

# **‘THE UNFINISHED HOUSE’ AND ‘A STEP INTO DARKNESS’ BOOK VERSUS MOVIE**

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## **Abstract**

The paper focuses on the presence of original Slovak literature in media or more precisely on transformation of the original Slovak literary work into media space. Its aim is to compare short novels by A. Bednár ‘Rozostavaný dom’ (The Unfinished House) and a film ‘Krok do tmy’ (A Step into Darkness) based on motives of this mentioned literary text. In this particular comparative focus our objective is to define concurrences and intersections of both artefacts and to have a close look at the fact whether the film adaptation, regarding its basic feature, conveys the message.

*Keywords:* film, short novel, film adaptation, original book, comparison

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## **1. Introduction**

The aim of the paper, as indicated in its title, is a comparative view on implementation of original Slovak literature works into media (specifically television) space. ‘Recasting’ of literary art into various film adaptations has been a long-time trend in media space offering a recipient the possibility of instant acquaintance with a particular literary work. Film adaptation of a literary classic partially provides a recipient with everlasting values where aesthetic fuses with authentic life truths that persist despite the time flow. From this point of view, a film adaptation may be considered to be a noble return and repeated revival of the preciousness each of them contains. It remains to be a fact that the approach of every individual author of a book original is different and it is being carried out in diapason from the most truthful presentation of book original to ‘film canvas’ to its loose adaptation which ambition is to communicate with the current social-cultural environment, accentuate its trends and, unfortunately, sometimes even to push itself to a recipient. As well as the transformation may responsibly convey the message of an original and what is more to create a more appropriate form that would communicate with its current climate and enable an

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easier perception of book contents, but at the same time it may 'harm' the classic being depicted in insensitive 'spasm'.

The aim of this paper is to analyse such transformation and find out to what degree the film 'copy' communicates with its book original and to what degree it conveys or does not convey its messages. For a particular comparison we scoop into Slovak space and we randomly choose (supported by its relative topicality) a Slovak film 'Krok do tmy' (A Step into Darkness) recorded in 2014 and nominated to Oscar by Slovak Film and Television Academy the same year. The shot was directed by Miloslav Luther. His brother Igor Luther, responsible for film camera, wrote the movie scenario together with Marián Puobiš. Starring: Martin played by Marko Igonda, Eva played by Monika Haasová and Soňa played by Kristýna Boková. The film is based on the shot novel motifs of Slovak prose writer Alfonz Bednár 'Rozostavaný dom' (The Unfinished House). Due to limited spatial possibilities we preferentially focus on protagonists and we lay down our summarizing conclusions.

## 2. About the atmosphere

Alfonz Bednár (1914-1989), prominent Slovak writer, is in Slovak literature periodization classified into a period of "literature after 1945" [1, 2]. Situating the writer in the mentioned time period indicates that he lived and wrote in a very complicated period of history that is reflected in the short novel 'Rozostavaný dom' (The Unfinished House). Particularly it is situated in the early 50s, respectively the first half of 50s the time, when the area of Slovak Republic (Czechoslovakia) after illegal occupation of the government by communist party in February 1948 is under harsh totalitarian regime. It was the time of unethical, violent socialism building in which the 'class enemies' were being sought, people unjustly sentenced to death, violent collectivism, nationalism of assets and agricultural collectivisation occur, basic human rights and freedoms were denied. Man becomes 'a prisoner' of the system, more roughly said 'the tool' of communist propaganda for 'production' of communist (socialist) society not respecting his internal/ subjective space [3, 4].

The plot of the mentioned prose is situated exactly in this period of history (see more about the prose and the author) [5; 6; V. Petřík, *Tvorivý život v opozícii*, <http://zurnal.pravda.sk/esej/clanok/335631-tvorivy-zivot-v-opozicii/>] as well as the film 'Step into Darkness'. It immediately indicates that as is the case with the book it is not considered to be a light reading; the film does not presume an easy perception. Speaking of the plot situated in the first half of 50s, it is necessary to mention that the plot does not take place exclusively there because in the protagonists' retrospectiveness and introspectiveness (mainly a central character of Martin Dubovský) there is an obvious overlap particularly in the period of Slovak National Uprising and subsequently the future is still potentially present, especially by building 'new, better socialist future' the present is determined.

### **3. About the protagonists**

#### ***3.1. Literary Martin versus film Martin***

Creators of the film also choose the protagonist - the doctor Martin Dubovský. The short story and the film are identical in the fact that the protagonist (regarding the point of view of the above mentioned time perspectives) lives and works in 50s as a factory doctor. His past is marked by fatal destructions of the war, while the most serious one is sentence to death of his brother where the protagonist transfers these unpleasant occurrences into the present. Despite this fact there is no amoral destructor but a sensitive, searching and fumbling character being insistently humane influenced by his failure and savageness. The character, in case of whom it is necessary to step out of simple 'black and white' perception about good and evil hero, from 'black and white' perception of good and evil itself, to take into consideration the given factuality that sometimes while acting in compliance with one norm we run into another, where there are neither winners nor losers, where the good and the evil are not expressly marked that such 'black and white' perception might not be understood as the actual human existence. Concerning the character which is being understood and 'taken by grace' by percipient only if they try to experience Martin's absolute inner failure, certain 'hesitation', omission, post war nihilism, loss of everything close and familiar and they feel the difficulty of new beginnings.

Martin is a character who responsibly and honestly serves the system (as a partisan liberating the country) and he does exactly what he is supposed to do (see more about a character in system interconnections [7]). According to partisan martial law he is forced to sentence his brother Fero who escapes a unit together with his partisan group. Escapers plunder, terrorise village citizens being under the influence of alcohol that leads to their death. On one hand there is a fratricide, and on the other there are tenths of murdered people. But a complex question arises and that is if a blood-related life means something more. On the contrary, there is one much more complex question - not only if it is right to sentence a brother/ criminal but even if it is right to punish death by death, though by the death of culprits who are being led by their slap-happiness and irresponsibility. The entire stand-off is only a pure destruction created by war destruction.

Martin presented in a short story and film Martin have this basic framework in common despite they are later created in independent ways.

##### ***3.1.1. Martin in a war cataclysm***

The character (resulting its broad-spectrum representation) in a short story opposite the film is more intensively perceived as a war victim, more precisely as a person shocked by war cataclysms who experiences existential edgy situations, being confronted by death in a war, blood and killing. He loses

completely everything in post-war 'debris' and in 'debris' of his birth place, losing his entire family, home, in 'debris' of everything he used to believe, being aware of sentencing his own brother is supposed to keep moving forward.

This intention is represented in the film too being one of the key situations because Martin's experienced war past determines his present compared to the short story this situation is stated more loosely and less persuasively. However, this situation is represented by impressive sequences of brilliant Marko Igonda in the role of Martin who recalls war incidents (brother's sentence, mother's and father's death, etc.). Compared to the book within repeated reflections, memories, introspections, analysis about experienced and currently experiencing with more precise denominating of feelings, demonstrating of internal shocks as well as repeated refrained returning to death of close people and the need to find the reason of this death it is more perceived and intensified.

### 3.1.2. *Uprising from cataclysm thanks to Eva and faith in communism (Martin's pro-communist intention)*

Regarding literary Martin it is explicitly clear compared to the film his insistent determination to start again to place against war destruction the understanding, humanity, kindness to 'heal' post war cataclysms. "*The debris remained yet the self-confidence, determination not to hazard with freedom, love and respect to man - that is what still persist, Eva (a friend later a wife, note by M.A.) and has to remain!*" [8] Within this scope the writer depicts Martin as a decisive and humane character compared to the film where a viewer does not have a chance to perceive it in such scope as well as in the film there is not that urgent desire and existential need to start again especially to start in a different way.

Speaking of Martin's post-war state of mind and his determination to start again in the book there is explicitly demonstrated the fundamental position of Eva (his partner later his wife) who spent 'partisan times' with him in the mountains. "That time Martin Dubovský could not imagine his life without Eva..." [8, p. 245]

Film Eva is not depicted in this position. While in film adaptation the urge need of the protagonist to start again is not indicated, the need of 'media' (represented by Eva) that would serve to be helpful is not necessary in this case. Likewise the film lacks the next intention and that is, except Eva, "the faith in new and better communist society' that becomes Martin's 'motive power'" [8, p. 245].

These intentions are not repeatedly offered by the film and contrary Martin is since the very beginning oriented in a pro-communist way. As a former partisan he could make use of this situation but he decides not to. At the beginning he finds himself in a situation in which he gets a chance to accept a position as a director but because it would mean to devote his life to a communist party he refuses (this particular moment is not presented in the short story). However, it is necessary to mention that the particular anti-communist

creation is rather depicted for a percipient by Martin's talks with Eva and a friend Jánoš, etc. and not in the sense of a certain fundamental action 'outwards'. Although, Martin consequently refuses the position and during one training he publicly announces his statements against communist party morals, his character evokes astonishment, interception, disgust with the way of life rather than expressive anti-political campaign.

### *3.1.3. Gradual routine life with Eva - disappointment with communist practices - failure into impertinent moods*

Martin's post-war euphoric determination to start again and desire to believe in the new system is subsequently suppressed by the reality coming (literary reality) such as suspicion, lack of freedom, sentencing the innocent, larceny - simply said system malpractice on all levels. There is one fundamental intention of literary Martin disillusion: "*Why did all that happen, he thought... Never there is the truth, everyone lies, one once declares this tomorrow one changes his mind. How to get rid of this chaos? (...) Old grievance is gone, new and more arduous have come because nobody awaited them.*" [8, p. 259]

Neither Eva has no energy to reverse that disbelief and the reason may be read between the lines only. The initial euphoria, infatuation and closeness caused by mutual experience of difficult war process are transformed into a routine life marked by destructions of the system. Such situation occurs when: "*Dubovský's moods are becoming more and more impertinent...seeking for the reason of previous and new victims, seeking for the sense of his work as well as the sense of the life spent with her (Eva, note by M.A.) with children, he found the sense in nothing, feeling like something makes his knees to buckle...*" [8, p. 246]

Regarding literary Martin (as it was mentioned before) that particular euphoric enthusiasm and the following disappointment are not present. We do not perceive those stated disruptions in the film. M. Luther, without a previous depiction of protagonist's inner 'turbulences' sets 'his' Martin from the very beginning right into the line we currently discuss. We may consider this to be the point where film Martin meets the literary one. We get to know film Martin in medias res as a person 'settled' in a routine married life ('relished' by extramarital relationship with Soňa) being disgusted and paralysed by communist regime practices.

### *3.1.4. Reoccurring hope represented by Soňa and reoccurring disappointment*

While film Martin seems to be in impertinent mood (from the beginning of the story) relished by extramarital relationship with Soňa, literary Martin is depicted in broader dimensions. In his 'impertinent mood' Soňa represents the important key role being another key character of the story. As we discussed above, the 'turbulence' of literary Martin's inner feelings: uprising from the war cataclysm → faith in Eva and in a new system (his devotion to it) → and

subsequent disappointment, and at the point of this disappointment Soňa enters the story as his 'new hope'. Years ago, everything being brought by Eva was darkened by system malpractices and routine of married life read between the lines is now awoken by young, ambitious officer coming to the factory to teach the workers the ideology of communist party. Thanks to her, Martin again believes that everything what happened and still is happening is not worthless but worthwhile "... because he believed in Soňa he believed in everything again" [8]. Naturally, Martin's faith in Soňa becomes more intensified by their mutual liking growing into their intimate relationship. This is just a secondary role of female protagonist because her primary role in a short story is represented by illusionary personification of a new and better world Martin again believes in that is not marked by previous difficulties of rotten, deformed world.

Reoccurring Martin's devastation happens when he is becoming aware of the fact that Soňa does not represent anything of the above mentioned as well as she has no faith in everything she promotes (communist party ideology). Being blackmailed by everyone she herself decides to blackmail and she pretends to believe in 'new, better communist future' may be perceived as a servile greedy comedy to be able to survive in those hard conditions. "*Soňa is pretending (...)* *She is hiding herself using hypocrisy to defend her poor existence (...)*" [8, p. 276] In this point Martin becomes devastated for the second time and as soon as he finds it out the text is full of unfortunate incidents leading to tragedy.

As we mentioned before, in the film Soňa 'representing a hope' is not present yet does not work in the film. The relationship between Martin and Soňa has a tendency to be perceived as a 'dalliance' in which a protagonist slap-happily and amoral lies to both his wife and children.

### 3.1.5. Martin's catharsis

In both artefacts the events escalated in a situation where Martin's affair may be disclosed (Martin hides in an elevator shaft before Eva who comes to look for him to his lover). The events result in Soňa's death and Martin's imprisonment. These edgy situations (Martin above the abyss of the shaft, Soňa's death, imprisonment) cause the protagonist to experience certain personal catharsis and may be perceived in both artefacts. In the short story, on more levels yet in all aspects there is one essential semantic aspect intensified-Martin's rebirth. Particularly, all the situations such as the protagonist hanging in the elevator shaft to the situation where he finds himself balancing literally above the abyss, he is gradually becoming aware of both his wife's preciousness and his failures: "in a deep humbleness before Eva and her children influences by the decision to treat people as he used to before leaving burnt area with Eva" (leaving the war, note by M.A.) [8, p. 343]. The rebirth of the protagonist in a literary text is subsequently marked by him admitting his coward behaviour towards his friend Jankovič ("*I could have helped Jankovič, I am aware of it- but I had not... Jankovič used to work in illegality (...), I was afraid to help him.*" [8, p. 344]) and escalated when he sends a letter from a prison to his wife where he

explicitly declares return of that 'old' postwar Martin when wanted to make his life be based on respect and love to human beings: "(...) *get our children used to self-sacrifice* (he writes to Eva from the prison note by M.A.) *that protected us in the uprising, and do your best to teach them respect to people, teach them to be self-confident, teach them human dignity because the rest may seem to be worthless!*" [8, p. 351]

Martin's catharsis reflected in the film is not repeatedly 'divaricated' but regarding this point it is not important at all. As we mentioned before the limitedness of the film while depicting some aspects, we pointed that out to be a problem that could draw the mentioned 'mist', characters vagueness and 'chaos', etc. by the critics (see below). In this case this particular absence of 'multilevelness' compared to the film nothing is hidden before the viewer. However, the inner release, catharsis, is presented in one particular scene (although, there is one more taken place in a prison where Martin asks Eva to forgive him but it seems marginal not distinctive) represents the return notably and very impressively. Martin is released from prison and comes home to take his personal belongings while meeting Eva a percipient sees everything: humbleness, asking for forgiveness, admiration for his wife, non-erasing their mutual story, fellowship and mutual (practically ontological) interpersonal need. The final significant sequence declared that in a way that nothing else was necessary to explain.

### **3.2. Women by Martin's side**

The following key characters in the story (resulting from the above mentioned) are female characters - his wife Eva and his lover Soňa (see more about female characters [9]). Although, both characters are used by the creators (as we referred before) there is not their key role indicated in the film. In the short story both women (in different time and conditions) are the reason for Martin to start again more precisely to walk towards his better future. Despite the absence of this fact, literary women are similar to film ones related to their basic features.

#### **3.2.1. Eva**

Literary Eva represents the fundamental female principle - affectionate, loving, caring and the one that softens everything. Regarding this principle, male rational scientific society building at the expense of humanity is not that obvious. It is Eva herself who helps her husband to live after the war and who is upset by Martin's depressing mood. As soon as Soňa appears, Martin's well-being improves, she is thankful for this change, naively hoping it only happens because of Soňa's non problematic past and faith in communism (which reveals to be a lie in the end), she repeatedly transfers into Martin, too. It is Eva herself, who tries to protect her husband from unpleasant reality (for instance (Soňa's rotten personality Eva is acquainted with earlier than Martin) and the symbol of

a cross Dugas is decided to overthrow as a memento of a previous obscurantism (in the same way Martin perceives the obscurantism itself). She feels much more- it is a symbol that did and still belongs to a village as something that presents humility and respect to human beings: “*She vaguely felt that people inserting crosses was not worthless. It served as a means how to arouse people's interest in love towards mankind and respect. Lacking them means to degrade oneself to be a soldier.*” [8, p. 326] Eventually it is Eva herself who reminds Martin about him not helping his friend Jankovič (in the film the character's name is Jánoš) was not right: “*Martin you should have stood up for him (note by M.A.)*” [8, p. 239].

Film Eva reflects the same softening, affectionate and loving aspect, too. She is aware of her husband's savageness. His deep moral burden (sentencing his own brother) and that is the reason why she tries to accommodate him. The same as film Eva, she reminds her husband about the importance of human factor while building a new society and in the film the self-sacrifice and love of a wife is intensified by the fact that Martin thanks to her is released from prison (where he found himself as a consequence of Soňa's death). Eva, because of her husband's release, sings (despite her own will) a cooperation with State Security of the Communist Party. Her self-sacrifice is intensified because she is fully aware of the fact that Martin's ‘devoting’ to a regime would mentally destroy him (she forbids Martin to sign the cooperation).

Despite the intersection both female characters have in common, it might be stated the same as we did regarding Martin. Literary Eva is more varied, more depicted and related to her introspections and inner monologues she provides a percipient with more detailed description of her character being a person emotional, perceptive but reflective.

### 3.2.2. Soňa

The following important character is Soňa. As we have mentioned several times, literary Soňa compared to film one represents one crucial task. The stated moment is relevant only referring to Martin's perception, maybe in a better or worse perception by the viewers, yet Soňa still remains the same. Both female characters variants are similar and the film reflects the leading line of the character, too. When M. Luther stated that he had chosen Kristína Boková mainly because of ‘the strange tragic feeling she radiates’ the tragic itself is crucial for the character.

This female character is ambivalent. On one hand she is cunning, unscrupulous and servile servant of the regime, on the other hand she is oppressively destroyed victim of ‘communist machinery’. Finding herself lost in her lies, seduced, blackmailed, always owing something to someone (Vlach), driven into a corner, fighting to survive, she spreads blackmailing and charing again. The character's tragic in both artefacts escalates when the protagonist dies (in the book by committing a suicide and in the film by jumping into the shaft accompanied by Kamil Vlach).



The character of young, seduced and deceived Soňa as a servile servant, the deep unfortunate story of a human victim based on lies, lack of freedom and denying basic human rights is unveiled.

### **3.3. Book vs. movie**

In general (despite the stated differences) we may presume that the basic framework contains the same timeless values and both artefacts radiate their mutual 'post-scriptum' the well-known system is right unless people who create it are right. To devote oneself mindlessly to an ideology and to dignify it to be more than a human being, more precisely to treat a human being as a means to reach the goal and not as the goal itself only means to change a destruction (war) for another (communism). Works of art again reminds viewers/ readers how simple it is to be manipulated and where the freedom or the truth are interfered, where a man gives in external determinations lacking the inner actual self-presence, there is no space for anything genuine, meaningful and healthy.

Of course books remains the book and in this case it offered (as we mentioned before) more versatile dimensions, broader noticeable plan, more complex narrative, unity, the atmosphere of the period itself and despite the stated broad-spectral secondary plan. Of course, the difference between the film and literary space and their possibilities also largely influenced it as well as the diverse 'work instrumentarium'.

The conceptual framework of the book is complex: a lot of plot lines, their interference, internal monologues, digressions and sudden alternations of the space, time, person, etc., as a monographer of A. Bednár, J. Vanovič stated. In spite of this compositional scattering and semantic emanating in the book remained entrenched in a coherent whole.

Supposedly, the film follows the complex composition but the lack of those coherent climax moments manifested in the book, the creators evoked a feeling of the film 'falling apart' in accumulating quickly changing (yet semantically significant) moments. As M. Ščepka stated in his review: „(...) *Step into Darkness* is a war drama of biblical proportions. It delivers a lot of marginal, secondary yet powerful sequences where each of them may serve as basis for an individual film. Thus together they interfere with each other during 2-hour duration.” [M. Ščepka, *Krok do tmy chce vysvetliť všetko*, <http://kultura.sme.sk/c/7233929/krok-do-tmy-chce-vysvetlit-vsetko.html>] as well as M. Svoboda [M. Svoboda, *Když si hrdinové zaslouží trpět, je to krok do tmy*, <http://kultura.idnes.cz/recenze-krok-do-tmy>].

Despite the stated fact the informative value of the film is obvious and the question if the film may really be considered as 'a false step' as Hochel named it [J. Hochel, *Krok do tmy – alebo krok vedľa?*, <http://kultura.pravda.sk/film-a-televizia/clanok/320661-recenzia-krok-do-tmy-alebo-krok-vedla/>]. This is one of the films that step out of their comfort zone and they present themselves to modern viewers obviously (as reviews confirm) not by a catchy topic but arduous plot, vague protagonist and compositional 'shatterness'. It is the film,

regarding its each aspect, is through its drawbacks (fragmented composition 'raggedness' of certain moments etc.) is in the current period of presenting cheap solutions at the expense of their virtuous search is definitely not a desired 'bite'.

J. Hochel [<http://kultura.pravda.sk/film-a-televizia/clanok/320661-recenzia-krok-do-tmy-alebo-krok-vedla/>] indicated that the possibility of accepting the film is more demanding because of the fact there is no 'good' protagonist viewers may identify themselves with and the fact it is situated into difficult (for a present viewer less attractive) period of 50s.

Of course, Martin does not present a positive, successful protagonist a modern viewer would like to identify with. Vice versa. It is a character marked by a war, chaotic, fumbling, searching, who does not easily forgive his failures and doubts. Especially all this explicitly and existentially authentic should be regarded as food for thought.

Speaking of the following objection about cliché topic we suppose its memento to be always timeless. It is necessary to carefully consider that the TV media space repeatedly offers the space to well-known thriller plots, always the same superficial naive films about love, unsubstantial soap-operas, serials, always the same reality-shows dishonouring human dignity or misleading commercials [10-12]. Even though we might not give them too much importance and a discursive percipient perceives their shallowness, their lack of verity (no authenticity) despite this they fill the social-cultural space and relating to a well-known quote a lie told often enough becomes the truth, they unobtrusively subdue the culture and deform recipient's taste. And the meanings conveying super-temporal ideas, invariant situations, cyclically repeated failures through the history one may learn from are considered to be a burden (as the reviews supposed). Whereby neither the world nowadays nor its current situation do not indicate a fact that the film *Step into Darkness* may be perceived as worthless.

Vice versa. We assume that mainly in current climate such films that directly point out that how easily a man may be manipulated, how easily a man may be lost in new ideologies, modern trends, rules that are not results of his authentic inner space, the true activity of awareness (self-awareness), conscience, inner intuition and rationality as well as external determinants much beneficial and important. A man is especially fragile when he automatically (in masses) receives the crowd point of view lacking the discursive and critical re-evaluation. The same was suggested by another Slovak writer D. Tatarka [13] and for example some thinkers [14-17].

#### **4. Conclusions**

As we mentioned before book always remains the book more precisely reviewed book always remains 'medium' (despite contemporary poetics that is a reflection of contemporary social character and in this meaning it reflects the atmosphere of that period from this point of view it is necessary to look upon it) that can be hardly overcome by any transformation. Despite naturally considering the film to be an independent unit and in this meaning it is also

accepted, it is possible to state that while the book does not require the film, the film itself is more shaped after reading a short story, becomes more 'powerful' on all levels, more reveals and understands and with the help of the book and its ruptures (not at the expense of literary metaspace) that particular feeling the film evokes compactly steels, situations become more meaningful and everything is compactly and coherently closed. As it was assumed previously, the film may be understood and perceived separately and regarding its most fundamental features (as we stated the question on ability to transform to convey the message of the original) convey the fundamental message of the work that has been assumed above and that is the system is we are as good as the people who create it are and the boundary between what we really want and what we are forced to want is very fragile. In connection with the Unfinished House J. Vanovič brightly formulates: *"As far as I am concerned, after Nazis communists are coming. These totalities grew up one from the other (...) Also racism 'only' changed its mask for a class-war. Superior race to an elect class. Concentration camps to the Gulag Peninsula. Six million of holocaust to ninety millions of communism victims! So, as it was said, we have at least ninety-six millions of valid evidence not to have faith in self-appointed redeemers of nations and mankind."* [18]

From this point of view the film may be perceived as an uncommon one. It set off a wave of criticism, it requires to seek, to debate, to discuss, to approach things critically, to discover and that is in the atmosphere where the absence of clearly defined positive protagonists hinders, one needs to identify himself with, where there is demand for black and white world perception, in the atmosphere where challenging themes are considered to be both irritating and tiring (as it was confirmed by the reviews [<http://kultura.idnes.cz/recenze-krok-do-tmy>, <http://kultura.pravda.sk/film-a-televizia/clanok/320661-recenzia-krok-do-tmy-alebo-krok-vedla/>] and vice versa there are cheap plots 'floating' undisturbed, it is more than necessary, important and meaningful. Such discussion on the film may also be regarded to be a way to a question arisen and that is where our culture is headed. If we give way to AUTHENTIC way of exploring ourselves that according to a French philosopher G. Marcel leads to REALITY, ABSOLUTE GENUINNESS in which a partial self pertains to THE WHOLE, ABSOLUTE TRUTH as such, Kant's moral law inside each of us that is represented by GOD, THE UNIVERSE... we may give it any names because we live our life 'outside ourselves'. Svoboda states in a slight ironic tone that a Slovak society sends for a nomination Oskar's film 'Krok do tmy' because "totalitarian dramas have the sound scholars can hear" [<http://kultura.idnes.cz/recenze-krok-do-tmy>]. So in this case it met its objective, because the moral duty of scholars is to 'hear', emphasise and appreciate not what a percipient asks for (that is the task of media business) but what is for them both beneficial and useful. The task of scholars is to notice an artefact that is rising above a particular towards generality, above particularity towards abstraction, towards the space, where in timeless mode the past meets the present and future, in the mode where a timeless utterance about man itself

arises. 'A Step into Darkness' (despite its weaknesses) undoubtedly represents such artefact.

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