

# Tarkovsky: the mirror

Religion



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Tarkovsky: The Mirror Basically, the history of the movie was around a mother who is special and ordinary also. The director wanted to film a long cherished idea. Firstly, the film got a name “ Statement”, but it did not get a license, later it was published with the name of Mirror. The frame of the story is a bit difficult to follow, the director do not indicate clearly that we are in the present time or in the past time. In the present time of the film dying man is remembering back to his life, although he himself never can be seen on the screen (we hear only his voice), the dying man memories largely are the same with the memory of the director. The dying hero, Alexei of the movie has a psychosomatic illness; the reason for this could be bad communication problems with his mother and ex- wife, he feels that he needs to do something for his mother and his ex-wife, but he could not talk to them, because he has lost touch with them. He is looking back to the past to find the solution, he needs to heal himself to come out from this status. In the first 20 minutes we are in the past time, it was only remembrance and dream. We cannot realize that the man is ill, we can just see from the talk that he has a bad relation with his mother. The great part of the movie is about Alexei memories and dreams, leads us to his childhood. Alexei as a child lived in villages with his brother and mother because father lived them. Besides the recent memories of the hero the Spanish Civil War, II. World War, Stalin's cult of personality, the Maoist threat are shown in the film. Alexei divorced from his wife, estranged from his child, and recalling the situation of his own childhood caused serious crisis in his mind. Looking for answers and solutions for his desperate situation, the difficulties of the Russian people, and the fundamental question of humanity. Alexei memories were used as mirror to face himself, that results in constant meditative state

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which necessarily leads to the perfection of the absolute spirit, faith issues. Tarkovsky's work includes autobiographical elements and it is a confession of the art of the human soul and the impact of the moral responsibility of the artist. Tarkovsky's films are always tests of faith and testimony, *The Mirror* is one of the highlights of the modernist film. The main character cannot be seen, through his narration like tiny pieces of the mirror we can get to know his dreams, memories and the events of his life which determined his life the most significantly. Alexei looking for answers for the people and his situation, and for the issues which are particularly important for humanity. It is an artistic creed with through we can face with our personal histories in a clear version. Alexei's life forty years story includes changes of Soviet history, from the 1930s until the end of 1970. Tarkovsky wanted to drive back the cultural community to its intellectual basics. \* Connection with the selected topic (religion) The author uses bipolar structure in his histories-two world coexistence-it means the framework of constant conflict between the person and the world. Dualistic view of the world is deeply rooted in the Orthodox thinking, but you can also find in all kinds of religious " holy" thinking. Tarkovsky partially talked about his views of the conflict of the individual and the world and partially can be inferred, but, we conclude that it is traced back to Russian Christian personalism. This personal concept distinguishes the characteristics determined by external and internal conditions. He completely isolates unique properties. The person is independent from the nature, society and the state, it is a determination which comes from inside, and cannot be compared to anything. The movie roams around the questions: how to create and to maintain the ethical personality and how to get there. We can call it the movie of internal road searching, because the <https://assignbuster.com/tarkovsky-the-mirror/>

central topics of it are the suffering and the pain. Moreover, in Tarkovsky's art there is a double meaning of the personal and global struggle, on the one hand, it means the fundamental opposition coming from personalism, and on the other hand, it is the opposite of spiritual tradition and modern materialistic civilization. We need to be careful with spiritual tradition, it is not a capability of the person, and however, it is a starting point and target point also. Each movie of the author is fight for passing forward. \* Parallels in the movie Three levels of parallels outlined in the film, the biographical, historical and personal destiny between the actors. There is a very important historical use, it underlines Russia historical role. From the Csaadajev-mail comes out that Puskin and Tarkovsky had a similar Empire in Russian history consecutive series of sacrifices. Self-sacrifice and the associated liability are shown in the same way as between Alexei and his mother, and the whole history of Russian people. Moreover, we can see a close contact with the history in the press scene where it shows Stalinist terror's psychological consequences. Personal destinies reflect to each other , calls " eternal return" and the same actors are playing the narrator's mother and his wife and a 12 year old Alexei and his son. The similarities between the two mothers is that both of them are divorced (Maria and Natasa) and with any of them hero cannot communicate. But, there we can also find differences between the two women. Maria smokes but Natasa do not, Natasa's life goes in a different way, she is thinking about remarriage, Maria insisted on her husband's memory and marriage is not subject to her. The parallels between the three men - the father, the narrator and Ignat - are equally strong. The father and Alexei leave their wives and little Ignat and Aljosha just grow up without a father . In all three person's life army appears. \* Parallels with <https://assignbuster.com/tarkovsky-the-mirror/>

other movies The person and the world conflict are represented in all movies by Tarkovsky, it starts with world domination in " Ivan's childhood", here the war dominates everything, moves into the personality and destroys it. The hero is unable to communicate with the world , rigid and self-locking. It is the most conventional movie, because in this time the author accepts that the person can be changed by external factors. The next movie is the" Andrej Rubljov" in which the imbalance is created in a relationship of the person and the world. The story of the film is nothing more than following through the mental process that the person will be able to get rid of the outside world domination and rise above the external determinations. From the hero misses the internal independence, he is looking for support from outside, but it is impossible without inner freedom. In " Solaris" the internal conditions of the process come to the front, the outside world becomes an abstract and symbolic space. In the next movies outside (which is independent from the person) disappears, it is only a mirror of the inside. From " The mirror" the objective world is absolutely missed, the whole story takes place within the person. This movie is a perfect contrast to ' Ivan", here the world is completely becoming nothing in person's mind, inside and outside world is depending on his ethical strength. Furthermore, it examines that internalized external world, for example, the cultural tradition, how much contributes to the maintenance of ethical power. After it, the author exits from this frame, and tries to understand this whole way of individual person on the community, because, the final condition of the becoming a person is finding back to the community. \* Relation with reality Therefore, The Mirror's inner subjective world converted into a religion transcendent world, so there opens a new outer world. The person faces with a new objective world , but he does

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not need to be defensive, rather need to be opened. Tarkovsky started at the dominant historical world and arrived to metaphysical world through personal inner world. With his films went through each stage of becoming a personality. But, the tradition involves the community; it cannot be simply a matter of the individual. That's why, the person may not exit from himself, he needs to turn back to empirical world. The author realized that one person is not enough to keep alive the tradition. There is a need to open to another tradition; the gates should be explored before another community. The real step is to want to know other cultures. Moreover, creation of traditions is another very significant factor, without it the personality is impossible to born. From this we can conclude that for our civilization there is a big importance of empathizing our own tradition, we need to know our culture, because of we lose to get to know it, our person is deficient. On the other hand, there is a big importance on migration and travelling. The author also went away from Russia, because he felt that he had to meet with other traditions to have a clear picture about the outer world. Good to know how to handle other cultures' people, such as , how people relate to one another, what dominates in their life management, their habits, individualism or collectivism dominates, spacing, masculinity or femininity dominates, what about the religion and so on. \* Message of the movie Civilizations The movie refers to the relations between civilizations. Through three thousand years relation did not exist, people were separated from each other in space and time, there was a need hundreds of years to transmit different inventions between civilizations. Then, violent confrontations with the West and the Hinduism followed, but the real change happened after 1500 years in their relations, when the West started to expand thank to the geographical

discoveries and had a big impact on other civilizations. From this time, we can talk about world politics, system of international relations. The next time is the 20th century, when colonial empires collapsed, new civilizations developed. The next stage is the modernization, it is the term which means the global extension of the Western world, today it is called globalization. It affects economic, political and social spheres. The fundamental problem of cultural modernization is the coordination of cultural funds and social reality, this means that Western civilization's lifestyle, certain social, economic and political features must be inserted into non-Western civilization's life with the intention of renewal and creation . From this perspective, the process of modernization means a homogenization which has to be extended to the whole world and increases the power differences between the countries.

Modernization The Hungarian social history in terms of modernization: It started in 1825, when the unified language was introduced, developed the school system, developed the science, stated the care of the Hungarian language and history. But, the starting process of modernization stopped in the fall of 1848 Revolution. After 1867, Hungary continued the process as a part of Habsburg Empire, notational characters remained important , in the same time the production had to enough for the whole country . This economy was built together with more developed Austrian and Czech industry, with began the separation of subsystems , economic development, urbanization and happened the separation of the state and the church. The dissolution of the Habsburg Empire caused a big shock for Hungary, because they lost big part of their territories, agricultural resources and a significant part of the relationship. They had to reorganize the economy, politics, culture, but the modernization restarted. In this time, the large scale industry

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push forward. The majority of agricultural unskilled workers is located in the industry. There was a big difference in a field of education, peasantry had a very bad situation, they could not reach money without education, therefore agricultural workers must support them. From 1938, modernization period boom. After the Second World War, the socialist paradigm was formed, the continued the development of economy, centralized the social powers, culture and politics. In the socialist paradigm the state is responsible for economic, social and cultural fields, and control them from the centre. But, it completely collapsed, because this process created the bureaucracy, the system stopped and the innovation became impossible to continue. The 1956 revolution was a profound shock for Hungary and some adjustments were made in 1968, the correction was not enough and in 1989/90 the paradigm failed. Religion The big question: what is the role of religion in society? According the author of the movie, the religion helps some people to be able to navigate in the world, it has important functions for the whole society , because it provides a common framework for the interpretation of the meaning of life, values and norms for the members of the society.

Furthermore, it provides social integration, sense of belonging, communities , and legitimizes the existing social institutions. However, in our days the sociology of religion has no meaning and not valid for everyone. It is the science of modern rational age. In the history, a few decades ago the religion was part of the undifferentiated cultural environment, it was evident like the spoken language or as a family, defined the nature of the man without selection. There was also a less and strongly religious people, but non-religious person did not exist. Before the modern ages, religion had key role in society, cultural and individual life. One characteristic of the modern <https://assignbuster.com/tarkovsky-the-mirror/>



age is that the culture is no longer self-evident in regard of the whole life, not only in respect of religion. We determine that where we want to live and what kind of morality we adapt. The law seeks to enforce certain standards, but ultimately, we decide about everything. And last but not least, it is increasingly a personal decision what we think valuable, good or bad, what is our view about the world and we have a religion or not. Though we can't prove the existence of one god, we can provide evidence for the power of religion. For good or for evil, faith factors into our everyday functioning: We've evolved to believe. Religion can help us make sense of our world, provide motivation, and bind us together. Nevertheless, structured belief has its drawbacks. So, keep your mind open when dealing with dogma. In reality, religion is inherent within many aspects of society, and religious beliefs inevitably affect areas such as politics, economics, and cultural values. This relationship between religion and society can be seen in Islamic religion and Muslim social culture, Christianity and economics, and Buddhism and politics. In each of these religions we can find insight for understanding the society in which it exists, as well as in the comparison of these religions and their relationships with society. There are no known societies that do not have some form of religion, although religious beliefs and practices vary from culture to culture. This therefore makes religion an important factor in society. Religious movements have played an important role in the development of religion in general and have influenced other aspects of social life. Religion is essential in society because it reduces stress among the people. People who have faith in their religion and their God are able to seek support and solace in the Church and so are able to deal with their stress in healthy ways. They do not go looking for witch doctors because

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they know they can turn to religion for an outlet hence saving them from being exploited by the wrong people in society. Another importance of religion in society is that religion enhances self-importance in that religion expands one's self to infinite proportions. Man unites himself with the infinite and feels enabled. Society also gains from the self-flattery provided by religious belief. Religion assures a greater reward in the afterlife to worldly failures than to successful life. Such kind of assurance encourages members to continue to play their part in society. Keeping in mind the importance of religion and the truth of religion are two completely different things, with either one being able to be true without the other, religion is important because it provides us with rules for living on which we advance our society. It is possible for non-religious people to act by religious morals, but in general they do not, and the ones that do are usually trying to prove that they do not need religion, rather than striving to make the world better. Religion is the hope which motivates the human race to advance itself beyond its current limitations. Finally, religion controls economic life as expressed by Max Weber. He was of the view that religion also controls the economic life of nations and people. To Weber, capitalism grew in the Protestant nations like England, U. S. A. It did not grow in Italy and Spain where the people are Catholics. The Hindus lay great stress on spiritual progress than on material progress. From my view, Tarkovsky succeeded in creating this unique sense of time in *Mirror*, although perhaps never again. *Mirror's* unstructured and inconsistent movement back and forth through time, with changing perspectives and fantasy sequences is unlike anything else in cinema. As Aleksei lies barely lucid in his final moments, the voyage comes to a conclusion, there is nothing left to remember. Perhaps

Tarkovsky's *Mirror* is not about memory, it is about human life in all its tragic fascination. It is a describing of a dream and we agonise over the possibility of waking up. *Mirror* is the author's greatest masterwork, something totally original, deeply moving and memory to date, it is the single greatest film ever made. \* References David Liepert (2010). *Muslim, Christian and Jew: Finding a Path to Peace Our Faiths Can Share*. Toronto : Faith of life publishing. Hexham, Irving and Karla Poewe, (1997): *New Religions as Global Cultures*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press. Jenkins, Philip, *Mystics and Messiahs* (2000): *Cults and New Religions in American History*, New York: Oxford University Press. John Shelby Spong, Robert W. Funk, Don Cupitt (2012). *The Future of the Christian Tradition*. California : Polebridge Press: Santa Rosa.