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EL *ROAD MOVIE*: ELEMENTOS PARA LA DEFINICIÓN DE UN GÉNERO CINEMATográfico

Abstract

The road movie is one of the most important American film genres. Although it has a long and complex history, only until relatively recently has this genre started to arouse the interest of specialists. The objective of this paper is to sketch a definition of the road movie –elaborated through a review of the most salient literature on the subject published so far– which takes into account the genre’s correlations with American social, cultural and film history. My reflection complies with the latest advances in film genre theory which, rejecting monolithic definitions, tend toward a more dynamic conception of the notion of genre. Because of its complexity and its hybrid character, the road movie is particularly difficult to define and requires an approach to the concept of film genre that allows mixing textual analysis with cultural studies. That is why this paper will propose an archaeology of the genre, outlining a panorama of some of the historical and aesthetic traditions that were fundamental in its emergence. Likewise, I will study the relation between two works considered by critics to be the foundational texts of the road movie: *Easy Rider* (Dennis Hopper, 1969) and the novel *On the Road* (Jack Kerouac, 1957). My article seeks to demonstrate that the road movie is not only a way of making films and thinking of them, but also one of the most profitable ways of thinking of the United States and its civilization through cinema.

Keywords: *Road movie*, Film Genres, Cultural Studies, United States, Road, Errantry, Landscape, Means of Transportation, *Easy Rider*, *On the Road*.