East European Film Bulletin

ESSAY

The Cinematic Man

VOL. 22 (OCTOBER 2012) BY MIKHAIL IAMPOLSKI

Mikhail Iampolski (New York University) retraces the genealogy of the cinematic man starting with Soviet films of the 1920s, and ending with contemporary Russian cinema. He argues that a study of the respective epochs reflects the emergence of a distinct human as created by artists, societies, and political systems. In his postscript to the essay, Iampolski turns to Sergei Loznitsa's "My Joy" (2010), arguing that it is tied to another condition – the "indeterminate man", – a de-individualized human detached from consistent historical narratives…

When I was a young man, I believed the Formalists, who argued that the language of a creative work (especially poetry) is somehow self-referential and makes itself apparent, as in the case of Shklovsky's defamiliarization, which halts "recognition". The same feature was defined by Jakobson as a poetic function of language. Many years passed before I began to realize that the OPOJAZ (Society for the Study of Poetic Language) understanding of poetic language, which aspired to universality, was in fact determined by its epoch. Let us recall how Shklovsky introduces defamiliarization in his famous work "Art as Device." At first, he firmly rejects Potebnya's view that artistic creation is "thinking in images" ("And why not?" we shall ask today); he then criticizes Spencer's assertion that art is related to an economy of effort. He recognizes this law only in prose, where the economy of effort is expressed in the *automatization* of perception. Things begin to be given to us "algebraically," "with one characteristic": "…life fades away into nothingness. Automatization eats away at things, at clothes, at furniture, at our wives, and our fear of war."[1] Accordingly, artistic creativity, which in Shklovsky's eyes stands in opposition to the routine prose of everyday life, should return to us our things, furniture and wife; in other words, it must deautomatize perception, and, violating the law of economy of effort, introduce difficulty, obstruction. It serves to recall Shklovsky's classic definition: "The purpose of art, then, is to lead us to a knowledge of a thing through the organ of sight instead of recognition. By "estranging" objects and complicating form, the device of art makes perception long and "laborious." The perceptual process in art has a purpose of its own and ought to be extended to the fullest. Art is a means of experiencing the process of creativity. The artifact itself is quite unimportant."[2]

What strikes us today in this theory of artistic language (which Shklovsky calls "device") is a particular kind of *machinism*. The perception of art is built on the laws of thermodynamics, on the expenditure and conservation of energy. The result of these thermodynamic processes is automatization, the transformation of perception into pure mechanics. Deautomatization – defamiliarization – should allow us to relive the making of things, that is, to engage in a certain process of production. "Making" is contrasted by Shklovsky with "made things," which, according to Marx, have undergone a process of the alienation of labor in acquiring commodity value.

Today, of course, we pay no attention to this significant element of theoretization. However it is precisely this element which allows us to understand that Shklovsky's notion of artistic language is rooted in a particular conceptualization of the person, who for him is primarily a manufacturer or producer of goods, and who in his functionality reproduces the laws of mechanics and thermodynamics. That which laid claim to universality turns out to be but a special instance of the transfer onto the language of art of a particular understanding of the person, determined by the era of Modernism and characteristically for that era, tied up with the cult of machines, which exemplified the ideals of the new rationalism.

This fully applies to the cinema of the time, as well. The cinema of the '20s had yet to be viewed through the prism of automatization in Shklovsky's understanding. It had come into being too recently for its perception to have undergone the process of routinization, for it to have already swallowed "things, clothes, furniture, one's wife and the fear of war." But the language of film in the '20s is no less dependent on this understanding of the "new person" as machine. What springs to mind first is of course Vertov's mechanical Cine-Eye. Indeed "montage" is not simply an engineering term transferred to film. It is the construction of a person from parts (as in Kuleshov's famous experiments); it is the poetics of mechanical assembly. The crowd is the first "assemblage" of elements seen in Soviet film of the 1920s. The crowd consists of discrete elements just as the montaged person consists of "arms," "legs" and "heads." The mechanical assembly of the elements of film should affect the viewer deterministically, just as a switch or lever would a machine. This is why directors of the '20s felt such an affinity toward reflexology—because it turns a person into a machine. Shklovsky's deautomatization is paradoxical because it too is based on the principles of machinism. Defamiliarization is a machine which extricates a machine from its mechanical mode. It's characteristic that in *Envy*, Olesha invents a machine, "Ophelia," which is designed to destroy all machines and mechanically bring about anti-mechanical behavior.[3] But what is Kuleshov's famous experiment, with its close-up of Mozzhukhin, on whose face we first read hunger, then pity, then joy, if not the same kind of machine? This experiment proved that through purely mechanical means, through the assemblage of pieces which have no relation to each other, it is possible to produce the illusion of a deeply human affect, which Eisenstein would later call *pathos*.

Of course, I am not claiming that montage is a purely mechanical phenomenon. But a machine must not necessarily be viewed through the prism of pure mechanics. Here I am above all referring to the innovative studies of Gilbert Simondon. Simondon

referred to machines as having been "an intellectual system transferred into the material"[4] and described its genesis as the movement from the abstractness to the concreteness of a material. In the course of this movement, the machine acquires a stability in its function, and only when it becomes a material machine, as Simondon thought, it ceases to fight itself. Montage in film can be imagined as an abstract machine which never fully becomes a machine of metal, a mechanical intellectual system which preserves contradiction as a principle of its speculative function. Eisenstein felt this particularly keenly, in consistently pointing to *conflict* as a principle of montage which disappears from the material machine. Conflict is an integral part of the functioning of the speculative montage machine; it is precisely conflict which allows this machine to produce affect. But this subject cannot be sufficiently developed within the parameters of this short article.

I propose that all 1920s Soviet revolutionary language acquires its meaning only in relation to a certain type of anthropology: one that understands human beings as machines. By the middle of 1930s, this language becomes, by and large, a thing of the past.

Discussions of the connection between montage and machine in the 1920s are not new, of course. Many scholars have spoken on it at great length. But it is considerably more difficult to demonstrate how, from the second half of 1930s, an understanding of the human determines the cinematic language itself (these boundaries are, of course, arbitrary, as no period has any anthropological purity). The key here, in my understanding, is a concept of a *narrative*. It is a known fact that the Soviet cinema reform was directed at increasing the role of the script (a trend that was minimal back in 1920s). Film industry executives made an effort to mobilize writers to work for them. In Shklovsky's terms, this was a "second literary period" in cinema. A standard interpretation of this trend links it to censorship, and hence, an ideological control over film production. There are many examples proving this interpretation. In the 1940s, film officials increased their tendency to see directors not so much as authors, but as specialists who literally translated scripts to pictures (take, for example, a well-known story of how Stalin himself used to edit certain scripts). However, it seems to me that to interpret this solely through the framework of control and censorship would be an unwarranted reduction. Even more so because the role of scriptwriters, and hence that of narrative construction, was equally on the rise in American and European cinemas of 1930s.

In my opinion, it would be correct to talk about this as a special attitude toward humans (or, as I express it in this article, an *anthropology*). What we are discussing here is the emergence of a *narrative man*, a man who is tightly embedded within a certain narrative. Theories of "narrative identity" (as some people call them) help us to see a connection between narration and anthropology. In philosophy, these theories were developed by Alasdair MacIntyre, David Carr, and – in a more complex form – by Paul Ricoeur. The narrative theory of identity strives to solve the problem of the *I* in time and its temporal changes. According to this theory, identity is the aggregate result of a human life, its total. Similarly to Shklovsky's theory, this theory claims

universality. However, it is also quite possible that this theory reflects only a certain stage in the history of human studies. In a narrative about a protagonist, a personal story always, at some point, becomes an opportunity to integrate someone's life and identity into a larger narrative, namely a grand historical narrative. That is the question at issue. History is often thought of as a grand narrative that has a beginning, an end, and an Aristotelian peripeteia in between. The structural isomorphism of individual and national (class, religious, etc.) histories allows the linking of the life of a separate individual to the life of a society. "Small" stories, combined together, form the "grand" narrative.

French philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy noted noted once that "that history can no longer be presented as — to use Lyotard's term — a "grand narrative," the narrative of some grand, collective destiny of mankind (of Humanity, of Liberty, etc.), a narrative that was grand because it was great, and that was great because its ultimate destination was considered good."[5] The loss of the efficacy of these grand narratives is connected to the monstrous senselessness of the great massacres which marked the 20th century. However, at the time that the anthropology of the narrative man was being formed, seeing the foolishness of grand historical narratives was the privilege of a few visionaries.[6] Quite on the contrary, the narrativization of life allowed people to give it meaning by embedding themselves into the grand narrative. The role of self-sacrifice and heroism in narratives of Stalin's time is one example. Self-sacrifice is a way to include one's biography in a grandiose historical epic. The meaning of life in such works is always derived from some grand movement of humankind toward a goal that would give history a kind of closure. A man, whose story is not a part of History, becomes a man without history, and hence, ceases to exist. An archetypical plot of Soviet cinema is the story of a simple girl or a guy (some "Maxim"), who lives outside of History (in a forgotten small village or a petty provincial town), but happens to be pulled into History, into a narrative, and in this way, gains both a "life" and identity.

This type of meaning organization is a gradual process. Let us recall, for example, Eisenstein's *October*, a film dedicated to History with a capital letter. This film is interesting, among other reasons, because, when portraying a key historic event, it denarrativizes it decisively, i.e. excludes it from a linear narrative. Separate characters are incorporated into this history not through their biographies (the viewers are completely unaware of them), but through the "mechanistic" incorporation into the assemblage of events, people and signs. This montage inclusion of people into history is unable to project the "meaning" of the grand narrative onto the individual life. A meeting of a simple worker, soldier or peasant with Lenin, who embodies the movement of the world historical process, can serve as an emblem of this kind of integration. A small biography here directly intersects with grand world History.

The emergence of the "narrative man" deeply transforms the character of the epoch's cinematic language. What takes place here is a secondary (from Griffith's times) canonization of a classical cinematic narrative. This new canon becomes a demarcation line by which we measure the innovations of experimenters. This language is subordinated to the task of servicing typical narrative situations (such as a dialogue or

the creation of the illusion of continuity by moving from frame to frame). I would distinguish two figures among the many in this language. The first is a camera angle reversion to 180°. Such reversion creates the illusion of completeness and a wholeness of narrative space (which theoreticians call *diegesis*,[7] an Aristotelian term), but most importantly, such reversion demonstrates the absence of film authors in this diegetic space, or that of camera and film crew. Thus, the illusion of autonomy and the self-sufficiency of the narrative world is being proven. This narrative world appears as if subordinate to itself, its events are the outcome of its inner causality.

The second figure is a camera tracking the character. This figure helps to center action on its main carrier, but it also helps to hide an authorial initiative. Authors hide their will behind the seemingly autonomous will of their characters: it is not the director who tells the character where to go, it is not him going after the camera, but on the contrary, it is the camera that passively tracks its character. In both these cases, narrative subjugates some elements of discourse: i.e. those that point to the source text, the author of this utterance. As Gerard Genette wrote once, there is no story without a narrator, and any narrative is inevitably discursive.[8] However, this obviousness is precisely what is being disguised by the figures of cinematic language.

Reviewed by film scholars on numerous occasions, these figures are traditionally interpreted in terms of a *reality effect* that is supposed to be an "ontological" film property. The suppression of the author undoubtedly promotes this effect. However, the main question is: what is the reason for this effect in film? Some people think that it accounts for the viewer's full identification with a character, promoting a deeper emotional investment in the plot. But today, all these dogmas do not seem very convincing. One can perfectly identify himself with Don Quixote and observe the work's plot development with interest, despite the constant and intrusive exposures of authorial games with readers. In addition, as of today, the question of identification seems to me insufficiently explained. I imagine that this need to organize plot so that it seems autonomous and self-propelling is rooted, to a certain degree, in an anthropology of the "narrative man."

Philosophers who work on the problem of "narrative identity" do not ask who is narrating man's life, or – to put it another way – in which way and with whose help this life becomes a narrative. But Genette is right in saying that any narrative simultaneously tells us about its narrator. It is therefore essential for the narrative man to retain authorship over his narrative. Otherwise, no narrative identity is possible, because if a character's story is not written by him, but by some author, then, above all, it characterizes this author. The character claims authorship of his biography and of his life. In addition, the character's deeds should somehow insensibly plug into another narrative, one that also claims the absence of the author, i.e. world history. An illusion that life is being narrated "on its own," and that biography "naturally" becomes a narrative, is fundamental for the "narrative man" who, simultaneously with narration, acquires historic meaning.

This is why all reminiscences of the author's presence are suppressed in the cinematic

language. This is why film undergoes total standardization and depersonalization. If the author is present, this demon who whispers to his Socrates what he ought to do, then this whole apparatus, which is meant to translate stories into History, becomes a clever ploy by a backstage puppet master. Hence, it follows that the purism of Stalin's film administration was directed not only towards the ideological components of the plot, but towards the cinematic language itself. Any form of "formalism" had to be eradicated. What is formalism? This is precisely what "formalists" were concerned with; the manifestations of language. A prohibition on "formalism," as it seems to me, was precisely connected to an assertion of a purely narrative man as a function of a large and autonomous historical narrative.[9] I think that even the stream of historic films that accelerates from the mid-1930s was partly conditioned by a demand for narrative in which biography and History would literally merge into one.

It seems to me that Thaw-era films formulate a new language and a new understanding of the human subject through their refusal to create an illusion of discursive subordination to a narrative. This manifests itself, first of all, in a reform of the plot structures that are so evident in Shpalikov's case, for example. Plot ceases to be linear and is no longer constructed in terms of cause-effect logic. But we can see its even larger manifestation in the fact that the camera is suddenly freed from the character. Take, for example, *July Rain* or *Walking the Streets of Moscow* where a free structure of narration coincides with the camera's autonomy, as it stops following the character slavishly and begins looking at the crowd or moving freely through a city street. It becomes clear for the first time that man exists not in history, but in *situations*. This understanding marks a decisive shift in the anthropology of cinematic language.

Yasujiro Ozu, one of the world's greatest directors, had a profound understanding of the philosophical dimension of the relationship between character and plot. Ozu thought that a script should not be written based on a plot which was invented in advance, because, in that case, the plot would dominate its characters and subordinate them. In his opinion, one had to write the script proceeding from characters, which had to be introduced into various situations. It is precisely in this case that the character leaves his subordinate position to the narrative and acquires, if one can say so, "non-narrative significance." From Ozu's point of view, narrative does not produce identity, but destroys it.[10] There are many strategies of "exiting" narrative structures as if they were an overdetermined and closed world.

An effect of hypernarrativization is well-expressed by the wonderful inability of Soviet films produced between 1930s and 1960s to reproduce historical textures. The quotidian textures of *Peter the Great* are conventional to the same degree as those in films about the Revolution, films that narrate recent events about the world that seem to still be present in the memory of many filmmakers. It is no accident that texture appears in Soviet cinema when narrative attenuates. Roland Barthes once said that "unnecessary" objects appear in novels apart from narrative exigencies, and even contrary to the narrative, as signs of the real. However, for the emergence of these "unnecessary" objects to be possible, narrative should cease to be a categorical imperative.

The 1960s mark, in my opinion, the appearance of a new man, whom I would designate as the *phenomenological man*. I understand the phenomenological man as a man who is able to open himself up to the world and to let this world inside of him. Deleuze calls this metamorphosis a passage from "image-movement" to "image-time." In the introduction to the English edition of his second volume on cinema, he writes: "Over several centuries, from Greeks to Kant, a revolution took place in philosophy: the subordination of time to movement was reversed, time ceases to be the measurement of normal movement, it increasingly appears for itself and creates paradoxical movements. Time is out of joint: Hamlet's words signify that time is no longer subordinated to movement, but rather movement to time. It could be said that in its own sphere, cinema has repeated the same experience, the same reversal, in more fast-moving circumstances. The movement-image of the so-called classical cinema gave way, in the post-war period, to a direct time-image."[11] Deleuze's formulation helps us understand the essence of what is happening, and he rightly includes the entirety of postwar Western cinema in it (although the chronological boundaries of this process are, of course, blurry). One can roughly say that in "classical" cinema, action resides in the center of attention, while movement is in the center of a narrative and its characters. This is why the camera loves to follow this movement. However, character movement is inseparable from narrative movement. The entirety of the poetics of cinema are subordinate to servicing this movement. The camera becomes autonomous in more modern film, and sound becomes autonomous from characters and narrative. This process manifests itself most fully in the films of Tarkovsky, whose camera is able to separate itself easily from a character and focus on the flow of water, a flickering flame, or wind gusts in foliage or grass etc. Action is, of course, present here to the outmost degree, but it is separated from characters and narrative. Quite in Deleuze's spirit, Tarkovsky speaks about a *fixation of time, not action*: "…for the first time in the history of the arts, for the first time in the history of culture, man has discovered a way to *capture time* directly. Simultaneously, he has also discovered an opportunity to reproduce this time onscreen as many times as he wishes, to repeat it, and to come back to it. He has received a matrix of *real time*."[12] Capturing the plot never creates a "matrix of real time" because plot does not have fluidity, continuity and duration. It is composed of episodes which propel narration ahead, but do not create duration. The fixation on the world and its piercing duration helps to bring texture on screen. Most importantly, however, it is directly connected to a different understanding of the human. The duration of the world is given to us in experience and in contemplation; it has a *subjective* character and appears through living in this world. Narration always includes man in its mechanism, and therefore it is not rooted in subjectivity. The narrative mechanism is supra-subjective.

Subjectivity in Tarkovsky is, however, peculiar, as it always gravitates towards dissolving in the world. This is the subjectivity of *Solaris*' characters, which transforms itself into figures of the outside world. In *Stalker*, the entire Zone is understood as an image of the subjective. *Mirror* seeks to accommodate the memory of the "narrator," images of the world, and even events that it certainly could not have seen. It is as if subjectivity spills out all over the world. The object-subject opposition slows down in such a world. The question about the subjectivity or objectivity of what we see in

Tarkovsky's frames does not make any sense. In this respect, we can talk about his films (and not just his) as a manifestation of the *phenomenological man*. By this I mean a man whose being opens up toward the world, whose subjectivity is a scene of the manifestation of the phenomena of the outer world that are given to his consciousness. The fact that the phenomenological man is quite inscribed in time is rather demonstrative. Time, as Heidegger showed, is not something objective or subjective; the opposition of eternity and timelessness is a form of attitude toward Being, which furnishes its meaning. This is a proper form of Being itself.

The narrative man is blind to the world, but he is active, and he is acting (like Babichev in *Envy*). The phenomenological man loses a lion's share of his activity, he becomes a witness, to whom the world manifests itself (as to Tarkovsky's *Rublev*). However, the phenomenological man is able to see and to understand. One should not forget that in cinema, the appearance of one or another human model is inevitably accompanied by the genesis of a new cinematic language. Alexei German, for example, demonstrates how a departure from the narrative models of Soviet cinema gradually leads to the decay of a linear and cohesive narrative, and a rise in the significance of texture. As *Khrustalev*'s narrative gradually attenuates and decays, the world begins to manifest itself in sounds, textures, and I would even say "smells" more and more vividly. The attenuation of narrativity leads to the phenomenological. There is not enough space here to give a complete characterization of the evolution of German's cinematic language, but one can easily assert that his camera refuses refuses to serve the narrative, and his world fills with sounds that are "unnecessary" in terms of plot development.

As of today, however, it seems to me that the phenomenological man has left (or is leaving) the screen. I would say that what we have today is an epoch of the *neutral* or *indeterminate* man, whose emergence dictates new figures of the cinematic language (more on this in the postscript to this essay).

In conclusion, it is important to say a few words about a side effect of the cinematic language in connection to anthropology. By this I mean the ethical dimension of the cinematic language. It is true, that if this language depends on our understanding of humans, than one cannot completely remove oneself from the ethical dimension. There is a direct link between our ethical position and our view of the human as an element of an assemblage, a narrative function or an eye contemplating the world. Generally, the way filmmakers apply a system of editing and montage to a human is a direct reflection of their ethical position. A close-up of an emotional face varies ethically from a face in in a medium or long shot, which are shots that attract so many young and talented Russian directors today. A close-up of a face with a tear is – for them – crude pressure, an expression of a didactic will, some kind of inflicted meaning to be thrown in the viewer's face. That is why the poetics of of long shots, the poetics of non-interference appear today to be more acceptable from an ethical point of view.

The prohibition for actors to look at the camera is usually interpreted as a means of supporting an illusion of reality, i.e. an autonomous diegetic space, which is not

supposed to coincide directly with the viewer's space. Of course, this is true. It is quite telling, for example, that Francesco Casetti, who devoted a book to the gaze in cinema, writes that the gaze realizes an instantaneous connection between the discursive instance (author), and those for whom this authorial utterance is meant – viewers.[13] Author and viewers become as if interlocked for a moment, due to the character's gaze, which is piercing through diegesis. What is most interesting for me in this interpretation is that a character happens to be no more than an instance uniting author and viewer, but lacking his own substantiality. His gaze is just a simple transmitting relay. This is the anti-narrative understanding of a character, of course. I also think of such an interpretation as ethically loaded, as it refuses the human subject onscreen its content, a content that would go beyond conventional functionality of a quite special, non-Proppian, non-narrative type. This human subject happens to be a link between discourse and narration.

I think that various filmmakers from Godard and Dwoskin to Muratova, who allowed their actors to look directly at the camera, were also presupposing the possibility of the viewer's meeting with some Other (as described by Emmanuel Levinas). Levinas supposed that a direct collision with the Other's face confronts us with infinity. In his opinion, a face could never be inscribed in the category of finite things, things that possess a quality of fixed identity. In his book *Du Visage au cinema*, famous French film scholar Jacques Aumont describes the face as a pristine surface and a mysterious text simultaneously, a text that requires deciphering.[14] This surface disappearance makes the face non-phenomenal. This statement by Aumont is characteristic for today's film theory, which is unable to interpret the face on screen as anything but surface and text. Levinas, meanwhile, denies the face the status of phenomenon. While the other's face appears in front of me as an image, in Levinas's thinking, I do not enter into a direct and straightforward relationship with it, a relationship that would eliminate distance between me and the face (this is precisely what a straightforward gaze from the screen accomplishes). Levinas writes that a face-to-face encounter with some people can cause a paradoxical combination of presence and the disappearance of this presence: : "The withdrawal is not a negation of presence, nor its pure latency, recuperable in memory or actualization. It is alterity, without common measure with a presence or a past […]".[15] It is precisely this surface disappearance that makes the face non-phenomenal. Hilary Putnam remarked that this paradoxical combination of presence and non-phenomenality makes the Other (in Levinas's writings) similar to God: "Just as we never see God, but at best traces of God's presence in the world, so we never see the 'face' of the other, but only its 'trace'."[16] Our inability to phenomenologize a face that is directed towards us, to turn it into an object,[17] into a surface covered by text, engages us, according to Levinas, in a direct ethical relationship with the Other; it makes us take responsibility for the Other and creates a taboo against murdering the Other.

The way that a filmmaker shows a face, the way that he structures the gaze in relation to his camera, the way that he incorporates this gaze in a montage system, – all these things have a direct ethical dimension that is connected to our understanding of the human subject in our personal anthropology (which, by the way, always reflects

general the anthropology of the time). In the end, the director decides what to turn his character's face into – a surface, a functional rail of narration and discourse, or a disappearing trace of an intense presence. This decision is directly connected to the way this director positions himself in a relationship to the Human.

POSTSCRIPT – On Sergei Lozintsa's film "My Joy"

Glancing over what I've written, I realize the article cannot be published in this form. It offers a cursory overview of anthropological models of the past, but the subject of the present is relegated to a few obscure words. But the present is in fact the burning topic for which the article is actually written. However, present-day cinema and its roots in a particular anthropology cannot be defined in a nutshell – this is difficult, an uncharted territory.

While this postscript risks making the article excessively long, I nevertheless feel that it is necessary to give at least a preliminary outline of the present situation. To this end, I will focus almost entirely on Sergei Loznitsa's recent film *My Joy* (2010). I chose this film for two reasons. First, I believe it is a key film of our time, one that would serve as a good introduction to the current anthropological theme. Secondly, I have often come up against negative judgments of the film. The radicalness of these assessments is in its own way symptomatic. It's quite possible that the film hit a sore spot, thereby triggering a reaction of alienation. Thus, the following is both an anthropological sketch, and an attempt to rehabilitate the film in the eyes of its fiercest critics.

My discussion, however, is by no means a review of Loznitsa's film; its goals are purely theoretical. To begin, I will briefly recall its simple plotline. The film tells the story of an attractive young truck driver, Georgi, who is charged with the task of transporting goods from one city to another. Along the way, he encounters a group of tyrannical police officers but is able to successfully pass through their checkpoint. After stealing back his driver's license from the police booth, he returns to his car. Inside, he finds an old man who tags along as a fellow traveler. On the road, the man tells the driver about how, while returning from the front after the war, he was brazenly robbed by a military patrolman at the border. Unable to bear the humiliation, he shot the commander of the patrol while departing on a train and, ever since, has lived on the outskirts of society, outside the law. In the midst of this, Georgi's car hits an endless traffic jam. While waiting in the car, he is solicited by an underage prostitute. He decides to take a detour through the forest, although he is warned of the reputation of the area. Eventually he loses his way and decides to spend the night in his car. But as it happens, local drunks are nearby, and they decide to rob the truck, hitting the driver on the head and throwing him, unconscious, into a field. After that, Georgi appears to us in a new guise. The head trauma causes him to lose his memory; he no longer knows who he is and becomes a kind of zombie who is kept company by a local floozy who sells flour, which, as it turns out, was in the truck. Half-senseless, Georgi indulges her

in bed and helps her trade in flour at the market. There, he is beaten to a pulp by local thugs and is near death when he is picked up by his former accidental "fellow traveler," who revives him. But his benefactor dies in an altercation with military men who tramp around the district, hopelessly attempting to return the corpse of a fallen soldier to his family. Georgi takes the dead man's gun and aimlessly wanders down the road, where he is picked up by a truck driver just like himself. This trucker is – as Georgi in the beginning of the film – also a nice guy. He chatters incessantly, explaining to our zombie that if you know the rules and don't rock the boat, life can be lived without any particular problems. This monologue is interrupted by the same cops from whom Georgi fled at the beginning of the film. This time they have become completely beastly. They attempt to haul off to jail a Moscow police major, whom they have just arrested and mercilessly beaten, and they demand that Georgi and the driver sign false statements condemning the major. Suddenly, Georgi pulls out his concealed gun and, one after another, kills the cops, the unfortunate major and the kindly truck driver who had picked him up. After this bloody massacre, he walks off down the highway indifferently.

Usually, criticism of this film is argued in a particularly ferocious, impenetrable *chernukha*, a kind of radical relapse into the *chernukha* of the perestroika years. Life is no walk in the park, they say, but this is just too much. There is no ray of hope. I've heard these kinds of remarks not just from Russian, but also Western, viewers, including those who are highly qualified. I think the main mistake these viewers make is in viewing Lozintsa's film as realistic reflection of reality; realistic — and therefore false. But *My Joy* is not a realistic film any more than this director's documentaries are "realistic." It is, rather, a *tale*, which could well have appropriated the title of another recent film, *Tale in the Darkness*.[18]

Lozintsa underscores the folkloric style of his story—a fine young man goes on a journey, but along the way encounters typically fantastic obstacles. The policemen in the film play the role of Oedipus's Sphinx or Homer's Scylla and Charybdis. Georgi is able to get away from them the first time because they, like a fairytale dragon, have a sacrifice at their disposal—namely, a woman, who is given to them to be devoured. Even the hero's name—Georgi, George—refers ironically to the legendary serpent-fighter. Georgi's fellow traveler appears in his car seemingly out of nowhere, as if by magic, and disappears in just the same way. And the mysterious companion himself doesn't seem to fit into any kind of realistic framework—he tells a story about himself that took place sixty years ago, though he looks no older than seventy. Indeed the entire peripeteia of the plot—that of the detour—is entirely folkloric. How many tales of this kind exist—where Ivanushka is advised not to take a shortcut through the dark woods, the abode of Nightingale the Robber, but he doesn't listen and courts disaster.

The detour has a significant, meaningful function in the film. The film in fact ends where the hero's misadventures began, at the same checkpoint, with the same cops. The story makes a kind of loop, magically returning to the beginning. The entire "scary" part of the film takes place in a shadowy world where linear time is suspended and there is always a return to the beginning. A murder had already taken place in the

house where Georgi lives with the market vendor (during the war, Russian soldiers had killed a schoolteacher there) – and his fellow traveler is killed in the same place. The story that Georgi's companion tells about his revenge on the patrol officer completely repeats itself at the end of the film when Georgi kills the patrolman, etc. Loznitsa diligently executes a mirroring of motifs, eliminating any possibility of a direct realist reading of the film. Rather, this mirroring asserts an almost Nietzschean eternal recurrence of the same. This motif is of fundamental importance in understanding of the anthropology of the film. But I will return to this later.

What did Lozintsa mean to say with his tale? The film contains several levels of meaning. The first and most obvious is a political one. The fairytale forest where Georgi finds himself is a political one rather than a realistic portrait of present-day Russia. I myself have repeatedly been subjected to statements that resemble those of the driver at the end of the film—that if you don't rock the boat and play by the rules, you can live a normal life. Loznitsa argues that no, in today's existential space, there are no more safety zones, because in fact there are no rules to be followed. The world he describes is one where the existence of a state has been replaced by a system of *organized* violence. Norbert Elias claimed that the establishment of a sovereign state is based on the principle of monopoly of violence by the state. This monopolization no longer exists—that is, there is no more government which can be in possession of this system of control over tyranny and violence. According to Elias, Lozintsa's world of dark forests is a *feudal* world, founded on the direct violence of the feudal lord over his environment. It is a world of, so to speak, assault and battery, unfamiliar with laws and social structures of control. This world can be described in another way—existential space here is divided into small pockets of severe violence which are unconnected to one another. From their booth, the cops have absolute reign over a hundred meters of highway. But in a field not far away, poor drunks dominate. There is no significant difference between the cops and the drunks. Both exist outside of a state structure and both act solely in accordance with their own will. It is significant that when, at the end of the film, the cops encounter the police major – who is higher in rank and from Moscow – it only excites their sadism. They essentially do not recognize any power over themselves.

Georgi's problem is that he believes that this world abides by rules of communal living. He thinks that people will not kill someone with whom they were just sitting at the table; he thinks that a young girl who is selling herself will be grateful for the money he gives her. And each time, he is wrong. There are no rules. Any action Georgi takes that corresponds to a particular code of behavior is met with an unpredictable explosion of aggression. I think Lozintsa's political diagnosis is very interesting. In contemporary Russia, he sees not an authoritarian regime, as is often assumed, but the dissolution of the state. The political moral of Lozintsa's story is simple—don't think that violence can't touch you, that you'll be able to sit it out, this latent violence which now spills out everywhere, and there are no rules for its application. This is precisely why the tale produces such a devastating impression. Lozintsa repeatedly shows us that our living space no longer contains any zone of control or rationality. If the director had retained at least some element of security and predictability (which no

doubt does exist in reality), the tale would have lost its meaning.

But what is considerably more interesting to me is a deeper level of the film, namely, the anthropological. Who indeed are these people who reside in Lozintsa's "dark forest"? And how are their qualities related to the world of dispersed violence portrayed in the film? Their main feature is what I would call the unpredictability of their behavior. These people, who know no rules, exist outside of any schema of cause-and-effect. In a sense, they have dropped out of the Kantian model of the relationship between the subject to the world. Kant showed that our subjectivity is constructed in such a way that it always sees the outside world as a deterministic world, subordinate to the principles of causality. In this model, one thing determines another—cause determines effect. It is this chain of cause-and-effect which allows us to understand the world, allows science to exist, etc. The causal model of the world, according to Kant, is the result of the projection onto the world of a priori forms of intuition, such as *time*. Indeed, where there exists a cause-and-effect chain, there exists something which precedes and something which follows, that is, linear time: the past, the present and the future. Since the external world is given to us as an area of determinations, we relate to it using a logical inference of this type: "to bring about *x* under circumstance *y*, I must do *z*." It is easy to see how this kind of logic prevails in artistic narratives that describe our world; the grand narrative of History is also constructed in this manner.

Thus, people in Lozintsa's story exist outside of a Kantian model of relation to the outside world. They seem to drop out of the logical chains which determine the behavior of the Kantian man; they also drop out of time, which forms the foundation of Kantian determinism. The fact that in the beginning of the film, the protagonist and his cargo are traveling in a straight line, is significant. The straightness of his route represents a logical movement from beginning to end, from source to endpoint. When he embarks on his fateful detour, he drops out of linear time and falls into "cyclic" temporality where events that took place sixty years ago are superimposed onto the events of the present.[19] The fact that Loznitsa, in unexpected digressions, shows the senseless murders that had occurred in the same area before doesn't refer to memory. More likely, it is the opposite; people who live in a house where a murder has taken place never recall it and probably don't even know it happened. They are devoid of memory. We are talking about real amnesia. Violence and murder can be repeated in almost the same circumstances half a century later precisely because no one who lives in Lozintsa's tale has any memory. The recurrence of the murders speaks not only to the fact that people with no memory cannot learn anything, but also to the fact that there is simply no movement in time in these places; there is only an endless reproduction of the same, perhaps because, as in Nietzsche, no memory of events is stored.

Amnesia, memory loss—this is the central theme of the film. It's no accident, of course, that after being beaten, the protagonist loses his memory and all notions not only of his past, but of his identity, which is impossible without memory. Thus, he is forcibly converted into one of the inhabitants of the "dark forest." Even the fellow traveler who helps our protagonist—the only character in this world who is able to preserve any

memory of the past—exists outside of time; he does not age. The fact that memory loss is essential for contemporary Russian film, although it does not always take the form of clinical amnesia, is also demonstrated in Bakuradze's *Shultes* (2008), another film in which the protagonist is an amnesic.

The dissolution of memory is of course to some degree characteristic of all of contemporary Russian society. And this is not surprising. Russia, having for many years feasted on grand historical narratives, suddenly found itself itself in a place of utter historical confusion; the October Revolution simply became "the October coup", and the Stalinist Soviet Union became the mightiest power – a place where Orthodoxy and the valiant Cheka coexisted, but would not submit to narrative unification. Russia definitively dropped out of a coherent historical narrative and in doing so, took a step beyond Kantian causality.

But what does it mean, this collapse of narratives, time, logical chains of causality? It is in fact the collapse of any rules for existence, the rejection of syllogism, of reasoning that follows the model of "if *x* happens in circumstance *y*…". Nothing can determine the actions of a person because he does not fit into logical oram temporal chains and has no relation to historical time. How, then, does an amnesic person act? His actions have a spontaneously passionate character. Suddenly, as if from nowhere, irrespective of any kind of logic, he explodes into a fit of aggression directed at the immediate surroundings. When the underage prostitute suddenly attacks Georgi, who only wished her well, it is an explosion of pure affect which has no internal logic. Aggression is indeed a radical form of the rejection of logic, which presupposes connections, and therefore the possibility of coexistence. It is the lack of logic, the absence of rules of behavior that make the living space of the "dark forest" an area of unpredictable micro-violence. When at the end of the film, the man formerly known as Georgi, who is now a nameless person with no memory, quietly takes out a gun and kills everybody indiscriminately, he proves that he has fully assimilated the ethos of the "dark forest"—to act according to the will of passion. It would be incorrect to interpret this final massacre as a kind of revenge on the part of Georgi, who suddenly transforms from passive victim to butcher. The fact that among Georgi's victims we find the truck driver who picked him up, as well as the Moscow police major, does not necessarily imply a universal guilt which is shared by victim and executioner alike. Massacre here is not an existential gesture as it is in Scorsese's *Taxi Driver*, where the main character is a psychopath brought to his boiling point. It is simply that, by the end of the film, Georgi has become a dragon. And the way to this transformation is through the loss of memory, that is, the loss of knowledge of the rules and loss of the ability to act according to the laws of cause-and-effect logic chains. Lozintsa's protagonist outdoes even the sadistic, lawless cops. In essence, he becomes just like them but, because of his amnesia, even more frightening. The instantaneous transition from victim to executioner is extremely revealing. Total passivity (victimhood) becomes but yet another grounds for a fit of unpredictable, aggressive passion. The protagonist of contemporary film is often found somewhere between total passivity and a ferocious, zombielike madness. Both states deny the continuity of a meaningful human identity.

Russian films of the last few years feature many characters who act in unpredictably aggressive and emotional ways; for example, the protagonist of *How I Ended This Summer* (dir. Aleksey Popogrebsky, 2010). Many characters have no narrative identity; their actions are not explained by their biographies or life views, such as the librarian in *Tambourine, Drum* (dir. Aleksey Mizgirev, 2009). They act as if the logic of their existence has completely broken down, and the unity of their person is lost. In Serebrennikov's *Yuri's Day* (2008), the main character transforms from an opera singer into a pitiful orderly, as if human identity had no logic or inertia. The characters of Boris Khlebnikov's *Help Gone Mad* (2009) embody this new anthropological type. The two main characters, likely inspired by Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, represent, on the one hand, the embodiment of complete passivity, and on the other, senseless explosive impulsivity. The absolutely absurd death of one of the characters at the end of the film (at the hands of another mad policeman) is in full accordance with the model sketched by Loznitsa.

This triumph of affect takes on meaning against the background of complete, indifferent sluggishness. Total passivity followed by explosion indicates the absence of any continuity between different states of human mind. There is no gradual transition from one state to another.. Seconds ago, a man may have seemed a passive ruminant and now, he finds himself in the throes of senseless affect. Freud never offered up a detailed theory of affect.[20] In his early *Studies on Hysteria*, which he co-authored with Josef Breuer, Freud stated that every event, every experience is accompanied by a certain amount of affect (Affektbetrag), which has an energetic quality. The ego, in order to sustain the balance of energy in the mental mechanism, "expenses" and "discharges" the surplus through the movement of affective reactions or associative psychic activity. Neuroses such as hysteria, for instance, come about as a result of an inability to discharge and thus eliminate affect. The unspent energy of affect, however, could be bound to the memory of a traumatic event and have a lasting impact on the body. Freud and Breuer understood hysteria as a disorder of memory. Freud's connection between affect and memory had far-reaching effects. Affect seems to disappear in the associations and connections that allow *affective person* to be replaced by a *structured person*. Indeed the psyche, in Freud's view, is impossible without memory, which ensures its functioning, that is, association, repression, displacement, substitution, etc. As the renowned French psychoanalyst André Green noted, alongside affect, we see the disappearance of the notion of madness—not psychosis or neurosis, but madness. People exist who cannot be considered schizophrenic nor paranoid. This is madness—people with explosions of affect.[21] Green rightly, in my view, insists on the restoration of affectology and the notion of madness.

Madness, the real of pure affect, becomes especially important in the understanding of people with memory loss, who thus lack a subconscious in the classical psychoanalytic sense of the word. It is madness, affect, which explains the spread of unpredictable violence which does not correspond to any social norms and rules.

If we agree with Lozintsa that amnesia and affectivity are the essential features of the new anthropological type, then we must reexamine the basis of the cinematic

phenomenology characteristic of contemporary Russian arthouse cinema. When I said that the cinema of Tarkovsky and other representatives of late Soviet film could be described in terms of phenomenology, that in them subjectivity meets objectivity, I meant classical phenomenology, the Husserlian, Heideggerian type, in which the world opens up to a consciousness of all its rich meaning. The world comes to man as a giant field of meaning. This kind of phenomenology is impossible without an understanding of time, which occupies a place of importance for Husserl and especially so for Heidegger. This is why "time-image" is so important for Tarkovsky, whose world always reveals itself in the halo of tradition and history. Tarkovsky's films are full of painting, poetry, etc. Rublev for him is an eye—one which transforms the chaos of the world into the harmony of art, which bears the indelible memory of the past.

There is the question at stake: what is the phenomenology of the world populated by people whose consciousness does not have memory, history, culture etc? The world manifests itself as something that is not loaded with meanings, as something completely indeterminate. Early Levinas writing has a concept of "il y a". It is best to translate this concept as an impersonal "there is".[22] *Something is*. This sensation of something impersonal and simultaneously oppressive, a presence of something indeterminate, appears, for example, at night during insomnia. Sensation of this oppressiveness urges one to escape, to search for meaning, and, as many commentators of Levinas' expressed, leads to the Other, to the discovery of his face, in which the impersonal "il y a" disappears completely. But Levinas' writing also expose a connection between "il y a" and affects. This "something is" indeterminacy can cause acute affect reactions: those of fear, panic, and aggression. The fact that such a possibility does exist points to affect's indeterminacy, because it appears as a reaction to not understanding: the unintelligible simply "is".

I think that Levinas' "il y a" in some way reflects this new cinematographic phenomenology in which the world manifests itself as a simple ascertaining that "something is". Consciousness of "il y a" does not possess intentionality, it is not directed towards the object; it exists as if floating in space. This is a pre-consciousness to what we are used to considering a real reflexive consciousness. This neutrality and indeterminacy of vision reflects in the indeterminacy of a man on screen, a character who, influenced by the spontaneity of affect, acts without determination. Affect invades this man as if from the outside, despite his own will and understanding. His mind becomes a mind of a zombie that acts as if possessed by an affect that is external to him. The zombie can produce any reaction possible because he does not have behavioral logics. Hence it follows that a gaze that is directed towards such a man loses its accents; there is no way to subordinate it to the narrative logics, which is the logics of temporal development. What we are dealing with here is a neutral camera simply limiting a field of vision. Anything can happen there. Khlebnikov's films can serve as a vivid example of such poetics. The camera assumes the position of a neutral observer because people, with whom this camera is correlated, are unidentified, indeterminate, and unpredictable. Thus, a true link between a new anthropology and a new cinema poetics is being established.

The “new man” is indeterminate onscreen because he does not seem to possess a human completeness that we are used to expect from characters of the “good” old movies. I have heard many complaints about the absence of a full-blooded protagonist in today’s cinema. Everything happens as if the “new people” have not reached their true individuation[23] (pardon this philosophical term). They all have something in them that is not sufficiently individuated, something that is too general. The English language has a felicitous term for such a state of things – “generic.” Pure efficacy is not enough for the individuation of a human. The human being is individualized through his or her integration into society, which gradually differentiates their role, and models their identity through integration into a multitude of complex social relations. A man whose sole connection to society is an affective relationship of victim or executor, a man who is not included in any other social connections, remains a kind of common place. No eccentric behavior can help mask this, even that of the hero of *Help Gone Mad*, or other popular films. Eccentricity, just as affect, does not produce a full individuation – one needs a system of connections to others – love, hate, envy, beliefs, and ethical principles – i.e. all that can only emerge in a fully developed society, not in a space of local violence.

All this being said, a question about the principle of the cinematic form and its connection to anthropology is inevitable. In what way does the director’s vision interact with an understanding of what humans are, especially if the majority of directors do not reflect on this, but rather grasp it intuitively (Loznitsa here being an exception)?

Years ago George Lukacs made a discovery that looks trivial today, although it has not been fully understood yet. He assumed that the forms of consumer fetishism described by Marx, in which human relations are substituted with relations to consumer goods, spread not only to human interactions and their social behavior, but also to the forms of sight produced by our society. The fact that we see the world in the form of objects that are separated from us and juxtaposed up against us testifies, according to Lukacs, to the fact that our forms of seeing are themselves alienated and fetishized. I am, of course, far removed from Lukacs’s Marxist-Hegelian analysis. I even question the validity of “alienation” as a term. But the idea of the fetishisation of sight itself seems to me quite fascinating. A director is just as much a product of society as the characters who embody his vision of “anthropology.” The human subject is just as determined by the society as the forms of vision in which we can contemplate it. However, I do not support the idea of a director freed from any kind of ethical responsibility for his film – the logic of “my vision is determined by the society without my own will.” The artist is not a zombie, not Georgi in the “dark forest,” and I hope that there is an elemental difference between a director and his character.

All of this, of course, does not concern the entirety of new cinema. Any art is uneven and draws from multiple models. All I describe here is an “ideal type” in Weber’s understanding, ideal not in terms of its perfection, but in terms of its abstract speculativeness. A multitude of counterexamples could be brought up against my construct. Some can reproach me for making Loznitsa’s film an unwarranted model.

Others will suggest a more symptomatic film to treat. I understand perfectly well the vulnerability of any kind of generalization, and generalizations about the model of a human or that of a society in particular.

But my business is to express my personal opinion. It is the reader's business to disagree…

Translated by Nataliya Pirumova and Alexandra Razor

References

Viktor Shklovsky, Theory of Prose, translated by Benjamin Sher. (Normal, IL.: Dalkey Archive Press, 1991), p. 5.

Ibid. p. 6.

Its designer Ivan Babichev describes it thus: "Just think, the machine is their idol, the machine… And all of a sudden… And all of a sudden, the best machine of all turns out to be a liar, a lowlife, a sentimental good-for-nothing. Let's go… I'll show you… She can do anything, but right now she sings our ballads, the foolish ballads of the old era, and gathers the old era's flowers. She falls in love, gets jealous, cries, dreams… I did this. I mocked the divinity of these coming men, I mocked the machine." Yuri Olesha, "Envy", translated by Marian Schwartz (NY: NY Review of Books, 2004), 115. In "Envy", Ophelia reproduces stereotypical patterns of behavior in pre-revolutionary Russian cinema, but does so mechanically. It produces emotions in a markedly unemotional way, as Mozzhukhin in Kuleshov.

Gilbert Simondon. Du mode d'existence des objets techniques (Paris, Aubier, 1989), 46. Simondon understood the technical object as a collection of basic but multifunctional elements, which, once they are included in the machine, lose their polyfunctionality. In cinema, this loss is only partial. No one piece of a montage becomes narrowly-functioning after its integration into a montage phrase.

Jean-Luc Nany. Jean-Luc Nany. The Birth to Presence. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993, p. 144.

One of these visionaries is Franz Rosenzweig, who thought that leaving history behind was the sole possibility for the salvation of humankind.

The term "diegesis" was first applied to film by Etienne Souriau in 1953.

“It is thus the narrative, and that alone, that informs us here both of the events that it recounts and of the activity that supposedly gave birth to it.” – Gérard Genette. Narrative Discourse. An Essay in Method. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1980, p.28. In other words, each narrative contains a hidden narration of its realization.

The narrative man’s actions only make sense in relation to the degree of their functionality in a narrative. The narrative man does not have freedom of action outside of his narrative functions. Let me recall Propp’s definition of a function: “Function is understood as an act of a character, defined from the point of view of its significance for the course of the action”. — Vladímir Propp. Morphology Of The Folk Tale. Austin. The University of Texas Press, The American Folklore Society and Indiana University, 1968, p. 21.

Donald Richie writes: “Ozu was simply bored by plot. He actively disliked it. Perhaps he felt that it used people and resulted in characters in bondage, characters who failed to reflect the complexity and illogicality of truly human characters. In the same way he would have felt that in conventional screen dialogue the characters are continually sacrificed to what the scriptwriters would have them say”. — Donald Richie. Ozu. Berkeley-Los Angeles. University of California Press, 1974, p. 25.

Gilles Deleuze. Cinema 2. The Time-Image. (London: Athlone Press, 1989), p. XI.

A. Tarkovskii. Lektsii po kinorezhissure. L., bez izdatel’stva, 1989, p.9.

Francesco Casetti. Inside the Gaze: The Fiction Film and its Spectator. (Bloomington-Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998), 24-27.

Jacques Aumont. Du Visage au cinema. Paris. Editions de l’Etoile, 1992, p.85. This idea of a text on a face comes from Bela Balasz physiognomy, and his “Visible Man” in particular. In this case, one could also recall the words of Giorgio Agamben, who categorically denied the possibility of reading the face as text: text: “What the face exposes and reveals is not something that could be formulated as a signifying proposition of sorts, nor is it a secret doomed to remain forever incommunicable.” Giorgio Agamben. Means without End. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 92. In Agamben’s opinion, the face is a “language revelation as such.” This statement should be understood in terms of Heidegger, who saw language as a manifestation of our being as time, which takes us outside of ourselves. Language, regardless of its content, is itself linear, that is, it unfolds in time and it is directed outward just as the face is directed outward.

Emmanuel Levinas. Otherwise than Being, or, Beyond Essence. Pittsburgh, Duquesne University Press, 1998 , p.90.

Hilary Putnam. Levinas and Judaism. – In: The Cambridge Companion to Levinas. Ed. By Simon Critchley and Robert Bernarsconi. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, 2004, p.45.

This resistance on the part of humans to turn themselves into a phenomenon, in its essence, takes the face that is directed towards us outside of anthropology which, as Sartre remarked, always turns a human into an object, into a thing: “Anthropology takes humans as objects. In other words, people-subjects, ethnologists, historians, analysts look at humans as objects of study”. – Jean-Paul Sartre. L’anthropologie. – In: J.-P. Sartre, Situations, IX, mélanges. Paris, Gallimard, 1982, p. 84. From Sartre’s point of view, only philosophy is able to look at a human as a subject and an object simultaneously.

Film by Nikolaj Khomeriki, 2009.

I would like to underscore that the recurrent model of time found in Loznitsa has no relation to the great cultural models of temporality. St. Augustine was the first to contrast the cyclical time of everyday life to linear, sacral, Christian time, which leads toward the redemption of sins and the eschatological resurrection of the dead. In our time, Mircea Eliade has turned Augustine’s schema on its head, making cyclical time a ritualized reproduction of cosmic order. Levi-Strauss placed Eliade’s dichotomy in the context of the division of societies into “hot,” those who live in the linear time of accelerating history and “cold,” those who live in an ahistorical formation, constantly reproducing the same things. Cyclical time in Loznitsa does not correspond to any of these models, which are rooted entirely in collective memory. Even the cyclical time of the cosmos is impossible without the ritualized reproduction of events stored in the memory of the collective. In Loznitsa, recurrence arises as a result of the absence of time as a way of organizing memory.

According to Freud, every instinct expresses itself in two ways – in the form of ideas and in affect. Affect manifests the quantitative aspect of instinctual energy.

How else other than “madness” can we characterize the behavior of the sadist militiaman in Balabanov’s Cargo 200? This character combines complete lack of emotion and the affect of madness. The infantile nature of his relationship to his mother is another characteristic aspect of madness. Thanks to Melanie Klein, aggressive aspects today usually refer to the most primitive and purely infantile formations which find an outlet in the deep regression to the infantile stage of development which knows no differentiation between the ego, the super-ego the and id.

evinas himself recognized a connection of this term with his old friend Maurice Blanchot’s concept of “neutral”.

The process of individuation is analyzed in: Gilbert Simondon. L’individuation psychique et collective. Paris, Aubier, 2007.