An exploration of the psychological and political dimensions of violence and aggression within the war film genre

An exegesis accompanied by a screenplay, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

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1. Introduction

A key objective of my research will be to investigate and develop those techniques described by film theorist Stephen Prince in *Savage Cinema: Sam Peckinpah and the Rise of Ultraviolent Movies in America*, that best illustrate the psychology of the professional soldier in terms of violence and aggression. The exegesis will examine screenwriting techniques that have been used to explore the psychological and political dimensions of violence and aggression within the war film genre. I will identify and examine those techniques used to depict violence within the war film genre, specifically those discussed by Prince, and evaluate them as they may or may not relate to my screenplay.

The techniques identified by Prince as central to the depiction of violence within the war film genre include:

- The use of recurrent imagery to visualise a character’s inner nature. This could take the form of flashback, such as the visualisation of literal moments from the past, or fantasy (surreal) depictions

- Subjective imagery from the character’s conscience within the present timeframe. This could be literal of distorted (surreal) imagery imprinted on the present reality of one of the characters

- “Temporal and atemporal montage intercutting”. Atemporal montage intercutting involves the juxtaposition of diverse violent images that do not exist within the same temporal reality but are connected on a more symbolic level. Temporal montage intercutting usually occurs through an extended violent montage of uninterrupted visual spectacle that is visually overwhelming

- Mirror-images as a means of visualising a “fissured self.” According to Prince, this technique conveys the protagonists’ visual “self-recognition” of their violent past
• The depiction of violence through the eyes of a passive or innocent observer, accompanied by voiceover/sound that reflects their experience (literal or otherwise) of the event, rather than the actual sound and fury of the violence itself. This can also take the form of a subjective montage from the point-of-view of the victim witnessing the violent act

• The conscious depiction of impending violence seen through the eyes of one of the characters, whose sense of helplessness is situated within the organised preparations for violence

• “Didactic tableaux”. This technique uses images of violence that stand outside the narrative of the story and which are usually used to comment on the society or culture of the period. They could occur in the prelude, execution or aftermath of violence, in an “extended tableaux” that also possesses a lyrical or metaphoric quality

A key objective of my research will be to:

• Define the war film genre

Critical questions that will direct this research are:

• What is the key definition of the war film?

• According to Prince, how may the visualisation of memory expand our awareness of the psychological dimensions of violence and aggression? As part of this exegesis, specific film works that will be discussed are: Cross of Iron and The Wild Bunch by director/screenwriter Sam Peckinpah, The Thin Red Line by director/screenwriter Terence Malick, Murderers Amongst Us by director/screenwriter Wolfgang Staudt and Pretty Village Pretty Flame by director/screenwriter Srdjan Dragovic

• How useful may these techniques be in terms of the project and the exploration of the psychology of the professional soldier?

Parade’s End A screenplay accompanied by an exegesis exploring institutional and ideological violence within the war film genre
2. Prince and the Political and Psychological Dimensions of Violence

Stephen Prince, in *Savage Cinema: Sam Peckinpah and the Rise of Ultraviolent Movies in America*, examines seminal films that deal with violence within the war film and western genre. According to Prince, violence is more than a physical force. It “destroy[s] hearts and minds as well as bodies”.¹ Prince explores films which engage with the effects of violence on the victim as well as the perpetrator. These film narratives for the first time probed the psychological and metaphysical dimensions of violence and aggression within the war film and western genre. Prince examines directors and writers who attempted to present violence as a cathartic experience for the audience. These situated and aestheticised prolonged montages of violence with characterisations and narratives that steered the audience to the identification of what Prince calls the “suffering and pity” of the characters. Violence and aggression were for the first time rooted in an “ontology of existence within an implacable indifferent universe.”²

Prince examines several techniques of film and TV violence in mainstream Hollywood *mise en scène* during the 1960s and 1970s to suggest that a new interpretation of screen violence had arisen.³ He points out that certain techniques, such as the flashback or the visual suggestion of memory, were used by screenwriters to direct the course of action by influencing the actions of the protagonist, and not merely to provide exposition on the character’s background and history. According to Prince, flashbacks were used by screen writer/directors such as Sam Peckinpah and Arthur Penn to create a psychological sense of instability, distorting screen time to represent the trauma of dreams, fantasies, memories or madness. This “visual intrusion of memory” was also used as a symbolic representation of a potent figure or symbol (combining flashback and surrealism). These intrusions were situated within the real contemporary world of the protagonist and determined the character’s fate.

Prince continues his examination of the nexus of violence, politics and culture in American film with *Visions of Empire: Political Imagery in Contemporary American Film*. Prince examines the period of the 1980s through to the present day, in which war films particularly became defined
through techniques that glorified violence and were totally inconsistent with the cultural and political underpinnings of only a decade before. Prince locates the chief psychological characteristic of modern screen violence as “dispassion” rather than psychological and emotional anguish, citing the *Rambo* trilogy and the *Missing in Action* films as the originators of this trend. Consequently, violence has become regenerative, an affirmation of strength and dominance.\(^4\) In Prince’s view, the depiction of violence has moved far away from the groundbreaking techniques of the 1960s and 1970s and is actually closer to the immediate post-war period. He notes that the anti-war film is no longer the dominant genre, as exhibited by the recent spate of war films such as *Black Hawk Down* and *Saving Private Ryan* (despite the latter’s watershed depictions of screen combat). Prince argues that by the 1980s the political and psychological dimensions of screen violence that were apparent in films of just a decade earlier have been virtually excised from most contemporary films.\(^5\)

Thus, it is Prince’s contention that contemporary film, the war film in particular, has foregone the techniques discussed in this paper. Writers and directors who present graphic displays of violence for its own sake have superseded, if not completely ignored, the psychological, social, and political complexities that may be essential to a profound understanding of actions and motives. Screenwriters and directors have moved contemporary film closer than ever to the early incarnation of the war film as a propagandistic tool, albeit in a more technologically advanced package.\(^6\)

In conclusion, it is the objective of this paper and subsequent screenplay to selectively combine and modify those techniques in ways that will confront audiences with disturbing and insightful images of war and violence. These images should leave no question as to the political and psychological dimensions of the story. However, before the screenplay can be written, it is essential to locate the genre in which the screenplay is inscribed. A serious consideration of the types of screenplays and films that make up the genre, along with the attendant social, cultural, national and generational influences, is required to determine where *Parade’s End* belongs as a genre piece.

*Parade’s End* A screenplay accompanied by an exegesis exploring institutional and ideological violence within the war film genre
3. Defining the War Film Genre

In defining the war film genre, the focus will be on theorists whose work dealt with two periods; either the post-World War One period and its aftermath, or post-World War Two. It is these major conflicts which greatly influenced the genre and depictions of violence in profound, and at times, unsettling ways. According to certain theorists, it is also these conflicts which first “created” the genre. For the period between the two World Wars, the main theorists included in the research are Kathryn Kane, Ann Linder, John Chambers, Folke Isaksson and Leif Furhammar. In the post-World War Two period, John P. Lowell, Tim Dirk, Jay Hyams, Jeanine Basinger and of course, Stephen Prince, have all made significant contributions to the study of the genre.

3.1 War and Politics

According to Janina Falkowska, the very word “political” in relation to the war film is used in several senses and on two different levels of analysis. The adjective may be applied generally to film interpretation, or it may be employed in the definition of a particular category of film. Therefore the concept of political, on one level can both pertain to the process of interpretation of any film, and define film that forms what she describes as “a polyphonic heterogeneous patchwork of works variously described as ‘social problem films,’ ‘resistance films,’ ‘revolutionary films’ or ‘ideological films,’ depending on the focus of the film researcher (theorist).” As an example of the “resistance” war film, Falkowska uses *Ashes and Diamonds* by director and screenwriter Andrzej Wajda: the narrative of a determined struggle by Polish freedom fighters to assassinate the new Communist head of Poland after the Nazis had finally surrendered in Europe.

According to Isaksson and Furhammar, the political dimensions of films are axiomatic with the tendency of most films, particularly box office successes, to be very similar to propaganda.
films. For these authors, the business of satisfying mass audiences is very closely connected with their aesthetic, religious and political preferences and norms. Ideological factors play a significant part in achieving success, with the audience’s identification and willingness to accept the story dependent upon whether the film catered to their pre-existing political and religious viewpoints.

3.2 The World War One Period: Pacifism versus Propaganda

The earliest definitions of the genre were the “pacifist” and “propaganda” war films of the World War One era. Dirk considers that most of the early war films were used as “flag-waving” propaganda to inspire national pride and to display the nobility of one's own forces while harshly displaying and criticising the villainy of the enemy, especially during the war or in the post-war periods. Consequently, jingoistic-type war films usually did not represent war realistically, film and screenwriting techniques avoiding the reality of the horrors of war. As Dirk says, “good guys would clash against the bad guys” (often with stereotyped labels such as “Krauts”, “commies”, “Huns”, or “nips”). With the advent of World War One, the cinema first showed its potential as a means of agitation on a large scale. Isaksson and Furhammar argue that the political and psychological dimensions of war films were instantly realised through the political tool of propaganda. This was enabled by the lack of complexity in narrative, character or thematic design.

3.3 Pacifism is propaganda

According to Isaksson and Furhammer, films such as To Hell with the Kaiser and Civilisation studiously avoided contextualisation, opting for an extreme take on the inhumanity of war. This involved techniques on the part of the screenwriters which used fantastical images and narratives to convey what was still a highly political message. An example of this is Thomas Ince’s Civilisation (1916), in which Christ is reincarnated in the body of a dead submarine engineer so that he can rise again and preach his gospel of peace to the world. This message was usually unequivocal; to stay out of the war at all costs, or to enter it with all possible speed. The psychological dimensions had a nationalistic streak which stemmed from this propaganda.
objective, where narrative strategies demonised the enemy as monsters intent on the rape and defilement of a nation’s womanhood. Violence was rarely if ever shown.

3.4 The development of the anti-war film

According to Linder, in the post- World War One period, pacifist films became the “anti-war film”. The main difference was that depictions of violence rested on techniques and narrative structure that strove for “truth” as opposed to “verisimilitude”. These techniques relied on creating the “absurd cataclysm of war”, using montage intercutting between scenes of mass confusion and chaos in the heat of battle, with the subjective experience of individual soldiers. So for the first time the audience shared the subjectivity of the common soldier. This point-of-view was replete with the images of the crescendo of violence encroaching upon the solitary individual, giving war a psychological dimension previously unexplored. The montage of battle scenes with the strain of the individual soldier raises the question: how does he cope with this overwhelming reality? Within the recently spawned anti-war narrative, the answer was in the form of the soldier or soldiers showing the signs of “shell-shock” or “battle fatigue”. Their capacity to continue was impaired, often irrevocably. In these early anti-war films, Linder suggests, another technique emerged which showed the horrors of war in the closing images of the film. The screenwriters were then determining within the narrative a predominantly peaceful message. Such examples include the mutilated bodies in J’Accuse, the mass graves in The Wooden Crosses, or Baumer’s lifeless body in All Quiet on the Western Front.

3.5 The testimony of war and violence

Linder also discusses a technique introduced during this period known as “temoinage”. This technique involved the testimony of individual soldiers describing the horrors of battle as they tried to reconcile the traumatic nature of their experiences. Unlike the pacifist war film, the anti-war film was more concerned with the experience of combat conveying the message, rather than simply stating it in narratives that were devoid of action. Both pacifist and propagandistic sub-genres tended to be overtly political in tone, with little serious context to the conflict. With the anti-war film, the horror and carnage of the Great War overwhelmed any incentive to glorify
or defend this conflict as necessary or just, particularly from those countries that suffered the most.\textsuperscript{16}

3.6 \textit{``The sight and sound of battle''}

According to Dirk, \textit{All Quiet on the Western Front} is possibly the greatest anti-war film ever made.\textsuperscript{17} This film, made between the world wars, was based upon the novel by Erich Maria Remarque. One of its distinguishing features was that it viewed the Great War from the German point-of-view. In both the novel and the film, soldiers were portrayed as human beings, ravaged by their experiences. As far as the depiction of violence was concerned, the use of sound in war films revolutionised techniques that could be used to heighten the sense of realism with aerial planes, battles, explosions and gunfire. Chambers describes this as a combination of fast-moving sight and sound to heighten the impact of the violence of industrialised warfare.\textsuperscript{18} This was combined with images of bodies lying crumpled on the ground, hanging on barbed wire, or being hurled into the air by artillery blasts. It was a combination of camera and screenwriting techniques that employed lighting, sound and shots in highly dramatic and effective ways: \textit{``[t]he impact of music, the realism produced by the sound of rifle fire, the staccato rhythm of machine guns, and the deafening roar of exploding artillery shells.''}\textsuperscript{19}

3.7 \textit{The ``regular'' war film}

According to Dirk, it was during the post- World War Two period that Hollywood screenwriters and directors invented what he defines as the ``regular war film''. He argues that the ``regular war film'' was a more sophisticated piece of propaganda, balancing some unpleasantness of war with neat resolutions that triumphed ``good over evil''. Unlike \textit{All Quiet on the Western Front}, the hero would usually survive, and only those who should die would oblige. A film that Dirk considers the first and most influential example of this sub genre was \textit{The Big Parade} (1925) by King Vidor with a screenplay by Harry Behn. \textit{The Big Parade} was based on the wartime experiences of Laurence Stallings, a US marine who served in France. It was, says Dirk, the first war film of its kind to tell its story from the viewpoint of the GI. But unlike other anti-war films of the period, it was more a film of escapist entertainment, yet incorporated powerful battle
scenes. While the film’s authors were careful to underline the futility of war in the story, the survival of the hero and his reuniting with a love back home would provide a template for war films to be made decades later. The anti-war film, on the other hand, avoided such neat dichotomies, usually recognising war itself as the ultimate evil. But even these films could not transcend the nationalistic boundaries and prejudices of individual countries. As a result, scenes of horror and carnage in *The Wooden Crosses* were greeted with cheers and applause by French audiences when it was German soldiers who were shown being killed.20

3.8 The pre- World War Two period

For Isaksson and Furhammar, the propaganda film did not disappear but rather reached its apotheosis during the pre- World War Two period with Genina’s *Asselio deli Alcazar*. Isaksson and Furhammar consider this film of the Spanish Civil War to be a high point of political cinema. One of its distinguishing features is that the fascists are the heroes of the story. In one scene, the Republican “enemy” is shown bombing the “nationalist” (read fascist) town of Toledo. Rather than showing the bodies of women and children (who were playing harmoniously only seconds before the attack), the aftermath of the violence focuses on an “ideological” conversation where it is stated that the “enemy” (the Republicans) are deficient in both “national conscience” and “aesthetic sensibility,” since they happened to destroy some national monuments in the attack.21 At the same time, says Herman and Dennito, Renoir’s *Grand Illusion* re-worked the genre completely to create a war film of great psychological and political complexity.22 Renoir dealt with the devastating aftermath of violence without one action scene, and yet, according to the authors, managed to incriminate the forces of class and power responsible for the carnage of the trenches. This was a political anti-war film with no hidden messages, refusing to blame one country for the chaos of the Great War.23 Renoir presaged European directors and screenwriters such as Costa Gavras and Gille Pontecorvo who, decades later, in films such as *Z* and *Battle of Algiers*, purposely tackled political issues with narratives relatively free of propaganda or overt bias.24
3.9 War films made during the Second World War

The depiction of violence within films of the Second World War was controlled by what Hyams describes as the “fervid patriotism and fantastic heroics” of these films. Consequently, says Hyams, these films have dated very quickly. On the whole, they did not present an accurate account of the conflict or the nature of violence in modern war. The world at war portrayed in these films had the aspect of a wonderful, romantic adventure. Interestingly, Hyams states that the majority of war films made during the conflict were not about combat due to the expense involved and the lack of interest among servicemen to watch war films or westerns. This was due to either their first-hand experience of war which soured their taste for mock heroics, or their imminent departure to a combat zone. It should also be noted that by 1945, hundreds of thousands of wounded soldiers had returned to the civilian community, bringing with them a different attitude to war than which was served through the propaganda machine of Hollywood or the daily newspapers. According to Hyams, the war films of the latter days of World War Two became more realistic as screenwriters included scenes of men screaming as they die, conveying a strong sense of fear and pain. This was noticeably absent in earlier films where men died quietly as they were sleeping. Political foregrounding was still non-existent, unless used for blatant propaganda purposes.

3.10 War and patriotism

Isaksson and Furhammar claim that Hollywood propaganda films during the Second World War sprang less from reality than from currently popular conceptions about war and patriotism which, of course, they served to reinforce. Depictions of violence remained sanitised, if non-existent, so war was still an exciting adventure with “politics a form of romance”. Death, essentially, was painless, and ultimately a blessing if suffered by the protagonist. Isaksson and Furhammar reinforce Prince’s belief that Hollywood films, particularly of the war film genre, have studiously avoided political contextualisation while being highly political as propaganda.
3.11 Violence as propaganda

Where violence is concerned, says Isaksson and Furhammar, or where violence plays a big part, there is a need for a common psychological perspective uniting film and audience. This is rarely a problem where the perpetrators of violence are supposed to be hated by the audience and was certainly not problematic during the Second World War when national survival was often at stake. Most propaganda films made during this time placed the audience firmly on the side of the victim. However, some German films during the Second World War, unlike their Hollywood and British counterparts, ran the risk of alienating their audiences by showing horrifying sequences. *Bomber Squadron Lutzow*, in which hundreds of Poles fleeing along a road are gunned down by Stuka dive bombers and Polish cavalry are massacred by German tanks, could be considered one of the first examples of the dissonance between political imperatives of the filmmakers and the psychological realities of techniques and their subsequent images that ran the risk of eliciting sympathy for the wrong party. For these were films that showed the “pictorial” reality of modern warfare, along with the sights and sounds of modern war, and were unique in their depiction of civilians as “legitimate” targets of the German war machine. It was a tribute to the power of propaganda, according to Isaksson and Furhammar, that these films were watched with satisfaction by their audiences, arguably through the sense of vengeance that was derived from these images of terror.30

3.12 The “structural dualities” of the World War Two combat film

Kane believes that what are generally referred to as “war films” are those that depict the activities of uniformed American military forces in combat with uniformed enemy forces during World War Two. To support this proposition, Kane considers the World War Two films to be structured by opposing dualities such as War and Peace, Civilisation and Savagery. The author states:
These essential dualities are extensively played out as the conflict between good and evil or American/Allies and Enemy (Japanese/German), including, for example, democratic vs. totalitarian, tolerant vs. oppressive, religious vs. atheist, fertile vs. sterile, etc. In the combat films of this period, these dualities are set forth. It remains for later films to explore their ramifications and possible inversions — for example, the kind-hearted Nazi officer or the resentful Japanese commandant, the oppressive American commander, and so on. 31

Kane presents a suggestive taxonomy of theme, character, setting and plot elements in the World War Two combat film. This approach “eliminates discussion of costume dramas with major battle scenes, all other wars, spy dramas, films made during the war years which may refer in passing to those historical events but do not take them as the basic narrative structure.” 32 Even Korean and Vietnam War films are excluded from what she refers to as “this core genre”: American military forces in combat with uniformed enemy forces during World War Two. For the purposes of script analysis, however, Kane’s taxonomy may be far too rigid. The World War Two film is not the best example of the genre, in terms of the output of films which added to our understanding of the nature of violence and combat. For Prince, 33 what made the violence in such films as The Wild Bunch and Cross of Iron so compelling was that screenwriters and directors such as Peckinpah and Penn created characters and narratives that had completely broken away from the traditional war film, and for that matter, the anti-war film. 34

3.13 The post World War Two period

According to Dirk, post- World War Two film could be neatly classified as two types; the regular war film and the anti-war film. With the regular war film, Dirk makes no distinction from the anti-war as far as promoting war. It was more a case of the anti-war film often acknowledging the horror and heartbreak of war, letting the actual combat fighting (against nations or humankind) provide the primary plot or background for the action of the film. 35 Regular war films are often paired with other genres, such as romance comedy, black comedy, and suspense thrillers. A number of war films are actually historical epics, authentic attempts to recreate the experience of war on screen. Dirk does not distinguish these as adhering to the anti-war or regular war film, but his choice of epics include most of the Hollywood epics written in the post...
war period (such as *The Longest Day*) where the screenwriters steered away from any definitive, anti-war statement. What also emerged, says Hyams, was the “Cold War” film which was made war simplistic, was “action-packed,” and filled American theatres. He states,

Even films such as *Battleground*, which depicted a sober view of the Battle of the Bulge and was written by a veteran of the conflict (groups of bewildered soldiers are shown fighting only for survival, with the war reduced to a series of bitter contests for short stretches of snowy ground), contained a Cold War preparedness message, as one of the soldiers reminds the audience of the vigilance and sacrifices necessary to protect freedom and democracy.36

3.14 Typical elements of the post- World War Two film

Dirk lists what he considers to be the “typical elements” in the action-oriented war plots of films made in the post World War Two period. These include:

- POW camp experiences and escapes
- submarine warfare
- espionage
- heroism
- "war is hell" brutalities
- air dogfights
- tough trench/infantry experiences
- male bonding buddy adventures during wartime

Themes explored in war films include:
• combat
• survivor and escape stories
• tales of gallant sacrifice and struggle
• studies of the futility and inhumanity of battle
• intelligent and profound explorations of the moral and human issues

Some war films balanced the soul-searching, tragic consequences and inner turmoil of combatants with action-packed, dramatic spectacles, enthusiastically illustrating the excitement and turmoil of warfare.

3.15 The revisionist western and “total war”

Theorists such as Lovell consider seminal western movies on violence such as *The Wild Bunch* (1969) and *Soldier Blue* (1970) to be allegorical treatments of more contemporary wars and atrocities of the 1960s and 1970s such as the Vietnam War and the My Lai massacre. Prince describes *The Wild Bunch* a “harbinger of the apocalyptic dimension of modern warfare of a narrative world poised fatefully on the eve of World War One and the new tide of slaughter that it would inaugurate”. In these films, the depiction of combat violence transcends their specific historical context. The screenwriters’ and directors’ target is the nature of modern war; indiscriminate, deadly, and nothing to do with sanitised depictions of violence. In both films, the Western setting is incidental, or used to demonstrate that its time has come through the onslaught of industrial civilisation and warfare. The climax of both films is not gunfights between lone individuals or small groups bearing deep enmity towards each other. Rather, it involves pitched battles between opposing armies. The messages are very clear from the writers and directors that it is twentieth century combat they are interested in. The uniforms and background are interchangeable with other conflicts and battles.
3.16 Hollywood versus European treatments of the war film

Meanwhile, Basinger’s criteria for what could be considered a “war film” are probably the most rigorous. Basinger believes that a war film must contain actual combat footage of armed uniformed combatants. This would appear to be far too narrow a definition. From the point-of-view of portraying the psychological dimensions, such a definition would exclude such films as *Grand Illusion* and *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, which, despite the absence of combat, are devastating portraits of loss and grief due to institutional and ideological violence. Films prior to the 1960s could not depict the kind of violence contemporary audiences have become accustomed to, but that did not prevent the making of films that in some respects have yet to be surpassed in more recent efforts within the genre. On the other hand, most of the Hollywood films of the 1940s and 1950s (with the exception of *Attack* by screenwriter/director Robert Aldrich), had very little to say about the nature of war and combat. It was often stated “war is hell” by the protagonist, but there was little evidence within the film that this was actually the case.
3.17 Conclusion

In discussing the war film genre, it is apparent that there is a clear relationship between the anti-war film and confronting images of violence and warfare. Alternatively, such a relationship also exists between the “regular” and propagandistic war film, and images which sidestep the terror and brutality of war and combat. However, this is not surprising if the history of the war film genre is considered to have often been one of political interference and manipulation of screen images to match the political “mood” of the country. Even the anti-war films of the 1960s and 1970s reflected the disaffection of large portions of the American public over the Vietnam War. Consequently negative portrayals of the American soldier were acceptable for the first time.43

The first response of screenwriters and directors of war films was overtly political, while it took the carnage of World War One to expose the psychological dimensions through the experience of the common soldier.

Whether working with or against these cultural tides, the development of techniques for depicting violence have been shaped by the thematic and moral imperatives of the filmmakers and screenwriters to show what “war is like”. There is an inextricable link between the human dimension and the political and psychological in discussing the war film genre. Directors such as Lewis Milestone and Abel Gance had experienced the war first-hand and were, in a sense, creating the genre and taking it in a particular direction at the same time. Yet filmmakers and screenwriters since have consistently struggled with the entertainment value in showing violent imagery and the partisan nature of audiences and their ability to accept cruelty and violence upon a supposed or “real” enemy. This has been offset through the depiction of human suffering as a consequence of war. Quite possibly one of the positive and intended effects of exposing audiences to scenes of unrelieved violence and suffering was to make it difficult for audiences to identify with the protagonist to the complete detriment of the antagonist(s). This allowed for the thematic treatments to stand more clearly, less obscured by any “dualities”. As previously stated, the enemy is humanised, and therefore, within the context of the war film, no acts against the “enemy” are completely justifiable.44

Hollywood has then, in this author’s opinion, successfully managed to depoliticise the war film through the creations of strong dualities within the structure of the film, dualities that overwhelm any possibilities of balance or contextualisation beyond the most simplistic. So, in this respect,
Kane’s taxonomy is the most engaging and convincing interpretation of the genre. The Hollywood anti-war film belongs to Kane’s continuum in the development of the genre; few anti-war films digress from this paradigm but those that do usually allow for an exploration of the political and psychological dimensions beyond the scope of the mainstream war film, regardless of thematic intentions of the screenwriters and filmmakers. Again, as Prince points out, techniques that focus on the depiction of violence exist within an approach which, on close investigation, does not fit with Kane’s continuum. This is mainly because the character and narrative design does not allow for such structural dualities. The character’s alienation from self, precipitated by a violent history, also mirrors the audience’s alienation for the character. There is therefore a distinct relationship between the political dimensions of a war film that seeks to contextualise war and its causes, and the nature and depth of the depictions of violence.

The anti-war film has moved from broad anti-war statements based on what Linder believes to be wholly the trauma of the soldier and the horror of combat, to more sophisticated treatments. These treatments have allowed for the political and psychological dimensions of a conflict to exist side-by-side or to be inextricably linked. The braver screenwriters and directors such as Renoir and Pontecorvo have managed this effortlessly. Undoubtedly, the strength of the anti-war statement, and with it, the exploration of the psychological dimensions, is more effectively realised in their films. These writer/directors have scrutinised the politics that underlies all wars, no matter how mythologised they have become through the ideological treatment of numerous screenwriters. Showing what war was like was not enough. For these artists, investigating the causes and consequences was just as important. Yet, despite the revolution of techniques for the depiction of violence, Prince believes the propaganda film has emerged as the dominant genre. This, according to the author, is no coincidence, but directly related to the political and cultural realities of the period that emerged in the 1980s and continues to the present day.

In conclusion, none of the theorists discussed, except Prince, have underlined the violence inherent to war and any faithful depiction of its consequences as influencing the type of war film that emerges. More importantly, Prince relates these innovations to changes across the cultural and political landscape. He examines a fertile period where numerous screenwriters and directors within the mainstream cinema brought insightful, and at times, controversial depictions of violence, eclipsing standard techniques of previous generations. These innovative ideas in

*Parade’s End* A screenplay accompanied by an exegesis exploring institutional and ideological violence within the war film genre
filmmaking and screenwriting encountered the prelude, execution, and aftermath of violence in new and exciting ways. Prince demonstrates with undeniable clarity how our own understanding of violence has been shaped by a variety of techniques which force the audience to confront the human consequences of violence and aggression in the war film genre. He defines techniques which, for the first time, contextualised violence in ways that illuminated the psychological and political dimensions of organised violence and aggression.

4. Prince’s Techniques for the Depiction of Violence within the War Film Genre

Prince examines several techniques that were specifically used by screenwriters and directors to highlight the psychological and political dimensions of violence. Before the screenplay can meet the goals set out as far as exploring these dimensions, it is important to examine the techniques in their various permutations. As well as citing the examples Prince gleaned from the films of artists such as Sam Peckinpah, there will be a consideration of works of other screenwriters/filmmakers whose innovations owe a great deal to the works of these early pioneers, and have taken these techniques to new levels.

4.1 Recurrent and subjective imagery: Flashback

According to Prince, “recurrent imagery” could be used to visualise a character’s inner nature. This could take the form of flashback, such as the visualisation of literal moments from the past, or fantasy (surreal) depictions of past events.
Subjective imagery from the character’s conscience within the present temporality could also be literal of distorted (surreal) imagery imprinted on the present reality of one of the characters. An example of this would be where the protagonist either visualises past imagery within his present reality, or where the flashback of a past event is distorted by the intrusion, or inclusion of conflicting or contrasting imagery, often turning the recollection into a disturbing event. It can also give the audience further insight into the protagonist’s attempts to reconcile the past with the present as opposed to simply suffering bouts of recurring flashbacks.

As Prince points out, the visual suggestion of memory as flashback can direct the course of action by influencing the actions of the protagonist. This then ties in flashbacks with the plot of the film. Flashbacks can also be used to create a psychological sense of instability, distorting screen time to represent the trauma of dreams, fantasies, memories, or madness.

Prince suggests that the visual intrusion of memory can also be used as a symbolic representation of a potent figure or symbol situated within the temporal world of the protagonist and determining the character’s fate. These “irruptions”, whether acting as a catalyst for the climactic point within the narrative, or symbolic representation within a corporeal framework, “allowed a troubled subjectivity to intrude upon the flows of narrative events, and to extend and deepen the psychological dimensions of the character's relationship to violence”. The audience witnesses the character’s nuanced reaction to the violence on both an emotional and psychological level. It is an “uncontrolled” psychological reaction to the violence complicit between an individual character and the audience, often hinting at further troubles later in the narrative. In the depiction of G.H. Ash, the central character of Parade’s End, there is a tension and interplay between images of what Ash has become and what he has witnessed that has brought him to this crisis point, and glimpses of a less troubled character and period in his life, through flashback. At each turning point of the story, with Ash carrying the burden of the past, the question becomes what Ash will do in response to each crisis; what will be the effect on his psyche and his subsequent actions.
4.2 Types of flashbacks

According to Prince’s theory of flashback, the reality of fighting and dying in combat can be intercut with two levels of memory or temporality. The first is the more immediate past of the protagonist and supporting characters in the story. (It can also refer to the length of the flashback which will be discussed later in this section). The second is that of a more distant reality and remembrance, such as childhood, to create an even greater sense of distortion between past and present. Within Parade’s End, such distortions could be of childhood innocence and perspective on “war,” “soldiers,” “fathers,” against the proposition from the adult perspective of imminent death or physical and psychological wounding.

This is evident in the depiction of atrocities within Parade’s End. In the screenplay, atrocities committed by both sides form a jarring counterpoint to the myth of the SAS soldier. Ash’s spiritual crisis is epitomised in moments and scenes where he is caught in the absolute compromise of his creed, the nadir reached when they are silent witnesses to a massacre of refugees by Kopassus troops. According to the logic of Prince’s discussion, the massacre itself should be rendered in such a way which combines the montage intercutting of soldiers witnessing the massacre of refugees from their hiding points, with the memories from the past, evoked by this overwhelming reality. The effect can be heightened, as in Wolfgang Staudt’s film, Murderers Among Us (1946). Here, a military doctor attempts to leave behind the memories of war-time atrocities committed by his unit in the German Army during World War Two. But these memories are never far away amidst the turmoil and ruin of post-war Germany and a chance meeting with his former commanding officer who ordered the killings. In Parade’s End, the massacre of civilians by Coehlo and his men can be overlaid with atemporal sound (or asynchronous), so that the more literal, naturalistic movements of the Kopassus troops, as they prepare to kill their victims, are processed by the audience with the contrasting images and sounds of a lost or past world. This would include the screams of children’s laughter mixed with screams of terror. The massacre may also serve as the crisis plot point in Act Two, allowing the physical and psychological impact of what has just occurred to propel the individual and team crises that are precipitated by the massacre and their complete lack of response to the events as they are unfolding. Prince’s “troubled subjectivity” is allowed to intrude upon the flow of
narrative events, and deepening all of the characters’ relationships to violence by making them complicit in the murder of the villagers by the Kopassus. It is also a point where Ash’s military relationship with Coehlo could be revealed through flashback. (It should be noted that in the submitted draft, Ash and the rest of the SAS team are present in the village when the murder of the civilians is about to take place. This incident becomes the mid-story plot point as Ash retaliates by killing some of Coehlo’s troops as they are about to execute a family of villagers).

As with *Murderers Among Us*, the screenwriter can convey the political nature of the atrocity through the insertion of collective images and flashbacks, to populist icons and myths. These can then illuminate the political underpinnings of events within the screenplay such as the massacre of civilians, while at the same time adding weight to the psychological dimensions of the piece. These would be images of politicians and other figures in photograph or documentary footage of their more pivotal moments or speeches. This could range from earlier politicians such as Chifley and Menzies to more recent political icons such as Howard associated with Indonesian diplomats and leaders, and Pauline Hanson making her maiden speech in Parliament.

### 4.3 Flashbacks within a compressed time frame

According to Prince, flashbacks can also be utilised within a compressed timeframe in relation to events which have just recently occurred. A compressed timeframe means the flashback is of a recent event or memory. It can also mean that flashback occurs in a brief moment in time.

In *Murderers Amongst Us*, the first flashback occurs when the protagonist, Dr. Mertens, is handed a pistol by his former CO whom Mertens has only recently discovered is still alive. Mertens, on grabbing the pistol, is immediately transported into a dissonant past, with the sound and fury of battle working in a cacophony with the screams of the dying and the gaiety of military marching music. At key moments in the narrative, this type of flashback can be used in a more subjective fashion, illustrating personal experiences of Ash, fragmented associations with the routine activities in preparation for war. While no visual flashback is used here, a more
“contemplative” version of this technique can also be employed within Parade’s End. Ash, the protagonist, on return to active duty, makes his way through a selection of weapons for the forthcoming mission which will climax the end of Act One. Ash’s handling of each weapon summons a personal experience from the past where it was used in combat, providing further insight into the psychology and history of the main character. The solidification of his reputation as a warrior also provides hints of the accumulated strain of one too many engagements with the “enemy”. The initial hesitation in training of an earlier episode of Ash’s life, representing the first phase of Ash’s life as an SAS soldier, is followed by recollected images of his cold numbing efficiency as Ash handles each weapon which becomes progressively more lethal. The perfunctory attitude towards killing in the flashbacks contrasts with Ash’s present psychological malaise.

This technique can also be effectively utilised within Parade’s End at the mid-story plot point. In the current draft, the SAS inspect the remains of the makeshift camp, finding drawings and words of the children. These show situations of domestic family bliss, which are then interrupted by the arrival of the Kopassus. A montage intercutting of the actual atrocities, with scenes of children raped, tortured, and finally murdered, are juxtaposed with the SAS troops mutely, lamely inspecting the aftermath of what they have witnessed. Ash discovers a book of drawings by one of the children, showing a depiction of a soldier threatening his family. This image triggers in Ash the words of his great-grandfather, the jingoistic rhyming couplets of a colonial war interposed with a flashback of Ash as a young boy discovering his great-grandfather’s diary for the first time. (Please note that in the submitted draft references to Ash’s great grandfather have been omitted but are still under consideration for later drafts of the screenplay. The main reason for this concerns length and pace).

4.4 Subjective imagery from the past

According to Prince, this technique usually involves an overlap or intrusion of images, people or events from the past within the present timeframe of the character.
The dialectic between the psychological dimensions of war and killing and the morally inverted world of the Special Forces soldier, who is extolled for his virtuosity in killing, will be the point of the violence contained in the screenplay. Prince refers to a scene in Sam Peckinpah’s *Cross of Iron*, where the death of a young Russian boy whom Steiner had protected from the SS is killed during a surprise Russian attack. The boy’s death catapults Steiner into a world between fantasy and reality as he wanders around the hospital grounds after being wounded in the same firefight that killed the young boy. Steiner imagines the boy within his own dreams and conscious state, impassively watching his (Steiner’s) psychological deterioration and trauma, as he negotiates the endless stream of mutilated patients hovering around a table of food specially placed for a visiting general. As Prince points out, this interlude from the action and brutal combat of *Cross of Iron* is taken no further as far as Steiner’s ability to conduct himself within a merciless environment. It is literally and metaphorically a nightmare that he wakes up from that leaves no lingering side effects. But in *Parade’s End*, the intention is to create a connection between the psychological meanderings of Ash’s mind and his ability to function as a soldier. One of the whole points of the screenplay is to explore those thresholds of a super-soldier’s capacity to make war. What happens when he is no longer capable of rationalising his actions and for the first time places them within a moral framework? The anguish of death and killing, so often exculpated from the psychological terrain of modern war films, is the point of its display within *Parade’s End*.

Flashback and subjective imagery from the past could also take on more recent events which are structured in a surreal context. In Srdjan Dragovic’s *Pretty Village Pretty Flame*, these techniques are used by the screenwriter/director to create the psychic tension of accumulated battlefield trauma, as the central character visits his mother’s home, fully aware that she has been brutally murdered by the enemy. The protagonist “imagines” what was done to her in brief jagged scenes heightened in impact by expressionist touches in both colour and composition of the scene (i.e. the mother would be portrayed in quasi-religious poses covered in blood). The mother inhabits the present in her physical context or surroundings, the home, while at the same time existing on an imaginary level through her son’s psychological reconstruction of her death and suffering. It is a technique that combines subjective imagery from the past and flashback within a compressed timeframe. It is also a type of flashback that borders the literal with the
surreal. What he imagines about his mother has actually happened, but it is framed in such a way to distort or subvert the pictorial reality of her death. The religious icon-like expression of her face and physical pose implies the son’s deification of her as well as the death of the maternal figure in his life. Ultimately it is an audacious, startling use of this technique.

In Parade’s End, this type of surrealism or expressionism could be used to heighten the impact of the flashback in the scene where Ash is interviewed by a psychologist after returning to the SAS to determine his capacity for soldiering. The doctor asks Ash how many people he has killed. Ash tells him he has no idea, as flashbacks of his victims are presented to the audience, their faces missing. In each flashback the images are extended till Ash can no longer contain or edit the human dimension of his memories and body count. Initial flashes of a hand, or body lying face down, the time with each image extended with each flashback, give way through the force of memory to the baroque-like image of his last victim, the young girl, unedited or censored by his mind. Ash has successfully managed to erase the other identities over time, except for hers. It is a kaleidoscope of images ending on the face of his last victim.

In conclusion, the use of recurrent and subjective imagery from the past in Parade’s End should allow the audience to witness contrasting periods in the characters’ lives, from childhood to the prelude and crucible of their existence as modern-day warriors. It can also prepare the audience for what is to come, vividly creating the terrain of the protagonist’s mind, thereby placing the psychological dimensions of the story at the forefront of the narrative. For each of the key characters, flashback to different eras in their respective lives will allow for greater psychological complexity and nuance, inescapably humanising the characters while at the same time juxtaposing this evidence of a former life or world, with the obvious after-effects of indoctrination and training.

This screenwriting technique will be instrumental in exploring the psychological and political dimensions of organised violence within the project; creating an interior life of the characters that reflects the extent of their involvement, as either victim or perpetrator. More important than providing information on the characters, the greatest asset of flashbacks will be in anchoring specific moments within the reality of each character with their visualisation of their
psychological response. The protagonist’s inner turmoil over previous events related to his life as a modern day warrior will constitute a large obstacle to his goal of becoming, once again, “re-integrated” within the unit that he has devoted his life to. These flashbacks will retrieve memories and experiences prior to and including his life as a professional soldier, providing the audience with insights into his psychology and motivation throughout the story.

5. Prince’s Techniques: The Conscious Depiction of Impending Violence

According to Prince, this technique involves a character observing the impending violence about to unfold with a sense of helplessness that situated within the organised preparation for violence. Prince defines this technique as the structural presentation of a character's reaction to preparation for violence either as:

- A participant
- Observer and these reactions

These reactions register the character’s helplessness to change the course of events. His prime example of this is the opening violence of *The Wild Bunch*. This helplessness is explicitly conveyed through expressions of deeper levels of betrayal, cowardice, and humiliation that the character is subjected to by the narrative events. Yet the use of violence overrides the moral conviction of qualms of the character Deke Thornton, even as it becomes clear he is about to betray his own human principles. Thus violence becomes an “index of personal diminishment”.

In this scene a brief moment of reflection is used to place the imminent violence within a “condemnatory framework in which the bloodshed is presented as an outrage perpetrated upon the innocent victims”.

This technique will be the cornerstone of the depiction of the massacre of refugees by the Kopassus troops that is witnessed by Ash’s team. In conjunction with the use of flashback, the outrage about to be perpetrated on the refugees is clearly wrought across the faces of Ash and other members of the team who are ordered by Blackmore not to intervene in the horrors that are
about to take place. Through the reaction of Ash and other team members to the preparations for the violence by the Kopassus, the audience is not spared the “truth” of what is happening, without the need for explicit bloodshed.53

In conclusion, this depiction of impending violence as witnessed through the eyes of a specific character can be used quite effectively in creating a sense of dread over impending events and is one that can be used extensively within the framework of other, more expansive techniques such as tableaux imagery. Our understanding of a character’s psychology in relation to violence is often encapsulated within the moments beforehand. It can also allow for a more creative and informative use of flashback, as the stress imposed by imminent events triggers specific, often revealing memories of the character.

6. Prince’s Techniques: Temporal and atemporal montage intercutting

6.1 Temporal Montage Intercutting

According to Prince, temporal montage intercutting of violent images usually occurs through an extended montage of uninterrupted visual spectacle that is visually overwhelming. The author believes that with montage intercutting there is a tension or struggle between didacticism and entertainment in depicting actual violence on screen i.e., the horrors of violent death versus visual spectacle. Prince considers montage to have been used mainly by contemporary screenwriters to infuse violent action and combat with the aura of an exciting visual spectacle.

The montage set piece of a film such as The Wild Bunch is what Prince describes as “exquisitely crafted artefacts that emphasised visual spectacle”.54 The design foregrounds the hyperkinetic spectacle so that it becomes a detachable part of the film. This design consists of the massacre of hundreds of soldiers by several men in a frenzy of suicidal rage over the torture and death of their friend. Ultimately Prince considers this an inherent weakness of the style since it undermines any
carefully constructed narratives and techniques. Such use of montage may have emphasised the brutality of physical violence while also giving it a graceful beauty.\textsuperscript{55} This is what Prince describes as a “multi-dimensional” approach to war and violence. While techniques such as elaborate montage intercutting and the use of slow motion inserts heralded a new approach to the presentation of violence and an audience’s experience of it, it was not necessarily focused against the violence presented. In fact, says Prince, it presented violence as a cathartic resolution for the main characters or perhaps for the audience.\textsuperscript{56,57}

Therefore Prince considers the type of montage intercutting exemplified by the cinema of Peckinpah and Penn, as caught in a contradiction between the aesthetic excitement it offers viewers through its montage editing, and the moral revulsion towards violence which the narratives, characters and dramatic situations often convey. Prince, though, does not equate this excitement with the glorification of war, citing Peckinpah’s \textit{Cross of Iron} as an example. The film opens with an extended scene of killings. Sgt Steiner, the protagonist, and his men, silently stalk and then garrotte, suffocate and knife three Russian soldiers. They follow this by machine-gunning and grenading a large encampment of Russians. Peckinpah, says Prince, assails the viewers in the film’s opening moments with a frightening portrait of a morally inverted world where cold blooded killing is complemented. Steiner then surveys the destruction and utters the first line of dialogue in the film, “Good kill.” The rest of the film says Prince, works to portraying the ghastliness of war, despite the stylistic nature of Peckinpah’s montage intercutting. Prince considers it an audacious stand by the filmmaker/screenwriter who was willing to be misunderstood at the outset of the film.

This technique, as used in the opening of \textit{Cross of Iron}, could be effectively applied within \textit{Parade’s End}. The shock of battle and killing, the cold-blooded nature of combat, needs to be presented at the outset of the story; the culmination of training, conditions, instinct and circumstance, captured in a scene of numbing brutality. The silent techniques of killing, so typical of popular impressions and image of the Special Forces soldier, could therefore act as an important counterpoint to the sound and fury of gun battle that is to follow. In the opening sequence, Ash and his team enter a village protected by rebel fighters and systematically exterminate each one of them. All of this takes place as the village goes about its daily business. The ruthless efficiency of killing is suddenly inverted with the accidental killing of a young child.
by Ash. The combination of tableaux imagery (to be discussed later in this piece), flashback and montages of violence can be included early in the piece as the young child’s routine of play is contextualised within an environment or moral and physical decay (i.e. the child thinks nothing of seeing a dead body). This in itself could allow for the use of another technique: witnessing the preparations for slaughter through a child’s eyes, the young girl’s feelings of helplessness allayed by a child’s trust. In one particular scene, Ash, or one of his team, has just killed off a rebel fighter near the young girl’s house. As the SAS trooper moves in for the next kill, he encounters the child, as there is a cut to a photo on a side table of the young girl and her father who has just been killed. The child then smiles at her father’s murderer. He motions her to keep quiet and she complies. This image is subverted here by presenting to the audience an ethical dilemma as the child’s naiveté is used to make her complicit in keeping her father’s death a secret from the rest of the village.

One of the most critical questions or problems as far as the depiction of violence is concerned is how to portray the “violence of combat” through montage intercutting. The verisimilitude and realism possible in the war film today poses the question of how to portray the excitement and spectacle of combat, particularly to audiences that expect it, while ensuring that such set pieces are interwoven within the narrative design and are not contrary to the psychological underpinnings of the characters. \textit{The Thin Red Line} is one film which has accomplished this.

In the \textit{Thin Red Line}, director/screenwriter Terence Malick confronted the audience with the suffering and the pity of both sides of the conflict. In the first opening battle, the enemy is faceless, visible only through the explosions and machine-gun fire pouring from well-concealed positions that wreak havoc on the attacking American forces. The relationship between politic and psychological dimensions of combat are beautifully illustrated in this sequence, as the images of the dead and dying are intercut with the commanding officer of the unit exhorting his junior officer to send more men to their deaths, miles away from the heat of battle. His superior officers lurk in the background as he tries to make his presence felt to men fighting for their very lives in order to impress his audience of visiting generals. The psychological dimensions are etched on the faces of the raw troops as they watch helplessly the carnage unfold before their very eyes, and at the same time listen to their commander throw his career away as he refuses to send the reserve forces to a certain death. The deaths are grisly and ignominious, as soldiers are
blown to pieces in all directions. The human body in the face of shrapnel and high explosives takes the form of a rag doll as bodies collide with each other and become projectiles themselves that knock down the soldiers immediately behind them. Life is extinguished mercilessly by an unseen enemy. Yet, after these positions are captured and the remaining Japanese forces prepare for a last ditch stand against the vengeful American forces, Malick does not shy away from depicting the desperation, bravery and despair of the Japanese soldiers as they face an imminent death. They Japanese soldier is humanised by showing him as depleted and pathetic, on the verge of starvation. Malick intercuts between the US and Japanese soldiers as they shoot and bayonet each other in the heat of battle. There are no sounds of screams and gunfire; instead, the mournful voice of one of the American soldiers who questions the justification of such slaughter.

In *Parade’s End*, this type of montage intercutting, which stays true to Prince’s notion of violence depicting the suffering and then pity, while eschewing the kinetic and visceral charge associated with war films, will enhance the political and psychological dimensions of all the battle scenes.

6.2 Atemporal Montage Intercutting and Flashback

Based on Prince’s research, atemporal montage intercutting may allow for a far more rigorous exploration of the psychological and political dimensions of violence. Atemporal montage intercutting involves the juxtaposition of diverse violent images that do not exist within the same temporal reality but are connected on a more symbolic level.

Peckinpah’s *Cross of Iron* provides a unique example of this, quoted by Prince as a film which, “went in a whole new direction as far as the director’s montage editing.” In one of the plot points of the narrative, the protagonist Sergeant Steiner is hit by the concussion of an exploding shell. Peckinpah uses a “poetic” montage of atemporal montage intercutting to disrupt the clear sequence of narrative events. The montage intercuts past, present and future actions in what Prince describes as a “suggestive approximation” of the breakdown of Steiner’s consciousness by the damage his body has suffered. The montage intercuts images of Steiner recoiling from and

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collapsing on the battlefield, with shots of him conferring with his men in their barracks and catching a harmonica a Russian boy prisoner throws to him just before the boy is killed at the beginning of a Russian attack. These are images reprised from earlier in the narrative and are intercut with shots of the nurse who will attend Steiner as she enters the hospital room where he lies (Steiner is present in the montage both on the battlefield and in the hospital, as the nurse shines a light into his face). Peckinpah goes further by intercutting a line of future narrative events as Steiner reacts to his psychological wounds, tries to escape from the hospital, runs down a river and jumps in. The dead Russian boy reappears, tossing the harmonica to Steiner. The nurse then rushes into the river to save him.59

This is a complex narrative technique that can be used early in Parade’s End to take Ash and the audience from the initiating incident to the first plot point (the death of the young girl and Ash’s subsequent wounding). At this point Ash is concussed by the exploding rocket from an American jet fighter that has been called in to cover up their “accidental massacre” of the villagers. As Ash lies wounded, the village is systematically destroyed. Earlier images are reprised from the attack on the village; the young girl watching Ash after he has killed her father in the village, the girl watching from the roof of her home, a brick loosening and falling to the ground, Ash reacting instinctively and killing her or quite possibly, replaying in his own mind another scenario where he stops himself from killing the young girl. Of course, the audience knows this is not what actually happened. Ash then wakes up in hospital, his rest further intruded upon by images of the wounded and dying: those of his own men and the villagers who were killed in the attack. Ash, now in the hospital, looks through the window and the sees the girl grieving over her father’s body in the hospital grounds. Ash watches, transfixed, until his delusions are interrupted by a nurse. These images are further intercut with those of Ash waiting in triage outside a mobile surgical hospital, the discovery of Ash by US Forces who arrive to clear the remains of the village, as Ash, disembodied from his physical condition in this memory, stands on a hilltop overlooking the scene of destruction as a passive observer. In this way, Ash’s psychological dislocation is firmly established as the violent action of combat is refracted through his previous and current trauma. As Ash observes a representation of his trauma within his current reality, we hear through voiceover, news reports, government proclamations, propaganda declarations, illustrating in broad strokes another conflict far closer to home.
In conclusion, it is imperative that subjective montage intercutting is used in *Parade’s End* in order to fully explore the human dimension. It will also allow for the simultaneous use of visualisation of the past within the present, as recurrent images, particularly for Ash, transpose themselves onto his present reality while in the midst of combat. Such subjective imagery from the character’s consciousness within the present can serve to elicit a conflict between the past and present reality that the character faces in the midst of an immediate crisis. This imagery can provide answers, elicit more questions, and deepen audience awareness of the character’s inner life.

7. **Prince’s Techniques: Tableau imagery**

This technique uses images of violence that could occur in the prelude, execution or aftermath of violence, in an “extended tableaux” that also possesses a lyrical or metaphoric quality. The focus of this technique is, first of all, on the violence that is about to, or has just occurred. Another distinguishing feature is how images of violence are shown, with the intent on the part of the filmmaker/screenwriter to move the audience towards a deeper understanding of the suffering through war and the psychological devastation it may cause to victims and participants alike. They could also use images which stand outside the narrative of the story and comment on the society or culture of the period. Prince terms this “didactic tableau”.

7.1 *Extended tableaux of the aftermath of violence*

As far as Prince is concerned, tableaux of the aftermath of violence are where the “suffering and the pity” of the victims can and usually are fully realised in the cinematic form. The technique is very broad in its ability to subsume other techniques used within the narrative. Extended tableaux allow for a reckoning of the consequences of violence which Prince considers to be
essential for any empathic response from an audience to what is, or has, transpired on the screen. For example, within an extended tableau, visualisation of memory from the past within the present timeframe can be intercut with subjective montage from the point-of-view of the victim witnessing the violent act. In *Parade’s End*, extended tableaux of the aftermath of violence can be used after Ash has mistakenly killed the young Iraqi girl. The final death-throes of the body, the faces of Ash and his team members grimly looking on or ignoring the body are juxtaposed with the quiet grief-stricken response of relatives who have come to accept so much death in their lives. As the child lies dying, pleading for help, one of the SAS troopers goes to assist her and is briefly shocked and repelled by the extent of her injuries. A momentary look between all the team indicates the complicity of all of them in this senseless death. It is a mission that should not have happened considering they have attacked the wrong village and caused countless deaths. When Ash is in hospital recuperating after his rescue from the doomed village, he looks out the window and is greeted by the surreal image of the father he killed playing with his other victim, the young girl.

The political dimensions can be more fully explored in the aftermath of violence as documentary footage, newsreel images, are inserted within the tableaux to accentuate the horrific irony of what has occurred: the Prime Minister extolling the virtues of the SAS, group photos of the soldiers before embarking for the Middle East, snapshots of social and political background imagery intercut with the dying girl and the benumbed SAS troopers. (This will be preceded by images of the hostage supposed to be rescued by the SAS actually being executed on television. The team discovers this as they search for the same man in what they believe is the safe house where he is being kept). It could be more effective to use this kind of imagery within the opening round of violence because it will disorientate the audience with a flurry of challenging images.60

In the final battle between the two antagonists, the stage is set for as brutal collision of forces that leaves a staggering tableau of violent death. The bodies are shown of soldiers mutilated, dismembered and mercilessly slain, as a young child belonging to the asylum seekers wanders through the carnage, searching for the only man she believes can protect her. Her subjective response to the violence can be incorporated with flashback as she recalls the manner of death of each soldier from her point–of-view. Newly arrived Kopassus soldiers go through the bodies of their comrades, removing dog-tags and personal belongings, occasionally putting one of the
wounded out of their misery. The moans of the dying fill the landscape. A more lyrical tableau could be created here by juxtaposing images of Anzac fortitude and “bonhomie” with the starkly realistic faces of pain and suffering.

7.2 Didactic tableau

Prince describes “didactic tableaux” as that which is somewhat removed from the narrative of the story while still contributing to it in some way. This technique allows for some kind of commentary on violence within society itself. Given the socio-political context of the piece dealing with a contemporary Australia, there is ample opportunity to explore or use didactic tableaux through the use of media reports which conflict with the “truth” of what has just been witnessed by the audience. The background of terrorism permeates the story, allowing the social and “collective” response to a heightened physical threat to be illustrated through a disjuncture between what actually occurs and what is reported.61

7.3 Tableau to the prelude of violence

Tableaux of the prelude to violence can be effectively used in several specific points of the story; the first being in the prelude to the attack on the village. In this scene, the day-to-day activities of the villagers, particularly the children, are detailed prior to the attack and are intercut with the preparations for the attack by the SAS team sent there to rescue a US hostage. Another point is the Act One plot point. It is at this stage where Ash and his team embark on a “training exercise” in East Timor. The briefing by Captain Blackmore before they leave gives every indication that much could go wrong. Ash and the rest of the team are witnessed individually preparing for what they know may be their last mission. It is a tableau that illustrates and underlines characteristics or qualities of Ash and the rest of the team; time is spent with families, or in a drunken debauch. In Ash’s case, he visits his father’s grave and older brother, their estrangement to each other only
highlighting the painful solitude of his life. For one of the soldiers, it is a last chance to pay back an old grievance. In one case a mother unsuccessfully tries to persuade her children to say goodbye to their father, this failure etched in his face like an epitaph over his life.

There is a mournful quality to the proceedings. An SAS trooper reassures his children that nothing is going to happen to him. There is little of the bravura and level-headed professionalism audiences have come to expect from stock images of the Special Forces soldier. These are men who have seen too much, involved in an anti-terrorist war that has claimed one too many lives. Yet as they come together for their final preparations before the mission, a transformation takes place; the accoutrements of war take on a life of their own, giving confidence, deflecting uncertainties. They demonstrate familiarity and competence with the tools of their trade. The repetitiveness of their actions with the equipment acts like a mantra against the extreme danger they are about to face. In such a tableau a specific psychological dimension of the story can be portrayed; the necessary withdrawal from society and civilised company (i.e. the family), and bonding with inanimate objects, the god of steel, that make war the lethal activity that it is. One soldier calls his family from the base, surveying the armoury of specialised weapons, the soldiers preparing for combat, as he tells his wife he is unable to say goodbye to his children.

The Act Two plot point of the screenplay could provide a contrast to this scene, and a possible sign of the journey the team has taken. Ash decides to defend the asylum seekers single-handedly rather than leave them to their fate. The rest of the team departs on the landing craft sent by an awaiting Australian Naval ship. As they leave the shores of East Timor, one of the sailors remarks on how lucky they must be given the date. One of the team members asks what the significance of the date is and is told it is Anzac Day. This resonates with the team; a flood of collective imagery is intercut with their reactions. Childhood images as well as historical documentary footage of smiling and suffering diggers add another dimension to what could be construed as a sentimental moment. In a split second the team realises they have to go back and stand by one of their men. Ash and timing have sealed their fates, not to mention the legacy of their training and indoctrination.

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8. Prince’s Techniques: The subjective depiction of violence through the eyes of a passive or innocent observer

According to Prince, this technique is usually accompanied by voiceover/sound that reflects their experience (literal or otherwise) of the event, rather than the actual sound and fury of the violence itself. This can also take the form of a subjective montage from the point-of-view of the victim witnessing the violent act. This technique is integral to enhancing other techniques, particularly montage intercutting and tableaux imagery. In all the scenes of violence, it is essential for subjective montage from the point-of-view of the victim or passive observer in order to allow the audience to witness the violence without engaging in it from the point – of - view of the instigator. The point-of-view of children in Parade’s End will be critical to expanding the psychological dimensions of the film. This would start with the “experience” of the Iraqi girl who is killed by Ash in the first turning point of the script. Her death-throes are seen from her point–of-view with the sound of children playing (asynchronous voiceover) as she looks up at her killers. Their tense voices are heard through her diminishing consciousness.

9. Prince’s Techniques: Mirror imaging

Mirror imaging can be used as a means of what Prince describes as “visualising a fissured self”. According to Prince, this technique conveys the protagonist's visual self-recognition of his violent past. This is a technique which, I believe, has limited use within Parade’s End, primarily because of its clear use of a specific object to further psychological depth within the story. Prince cites numerous examples of its effectiveness, mainly in Westerns such as The Wild Bunch and Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid. In both cases, the reflection of the protagonist in the aftermath of killing provokes a violent response to their physical reflection in the mirror and the obvious psychological manifestations and ramifications of the violence that has been committed. The reaction has been an obvious one; in an expression of self-hatred, they shoot their images in the mirror, thereby annihilating them.
10. Conclusion

This paper has sought to define and explore techniques outlined by Prince that have been used to depict the psychological and political dimensions of violence within the war film genre. These techniques have included different types of flashback, montage intercutting, and tableaux of violence. The paper has also sought to answer specific questions that relate to the usefulness of these techniques towards the writing of a screenplay within the war film genre. One of the first questions regarded the key definition of the war film. The subsequent exploration of various writings on this subject revealed that the choices are complex and diverse in terms of defining the type of war film that any artist/screenwriter wants to make, choices that are defined by personal, professional and cultural limitations as well as expectations. These choices (from the propaganda film to the regular war film, or from the elements of the war film outlined by Dirk, to the dualities Kane believes underpin all films of World War Two), have, to varying degrees, always impacted the psychological and/or political dimensions of the story and how these dimensions were revealed through the depiction of violence.

Another key question was whether the same techniques could be used to convey the political and psychological dimensions of the story. My research has found that while the techniques do not differ, it is also extremely difficult, if at all desirable, for a screenwriter to write a story that explores the psychological dimensions, without it in some profound or indirect way, also making a political statement. The question really became whether the statement was a more overt articulated political stance typical of the European film culture and which Prince describes as “transformative” in nature (in other words, a serious attempt by the film makers to honestly capture the political realities of the period), or whether this statement lacked this directness but by the way the violence and combat was treated cinematically, an anti-war film was created and a political statement incontrovertibly made.

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Upon close examination of the several techniques outlined by Prince, one of the most consistent findings of the research is that these techniques, rarely, if ever, work autonomously. There is considerable inter-relatedness between these techniques as they overlap, work simultaneously or sequentially with each other. For example, with tableaux of the aftermath of violence, flashbacks can be effectively used within these scenes which heighten the troubled subjectivity of the character directly in relation to the violence that has just taken place. Alternatively, without this juxtaposition or embedding of techniques, the scene can stand alone with emphasis placed either on the victim, a passive observer, or the protagonist. This choice of “character subjectivity” is also essential to working within Prince’s framework or notion of the suffering and the pity inherent to violence and war. What is also apparent as far as the development of the screenplay is that complexity and tension can be heightened when all three perspectives on violence are used within the story. There is also a direct link between the observations of a particular character in the prelude or aftermath of violence, and the substance and context of flashbacks later in the piece.

Critically, it is the techniques of montage intercutting and tableaux of violence which give substance and weight to flashbacks later in the narrative. In fact, the mis en scene of these flashbacks is often tableaux of the prelude or aftermath of violence. The drama is created by telling the audience at different points of the temporal narrative, the driving forces behind the characters present dilemma. Flashbacks have been shown to be a highly versatile technique, capable of adding weight to all the techniques discussed in this paper. It can appear within atemporal montage intercutting and in some respects may be indispensable to its effectiveness. It can be used in literal or surrealist depictions and inform the audience’s experience of a character’s inner life and subsequent actions. Paradoxically, the use of surrealist imagery within the flashback also allows for a more transformative depiction of the harsh realities of war. The creation of an image through flashback abstracted in some way (i.e. the image of the dead mother in a religious pose from Pretty Village Pretty Flame, the peasants executed within a snow-flaked Christmas diorama in Murderers Among Us, Steiner throwing his harmonica to the dead boy in Cross of Iron, Ash seeing the dead Iraqi girl playing outside his hospital window in Parade’s End), tells an audience a great deal about the internal struggle to cope with grief and loss. Elegiac images such as these allow for a more poignant understanding by the audience of what the character is going through.

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Conclusively, and in response to one of the key questions posited in this paper, the visualisation of memory does expand our awareness of the psychological and political dimensions of war and violence. Prince’s take on flashback, through the works of director/screenwriters such as Sam Peckinpah and Arthur Penn, is that it is inherent to the dramatic action and an indispensable part of the story and characters. The research has shown that this technique can be used strategically and consistently tied into the dramatic action within a character’s temporal reality. In Parade’s End, in specific instances it will directly trigger the action within present time, and at all times adds layers of meaning to the inner and outer struggles that Ash faces on his journey. Ash’s struggle with his past and concomitant memories is the momentum of the story, irrevocably linking the two realities.

In answer to the final question, all of the techniques described are useful for the exploration of the psychology of the professional soldier. This research, therefore, has been essential to writing a war film which foregrounds the destruction and cost of war within a psychological and political framework. One of the keys to their effectiveness is the precise use of subjectivity within each of the techniques. The objective of this research, then, has been to write an anti-war screenplay that will confront audiences with disturbing and insightful images and leave no question as to the political and psychological dimensions of the story. The broader canvas will be an exploration of Australia’s relationship its neighbours and the notion of “foreigners” in the twenty-first century. This will be highlighted through the plight of the asylum seekers and exacerbated by a highly volatile terrorist war with no clear heroes and villains. Within this narrative, xenophobia and fear are just as responsible for the escalation of terror as is the fundamentalism of Australia’s Indonesian neighbours. An SAS team within the Australian military will confront their own prejudices, fears, and beliefs as they die or kill for them. The story intends to probe our exclusion or marginalisation of those seeking help by virtue of their race or religion. The racism and prejudice perpetrated is questioned on the personal and cultural level, through the responses of society, media, and ultimately, the military arm to the threat of foreigners. Thus, it has been the objective of this research and subsequent screenplay to selectively combine and modify techniques such as montage intercutting, flashbacks and tableau imagery, in ways that will unflinchingly depict the cost of war on the perpetrator as well as the victim.
It is my contention that the techniques outlined by Prince give greater flexibility and latitude to the screenwriter/director towards contextualising any depiction of war and violence. Just as films discussed within the genre were severely edited of any “content” that confronted (or would have confronted) audiences, usually associated with the horrors of war, any scene can be given greater psychological dimension through the use of didactic tableau, flashback and montage intercutting. These techniques do not require pyrotechnics or large scale depictions of combat. Indeed, some of the most devastating war films, at least on a psychological level (films such as Pretty Village Pretty Flame, Ivan’s Story, Murderer’s Among Us and Come and See), are small-budget films which are epic in their human dimension. Also, none of these films rely on blood and gore to make war horrible. It is the insinuation of horror through the techniques discussed that manage to convey far more, techniques that work on a psychological level. Thus, all of the techniques discussed allow the writer to transcend to greater or lesser degree, the conventionality of the Hollywood war movie, or indeed any war film made strictly for entertainment. The collaboration of the director and producer with the screenwriter is critical. Peckinpah’s concerns regarding montage intercutting and the glorification of violence are just as relevant today as they were forty years ago, particularly given the filmmaker’s capacity to render violence with greater verisimilitude but with even less concern for the moral or ethical perspective as to how the violence affects the audience. It is often violence without a humanistic perspective. The onus then is on screenwriters to convey the “truth” of war, rather than just a faithful rendering of physical destruction. Screenwriters would do well to consider the principle of a unified narrative that does not attempt to cater to multiple demographics. If their vision is so clearly woven into every aspect of the script, then possibly the coherence of the piece can be maintained and any serious disruption of the writer’s intentions avoided.

Future directions: research
The research undertaken has demonstrated that it is possible to write a screenplay of great complexity that engages with the consequences of violence through war and combat. Cinematic and writing techniques have been developed by director/writers such as Peckinpah that allow for a more profound exploration of the psychological devastation wrought by war. Yet in exploring the genre, it is apparent that the control of cinematic images of violence has been very much a struggle rather than an arbitrary question of artistic choice. From the first war films, propaganda imperatives have determined what the audience will witness on screen about war and violence. Particularly for those who had no first-hand experience, this would influence their understanding of the individual and social cost of war; themes all too rarely explored in the history of the genre.

At a time when sanitised images of war are conveyed to the public with a mundane regularity that neutralise any serious social or psychological perspective, there is a need, I believe, for the presentation of unequivocal statements or positions on what war is. Future research could consider exhibiting the works and words of specific artists who have made significant contributions to our understanding or experience or war and violence. In doing so, such an exhibit may provide a unique historical perspective and overview of the relationship between art, the photographic image, and war.

The purpose of this exhibit would be firstly, to present to the public attempts to capture the violence of war through the words and images of twentieth century art, literature, and photography. Secondly, the exhibit could contrast the works of Australian artists and photographers with those of their European counterparts, in order to develop a critical perspective on how all these works confronted and translated the experience of war.

It would be an exhibit where specific works are recontextualised and juxtaposed with various modes of expression within a single forum. This would allow works to stand alone and in contrast with each other, providing the public viewer with a heretofore unexplored avenue for the consideration of war and violence, and of course, the power and limitations of art and the photographic image. In various incarnations, the gallery of photographs or artwork could provide an introduction to the film or theatre presentation. The photomontage of artists such as John Hertzfeld, along with the grim realism of Otto Dix and Ernst Friedrich could form a triptych to

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tell its own story. Words could be everywhere, with text visually realised and captioned in conjunction with imagery or presented to the public through voice over, to contrast, compliment or contradict their work. Ultimately such an exhibit could redraft the template for the consideration and viewing of art, literature and photography on the subject of war and violence.
Endnotes


3 Prince states: “When Pike Bishop rejects the principles of his government, when Junior Bonner stares with disgust at the TVs and plastic homes of his desert suburbia, when television talk-show host John Tanner in *The Osterman Weekend* warns viewers to turn off their televisions, when Mac in *The Killer Elite* warns Mike Locken that “there's not one power system that really cares about its civilians,” when Steiner in *Cross of Iron* confesses his hatred of all military officers and uniforms, and, more positively, when Cable Hogue finds his paradise in the desert of butterfly mornings and wildflower afternoons, Peckinpah's films give articulate shape to the myriad forms of late sixties radical thought and antiestabishment sentiment. His films mirror the national preoccupation with violence that shaped those years and the extent to which violence had infused the inner fantasy life of the culture. The era’s romantic yearning for the apocalypse, coupled with a lack of faith in modern American society, led to visions of transcendence achieved through death, as demonstrated in the cults surrounding Hendrix, Joplin, Morrison, and the fates of the heroes in *Easy Rider* and *Bonnie and Clyde*. The defeats of Peckinpah's heroes, outlaws on the run from bourgeois America, and their occasional apotheosis in death represent a grand fulfilment of this tragic-romantic zeitgeist.” Prince, 1998, p. 42.

4 Palmer states: “From 1980 to 1986 the Vietnam War entered its comic book phase. The two *Rambo* sequels and the POW rescue movies such as *Uncommon Valor* and Chuck Norris's three *Missing in Action* ‘shoot-em-ups’ are the best examples of the exploitation of the war and of Vietnam veterans that was so rampant in American society and the American media. This comic book approach involves the creation of shallow stereotyped military or commando characters of the sort that appeared in comic books like *G.I. Joe* or *Men at War* or *Sergeant Rock*. These stereotyped characters take the form of either a single, larger-than-life fighting machine like Sergeant Rock or a commando team of specialists (usually a demolition expert, an inventive tactician/con man, and a strongman as in the TV series "Mission Impossible" or "The A Team") led by an officer/administrator. Ironically *Apocalypse Now*, generally considered the Vietnam War epic, was originally conceived, in its first script version by John Milius, as a sort of G. I. Joe comic book set in Vietnam.” William J. Palmer, *The Films of the Eighties: A Social History* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press), 1995, p. 22.

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Prince believes that Hollywood films have traditionally sought works against what he calls “ideological or political coherence.” He states: “To appeal to diverse racial, ethnic, or generational groups, Hollywood films may sometimes willingly sacrifice strict coherence. In its place may be a more polysemous, multivalent set of images, characters, and narrative situations. The formula narratives of Hollywood films and television frequently operate through a process of ideological agglomeration, taking a little of this, a little of that, a fragment of social reality here, a constellation of values there. Writing on recent Cold War films such as *Rocky IV* and *Aliens*, Christine Holmlund notes the fissured nature of their discourse, the ways in which they ‘undercut and extend’ established ideologies and ‘construct alternative points of [audience] identification’.” Stephen Prince, *Visions of Empire: Political Imagery in Contemporary American Film* (New York: Praeger Publishers), 1992, p. 40.

Fraser states: “In the early 1950s, Warshaw pointed out that the intellectuals’ recoil from and disdain for violence had ‘helped to free it from moral control by letting it take on the aura of emancipation. The celebration of acts of violence is left more and more to the irresponsible.’(p103) There seems to me to be a contrary danger now of intellectuals themselves being irresponsible in their dealings with violence, especially in the arts.” John Fraser, *Violence in the Arts* (Cambridge University Press). 1974, p. 48.


*Ashes and Diamonds* highlights possibly one of the key differences between propaganda films and those which attempt to document a period of history through fictional narrative; with the latter, the intent is to question historical events by presenting counter prevailing interpretations which are supported by the merging of intellectual insight and historical fact. Murray and Wickham cite films such *Kolberg* and *Murderers Amongst Us*, examples of both types respectively, which, “…promoted history as a component of personal/cultural/national identity. They have offered perceptions of historical change to individuals, interest groups, and national communities engaged in debates about the meaning of the past for social development in the present and future. They also have served as one important object of study for those who have investigated the interweaving relationships between history, narration, and subjectivity in a social environment that has become permeated by filmic images of the past.” Bruce A. Murray and Christopher J. Wickham, eds., *Framing the Past: The Historiography of German Cinema and Television* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press), 1992, p. 5.
In Thomas Ince’s *Civilisation*, Christ allows himself to be reincarnated in the body of a dead submarine engineer so that he can rise again and preach his gospel of peace to the world. War and violence did not necessarily require graphic displays of violence for its forceful implication in the minds of the audience. Yet the seeds of anti-German sentiment were discernable even here with emblems and uniforms clearly indicating who the brutal warmongers were. This pacifism quickly turned to militarism with the cinemas mobilised against Germany well the United States’ entry into the war. Isaksson and Furhammar, 1971, p. 9.

“…more than simple idealism lay behind the enthusiasm with which film industries all over the world threw themselves into the national propaganda efforts. Economic interests are always to be watched when public opinion is emotionally charged, never more so than in the hysteria of a country going to war. Propaganda films are usually as much a means of exploiting a given climate of opinion as of exerting an influence. The public pays for the satisfaction of having its attitudes confirmed and reinforced”.

Hyams states that Abel Gance’s *J’Accuse* (1919 and remade in 1938), matches the striving for authenticity that was the hallmark of Griffith’s films. Like Griffith’s, Gance actually witnessed the war, not as a director but as a French soldier fighting in the trenches. Gance was traumatised by what he saw there and was determined to make a film about the war. Gance managed to obtain permission to film at the front so that he could incorporate actual scenes of combat in his movie. The effect was a movie which raged at the purposeless waste of war. In a technique which Prince later correlates with the cultural shift of the sixties, *J’Accuse* actually shows the protagonist driven mad by the terrible sights he has seen in the trenches. He summons the dead of Verdun to rise up and wreak vengeance on a complacent population and those war profiteers ignoring the imminent threat of another cataclysmic war. In what may be the first surrealist technique in the war film genre, the dead do arise, and in the remake they bear the horrible mutilation of their wounds. Gance actually enlisted the help of the French association of war wounded men, their mutilated bodies and faces presenting a frightening spectacle. It appears, says Hyams, as a horror film, and was one of the most graphic screenwriting techniques used for the depiction of the aftermath and effects of organised violence. This was the closing image of the film, with the protagonist driven to
insanity and burned at the stake by the frightened local townspeople. Interestingly, in the
American version, *J’Accuse* was heavily edited, and the war profiteers cut down to just the
Germans. The American version was also given a happy victorious ending. Jay Hyams, *War

15 To possibly illuminate the timelessness of this technique as a narrative tool for exploring the
psychological effects of violence, Evans describes the efforts French film director Bertrand Tavernier
to communicate “the hidden suffering of veterans” in *The Undeclared War*. Tavernier, says Martin,
“edited the final footage with immense care. The opening sequence, in which a succession of
interviewees admit their personal amnesia over the war, establishes the central concern of the film: the
way in which the Algerian conflict has been the focus of an enormous taboo. Thereafter Tavernier, in
chronological order from 1956 to 1962, explores painful stories of loss, hardship and death, and here
two moments in particular exemplify the general thrust of the film. The first is the interview with
Serge Puygrenier where he recounts how he lost his leg in action. What characterises this scene is
mounting anger and discomfort. Puygrenier tells how the loss of the leg has left him feeling like a
freak, unable to do normal activities like swimming in the sea. Sitting beside him, his wife emphasises
the psychological toll of dealing with his disability. Recently made redundant, and with little prospect
of finding work, it means that every day they are forced to relive the Algerian war. The second
instance is the interview with Rent Donazzolo. Here he recalls how at one point, surrounded by
Algerians and with no ammunition, he thought that he was going to die. The one thing that saved him
was an artillery barrage which forced the Algerians to retreat. In retelling the story he is eventually
overcome with emotion, breaking down into tears, at which point Patrick Rotman calls on to cut
filming. When he regains his composure, Donazzolo explains that he has never talked about this
experience before, not even within his family. What is striking in both cases is the voyeurism of the
camera as it deliberately dwells on uncomfortable body language. In this sense what is *not* said is just
as significant as what is said. In revealing the difficulty they have in communicating their memories in
words, it indicates the depth of the trauma and the extent to which it has set them apart from French
society.” Martin Evans, and Ken Lunn, eds., *War and Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Berg

16 Prince cites the work of screenwriters and directors like Peckinpah who used techniques such as
flashback to show the psychological trauma of the individual soldier. There was no need to describe
the experiences of war, as the sophisticated use of flashback illustrated the soldier’s conflict with the
realities of war. Flashbacks often depicted the horrors of war, as screenwriters situated the violence


Chambers singles out the famous scene at the end of the film where Baumer is killed by a French sniper as he tries to touch a butterfly. It may be considered one of the earliest uses of a technique that Prince terms “montage intercutting” and “lyrical tableaux of the prelude and aftermath of violence,” as the script cross cuts between shots of the French rifleman, Baumer and the butterfly. Interestingly, Chambers points out, Hollywood had no trouble making an anti-war film which showed disillusioned Germans, as in All Quiet on the Western Front, but never repeated this thematic treatment which showed American soldiers in a similar fashion. Meanwhile, in Germany, All Quiet on the Western Front and Westfront 1918 were banned almost from the outset by the newly entrenched Nazi Party for illustrating the German soldier with “pacifist tendencies.” Prince’s work on the political nature of films from the 1980s onwards explores a similar attitude towards “political” cinema from the newly arrived conservative government. Prince believes a major difference was that films did not necessarily have to be banned as Hollywood exhibited its own form of censorship in response to the changing political and social landscape. John Whiteclay Chambers and David Culbert, eds., World War II, Film, and History (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 20.

20 A counterpoint to the overtly anti-war literature epitomised in the works of Robert Graves, (Goodbye to All That), Siegfried Sassoon, (The Memoirs of George Sherston), and Errique Marie Remarque, (All Quiet on the Western Front), was Ernst Junger’s Storm of Steel. Though revisionist critics proclaim Junger’s experiences as some of the most authentic evocations of modern war, his tone is markedly nationalistic and pro-war. His work became a focal point of the Freikorps regiments responsible for defeating Communism in post war Germany, and later for that of the Nazi Party who attempted to present World War One as the mythical transformative experience of the German nation thwarted by political ambivalence and Jewish treachery. Klaus Thewelit, in Psychoanalysing the White Terror, dissects the underpinning of this transformation with markedly different results. He pinpoints a pathology that created a sacred aura around the notion of “blood and sacrifice,” setting the stage for the birth of the Aryan “superman” and the depredations that were to follow.

21 Isaksson and Furhammar, 1971, p. 50.

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Hermann and Denitto state: “Grand Illusion is, of course, a war film. On that simple level its theme is pacifism. Indeed, it would be difficult to think of a war film which does not have pacifism for a theme. From All Quiet on the Western Front to Forbidden Games and Paths of Glory, the war film has cried out against the horrors of its subject matter. But these films have dramatised their themes with reference to combat and the way that combat perverts into brutality even the most decent of human impulses (even Forbidden Games cannot resist indulging in its brilliant opening sequence, which depicts the helplessness of a civilian population when confronted by war machines). The trouble with most war films is their inevitable tendency to glorify man’s adaptability even to such monstrous circumstances; war films invariably depict war heroes. And on a scale of pacifist sentiment such productions rank low. What distinguishes Grand Illusion from the typical specimen of the genre is its steadfast refusal to take part in a generic ritual. There are no combat scenes in Grand Illusion. Even at the risk of violating an important temporal transition (from the opening to the following sequence: the time between Maréchal’s and Boeldieu’s take-off on their photography mission and their capture by Rauffenstein), Renoir does not show us a combat scene. The shooting down of Maréchal and Boeldieu must be imagined, and even Rauffenstein takes off his flying suit quickly. Moreover, Boeldieu’s final fife-playing scene—an opportunity to do so—is not pictured as violent combat but rather more as a performance, a stylised encounter between members of a heroic caste. Renoir goes further away from the war film genre by insisting that war is an illusion. It is an illusion because it has no basis in the relations of men”. Dennis DeNitto and William Herman, Film and the Critical Eye (New York: Macmillan), 1975, p. 140.

For most of the decade of the 1930s, war films went into decline. Then, in the late 1930s, French filmmaker Jean Renoir attempted to signal a warning about warfare’s ‘grand illusions’ with the classic anti-war film La Grand Illusion (1937), set in a WWI German prison camp where an aristocratic French officer faces a dilemma regarding his escape with other POWs. It is uniquely, a war film without any scenes of fighting or combat. Yet its story of what Hyams describes as the social customs, economic barriers and prejudices that separate people make this film a very powerful anti-war statement. This unique approach to the psychological dimensions of violence is illustrated through what Herman and Denitto call the “juxtaposition of war, rigidity and death against friendship, openness, community and love.” Renoir, according to the authors, demonstrates the commonality of humankind. The anguish and despair of war’s cataclysmic violence is movingly displayed, according to the authors through the chance meeting of the two French escapees with the German farm woman, In an extended tableaux of the aftermath of violence, the psychological cost of war is conveyed unsparingly as Elsa looks at the photos of her husband and brothers hanging on the wall. She recounts the fate of each, all killed in previous battles described as “victories” by the government and military. In this brief testimony that represents the silent millions of those left behind, Renoir may have been one of the first film makers to merge the political and psychological dimensions of organised violence.
within a single scene, and unsparingly illustrating the other, less literal aftermath of organised violence. In the background, Elsa’s daughter sits alone at a large table for breakfast. This is how it will always be. The facts of human community that Renoir has purposely sought to convey up until this moment, is brought into shocking relief by the harshness of this image. It is, remarks the authors, “an appallingly empty picture”. DeNitto and Herman, *Film and the Critical Eye* (New York: Macmillan), 1975, p. 163.

24 Prince describes these films as following a “transformative” model. The most common technique for the transformative type is to show the suffering and pity of combat within a political context that throws the causes of the war, literally and figuratively, into the framework of violence and destruction. As far as Prince is concerned this screenwriting approach is a hallmark of serious European films of the post World War Two period that studiously rejected the decades of propaganda between the two conflicts. Prince, 1992, p. 85.


26 Gianos states: “As hackneyed as were most combat films, a small handful stand out as relatively subtle readings of the reality of war, despite their being set within the standard platoon-as-social-microcosm structure. *The Story of G.I. Joe* (1945), based on the experiences of journalist Ernie Pyle, and *They Were Expendable* (1945) are perhaps the best. Both avoided the empty heroics of most of their predecessors. It is perhaps not accidental that both were released relatively late in the war, when Allied prospects were brighter and the reality of the war had been impressed upon civilians. Even more impressive were documentaries made by Hollywood directors during their own wartime service. John Ford *The Battle of Midway* (1942), William Wyler *The Memphis Belle* (1942), and John Huston's *The Battle of San Pietro* (1945), all shot on 16-mm film largely by the directors themselves, are easily the best of the World War II combat films. In 1945, Huston also made *Let There Be Light*, a film so powerful it was banned by the War Department and not released until 1982. These films were heartbreaking in the directness with which they looked at the lives and deaths of young, frightened combat troops. No fiction film representations of war come close to them.” Phillip L. Gianos, *Politics and Politicians in American Film* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers), 1998, p. 117.

27 According to Isakson and Furhammer, by 1945, with victory near, it was not necessary to maintain the “encouraging and dishonest wishful image of the war. Nor was it desired by war weary audiences; the reality had become so intense that war was no longer a subject for escapism. Towards the end, despair, exhaustion and reality break through the mythical treatment in film’s like Raoul Walsh’s *Objective Burma*, in which even Errol Flynn loses his romantic aura, Milestone’s *A Walk in the Sun* and William Wellman’s *The Story of G.I Joe*- all from the last six months of the conflict.” Isakson and Furhammer, 1971, p. 69.

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Prince calls this approach the “instrumentalist” model which, following the development of specific techniques for the depiction of violence in the 1960s and 70s, became once again the hallmark of Hollywood war films and typified the political nature of most films in the 1980s. Prince, 1992, p. 85.

Yet as Prince makes perfectly clear about most contemporary war films from the 1980s to the present, the anguish and despair associated with death and killing would be totally absent, thereby allowing audiences to rationalise the nature of what they are witnessing. Prince calls the technique for depicting this, tableau imagery, used by screenwriter/directors such as Peckinpah to unsettle audiences through depictions of violence that explored the emotional and psychological cost of war. These screenwriters and directors situated violence within a design which made the glorification of war extremely difficult. The real concern for directors such as Peckinpah was the undeniable excitement audiences got from the treatment of the violence itself through montage, slow motion and the squib effects that have become standard fare for all acts of violence, regardless of genre. Prince, 1998, p. 169.

Kane believes that other dualities exist and provide much of the narrative tension. These are honour vs. brutality, duty vs. self-interest, cooperation vs. individual heroism, sacrifice for others vs. personal pain. Kane states that “these dualities, acted out in action and in each individual's attitude toward how to fight this war, are presented in the films of this period much as morality plays, but in a number of films, and particularly in some made after this period, become much more complex and even more inverted, to show that the dualities are not so black and white, nor so clearly separated into good and evil columns.” Significantly, Kane considers even the anti-war film to be part of this genre continuum while conceding that the dualities were not so black and white, nor were they clearly separated into what she describes as “columns of good and evil”. Kane, 1988, p. 87.

In fact, Prince’s techniques are intrinsically bound to a departure from narrative and character commonly employed in the Hollywood war film. The Vietnam War films, and the era that spawned them, helped to transform the war genre, particularly of the mainstream variety, into serious investigation of the nature of combat. Such examples of these films

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would be Stone’s *Platoon*, Kubrick’s *Full Metal Jacket*, Coppola’s *Apocalypse Now* or Cimino’s *The Deer Hunter*.

Palmer presents an interesting comparison between these films in their approach to the Vietnam War and its implications, highlighting the depth and texture of films in a relatively short period that marked a stark contrast from earlier attempts within the genre. He states: “Like *Platoon*, the narrative of *Full Metal Jacket* is in parts, but the separation of those parts is much more dramatic. Whereas *Platoon* lands the audience in Vietnam in its opening frame and spends its whole time incontry single-mindedly unfolding a young soldier's initiation and psychological hardening, *Full Metal Jacket* at first seems to be two totally distinct films. No Vietnam War film, except a feeble stereotypical section of *The Boys in Company C* (1978), has attempted, as Philip Caputo in *A Rumor of War* and Gustav Hasford in *The Short Timers* (from which *Full Metal Jacket* is adapted) did so brilliantly, to portray the training experience of Vietnam-bound American soldiers. The first half of *Full Metal Jacket*, set at the Marine boot camp at Parris Island, portrays that experience with a vengeance. The second half also differs in setting from all the other Vietnam War films. It takes place in a city, not in a jungle. It offers stark images of the urban warfare of the battle for Hue during the Tet Offensive of 1968 that are reminiscent of the combat footage and film versions of World War II in Europe or the eighties TV news footage of downtown Beirut. This second act of *Full Metal Jacket* is divided into two extended scenes. The first shows Joker “in the rear with the gear” as a Stars and Stripes journalist in a supposedly secure headquarters company. This scene examines the war as presented by the overtext words of the media. The second scene of this second half is, as was the last part of *Platoon*, a single extended urban firefight that is Kubrick’s symbolic crystallisation of the futility of America's machines, firepower, and, especially, the words invented to deal with the ballet of death that is the Vietnam War.”


The 1950s brought about different genres of war film: the “Cold War film” according to Isakson and Furhammer, as well as the “Nuclear film,” according to Sheehan. Hyams considers *Above and Beyond* to be the first film of this new genre. This movie told the Hollywood story of the Enola Gay, the plane which dropped the first atomic bomb in history, and that of its pilot, Colonel Paul Tibbets. The narrative centres on Tibbets and the huge strain preparation for this mission played on his marriage. It is, like most of the films that followed during this period, a justification of the use of atomic weapons, starting with the first one that was ever used. For what could be described as the most politically motivated act of organised violence in history, motives and justifications are rendered in black and white. The Japanese are an evil, implacable enemy (soon to be replaced by the Communists), who leave the United States with no choice. Tibbets is shown undergoing great emotional strain in the prelude to the mission, but mainly due to a lack of understanding from his wife.
who cannot be told the true nature of his activities. (Interestingly, Tibbets, in his memoirs, recalls no anguish or guilt at any time leading up to the fateful mission, or afterwards, and admits that he was completely estranged from his wife long before the attack took place). As far as screenwriting techniques are concerned, the writers left no mistake that this was one of unparalleled destructive power. The explosion and its aftermath is depicted through the montage intercutting of the rising mushroom cloud, the first ever witnessed, with the shocked reactions of Tibbets and the rest of the crew, replete with a dissonant musical score. The implication of horror is very clear. There are no smiling faces over this mass incineration of an estimated 100,000 Japanese. The film, in marked contrast to those that followed, ends on an ambivalent tone. Tibbets, on returning from the mission, is greeted by the press. A reporter tells Tibbets the US public would like to know what he thinks after being responsible for the deaths of thousands of civilians. Tibbets quickly replies, “Why don’t you ask them what they think.” As Hyams makes clear, future “nuclear war” films would demonstrate no such ambiguity. These films are all about preparedness, with testimony and imagery that extols the virtue of America’s supreme destructive power, Strategic Air Command. In the film which bears the same name, an officer remarks on the new B47 Bomber with a crew of only three which carries the entire destructive power of all the “B29’s we threw against Japan.” Hyams, 1984, p. 112.


38 According to Prince: “Hollywood was very slow to address Vietnam. The only major studio production during the war was John Wayne The Green Berets, released in 1968. This is not to imply, however, that Vietnam had few effects on American films before the 1980s. Indeed, throughout the 1970s, an unfortunate convention presented the Vietnam veteran as a crazed homicidal vigilante in such films as Magnum Force (1973), The Stone Killer (1973), Taxi Driver (1976), and Rolling Thunder (1977). Furthermore, Vietnam had a profound but indirect effect upon the social vision of American filmmakers contemporary with the war. During the war American films became far more explicitly violent than ever before in works by contemporary socially critical filmmakers. Slow-motion and multi-camera techniques used to film scenes of bloody carnage were introduced into the American cinema by Arthur Penn in Bonnie and Clyde (1967) and Sam Peckinpah in The Wild Bunch (1969). Penn and Peckinpah used the formulas of the gangster film and the Western as a means of exploring contemporary issues of social rebellion and state violence that resonated with the Vietnam conflict. Peckinpah’s The Wild Bunch, in particular, has sometimes been interpreted as an allegory about the American presence in Vietnam.” Prince, 1992, p. 117.
According to these authors, Peckinpah’s *Cross of Iron*, (1976) *Castle Keep*, (1968) and *Slaughterhouse Number Five*, (1968) could also be allegorical treatments of World War Two that owed much to the contemporary political and social upheaval of that period; the 1960s and 70s, inclusive of the Vietnam War. The World War Two combat movie was given a treatment that was distinctly anti-war and in keeping with the new writers and directors in Hollywood political and social viewpoint. What all these films had that defied the typical definition of the genre was a clear relationship between the soldier and the violence perpetrated by war. If we can learn anything about the genre in terms of political and psychological dimensions is that the nature of the conflict itself is rather incidental. It is war itself that was under scrutiny, its violence and human cost unexplained by any sermonising. Peckinpah’s films such as *The Wild Bunch* were considered by Prince as meditations on modern warfare and the death of the Western myth in the face of a dawning new century. Peckinpah’s violence, says Prince, reflected on the society and times that he lived in. This attitude allowed Peckinpah to inverse all previously held notions of sacrifice, duty and honour. With a screenwriter/director like Peckinpah, says Prince, the characters in his films are totally lacking in all these qualities or attributes, presenting a far more disturbing portrait. Prince, 1998, p.11.

Sheehan contrasts the “Hollywood” treatment of war in the 1950s, with that of European films, such as *Hiroshima Mon Amour* by Alain Resnais. Essentially, the whole film is an extended tableau of the aftermath of violence, subsumed within various other techniques to convey the psychological dislocation and suffering of the two lovers. Resnais also makes use of atemporal montage intercutting as a screenwriting technique, juxtaposing diverse violent imagery of the after effects of the first atomic bomb with a future reality of the two protagonists making love. This is also combined with the use of subjective imagery from the characters conscience within the present timeframe. In the films first sequence, the man and woman are making love, their arms intertwined and they are perspiring. Resnais transposes subjective imagery of the nuclear holocaust so that it appears they are covered with ashes or fallout, thus equated with the tragedy of Hiroshima. She says to him that she saw the Atomic Museum, the hospital, the newsreels. He says to her that she knows nothing of Hiroshima. Resnais then cuts to images that show us what she is talking about; images of destruction, photographed at the Hiroshima Museum, such as a bicycle twisted out of shape by the blast, human hair falling from the head of victims. All of this is merged with the “poetic” testimony of the two lovers, creating what Sheehan considers the “brilliance of Resnais’s meticulous design.” Shaheen Jack G, *Nuclear War Films* (Southern Illinois University Press) 1978, p. 17.
A film, which according to Hyams, flew against the prevailing trends of the post war period, was *Attack!* by Robert Aldrich. Unlike any other war film of this period, class and politics are at the forefront of the conflict between two officers, one a cowardly captain from a wealthy Southern family, the other a working class, “ethnic” lieutenant who is far more capable and puts the welfare of his men before his own. Aldrich brilliantly highlighted the possibilities of the genre with tough gripping dialogue and strong, characterisations which subverted the knee jerk heroism of so many war films of this period. It also exposed the propaganda like nature of so many war films which dared not venture into the political and psychological territory that Aldrich was quite comfortable working in. What also becomes apparent with a film such as *Attack!* , is that the recognition of obstacles and conflict based on class and politics by the actual characters, pushed them into far more confronting situations, making the psychological dimensions all the more compelling. It is the recognition of an enemy that can’t be defeated and the cold statistical nature of a soldier’s life: all of them were expendable, particularly the lower you were in rank. None of this was romanticised in any way, with its essential injustice embodied in the relationship between of the working class lieutenant and his wealthier captain. Ultimately, this film portrays the “Good War,” the war that had to be fought, as one still tainted by human corruption and venality. Violence and combat are thrown into relief against a back drop of class bias and personal hubris. Another film, *The Victors*, which depicts and implicitly condemns the execution of Private Slovick, traces the moral degradation of American GI’s, and pits the final battle of the film between an American and Russian soldier, who end up killing each other. Like *Attack!* , but possibly even more so, *The Victors* makes an overt particular statement that deviates from the bulk of war films of, and about this period. Little wonder it was pulled from most screens within weeks of release due to the storm of protest from conservative groups. Once re instated in the movie theatres following protests from civil liberty groups, the film was excised of any its more overt political statements, thereby suffering the fate of all the anti-war films since the post World War One period. Hyams, 1984, p. 154.

This where Prince believes the departure from the 1950s was mostly evident in war films and films that dealt with violence in general. Sam Peckinpah, says Prince, went to great lengths to illustrate that war is truly hell, with the clear intention of un-tethering audiences from any pre-conceptions they might have. Violence was meant to be disturbing, and, according to Prince, modern screenwriters and directors such as Scorsese and Stone lack the humanistic moral sensibility that embodied Peckinpah’s work. Prince identifies Peckinpah as

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one of screenwriters and directors whose work allows us to understand the problems and limitations of the treatment of violence in contemporary film. Prince, 1998, p. 244.

43 The same could be said of the 1950s with the French New Wave where references to the Algerian crisis were either non-existent or obliquely made. Yet the controversy over the crisis gave impetus to the film makers such as Godard and Resnais to challenge the pre-existing norms of society and government.

44 Depictions of violence within the war film genre have gone through numerous permutations, precipitated by the wars and conflicts of that era. Screenwriters and directors of war films were, from their earliest beginnings, responding to the looming or imminent wars of their generation which invariably were ideological and political from start to finish. In fact, despite technological advancements screenwriters and film makers have demonstrated the ability to present graphic depictions of violence that alienate any engagement with the suffering and the pity of the victims. The approach to editing and content, intercutting and juxtaposition has proved to be a double edged sword that allows for truncation of the truth as well as its “revelation”. Prince acknowledges that even a pioneer of violent imagery such as Peckinpah was forced to remove the montage sequences, especially those of multiple deaths in slow motion. Peckinpah realised these techniques detracted the audience from engaging with any serious treatment of violence and its psychological devastation. Prince, 1998. p. 230.

45 As Falkowska considers in her overview of all genres, no film, and especially the war film, can be apolitical; a stance is taken by the very omission of context and complexities which exist in relation to any conflict. Kane’s model is actually a paradigm for Hollywood’s exclusion of such complexities, making a serious investigation of political and psychological dimensions almost impossible. It is a paradigm which is almost identical to Prince’s definition of the “instrumentalist” model. Prince’s “transformative” model on the other hand, offers a representation of narrative design that demonstrates the choices film makers and screenwriters have in approaching the genre, not to mention the political, social and marketing constraints they face in realising their vision.

46 Screenwriting techniques such as flashbacks were used effectively in films such Noel Coward’s In Which We Serve, yet for decidedly different reasons than it would decades later in the film renaissance of the 1960s and early 1970s. Screenwriting techniques such as atemporal montage intercutting between images of the past juxtaposed with the reality of fighting and dying in combat, were inserted

57 Parade’s End A screenplay accompanied by an exegesis exploring institutional and ideological violence within the war film genre
to fortify audiences and remind them of the reason their loved ones were fighting in the first place. It did little to provide any insight into the psychological dimensions of violence in wartime, considering the ship and crew have just been sunk by a German aircraft. *Twelve O’clock High.* is a film with very few action scenes and is told in one complete flashback. It focuses on the attempts of a new Commanding Officer, played by Gregory Peck, to turn an unlucky bomber squadron into a ruthless combat force. He succeeds, yet despite the training and efficiency, the losses still keep mounting. Finally, he loses his own sanity, suffering a complete nervous collapse in the climax of the film. For Kane, this film, along with *Command Decision*, looked at the conflict between a commanding officer according to what worked and the commonly expressed values, and the emotional toll that conflict took on him as his men died following his orders. Yet, as Hyams points out, his character is unequivocally the strongest amongst all those portrayed, and one who has resolutely grasped the true nature of organised violence in the modern war. While documentary footage was used for the aerial battle scenes, the true psychological cost of their particular type of warfare was demonstrated in the aftermath of every mission, as the survivors attempt to adapt to the sudden and often grisly deaths of their friends and fellow crew members.


49 The type of crisis that Ash undergoes in the story is described by Fraser: “The shock of certain atrocities, and the recognition of certain dreadful possibilities in other people or in oneself is likely to be especially disruptive if one has tended to feel previously that at bottom life is essentially benevolent— that Good always wins over Evil because of the essential nature of things, that there are magical limits beyond which people won’t go, that the innocent and the beautiful, the ‘sensitive, the considerate and the plucky’ of Forster’s ideal aristocracy of the spirit carry with them their own protections and ‘have no enemy but age’, as someone puts it, and that when atrocities are perpetrated it is by people who have either been victims themselves (as in wartime or in the slum childhood of criminality) or who wear very obvious marks of monstrosity and of their own eventual downfall. And as a result, one may become more and more preoccupied with awfulness and alert for instances of it, while increasingly it is the glimpses of love and beauty and hope that prove the real threats to one’s stability, because they draw attention to one’s estrangement from one’s more hopeful earlier self.” Fraser, 1974, p. 113.
The flashback from *Murderers Are Among Us* provides a more strategic use of this technique, acting as the crisis plot point of the central character. Dr. Mertens’ “trauma,” and spiritual malaise is laid bare as his flashback, triggered by the innocent display of Christmas celebrations places him at the site of an atrocity that is about to be ordered by his commanding officer. The proceeding massacre of civilians is filtered through the singing of Christmas carols by Nazi officers, led by the CO who has just ordered the liquidation of village. There is no sound of gunfire or recoil of bodies to bullets, its surrealist quality only heightening the distortion of Mertens’ reality and psychological instability.

Flashback has achieved its apotheosis in Srdjan Dragovic’s offering, *Pretty Village Pretty Flame*. Flashback is used throughout the film, from its opening shots of a restaged newsreel thirty-odd years from the period explored in the film (the Bosnian War in 1995) to the constant exchange between the two protagonists who are now enemies, one Serb, one Muslim. These exchanges cover range from their early days as children playing near the symbolic tunnel of unification (site of the opening newsreel shot) to young men without a care in the world, yet on the cusp of imminent change. War is declared, and finally, to the events and atrocities unfold within the Bosnian conflict itself which led to the former confrontation between the two friends and adding further layers to the flashbacks that are driving the story. And yet all this is a flashback of our main protagonist, the young Serb, who lies seriously wounded in a Belgrade hospital, obsessed with killing a wounded Muslim who has been brought into the same ward.

Prince states: “Just before the slaughter in San Rafael that opens *The Wild Bunch*, Deke Thornton looks at the street below his rooftop sniper's perch. Down it come the temperance matchers who, in a moment, will be trapped in the crossfire between Thornton's snipers and the Wild Bunch. Contemplating the impending bloodshed, Thornton shakes his head with disgust and a weary resignation. He then participates in the ambush and shoots at least one unarmed townsperson, a man carrying a large tuba who suddenly intrudes into the line of fire Thornton has directed at Pike Bishop. Thornton's brief moment of reflection before the paroxysm of violence that consumes San Rafael helps place that violence within a condemnatory moral framework in which the bloodshed is presented as an outrage perpetrated upon the town by the railroad and the legal institutions it controls. Up on the roof, knowing what is to come, Thornton chokes down the sadness and revulsion that well up within him. Later, when Harrigan, the railroad agent, justifies the killing by declaring that he represents the law, Thornton is overcome again by these feelings and angrily strides away from Harrigan. He leaves the railroad office and goes back outside where the street is covered with corpses. He stares disconsolately at the dead.” Prince, 1998, p. 163.
Parade’s End will be more concerned with the erosion of character, bonds, and relationships, (particularly between Ash and Blackmore) as a result of the constant, ever-present violence. At every stage of violence witnessed, or inflicted by Ash’s team, there is a constant degradation of the bonds between each team member and alienation from the world they left behind. In Parade’s End, the preparations by the Kopassus will offer no real clue to the fate of their captives. The Kopassus do not threaten their prey upon first contact. They walk casually through the makeshift village, talking to some of the refugees, eating some of the leftover food. At a certain unexpected point, the scene shifts and our observers realise they are about to witness a brutal slaughter.


Yet Prince, particularly through the work of director/screenwriter Sam Peckinpah, sees montage intercutting as having far more complexity and sophistication towards conveying the psychological dimensions of war and killing. Prince cites Peckinpah’s use of slow motion inserts placed within a complex montage that cross cuts multiple lines of action so that slow motion functions in concert with the extended cutaways to reconfigure time. Furthermore, Prince states, these temporal manipulations include not just deceleration, but also, parallelism, disruption, and resumption. Interestingly, according to Prince, critics considered this stylistic as more realistic than previous generations of Hollywood war films. Prince believes that the trend started by Peckinpah, of bloody squibs in slow motion, was actually far from a realist’s aesthetic and worked primarily on the level of form than by their representational content. Prince, 1998, p. 71.

Prince states that Peckinpah’s montage set pieces “work as exquisitely crafted artefacts that emphasise physical spectacle. Their design foregrounds the hyperkinetic spectacle so that it becomes a detachable part of the film. Although, within the narrative, complex issues of character and theme lead up to and into the slaughter at Mapache’s headquarters, in terms of its montage design this scene is complete, self-contained, and utterly sufficient unto itself. For the filmmakers involved, the scene must have been a lot of fun to craft and edit. Herein lies a significant problem for the didactic uses to which Peckinpah wanted to put his screen violence.” Prince, 1998, p.72.

Prince contrasts this with a film like All Quiet on the Western Front where the battles push the narrative along. Scenes of fighting, which were shockingly brutal for the period, were consistent with Parade’s End A screenplay accompanied by an exegesis exploring institutional and ideological violence within the war film genre
the films anti-war themes. The audience witnesses the battles driving the protagonist further into despair and isolation through witnessing the death of all his friends. The intercutting is between scenes of cataclysmic violence, scenes that are constantly connected to the protagonist and its effect upon him. The effect of the violence upon the protagonist is the whole point of the sequence, the scenes within it, all of which support the narrative and thematic structure of the piece.


59 Prince states: “By intercutting the battlefield and hospital imagery with the images of Steiner from prior incidents, the montage disassembles the time-space relationships of the narrative, blurring the distinctions between past, present, and future and implying that all of these coexist within the mind and through its ability to recollect the past and project a future. Steiner’s pain and disorientation render these events and experiences co-present for him as Peckinpah once again employed complex montage techniques to show the interior correlates of physical violence and to convey trauma through the disruption of the temporal and spatial boundaries established by narrative. As the film progresses, Steiner and his nurse attend a banquet honouring the hospital’s wounded. Seated in a wheelchair, he believes sees one of the men from his squad dancing on the balcony. Steiner gets up from the wheelchair, walks over to this man, and finds that he is a stranger. Steiner turns away, confused, and looks off-frame right. In the cut to his point-of-view shot, Steiner sees himself still seated in the between chair, and as he walks back to the chair, the editing switches between shots that show Steiner alternately alone on an empty balcony and surrounded by a festive crowd. Steiner sees himself removed from his "body and sees the dancehall alternately crowded with the maimed bodies of dead comrades and empty of people. Steiner lingers in a psychological twilight, zone, and the dissociated imagery of himself and others that he sees while recovering from his wounds represents an effort by his shattered psyche to painfully reassemble itself in a way that negates the brutalities that have been inflicted upon it by narrative and by history.” Prince, 1998, p. 92.

60 No discussion of the disturbing images of war can avoid Elem Klimov’s landmark film, Come and See. Come and See, according to Youngblood, is a more despairing and negative film than say, Ivan’s Childhood, which is not so much a result or its graphic depiction of terror and atrocities committed by the SS during the invasion of Russia. For this author, Come and See presents a pervasive pessimism where all humanity has degenerated, although the Germans are undeniably much worse than the others. The central character, Flor, becomes progressively unhinged during the course of the movie as he discovers death and destruction at every turn. By the end of the film, his face has become a mask of terror. In the climactic sequence, the Nazis busy themselves in preparation for the destruction of the village where Flor has sought refuge. Like Rossellini, Klimov uses the technique where we witness

61 Parade’s End A screenplay accompanied by an exegesis exploring institutional and ideological violence within the war film genre
the violence through the eyes of the central character. The screenwriters illustrate in unsparing detail the destruction of the village. The SS battalion go about their business in a routine-like fashion. This is their way of making war. They eat, drink, and take respite from their previous encounter. The civilians, hospitable and supplicant to these interlopers are unaware of what is about to befall them. At a given time, they are all rounded up and herded into the local church which is then set on fire. In military fashion, the SS troopers surround the church and empty their weapons into the screaming villagers. As Youngblood states, these preparations become artistically excessive only if the viewer does not recognise that we are watching this through Flor’s eyes. It is a supreme example of the depiction of the prelude, execution and aftermath of violence seen through the eyes of an passive observer. A woman escapes from the inferno and is thrown onto the back of a truck to be repeatedly raped by the soldiers. The SS watch their handiwork, as do the audience. Not long after, they are ambushed by partisans who argue the methods by which they should execute their prisoners. The reaction of the Germans is at once defiant and riddled with fear. The most brutal officer begs for his life and on command, empties a can of petrol on his comrades. Another spits in the face of his captors. Klimov, despite their murderous acts, refuses to allow us to not see them as human beings begging, resigning themselves to their fate. It is a stunning evocation of the despair and horror of war and quite possibly, a depiction of organised violence that is unmatched in its sense of both truth and verisimilitude. The political dimensions of this film are unmistakeable, not as propaganda, but, as with Murders Among Us, implicating political ideology as the cause belli to what has been witnessed. At the end of the film, Klimov tells his audience that 167 villages in Belarus were destroyed like this.


Prince writes: “The didactic tableau constitute a category of imagery in Peckinpah's work that is responsible for some of his most sophisticated effects. Despite their intermittent usage, the tableaux presence in the films demonstrates Peckinpah's efforts to think through, and impose aesthetic control upon, the implications of the material he was dramatising. These compositions furnished him with a vital and provocative method of visualising the important thematic, psychological, social, or affective components of violence which he wished to impress upon his viewers. By making the tableau grouping a strikingly pictorial one, and, in many cases, by intercutting the tableau throughout a scene, Peckinpah emphasised the didactic quality of the conception that underlies the design and nudges the viewer towards a recognition of the explicit intended metaphor. Peckinpah did not systematically employ the tableau design as an essential element of structure throughout the body of his filmmaking. He was, instead, an intuitive filmmaker whose creative sensibility tended toward the fragment, the finely crafted detail, rather than toward elaborate and grandly integrated designs (except as noted, of course, in The Wild Bunch and Straw Dogs). Thus, he used tableau presentations as an irregular, but

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very important, feature of visual and philosophical design. They enabled him to periodically break in on the narrative, to speak more immediately with the viewer than the dramaturgical stratagems of character and narrative ordinarily permits. Peckinpah's tableaux are not, therefore, Brechtian, but they do reveal a restless, protean, creative sensibility impatient with conventions of narrative and driven to expose not just the look and feel of violence but its underlying psychic and social correlatives. The tableaux concretely speak to the abstraction of these more fundamental components.” Prince, 1998, p. 184.

62 According to Prince: “Peckinpah tied his innate sense of the fractured psyche with his developing perspectives on the phenomenon of human violence. From this, he fashioned one of his signature elements as a filmmaker, a key and recurring visual motif that he used as shorthand to convey his complex understanding of human psychology. The psychological correlative of violence in Peckinpah’s work, as we have seen time after time, is self-alienation, and Peckinpah employed mirror images as a recurrent means of visualising the fissured self and of interrogating the consequences of violence. He began to explore the implications of the mirrored self as an embodiment of estrangement and duality in The Wild Bunch, and in subsequent films he refined and sharpened the imagery.” Prince, 1998, p. 200.

63 Denitto describes a sequence from Wajda’s Ashes and Diamonds which illustrates the multiple uses of these techniques, particularly the embedding of techniques within tableaux of violence: “The scene is peaceful. The only sounds are those of a bird and the voices. There is no hint of why the men are there…A low-angle shot of the two men standing at the top of a slope. Maciek runs down, the camera moving with him, to the other side of the road. He stands there with his gun ready. We hear the sound of a car; Maciek opens fire. The car careens off the road, up the slope toward the church, and someone drops out. Andrzej machine-guns the driver. At Andrzej’s sharp command, Drewnowski searches the pockets of the driver for documents. Cut to Maciek on the other side of the car approaching the man lying on the ground. Suddenly the man jumps to his feet and dashes out of the frame; with a curse Maciek reloads his gun. Cut to the man desperately running past the front of the chapel, camera right to left. He stops when he sees Andrzej around the corner. He rushes back to the chapel door and slams on it with his hand, Maciek fires at him. The shots that follow constitute the climax of the sequence. Depending on a viewer’s taste, he will consider the scene strikingly dramatic or artificial. Wajda might be suggesting that violence invades even the sanctity of the church, a peaceful haven, or, critically, that the church is closed to a desperate man until he is dying. The latter interpretation seems more likely when we discover that the scene anticipates one in which Maciek encounters the corpses of the men he has helped kill in another chapel just after he and his girl friend had been talking in front of a large crucifix hung upside down. The man begins to slide down as the bullets tear into his back and

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set his coat on fire. The chapel door opens (have stray bullets hit the lock?) and there is a brief shot beyond the falling man of a statue on an altar in shadows. Cut to Maciek, with the camera facing him; his teeth are clenched as he presses the trigger of his blazing machine gun until Andrzej stops him. The next perspective is from inside the chapel. From a low angle we see the murdered man fall to the floor and out of the base of the frame. The camera remains stationary, so that Maciek and Andrzej are visible looking down at the body. Drewnowski joins them for a moment, tips his hat quickly, and scurries away.” DeNitto and Herman, 1975, p. 373.

Bibliography

Books


Sitney’s take on Italian cinema since 1945 focuses a great deal on the perspective and opinions of film director Piero Pasolini. As indicated by the title, it is not the aesthetics of Italian cinema that interest the author, but rather, the nexus of politics, cinema and society that were inextricably linked in the post war years. The success of neo realism is seen as reflecting the failure of Italian society to reform itself following the brief period of anarchy wrought by World War Two. The term “crises,” comes from Pasolini’s description of the outbursts or symptoms of cultural turmoil exacerbated by the fall of fascism. They were “vital” insofar as they invigorated powerful films. The author translates Pasolini’s often obtuse psychoanalytical writing on neo realism as continuation of a long tradition in Italian cinema of populist romanticism. Sitney’s investigation of the early period of cinematic renaissance in the early 1940’s and the second period typified by the works of Fellini is compelling and exhaustive in its detail.


Wetta and Curley catalogue in some detail the influence of war upon the history of filmmaking. They have also examined the influence of films upon war making—a question that is altogether more problematical. Once, the notion that the behaviour of armies and their soldiers would be affected by what they had seen on a motion picture screen would have been laughable. War was too serious a business to be susceptible to images from idle entertainments, no matter how technically adept or historically factual. Art in any form—much less this newest form—was supposed altogether too precious to survive translation from the pleasant surroundings of a darkened theatre to the mayhem of a battlefield.


Dethridge’s book is not a tome on the subject of writing a screenplay, making it far more accessible than say, McKee’s *Story*. Each chapter is concise, and unequivocally clear, using specific examples and finishing with set exercises for the student. It is therefore a very engaging work which invites originality from potential screenwriters, but at the same time adamantly defends the core principles and steps that need to be adhered to, or at least learnt, along the way. Dethridge strikes a cautionary note, particularly in regards to the public and/or business expectations and how they are ignored at the screenwriter’s peril. In these matters there is some confusion as to how this correlates with originality which more often than not can be at odds with public or business tastes. Irrespective of this, *Writing a Screenplay* is a highly intelligent and thoughtfully written manual for someone who is intent on writing a screenplay for the first time. The author demonstrates in each chapter the courage of her convictions, evident in her illuminating definitions of screenwriting techniques and their practical applications within the craft.


According to the author, his analysis is emphatically not conceived as a comprehensive study, much less the definitive one. Rather, it presents a survey of some of the principal ideological myths communicated by a sample of prose fiction and feature films, together with a tentative analysis of their characterising rhetoric. The selected works are intended to be representative as regards their range of political affiliation and thematic orientation, their dates of publication, and, most contentiously, their literary merit. Dine purposely restricts his study to the properly French literature of the Algerian conflict, as opposed to what he considers the equally valuable, but substantially documented, Algerian narratives of French expression which have been and continue to be inspired by the memory of what in Algeria itself is called ‘the Revolution’. The focus of the present study is rather upon the neglected final
phase of a much older tradition: namely, French colonial literature, understood here as writing produced in, and/or dealing with, the nation's overseas empire. It was in the 'age of imperialism', the period of European expansionism between about 1870 and the Great War, that literature--and particularly fiction--was, like public education, first consciously conceived of by French imperialists as a weapon in their propaganda armouy. This overtly instrumental view of cultural productions became even more obvious as part of the process of French colonial consolidation which occurred between the wars. Dine’s analysis of the “myth of the paratrooper” provides an example of how myth was able to subvert historical contextualisation by a public still enamoured with its own military icons, and very well prepared to create new ones for a vastly different conflict.


This book looks at how national traumas brought about by war are remembered on the socio cultural level through its representation in film, public memorial and oral testimony. It also points out that how we remember these events is subject to change depending on the historical period that we live and the determine the theoretical constructs that predominate. One example would be the rise in feminist theory as a means of re-evaluating history. *War and Memory* willingly engages with what is described as the “unstable and indeterminate relationship of history and memory.” The examples vary from the biography of Anne Frank to other oral histories dealing with a diverse cross section of 20th century history as experienced by the soldier and civilian. The span is from World War One to the Vietnam and Algerian Wars.


Falkowska’s work is a very precise look at the substance of Wajda’s films and life as an artist. She states that in Wajda’s films, “A protagonist faces specific moral choices within a defined historical reality. His or her internal struggle is always watched with tension by spectators who painfully negotiate the meanings of the image on the screen-images with which they identify with or passionately reject.” There is no doubting the contribution of Wajda to the political film genre and Falkowska understands her subject and the complexities of his material (which of course reflected that of the man himself) and the period and genre in which he worked. Her choice of the three films named in the title is based on their capacity to “reveal multiple cultural discourses that blend with the overtly historical and ideological.” In the first chapter she deals with the concept of the “political” in Wajda’s films. Falkowska’s analysis transcends the specifics of Wajda’s work to become a paradigm for the discussion of any films with an overt or marginal political context.

Syd Field has written what is often considered the first screenwriting handbook that outlined the essential skills and path necessary to writing a screenplay. Despite the onslaught of many other works by more heavily marketed figures such as Robert McKee, *The Foundations of Screenwriting* has lost none of its relevance in an increasingly cluttered library of options. Like other writers, he eschews formula on the one hand, but considers it necessary to writing a cogent screenplay that follows the traditional three act structure and that will ultimately make sense to an audience.


*Violence in the Arts* is a fascinating extemporisation on the subject. Fraser is a self – described literary critic and avid cinema - goer whose subjectivity within the narrative highlights the disparity between his expertise in the former, and passionate interest in the latter. It is a subject which begs for a more rigorous academic approach. Fraser’s is almost stream of consciousness and thus can be at time discursive. Yet this ability to recall and use a multitude of literary and cinematic works against the backdrop of modern history is impressive. As an extended essay, Fraser has indeed laid the groundwork for a more structured analytical approach. He moves easily from psychological observations related to group dynamics to pithy facts on numerous films and books. As stated in the forward, there is an exceptionally wide range of references in the book to both “high” and “popular” culture and to subjects like fascism, sadism, censorship and imperialism. All future discussions on the subject will need to take this book into account.


The authors present a highly detailed and comprehensive work on the relationship between politics and film. Taking as their subject the popular cinema and films designed to reach a large audience, Leif Furhammer and Folke Isaacson examine the troubled relationship between the movies of politics from the patriotic efforts of 1914-1918 to more contemporary works such as *Che!* and *The Green Berets*. The authors deal not only with the overtly propagandist cinema but with the political content of entertainment films and the political pressures exerted on them. One of the strengths of this book is the undeniable breadth and scope of the research undertaken by the authors. They are able to look with an equal degree of alert scepticism at works from East and West, Left and Right, exposing not only the

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disturbing uses to which the cinema has been put but the often ludicrous results of political interference with the movies.


What this book is about is ably and succinctly described by the authors: “Film and the Critical Eye is confined to one cinematic genre, the fictive narrative film. This genre is presented as a fusion of two elements, narrative and its visual expression. It has occasionally been necessary in preserving the coherence of an analysis to give prominence first to one element and then to the other, but in each of our chapters we have tried to do justice to both the cinematography and the narrative dimensions of the work discussed. When exploring story, characterisation, and themes of a film, we have emphasised the narrative component. Pages on the approach and style of a director are concerned primarily with cinema techniques. In the subdivision of each chapter entitled ‘Analysis of Major Sequences’, we have sought to combine both approaches in the commentary devoted to single sequences’. The films used are acknowledged as being classics, worthy of any selection. It is their goal to provide detailed analyses of the films for the critical film goer and they have without question, accomplished this. Ultimately, the authors have achieved what they set out to do, making this book essential reading for the academic or lay person who wants to reach a greater understanding of the relationship between narrative and visual expression.

Hake, Sabine. *The Cinema’s Third Machine: Writing on Film in Germany, 1907-1933.* USA, University of Nebraska Press, 1993.

With few exceptions (Lukács, Kracauer, Arnheim, Richter), none of the texts under discussion is presently available in English translation. With the exception of a few specialised accounts (e.g., Kaes on the literary debates, Hansen on early cinema, Murray about leftist film activism), little is known about the discursive field in which these texts have to be placed. And with the exception of writings devoted to the three canonised theoreticians (e.g. Schlüpmann and Petro on Kracauer, Koch on Ballázs and Arnheim), few in-depth studies have explored the contribution of early critical writings to the historiography of early cinema. It is for these reasons that The Cinema's Third Machine considers as many primary texts and as many critics as possible. While some texts are discussed at greater length because they express typical concerns, the emphasis clearly lies on preserving the multitude of voices, including their different tones and qualities, that made writing about film a field of contention. Even at the risk of presenting too much primary material, this study is intended to reproduce the heterogeneity of discourse to which various academic disciplines laid claim, and to restore the process of discourse formation on the level of historical analysis.

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Consequently, the different perspectives on cinema--as a social space, an industry, an art form--are not contained within their respective disciplines but are brought together to preserve the kind of interrelatedness that gives emerging discourses their intensity and complexity. This study even enlists journalistic and fictional texts in the reconstruction of a discursive formation characterised by, to a large degree, imaginary relations. Interdisciplinarity, therefore, comes to mean not only the inclusion of literary, pedagogic, and political concerns, but also of various modes of discourse, whether they are critical or affirmative, celebratory or instrumental.


War Movies manages to provide a considerably important function within the scope of research for this project. Firstly, it is a thorough and comprehensive history of war films since the beginning of commercial film production. It includes a range of films unmatched by any other work under consideration. Secondly, the author astutely manages to differentiate between films of more relevance than others, underlining political social and historical context, as well as notable attempts by directors and screenwriters to take their films in a more adventurous direction than their predecessors. The author recognises that movies about war are more than entertainment; they are an incomparable form of mass communication and propaganda. Hyams also manages to include technical accomplishments within these films that helped to elevate the genre. Unfortunately its forays into this more serious territory are undercut by the numerous anecdotes on the films and stars which veer uncomfortably close to a homage to a Hollywood of the bygone era. Nevertheless it provides a thought provoking an illuminating view of a 20th century phenomenon.


Kane believes that what are generally referred to as “war films” are those that depict the activities of uniformed American military forces in combat with uniformed enemy forces during World War Two. To support this proposition, Kane considers the World War Two films to be structured by opposing dualities such as War and Peace, Civilisation and Savagery. The author states: “These essential dualities are extensively played out as the conflict between good and evil or American/Allies and Enemy (Japanese/German), including, for example, democratic vs. totalitarian, tolerant vs. oppressive, religious vs. atheist, fertile vs. sterile, etc. In the combat films of this period, these dualities are set forth. It remains for later films to explore their ramifications and possible inversions--for example, the kind-hearted Nazi officer or the resentful Japanese commandant, the oppressive American commander, and so on.” Kane presents a suggestive taxonomy of theme, character, setting and plot elements in the World War Two combat film. This approach “eliminates discussion of costume dramas with major battle scenes, all other wars, spy dramas, films made during the war years which may refer in passing to those historical events but do not take

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them as the basic narrative structure.” Even Korean and Vietnam War films are excluded from what she refers to as “this core genre”; American military forces in combat with uniformed enemy forces during World War Two. For the purposes of script analysis, however, Kane’s taxonomy may be far too rigid. The World War Two film is not the best example of the genre, in terms of the output of films which added to our understanding of the nature of violence and combat.


This discussion focuses primarily on feature films, rather than documentaries, most of them American (i.e., Hollywood) rather than foreign. Several exceptions to these generalisations are included, however, in order to illustrate a range of possibilities for films that can enhance instruction, particularly if one recognises the creative possibilities for showing film excerpts rather than invariably showing films in their entirety. Given audiences consisting mainly of young (i.e., post-adolescent) men and women, the plot lines of most of the films trace the saga of the soldier in time of war. Several of them have the additional merit (from my perspective) of capturing the irony, even the absurdity, of the human predicament as it is experienced in war. This book concerns the role of filmic historical interpretation in regard to World War II, from the images of combat with which people entered the war, to wartime use of film histories to mobilise nations, to the ways in which film and video have subsequently been used to portray and interpret that global conflict. It is a book about war, film, and history.


This is a definitive work on surrealism’s influence on film and more importantly, the key exponents of surrealism and their relationship and influence on the movement in general. How cinema should be handled from a surrealist viewpoint is one of the definitive questions asked by the author who sets out to find the answers through the examination of a wide variety of surrealist pronouncements, scripts, and films—from movies made within the framework of commercialism by luminaries such as Luis Bunuel and Robert Benayoun. It is an authoritative treatment of the surrealists’ program for the cinema, including as pertinent evidence readily available and relatively hard to come by scripts and texts, as well as statements made by surrealists in books, magazines and film reviews. Mathews even uses remarks made in private correspondence or conversation. It is without doubt an exhaustive and compulsory text for understanding the strengths of limitations of surrealism for the cinema.

The substance, structure, style and the principles of screenwriting accurately encapsulates the author’s work and intentions. McKee leaves no stone unturned in examining the essential ingredients, as well as the minutia of screenwriting. The research and knowledge behind this book is extraordinary, yet there is a pedagogical aspect to it which is jarring with McKee’s desire to explore the possibilities of screenwriting as an art form. McKee leaves little to the imagination and there is a certain paradox to his exhortations for originality while excavating with almost scientific rigour each and every element of the screenwriting craft. This work is certainly the author’s magnum opus, and as such, it is certainly mandatory reading for any writer, no matter what the discipline. McKee’s memory and references are encyclopaedic and his use of examples inspiring.


The author states early in the piece that his study is neither a “book of praises nor a blackwash”. He uses early in the introduction quotes from diverse literary giants such as Sartre (“I hate the man”) to Hannah Arendt who adopts a more cool headed approach to Junger’s legacy. Nevin makes it clear that Junger is a pre eminent literary figure, more so because of his experiential and spiritual grasp of the nature of industrialised warfare and all that it entailed. Junger describes wars casual horrors in a blindingly captivating fashion that, according to the author, reminds us of Baudelaire’s dictum that only three men are worthy of respect, the priest, the warrior and the poet. To know, to kill, to create. This book, says Nevin, is the study of the three in one man. Lofty praise indeed but praise that is backed by considerable research that follows Junger’s personal odyssey from the trenches of World War One to the aftermath of the Nazis downfall. Junger has never required a revisionist approach to his work. His detractors are more often confused or threatened by allusions to the Nazi superman. He unflinchingly faced the horrors of war and wrote about it brilliantly, but he did not condemn it. Consequently he was embraced by the Nazis. But Junger attests in his own writing and record, that he considered Nazism a social and spiritual malaise. Into to Abyss is a necessary and pertinent book on a truly enigmatic and vital figure of 20th century European literature.

The premise for this book is that the major issues of American social history in the 80’s was explored and disseminated to a mass audience through the movies. The author purports that Hollywood creates a discourse in clearly defined texts that not only comment perceptively upon contemporary social history but actually participate in it. Given these underlying beliefs, it is a polemical work but one that deftly looks at the “holography of history” via the “Vietnam” film, the “Coming Home” film, the “Terrorism” film and the “Nuclear war” film texts.


Stephen Prince provides one of the most comprehensive analyses of contemporary political filmmaking. Cinema provides a wonderful landscape to assess the social concerns of a nation. According to Robert Savage (1990), movies are "parasocial vehicles revealing the very parameters of human society" and thus provide the "iconographic shorthand for political communication". The study of politics and film incorporates several dimensions. First is the relationship between the film medium and society. As Prince emphasises, topicality has been essential to the popularity of Hollywood movies. To keep current with the audience, Hollywood productions routinely draw from contemporary political agendas and issues, portraying them at times explicitly, at other times implicitly. Prince situates prominent cycles of Hollywood production - films dealing with the Cold War, with revolution in Latin America, with the Vietnam war, and with the declining health of the American economy--in relation to prominent political agendas and controversies during the 1980s.


According to Prince, Peckinpah's work helped propel American film toward explorations of subterranean aspects of human behaviour that had been too dark or twisted for the industry to countenance in earlier decades. Recognising this brings us to the most important feature of Peckinpah's relevance for modern American film and highlights for us the fundamental issue explored in this book. Graphic screen violence has become an obsessive feature of contemporary filmmaking. We cannot, it seems, go to the movies today and avoid for very long the spectacle of exploding heads and severed limbs, or escape the company of the screen sociopaths who perpetrate these acts. If we trace this contemporary fetish for graphic bloodletting to one of its chief sources, we arrive again at Peckinpah's films. Violence is what his work was chiefly known for in its day, and it continues to be the central attribute that many people think of when his films are mentioned. This is with good reason. We have already noted that Peckinpah showed subsequent filmmakers how to stylise scenes of graphic violence and that his techniques have

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become the standard tools of the trade. Moreover, the rise of ultraviolent movies is tied to the impact of Peckinpah's work on the American cinema. Violence, Prince argues, is the central preoccupation of his cinema. Consequently, Peckinpah did not merely attach a new level of violence to screen images but exploded the moral absolutes that had given shape and meaning to screen narratives for decades.


This book focuses on combat between men--the deliberate aggressive behaviour of man to man. The author describes such behaviour as possibly involving naked violence, hostility, and fear--even if theoretically governed by what he describes as “so-called civilised rules of war”. Other behaviour, he states, involves ritualised disputes and patterns of negotiations, without evoking any physical threat. Yet they all have in common the deliberate behaviour aimed at "getting the better of" (a much more dramatic version of S. Potter's "one-upmanship") the opponent--whether by actual annihilation or by dictating and coercing the other's behaviour. The opponent has a precisely similar aim; and the ideal outcome for either side--total success--would, necessarily, be at the expense of the other. The most dramatic examples of combat behaviour are found in the military setting; but, even if we think of combat in physical terms only, it is not restricted to the military. Men seek legitimate combat with men in the police and prison service, and under many other less organised and certainly less respectable establishments. Daily industrial strife and even family life are often a setting for combat. These versions may at times be less dramatic, but they inevitably obey the same psychological rules as those that govern the more explicit, physically oriented combat of war.


Shaheen’s book is a serious and thought provoking study of the phenomenon and evolution of the Nuclear War film as a genre. His choice of films ranges from the documentary to more esoteric works such as *Hiroshima Mon Amour* by Alain Resnais. Shaheen knows his subject well and this is a necessary and important study of one of the least considered genres in cinema.

Chambers looks at specific films that represent, or illustrate how different countries or groups within countries, have separate memories or divergent ideas about how or what should be commemorated. So the author makes a direct link between film and the collective memory of societies in relation to historical events. He states, “...as the generation that experienced the war diminishes in number, the public memory of it is increasingly shaped by those who create or manipulate the images of the conflict. It is a book about war, film and history. Chambers has selected a cross section of films form both sides of the conflict that explore films use as propaganda, or more honest portrayals of the conflict. This is an important book because it recognises that more people experience war through film than as the real thing, therefore shaping perspective on war without any understanding of the random violence inherent to organised violence. Indeed, he considers all war films, whether made for propaganda or more artistic purposes, to “place the bloody horror of modern warfare within a comprehensible and manageable pattern with a beginning, middle and end. He also acknowledges the psychological component of films such as Ivan’s Childhood and Come and See which deviate from portrayals of heroes and heroines as sturdy individuals. With the former, Chambers considers the film, rightfully, to be about the fate of all children during World War Two, this being one of the contributing factors to its pre-eminence as an enduring masterpiece.

Journals


Garton’s article explores the underlying issues of race and identity that sits uncomfortably close to the Anzac legend. It is redolent with quotes from known political, historical and military figures of the period who were quick to claim Australia’s place in the “Empire,” via the blood and sacrifice of its manhood. Garton also traces the obstacles this early idealism forged through the campaigns of World War One, faced with the experiences of World War Two and Vietnam, where the Australian soldier did not return as the same physical specimen as when he left. It is an extremely well researched ad convincing study of how truth is spun into legend to suit the cultural and political imperatives of the day. Racial hygiene and identity was a major issue, and Australia was concerned about its own internal developments such as female suffrage, and how this would affect Australian “manhood.” More poignantly, Garton retells the loss survivors faced on their return, feeling their lives over with no war to fight, and the toll this took on the families and returned veterans. In a sense, as with other countries, societies paid twice for their involvement in these global conflicts that are so often claimed to shaping a nation and its manhood. As the author
concludes, war “both constructed and problematised masculinity.” The same might be said of Australian society as a whole.


Linder’s essay substantially highlights the shift that took place within the war film genre from the end of World War One, as well as the historical, social and cultural reasons for this shift. While her concerns are not with the technical changes that took place within cinema, Linder’s description of specific developments such as temoinage and the aftermath of violence as the final image of the film, are conclusive. More importantly (and consistent with other authors explored in the research), these changes in techniques are irrevocably linked to the social and political history of the period. Her examples are of seminal works such as *The Wooden Crosses* and *All Quiet on the Western Front*, which set clear demarcation from earlier war films.

**Theses**


In the synopsis, the author states her intent; to consider the position of Paul Cox as an independent filmmaker within Australian cinema. Her argument is that Cox fulfils the traditional notion of auteur as artist in a nostalgic sense of self definition. To that end, the author uses psychoanalytical theory to form a reading of his films. She successfully employs Freudian and Lacanian theories in order to achieve her objective. Essentially her argument is that the works of these theorists are concomitant upon the human subject entering subjectivity and being rendered fundamentally alienated. Flashbacks are deconstructed by the author, revealing Cox’s ability to use this technique on multiple levels; primarily to expose the central character’s Oedipal relation to the “omnipresent maternal figure.” The author takes her definition of flashbacks from Messiaen and Visser; a temporal disruption which acts as a plot device to convey the subjectivity of the character within the story. Irrespective of the psychoanalytical framework, her description of Cox’s use of this technique is thorough and demonstrates its potential to explore psychological dimensions, even at the most rudimentary level of childhood memories.

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The author has written a rigorous and fascinating study of the twentieth century military and its relationship to the development and practice of torture as a legitimate tool of the modern soldier (army, state). While her research does point conclusively to the training of Special Forces soldiers as ideal for the recruiting of “professional torturers”, the emphasis seems to be on the misanthropic nature or psychology of the twentieth century military, and how these practices are totally at odds with their idealised sense of professionalism. This “professionalism”, the author believes, is inculcated within all modern military thinking and under close scrutiny is only paid scant attention when tradition comes up against the realities of modern war. While there is ample evidence of this, the question that is raised is how this differs from militaries across the centuries, notably the Roman legions and Napoleon’s Grand Armee who practiced torture while defining the ideal of a professional military force, an ideal that was quite distinct from conscript soldiers or mercenaries. The author’s answer to this might be in her exhaustive definition of the word “professionalism” and how it applies to the idea of “professional ethics” commonly practiced in the medical and legal professions. Unsurprisingly, the point of military training, to kill, does not sit comfortably with any ethical definition or understanding of this concept.

Filmography


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