

THE MYTH'S WAY BACK INTO THE BODY. A VISUAL ANALYSIS OF THE ANTI-WAR FILM

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Abstract: In this article, I will analyse from a psychological and philosophical point of view many sequences from the film *Come and See* by Elem Klimov. I will extract from each of them the parts that define their essence and construct a biunivocal correspondence between their cinematic representation and myths and archetypes (the myth of return, the myth of birth, the myth of the totem, the myth of the rescuer, the trauma of abandonment). Next, my analysis will focus on understanding the protagonist's unconscious confrontation with the collective trauma of war. I will present the connection between the methods that director Klimov used and the emotional intensity that the film's characters experienced and their refractory capacity towards the viewer. Coupled with an aesthetic analysis, I will offer a possible algorithm for deconstructing history and reconstructing different identities. An important part will be devoted to psychological observations on the main character and the unusual way in which the process of his maturation takes place. At the same time, I will delineate the vague areas in which personal history becomes the great history and the individual becomes only an instrument of its unfolding.

Keywords: Elem Klimov, collective trauma, myth, war, archetype, aggression.

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Introduction

Come and See is a Soviet film directed by Elem Klimov in 1985 whose screenplay written by Klimov and Ales Adamovich is based on the book *I Am from the Fiery Village*, co-authored by Adamovich. The English translation has altered the original meaning of the Russian expression *Idi i smotri* whose Romanian equivalent is *Du-te și vezi* as opposed to the meaning that would be obtained by going through the English translation, namely *Vino și vezi*. On the one hand, the original Russian version makes an obvious biblical reference, juxtaposing the hyperrealistic image of war with the detailed atmosphere in *John's Revelation*³.

³ "1. And I saw when the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four beasts say with a voice like thunder, Come and see. 2. And I looked, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him had a bow; and to him was given a crown, and he went forth as a conqueror to conquer. 3. And when he opened the second seal, I heard, saying, by the second being, Come and see. 4. And another horse came forth, red as fire; and to him that sat upon him was given to take peace from the earth, that men might kill one another; and a great sword was given to him. 5. And when he opened the third seal, I heard the third being saying: Come and see. And I looked, and behold a black horse, and he that sat upon him had a scale in his hand. 6. And I heard, in the midst of the four beings, as it were a voice saying: A measure of wheat a dinar, and three measures of barley a dinar. But of oil and wine thou shalt not touch. 7. And when he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth

However, this apparent antagonism between the exhortations *go* and *come* suggests two issues: the first of an ontological nature, showing us the uniqueness of space and the impossibility of exiting it (whether we come or go, we will be in the same space), and the second of a psychological nature, inviting us to discover inner



otherness at the same time as that of outer identity - *come* implying participation with, and *go* indicating the bearing on one's own of the knowledge of the outside, i.e. war, which reminds us of the Heideggerian concept of *throwing man into the World* (Heidegger, 2002).

Although the film apparently has many realistic elements that place us in Belarus during World War II, it goes beyond that and seeks to explain a wider mechanism. The images are of a war of becoming the protagonist, of coming of age and, in fact, of every man. The process of maturation is achieved through the concept of war as History mirrors, continues and dilutes itself in the life of each of us, and War, paradoxically, offers the simulation of the collective and makes the individual escape alive from personal war. It is war that fights against loneliness, ultimately generating loneliness. It is interesting to note the perpetual interchange between the series of major historical events and the micro histories of the participants, which are an illustrative example to Aristotle's theory of generation and annihilation (Aristotle, 2010).

Is Come and See an anti-war film?

A first step in answering the previous question would be to consider aggression as a universal given and to establish its relationship to social-political organisation. Everything could be rephrased in the following question: do political

creature saying: Come and see. 8. And I looked, and behold, a yellow horse, and the name of him that sat on him was: Death; and hell followed him: and power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to slay with sword, and with famine, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth." (St. John the Theologian, n.d.)

concepts trigger aggression or does aggression lead to a political concept that ends in war?

The personal mythology specific to childhood is confused to the point of identification with Soviet propaganda enhanced by the Nazi danger. Flyora, a 14-year-old boy, is at the centre of these events and his unstratified consciousness still produces numerous reversals of normal perception. He is the victim of three different types of aggression: the first is a vicious underpinning of his personality caused by the intrusive propaganda of the Soviet totalitarian state, the second is war itself as a phenomenon of armed interaction, and the third, the most material, is the danger of being killed by the Nazis. Throughout the film we wonder how much of its essence can be deduced from its behaviour and whether there is an inalienable part of it. Can we consider it a canonical transition or a sudden entry into the strictness and discipline engendered by dictatorial wartime state policies?

Collective trauma

From the outset, we can note two related observations. The first relates to the ancestral cult of war, of violent conflict, and the second relates to its perpetuation through multiplicity and continuity. Thus, young people are shaped by the mechanism of fears and wounds to generate the enthusiasm to participate in armed conflict, and this mechanism is not an institutionalised one, but in fact one that is the consequence of collective trauma. Overlying this framework is the discrepancy between the hierarchical, fixed and precise structure of the military apparatus and the unpredictability of war. Thus, the extremely rigid orders that correspond to a fictional unfolding of the war become useless in the face of frequent changes in the reality of the front. For the soldiers, this only feeds their thirst for violence by trying to circumvent the meaninglessness through a form of extreme aggression that becomes their benchmark. Flyora becomes the typical exponent of the outcome of these causes.

The great strength of this production is that it melts the boundary between our opinions as viewers and the emotions of the protagonist. Basically, it makes us fall from the ideational plane of rational revulsion towards war to a more sensory, emotional one through perpetual deduction. This is made possible by the use of a film technique that forces us to be the ones who feel the greatest impact of the lines and sounds, i.e. to be in the place of the receiver in the film and not just an observer. The challenge initially posed by the film is even about how to conceive an epistemology of war: thus, while we initially have the intuition that we can only

have Knowledge through books, documents or the collective mind, by the end we are suggested that war is the kind of element that can only be known from the inside out and not the other way around.

Another initial reflective theme resulting from the first part of the film is Flyora's ontic grounding and one's personal attempt to decay how much of one's innermost forges are original, unique, pure or are the effect of the environmental, social and biological conditions to which one invariably subordinates oneself. All of these are metonymically represented by the strong but lacking in rational and layered arguments desire to go to war. One possible explanation for the boy's positive mood about war would be the age-induced inability to have a vectorial dimension, i.e. to be himself Origin. According to Presocratic theory, Origin *comes from the front* (Vlăduțescu, 1998), so Flyora will be able to determine himself only after the maturation process catalysed by the war, which will also have a backward effect in time and he will become what he was.

The myth of return

Stillness, desolation, clarity, smothering, dust, heat, living and lots of hiding – these are the coordinates that make up the skeleton of the first part of the film. The pressing, defiant stillness that comes from an attempt to mimic normality reinforces our conviction that an inevitable drama is about to unfold. Only in the strangeness of the familiar can a credible tragedy grow and develop. We are conditioned not to tolerate the lack of change, so in this unfamiliar environment we seek to invent huge problems and then be in constant search of tailor-made solutions. And we can do this peacefully since failure is impossible with the knowledge that somewhere on that yellow hill where childhood rests, the problem we created is and is not. This is where our de-bonding struggle to experience two contradictory hypostases of ourselves begins: the torment of joy and the joy of torment, and the fact that they are glued together makes us unable to choose.

In the first frame, someone is talking, we don't see his face and he is critically contemplating the children's play towards him, his annoyance seems to come from the fact that hiding the children from him makes him look into a mirror and remember that he is also hiding from the reality of war. So, in the face of war and behind it we are all children. Speaking directly to the camera we are visited by the old man's warning *Play, play, they will find you anywhere*. So, they are no longer just the Nazis, not even just other people, but they are those from beyond,

those from beyond the edge who come to leave us without our selves. After this warning the children's play becomes a satire of the world of grown men and a parody of their sequential way of understanding the world: the first child comes out of his hiding place, dressed thickly, his voice finished, imitating the weight of a grown man attacking the demands of the old man, fed up with him.

The successive rotation of the foreground of the camera, first towards the children, then towards the old man, but also towards the spectators, is transposed filmically in the dissolution of the essence of the characters: the old man scolds the children who in turn scold the old man, and we see all this objectively while we too are scolded, beneath this triad hiding repulsion and anger towards the German invaders who, besides occupying their territory, seem to steal their lives, to alter their specificity. There is always a countertransference relationship, a role reversal between us and the film's characters. The frames shifted in certain lines make us the judgmental ones about aggressive actions on our part, or the ones seeking to escape suffering. Our identity doubles, we are both those presented as the invading enemy and those who are invaded.

The aggregation and crisis of finding a weapon becomes the first mark of collective thinking, that without a weapon you cannot become a soldier fighting for your country. The act of looking for a weapon in lands where people have been killed, further emphasizes the collective influence to continue what others have started. Unearthing the true artifacts that were not represented by the weapons, but by the purposes of the dead.

The seemingly quasi-static setting of the field in which the children seem merely material dots is tantamount to demonstrating that each small, dusty child, low to the ground, is in fact a whole field itself, and the field is a huge, breathing old child. The children's acute desire to sink into the earth stems from a premonition, not of inevitable death, but of the myth of an eternal return to a planetary womb that could only be found in the earth, next to the remains of ancestors. They bury themselves in the earth and are born happy that they have managed this time to remain unnoticed.

Finding a rifle becomes more than just a mechanical instrument, it marks an event of great significance. From a Nietzschean analysis, we can equate the embodiment of the gun with a Zarathustrian contact (Nietzsche, 2012) producing his transformation from human to superhuman soldier. The weapon thus acquires organicity and becomes inseparable from the fulfilment of its destiny. From another perspective, the Absolute Spirit that is self-conscious through the

unfolding of History has a brief moment of incarnation in Flyora, illuminating his destiny. The last perspective of this situation shows its importance by cancelling a collective predestination (which transcends the biological framework), without affecting its outcome, but in a more fundamental way by transforming it into a personal decision, he is now the binder through which the self falls into the Common. The despair at the moment of departure is not only evident from Flyora's mother's heavy monologue. A greater impact on the viewer is made by the slow, hypnotic alternation from one leg of her body to the other, simulating a baby's rocking motion. In her and her son's case, however, it was a belated rocking, leading not to sleep but to death.

"Let the noble anger grow"

If at the beginning the whole camera space emphasizes the action on the ground and the interaction of the characters with the earth, throughout the journey with Flyora's wagon to the front, the sky is followed. This choice symbolically marks the boy's longing not so much for heroic death, but for what comes after it, namely rebirth. The haste with which he contemplates this is generated by a certain characteristic of the war that he already feels, the condensation of time, in Marin Preda's terms: *Time had no patience* (1955). The inner heaviness is figured by the ill-fitting clothes, the rifle etc. The clothing also comes from a dead man, which represents the assumption of the being of the big dead man. The strangeness comes only when one of the soldiers tells him that he has found more suitable clothes from a living man, the ability *to be suitable* being dependent on life, i.e. death.

Passing a nurse makes him stop and look more closely, sensing danger, but is interrupted by *Keep going, keep going, child*. This line has a whole history in the collective imagination and takes many forms. In cinema, its emblematic version is *Run, Forest, run!*, in literature the embryonic form of this line is found in the repeated exhortations to the hero in the midst of trying not to go back to somewhere or not to perform a process repeatedly. The most illustrative example is in *Youth without Old Age and Life without Death*⁴, in which Prince Charming is warned not to go to the Valley of Sorrow because there he will find death. The

⁴ "When the masters of the house accompanied him, they gave him permission to go through all the places around, wherever he pleased; but in one valley, which they showed him, they told him not to go, for it would not be good for him; and they told him that the valley was called the Valley of Weeping... You have passed, you wretch, into the Valley of Weeping! they said to him, in a fright." (Ispirescu, 1985)

basis for this is the mythological vein, specifically the Orpheus myth which tells how Orpheus⁵ fails in his attempt to retrieve his wife from Hades' inferno because, lacking confidence, he breaks the deal at one point, stops walking and looks back, making sure Eurydice follows him, leading to her irrevocable loss. The line is not just for this moment, but is ubiquitous to the child's life.

The monotony of the frames is broken by a scene cut from *commedia dell'arte*⁶, its ingredients, some burlesque, carnival-like: good cheer, partying, a painted cow, a small cannon, all culminating in a final shot before a final war.

The third coming-of-age situation for Flyora is a tense moment, his obedience to a first order given by his superiors. He doesn't shoot anyone who comes at him without saying the password, demonstrating his inability to be in faithful touch with reality and able to meet the rigors of frontline discipline. Essentially, he refuses to take on the task of killing and the only way he can do it is by perpetual procrastination. His reluctance also stems from the confusion that is aroused firstly by his lack of appreciation of life, and secondly by the multivalence of any man, namely the distance from comrade to adversary and vice versa being however small.

The washing of the pot with boiling water refers to a concrete visualization of the inner tension of what a man's life on the battlefield represents, a tension that the boy has to understand in the new situations he has to be part of. The child carries with him an extraordinary unease about what is going on around him, executing orders, but is almost transparent.

⁵ "Distraught with grief, Orpheus asks the gods for help to restore his beloved. But heaven is silent. Orpheus then decides to go to the land of shadows himself and, after many adventures, overcoming all obstacles with his enchanted lyre, arrives at the dreaded Hades. Hades, enchanted by the beauty of his music and lyrics, is won over and promises to let Eurydice follow him into the world of the living, on the sole condition that he, Orpheus, goes before her and does not look back at Eurydice until they have left the world of shadows. Nearing the exit, Orpheus fears that Eurydice has lost her way and turns his head, but all he can see is his beloved, arms outstretched to him, slipping back into Hell. In his impatience, Orpheus has forgotten that they both belong in the upper world, and the moment he steps into the upper world, he turns to her to see her. Eurydice disappeared a second time, this time forever." (Mitru, n.d.)

⁶ The actors of the *commedia dell'arte*, despite the lack of strict scripts, always knew how to improvise, how to appeal to everyone, and not only to the intellect, but also to hearing and seeing, i.e. to immediate perception, as entertainment. Extraordinary jugglers and mimes, virtuoso singers with their mouths or very different instruments, exceptional dancers and acrobats, the actors mastered their souls and bodies, their voices, bringing out the wonders of their performances, their signs alongside movement, music and voice, the costumes forming the symbols so telling of their art. (Wikipedia, 2022b)

The action of the girl who comes and throws flowers on him has a symbolic charge and refers to the moment when women bring flowers to the grave of the man who met his end on the battlefield. Now we have a warm body, from an earth still warmed by fire and bombardment, a body still alive but destroyed by war. The frame of the washing of the cauldron is interrupted by the frame in which a large piece of flesh is removed from it, what remains of the men who died in the field, from whom we eat and carry on the desire to defend in their name and that of the country, we revive them through us, we perpetuate the struggle.

In the preparations for departure there is a time when the child has to change shoes with someone else who would be more able to use the new equipment. In the apparent macro-accuracy of moving to the front, he chaotically sets off alone, trying to keep up with his regiment, and steps on a nest of eggs, which seem ready to hatch – confirmed when he turns his gaze and sees among the remains of the nest a crushed skull. His first kill, on innocent, unbelieving beings, makes him aware of the gravity of the disaster caused by the war. In the cracking of the eggs, a visible transformation will occur in him and he will identify with the shape of the wrinkles that will appear on his face. The profound impact is that Flyora unconsciously tramples and destroys himself, his family and his village in the same way that the war outside had done. His interaction with the land undergoes a metamorphosis, as in his march he comes *to struggle* with a swamp that keeps him close to the ground, makes him self-destructive, transposing himself into the image of unborn children towards whom he now feels no guilt and considers himself more of a hero. He cancels their existence and saves them in the most radical form from the perpetual and thorny suffering of participation in the conflagration.

His exit from the swamp is simultaneous with his entry into the forest and his encounter with Glosha, a girl who seems more mature than him and who comes to embody the sublime of destruction, the creative capacity for chaos, psychosis, hallucination. The first interaction between the two is under the sign of lability and Flyora's introduction into her psychological sphere of influence. With the bombardment, their inner tensions also explode, giving way the next day to a strange distance between them and their selves.

The ternary appearance of the stork has multiple meanings. The first has a very obvious nationalistic side, the stork being a national symbol of Belarus. On the other hand, we know about Himmler's⁷ plan to use storks from 1942 to spread propaganda material in favour of Nazi Germany. Incidentally, it is no coincidence that this bird, with its apparently protective attitude, never flies. Drawing on ancient Egyptian tradition⁸, the stork is a symbol of personality and also has a locative dimension for the spirit of the deceased. Thus, it is suggested that dead soldiers still protect combatants in battle, which is in keeping with its status as a national symbol. If we recall the scene of Flyora's destruction of a bird's nest, we can speculate that the stork is experiencing a veritable Stockholm syndrome⁹ trying to protect to the point of sacrifice the aggressors. The technique of muffling the sounds we expect to hear and replacing them with jazz passages produces a dissonance between the sounds we naturally expect to hear and the artificially and methodically introduced rhythms. Transgression is meant to take us from the externally produced sound to the internal artificiality with which they want to smother reality. The same process is used in animation productions and circus performances in an attempt to work with the most indivisible parts of our perceptual apparatus.



His journey is hallucinatory, both for us and for him, it becomes an initiatory one. Lost from his regiment, lacking even the coordination he originally

⁷ In 1942, Heinrich Himmler sought to use storks to carry Nazi propaganda leaflets in order to gain support for Africans in South Africa.

⁸ The white stork, because of its large size, predation on pests and because it nests close to humans, has had an important impact on culture and folklore. In ancient Egypt, it was associated with ba, 'the soul', whose hieroglyph was. The Hebrew word for this stork is "חסידה" (chasidah) and is derived from "חסד" (chesed), "kindness, mercy", in keeping with the belief that the bird is known to be helpful to other members of its species. Greek and Roman mythologies describe storks as models of piety for their parents, who do not die of old age but fly to islands and take on the appearance of human beings. (Wikipedia, 2022a)

⁹ Stockholm syndrome describes the behaviour of an abducted or captive victim (e.g. a child) who, over time, begins to sympathize with the abductor (e.g. with the parent with whom they live). Captives begin to identify with their captors as a defensive mechanism out of fear of violence. Small signs of kindness from the abductor are amplified, as in a captive situation, lack of perspective is impossible. Escape attempts are also perceived as a threat, since in an escape attempt, there is a high risk that the abductee (e.g. the child) will be harmed and injured.

had, Flyora decides to walk home with Glosa. Once there, we can hear the loud buzz of flies and the image of the sisters' puppets lined up as if in a firing squad is emblematic. The state of delusion is also maintained by finding some hot food in the oven of the house and makes Flyora ignore the total absence of family members. The order, the stillness and the strange property of life to be remnant lead our intuition to believe, apparently without good reason, that a massacre has taken place.

For a few minutes, all that follows are incremental actions of the inexplicable. Flyora gives his almost physical helplessness a contest, manifested for example when he doesn't see the pile of corpses behind the house right in front of him. As in any crisis situation, the boy wants to take a reverse time trip that ends up wallowing in spatiality. The wallow being both that in the swamp (its viscosity refers to the earth's womb in which all are born and die) and that in the difficulty of choosing the route to a ghost destination where his parents would have taken refuge. The hinge in the boy's logic comes from the tacit assumption that the imminence of death is discreet, that it is, even in war, the exception. Then it becomes clear that we have proof of a place where his family could have been saved.

Myth of birth

An important metacharacter is the swamp, which we will briefly analyse. The swamp is the ancestral fecund pattern of the world, i.e. it takes the organic form of all beings that have died, it does not swim in mud, it swims in the organs and flesh of the dead. The swamp is red, it is the congealed blood of the dead. Glosa and Flyora's movement through the swamp is a gripping one. Their screams cannot be heard, we only see the micro facial expressions and chaotic movements they make out of a desire to escape. Everything is weighed down by the abundant presence of muffled war sounds. Although it is quiet, we are not spared the presence of their cries, the silence is generated by the suffering inside the man who no longer has the intention of externalising himself, but only to endure until the moment of escape. In relation to the swamp, the shotgun undergoes an alchemical process and highlights its presumption as a phallic symbol as the *great placenta* of the swamp is forcibly and desperately cut away by the boy with the shotgun – it is the imaginary cutting away of a first birth of the world and the rebirth from it as an escape. Terrified of Flyora's madness, Glosa can't take it anymore and tells him the truth that his family is dead. In desperation

he throws her into the mud, to endure the cruel reality he tends to kill the only source of rationality, if Gloscha dies, so does the truth about his family.

Burdened with hellish chaos, the character who appears seems to be an almost biblical saviour, treads on a watery moat, but without drowning in it, he appears as if he is treading water. Driven mad with horror, he makes the break between delirium and reality and pulls them out of the hallucinatory morass they seem to have been in for quite some time.

On his journey he comes across a group of survivors from his home village. It is an emblematic moment, this movement of always returning to the origin, in his case – the village and the people he knows, and then being able to go further and further away. The celebration of the interaction between him and the villagers has something of the festivity of a remembrance that is his, his family's, his pre-war life, his country, his childhood.

The reappearance of the old man comes to close the cycle of the apparent curse he had formulated at the beginning of the film. His warning suggested from the beginning that disobeying the boy, more specifically digging up the dead, would lead to the loss of free will and placing him in a spiral of predestination, so he would have to continue their destiny, war, life and death. Flyora's perception of war is like his general perception of happiness, in that he sees all its consequences, all its horrors, but he always misses the moment of transformation, the moment when they occur; it begins to seem hallucinatory that things were ever otherwise

and that the war brought about their change just as we can honestly speak of happiness only in recollection and never in the present. There is a reversal of qualities and now the becoming normal in war seems to produce its atrocities, thus externalising the grotesque attribute of war, becoming merely a consequence of its installation on the ordinary.



In shock, the boy begins his own flight to nowhere, accomplishing this through a total temporal deconstruction accomplished through the instrumentation of two legendary vehicles. The first derives from the Christian tradition which assumes our material, bodily genesis as coming from the earth, and the second is itself a ground on which the first comes,

namely the belief that the earth in its fecund state is a primordial, mitochondrial mother who gives birth to us but also sustains our subsequent life. In practical terms, Flyora unites legendary realities with his present state of shock by violently digging a hole in the ground, the same ground in which he was born, in which he searches for weapons, in which his slain soldiers were buried, was the only spatial landmark that not only stopped his existence, but also nullified it, thus altering both past and future. We can also observe the presence of a saviour complex, a certain Christ-like reference, Flyora irrationally feeling guilty for the war and guilty for Death. His physical as well as mental helplessness caused by his age makes him cut short rational paths and identify with the scapegoat. The women who mourn his death prefigure the selfishness of the people in the community who are constantly evading small, individual dramas and refuse a total knowledge or perspective. Thus, they would be able to repeatedly give birth to Flyora even at the risk of always giving birth to him dead.

The primordial imaginary – Totem

Suddenly, all the villagers begin to have a coordinated action to make a statue, a totem. The presence of numerous enemies around them increases their nervousness so they act against our intuition and want, through this statue, to achieve a phenomenon of reversal, of the passage from the Multiple to the One. All the soldiers become one, and this totem is the caricatured image of the Nazi in their altered vision of hate and fear. The trauma of war causes them to pay heightened attention to the facial elements of the totem, and the result is an installation that bears a striking resemblance to Hitler. In doing so, their hatred is spared as the construction of the totem empties the depicted character of humanity, and they can subject the statue to any torment as it is the image of a man's image, reflected in the terror it produces.

The trauma of abandonment – loss of identity

Flyora's departure with other comrades-in-arms on a pilgrimage with the statue through neighbouring villages marks the beginning of tragic events. They come under attack from enemy aircraft and only Flyora and Roubej survive. Arriving in the first village in a chaotic effort, they steal a peasant's cow but are soon surprised by an artillery attack in the forest. Importantly, live ammunition was used during the filming and the death of the cow also takes place in real life.

The dynamic framing of the cow's eyes¹⁰, looking up at the sun that becomes a shell, and the sounds she makes, have the effect of greatly sensitising the viewer. As in most situations, Flyora is again left alone in a succession of journeys that he begins and never manages to finish.

Aiming to hide from the Germans, the boy formally integrates into a peasant's family, losing his identity, he becomes one by one the peasant's dead son or grandson. Under Nazi occupation, the whole settlement is a scene of a total and absurd spectacle, a voice from a megaphone ordering the villagers where to sit and taking care to tell them the story of what will happen next. There is a terrible contrast between the crypt-like atmosphere inside the houses and the forced celebration outside. As the two atmospheres seem heterogeneous, it takes the stylistic artifice of breaking a window to condemn everyone in the house to collective joy. The whole performative structure is intended as entertainment for the commander of the regiment occupying the village. Among the absurd and parodic demands of the megaphone voice are washing, festive dressing, mock joy etc.

For the German group that arrives in this village everything is seen as a reason for amusement, including a simulated medical check on a dead man brought by them as a warning to anyone who violates the orders of the German commander and country.

A picture of a cruel massacre is then depicted, as the villagers are forced to leave their children in the village church, which is later burnt down, and machine-gun fire is fired at it. The scenes seem a syncretism between the writings of François Rabelais and the paintings of Pieter Bruegel. The music blaring from the Major's car and the obsessive appearance of a plane, which seems to exist only in the boy's mind, internalize the whole action, so that each dead child increments his perpetual death.

The myth of the saviour

In a confusing twist of fate, Flyora wakes up in a forest and remembers where he had hidden his gun in the village. He goes to retrieve it and "repairs" it using a leucoplast. The fact that he considers this repair to be essential and does it

¹⁰ "The eye or the gaze is always linked to transcendence, a fact that both universal mythology and psychoanalysis have noted. A philosopher like Alquié grasps this essence of transcendence which serves as the basis of visual perception: 'Everything is visual perception, and who would not understand that visual perception is only possible from a distance? The very essence of human vision introduces a certain separation into visual knowledge...' (Durand, 1998, p. 149).

with methods specific to a man proves once again the humanisation of his weapon in full connection with the mechanisation of his own person. He turns himself into a cog of the great war machine, and his rifle becomes an indeterminate human hybrid, a death-creating waxing of man. The altered perception of reality is also suggested by the boy's obsession with repetition and uniformity, so that all women become Glosa, all the words they say or don't say are her words (*to love, to have children*). But the overlap of people in his psyche seems to cross this threshold, suggesting that Glosa, the old man, the imaginary plane become One.

Towards the end, the propaganda component of the film appears, namely the emphasis is on the noble character of the Soviet soldiers and their respect for the procedures and rules of war when they take prisoner some German soldiers. The obvious contrast is drawn between the formalism with which the Soviet soldiers act in condemning the Germans to death as opposed to the pleasure, amusement, sadism with which the Nazis killed the civilian population.

Before leaving – a child who, like Flyora, carries a suitcase full of bullets and a new rifle, symbolising the continuation of the cycle of war. A pivotal scene that occurs in the film's denouement is the end of the boy's attempts at self-annihilation, this is now made possible by projecting himself into contemporary history, achieved through the use of successive overlaps in myths that have unfolded throughout his journey to the front line. The boy uses his rifle, which he is only now fully integrating, and fires it repeatedly at the image of Hitler in a fallen painting. In terms of imagery, with each shot, the director places images of the lives of the German people and of Hitler's life, especially the damage he created. The last image depicts Hitler as a child, and this produces a magnetic closeness between his status and Flyora's, and this similarity triggers a self-preservation instinct that makes him find himself in the dilemma of not knowing whether he wants to kill Hitler from himself or kill his self from Hitler.

Conclusions

The Russian film *Come and See* is considered the only real anti-war film in the entire Russian cinema. The film is made in such a way that you don't ever feel eager to keep any memory of watching it, you are truly removed from what is the accuracy of the idea of war as an event in which one country defends itself against another. The filmmaking mechanism meant to provoke despair and raise the hardest questions about the true nature of humans.

The realism of the film is far beyond our expectations, any viewer who has never lived through a war can truly feel a part of the experience. Besides, the film doesn't have a lot of actual war sequences as they are shown in other films or documentaries, we don't see people fighting each other, rather we see the real pain that people have to endure and especially children going to war. The quality of the film lies precisely in its direct and unvarnished presentation of the traumatic events of war. The film presents a metaphysical awareness of linear horror and constant fear.

All sequences of great intensity are captured by the camera in such a way that we are complicit and even characters in the film. We are made to witness it all, watching from up close as the flesh drips off the characters. We are the ones filming and participating directly in the events, we are also the ones who, subjected to the aftermath, are forced to wonder if we are complicit in the rivalry or intensely experiencing the terrifying emotion of those we see destroyed before us.

Throughout the film, the director has used real ammunition, he has tried to bring the state of war into our psyche by using ideas as realistically as possible. The most realistic reproduction of the states of those in the war was to be realistic when the actors truly understood the fear.

Everything is filmed in daylight, letting you feel the real passage of time. We're not watching a film, where we can clearly see everything around us, we're in it and, like those involved, we find it hard to walk, see, hear or recognise what's around us. The director throws us, along with the actors, into a world that many people only know historically, but not sensory-emotionally. It creates in the audience's psyche the reality of war.

There is no real violence displayed, but there are reactions to the horror, to the violence, to the consequences of aggression that are left without cinematic explanation. The violence is not followed by any visual explanation, the images are interrupted, leaving the experience to be prolonged to the point of madness.

The themes used in the film are the early maturation of the child, the human race towards the end in time of war as recognition of life itself (the end giving meaning to life). It is a kind of understanding of what life and existence is all about. The child does not seek to find out how to escape from the terrifying events he is going through, he wants to understand existence in its own sense under the traumatic aspect.

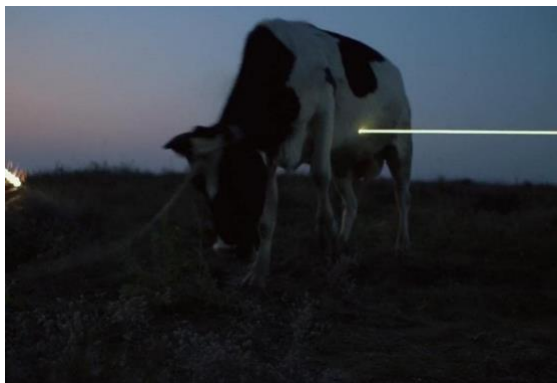
Another important theme in the film is the child soldier. The use of children as soldiers forces the unconsciousness of the human being¹¹, in the situation and need to resort to murder, to the definitive cancellation of emotion, the cancellation of feelings and the ability of a human being to be human. The child protagonist begins to age unnaturally fast under the horror of war.

His coming of age implies a clichéd image of what it means to be old, grey and without much power to live. For the child, reality becomes unreal, non-existent, we don't know if he is capable of recognising what is going on around him or has gone mad. He is in a delirium of existence.

Every frame, music and camera close-up are evidence of the viewer's projection into the film and into each of the film's characters, actively participating in all the absolute brutality of the consequences of war. The reality that Klimov presents about the war and its victims is disturbing, adding with different frames an endless experience of this trauma. It is a cycle of trauma (Jung, 2014)¹² that we will experience whether we have experienced war ourselves or not.

¹¹ "Archetypes are training systems for action and at the same time images and emotions. They are inherited with the structure of the brain, representing its psychic aspect. They represent, on the one hand, a very strong instinctive conservatism, while, on the other hand, they are the most effective possible means of instinctual adaptation. They are thus essentially the chthonic side of the psyche... that part by which the psyche is attached to nature." (Romanian Association of Analytical Psychology, n.d.)

¹² The collective unconscious – as far as we can say anything about it – seems to be composed of mythological motifs or primordial images, and therefore the myths of all peoples are their exponents. In fact, all mythology could be considered a kind of projection of the collective unconscious. Therefore, we can study the collective unconscious in two ways: through mythology or through the analysis of the individual. Archetypes were models in the collective unconscious. They were innate responses to stimuli found in all human societies for thousands of years, such as babies, elders, heroes and virgins. Jung was struck by the resemblance between the images in dreams as reported by his patients and the images in the journals of medieval alchemists. The alchemists had been a pre-scientific version of the chemists. The alchemists had been most famous for their attempts to turn various substances, such as lead and antimony, into gold, but they also carried out many impressive demonstrations. They could make liquids change colour, explode or turn into solids only if the ingredients were mixed or heated correctly. All this seemed like magic in the Middle Ages. Some alchemists kept dream diaries, illustrating them with flamboyant, mysterious drawings of supernatural creatures and mystical symbols. Jung borrowed an alchemist's diary from a library the same week he dreamt about a book filled with obscure symbols. Opening the borrowed book, Jung saw pages filled with fantastic symbols similar to those in his dream. From that moment on, Jung was drawn to alchemy. He explored the books of ancient alchemists to look for clues about obscure symbolism and occult practices.



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