of the means how the civilization advancing to the west tries to hold the frontier area together, along with military patrols and telegraph lines.

Civilization is both criticized and glorified in the movie. The movie serves as a social critique. The passengers of the coach are divided into two social groups: Mrs. Mallory, Banker Gatewood, and Hatfield represent respectable half, prostitute Dallas, alcoholic doctor Boone and runaway Ringo Kid represent disrespectable half. During the course of the story, we learn that the characters who are considered disrespectable by the self-righteous moralistic society are in fact morally superior to the respectable half.

Gatewood, whose wife is a member of Law and Order League cares only about his own safety and tries to hurry up the departure from the Apache Wells even though Mrs. Mallory is still weakened by childbirth. Mrs. Mallory who refuses to sit at the same table with Dallas because of her social status is later saved by her and a doctor her friends in Tonto labelled as: "Doc Boone? He could not doctor a horse!" Also, Ringo Kid who is deemed by society as

immoral criminal exceeds over other male protagonists when he has an opportunity to escape and pursue his vendetta unselfishly chooses to stay with others to protect them from danger.

In contrast with The Iron Horse which glorifies civilization, in The Stagecoach the civilization and its intricacy are portrayed more in-depth.

In Stagecoach, the wilderness is again represented by a Native American tribe, this time the Apaches. Despite they confront the stagecoach near the end of the movie, their possible presence in the area is in the movie from the start when the army officers learn about their attack on a military outpost near Lordsburg. This outlines the atmosphere throughout the movie, the tension between frontier settlers and local Native tribe. Apart from them, vast, untamed plains and valleys are the obstacle for the passengers.

The individuality retreats in favour of community and cooperation. The only passenger that was plainly individual and selfish is banker Gatewood, who gets arrested right after arrival to Lordsburg for his crime.

The Frontier Myth is undoubtedly present in the Stagecoach, though it changed from the first analysed movie. The society is not presented black and white as in the Iron Horse. The movie criticises society but simultaneously shows the importance of collaboration to overcome hardship and danger.

2.3.3 The Stagecoach Stereotype Analysis

Firstly, the cowboy stereotype in Stagecoach will be analysed and examined whether it changed since the Iron Horse.

The character of the cowboy in Stagecoach portrayed by Ringo Kid is far more complex than Davy Brandon. One of the reasons could be that in a sound film a lot more can be expressed in a much shorter time than in a silent film. Another reason might be that Ford had grown professionally during the 15 year time gap that divides both movies.

The first mention of Ringo Kid is at the beginning of the movie when the coach driver looks for his guard who accompanies him regularly on his rides. Sheriff informs him that his guard is hunting for Ringo, who escaped from the penitentiary, to go after Plummer brothers

whose false testimony sent him to the prison in the first place. This makes Ringo's background more complex than Davy's, Ringo is driven forward with his desire to avenge himself, unlike Davy, he takes action (escapes from prison) to execute his revenge.

Being a runaway makes Ringo an outcast of society. That is a significant change in comparison with Davy, who is portrayed almost flawless, only smear on his perfect facade is killing a man in self-defence. When the group stops in Dry Fork to rest the horses, the passengers are invited to the table for a meal. When Ringo joins the table with Dallas, Mrs. Mallory feels offended to dine at one table with people of their sort.

As well as Davy in the Iron Horse, Ringo has a love interest – Dallas, a prostitute from Tonto. Ringo does not know about her past and falls in love with her along the way, noticing that she is unselfish and caring. Even when she tells him about her former profession, Ringo does not change his opinion about her. This illustrates that unlike the rest of society – the society that had Dallas and doctor Boone evicted and considers itself just and moral, Ringo is the righteous man because he does not judge people by their social status but by their actions and attitude towards other people.

Another difference between the cowboy protagonists of analysed movies is their attitude towards civilization. While Davy embraces the civilization and is determined to serve its cause (construction of the railway from east to west), Ringo is disappointed with it. He was falsely sentenced to prison due to the testimony of the men who killed his father and brother. Moreover, he and the woman of his heart are frowned upon by the majority of society. The only case when he chooses civilization is when the stagecoach passengers are in danger, he reverses his decision to flee from the sheriff when he sees Apache's smoke signal. At the end of the movie, when his revenge is completed Ringo and Dallas decide to leave the civilization and head to Mexico in pursuit of new life.

The cowboy stereotype had certainly evolved during the 15 years splitting both analysed movies. There is a visible shift in the richness of the cowboy character. The character of Ringo Kid is significantly more psychologically developed, has a richer backstory and his character evolves in the story. The cowboy stereotype had to be vitalized, to keep the viewers entertained and involved with the character.

The Native American stereotype in the movie is represented by the Apache tribe. Again, they play parts of antagonists in the story. In contrast with Cheyenne in the Iron Horse, the Apaches are led by chief Geronimo, they are no longer just tools to be used by some white or

mixed raced villain. At the start of the film, American cavalry officers are informed by their Cheyenne spy about Apache movements. When one of the officers questions the spy's credibility, other officers responds:" He is a Cheyenne. They hate Apaches worse than we do!" (The Stagecoach, 1939, 2:07). This implies that Native Americans are disunited, wage war between themselves and is used to demote them in front of the viewers.

Another situation where the Apaches are shown negatively is at the Apache Wells outpost. The Mexican overseer has an Apache wife, who later steals his horse and runs away. When the stagecoach passengers first meet her, one of them frightened by her and shouts:" But she is a savage!" This reflects that the overall attitude towards Native Americans has not changed from the first movie.

Within 15 years that separate both movies Native American stereotype had been slightly vitalized.

2.3.4 The Stagecoach Social-Cultural context

Stagecoach was first Ford's western made after more than a decade when the western genre had relegated to B-movie status. Ford had personal involvement with the creation of the movie. In 1937 Ford acquired the screen rights of Ernest Haycox short-story "Stage to Lordsburg" and started looking for a producer for the film. Together with screenwriter Dudley Nichols, Ford managed to transform the simple plot with flat characters of the short story into a much richer multidimensional story with psychologically deep characters (Grant, 2003, p. 23-25).

The film was released in 1939, a time when the United States was still recovering from effects of the Great Depression. The unemployment rate was still over 15% and plenty of people were still struggling to make do. The Stagecoach's emphasis on collaboration and mutual aid might have rooted in nations gloomy situation in the past decade (britannica.com).

Another cultural influence on the movie could be the Melting pot theory. This theory based on the premise that America is one big metaphorical pot where the ingredients are people from various nations who get melted and re-formed into the American nation was still prominent throughout the first half of 20th century (hoover.org). In the 19th century, immigrants mostly settled in the frontier area. The concept of leaving the civilization (Europe) and starting anew elsewhere (America) was used at the end of the movie – Ringo and Dallas, disillusioned with American civilization leave for a promise of new life in Mexico.

Ford started to work realistically with character development and their background. The characters have more complex motivations and relationships with each other; the characters are less archetypal. The conflict of civilization and wilderness is shown on a far smaller scale. In The Iron Horse, the storyline follows the fate of whole American civilization, in contrast to The Stagecoach's storyline con cerning fates of single stagecoach passengers.

Conclusion

As it was mentioned in the theoretical part, to keep the viewers interested in the same type of movies the portrayed stereotypes had to be vitalised, which was showed by the analysis of both Ford's movies. Analysed stereotypes have demonstrably evolved. Other possible factors for this stereotype vitalization might have been Ford's growth as a director or the transition to the sound film. In the following paragraphs, a conclusion about how the chosen stereotypes changed is presented.

The frontier myth in The Iron Horse is adapted for mythological and ideological purposes. It showed The United States of America as a pioneer of civilization and its citizen as just, hardworking and determined. It almost functions as a biopic or documentary for the transcontinental railroad. Ford deliberately picked an important milestone in nations history to incite patriotism to increase the first movie's potential revenue. The civilization in the movie is portrayed positively, apart from the two main villains. Wilderness was presented as an obstacle to the civilization's advancement. Unlike in The Stagecoach, the wilderness provides real obstacles to the civilization such as mountains, hills and rivers. Frontier myth was vitalized in the same way, that Americans long ago conquered west: at first most of their battle was with nature itself, later on, the battle was within civilization itself.

In The Stagecoach the conflict between civilization and wilderness is used to put the protagonists of the story in the permanent danger — mainly in the form of Apache tribe. The stagecoach itself and the outposts along the way are symbols of civilization and the vast, savage land between is symbolizing wilderness. Also, in The Stagecoach the civilization is criticised by showing the differences between the social status of stagecoach's passengers.

The stereotype of a cowboy has been undoubtedly vitalized. While it maintained the essential aspects of the cowboy stereotype such as individualism, physical strength, proficiency with guns and heroic tendencies, the cowboy character moved towards a more realistic portrayal. In the first movie, the character of Davy is quite flat, black and white in contrast with Ringo who

has a more complex background and has several motivations that drive him forward. Unlike Davy, Ringo acts selfishly when he puts his revenge ahead of his future with Dallas. He also leaves civilization behind when it disappoints him, while Davy finds his future and happiness within civilization. However, in the end, they both find redemption.

The second examined stereotype was the portrayal of Native Americans and in The Iron Horse also the foreign workers' stereotype. In both films, the Native Americans are portrayed as the villains; in the first movie, they are just a tool to be used by the white villain, which suggests their inferiority. In The Stagecoach, they are portrayed as an aggressive, independent force of nature; except from one Cheyenne at the start of the movie, which was used as a narrative device. The characters of the foreign workers are portrayed stereotypically, e.g. Chinese – hardworking, Irish and Italian – unreliable and discontented.

Last part of the analysis showcased a possible connection of Western images of stereotypes to the social-cultural context of United States of America at that time. However, they are only hypothetical, proving them would require further academic research.

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Résumé

Bakalářská práce zkoumá proměnu stereotypů ve vybraných westernových filmech The Iron Horse (1924) a The Stagecoach (1939) amerického režiséra Johna Forda. Teoretická část představuje filmový a westernový žánr, nastiňuje problematiku mytologie, maskulinity a stereotypů. Analytická část se zabývá zejména analýzou stereotypu kovboje a zobrazení původních Američanů a jejich vitalizací v rozmezí mezi oběma filmy. Dále se zaměřuje na přítomnost hraničního mýtu a jeho zobrazením. Poslední část analýzy představuje hypotézy ohledně možného vlivu tehdejšího sociálně-kulturního kontextu na podobu stereotypů ve vybraných filmech.

Annotation

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Název práce:	Srovnání mužského stereotypu v americkém a evropském filmu ve 20. století
Název v angličtině:	Comparison of the Male Stereotype in American and European Motion Pictures in the 20th Century
Anotace práce:	Bakalářská práce má za cíl popsat proměnu mužských stereotypů ve vybraných westernových filmech amerického režiséra Johna Ford The Iron Horse (1924) a The Stagecoach (1939). Také se zabývá podobou hraničního mýtu v obou snímcích.
Klíčová slova:	Film, western, stereotyp, mytologie, maskulinita, hraniční mýtus, John Ford
Anotace v angličtině:	This thesis examines the change of male stereotypes in selected movies of American director John Ford, The Iron Horse (1924) and The Stagecoach (1939). It also deals with the portrayal of the frontier myth in both movies.
Klíčová slova v angličtině:	Film, western, stereotypes, mythology, frontier myth, masculinity, John Ford
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