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## Western Remakes: Textual and Cultural Aspects

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### Abstract

The article analyses the textual and cultural aspects of Western remakes. Particular attention is paid to the genre and dramatic analysis of remakes, the system of characters, as well as the cultural messages of the films. The author considers an ambivalent attitude among film critics and scientists towards remake phenomenon. On the one hand, remakes contain for the viewer a marker of a famous film, on the other hand, remakes risk failing at the box office if they give way to the original films. The author focuses on the analysis of remakes as semiotic objects that create new realities through director's and viewer's interpretation. A number of typical features and modern trends of Westerns remakes have been identified. Ways to increase the popularity of remakes of this genre are proposed. The author analyzed four couples of original Westerns and their remakes: *Cimarron* by Wesley Ruggles (1931)/*Cimarron* by Anthony Mann (1960); *Stagecoach* by John Ford (1939)/*Stagecoach* by Gordon Douglas (1966); *3:10 to Yuma* by Delmer Daves (1957)/*3:10 to Yuma* by James Mangold (2007); *True Grit* by Henry Hathaway (1969)/*True Grit* by Joel Coen and Ethan Coen (2010). Considering the Westerns remakes through the prism of the textual aspect, the author concluded that despite the similarity of the plot and characters, the remake of the film, thanks to the interpretations of the director, creates a new semiotic object for the viewer's perception. Hybridization of genres, changes in the plot and new characters creates a new reality. It would seem that the viewer of the remake is transferred to the same time and place, he see the same characters, but nevertheless, the new directorial style places delicate and clear accents that form new semantic and cultural ties.

**Keywords:** Western, remake, film, plot, script, character, semiotic object, genre.

### 1. Introduction

One of the original genres of American cinema is the Western, since the first Westerns reflect the formation of the American nation. Accordingly, the Western is considered a symbol of American cinema and is one of the most popular genres in Hollywood. The analysis of Western allows a reflection on cinema itself, so this genre and its remakes became the object of this investigation.

Despite the permanent stereotypical perception of the Western as an attraction of stunts, chases and duels, this genre has essential cultural and social significance. Western also covers such up-to-date topics as: formation and strengthening of statehood, the problem of cultural dialogue, international conflicts and wars, intolerance and establishment of powerful ideologies, violation of human rights, etc.

Keeping a specific primary determinism, this genre acquires more and more signs of discreteness. The Western is dynamically evolving, which causes a contradiction between the

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functioning of the new principles of organization of the morphological and dramaturgical systems of this genre and their scientific understanding. The great popularity of this genre necessitates further scientific reflection on the morphological and cultural transformations of the modern Western.

## 2. Materials and methods

Main research approaches include sociocommunicative, culturological and morphological. The sociocommunicative approach made it possible to analyze the remakes of Westerns from the point of view of the objectification of cultural meanings into the film and its following deobjectification by the viewer. Films in this case is considered as a product that embodies the ideas, aesthetics and technical innovations typical of the film's release time. The director's style becomes the dominant feature that determines the concept of an audiovisual work. The culturological approach provided the determination of the basic cultural meanings contained in Westerns, which were related to the relationship both between Americans and Indians, and within American society. Of particular interest were ethnic conflicts and the construction of the "stranger" ("enemy") image in Westerns. The morphological analysis allowed to study the specifics of one of the oldest feature film genre – the Western, its genre conventions, as well as the dramatic structure of the original Westerns and their remakes.

## 3. Discussion

In the course of the study, a number of sources touches upon the issue of art criticism, in particular fiction cinematography, cultural studies, and social communications. Modern scientific articles that focus on the genre analysis of Western and the remake phenomenon presented the greatest scientific interest for this study.

The most simplified understanding of the remake defined it as "a new version of an earlier film, the remake puts the emphasis on where there is a pre-existing film and it is used to make a new one" (Kuhn, Westwell, 2012: 348). Another, more extended interpretation offers a more specific definition of a film remakes: "as (more particular) intertextual structures which are stabilised, or limited, through the naming and (usually) legally sanctioned (or copyrighted) use of a particular literary and/or cinematic source which serves as a retrospectively designated point of origin and semantic fixity" (Verevis, 2006: 21).

There is an ambivalent attitude among film critics and scientists towards remakes. Try to consider them in more detail. On the one hand, remakes contain for the viewer a marker of a famous film, on the other hand, remakes risk failing at the box office if they give way to the original films.

According to the first approach, remakes "provoke a double pleasure in that they offer what we have known previously, but with novel or at least different interpretations, representations, twists, developments, resolutions" (Horton, McDougal, 1998: 6). This assertion, however, assumes that "the audience has seen (or is at least is aware of) both (or more) versions of the film" (Cuelenaere et al., 2019: 3). In a commercial context, for film producers, remakes "are consistently thought to provide suitable models, and something of a financial guarantee, for the development of studio-based projects" (Verevis, 2006: 3).

Western is closely related to the genre of historical drama, and therefore is of interest to connoisseurs of historical cinema. Remakes of favorite films are able to reveal new details and raise new problems of an already familiar story. In this way, McKee compares the history of humanity to a treasure chest, which is sealed and the warning inscription on it says: "What is past must be present. A screenwriter isn't a poet hoping to be discovered after he's dead. He must find an audience today. Therefore, the best use of history, and the only legitimate excuse to set a film in the past and thereby add untold millions to the budget, is anachronism – to use the past as a clear glass through which you show us the present" (McKee, 1997: 83).

According to the second approach, many critics reduce the remake to plagiarism, to the lowest level of cinema art: "remaking is often taken as a sign of Hollywood film having exhausted its creative potential, leading into conservative plot structures" (Harvey, 1980: 50–53) and "automatic selfcannibalisation" (Miller, 1990: 59–62). According to a similar point of view, remake writers have not only lost inspiration, they are also capable of causing irreparable harm to the original films: "In the Dearth of Ideas, hard by the dire Lack of Imagination, dwell those alchemists of the entertainment industry who delight in turning gold into base metal. These are the remakers and their awful talent is to be feared. Not only will they not stop at bugging up a classic like

*Psycho*... they will even transform the second rate – like the original *On the Beach* – into something completely forgettable” (Hughes, 2001: 1).

Based on the methodological models of Albert Moran and Victor Verevis, a number of relevant parameters for the analysis of Westerns remakes were identified. Textual and cultural aspects have acquired special significance among them. Let's take a closer look at both aspects. So, “as source films and remakes often have a more or less identical narrative and dialogic structure, the underlying, latent and ideologically informed meanings become more tangible when juxtaposing their different cinematic manifestations. By comparing a film remake with its source text(s) and looking into the re-contextualization of a specific narrative, it becomes possible to acquire insights into the actual process of meaning-making in and by films” (Cuelenaere et al., 2019: 14).

In addition to the script, the genre of the film is also of particular importance in the textual aspect: “The most abstract category of transtextual ties is called architextuality, pointing to “the relationship of inclusion linking each text to the various kinds of discourse of which it is a representative” (Genette, 1997: 19).

The cultural aspect seems to be a more complex category, as it combines value-semantic guidelines, cultural diversity and diffusion, traditions and attitudes, incorporated into the film. It is hard to disagree that “the cultural codes of a film indicate implicit and explicit references to specific cultural elements or contexts. Therefore, these codes often denote what we previously called a process of localization, that is, adjusting filmic aspects to a particular socio-cultural context, often with the aim of recreating a recognizable reality and national identity” (Cuelenaere et al., 2019: 14).

There is an opinion that “American remake version puts American elements into the narrative giving the priority to sell its globally marketed image of the American culture especially favoring this image as universal. This is a narrative claim for universality based marketing for the US culture” (Dönmez, 2018: 240). This interesting statement requires separate consideration.

Analysis of the remake phenomenon is quite shared in modern scientific sources. An article *Male Monsters Still Stalk, Yet More Violent: A Comparative Analysis of Original Slasher Films and Their Remakes* by Victor Hernández-Santaolalla and Irene Raya introduces the slasher genre and its remakes. The authors note, that “although there have been a number of changes, such as higher doses of explicit violence and profanity and in the fight responses of the victims, most of the subgenre’s defining traits have remained intact, whereas others, such as those relating to the defining traits of the victims, should be questioned” (Hernández-Santaolalla, Raya, 2021: 1167). This actualizes the problem of genre instability, evolution and variability, what is clearly seen in the analysis of remakes. This problem also covers the western genre and requires a deep scientific understanding.

The evolution of genres is also typical for television, which is also subject to scientific reflection nowadays. An article by Kim Toft Hansen et al. *From remade drama to original crime: HBO Europe's original television productions* is devoted to the study of the evolution (from 2007 to early 2020) of crime drama genre in television series and their remakes, also features of their localization and transnationalism. Researchers emphasize, that their “intention is not to analyse the specific series’ content; rather, we scrutinize genre, talent and remakes through the perspective of the HBO brand and the creatives behind the series” (Hansen et al., 2021: 601). The study of this aspect is also forward looking for the analysis of remakes of the Western film genre.

Remakes are produced to be shown in movies, on television, but also on the Internet. The following article by Renee Hobbs and Yonty Friesem *The creativity of imitation in remake videos* is devoted to the analysis of Internet remakes: “we take an interest in the *Love Language* video in order to examine some of the pleasures, paradoxes, and tensions regarding the ethical, aesthetic, and therefore educational values of youth-produced remake videos” (Hobbs, Friesem, 2019: 328).

The authors conduct a deep historical analysis of the remakes problem, exploring educational theories of imitation: “some in the ancient world thought that artists should look to human life and character for inspiration, imitating great artists and gaining familiarity with their best works” (Hobbs, Friesem, 2019: 329). Thus, the remake is as a multi-level and multi-functional phenomenon of audiovisual art, which is rooted in the very beginning of artistic creativity.

The next article by Matthew Carter *The Perpetuation of Myth: Ideology in Bone Tomahawk* contains a powerful cultural and historical analysis about how America (by means of a Western) uses the mythic past to outline and solve the present-day crises. Researcher remarks: “In times of

crisis, America habitually reverts to ‘Western’ rhetoric of Manifest Destiny, Native American ‘savagery,’ and ‘off the reservation’ civilizing missions in times of war and external conflict that threaten its sense of righteous superiority. This creates an ideological mirror that America often gazes into to see a distorted, idealized image reflected back” (Carter, 2020: 21). Thus, the author concludes that through the Western, the United States creates a kind of ideological bridge between the savage war in the past and the War on Terror in the present. This conclusion is of particular interest for the analysis of the cultural aspect of Western remakes.

The textual aspect of the analysis of westerns involves the study of the script of the film, the disclosure of its characters’ interaction. An extraordinary study by Jordan Savage devoted to a deep study of the characters of the Western. The paper *True Grit: Dirt, Subjectivity and the Female Body in Contemporary Westerns* presents “Western Romance as a model, it will be argued that the dirt aesthetic is crucial to how Westerns construct the myth of the American character as both “true,” and “grit”: honest and authentic, and fundamentally tough” (Savage, 2020: 54).

Jordan Savage of the article also spotlights the cultural analysis of the Western phenomenon, highlighting its role in the creation of American statehood. The author refers to Frederick Jackson Turner’s frontier thesis. According to it the mega-myth of frontier connected with the image of “honourable dirt”: “the dirt of transforming the “wilderness” of Turtle Island, into “America” – the white European name for the U.S.A. ...The “rugged” nature of the American character, that belongs in its cultural lexicon of dirt and grit, is formed by the co-option and eradication of indigenous land practices” (Savage, 2020: 56).

Marcus Stiglegger in the article *The inner frontier. Images of the USA in recent Western cinema (2000–2020)* also mentions the Frederick Jackson Turner’s concept of frontier mythology. He notes, that: “at the heart of the American western cinema lies the myth. And the western myth is closely linked to the frontier, that boundary between civilization and wilderness that is constantly being negotiated”. Moreover according to the conception of his research: “the outer boundary between civilization and wilderness is turned inward in films of the last decade: This means that the ‘stranger’ is part of the self, the abject lurks in one’s own forests and mountains—or in one’s own micro-society, even if films are only told in Western mode” (Stiglegger, 2022: 4). This study is of particular interest due to not only a broad analysis of westerns over the past 20 years, but also a deep psychological analysis of their perception in society and its evolution.

The production of westerns is closely related to the demands of society, in particular the industrial conjuncture. David Blanco-Herrero et al. explore this issue in the article *New forms of masculinity in Western films: The end of the Marlboro Man?* The authors focus on main characters of Westerns (women and homosexuals) that do not follow heteronormative masculinity. Nevertheless, they conclude: “a certain level of masculinity is still necessary to lead or play a relevant role in a Western film: even if they are women or nonheterosexual men, all characters in the main roles –except Jane, who actually needs male help – follow, at least partially, a traditionally masculine behaviour. This could be explained perhaps by the lack of acceptance of these changes by such a traditional genre or maybe because the reality on which these films are based –a particular historical event, the Conquest of the American West– was mainly dominated by men” (Blanco-Herrero et al., 2021: 14). Considering the cultural aspect of Western analysis, this article will also consider the issue of incorporating new character individualities into remake scripts that meet the requirements of modern American audience.

One of the more conceptual studies is the research by Miranda-Gable J. *Analytical Model of Transmedia Storytelling Ecosystems in Audiovisual Fiction: The Spanish Model of The Ministry of Time*, dedicated to the global problem of transmedia narratives in the modern communication society. According to the authors’ conception: “The quantity of information, the audience is exposed to through different mediums to a vast quantity of information allows the follower base of these vast universes to engage with the story more profoundly than a single-media project” (Miranda-Galbe et al., 2021: 3). This approach allows conduct a deep and systematic analysis of all stages of westerns production - from idea to promotion in social media. Also in the process of the study, the problems of the evolution and expressive means of feature films were considered: (Betancourt, 2018; Cashman, 2019; Kretz, 2019; Ness, 2021).

#### 4. Results

This article focuses on the “direct remake”, when “a property may undergo some alterations or even adopt a new title, but the new film and its narrative image do not hide the fact that it is

based upon an earlier production” (Druxman, 1975: 7) or as it also called – the “acknowledged, close remake”: “the original film is replicated with little or no change to the narrative” (Greenberg, 1991: 164). The objects of this study are four couples of original Westerns and their remakes: 1) *Cimarron* by Wesley Ruggles (1931)/*Cimarron* by Anthony Mann (1960); 2) *Stagecoach* by John Ford (1939)/*Stagecoach* by Gordon Douglas (1966); 3) *3:10 to Yuma* by Delmer Daves (1957)/*3:10 to Yuma* by James Mangold (2007); 4) *True Grit* by Henry Hathaway (1969)/*True Grit* by Joel Coen and Ethan Coen (2010).

Following the chronology, it is best to start with the 1931 film *Cimarron*. It is a story of newspaperman and lawyer Yancey Cravat and his wife, Sabra, who, after found out about the 1889 land boom in Oklahoma, went to seek their fortune in the West. First, let's look at the genre of the original film and its 1960 remake *Cimarron* by Anthony Mann.

*Cimarron* by Wesley Ruggles (1931) is declared as a Western and drama, and *Cimarron* by Anthony Mann (1960) as a Western and melodrama. This needs to be analyzed in more detail. First of all, it should be noted that the *Cimarron* is a migration Western, a rare category of the Western genre. Western is considered a sort of adventure cinema. The first *Cimarron*, despite the tragic ending, is more suitable for this interpretation. The scenes with land races, defending Dixie's rights in court, shootouts with local bandits because of Yancey's white hat, etc. in the first *Cimarron* contains elements of attractions and ends safely for the main characters. The viewer reacts to them with a smile, experiencing a sense of satisfaction and victory.

In Anthony Mann's *Cimarron*, most of the scenes do not have a happy resolution: the land race is shown as a bloody mess in which people are killed and maimed. The son of Yancey's friend, whom he tried so hard to guide on the right way, dies in a shootout. The Indian girl, despite all the efforts of Yancey, is refused to be accepted into an American school. The holiday evening in the capital, which promised to be a triumph for Sabra, ends in disappointment and separation forever. Yancey refuses the post of governor and his wife drives him away.

In fact, the drama genre comes into force much stronger in the 1960 remake. Drama as a genre contrasts the subjective world of person and the objective course of life; the free person's will and the objective processes of reality. Yancey and Sabra in the first *Cimarron* essentially achieved everything they wanted, the viewer sees a confirmation of the principle "Every man is the architect of his own fortunes". In the second *Cimarron*, scene by scene, the viewer sees how Yancey's desires and aspirations are broken against a wall of misunderstanding, corruption and intolerance. This is the fundamental difference between the films.

It is worth paying tribute to the subgenre – the migration Western. Along with the films *The Covered Wagon* by James Cruze (1923) and *The Iron Horse* by John Ford (1924), this film is one of the few that highlights one of the most iconic periods in US history – the colonization of Indian lands. Movies like this aren't being released right now. They have already become history, as well as this tragic period of the past.

The dramatic features of the *Cimarron's* original and remake also deserve attention. The plot in both films is almost the same, but the second *Cimarron* by Anthony Mann (1960) contains more scenes that highlight the social conflicts of that time. The content of these scenes is also different, as well as the behavior of the protagonist, his internal struggle with himself and circumstances. Anthony Mann devotes much more screen time to the Indian theme. A rather strong emphasis is placed on the episode with an Indian girl who was not accepted into an USA school, and Yancey Cravat was never able to get justice. This new scene wasn't in the original movie. In addition, in original film was no scene in which Yancey Cravat refuses the post of governor so as not to be involved in future corruption schemes. The guy who was the son of Yancey's friend was also introduced only in the remake. Thanks to this character, Anthony Mann also raises the topic of social unfairness during this period. Quite acute is Sabra Cravat's internal conflict regarding her relationship with an Indian woman working in their house in the second *Cimarron*. It is clear that a remake of *Cimarron* would have raised much more acute and topical issues at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries if Anthony Mann had been allowed to complete the film to the end. However, in the middle of the filming, Anthony Mann was fired and replaced by director Charles Walters. Moreover, Anthony Mann strongly disapproved of the film's finale.

The textual aspect of the analysis of remakes includes genre and dramatic exploration of films. The text in this case is interpreted as a multidimensional semiotic object, allowing different interpretations of meanings. The text as a means of different interpretations has been considered since the time of romantic hermeneutics, but I will consider the text as a mechanism for generating

new meanings. Now let's look at how the cast of the original *Cimarron* and its remake influenced the transformation of main characters, as well as the meanings laid down in the films.

The choice of actors determines the significance and success of the film. After comparing the types of the main characters – Richard Dix in *Cimarron* (1931) and Glenn Ford (1960), I can note that Glenn Ford's impersonation of Yancey Cravat made this character much softer. First of all, as a gentle person he reveals by his wife. Perhaps this was the reason for the increase of melodramaticism in the remake of *Cimarron*.

Well-known story consultant Robert McKee compared the cast of the film with the solar system: “the cast orbits around the star, its protagonist. Supporting roles are inspired by the central character and designed to delineate his complex of dimensions” (McKee, 1997: 381). If the first Yancey held back the caprices of his wife, calmed and repaid her claims, the second Yancey patiently listened, apologized and retreated. If the first Yancey was a rebel and a dreamer, the second Yancey appeared before the viewer as a balanced and restrained person who did not compromise with his conscience. This was due to the complication of Sabra's character in the 1960 remake. The scriptwriter and director make it more rigid and uncompromising, perhaps just in order to show a different Yancey. It is hard to disagree with McKee, who points out that supporting roles “are in a story first and foremost because of the relationship they strike to the protagonist and the way each helps to delineate the dimensions of the protagonist's complex nature” (McKee, 1997: 379).

In the migration Western, the hero owes his appearance on the screen to history. By means of typification and oversimplification, the authors of both *Cimarrons* tried to show the viewer an exemplary hero of that time, whose main goal is a civilizing mission. Thus, it's the turn to consideration of the cultural aspect of the *Cimarron* remake's analysis.

Both films contain the message of the civilizing mission of the American nation, a high impulse towards universal happiness, the construction of the American dream. It is not the wealth guides Yancey according to the scenario, but the desire to turn these territories into a prosperous country, which proud of its laws and citizens. This message is supported by the fact that both films end with the episode of the monument opening to the pioneers of the West, in the center of which is the bronze mighty figure of Yancey Cravat.

Silent film Westerns, as well as pre-war Westerns, were characterized by the polarization of whites and Indians, located on opposite sides of each other and touching only in open fights and battles. The Indians hardly appear in the first *Cimarron*. In the second *Cimarron*, they are present in the secondary or episodic roles.

Despite the fact that the first *Cimarron* was filmed in far 1931, the Sabra's attitude towards the Indians was much softer than in the 1960 Western. Seemingly, modest and fragile girl, the second Sabra kept inside a whole whirlwind of intolerance towards the Indians. This intolerance led to a quarrel with her son, who could no longer live with his mother under the same roof.

Curiously, that both *Cimarrons* show the lands of Oklahoma as an uninhabited land, a free land waiting for its owner. At the same time, the historical and cultural prerequisites for organizing land races, as well as their legal expediency, remain behind the scenes. Every film with a historical basis perceived by viewer mostly as a true chain of events. The silencing up of the problems of the Indians expelled from the territory of Oklahoma leads to a direct distortion and twisting of the true history of the United States.

The second original Western to consider was released in 1939 by John Ford. *Stagecoach* takes us to 1880 in the Wild West. Several different people met in the stagecoach to New Mexico City: the unrestrained drunk Doc Boon, the whiskey merchant Samuel Peacock, the sharpie Hatfield, the pregnant Lucy Mallory, the prostitute Dallas, the cynical sheriff and the simple-minded coachman. At the last moment, the wanted Ringo Kid joins the passengers. They all go on a dangerous journey.

The first *Stagecoach* by John Ford (1939) belongs to the genre of drama and adventure, and the second *Stagecoach* by Gordon Douglas (1966) – to the drama and action movie. Indeed, the 1960 remake contains more action elements. In all other respects, both films are Westerns in their purest form, the basis of which is an adventure component.

The plot of the remake 1966 is almost identical to the original but the ending of the remake is fundamentally different. In the original version of the film, Ringo is arrested, he asks Dallas to go to his farm and wait for him, so they are separated. In the remake, out of respect for Ringo's merit in the shootout with the Indians, guards let them go.

It should be noted that the principle of moral compensation worked in the original version, consisting in the following. If the main character has committed crimes, it is not enough for him to atone for them with only good deeds. He must go to jail or die. In the 1966 remake, the protagonist earned forgiveness for his exploits on the battlefield. Perhaps this is a kind of happy ending that the viewer would like to see in the original version of *Stagecoach* 1939.

The remake contains more action scenes, especially in the film's conclusion when Ringo shoots the gang members who killed his father and brother. The director of remake included a fire and many acrobatic stunts in this scene. The finale in the original Western is more static and unimpressive.

The cast of the first *Stagecoach* 1931 is unique without any doubts. Each actor creates his own character, which remains in the memory of the audience for a long time, if not forever. Despite the large number of main characters, images of Ringo (John Wayne), Dallas (Claire Trevor), Doc Boone (Thomas Mitchell), Mr. Peacock (Donald Meek) are exclusive and exceptional. The characters of the *Stagecoach* of 1960, in turn, in my opinion, are devoid of original authenticity. However, the uniqueness of *Stagecoach* lies exactly in the diversity and fullness of the image of the "Plural Protagonist".

McKee identifies two conditions for such Plural Protagonist's existence: "First, all individuals in the group share the same desire. Second, in the struggle to achieve this desire, they mutually suffer and benefit. If one has a success, all benefit. If one has a setback, all suffer. Within a Plural Protagonist, motivation, action, and consequence are communal" (McKee, 1997: 136). Indeed, the main characters' efforts unite at the culmination of the film – during the pursuit of a stagecoach by an Apache detachment led by Geronimo. They are guided by the main goal – to survive, and all other disagreements are thrown aside.

The cultural conflict between whites and Indians in this film looks slightly simplistic. There is no communication as such, the viewer sees only an "unreasonable" attack from the Indians, frightened Lucy with a baby in her arms, and desperate Dallas, who, by the will of fate, find themselves in a hopeless situation. It is noteworthy that the theme of the Indians as obvious antagonists was characteristic of the pre-war Western, so in the 1966 remake, after the release of such critical films as *Broken Arrow* by Delmer Daves (1950), *Soldier Blue* by Ralph Nelson (1970), this message looks a little stretched.

Much sharper in both Westerns are shown cultural conflicts within American society, expressed in a humiliating and intolerant attitude towards girls, who are forced to survive by selling themselves. This issue also came up in the *Cimarron*, when Yancey defended Dixie in court, proving that she did not start prostitution of her own free will. In addition, the problem of prejudice against people who drink alcohol is shown. The scene of Dr. Boone's transformation, when he sobered up and brilliantly helped the baby to be born, gave the actor Thomas Mitchell the win in the nomination "Best Supporting Actor" of Academy Awards. Just like Dr. Boone, Dallas also went through a character arc. Seeing the humane attitude towards herself, she decides to settle down and change her life for the better.

The conciliating ending of remake *Stagecoach* by Gordon Douglas (1966) contains a strong cultural integrating message, similar to the statement of Paolo Coelho: "Culture makes people understand each other better. And if they understand each other better in their soul, it is easier to overcome the economic and political barriers. But first they have to understand that their neighbor is, in the end, just like them, with the same problems, the same questions" (Coelho, 2015).

The third western that has a successful remake is *3:10 to Yuma* by Delmer Daves (1957). The film takes the viewer to Arizona in 1884. The famous bandit Ben Wade and his gang robbed the stagecoach. Civil War veteran and small rancher Dan Evans and his sons become witnesses. Wade is arrested, and Dan Evans agrees for two hundred dollars to help bring Wade to the station and put a three-hour train to Yuma: Evans desperately needs to pay off his debts. Nevertheless, Wade's gang start chasing the law enforcement officers. A remake of this film by director James Mangold (2007) bears the same title *3:10 to Yuma*.

The first film *3:10 to Yuma* by Delmer Daves (1957) is declared as a Western and a drama. However, some elements of the parable can also be noted. In addition to the plot as such, this is evidenced by the lyrical-philosophical song about the train to Yuma, which sounds at the beginning and end of the film, creating a complete image of the folklore background of the film, typical of the director Delmer Daves. This soundtrack by Frankie Laine gives a special philosophical particularity

to the film: “There's a legend and there's a rumour. / When you take the 3:10 to Yuma, / You can see the ghosts, / Of outlaws go riding by, (riding by) / In the sky (in the sky)”.

The parable genre is one of the rarest and most complex categories in cinema, so consider it individually. The parable genre has deep mythological roots; it is a genre above genres, the archetypes of which are easily seen through the shell of a historical plot. This is a lyrical-epic genre, which is characterized by the depth of the author's philosophical thought, hidden in a seemingly simple story. The plot of the first Western is really simple. However, exactly this feature provided an opportunity for the director James Mangold to complicate and improve it in the remake 2007.

*3:10 to Yuma* by James Mangold (2007) is declared as a Western, crime and action. Unlike the first Western, full of melancholy reflections and dialogues, the second is dominated by the action genre, which had a positive effect on the box office. Despite the large amount of action in modern cinema, this genre continues to retain high popularity ratings. It ensures the audience's interest and emotional involvement due to high-profile action, dynamic intrigue with many unpredictable, dangerous plot twists. A common feature of adventure genres is an acute dramatic situation that causes the ultimate tension of the hero's strength.

Contrasting previous pairs of Westerns, the plot of the remake of the film *3:10 to Yuma* by James Mangold (2007) has a number of interesting differences from the original one. The original film essentially contains one culmination – leaving the hotel before boarding the train. The remake has already been created according to all modern canons of screenwriting – it contains several peaks and plot twists the attack of the Indians, the scene in the tunnel, the shootout near the hotel, the denouement near the train.

The script of the remake has a completely different ending. In the original film, the bandit jumps on the train to Yuma by his own will, followed by a farmer. In its turn, in the remake, Charlie Prince kills the farmer and Ben Wade kills his entire gang in retaliation. Then Ben Wade turns himself in to the authorities and departs to Yuma. This fundamental difference changes the whole concept of the film. In the original version, at the end of the film, a beautiful legend about the train sounds, it starts to rain, and everyone is alive and well, rejoicing at the future transformations. The ending of the remake is quite depressing. Ben Wade, the last main character left alive, voluntarily renounces his freedom and rides towards the court and, most likely, the gallows. We can see an example of how the rule of moral compensation works – moral virtues are not enough to atone for the crimes committed. The character must be punished by earthly justice.

In addition to the differences in the plot, it is also necessary to consider the character system of the original film *3:10 to Yuma* and its remake. The main characters of the Western are the criminal Ben Wade and the farmer Dan Evans. During the majority of the film, they are enemies. Ben Wade is the antagonist and Dan Evans is the protagonist. Thus, we see the evolution and complication of the dramatic structure: *Cimarron* has one main character, *Stagecoach* has a Plural Protagonist, *3:10 to Yuma* has two opposite main characters. However, scene after scene, the viewer begins to feel sympathy for Ben Wade, and gradually two protagonists are already formed in the film.

McKee calls this system of characters as Multiprotagonist: “Here, unlike the Plural-Protagonist, characters pursue separate and individual desires, suffering and benefiting independently. Multiprotagonist stories become Multiplot stories. Rather than driving the telling through the focused desire of a protagonist, either single or plural, these works weave a number of smaller stories, each with its own protagonist, to create a dynamic portrait of a specific society” (McKee, 1997: 136-137).

Let's consider the cast. The *3:10 to Yuma* by Delmer Daves (1957) starred Glenn Ford as the antagonist and Van Heflin as the protagonist. In my opinion, both characters are overly soft. So, perhaps the farmer sometimes behaves harder and sharper than the bandit. This softens the film itself, adding more lyrical and philosophical components to it.

The remake *3:10 to Yuma* by James Mangold (2007) starred Russell Crowe as a bandit and Christian Bale as a farmer. The film received a nomination for Best Cast and it's completely predictable. Russell Crowe played a tough, unruffled, but not cruel bandit, for whom robberies are just a job. At the same time, screenwriters gradually reveal Ben Wade from the other side and his personal moral qualities were demonstrated in several scenes. For example, in the scene in which he uncovered Pinkerton agent Byron McElroy as a furious killer of peaceful Indians and killed him.

Simultaneously, Christian Bale, who played a farmer, in contrast to his prototype from the 1950s – Van Heflin, was able to fully convey the hopelessness of his financial situation, the despair



of self-consciousness that he could give nothing to his family, except for a bright memory of himself. On the one hand, the farmer starring of Van Heflin was simpler and rougher compared to the farmer starring of Christian Bale, which is more believable. On the other hand, a certain refinement and sophistication of Christian Bale helped to add contrast between the two main characters in remake, to display positive and negative sides both of the men.

The secondary characters were also developed perfectly well. The character of the eldest son of a farmer, played in remake by Logan Lerman, reveals the main protagonist as a loving father and a person ready for self-sacrifice. The character of Charlie Prince – Ben Wade's right hand, played by Ben Foster (a typical actor playing negative characters), personified the negative side of Ben Wade, which he wanted to get rid of. Here we see a pure Ben character arc.

The message of *3:10 to Yuma* is very clear – evil must and will be punished, the law is above all, criminals must be in prison, etc. However, in my opinion, the outcome looks an improbable. A cynical and pragmatic bandit keeps his promise to a farmer and volunteers to meet his own death. The lyrical and optimistic ending in the original film stands against the pretentious and tragic ending in the remake. In this regard, I should quote Francis Ford Coppola: “Nothing is more terrible, than a pretentious movie” (Coppola, 1991). Unfortunately, a similar feature is inherent in the finals of many Westerns.

The current trend of modern cinema is inclusion in films of characters with disabilities. Therefore, the main character Dan Evans is the one-legged war veteran turned rancher. As compensation from the authorities, he received \$ 200. It's the same fee he expected to get Ben on the train.

The fourth Western to consider is *True Grit* by Henry Hathaway (1969). According to its plot, Mattie Ross, a fourteen-year-old girl, leaves her home to find and punish the killer of her father, the robber Tom Chaney. Upon learning that Chaney has escaped to Indian Territory, she hires a one-eyed federal marshal Reuben “Rooster”, known for his drunkenness and temper. Texas Ranger La Boeuf, also looking for Chaney for the senator's murder, joins the search. The remake of this film has the same name *True Grit* by Joel Coen and Ethan Coen (2010).

Both films belong to the genres of Western, drama, adventure. This Western also contains elements of a family movie, aimed for an interested perception simultaneously by different age groups of both sexes. This is because one of the main characters is a girl Mattie Ross, whose confidence and courage will undoubtedly arouse sympathy among teenagers. Special attention in the film is given to her horse Blackie, which is also a factor that arouses interest among the teenagers. A girl is sometimes more resourceful and bolder than adults, which cannot but arouse admiration among children. In this sense, the next scenes with Mattie are particularly revealing: bargaining with the horse seller, water crossing in the beginning of journey, shot at Tom Chaney, etc. The popular comedies: *Home Alone* by Chris Columbus (1990), *Problem Child* by Dennis Dugan (1990), *It Takes Two* by Andy Tennant (1995) etc. contain similar elements of main characters' naughtiness, embodying their Trickster archetype. Well known, films designed for a children's target audience are usually the highest grossing ones. Western *True Grit* by Joel Coen and Ethan Coen (2010) is no exception.

The script of the remake *True Grit* by Joel Coen and Ethan Coen (2010) was made, like the script of remake *3:10 to Yuma*, according to all the standards of modern screenwriting: new plot twists and new scenes were added: hanged man, “dentist doctor”, bottle shooting, etc. In the original version *True Grit* by Henry Hathaway (1969), Texas Ranger La Boeuf died, in the remake wounded, he remains to wait for help. Moreover, the authors of the film do not give an answer whether he survived or not. This incompleteness gives the viewer a small hope. In addition, the final of remake contains frames of an adult Mattie. She wants to find a living Cogburn, but can find only a dead one. She reburies him in the family graveyard and keeps warm memories of him.

Unlike other remakes, in *True Grit* 2010, the actors and their types are almost identical to the original film 1969. The mature John Wayne and Jeff Bridges equally convincingly embodied the brutal Cogburn. Both Glen Campbell in 1969 and Matt Damon in 2010 effectively conveyed the responsible and changeable character of the Texas Ranger La Boeuf. The only difference, in my opinion, is that the second La Boeuf, played by Matt Damon, loses its former self-confidence and pomposity. Thanks to this, the remake only won. Stubborn and daring Mattie Ross successfully played Kim Darby and Hailee Steinfeld. It's obvious that the remake directors tried their best to keep characters of the original film unbroken.

As already mentioned, initially the film has one main character – a girl, then Marshall and the Texas Ranger joined her. Despite the fact that firstly their goals were different – revenge (Mattie), earnings (Cogburn), assignments (La Boeuf), in the end, their mission is the same – to catch the bandit Chaney. Therefore, in the film itself, an evolution of character system takes place – one “Protagonist” – “Multiprotagonist” – “Plural Protagonist”.

The main message resonates with the message in the film *3:10 to Yuma* – the fight against crime. There is no doubt that the title is dedicated to the main character – Marshall "Rooster" Cogburn, who goes in search of criminal Tom Chaney. The bet is on the arc of the Cogburn character, who must turn from an alcoholic and hardhearted type into a brave person disposed to self-sacrifice and high feelings. However, the scene in the bandits' house by the river crosses out this aspiration. In order to find out Chaney's location, Cogburn pits them against each other, causing a bloody quarrel. One bandit lethally cuts another, he himself is killed by Cogburn. The dying person asks to bury him and give a small amount of money to his brother. Cogburn promises, but none of the promises is kept. As the dead man feared, his body is left to be eaten by wolves. The crimes of these two are unknown, but their deaths remain on the conscience of "grit" Cogburn.

The directors of the remake touches on another important socio-cultural aspect – the problems of people with disabilities. At the end of the film, they show an adult Mattie going in search of Cogburn. She lost her arm after being bitten by a snake. However, this did not deprive her will to fight for her rights.

One interesting difference between the remake *True Grit* from the original should be noted. As already revealed, the character of La Boeuf, played by Matt Damon in the 2010 Western, loses its former pretentiousness and arrogance. That's why Mattie's reproaches and claims about his appearance and qualifications look preconceived. Thus, the remake touches on one of the social conflicts – an intolerant attitude towards Texans (this kind of conflict, only in the middle of the 20th century, was reflected in the film *Coogan's Bluff* by Don Siegel (1968).

Such type of conflict also called “Inner frontier”, that should be understood as the “encounter with strangers in what is supposedly one's own: one's own country, one's own city, one's own family... Current Westerns about the indigenous population, slavery and religious fanaticism show this Inner frontier in a drastic way” (Stiglegger, 2022: 4).

## 5. Conclusion

Considering the Westerns remakes through the prism of the textual aspect, I concluded that despite the similarity of the plot and characters, the remake of the film, thanks to the interpretations of the director, creates a new semiotic object for the viewer's perception. Hybridization of genres, changes in the plot and new characters creates a new reality. It would seem that the viewer of the remake is transferred to the same time and place, he see the same characters, but nevertheless, the new directorial style places delicate and clear accents that form new semantic and cultural ties.

It was revealed that in remakes, directors actively use the principle of genre diffusion, adding more elements of action genre to the original Western. This has a positive effect on demand and box office. The script of the remakes necessarily undergoes changes compared to the original film. These changes can be divided into several gradations: 1) a fundamental transformation of the plot, by changing the ending of the film; 2) adding plot twists, 3) changing or adding individual scenes; 4) the introduction of new cultural and social meanings through a new image of known characters.

The cultural message of Westerns is expressed in several directions: 1) the fight against crime; 2) punishment for committed crimes, 3) the formation of a nation. Many Westerns overuse the pretentiousness of the narrative. Among the remakes of recent years, the themes of the problems of people with disabilities are actively introduced.

At the same time, directors also use a critical approach, inserting realistic scenes. So, despite the outward message: “the law is first of all”, the viewer sees scenes of cruelty and unscrupulousness of Marshalls and nobility of criminals. Therefore the veiled cultural meanings: 1) intolerance and prejudice towards people of a different skin color, another social stratum or from another region; 2) the permissiveness of the authorities of that time; 3) lack of rights and social injustice within the US society.

A modern Western remake is an unstable genre conglomerate that satisfies both the American audience's need for national self-awareness and demonstrates all the modern assets of the entertainment film industry. With deep historical roots, the Western highlights the complex

and dramatic historical process of the formation of American statehood. The more critical directors are, and the less pathos they use, the stronger the power of cinematic art will be revealed.

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