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## USING FILM EDUCATION AS A PART OF VISUAL CULTURE IN ORDER TO SUPPORT RECEPTION OF LITERATURE

*Галовска А. Використання кіноосвіти як складової візуальної культури з метою підтримки реценції літератури. Світ учнівських зацікавлень, захоплень та культурних навичок увиразнюється сьогодні і буде увиразнюватись у майбутньому переважно в аудіовізуальній галузі, а з-поміж усіх видів мистецтва найближчою для молоді є мова фільму. Відтак нові рішення й методи навчання повинні йти в ногу з шаленою швидкістю розвитку засобів масової інформації. У статті висловлюється припущення, що саме за допомогою кіномистецтва можна не тільки впливати на краще розуміння поточних суспільно-політичних подій, але й заохочувати молодь до читання літератури. Екранізації літературних творів постають книжкою в образі, яка більш доступна й зрозуміла для молодшої аудиторії.*

**Ключові слова:** кіноосвіта, медіаосвіта, імперіалізм у літературі й кіно.

*Galowska A. Using film education as a part of visual culture in order to support reception of literature. The world of the student's interests, passions and cultural habits is located now and will be located in the future mainly in the audiovisuality, and from all kinds of art the closest for a young man is the language of film. New approaches and educational methods should not be left behind in the time of fast development of media, even though it might be not easy for teachers. The author presumes, that by use of the film art educators can impact the better understanding of the sociopolitical events and also encourage students to reading literature. Film adaptations of the literary works are the books contained in the image – for the young audience more readable and understandable version of the art. Thus it is worth to make a use of new approaches connected with ludic function of receiving literature and made reading more attractive for the students on the all levels of the education.*

**Key words:** film education, media education, imperialism in literature and film.

*Галовска А. Использование кинообразования как составляющей визуальной культуры с целью поддержки реценции литературы. Мир ученических интересов, увлечений и культурных навыков выражается сегодня и будет выражаться в будущем преимущественно в аудиовизуальной области, а из всех видов искусства наиболее близким для молодежи является язык фильма. Поэтому новые решения и методы обучения должны идти в ногу с невероятной скоростью развития средств массовой информации. В статье высказывается предположение, что именно с помощью киноискусства можно не только влиять на лучшее понимание текущих общественно-политических событий, но и поощрять молодежь к чтению литературы. Экранизации литературных произведений являются книгой в образе, которая более доступна и понятна для молодой аудитории.*

**Ключевые слова:** кинообразование, медиаобразование, империализм в литературе и кино.

**Statement of the problem.** Teachers and other educators should focus on the student perspective of receiving literature, culture and social relations which now a days is concentrated mostly on the media. Technology gives us wide range of methods and approaches in teaching and one of those is film education. With the help of bibliography I would like to show that film adaptation can be also helpful in receiving the literature. Using as an example analysis of Conrad's novella and Coppola's film adaptation we can experience modernistic and postmodernistic views on evil of imperialism, which may help students and receivers to understand past and recent political and sociological events.

**Research analysis.** «Heart of Darkness is by now so familiar to us, so studied, commented upon, written about, argued over, appropriated, liberated, vilified, recuperated, rehashed, taught and retaught that it might seem as though there can hardly be anything left worth saying about it» [11, 65]. This quotation surely is truthful for the researchers but the great Polish novelist's masterpiece is not easy to receive especially for the students.

In the very first lines of the novella the main protagonist – Marlow proceeds to tell the entire story as the tale of a young Roman sent off to the blank edges of the known world nineteen hundred years ago to confront the «utter savagery» of the primeval England. London then was the similar dark place with the swamps of the Thames which were like the Congo for the Romans. The final words of the story drape the entire modern world in a brooding projection of its darkness: «The offing was barred by a black bank of clouds, and the tranquil waterway leading to the uttermost ends of the earth flowed sombre under an overcast sky - seemed to lead into the heart of an immense darkness» [10, 3].

Together with this quotation go certain questions. Is this a story about the Belgian colonialism or colonialism in general? Or does underneath Conrad's tale lay much more – a



Pic. 1. The front of Moskwa Cinema in wintertime in Warsaw. The beginning of martial law in Poland, 1981, remarkable photography by Christopher Jan Niedenthal (<http://www.fototapeta.art.pl/2010/cnd.php>, (access 25.06.2013, 8.57).

repeated vision of Dante's and Virgil's hell? Did Conrad, like George Orwell truly had his vision of the future World, about never ending stories of cruelty, greed and decay, about a crime which like history likes to repeat itself instantly over years and centuries? In this case Conrad's short novella needs to be discussed, and studied over in order to let us understand dark side of human nature and motivate us in trying to prevent a human kind from moral destruction.

*HoD* is studied closer in our times not only in the books or reviews but also using a film art. The proof that Conrad's vision of the imperialism is still up to date is the 2001 year edition of the 1979 Francis Ford Coppola film masterpiece *Apocalypse Now Redux*. It is extended version of the 1979 film adaptation of Joseph Conrad's 1899 novella, which has had a great influence on many artists. It was Czesław Miłosz who used it as a prophetic vision of 20<sup>th</sup> century as the time of two world wars, totalitarianism and genocides, and who also saw its relation to Conrad's motherland not only in the times of the author of *HoD* but also in the nearest future.

The Zeitgeist from Miłosz's *A Poetical Treatise* is wearing a necklace made of skulls reminding those which were stuck on the palisade in Kurtz's camp. Also T.S. Eliot's poem appears in Coppola's film, for whom Conrad's work shows a crisis of humankind by stigmatizing «*fragility of the base on which modern people built their dilapidating ark, namely language*» [8, 195]. We can also find the traces of Conrad's novella in George Steiner's *The Portage to San Cristobal of A. H.*, Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities* as well, as works by Marcel Proust, Herman Broch, Georges Bernanos and Polish émigré Bronisław Malinowski [8, 195–196].

*HoD* continued to be famous among the readers during years passing by. Among them we can point Orson Welles, who adapted the story twice for radio and took it as the basis for an ambitious Hollywood film that was never finished. When the project ran over the budget and was scrapped, Welles made *Citizen Kane* instead [10, 5]. In 1979 Coppola tried to transpose the late 19<sup>th</sup> century colonial reality into the imperial reality of the 1960s and the current frame already contained the experience of the Kolyma and Auschwitz, and it was parallel with Pol Pot's and Khmer Rouge genocide. However, it seems to be wondering why Coppola has decided to express new edition and extended version of the old film, which already has been shown and priced over 20 years ago. History showed that genocides of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had their repetition in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and had experienced the new age even more harmful. As an example we can mention tribal conflict in Rwanda or the ethnic war in former Yugoslavia. In the case of Yugoslavia, war crimes and genocides took place in the times of modern humanistic developed Western world, in the heart of Europe.

Coppola opposed the US involvement in the Vietnam War and wanted to expose its cruelty. But the director also posed the question, which after September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 has become again up to date, it is the question about the evil of modern imperialism [10, 5]. The United States does not really changes their war politics, what is easy to notice in contemporary Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. Since *shoah* and communist genocide Western people thought that evil has been external and it has its source in non-democratic, totalitarian or dictatorial states [10, 5], but the modern world shows that evil is internal, that its hiding in every one of us, what has been proved by professor Phillip Zimbardo in his *Lucifer Effect* experiment. In this experiment two groups of students played prisons kept in custody and watching them guards, nevertheless the hole procedure had to be shorten when the worst human instincts in students – guards have been unleashed and they have started to use their position and torture students – prisoners [12]. The anthropological crisis of modernity has also disrupted the Enlightenment myth of Reason and Progress, which has led to the «metaphysical horror» well described by Leszek Kołakowski [6, 236]. This complicated philosophical conception of the *Absolute* show the time as an enemy, defeated but still alive and does not yield to a conceptual reduction to anything named *Nothingness* [6, 236–237]. The other side of metaphysical horror is revealed: if God is *Absolute*, there is no good and evil and *a fortiori* there is no difference between them. It is the awareness of good and evil that makes part of being community, and became also a condition for constant self-confirmation [6, 270]. In other words, the nihilistic crisis connected with Darwinian «natural selection» and Nietzschean «will to power» leads to absolute loneliness and turns human existence into crushing dominating murder [8, 197]. Zimbardo however, in the example of Fiodor Dostoyevsky shows, that «the horror» can be also a hope for humanity. After spending four years in a Siberian prison a prominent Russian novelist commented that his time in prison developed in him deep optimism for the future of the mankind. He claimed that, if human can survive the horror of prison life he must be a «*creature who will withstand anything*» [12, 70].



By analyzing Conrad's novella and comparing it with Coppola's film we can experience different view on evil of imperialism. In both works we can find political, sociological and economical sources of evil, but the conflicts and tensions seem to be viewed from slightly different perspective of the writer and the film producer.

Table 1. *HoD* and *AN*, basic differences [8, 207]

<i>HEART OF DARKNESS</i>	<i>APOCALYPSE NOW</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Double realization of their identity and condition: Marlow and Kurtz</li> <li>- Kurtz's natural death (illness)</li> <li>- Excusing humanitarian discourse parallel to colonial <i>praxis</i></li> <li>- Colonial greed</li> <li>- Colonial stupidity (random shooting at the jungle)</li> <li>- Marlow: sailor-philosopher</li> <li>- Sense created by symbolic screen-images</li> <li>- Shattered modern consciousness vs. primitive instinct</li> <li>- Grayness, opacity, darkness</li> <li>- Kurtz: seductive Hitler-style voice</li> <li>- Double narrative</li> <li>- The intended/ the wild woman</li> <li>- [Marlow as Conrad]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kurtz possesses self-awareness, Willard undergoes «initiation»</li> <li>- Kurtz death by execution (ritualistic sacrifice)</li> <li>- The <i>praxis</i> of war &gt; excusing discourse</li> <li>- The logic of war destruction and military parades</li> <li>- Stupidity of war and imperial arrogance (napalm bombardment before surfing)</li> <li>- Willard: intelligent CIA agent</li> <li>- Varied symbols, story told in episodes</li> <li>- Clear consciousness, but ill soul (American technical skills and infernal situation)</li> <li>- Warm and intensive colors: green and fire</li> <li>- Kurtz: the great Stalin-like leader</li> <li>- Double beginning: subjective and objective</li> <li>- The memory of a son (family and succession values)</li> <li>- [Kurtz as Coppola]</li> </ul>

**Purpose of research.** The aim of this study is sources analysis and an introduction to the empirical research on the reception of the literature and understanding the modern imperialism by using film education to be conducted amongst the group of English Philology students.

**The main section of the research.** As «darkness» was to be widely interpreting by literary critics, the idea of «horror» has a comparable appeal for filmmakers. At least ten film or television adaptations of *HoD* have been made in the course of the last half-century, including parodies and spoofs as well as serious efforts. None were ever filmed in the Congo, and only one directed by Ettore Scola was located in Africa. The greatest and most daring of these films is surely Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*, which is «structured on» *HoD* but transplants the action from colonial Africa to the Vietnam War. It is thought, that film share a similar narrative structure despite the differences in their stories [4].

However, *Apocalypse Now* was not the first film using Vietnam War to speak about modern American imperialism. *The Deer Hunter* had started shooting after Coppola's film, but it was finished sooner and triumphed at Academy Awards in the spring of 1979. Starring Robert De Niro and Meryl Streep film differed sharply from Coppola's *opus magnum* and it dealt with the impact of war on men and women in the United States. Made in the same year and more modest in the scope was *Go Tell the Spartans*, which enlarges an incident during the «phoneywar» period of 1964, when US involvement in Vietnam consisted of a few thousand «military advisers». The film is analyzing the French occupation of Indo-China and the tension between US mercenaries and local Vietnamese soldiers. Made by Hal Ashby in 1978

*Coming Home* expressed a poignant regret for the consequences of the war, but it unfolded almost wholly in the US. In this production Vietnam is left as a malignant shadow. However, it deserved two Oscars for Jane Fonda and John Voight. John Wayne and Ray Kellogg made *The Green Berets* at the peak of the conflict in 1968. Unfortunately, this film is actually fulfilled with his own propaganda about affirmation of Special Forces in Vietnam. Olivier Stone's *Platoon* is a war film famous because of its pain, frustration and fury. It reflects the increasing candour with which Americans were able to confront their most appalling struggle since the Civil War. Three years later Stone would depict an aftermath of Vietnam War in awarded *Born on the Fourth of July*. Based on the life of real Vietnam War veteran Ron Kovic's story shows blind false patriotism and pointlessness of war [5, 175–176]. In grim and realistic *Hamburger Hill*, made in Vietnam by John Irving documentary attacks on the strategic fortified hill were described. Stanley Kubrick spent years preparing *Full Metal Jacket*. It was released in 1987, and like Coppola, Kubrick employed the unrivalled talent of Michael Herr as a writer. Neither light nor landscape was convincing since the director used in his film peripheries of London as a location. But another Kubrick's film *Paths of Glory* was a masterpiece for a change. The story may took place during the North Vietnamese assault on the old citadel of Hue in 1968. Other production needed to mention about are: *M\*A\*S\*H*, *Catch-22*, *All Quiet on the Western Front* and *Saving Private Ryan*, which are showing chronicles of the insanity of war and imperialism with grinding realism [5, 177].

Some war films have been more graphic in their depiction of violence and physical pain, some have been louder in their denunciation, but none of them like *Apocalypse Now* has at once bombarded the audience with such complicity of Vietnam War.

This is significant, that after 22 years from releasing *Apocalypse Now* in 1979 film makers decided to re-release *Apocalypse Now Redux*. It is also a proof that imperialism and genocide themes are up to date. The theme in a metaphorical way is repeated constantly, over and over again by film makers. It is even compared to the science fiction films such as George Lucas's «Star Wars» where «[...] the rebels in [...] are the Vietnamese, and the Empire is the United States» [5, 1].

For a long time people connected with film business presumed that «no film maker had licked the challenge of bringing HoD to the screen», and it was like «waving a red flag in a front of a bull» (Peter Cowie's phone interview with Milusi, 18 November, 1986) [5, 2]. As Michael Herr noticed in 1987, it was impossible to transfer Joseph Conrad's sublime irony to the screen because he is purely literary writer. Actually, Orson Welles author of famous *Citizen Kane* was the closest of making a film adaptation of Conrad's novella. He has already adapted it for radio in 1938 and wanted to make a film as «a parable of fascism» (interview with M. Herr in *Positif*, No.320, Paris, 1987).

The time of making film was not easy, decisions must have been taken spontaneously or the film was never to be made. It must be admitted, that situation during Coppola making his film was still tense, American troops were still charging beaches of Vietnam, anti-war fervor were mounting on the campuses around the United States [5, 3]. Because of the situation, the film was to be made in the Philippines. The Department of Defense also refused to cooperate with Coppola in case of «narrative [of the film] did not portray historical events (i.e. Vietnam) in an accurate light» [5, 49].

According to Maslowski we can notice two kinds of discourse in the film: the discourse of war and humanitarian one. Both are devaluated by the practice of barbaric murders perpetrated to the soundtrack of Richard Wagner's «Ride of the Valkyries» (Valkyries, in the Wagner's opera were a group of virgin-warriors riding winged horses, whose task is to transport

Allen heroes to Walhalla, the major god Odin's hall. In the beliefs of ancient Germans, they were probably the spirits of death) coming out of the helicopter loudspeakers. In this context Kurtz's crimes seems to be natural ultimate consequences. The Colonel sees it as an absolute moral power of the Vietnamese, who were – according to Kurtz's tale – able to cut off the arms of hundreds of children because they had been vaccinated by American missionaries. Maslowski compares performed by Marlon Brando Kurtz to the Stalin, who possessed the Soviet's leader intuition, which tells him whom to kill at the given moment. In the Kurtz's camp we can notice adults and children walking and playing between the corpses of hanged, tortured and quartered people [8, 203].

Besides strong symbols of the tribal rituals like war paint covering faces and triple mud bath of Willard's soldiers, Kurtz before he beheaded a soldier and Willard's when he is preparing to kill Kurtz, it is a need to mention the French episode. It is a positive symbol of colonial dream of a fatherland outside the borders of one's country. But all the rest of symbols leaves no room for a hope – Americans imperialistic actions lead only to their destruction and ultimate downfall.

**Conclusions.** The myth of the Dark Continent was a Victorian invention. As part of a larger discourse about empire, it was shaped by political and economic pressures and also by a psychology of blaming the victims, in this case Africans. From the abolitionism to the imperialism, the myth of the Dark Continent defined slavery as the offspring of tribal savagery and portrayed white explorers and missionaries as the leaders of a Christian crusade that would destroy the forces of darkness. Reports about cannibalism, witchcraft and shameless sexual customs emerged Victorians. The first abolitionists had placed blame for the slave trade mainly on Europeans, but, by midcentury, that blame had largely been displaced onto Africans. Peoples of Africa were stripped of articulation. The Bible was translated into numerous African languages, but the colonizers rarely translated it in the other direction, even when they learned Wolof or Zulu. African customs and beliefs were condemned as superstitions, their social organizations were despised and demolished, their land, belongings, and labor often appropriated as ruthlessly as they had been through the slave trade.

The ethnocentric discourse of domination was not met with silence. However, lack of objective sources made historical recover of the African respond to their Victorian savior-invaders very hard. It is known about resistance fought by Zulu, Ashanti, Matabele, Ethiopian, Bugandan, and Sudanese peoples. The writings of literate nineteenth-century Africans like the Liberian Edward Blyden, pioneer of the *negritude* movement, have also been important. Still other responses can be found in the modern independence movements and the writings of nationalists like Fanon, Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta, and Steve Biko. Nevertheless, the legacy of the myth of the Dark Continent and, more generally, of imperialism has been massive and impossible to evade, as stereotypic treatments of Africa by today's mass media continue to demonstrate [2, 81]. A liberation from racism and the politics of domination is far from over. The most recent assumptions about the antithesis point «primitive» or «backward» and «civilized» or «advanced» societies, about the cultural and historical differences between Afro-Americans and white Americans, and about the legitimacy of the white apartheid regime in South Africa. In this regard, what Nkrumah said in 1965 about the special impact of the American mass media on the African situation is still relevant [1]. Passing the important message of the condition of the mankind using the film art had to be a natural consequence of technical and cultural revolution in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

There is an astounding number of interpretations of *HoD*, in the film, television productions or in the radio and bibliography in subject of Conrad's novella exists in dozens of vol-

umes. It is thought, that narrative of the novella is not always clear and the plot is not always easy to grasp. The key to the interpretation seems to be the symbolic technique of screen-images which, so to speak condense the meaning of the events. The story told by Marlow who grew up on child stories full of heroes and adventures but later experienced the cruel and irrational reality of the colonial conquest is put in parentheses by other protagonist. Mythical character of Kurtz, regarded as an ingenious trader as a young man dreamed of bringing enlightenment to «barbaric» peoples and developing ivory trade. Eventually, he stretched his mercantile logic to the limits, acting radically and brutally. Kurtz following his methods is getting more ivory than his colleges and competitors, but his acting involves murders and ideology of profit at all costs. Finally, he not only uses violence but also plays a role of demigod in the front of African cannibalistic tribes. He is being treated as a king, shaman, an absolute lord of life and death of the «brutes». Conrad's novella has a triptych-like structure. The first part is a dream of adventure, the second is the journey and the third is discovery of the laws of darkness, which are fascination with absolute power and temptation of primitive instincts [8, 198]. The novella are to be found co-existence of two discourses. The first one is about a colonial state, which advocates the need of enlighten and civilize «savages», to teach then the law and religion of developed countries. Nevertheless it is ridiculed in the book by describing acts of punishing blacks for crimes committed by colonizers themselves, like French navy shooting at the jungle. The second discourse is of Judeo-Christian origin and shows colonization, which pretend to be honest, benevolent, rigorous, dedicated work [8, 198] *HoD* detects human interactions and is structured like a play of mirror reflection, which is reminiscent of Shakespeare, Conrad's favorite author. Thus, the novella is loaded with symbols. The Enlightenment patronizes plunder and genocide as the two ancient human instincts. There is not many positive symbols though. One of them is the fog, which just like in the Bible mark the presence of the Primeval. But even fog turns negative and starts to be connected with darkness, just the same as the river, which starts to be the route of terrifying initiation, the revelation of human unconsciousness and human primitive instincts. The final image of the crisis of reality is shown, and what is left is a hollow man [8, 203–204].

It is thought, that in Conrad's writing his heroes have ineffable weaknesses, but thanks to intellectual honesty, essential metaphysical self-examination and self-judgment can built new ethical bonds between people, which today is a great value. Coppola's film is lacking this kind of item, which makes his story far more pessimistic than Conrad's novella. The director of *Apocalypse Now* in opposite to novella writer left no hope for humankind now and in the future. According to the film the price for the madness and «the horror» of war has been paid by Kurtz, Willard, Coppola, whole humankind and the apocalypse will last now and forever. This state of human race seems to have universal dimension. The broken mirror from the opening scene illustrates powerlessness of all our ideas about reality when confronted with basic primitive human instincts. As a civilization we have found ourselves on the other side of a mirror, the side of madness, which supposed to lead to absolute control over the world, but in total effect it is leading to destruction. It is an apocalypse in a colloquial sense [8, 205].

Those two remarkable masterpieces *HoD* and *AN* are so similar with their structure and envoy because they have been made in the similar times, the novella at the end of the century going with the *fin de siècle* mood and the film on the very beginning of the postmodernism age with its asking for keeping the eyes open on differences in races, religions, political views and sexuality. Both Conrad and Coppola speak about constant instinctive temptation, the desire to wield an absolute power over others. They speak about an illness of the soul and about insanity and, colloquially speaking they beg for changes in the society. As long as the



film is a testimony to the evil of the humankind, the novella goes further, it make an effort to understand reality and rebuilt dignity.

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