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WAR FILM: MORPHOLOGICAL AND DRAMATURGICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this chapter is to conduct a morphological and dramatic analysis of the war film, as well as identify and characterize its most obvious subgenres. Main research approaches include morphological, culturological and sociocommunicative. The morphological analysis allowed to study the specifics of war film, to determine its genre conventions and dramaturgical structure. The culturological approach provided the determination of the basic cultural meanings, contained in war films. The sociocommunicative approach made it possible to analyze the war film from the point of view of the objectification of cultural meanings into the film and its following deobjectification by the viewer.

The detailed dramaturgical and genre analysis of the war film allowed to single out three subgenres of the war film: warlike, warfare and anti-war. Warlike films are dedicated to conquest aggressive wars. They contain a message to forcing and exonerating the war, forming the image of the enemy. Warfare films show the course of defensive or liberation wars. War in this subgenre is an essential measure for the main character, a means of protection. The sides of the conflict in the anti-war film begin with confrontation, but then come to cross-cultural dialogue, consensus by means of cultural tolerance.

Genre diffusion of war film is vast and multifaceted. The war film has the closest links with historical drama, epic film and melodrama. Combinations with the biopic, action, and adventure film genres are also quite common. There are genre priorities for different war film subgenres. For warlike, the epic genre is a priority, for warfare – action, for anti-war – adventure. The conventions of subgenres and types of conflicts are also revealed, providing their unique characteristics.

The chapter proposes a new classification of the war film genre, consisting of warlike, warfare and anti-war films, and offers a solid justification for these subgenres in terms of morphological, dramatic, cultural and visual contexts. The trend of genre diffusion of the war film of the period of the second half of the 20th century – the first 15 years of the 21st century is revealed.

The provisions and conclusions, set forth in this, chapter can be used in the process of film production when working on a war film. The revealed trends will serve as an effective help in choosing war film subgenre and related genres, effective conventions to increase audience interest. In addition, the scientific findings can be applied in the educational process of training future screenwriters and filmmakers in general.

KEYWORDS

War film, feature film, plot, script, character, genre, dramaturgy, genre conventions, dramaturgical conflicts, genre diffusion.

The relevance of the article topic is determined by the social significance of a war film as a film product, designed to reveal the cause-and-effect relationships of the appearance of interethnic, intercultural and other military conflicts, their course and resolution. The Earth suffers from a number of aggressive and conquest wars, among them the colonization of America by the Spaniards, later by the French and British; two World Wars; wars in Vietnam, Iraq, and now in Ukraine. Films, dedicated to military conflicts, are powerful art works, in which, with the help of a complex of expressive means and visual solutions, an image of a cultural chronotope is created. This chronotope performs the functions of informing and educating, on the one hand, and disinformation and manipulation, on the other. Keeping a specific primary determinism, the war genre acquires more and more signs of discreteness. This trend is causing a contradiction between the functioning of the new principles of organization of the morphological and dramaturgical systems of this genre and their scientific understanding.

For the most part, a war film is based on historical facts, therefore it contains an outstanding cultural and educational material for society. Its special value is shown when historical events are passed through the prism of the present day, and the viewer can easily notice the modern flaws of society in it. However, a true art work cannot but use the method, genre and style, which are the main means of creative interpretation and aesthetic development of the world, turning it into the artistic material of a film work. Therefore, the problem of the genre and morphological modifications in the structure of modern war films is relevant.

Audiovisual art cannot exist apart from socio-cultural, political or economic factors. Interest in history does not fade away, and the viewer becomes more and more demanding in understanding the historical events of his/her own or other countries. Over time, a transformation of audience preferences in cinematography occurs in society, associated with political, social and cultural changes. They influence the general spiritual and cultural development of the younger generation, change the demands in the visual perception, transform the approaches of modern screenwriters, directors and cameramen, and, accordingly, the style and visual solutions of film products. In this study, of particular interest is the analysis of war films of the second half of the 20th century – early 21st, revealing the cultural trends of postmodernism and the beginning of metamodernism.

In the course of the study, a number of sources touches upon the issue of art criticism, in particular fiction cinematography, cultural studies, philosophy, social communications, official statements of UNESCO etc. Particularly in this study, the works of an author, lecturer and story consultant R. McKee [1]; a French sociologist, culturologist and philosopher J. Baudrillard [2]; an American sociologist E. Goffman [3]; an ancient Chinese philosopher Mozi [4] were considered.

War film is closely related to the genre of historical drama, and therefore is of interest to connoisseurs of historical cinema. McKee compares the history of humanity to a treasure chest, which is sealed and the warning inscription on it says: "What is past must be present. A screenwriter isn't a poet hoping to be discovered after he's dead. He must find an audience today. Therefore, the best use of history, and the only legitimate excuse to set a film in the past and thereby add untold millions to the budget, is anachronism – to use the past as a clear glass, through which you show us the present" [1].

Furthermore, modern scientific articles were of particular interest for this study. War film is often combined with Westerns. An article by M. Carter *The Perpetuation of Myth: Ideology in Bone Tomahawk* contains a powerful cultural and historical analysis about how America (by means of a Western) uses the mythic past to outline and solve the present-day crises. The researcher remarks: "In times of crisis, America habitually reverts to 'Western' rhetoric of Manifest Destiny, Native American 'savagery,' and 'off the reservation' civilizing missions in times of war and external conflict that threaten its sense of righteous superiority. This creates an ideological mirror that America often gazes into to see a distorted, idealized image reflected back" [5]. Thus, the author concludes that through the Western, the United States creates a kind of ideological bridge between the savage war in the past and the War on Terror in the present. This conclusion is of particular interest for the analysis of the cultural aspect of war genre.

Another researcher J. Savage in the paper *True Grit: Dirt, Subjectivity and the Female Body in Contemporary Westerns* spotlights the cultural analysis of the cinema role in the creation of American statehood. The author refers to F. J. Turner's frontier thesis. According to it, the mega-myth of frontier connected with the image of "honourable dirt": "the dirt of transforming the "wilderness" of Turtle Island, into "America" – the white European name for the U.S.A. ... The "rugged" nature of the American character, that belongs in its cultural lexicon of dirt and grit, is formed by the co-option and eradication of indigenous land practices" [6].

War films often create a strong image of the enemy, the analysis of which is also often relevant among film researchers. M. Stiglegger in the article *The inner frontier. Images of the USA in recent Western cinema* (2000–2020) also mentions the F. J. Turner's concept of frontier mythology. He notes that: "at the heart of the American western cinema lies the myth. And the western myth is closely linked to the frontier, that boundary between civilization and wilderness that is constantly being negotiated". Moreover according to the conception of his research: "the outer boundary between civilization and wilderness is turned inward in films of the last decade: This means that the 'stranger' is part of the self, the abject lurks in one's own forests and mountains—or in one's own micro-society, even if films are only told in Western mode" [7].

One of the more conceptual studies is the research by J. Miranda-Gable *Analytical Model of Transmedia Storytelling Ecosystems in Audiovisual Fiction: The Spanish Model of The Ministry of Time*, dedicated to the global problem of transmedia narratives in the modern communication society. According to the authors' conception: "The quantity of information, the audience is exposed to through different mediums to a vast quantity of information allows the follower base of these vast universes to engage with the story more profoundly than a single-media project" [8]. This approach allows conduct a deep and systematic analysis of all stages of film production – from idea to promotion in social media. Also in the process of the study, the problems of the evolution and expressive means of feature films were considered [9–12].

The war film genre is also ambiguous and discrete, like other modern genres. It should be noted, that a war film is not always historical, as it sometimes represents hypothetically possible wars in the future. War films, combined by diffusion with historical drama, were chosen as the

empirical core of the study. Science fiction, fantasy comedies, horrors, post-apocalyptic films, etc. were not included in the object of study, because did not use authentic historical incidents, facts and personalities in the plot. The films, studied in the article, belong to the chronological period from 1970 to 2014 and are considered inside of three proposed subgenres: warlike films, warfare films, anti-war films (**Fig. 2.3.1–2.3.3**).

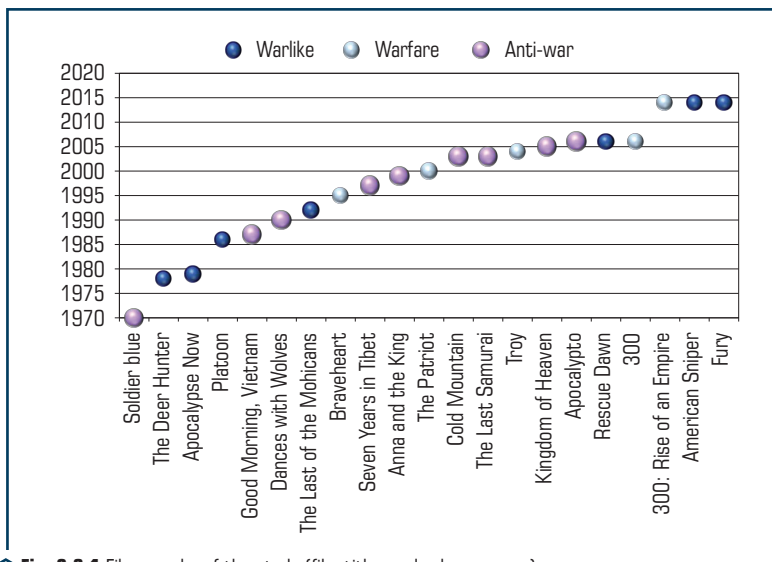


Fig. 2.3.1 Filmography of the study (film titles and release years)

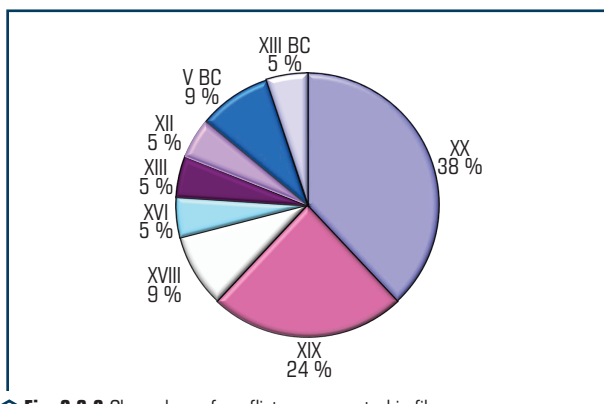


Fig. 2.3.2 Chronology of conflicts represented in films



Fig. 2.3.3 Geography of conflicts represented in films

3.1 WARLIKE FILMS

Let's consider the concept of the warlike subgenre. Militarism statements can illustrate this concept (**Fig. 2.3.4**). In particular, an American doctor and psychoanalyst A. Franz, argue that the state of the world is an illusion. "Peaceful" periods are indeed periods of preparation for an impending war, or a situation, in which warlike instincts are suppressed by a stronger state [13]. Another psychologist notes that human beings by nature are aggressive. Their aggression is fueled by sublimation and projection, when people turn their discontent into prejudice and hate of other races, religions, nations, or ideologies [14].

H. Goering, a political, state and military leader of the Third Reich, spoke about the principles of forming such an image at the Nuremberg trials: "Of course, the people do not want to fight. But, in the end, policy is determined by those who are in power, and the people will easily go where they will be driven, even under democracy, even under a fascist dictatorship, even under parliamentarism, even under communists. Whether they vote or not, people can always be persuaded to do what the rulers want. It's simple. You just need to say that the enemy is preparing to attack, and shut the mouth of the pacifists, declaring that they do not love their homeland and leave it in trouble" [15]. In this regard, one cannot help but recall the murder of musician and public figure J. Lennon, who opposed the Vietnam War and any other infringements of human rights, overgrown with versions – a person with "political power, political substance" [2].

M. Mann's *The Last of the Mohicans* was released in 1992. This was an adaptation of J. F. Cooper's famous historical novel of the same name (1826). Beyond the genres of war film and historical drama, *The Last of the Mohicans* is a diffusion of epic and adventure film.

The film is set in 1757, at the height of the French and Indian War for the American colonies. The military escort accompanying the daughters of the English Colonel Edmund Munro

(the prototype is George Munro) to the English Fort William Henry is attacked by the Hurons. The white hunter Nathaniel "Hawkeye" Poe, his adoptive father Chingachgook from the Mohican tribe and his brother Uncas come to the aid of the women and Major Duncan Hayward, who survived the fight. The film is dedicated to the confrontation between British and Natives, the nobility of whites, on the one hand, and the treachery and barbarism of the Indians, on the other.

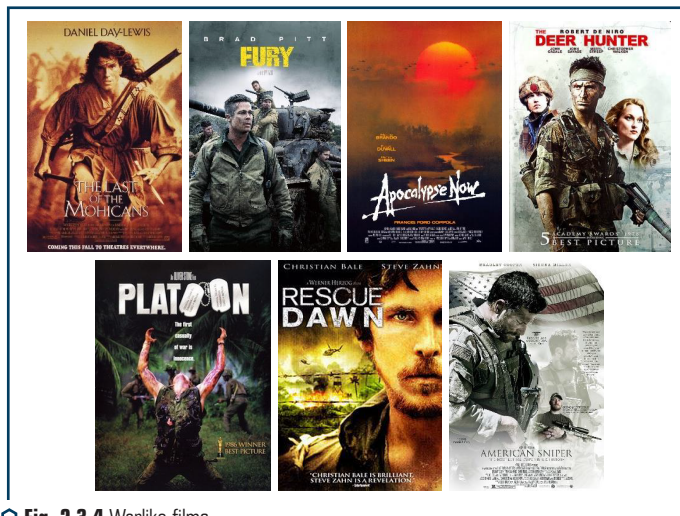


Fig. 2.3.4 Warlike films

Both the plot and the cinematic language of this film aim to refute the opinion of most historians that the colonization of America was the genocide of the Indian people.

The authors of the film avoid disclosing such historical facts as: the significant armed superiority of the colonists; deliberate modeling of internecine fighting by the principle of "divide and conquer"; infection of local residents with smallpox, measles and plague; the extermination of bison and other measures to killing the native people.

Curiously, every Huron in the film is armed with a firearm, which itself is either a blooper or a deliberate fake.

At the film's culmination, Magua the Huron cuts the heart out of the chest of Colonel Munro, who was still alive, in order to eat it. It is worth noting, that the historical prototype of Munro survived the massacre and died after 3 months in Alban, New York. Nevertheless, the brutal murder scenes with tomahawks and scalping form a clear image of the enemy and justify the policy of Europeans to assassination natives.

There is a certain manipulation in terms of historical facts in the film, as always happens when trying to create an opposition "friend or foe", which is expressed by the color and light palette.

Many creators are of the opinion that the real purpose of art is to make the form destroy the content. The compositional construction, light-tonal and color scheme of the frame appeal to the subconscious perception of the viewer, as opposed to dialogues, off-screen text or any other verbal variants. Cinema makes it possible to "intervene" in nature with color, light, the pace of movement in order to make new powerful images. The color scheme of the film affects the mental warehouse and is closely related to the state of mind. Color can cause joy, sadness, peace, indifference.

The film's cinematographer, D. Spinotti, received the BAFTA Film Awards for his work on this film. The film uses a rich arsenal of camera expressive means, in particular to create portraits: bright and clean Cora and Alice and, in contrast to them, aggressive Magua. Chiaroscuro lighting is actively used, as well as lighting from fire sources – candles, torches and bonfires, which is quite usual for the 18th century. Most of the scenes were filmed in nature, the operator is actively working with the sun's rays and backlighting.

The images of representatives of the Indian antagonistic tribe – the Hurons are presented in red shades (shades of rebellion, blood, aggression), the British – in white and blue tones (calm, hope and appeasement). This is emphasized by the skin color of the Indians, the clothes of the British, the landscape background in different scenes. The film has many bloody scenes of the Hurons attacking the British, replete with red. In one of them, the British are hiding from the Hurons in a cave behind a waterfall. When they are found, the unarmed and desperate British stand against the backdrop of a blue waterfall, which symbolically demonstrates their sacrifice and doom. Hurons with weapons and torches in their hands against the background of a dark cave are illuminated with red light. Another scene is dedicated to the death of Alice, who did not want to become the concubine of Magua. Standing on a cliff against the blue sky and mountains, she takes a step into the abyss, seeing this as the only way to save herself. Indians, with accentuated red skin, are watching this against the background of orange-brown rocks.

The *Last of the Mohicans* contains many landscapes that harmonize favorably with the strongest scenes. One of these is the turning scene of diplomatic negotiations between the film's protagonist, Colonel Munro of the British Army, who is in charge of the defense of William Henry's Ford, and French General Montcalm. The scene unfolds against the background of the river in a blue tonal (air) perspective. The same perspective was used in the scene with Alice's death.

The next film in the category of warlike films is D. Ayer's 2014 *Fury*, reveals events on the Western Front at the end of World War II, particularly American war crimes in Nazi Germany in 1945. The movie leans towards the action genre.

The Third Reich is collapsing, but the German soldiers are still fighting desperately. A battle-hardened sergeant nicknamed Wardaddy commands the M4A3E8 "Sherman" tank and its crew of five. A new recruit is sent to his command – Norman Ellison, who resists killing, but he is quickly trained in this. The executions of prisoners of war, rape and other atrocities are justified by the main characters with hatred for the Germans as a race.

The filmmakers contrast the emotional title of the film with the cold and lifeless visuality. The film was shot in shadowless lighting, the sky is covered with clouds, hence the soft gray-blue color

of the entire film. Shadowless lighting creates the impression of an informational, impartial image, devoid of additional characteristics.

In terms of color and light visual solution, *Fury* gravitates towards a black-and-white film, demonstrating the desire of the filmmakers to bring it closer to documentaries about the war, confirm the authenticity of the events reflected, "thicken the colors" and show the dark side of what was happening.

In black and white, usually perceived the past or events that have a negative meaning (under stress, all colors of reality are divided into black and white). No one says "white and black", thereby highlighting and putting black at the forefront, because color perception is primarily associated with sensual, emotional experience.

The number of camera techniques in *Fury* is limited. The battle scenes are shot in close-ups instead of long-range shots, which is not typical for a war film. Cinematographer R. Vasyanov focuses not on the war, but on the characters. It was expected, that the viewer will be interested to see how the central characters see the battle from the tank.

After World War II, the next major military conflict is the Vietnam War (1960–1975). The Vietnam War is one of the largest acts of military intervention in history, leaving a major mark on the history of Vietnam, the United States and the USSR. Documentary evidence of the destruction of the country's economy and ecology, the extermination of civilians, as well as the death of the Americans themselves led to major anti-war actions in the United States. The theme of the Vietnam War was one of the most relevant and discussed topics of the second half of the twentieth century, in connection with which American cinema releases one film after another. Exactly in these films, the postmodern cinema aesthetics was established.

One of the characteristic features of these films is the clearly defined image of the enemy. The Vietnamese were portrayed in two ways. On the one hand, as a gray mass, non-humans and fools who had no right to their way of life. On the other hand, cruel and merciless people.

An American author and political activist W. Tarpley notes: "According to neocon theory from Carl Shmit, you have an enemy image in order to have a society, it's a very dangerous thing because now it means that the entire social order, the political parties, intellectual life, politics in general, all based on a monstrous myth" [16].

The American military forces in films about the Vietnam War are positioned as a "good-natured giant", which was mentioned by V. Hugo: "One day I saw a hippopotamus tread upon a molehill; he crushed it utterly. He was innocent. The great soft-headed fool of a mastodon did not even know of the existence of moles" [17].

One of the most famous films about the Vietnam War was F. F. Coppola's epic film *Apocalypse Now* (1979). J. Baudrillard writes about the aesthetic power of this film: "Coppola does nothing but that: test cinema's power of intervention, test the impact of a cinema that has become an immeasurable machinery of special effects. In this sense, his film is really the extension of the war through other means, the pinnacle of this failed war, and its apotheosis. The war became film, the film becomes war, the two are joined by their common hemorrhage into technology" [2].

The central character of the film is the captain of the special forces Willard, sent to the jungles of Cambodia to eliminate the mad Colonel Kurtz, who commands a detachment of local residents and is accused of killing several Vietnamese, needed by the American government. During the journey, Willard participates in a number of dramatic events, and the viewer opens the panorama of the war.

In addition, the film offers the viewer an interesting type of character – Captain Willard – according to an American sociologist, social psychologist E. Goffman "a person outside of framed activity". In this case, writes Hoffman: "an individual who is presumably outside a framed activity, a mere uninvolved bystander, but one who is actually involved covertly, can suddenly lose control of his appearance of disinvolvement in the activity and openly flood into it" [3].

The viewer is in solidarity with this kind of character, since he/she realizes him/herself as a simple observer of cinematic events. When the observation of the movie character turns into action, sometimes aggressive, the viewer has no choice but to follow his character again, listening to him and obeying his decisions.

One of the key scenes is the scene of the bombing of the village from helicopters under the Wilhelm Richard Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries". It is noteworthy, that the young woman teacher, who, protecting the children, throws a grenade into a combat helicopter, is immediately shot, calling her a partisan. Emotionally, the Americans' annoyance is shown very strongly. According to the Americans, they carried democratic values and freedoms to Vietnam. Hence the bewilderment – why Vietnamese are being resisted. For the American viewer, the main characters are the wounded US military, and the viewer's empathy is on their side. Therefore, the victim (teacher) is considered the enemy, although the true aggressor is the US military. In this regard, it is noteworthy, that most of the films about Vietnam were not planned to be released worldwide, since they were intended purely for the American audience.

During the performance of the Playboy girls for American soldiers in Vietnam, the central character thinks about the mentality of the Vietnamese, while still calling them "charlie". A large crowd, the excitement of the Americans and the reflections of the main character – Captain Willard create an interesting effect of grotesque and hyperbole. Willard reflects to himself: "Charlie didn't get much USO. He was dug in too deep or moving too fast. His idea of great R and R was cold rice and a little rat meat. He had only two ways home – death or victory". This spectacular scene, which contains an outstanding video sequence, also sheds light on the cultural differences between the two different nations.

The authors of the film contrast the Americans and the Vietnamese, pointing out the extreme cruelty of the Vietnamese. The main anti-hero of the film, the killer, Colonel Kurtz says: "If I had ten divisions of those men, then our troubles here would be over very quickly. You have to have men, who are moral, and at the same time who are able to utilize their primordial instincts to kill without feeling, without passion, without judgment. Because it's judgment that defeats us".

According to the plot of the film, after this monologue, Colonel Kurtz himself asks Captain Willard to kill him because he can no longer withstand the horrors of war. The colonel's murder scene is

one of the most powerful scenes in the film. With the help of parallel editing, this scene is accompanied by real footage of the sacrificial killing of a bull. A bull, cut into pieces, symbolizes the slaughter in the war, the image of the American military as a hunted beast is an innocent victim. "Horror ... horror ..." – the last words of C. Kurtz, who was rehabilitated by means of cinematography, forgiven by society and turned almost into a saint. Such brutal shots testify to the transgressive nature of cinematography, characteristic of this period of postmodernity.

The myth about the indecisiveness and soft-heartedness of Americans, demonstrated in this film, is shattered by thousands of evidences of American war crimes against civilians, incl. in the villages of Song My, My Lai.

Napalm was a particularly brutal type of murder. One of the facts of the mass use of napalm became known to the public thanks to the photograph series of Nick Ut "Napalm in Vietnam" in 1972, depicting children running along the road with burned skin and parents carrying burnt babies. Napalm, which strongly adheres to the victim, cannot be washed off, which made it possible to turn people into living torches. There are many such crimes, but unlike the sentences, passed against the Nazis during the Nuremberg trials, not a single American general or president was hanged.

To escape from napalm, the Vietnamese were forced to burrow underground – into tunnels, which are a three-hundred-kilometer multi-level system of underground passages. The first level was at a depth of 3 m, the second – 7 m, the third – 12 m. All the inhabitants dug tunnels, because they understood that this was the only way to survive. They were equipped with small rooms, canteens, hospitals, etc. To exterminate the Vietnamese, even underground, the Americans launched gas and water, threw grenades, and let trained dogs in.

In the Vietnam War, new types of chemical and climatic weapons were also widely used, in particular, white phosphorus, agent orange, silver iodide, etc. Not only people, but also the entire ecosystem of the country was destroyed. Thus, in the Museum of War Victims (previously called the "House for displaying war crimes of American imperialism and the marionette government of South Vietnam") in Ho Chi Minh City, photographs are presented showing the effects of defoliants and herbicides on the human body, primarily deformities that affect children to this day, – even in the third generation.

The war film contains a huge potential of expressive means for creating powerful portrait, reflecting the character of the era, landscapes and interiors, on which battle scenes and the life of citizens unfold. F. F. Coppola wisely allowed V. Storaro to unleash his creativity, improvise and choose his own visuals for *Apocalypse Now*. The work of the operator contributed to the creation of the philosophical and metaphorical concept of this film. The *Apocalypse Now* cinematographer V. Storaro won an Oscar for Best Cinematography for this film.

In search of Colonel Kurtz, the central character travels by boat. A moving camera, water and a tunnel of living trees, as well as a constant air-shadow perspective, multi-colored smoke and fog, meditative music introduce the viewer into the crazy world of the death horror. The journey of Captain Willard is, from an aesthetic point of view, a journey through the color spectrum. The authors of the film actively used smoke bombs of different colors to create a certain mood for the

viewer in certain scenes. A successful directorial technique is the sound of a helicopter, which sets the right mood and keeps it until the last scene.

The visual concept of the film was to oppose and clash between two civilizations – East and West – through the confrontation of different types of lighting. On the one hand, Vietnam: natural light from sunrise to sunset, with all the endless variety of shades of light. On the other hand, – US: artificial light from searchlights, explosions – sharp and dazzling. The film uses different types of lighting: Chiaroscuro, shadowless, local and silhouette.

Kurtz's final monologue in fill-lighting would not have had any dramatic power, so it was decided to use the chiaroscuro effect – a lateral painting light that snatches parts of Kurtz's face from the darkness. The black color, a symbol of the unknown, otherworldly, personifies Kurtz not only as a demon, but also as a carrier of truth, a sage.

Along with portraits, which are no less important in creating artistic images in a war film, filled with battle scenes, there are landscapes and interiors that can play the role of a formal-objective factor, background, epithet or symbol. The higher the level of figurativeness of the film, the more widely the use of symbols and metaphors in the visual solution of the film.

The film *Apocalypse Now* uses a variety of types of landscapes. The landscape as a background is the forests of Vietnam, set on fire by napalm; a Vietnamese school under helicopter bombing; the abode of Colonel Kurtz with its ancient temple and countless followers; the bodies of the Vietnamese accompanying the main characters on their way are hanged and torn to pieces. Landscape – an epithet (landscape through the eyes of the director and cameraman) is intended to reflect the mood of the main characters. In particular, this is the scene with the pouring rain, when the American soldiers bought themselves time with the Playboy girls. The joyful mood of the soldiers contrasts sharply with the cloudy weather and mud underfoot. Dirt appears as a symbol of social and mental decay. The sky is crying, as are the girls, isolated in their helicopter, in contrast to the euphoria and safety of the US military. Along with this, the interior is also used – an epithet. The interior of the helicopter lives its own life. The devastation and mess contrast with flying birds – the only consolation of one of the girls, which in turn symbolize the wounded souls of the girls – birds in a cage.

Another type of landscape is the landscape-symbol, revealed in the scene of the capture of Captain Willard by Kurtz's men. They grab him by the legs and turn him upside down, dipping him in the mud. Together with Willard, the camera also flips, depicting the world around us upside down to the viewer.

The film *Apocalypse Now* is dominated by distant shots and panoramas, using lower angles, in particular to give significance to the character (for example, Colonel Kurtz) or upper ones, which allow demonstrating the scale of the panoramic scene as a whole (demonstration of the number of Kurtz's followers during the arrival of Willard's people to shore).

Like *Apocalypse Now*, the next film, *The Deer Hunter*, achieved cult status thanks to strong characters and great imaginative potential, among other things. These films have become classics, cited from decade to decade, perpetuating the names of the actors and directors of these films in history.

The Deer Hunter, directed by M. Cimino, premiered on December 8, 1978, five years after the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam. The film collected 5 Oscar statuettes. The film tells stories of three young Americans of Russian origin, called up for the war in Vietnam. The film contains a three-act structure: "before the war", "in Vietnam", "after the war". The most intense is the second act, during which, according to the plot, the Vietnamese captivate and mock the Americans, forcing them to play Russian roulette for their fun. The film demonstrates the gradual physical and psychological degradation of Americans who receive physical and psychological trauma that destroys their subsequent life. The consequences of the war for the Vietnamese, both military and civilian, once again remain behind the scenes.

The Deer Hunter contains two key metaphors – deer and Russian roulette. Deer represent the youth and carelessness of the main characters, and, as an antithesis, Russian roulette symbolizes death in war. Despite the film's great popularity, there has been a lot of controversy about the authenticity of the fact that Russian roulette even took place in Vietnam. An Associated Press reporter Peter Arnett, who had won a Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of the war, wrote in the *Los Angeles Times*, "In its 20 years of war, there was not a single recorded case of Russian roulette... The central metaphor of the movie is simply a bloody lie" [18].

Such assumptions are often justified because they enhance the artistic effect. Confirming or refuting the use of Russian roulette in Vietnam is a task for historians, most likely that Russian roulette served as another way to demonstrate the callousness and cruelty of the Vietnamese through cinema.

The next film, dedicated to the Vietnam War *Platoon*, directed by O. Stone, was released in 1986 and received 4 Oscars. *Platoon* was the first film in director's trilogy about the Vietnam War, which he later continued with *Born on the Fourth of July* (1989) and *Heaven & Earth* (1993). According to the plot of the film, Private Chris Taylor volunteers to serve in Vietnam. During the military service, a young man encounters internal conflicts in his platoon, in particular, a confrontation between two sergeants.

In one scene, American soldiers, overwhelmed with the desire to avenge their dead brothers, break into a Vietnamese village and, on the orders of Sergeant Barnes, kill unarmed civilians. For the Americans, they are enemies, because, in their opinion, they harbor or support the partisans. However, whether they actually sheltered the partisans or simply lived their lives, cultivated the land and raised children – no one is interested. Here the principle of relativism is actualized, best expressed by Protagoras: "As it seems to someone, it is so".

Another Sergeant Elias categorically does not accept such methods of fighting, he reports to his superiors about the actions of Barnes. In revenge, after waiting for the right moment, Barnes shoots Elias in the jungle and leaves alone, then tells the others that Elias is dead. The platoon boards the helicopters and flies away. Already in the air, Taylor discovers the wounded Elias running away from the Vietnamese soldiers. The shot of the doomed Elias raising his hands to the sky was placed on the film poster, and this image is one of the strongest in the film. Thus, the suffering of the US military again comes to the fore. At the same time, the problems, losses or pain of the Vietnamese are not considered at all. Only one side of the conflict is covered.

The next biopic film *Rescue Dawn* by W. Herzog was released in 2006 – 20 years after the release of *Platoon*.

According to the plot, an US Navy pilot, German-American Dieter Dengler participates in the Vietnam War. In 1966, his plane was shot down over North Vietnam and crashed in Laos. Dengler will have to go through captivity, torture, escape and wander in the jungle for two weeks, hoping for an unbelievable rescue.

The film uses one of the interesting directorial techniques. Dieter Dengler escapes captivity with his partner. Along the way, the partner is killed by the inhabitants of the Vietnamese village. And again, before the viewer, the Vietnamese appear as cruel and heartless people, killing one of the central characters of the film – a fleeing and half-tormented prisoner.

The main character is left alone, but he constantly sees his friend, who sits next to him and says that his feet are cold. This happens several times in a row, forcing the viewer to plunge into that hallucinatory unreal world of a person on the verge. This psychological method has no special role in the unfolding of the plot, but from an emotional point of view, it completely fulfills its function.

In its semantic concept, the film differs from previous films about the Vietnam War, since it was released in 2006. Firstly, it has a positive ending – the salvation of the central character, and secondly, it contains the constant fluctuations of the central character between optimism and hopelessness, characteristic of the metamodern era. The cynicism, deconstruction and depressed parataxis characteristic of war films of the postmodern period give way to film works oscillating between cruelty and childish innocence, demonstrating an analysis of historical events, "working on mistakes", often in an edifying way. To make the experience of the recent past interesting again, the need to reconstruct its semiotic model that meets the requirements of metamodern culture is actualized. And in the film *Saving Dawn*, this was done. At the same time, war films about the Vietnam War of the postmodern period may be of much greater interest to an expert viewer in terms of directness, freshness, and cleanliness of the historical events covered.

The Vietnam War has much in common with the Indian Wars, since in both cases there is a mass extermination of the civilian population – the natives of Vietnam and America on their own land. The inequality of forces in these wars raises the question, in principle, of whether these barbarism and genocide can be called wars. J. Baudrillard tries to explain such radicalism: "We are fascinated by Ramses as Renaissance Christians were by the American Indians, those (human?) beings who had never known the word of Christ. Thus, at the beginning of colonization, there was a moment of stupor and bewilderment before the very possibility of escaping the universal law of the Gospel. There were two possible responses: either admit that this Law was not universal, or exterminate the Indians to efface the evidence. In general, one contented oneself with converting them, or even simply discovering them, which would suffice to slowly exterminate them" [2].

In our case, "conversion", namely "building capitalist relations", did not find a positive response from the Vietnamese. Vietnam, as the embodiment of harmonious relations between people based on social equality, had to fall. And the cinema fulfilled this order: "film is really the extension of the war through other means" [2].

Another military conflict that the United States waged on foreign territory was the Iraq War (2003–2011), which began with the invasion of the United States and its allies in Iraq, with the aim of overthrowing the government of S. Hussein.

C. Eastwood's 2014 biopic film *American Sniper* is dedicated to this war. In addition to positive reviews from film critics and commercial success, the film won the Academy Award for Best Sound Editing and was also nominated in five other categories.

The central character of the film is an US SEAL soldier Chris Kyle. The historical prototype of the film was considered the most successful sniper in the history of the US Armed Forces, killing 255 opponents while serving in Iraq, of which 160 were officially confirmed by the US Department of Defense.

The patriotic line of the film is very strong. A hero for the Americans, for the Iraqis he became the "devil", as the natives called him. The central character explains his murders with the desire to protect the Americans from the Iraqis who "reached Texas".

The film, postulated as a drama, leans more towards melodrama, in which the love line is given more attention than the war. Jokes and lyrics dominate the film, and the murder scenes lack drama. The scenes of the execution of Iraqi women and children are filmed coldly and distantly, because they are justified by the need for the American army to "protect their fellow citizens", but thousands of kilometers from the United States.

The image of the US hero is revealed in green tones, from the psychology point of view – the color of professional and personal growth, the color of calm and kind-hearted people. The visual solution of the film as a whole is made in warm green color, the cameraman uses elements of black and white lighting, which gives individual scenes vitality and optimism. However, this optimism is subjective. The main character, a sniper, cannot live a civilian life without killing "live targets", as he used to say. While his younger brother was leaving Iraq in despair at the brutality and inhumanity of war, Chris Kyle went on one military mission after another.

The scenery in *American Sniper* is portrayed as a documentary statement of fact: the "cold" and deserted streets and stone buildings of Iraq. Most often, the viewer sees the Iraqis through the lens of the main character's sniper rifle, lying on the roof of one of the houses. Accordingly, there is an upper angle when using a subjective camera. Otherwise, the range of camera techniques is limited. Large and medium plans predominate. The so-called similar color scheme is used, based on the use of three colors close in spectrum. In this case, it is green, light green and yellow. Usually when using this scheme, unlike the complementary one, there is no contrast, so the colors are either warm or cold. In this case, warm green shades. The life of the central character ends tragically. After retiring, he was killed on the shooting range by a veteran suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, whom Chris Kyle wanted help with as part of the therapy he was doing.

Most films in this category are characterized by strong images of the main characters and, not least, their death in the finale: *Apocalypse Now* (Colonel Kurtz), *The Deer Hunter* (Russian roulette player Nick Chevotarevich), *Platoon* (wounded and abandoned by his own companions Sergeant Elias), *American sniper* (record holder Chris Kyle).

"Death is never an absolute criterion, but in this case it is significant: the era of J. Dean, M. Monroe, and the Kennedys, of those who really died simply because they had a mythic dimension that implies death (not for romantic reasons, but because of the fundamental principle of reversal and exchange) – this era is long gone" [2], J. Baudrillard noted. There are individuals whom "popular myth never wishes to believe them dead" [2].

In the world of American cinema, these are fictional or real characters of warlike films. No one wants to recognize them as dead, so the viewer will constantly return to the film to "resurrect" these cinematic heroes. About this kind of films, J. Baudrillard wrote: "the cinema is an image. That is to say not only a screen and a visual form, but a myth, something that still retains something of the double, of the phantasm, of the mirror, of the dream, etc." [2].

3.2 WARFARE FILMS

This category is based on the principle of protecting one's state, people or subsequent liberation (**Fig. 2.3.5**). War in this category is represented as a forced measure, a tragedy, a catastrophe, from which not only the military, but primarily civilians suffer. It should also be noted sufficient objectivity in the disclosure of the plot in this category of films. If in the first category of warlike films only the aggressors with their justifying ideology, psychological and physical traumas, etc. acted as the main characters, then in the second category the victims of aggression also become either in line with the aggressors or come to the fore, becoming the main characters. If in the first category of films the central characters go to war voluntarily, guided by the desire to kill and disguising it as the desire to "liberate a foreign country", etc., the main characters of this category do everything to avoid a collision. However, they are forced to defend themselves, their families, and their people from invaders.

The 2004 epic and peplum film *Troy*, directed by W. Petersen, is one of the highest-grossing war films of all time, grossing half a billion dollars at the box office. The director, known for his epic disaster films *Outbreak*, *The Perfect Storm*, *Poseidon*, has created another spectacular film with scale and mass character of battle scenes.

In the center of the plot is the Trojan War, according to the Greek tradition, the war of the coalition of Achaean kings under the leadership of the king of Mycenae Agamemnon against Troy, which ended in the defeat of Troy and its capture by the Achaeans.

Information of the Greek tradition was confirmed during the excavations of Troy, which showed that around the middle of the 13th century BC the city experienced a long siege and was destroyed. Archaeological evidence has allowed the Trojan War to be dated to around 1260 BC. According to the legends, some of which are reflected in the poems *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the reason for the war with Troy was the abduction of the wife of the Spartan king Menelaus – Helen, by the Trojan prince Paris. Calling on the help of the kings of the Greek states, Menelaus and his brother Agamemnon with a large fleet sailed to the shores of the Troad. For 10 years, the Greeks besieged Troy and

took over the city, resorting to trick. The city was completely burned and destroyed, its citizens were killed or captured.

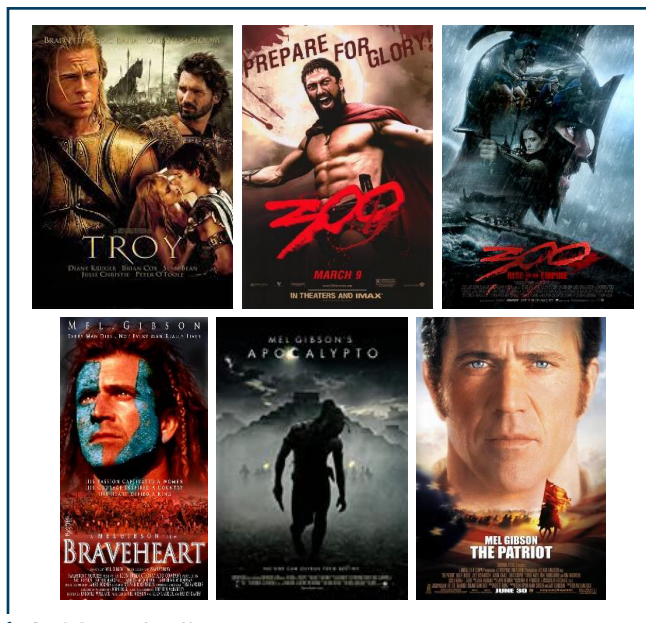


Fig. 2.3.5 Warfare films

Thanks to a well-thought-out script, the director allows the viewer to look at the situation from two sides – the invaders and the defenders. On the one hand, the Achaean Greeks have Achilles, two Ajaxes, Patroclus, Agamemnon, Odysseus and others, while the Trojans have Hector, Glaucus, Sarpedon and Aeneas. Unlike the films of the first category of warlike films, there is no propaganda or justification for the war, the war is presented as a catastrophe. The question of vanity in war is also raised. The idea of gaining glory in eternity inspired Achilles to participate in the Trojan War.

The next film in the category of warfare films is a film *300* by Z. Snyder in 2007, made in a rare combination of action, epic film and peplum. The film is an adaptation of the 1998 comic book of the same name by Frank Miller and Lynn Varley about the battle of three hundred Spartans under the command of King Leonidas with a Persian army of many thousands at Thermopylae. Z. Snyder is known for his superhero films *Justice League*, *Watchmen*, *Man of Steel*, *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*, *Wonder Woman*, etc. In the film *300*, he doesn't change his style, building the film on special effects, dynamic editing, etc.

The plot was based on the Battle of Thermopylae Gorge, one of the key events from the Greco-Persian wars of the 5th century B.C. In 480 B.C. the millionth army of the Persian king Xerxes launched an invasion of Greece. The Persian envoy comes to Sparta, demanding complete obedience to the Persian king Xerxes. In response, king of Sparta Leonidas throws herald and his escort into an endless hole.

The film has several storylines. The key storyline is the line of relations between Leonidas and his wife, another – Leonidas with the army, the third – the tactics of warfare by Xerxes. The course of the war was changed by the betrayal of the hunchback Ephialtes. He opens a secret path in the mountains to the Persians and they surround the Spartans. 300 Spartans heroically perished, but the colossal losses of the Persians subsequently help Greece to defeat Xerxes.

A strong plot is organically combined with the attraction of battles during the numerous Persian attacks on the Spartans. The Persians throw their best forces into battle – war elephants, rhinos, magicians and elite guard of "immortals" with a berserk giant. These fantastical creatures enhance the film's mythological and epic atmosphere by transporting the viewer to prehistoric times, when, according to legend, gods and humans lived in close proximity to each other. The authors of the film tried to recreate the aesthetics of the comics, so the color and light was created thanks to computer special effects and as close as possible to the comic book, from which they repelled. In general, the film turned out to be something between a feature film and an animated film.

Z. Snyder's *300: Rise of an Empire* 2014 is a midquel to the previous film. A feature of the midquel is that the events, depicted in it, are chronologically related to the period within the original plot (unlike the sequel, in which the events follow the original, and the prequel, in which they precede).

This film has other storylines. Firstly, the desire of the Athenian commander Themistocles to unite all the states of Greece in the fight against Xerxes. Secondly, it is the aggressive policy and struggle of the protege of Darius Artemisia, who led the Persian fleet under Xerxes. Thirdly, the character arc of the widowed queen of Sparta, who until the last scene of the film did not want enter the war against Xerxes.

The plot of the second film is more vague and ambiguous, because it loses the protagonist king of Sparta Leonidas, who, by the power of his magnetism, kept other characters around him in the original film. Life scenes are being replaced by more and more computer-generated special effects and pompous monologues by Themistocles, calling one or the other to war to protect and liberate Greece. The main battles are battles at sea, which were filmed in pavilions using chroma key.

However, the absolute success of these films at the box office proves that a historical war film can be successful not only if it is made in a realistic way using exterior filming, but also if it is made in an experimental comic book format. By the way, both of these films were produced by Z. Snyder, D. Snyder and W. Collier production company, named *Cruel and Unusual Films, Inc.*

The military conflict, revealed in the next film, refers to the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries. M. Gibson's 1995 epic film *Braveheart* focuses on the First War of Scottish Independence, the first of a series of conflicts between England and Scotland. It began with the English invasion of Scotland in 1296 and ended with the formal recognition of Scottish independence under the Treaty

of Edinburgh-Northampton in 1328. Actual independence was established in 1314 with the victory of King Robert the Bruce of Scotland at the Battle of Bannockburn.

The film *Braveheart* also contains elements of a biographical film, since the protagonist of the film is a true historical figure – Sir William Wallace, a Scottish knight, one of the military leaders in the war for independence from England. Wallace, Guardian of Scotland (regent) 1297–1298, is revered in Scotland as a patriot and folk hero. The film was nominated for 10 Oscar nominations and won 5 of them.

The events of the film begin in 1280, when King Edward I "Longshanks" of England occupied a large part of Scotland, establishing humiliating and inhuman rules and restrictions for the Scots. Wallace, who did not want to enter into a confrontation, begins the struggle for the liberation of Scotland after the murder of his wife by the English occupiers.

The message of this film is clear – a rebellion against inhumanity and cruelty in their own land, the protection of human rights. In this case, not state symbols or borders come to the fore, but the people themselves, the rights of the Scots to their traditions, way of life, a quiet life and the absence of humiliation from the "higher" nation towards them as second-class people.

The 2006 film *Apocalypto*, directed by M. Gibson, combines epic, adventure and thriller genres. The film opens up new features of working on the action-chase genre of filmmaking. F. Safinia, M. Gibson's screenwriter and co-producer said: "We wanted to update the chase genre by, in fact, not updating it with technology or machinery but stripping it down to its most intense form, which is a man running for his life, and at the same time getting back to something that matters to him" [19]. Thus, this film appears to be one of the most complex genre conglomerates in this study.

The events in the film take place in 1517 on the Yucatan Peninsula. The cruel Maya attack the small settlement of Jaguar Paw, located in the jungle. Jaguar Paw manages to hide his pregnant wife and little son, and then he is captured along with the others. The invaders burn the settlement, exterminating and capturing all adult residents. Subsequently, the women are sold into slavery and the men are sacrificed. Jaguar Paw tries to save himself in order to protect his wife and children – the future of his people.

The first cultural message of the film is the protagonist's protection of his people, his world. "I am Jaguar Paw... Son of Flint Sky... My father hunted this forest before me... I am a hunter. This is my forest. And my sons will hunt it with their sons after I am gone," – shouts Jaguar Paw to his pursuers. Here the meanings of *Braveheart* are repeated about the value of traditions and way of life, about the need to protect them from aggressors.

The second cultural meaning of the film is the issue of the psychology of the invader, his gluttony and cruelty. The main theme of the film is proclaimed by the elder of the tribe, telling the legend of a sad man. Forest animals decided to help him and fulfilled all his wishes. The vulture gave him sharp eyesight, the jaguar gave him strength, the serpent revealed to him all the secrets of the world. When the man received all the gifts that the animals could give him, he left. The deer said that now the man has everything he needs and sadness will leave him. But the owl said: "No. I saw a hole in the Man... Deep like a hunger he will never fill... It is what makes him sad and

what makes him want. He will go on taking and taking... Until one day the World will say: 'I am no more and I have nothing left to give'.

The final shots of the arrival of the first Spanish conquistadors in the Yucatan Peninsula became a symbol of the end of the Mayan civilization. At the same time, anticipating a new evil, Jaguar Paw refuses to meet the new arrivals, and says to his wife: "We should go to the forest. To seek a new beginning". Eventually, the enemy can be anyone who puts his right above the right of another person.

The third cultural meaning is the destruction of civilization itself, which is best revealed during the demonstration of class inequality. When the captives are led to the sacrifice, the viewer sees a wide variety of castes: a smallpox-destroyed settlement; starving slaves who quarry lime for the pyramids or work the land; priests; fanatics; the poor in the market; and also nobility, mocking everything that happens. Thus, the viewer may come to the conclusion that civilization is capable of self-destruction if it does not value its people and does not strive for equal rights for all.

The 2000 epic film *The Patriot*, directed by R. Emmerich, is dedicated to the war for the independence of the United States of America, received three nominations for the Oscar.

During the American Revolutionary War in 1775, Captain Benjamin Martin, a veteran of the Anglo-French and Indian War and a widower with seven children, was called to Charleston to vote in the South Carolina General Assembly for a tax in support of the Continental Army. Forefeeling war with Britain, Benjamin abstains. The protagonist advocates a peaceful settlement of the conflict. He proposes to apply to the King of England with a petition, if only to avoid war.

The directly opposite position of the elder sons of Martin is interesting. Both of them, subject to the pathos of war ideologues, want to fight. When the decision on war is adopted, the people rejoice. And Benjamin's eldest son Gabriel joins the Continental Army. This gives rise to an ideological conflict about the expediency of war, which arises not only in society as a whole, but also in each individual family.

Two years later, Martin's prediction that the war would not go somewhere far away, but near the house of every inhabitant of the city, comes true. Charleston surrenders to the onslaught of the British, and wounded Gabriel returns home with letters. The Martins take care of the British and American wounded in the recent battle. British dragoons, led by Colonel William Tavington, arrive and detain Gabriel with the intention of hanging him as a spy. When Benjamin's second son Thomas tries to free Gabriel, Tavington kills him and then orders the Martins' house to be burned down and the wounded Americans to be executed. When this happens, it shows once again that in any war, a simple civilian is a hostage. Benjamin Martin is only forced to act after an innocent family member has been killed and he needs to protect the others. This brings the film closer to the film *Braveheart* and allows it to be placed in the second block of warfare films.

The Patriot shows the peculiar evolution of the war: first, it affects one family – the Martins, then the militia families who joined the Martin, and then it goes on a national level. The pathos of the film also changes, creating the feeling that the genre of the film is changing as the plot develops. Starting with a family saga, the film develops into a war film, and then into an epic one with slogans about building a new nation, ideals of freedom, etc.

3.3 ANTI-WAR FILMS

This category of anti-war films is based on the well-known statements "the worst peace is better than the best war" and "the world is united in its diversity", which has repeatedly found its coverage in feature cinema (**Fig. 2.3.6**). The dialectic of the cultures interaction, embodied in an audiovisual form, captivates the audience around the world.

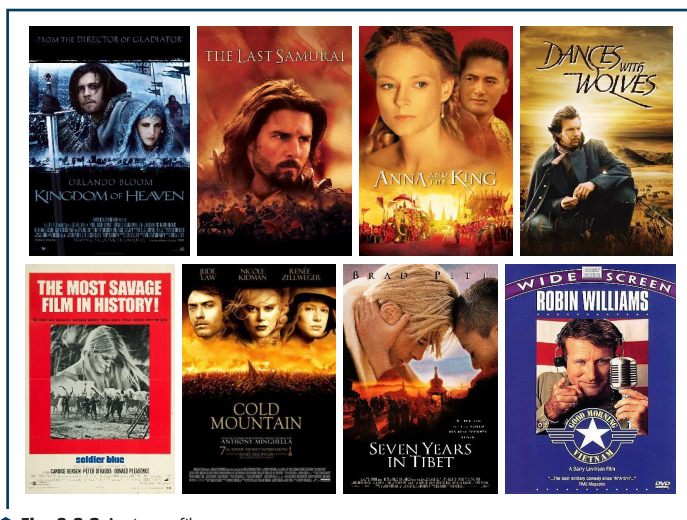


Fig. 2.3.6 Anti-war films

Along with intercultural dialogue in cinema, the problems of interethnic conflicts and wars, intolerance on various grounds are often raised. In the modern heterogeneous world, there are two opposite principles: on the one hand, the desire of representatives of different cultures for mutual enrichment, their equal dialogue, and on the other hand, the incitement of interethnic and interfaith hatred. Many authors of war films have tried to find a constructive beginning between these different poles.

Mahatma Gandhi, the leader and ideologist of the Indian independence movement, noted: "What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans and the homeless, whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or in the holy name of liberty or democracy?" [20]. According to this, the scripts of films in this category are closely related to human rights, in particular the main human right to life. International norms and principles of cultural tolerance are set out in the international acts of UNESCO. Despite the extensive discussion of the problems of multiculturalism on the pages of the professional press, these issues have not yet been sufficiently developed in cinematography.

The preamble to the Manual of the General Conference UNESCO highlights: "the peace must therefore be founded upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind" [21]. Declaration of Principles on Tolerance calls "to develop and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, gender, language, national origin, religion or disability, and to combat intolerance". Moreover it insists "to promote tolerance in our societies, because tolerance is not only a cherished principle, but also a necessity for peace and for the economic and social advancement of all peoples" [22].

In the dramaturgy of anti-war films, an important role belongs to the protagonists, who demonstrate to the audience the extraordinary strength of character, the power of the spirit, and great morality. The main characters, often integrated into another country and culture, are spiritually cleansed, freed from the vices of a past life. These heroes gradually come to the conclusion that war is a madness, in which they refuse to take part.

R. Scott's epic in 2005 film *Kingdom of Heaven* is based on historical events leading up to the Third Crusade of 1189–1192: the war between the Kingdom of Jerusalem and the Ayyubids and the siege of Jerusalem by Saladin (1187).

The protagonist of the film, the knight Balian, arrives in Jerusalem, where he learns that Saladin (Salah al-Din, the Sultan of Egypt) and King Baldwin are struggling to keep the shaky peace that is violated daily by fanatics arriving from Europe, led by Raynald of Châtillon and Guy de Lusignan, Sibylla's husband, constantly attacking and killing Muslims. The restraint and prudence of the rulers Baldwin and Saladin contrast with the radicalism and cruelty of Raynald of Châtillon and Guy de Lusignan.

The central storyline is the line of struggle for Jerusalem between Muslims and Christians. In this struggle, the main question remains: what is more important – shrines, made of stone, or human lives. It is shown that a real ruler takes care of his people, protects the living and mourns the dead. The film also demonstrates respect for other cultures. Noteworthy, while examining the captured Jerusalem, Saladin picks up the fallen cross and respectfully puts it on the table.

The film raises many philosophical, in particular ethical questions about the meaning of life, the value of human life, respect for the enemy, the meaning of religion, the meaning of the church, etc.

The epic film in 2003 *The Last Samurai*, directed by E. Zwick, is based on the interpretation of the Meiji Restoration in Japan – a set of political, military and socio-economic reforms in 1868–1889, which turned a backward agrarian country into one of the leading states in the world. Under Emperor Meiji (1852–1912), a course was taken to modernize the country and pursue an "open door" policy. The samurai rebellion, led by Saigō Takamori (the prototype for Katsumoto's character) in 1877, became the final of the film. These events marked the end of the samurai system of management.

The hero of the film *The Last Samurai*, a retired cavalry captain of the northern troops Nathan Algren, from the beginning of the film appears before the viewer as an exhausted and stressed man suffering from alcohol addiction, tired of remorse for the destruction of innocent Indian tribes. Finding himself among the samurai, he gradually absorbs their mores and peace of mind. He realizes, that the word "Samurai" means "to serve". Surprised, the protagonist remarks

to himself: "Everyone is polite. Everyone smiles and bows. But beneath their courtesy, I detect a deep reservoir of feeling. They are an intriguing people. From the moment they wake, they devote themselves to the perfection of whatever they pursue. I have never seen such discipline". Later, he feels positive changes in himself: "But there is, indeed, something spiritual in this place. And though it may forever be obscure to me, I cannot but be aware of its power. I do know it is here that I have known my first untroubled sleep in many years".

The Last Samurai is a film, in which special attention is paid to nature, the connection between nature and culture. On the one hand, the concepts of "nature" and "culture" are often considered as opposed to each other, since nature is non-historical, and culture is a historical process of creating ever new, more advanced and complex forms of meanings. At the same time, at the basis of the differences between the cultures of the West and the East, on the one hand, there are differences in natural conditions that gave rise to various forms of work and life of people; on the other hand, the irregular economic development of society. Both positions are highly argued and are reflected in this film.

An English philosopher A. N. Whitehead explains the concept of "nature" quite deeply: "Nature is that, which we observe in perception through the senses. In this sense-perception we are aware of something, which is not thought, and which is self-contained for thought" [23].

This detached perception fascinates the viewer, allowing him/her to take a break from the dynamic, adrenaline-filled shots inherent in war films. The emotional flight of the viewer's aesthetic perception is achieved through panning, a moving camera, and the maximum distant plans. The feeling of closeness with nature, spiritual freedom becomes possible thanks to the demonstration of the greatness and immensity of natural objects: huge mountains, an endless ocean, a bottomless sky, etc. So, heading to the shores of Japan, the hero of *The Last Samurai* says: "There is some comfort in the emptiness of the sea. No past, no future".

According to the intention of the authors of the film, the viewer should receive as much information as possible about the new unfamiliar culture. For this, both visual and auditory means are used. The culture of Japan is revealed in the demonstration of the perfect possession of the sword, clothing and armor, samurai's attitude towards each other and towards enemies. The fear and respect of the Japanese towards the samurai, brought up by a thousand years of war, is depicted during the first battle scene. Their traditions and inner world are revealed gradually, finding a response in the mind of an American. The positive qualities of the culture, into which the protagonist integrates, make it possible to establish a situation of tolerance.

Andy Tennant's 1999 biopic and melodrama film *Anna and the King* is based on the biography of Anna Leonowens, who entered the service of the Siamese King Mongkut in 1862 as a teacher for his 39 wives and 82 children. The king wanted his wives and children to receive a modern Western secular education. Anna was at court for 6 years, getting to know the customs of Siam and trying to find a balance between eastern and western traditions.

The culture of Siam is revealed to the audience through the eyes of the main character Anna. On the one hand, this is an ancient sculpture and majestic palaces, unusual for a European, and on

the other hand, "wild" laws (polygamy, lack of rights for a women during marriage, etc.). The situation of tolerance between the Englishwoman and the Siamese king is achieved when the teacher Anna Leonowens understands that the king himself is a hostage to outdated traditions and seeks to change them. At the same time, the hero herself draws a lot of Eastern wisdom from the culture of Siam: its balance and prudence, restraint and adherence to the social hierarchy.

The plot of this film echoes the French adventure film 1968 *Angelique and the Sultan* by B. Borderie, but is its best analogue. Being captured by the Sultan of Meknes, Angelique boasts of her own civilization and Europeaness, the Sultan is depicted one-sidedly as a tyrant and a murderer. In this case, there is no question of any compromise or consensus.

The next anti-war film is a revisionist western *Dances with Wolves*, directed by K. Costner, was released in 1990. The film was nominated for 12 Oscars and won seven awards, including Best Picture. It introduces the viewer to the period of 1863 – the American Civil War. After being wounded and rehabilitated, Lieutenant John Dunbar asks to be transferred to the western frontier, where he is sent to the farthest post – Fort Sedgwick, which turned out to be abandoned. Despite the stated threat from the local tribes, Dunbar decides to stay at the fort and begins rebuilding it. He records his observations in his diary.

After the first contacts with the Sioux tribe, Dunbar is in no hurry to enter into a confrontation, but tries to draw his own conclusions in relation to his neighbors. He realizes that everything he has heard about them is a lie. After some time, he begins to be imbued with the culture and mentality of the Sioux, a culture dialogue begins. He becomes a member of the Sioux tribe and receives the new name "Dances with Wolves".

Due to the growing threat, the Sioux chief decides to move the tribe to a winter camp. Dunbar decides go with them, but must first retrieve his diary from Fort Sedgwick. However, when he arrives, he finds the fort already occupied by the US Army. Because of his Sioux clothes, the soldiers open fire and capture Dunbar, killing his horse and arresting him as a traitor. They subsequently kill his wolf. Blatant cruelty, cynicism and bias towards everything Indian finally convinces the protagonist that nothing unites him with his former fellow soldiers.

In general, the film is the hymn of a man who categorically does not accept any violence. He openly opposes this, and is ready to go to the ends of the world, just not to participate in war conflicts.

Just like *The Last Samurai*, the film *Dances with Wolves* raises the issue of harmony with nature, with another culture and with oneself.

The next film in the anti-war category is listed on the poster as "The most savage film in history". However, the savagery in this film showed the so-called progressive civilized world, represented by the United States. This is the revisionist western *Soldier Blue* 1970 by R. Nelson, which is dedicated to the attack of American regular troops and volunteers under the command of Colonel John Chivington on a Cheyenne and Arapaho peace camp on the Sand Creek of 1864 (Sand Creek massacre).

According to the story, the Cheyenne attacked the convoy of soldiers. Only a young soldier, Honus Gant, and the ex-wife of an Indian chief, Cresta Lee, survived. Both of them are heading to

the Fort Reunion, the army camp. The soldier is filled with a sense of patriotism and brotherhood for his fellow soldiers who died in battle. At the same time, the practical Cresta, who accumulates both American and Native American cultures, acts as a kind of intermediary between these two cultures and as a mentor to Honus. She explains to him that these are the lands of the Indians, and the aggressors are precisely those who take these lands and exterminate civilians. In the finale, Honus and Cresta witness how the American army violently destroys a peaceful Indian settlement near the Sand Creek River.

The scenario move of the film is a prayer or a poem, which, according to Honus, should be read over the dead. In the beginning of the film, he reads a beautiful poem over the bodies of his fallen fellow soldiers.

In the final of the film, when Honus is standing over hundreds of murdered and mutilated bodies of Cheyenne children and women, Cresta addresses him with the words: "You got a prayer soldier blue? A nice poem, say something pretty".

In this way, Honus opens his eyes to the true bestial face of war, conditioned not by lofty ideals, but by an animal desire to torture and execute the weak and defenseless.

Sand Creek massacre was also called one-sided battle. According to official documents, the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes agreed to live on a small reservation on Sand Creek and keep peace with the settlers. After negotiations with the Colorado authorities, about 800 peaceful Natives set up their camp in the place, indicated by the Americans, so that they would not be confused with hostile Indians. A huge American flag fluttered over the tipi of the Black Kettle, given to him by the authorities to protect the peaceful camp from the attack of American troops. Most of the men, believing the promises of the authorities, left the camp to hunt buffalo. Together with women and children, only about 60 warriors remained. Nevertheless, Chivington with his troops attacked the camp and murdered of about 500 natives [24].

The following eyewitness accounts can be cited: "I saw the bodies of those lying there, cut all to pieces, worse mutilated than any I ever saw before; the women, cut all to pieces ... With knives; scalped; their brains knocked out; children two or three months old; all ages lying there, from sucking infants up to warriors ... By whom were they mutilated? By the United States troops" [25]. From this massacre, American soldiers carried away special trophies: "Chivington and his men dressed their weapons, hats, and gear with scalps and other body parts, including human fetuses and male and female genitalia. Later, they demonstrated their prey to the people of Denver" [26].

The question of the nature of such killing thirst was also of interest to the authors of the film in 2012 *Jack Reacher*, directed by Ch. McQuarrie: "There are four types of people who join the military. For some, it's a family trade. Others are patriots, eager to serve. Next, you have those who just need a job. Then there's the kind who want a legal means of killing other people". Often the last of the motivations dominates consciously or not.

The plot of the film *Soldier Blue* has a close historical basis with the film *The Last Samurai*. It lies in the fact that both the main characters – Nathan Algren, and Honus Gant witnessed

the extermination of the Indians by the US Army. Four years after the massacre at Sand Creek, General Custer led another similar extermination at Washita River. Perhaps exactly this incident was mentioned in the film *The Last Samurai*, as the one that torments Algren with her cruelty and madness.

The 2003 *Cold Mountain*, directed by Anthony Minghella, belongs to the genres of melodrama and epic film. The events in the film unfold against the backdrop of the American Civil War of 1861–1865. The main character, Inman, a carpenter from North Carolina, volunteers to join the Confederate Army. Taking part in several brutal battles, he sees the agony of the dying and realizes the insanity of the absurdity of war in principle. Having received another wound, in the hospital he receives a letter from Ada, who is waiting for him in the town of Cold Mountain, asking him to return. He decides to escape. At this time, the inhabitants of Cold Mountain suffer from the willfulness of local defense – Confederate militias, hunting for deserters and terrorizing the residents.

The image of the enemy in this film, as in other films of the "anti-war films category", is not directly expressed. The enemy is not the soldiers of the army of the northerners, but the neighbors. Those who were supposed to help the locals in such difficult times turn out to be the worst enemies, "worse than the Yankees", as one of the characters in the film says.

One of the senses of the film is the idea that the authorities, regardless of the losses, send thousands of young men to certain death like cannon fodder, leaving widows, orphans, mothers in despair. Therefore, Ada's request in the decisive letter to Inman sounds especially significant: "My last thread of courage now is to put my faith in you... and to believe I will see you again. So now I say to you, plain as I can... if you are fighting, stop fighting. If you are marching, stop marching. Come back to me".

The 1997 biopic *Seven Years in Tibet*, directed by J.-J. Annaud, was based on the 1952 memoir *Seven Years in Tibet* by an Austrian mountaineer and SS officer Heinrich Harrer and dedicated to his life in Tibet between 1939 and 1951.

The main character, Heinrich Harrer, initially repels the viewer with his rudeness and selfish character, lack of any moral principles. Heinrich had everything – family, success, fame. But it turns out that this was not enough for him. Leaving his pregnant wife at home, he sets off to conquer the most impregnable peak in the Himalayas and perpetuate his name. However, ahead of him is not a successful ascent, but danger, captivity, long wanderings. Wherever he goes, he shows disrespect for the locals as well as his fellow travelers. Only after a welcoming reception in the holy city of Lhasa (which is an exception for foreigners) and acquaintance with the Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama, Henry begins to accept the existence of other worldviews. In particular, he gets acquainted with the concept of reincarnation and why it is worth respecting the life of any living being. One of the characters in the film disapproves of his vanity and tells him: "Then this is another great difference between our civilization and yours. You admire the man who pushes his way to the top in any walk of life. While we admire the man who abandons his ego. The average Tibetan wouldn't think to thrust himself forward this way".

Having received spiritual purification, he begins to appreciate friends and is filled with humanism. The hero of the film acquires spontaneity and openness in another culture. Returning to the "nature-culture" dyad, recall the comparison of spiritual harmony that Heinrich mentions when he draws a parallel between climbing mountains and communicating with the Dalai Lama: "The absolute simplicity. That's what I love. When you're climbing, your mind is clear... freed of all confusions. You have focus. And suddenly the light becomes sharper, sounds are richer, and you are filled with the deep, powerful presence of life. I've only felt that way one other time. In your presence, Ku-Dun".

The film can be considered as educational. Representatives of the Tibetan culture appear before the viewer as highly religious people who follow spiritual precepts. The viewer learns a lot about everyday and ritual traditions of the Tibetans, their mentality. Another everyday side of the Tibetans is revealed in their attitude towards foreigners – respect, readiness to help, immediacy and sincerity.

In addition to the issue of cultural tolerance, another key message of the film is the anti-war message. After the threat of occupation of Tibet by China, Heinrich reflects on the matter of the war: "Nearby, the Tibetan army practiced its maneuvers. Some of the soldiers wear ancient mesh armour. They bring old muskets and spears as artillery. The spectacle of a peace-loving nation, vainly attempting to create a military. The fears of war on my friends' faces... strike a deeply buried personal chord. Echoes of the aggressions of my own country... the will to overpower weaker peoples... bring shame to me. I shudder to recall how once long ago I embraced the same beliefs, how at one time I was, in fact no different from these intolerant Chinese".

Also important is the cinematic acquaintance with the personality of the 14th Dalai Lama, his devotion to his people and spiritual teachings. This becomes distinctly clear when he sets out his position to the Chinese generals: "I am a simple Buddhist monk. All I know is the scripture and the words of Lord Buddha. He said 'All beings tremble before danger and death. Life is dear to all. When a man considers this, he does not kill or cause to kill'. You must understand. These words are ingrained in the heart of every Tibetan. It is why we are a peaceful people who reject violence on principle. I pray you will see this is our greatest strength... not our weakness".

This statement appeals to people of different faiths, since the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" is professed by any religion, as are the universal values, voiced in this film. Thanks to this, the film gained high ratings, and the literary basis – H. Harrer's book *Seven Years in Tibet* was translated into more than 50 languages of the world and found its reader all over the world.

The author of the book, H. Harrer, missed Tibet and the peaceful spirit of its citizens all his life: "Wherever I live, I shall feel homesick for Tibet. I often think I can still hear the cries of wild geese and cranes and the beating of their wings as they fly over Lhasa in the clear, cold moonlight. My heartfelt wish is that my story may create some understanding for a people whose will to live in peace and freedom has won so little sympathy from an indifferent world" [27].

The next film in the anti-war category is a comedy biopic *Good Morning, Vietnam* 1987, directed by B. Levinson. The protagonist of the film is a true radio DJ Adrian Cronauer, who worked as the head of the radio news department for the US military in Vietnam. Cronauer was DJing in

Vietnam since 1965, stirring up the radio routine with rock 'n' roll and humor, eliciting positivity from the soldiers and harsh criticism from his superiors. In his free time from radio broadcasts, Cronauer gets a job as an English teacher at a school for adult Vietnamese, makes acquaintances among the local population. He is aware of all the negative consequences of the war, which he is strictly forbidden to talk about on the air due to severe censorship. The authorities are trying by all means to eliminate the intractable DJ, so he has to leave Vietnam.

The authors of the film use an interesting technique – an oxymoron, created thanks to the contrasting montage of L. Armstrong's song "What a Wonderful World" on the footage of military operations: bombings and executions. This technique reveals the anti-war message of this film, as it shows the absurdity of what is happening.

With this scene, the authors of the film show how DJs carried out the mission of a propaganda mouthpiece – convincing American soldiers of the correctness of their mission and raising their morale. The real consequences of the presence of the American contingent in Vietnam must be ignored. "The world is beautiful!" – says the song, what should be believed. The true picture of reality takes place as if "behind the glass". It is necessary to carry out orders unconditionally and blindly, not paying attention to killing and destruction. Nevertheless the contrast between audio and video is so stark, and the visuals of suffering and death so strong, that the viewer cannot help but resent this barbarity.

Another feature of anti-war films is that a representative of another culture is one of the main characters. In *Good Morning, Vietnam*, Cronauer befriends two Vietnamese: Trinh and her brother Tuan. With Tuan in the finale of the film, he has an interesting dialogue. Upon learning of his friend's connections with the VC, Cronauer accuses him of betraying their friendship and calls him an enemy. In response, Tuan replies: "Enemy? What is enemy? You killing my own people so many miles from your home. We not the enemy. You the enemy... My mother is dead. And my older brother, who be 29 years old, he dead. Shot by American. My neighbour, dead. His wife, dead. Why? Because we not human to them. We only little Vietnamese".

Thus, the Tuan character appeals to the sanity of the American, asking to understand that a war, in which innocent people die, is not a feat, but a crime. Let's turn to the opinion of Chinese philosopher Mozi: "The murder of one person is called unrighteous and incurs one death penalty. Following this argument, the murder of ten persons will be ten times as unrighteous and there should be ten death penalties; the murder of a hundred persons will be a hundred times as unrighteous and there should be a hundred death penalties. All the gentlemen of the world know that they should condemn these things, calling them unrighteous. But when it comes to the great unrighteousness of attacking states, they do not know that they should condemn it. On the contrary, they applaud it, calling it righteous" [4].

Therefore, having considered morphological and dramaturgical potential of these films and actualizing their genre diversity, it is possible to define the main object of representation and cultural message of three categories: warlike, warfare and anti-war (**Fig. 2.3.7**) and to single out several basic genres, with which the wrenre is most effectively combined (**Fig. 2.3.8**).

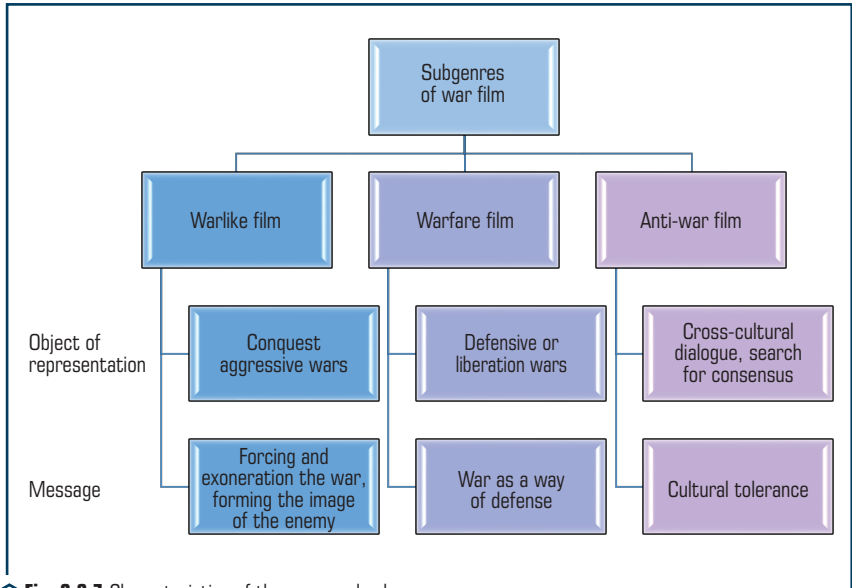


Fig. 2.3.7 Characteristics of the proposed subgenres

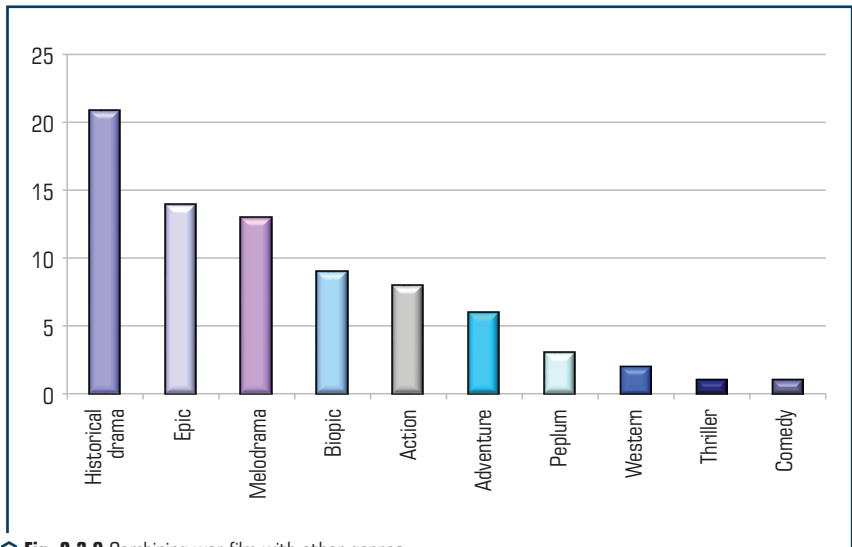


Fig. 2.3.8 Combining war film with other genres

CONCLUSION

As a result, three subgenres of the war film were singled out: warlike, warfare and anti-war. The detailed dramaturgical and genre analysis of them allowed the conventions and the specifics of the conflicts covered:

1. The main convention of the warlike subgenre is a story when a person voluntarily goes to war in another country, justifying the murders with high ideals and aspirations, as well as the official propaganda of the aggressor country. Receiving a rebuff, the central characters endure excruciating suffering and often die tragically at the end of the film. Films are replete with scenes of mental anguish, torture and death of American soldiers. Thus, the aggressors are portrayed as victims, and the victims as aggressors. In this category, representatives of the attacked countries are portrayed as a faceless mass – stupid or cruel. A clear image of the enemy is being formed.

The conflict in films in this category is external. This conflict can be called the conflict "character – environment". The viewer does not have the opportunity to get acquainted with the opposite side of the conflict. Indians, Vietnamese, Iraqis or other Indigenous peoples dissolve in an environment antagonistic to Americans. And this environment becomes the main antagonist.

The expressive means, considered in the article, created powerful images of characters illustrating the "friend or foe" approach. This is the desperate, but all-knowing Colonel Kurtz (*Apocalypse Now*); the merciless and unshakable Indian Magua (*The Last of the Mohicans*); the cynical and cold-blooded Wardaddy (*Fury*); as well as the good-natured prankster – record-breaking sniper Chris Kyle (*American Sniper*). Thus, camera, directorial and editing techniques fill the film with visual contexts and symbols that serve to reinforce the images of the characters conceived by the screenwriter.

2. The leading convention of the warfare subgenre is a story that tells about a person who lives a peaceful life, strives to continue to live peacefully and openly upholds nonviolent ideals. But when an innocent member of his family is killed, he is forced to fight. In this situation, the protagonist (victim) and antagonist (aggressor) are in their places.

The conflict in this subgenre is external, which can be also called the conflict "character – character". The protagonist and antagonist enter into an open confrontation, so action is the leader among the genres here.

3. The central convention of the anti-war subgenre is a story when an intolerant, radical, immoral person finds himself/herself in another culture, where, after some time, he/she starts respecting culture and understands that a consensus can be found with anyone without entering into open confrontation. Among the three subgenres, in the anti-war subgenre, the most powerful is the cognitive component revealing the subtleties of another culture.

There is an internal conflict here. This is most clearly illustrated by two taglines for the film *Dances with Wolves*: "Inside everyone is a frontier waiting to be discovered", "Lieutenant John Dunbar is about to discover the frontier... within himself". Strongest among the three subgenres, this

is where the character arc comes into play. Another, initially seemingly hostile, culture changes the main character for the better. He finds harmony with himself and the world around him.

The most interesting here is the type of conflict, which can be defined as "character – audience". This is due to the fact that in the anti-war subgenre there is no antagonist at all. The image of the "other", "enemy", "hostile environment", which originally existed in the mind of the central character, is destroyed throughout the film. A dialogue of cultures and cultural consensus are being carried out.

This is achieved due to the fact that the central character begins to see in another value system not something that is opposed to his own position, but something that can help him in solving personal problems and problems of his own culture. Thus, the boundaries between the protagonist and antagonist are erased and both sides of the conflict become protagonists acting together to solve certain problems.

The aesthetic potential of the anti-war subgenre is formed thanks to a set of camera techniques that depict the grandeur of natural and cultural objects, as well as large-scale panoramic mise-en-scenes. Overcoming a long journey, dangerous obstacles and natural and cultural barriers actualize the popularity of the adventure and biographical genres here.

The unifying factor of the three subgenres is a pronounced substantive conflict – military operations. In the war film, the characters face the transcendence of war, which goes beyond ordinary life, and at the same time their fears of being unable to comprehend and overcome the surrounding chaos and horror. Often the bifurcation of the plot, based on real events, leads to unexpected and tragic consequences that highlight the ambivalence of moral choices in war. The war film shows how the determinism and randomness of war interact with each other, leading to transgression between different social and cultural groups during the war.

This raises an important question about the role of each individual in changing the course of the war. On the one hand, the plots of the films demonstrate the total helplessness and doom of people in the face of war, on the other hand, they highlight bright characters who, thanks to their outstanding qualities of character, are able to influence the outcome of the war. Moreover, even films that have a tragic ending: *300*, *The Last Samurai*, *Braveheart*, express the message to the audience in the prologues about how the sacrifice of Leonid, Katsumoto and William Wallace subsequently contributed to the end of the war and the restoration of peaceful life.

5. In a philosophical context, it is appropriate to talk about the existence of a relativistic and pluralistic approach to the distinction between warlike and anti-war films. Guided by the principle "Truth is in the eye of the beholder", it can be noted, that the same film may contain both features of a warlike and anti-war film. Thus, the thinking viewer will draw unambiguous conclusions from the brutal bombing of the Vietnamese village and school under the music of Wagner in the warfare film *Apocalypse Now*. In it, despite a number of justifications for the American invasion of Vietnam, the viewer will hear the Frenchman address Captain Willard: "... you Americans, you are fighting for the biggest nothing in history".

6. Each film is a powerful audiovisual product, the result of the colossal collective effort of its creators. The main goal of creating any movie is to maximize profits, therefore, the film must

be spectacular, entertaining, intriguing and exciting the feelings and emotions of a wide range of viewers. Hence, the powerful influence of the love line (melodrama), chases and dangerous tricks (action), ingenuity and resourcefulness of the characters (adventure).

To make a film that tells about long-past events in demand for the viewer of today is a big risk, challenge and test for filmmakers, so future researches on the potential of a historical war film are foreseeable.

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