

Ivan's childhood and the battle of algiers: war movies analysis

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War movies are often dramatized, either in a positive political. Some glorify it while others emphasize a portrayal the hardships caused, and lives lost.

Others cast a positive light on one side while dehumanizing or criticizing the other. Ivan's Childhood and the battle of Algiers are neither of these. Ivan's childhood, unequivocally an anti-war movie, portrays a newly-orphaned young boy who joins the Soviet army to avenge the loss of his parents. The Battle of Algiers is not as straightforwardly anti-war. It is a complex, realistic depiction both of what war was meant to achieve and the loss it caused.

Where the two movies converge is the divergence the respective war caused from one's ordinary, more pleasant, state. In Ivan's childhood, Ivan's childhood is effectively stolen away from him by the war. In The Battle of Algiers, the Casbah, and the women's innocence are corrupted by war. For both The Battle of Algiers and Ivan Childhood, it is contended that people have legitimate reasons for engaging in warfare, war is ultimately depicted a disturbance to people's' natural, more pleasant, states.

Ivan Bondarev is a young Russian boy who wants to avenge his parents death. Through a series of dream sequences, it becomes apparent his mother and father had been killed by German Soldiers. to do so, he joins the partisans and demands to fight on the front lines. Ivan is steadfast, even stubborn and rude to achieve his goals but his intentions are depicted in a positive light. Since the viewer sympathizes with Ivan, through a heartbreaking backstory, whatever Ultimately, the viewer gets what he or she would like to see, as Ivan is accepted as a soldier and is successful on his reconnaissance missions. In short, his endeavor is a success and the sympathy the viewer feels for Ivan legitimizes his intentions for wanting to

fight in the war, especially fighting against an enemy as loathsome as the World War II Germans. Fighting in this particular war, from the filmmaker's eyes, is a commendable endeavor. In this sense, Ivan's childhood is not an anti-war film.

Despite how Ivan is portrayed, his life as a soldier is quite literally shown in a dark light. Everything takes place at night and one never sees Ivan smile or act playfully. He acts older than his age and does his best to bond with the rest of the partisans. However, during all of Ivan's several dreams, we see him smile, run and prance playfully, interacting with friends. In his dreams, Ivan is a normal kid. These dreams are starkly contrasted with his life as a soldier. From the lack of light to his body language and facial expressions, it is apparent how different his life is at war in contrast to his life with his mother, father and friends.

A prime example of this contrast is in the dream in which Ivan is shirtless in a forest next to a dirt road. The sun shines, casting a light on his blond hair. Ivan looks at a butterfly, a goat and seems to be curiously yet playfully searching the area around him. He floats in the air, smiling and brushing the branches of the trees away from his face. After he smiles and stops to bend down to take a drink of water, the dream comes to a halt, as Ivan wakes up in a small, dark hut, looking startled. This rude awakening serves as an illustration of his childhood being lost. This happy playful scene is interrupted by the harsh reality of war. He no longer has a mother and his choice to join the Soviet army robs Ivan of idyllic days such as the one portrayed in his dream. In his current state, caused both by the war and his decision to

engage in it of the harsh reality He is not with a young girl, his mother in the forrest on a bright sunny day. He s sleeping on hay in a small hut about ot undergo a day of reconnaissance missions. Ivan’s choice to join the war is commendable but Tarkovsky is sure to emphasize what Ivan is missing: his childhood.

From the first scene of THE battle of Aligers, the wards brutality is immediately evident. After an old algerian man is being tortured the viewer sees just how awful this particular war was. However, this scene, like the entirety of the film, is shot and produced without melodrama; no dramatic music, extreme cries of pain or evil laughing by the perpetrators of torture. This depiction illustrates war’s ability to make otherwise normal people to partake in logically coherent yet morally abhorrent action. Neither the French nor the Algerians are shown to be uniquely evil or monstrous, despite their actions. Because the film forgoes the norms of dramatization, largely due to the untrained status of those that acted in the movie, people committing violence and brutality are not seen as inherently immoral. These acts are a product of war, not a product of pathologies within the peoe. In other words, absent war, it seems these would be perfectly peaceful, productive members of society. The Battle of Algiers contends that soldiers on the French side and guerrilla warriors on the Algerian, acted violently because of the war, rather than inherently violent people causing

Along similar lines, the war also corrupts the Algerian women. In several scenes throughout the movie, guerrilla warriors use their religious garb to conceal weapons and subsequently shoot people. the Most notable example

of the Algerians cynically using women's perturbed innocence in the scene in which the wives and other female family members to plant bombs past the security barrier. In order to do this, the women dress up as French, as to not raise suspicion from the French authorities. Not only are they partaking in terror, they are in a position in which it seems logical to don the close and hairstyle of a woman of another nationality. These acts, to be sure, are ones of their own choice. However, it must be noted that these actions are quite out of the ordinary. War changed these women and guided them towards positions in which they acted in ways that are inconceivable outside of this war. This example, like the use of torture, is not to prove the obvious claim that war changes what people do but to say it is fundamentally corrupts values reasonable, well-intentioned people perform in a sober manner. The women, like the purveyors of torture, are not hysterical or bloodthirsty but act in ways in which they see fit given their circumstance.

The Battle of Algiers, like Ivan's Childhood, is not pro or anti-war in a conventional sense. Though torture and civilian killings are shown, bloodshed is not dramatized, as the movie is shot in documentary style. and The Algerians are portrayed as having legitimate grievances while the French military personnel are not portrayed as monsters instead. they are experienced, logical, precise yet also cruel tacticians trying to achieve an end. While animosity and emotional hardships are largely absent in the Battle of Algiers, the city and people, particularly women, are transformed. The Casbah is no longer a safe space and women's spiritual garb are no longer used just for their intended purposes but as means to perform terrorism. In

addition, the Pied noir are changed for the worse, as they are swept up in the mass hysteria. Much like Ivan's childhood is stolen away from him by war, the war took the normalcy of the Algerian city.