

Time Estimate: 50-75 min. Students will have 75 min. to write.

Essay: 20% for introduction which provides context and sets up thesis statement. 40% each for discussion of the two frames in the prompt you select. No conclusion necessary.) **The essay should be roughly 500-600 words.**

Please respond to one of the three prompts provided, closely analyzing each of the two frames included in terms of both technique and story. *To perform well, you must demonstrate understanding of each image's narrative context, as well as what it captures itself.* Be sure, that is, to talk about how the captured moment relates to other parts of the film.

You need not reach the same conclusion about both films, nor do you need to choose a linear, binary response when tackling each work. The humanities invite nuance and complexity in argumentation. Your essay should be argumentative (rather than merely narrative); ensure that every point you make is closely supported with appropriate, specific evidence.

Before writing, I recommend: 1) reading the prompt again, closely, to make sure your response stays on track, 2) brainstorming some related ideas, 3) briefly outlining your essay (5-10 min. max).

ALTERED STATES

1. Do dream states provide valuable opportunities for personal growth, or do they risk damaging as much as helping the dreamer?

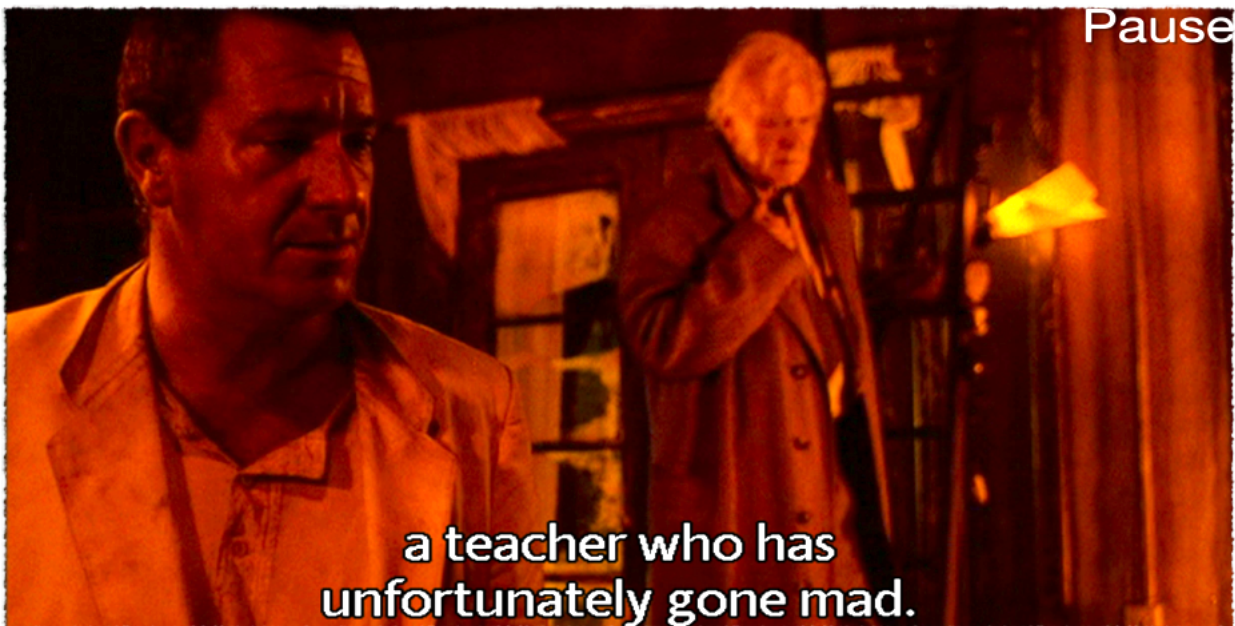


2. Do altered mental states prove more beneficial than harmful for the dreamer?



DISABILITY

3. Is disability—physical or mental—necessarily a hindrance to the one who has it?



FEMININITY

4. Do these two films objectify women in a delimiting way, or grant them agency and influence?



5. Do our female protagonists ultimately overcome the obstacles confronting them?



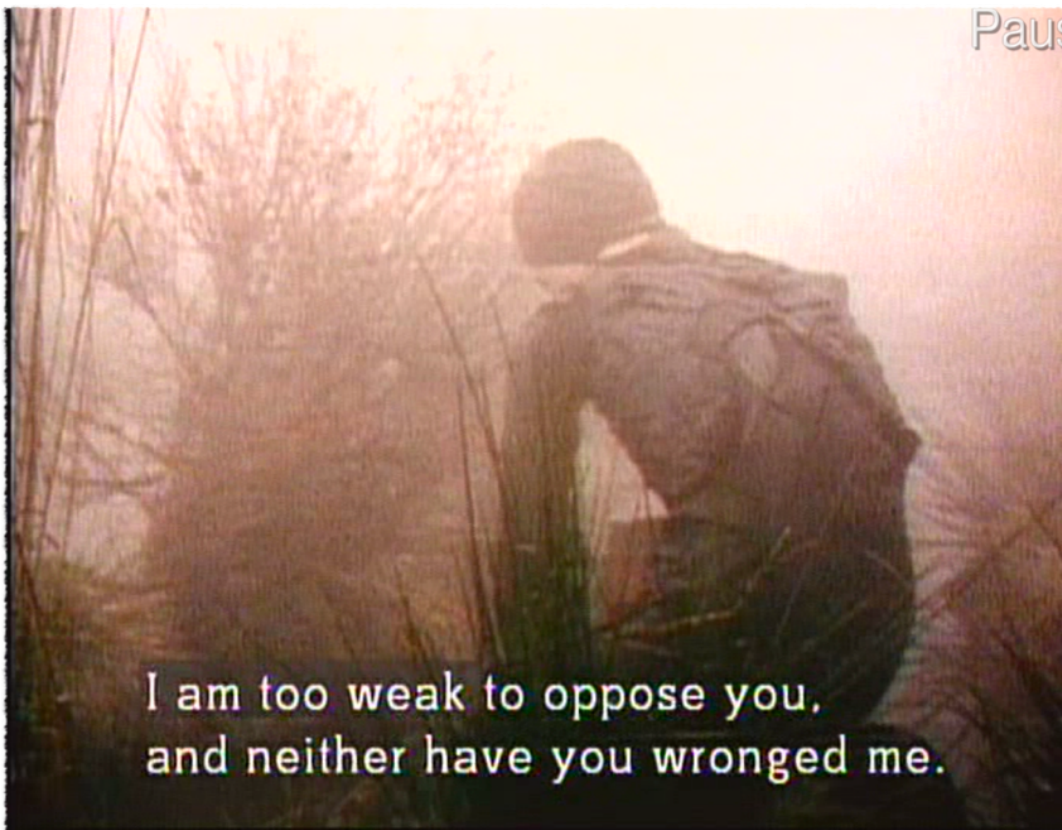
6. Does the sexuality of the women in these films prove itself a blessing, a curse, or something else?



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8. Do the female characters in these films escape the reductive impulse of those who would pigeonhole and categorize them?



MASCULINITY

9. Is the impulse to explore and discover--an inclination often gendered male in these films--of demonstrable value?



10. Is male sexuality *toxic* in these films?



11. Does wielding a weapon empower the man who holds it?



12. Do the men in these films make the world a better place? Are they agents of good? Do they prove themselves effective and reliable problem-solvers?



*[Fisher]
I need something to work on.*

13. Are the men in these films virile or impotent? (Feel free to consider the question in both literal and figurative senses.)



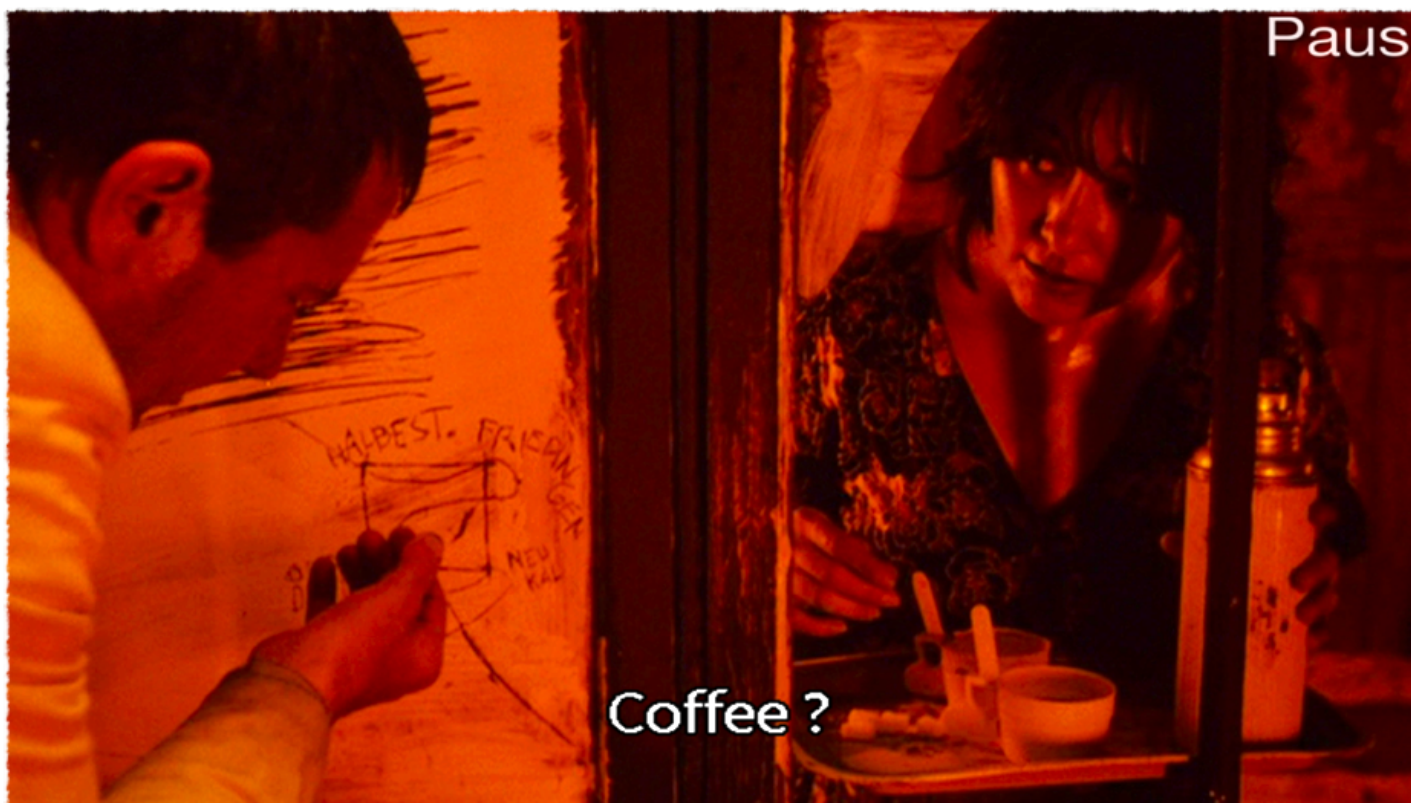
14. Do these movies implicitly advocate marriage as an enviable state?



15. In these films, does one sex tend to treat the other with greater kindness and humanity?



16. Do members of the opposite sex succeed in their efforts to understand one another?



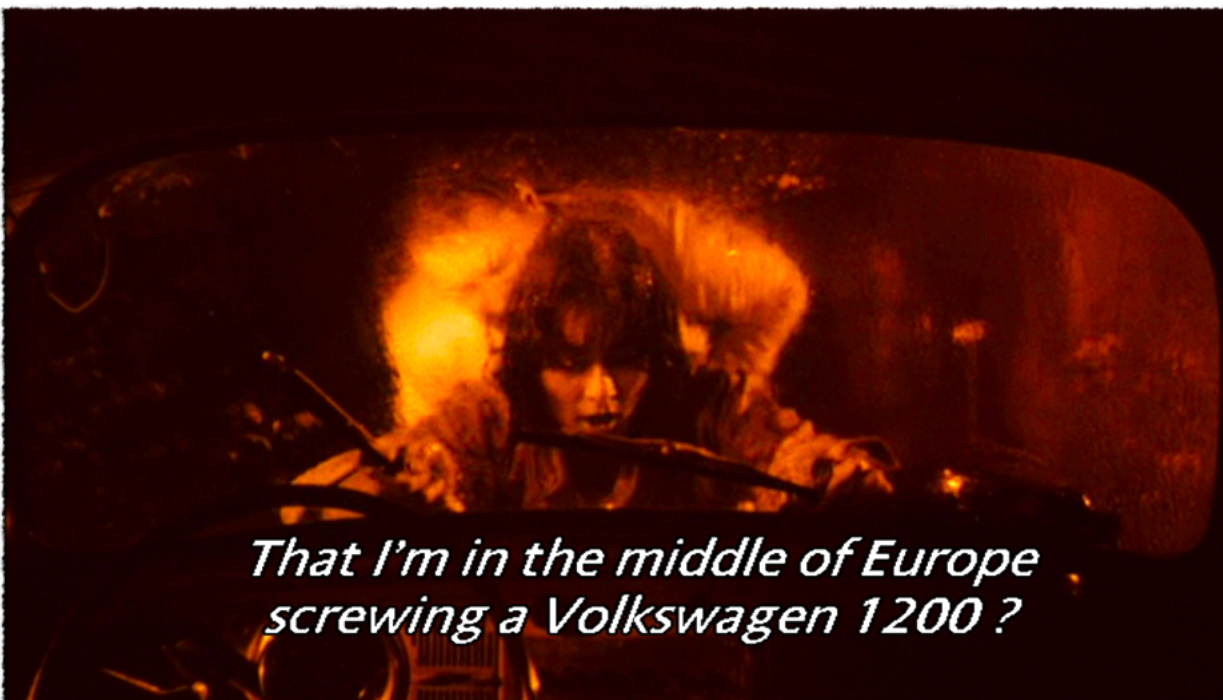
17. Are the sexes hopelessly separated by a cavernous divide, or do they manage to create genuine and lasting connections?



18. Do women and men have an equally firm grasp on truth and knowledge in these films, or does one tend to see things more clearly than the other?



19. Does sex constitute a means of creating intimacy in these films?



20. Do the men and women in these films objectify one another, treating their partners more as tools or playthings than as three-dimensional individuals?



21. Do our characters view parenting as a privileged opportunity?



22. Do adults in our films provide a safe environment for the young?



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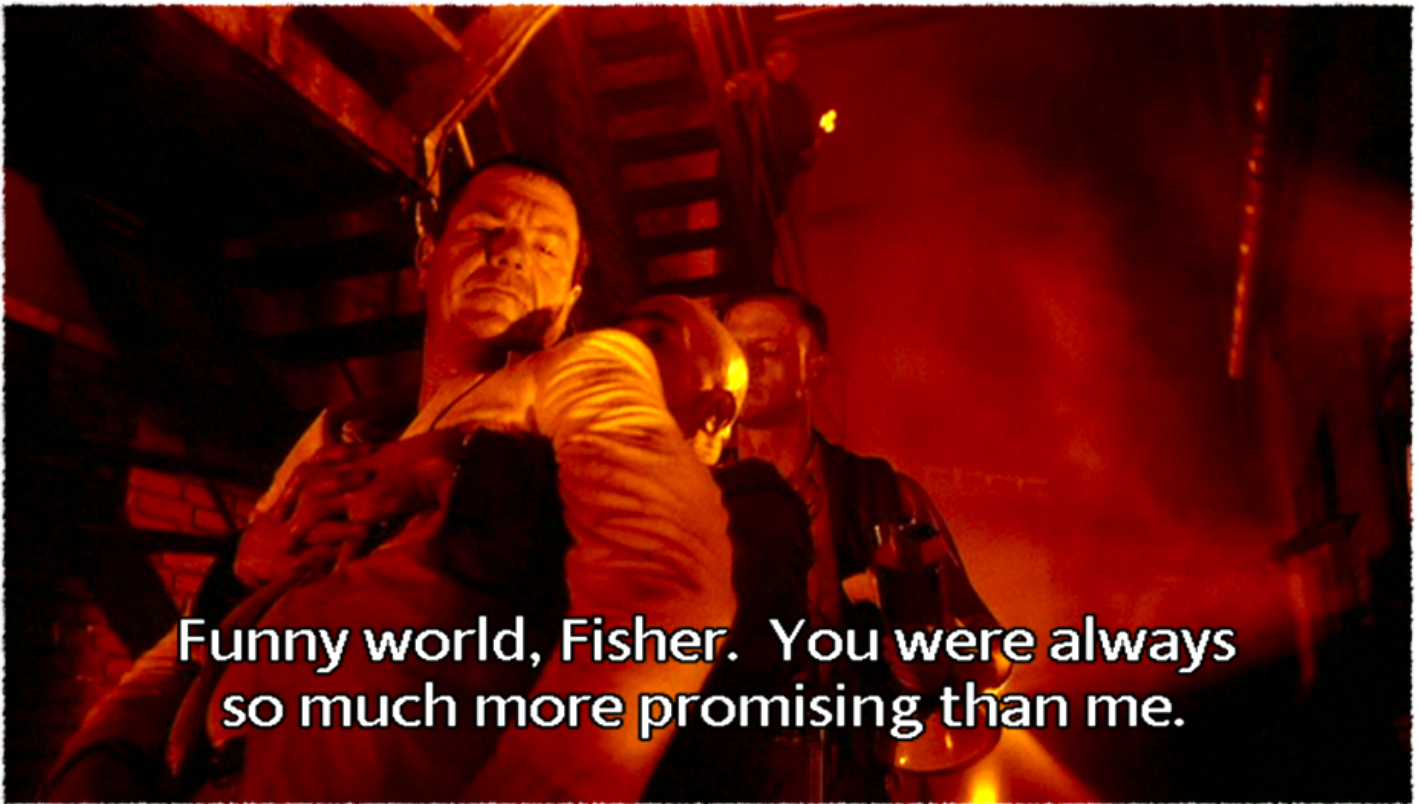
24. Does love conquer all within the domestic sphere provided by the home and family?



25. Do families provide more succor than distress for the afflicted member?



26. Does the proximity of friends and acquaintances provide reliable refuge?



27. In these films, does it help to have friends nearby to help one process difficult circumstances?



28. Does religious faith provide tangible hope in these films?

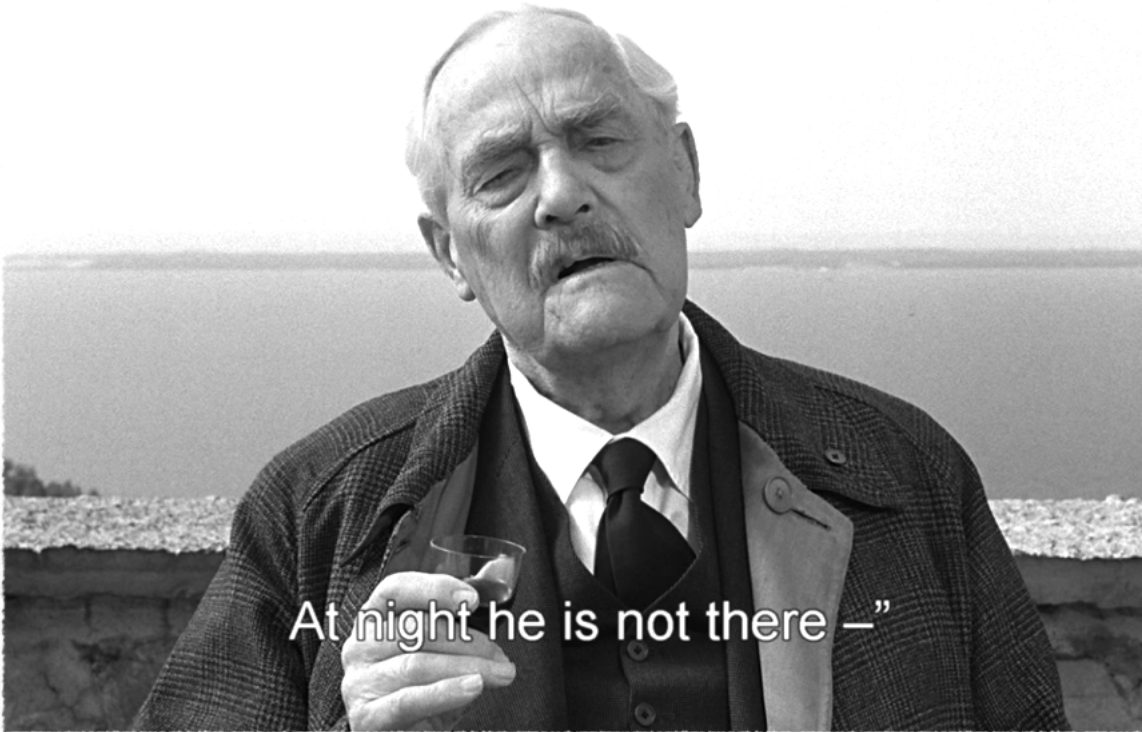


Pause



"Keep the wine in the bag until you get home".

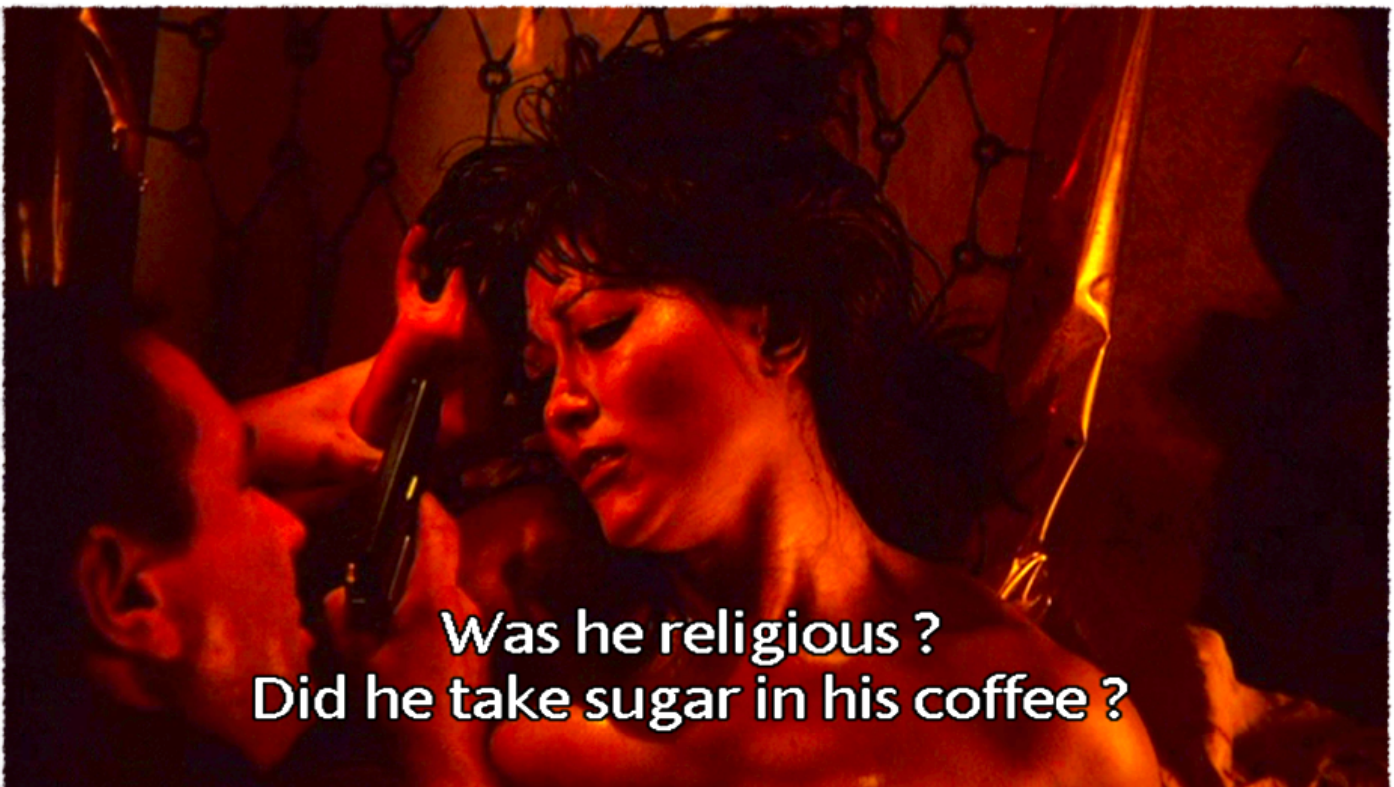
29. Does God seem present or far away to our characters?



30. Why do the characters bring up religion? Do they use it as an olive branch or a bludgeon?

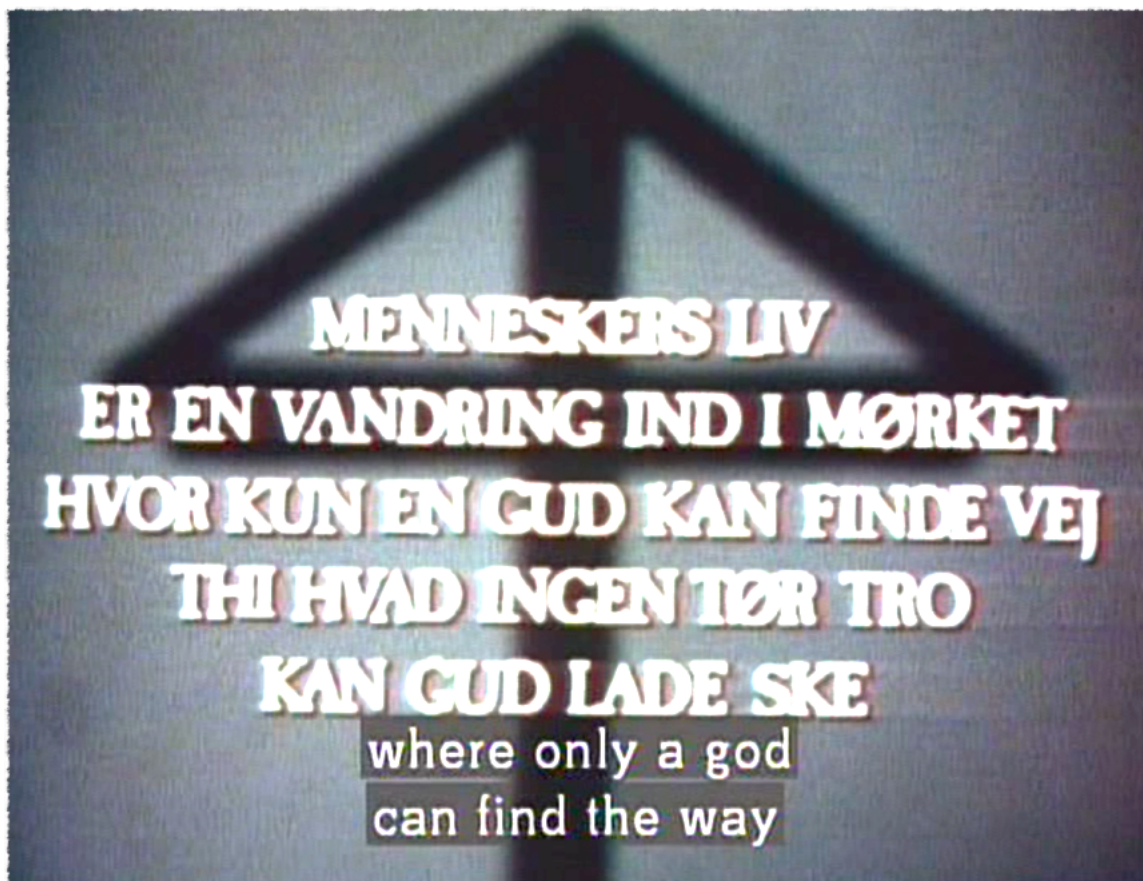


Ah, when creation shows
so much beauty.

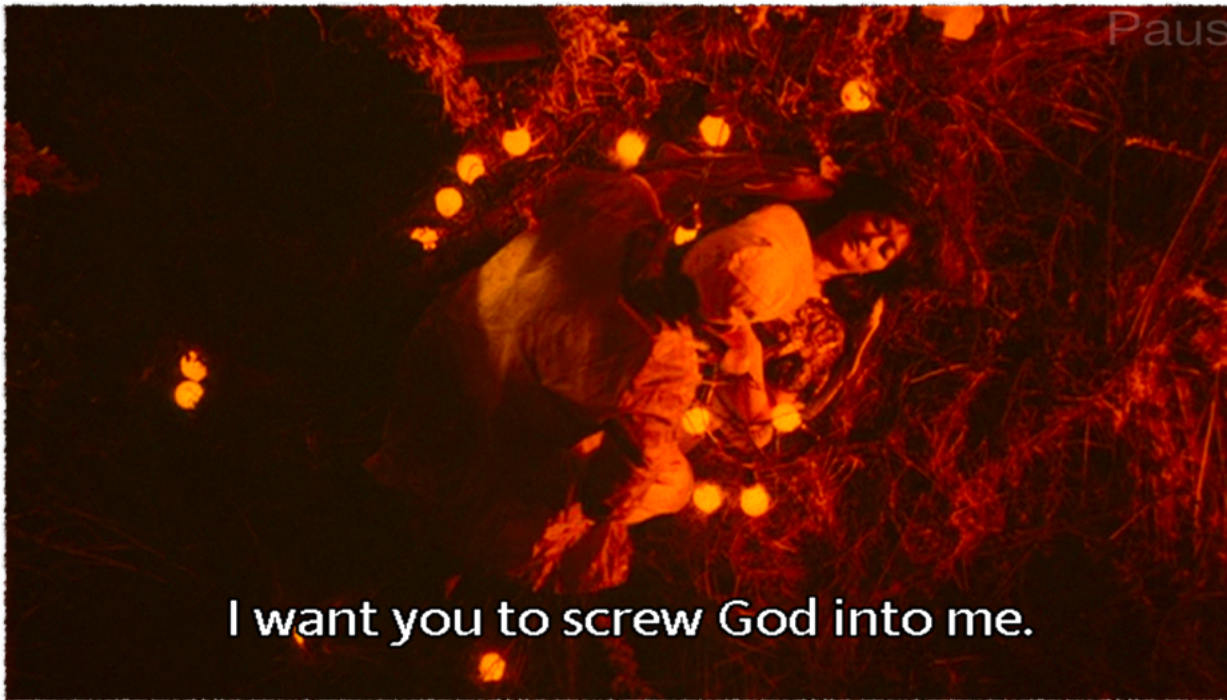


Was he religious?
Did he take sugar in his coffee?

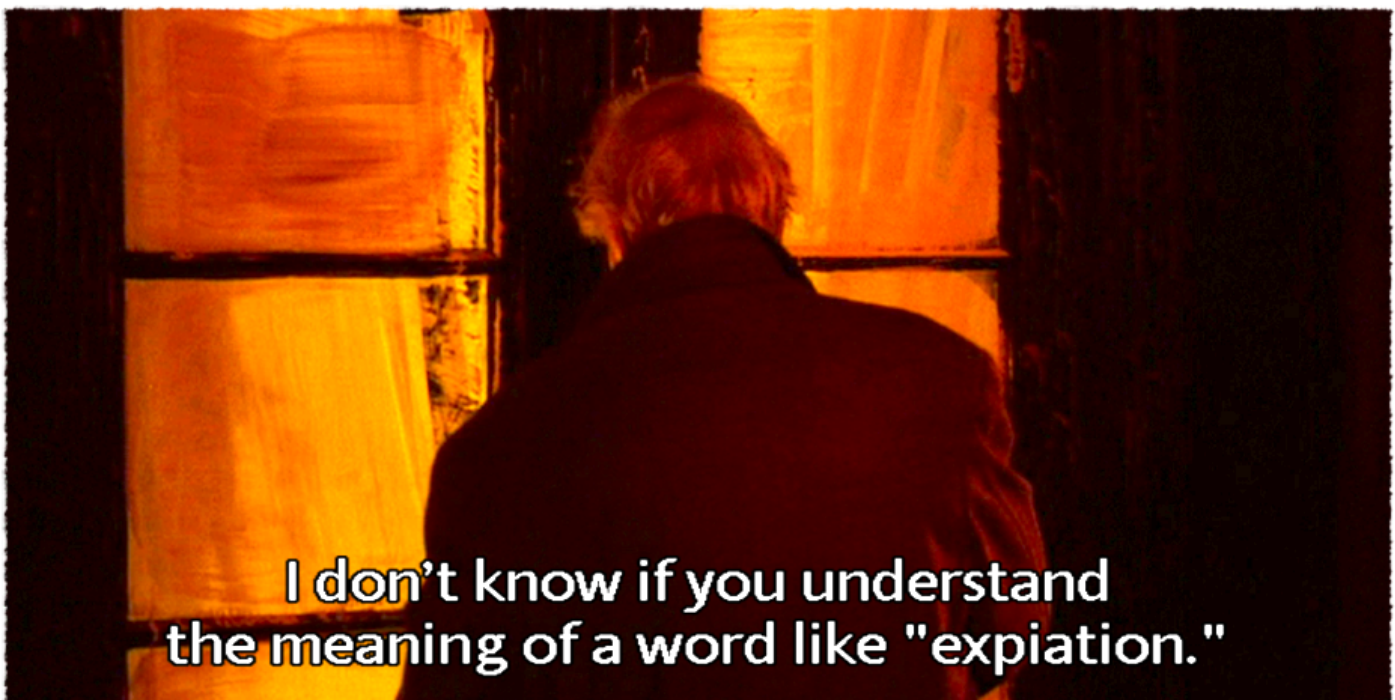
31. When and why do our filmmakers incorporate the Christian iconography of the cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified?



32. Do the characters in these films treat religious ideas with respect?



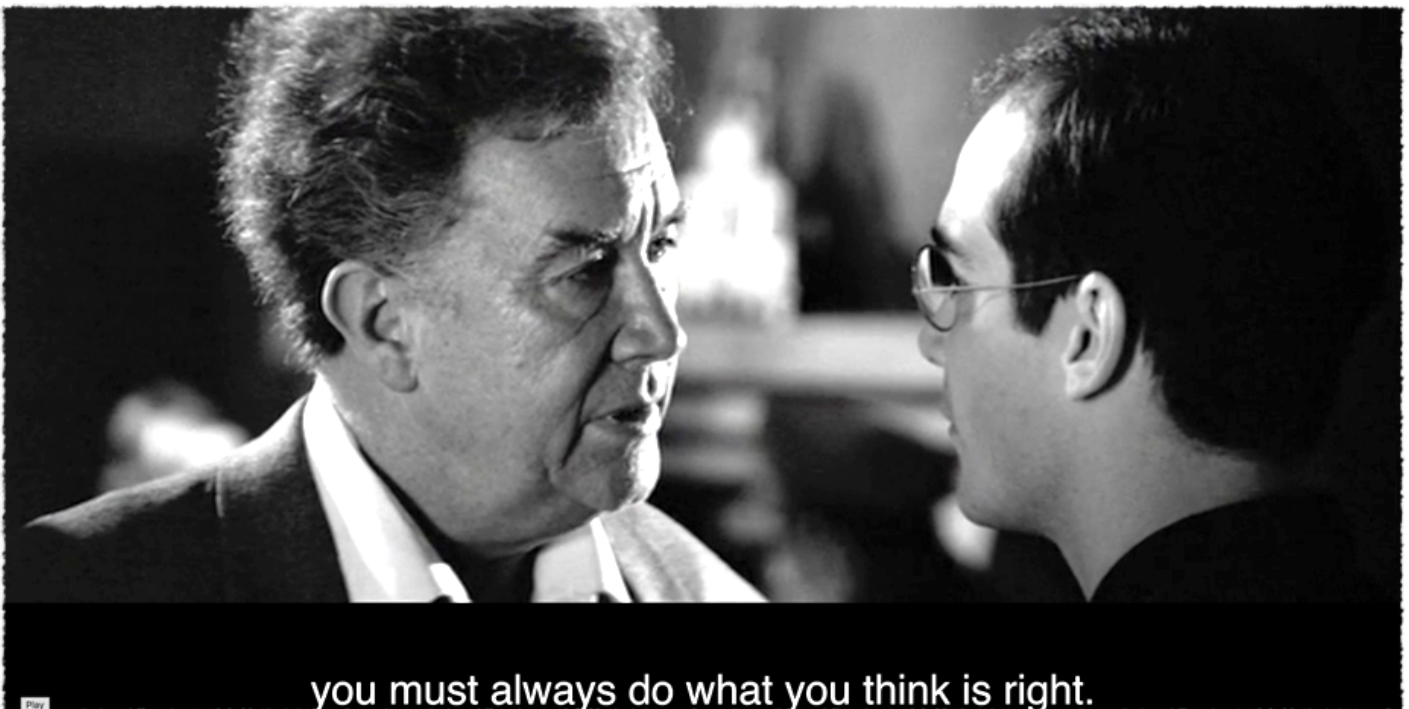
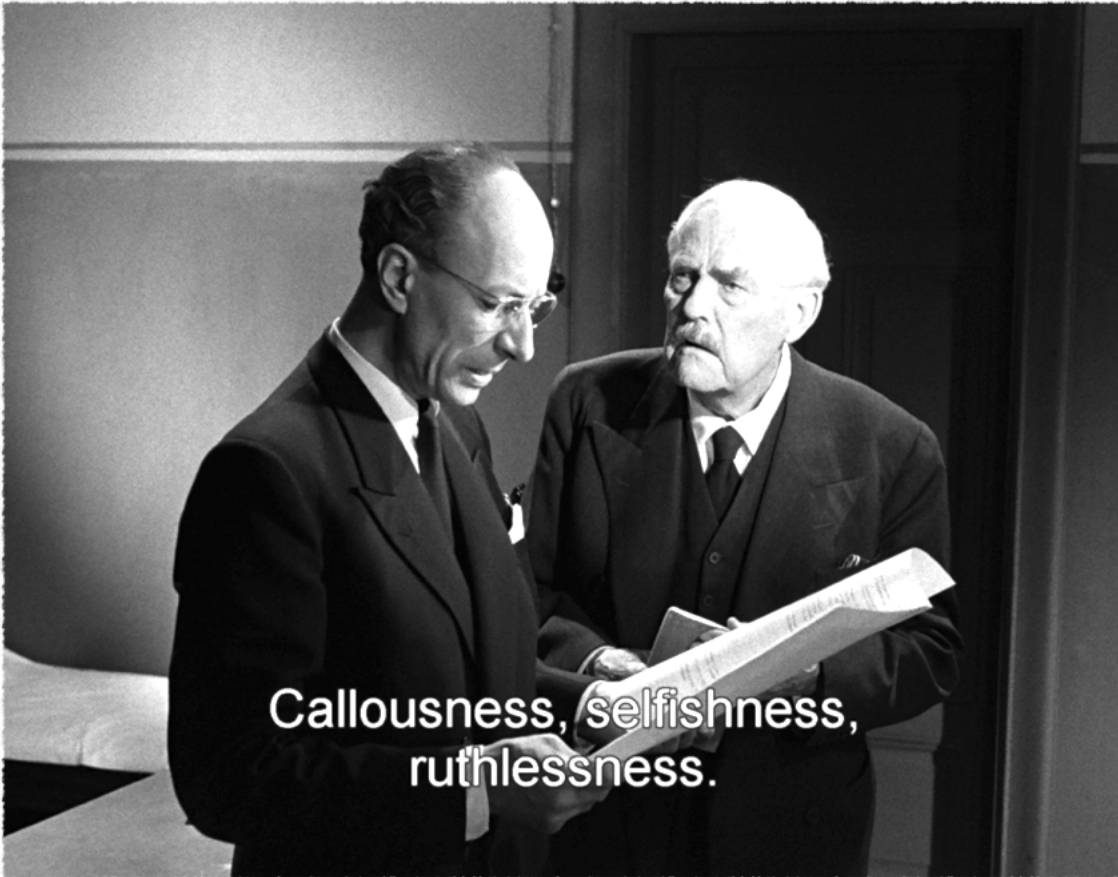
33. Do our characters know themselves very well?



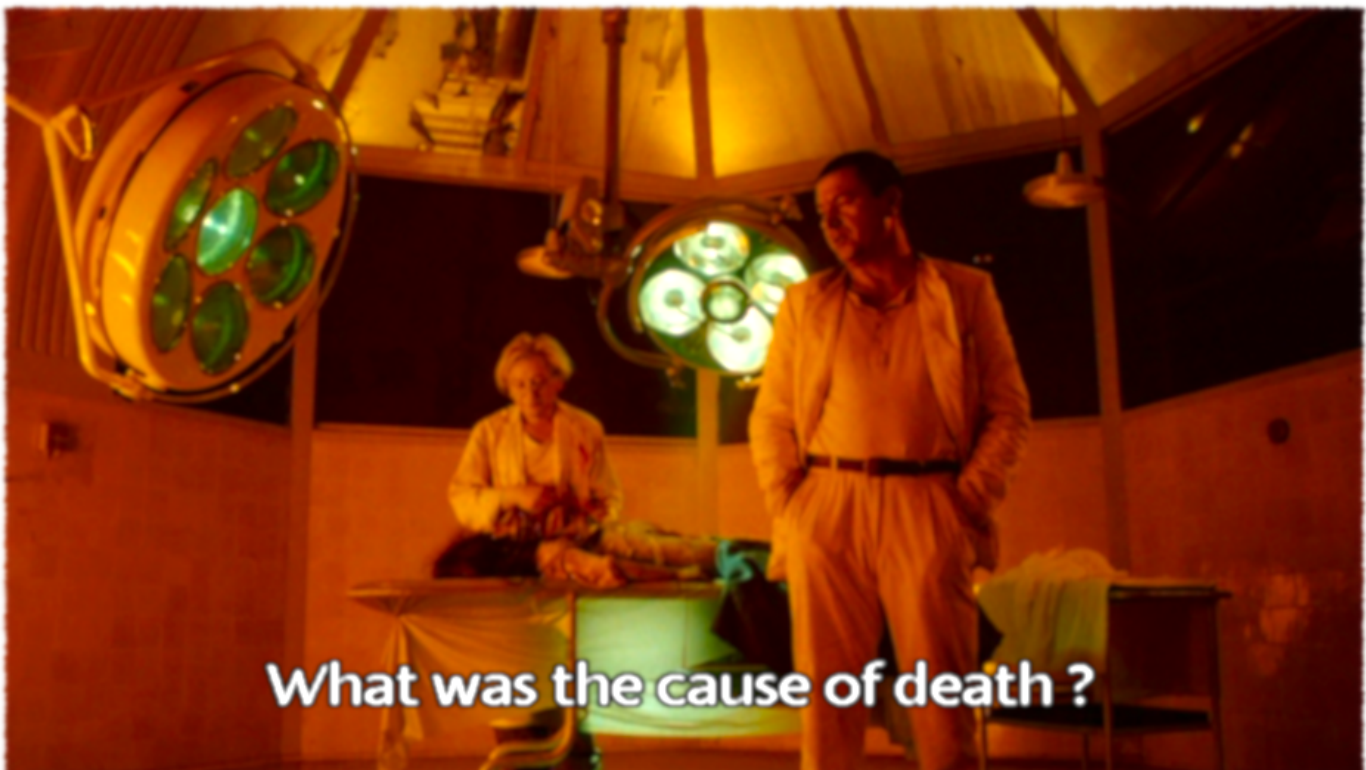
34. To what can wrong action be traced in these films? What, or who, is to blame for pain and suffering?



35. Do right and wrong have an objective reality in these films, or do they seem the spontaneously generated and subjective creation of the individual?



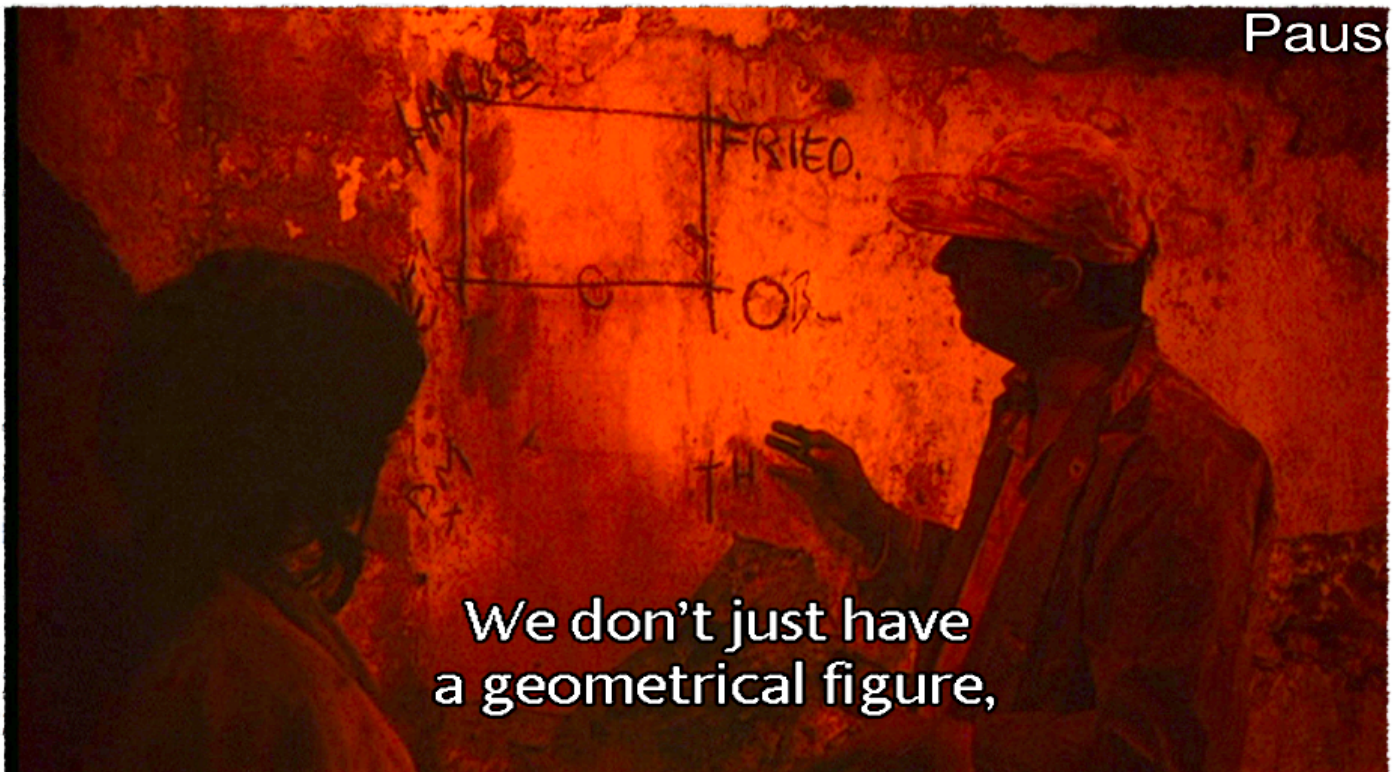
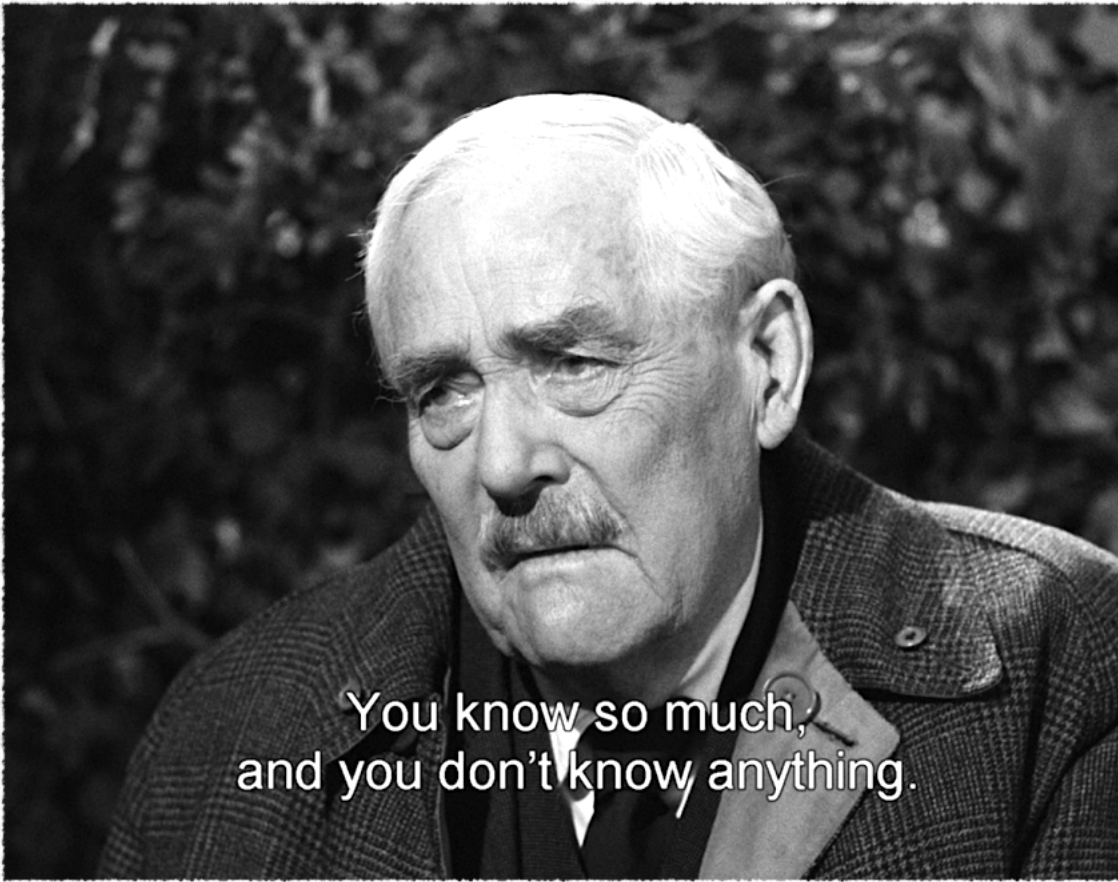
36. Do our films imply that death should be feared and fought, or embraced?



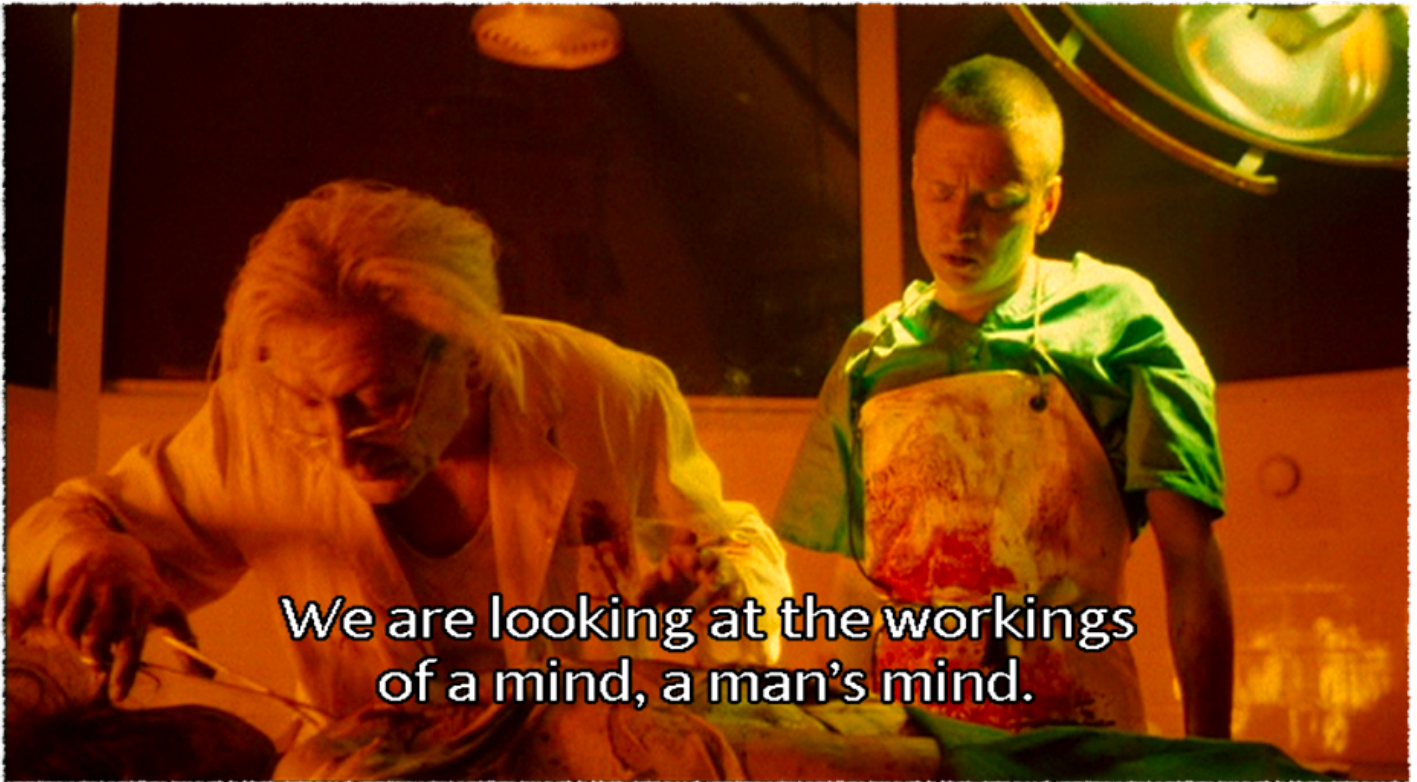
37. Does death seem to provide rest and reward, or punishment, in these films?



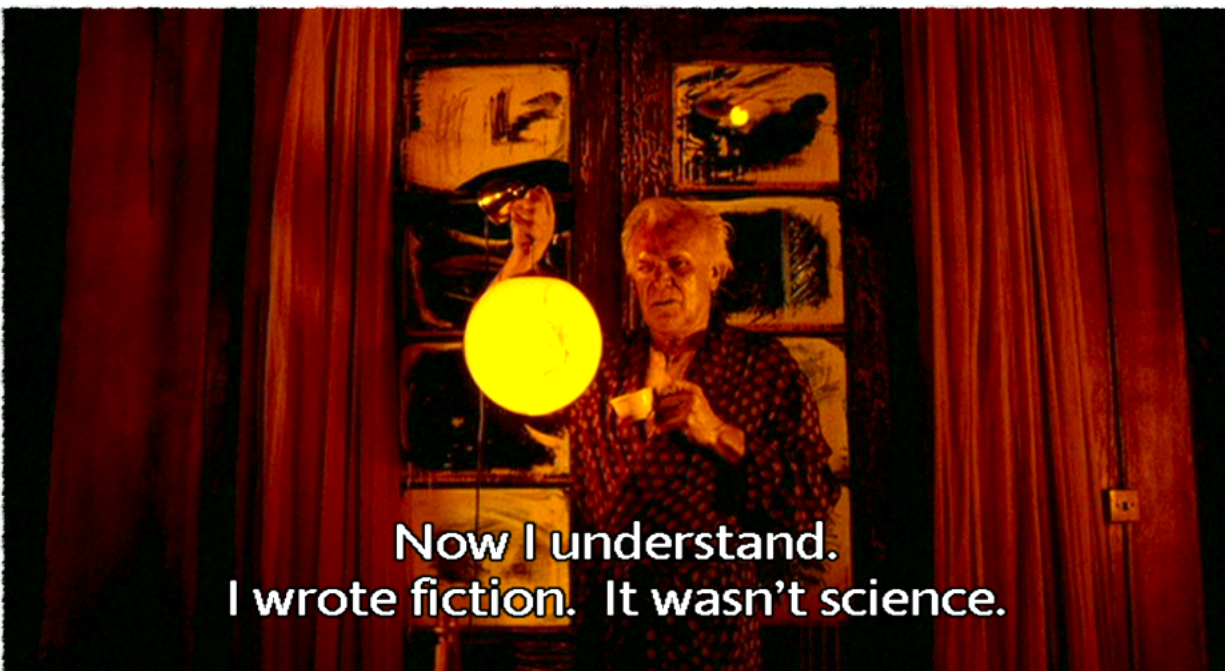
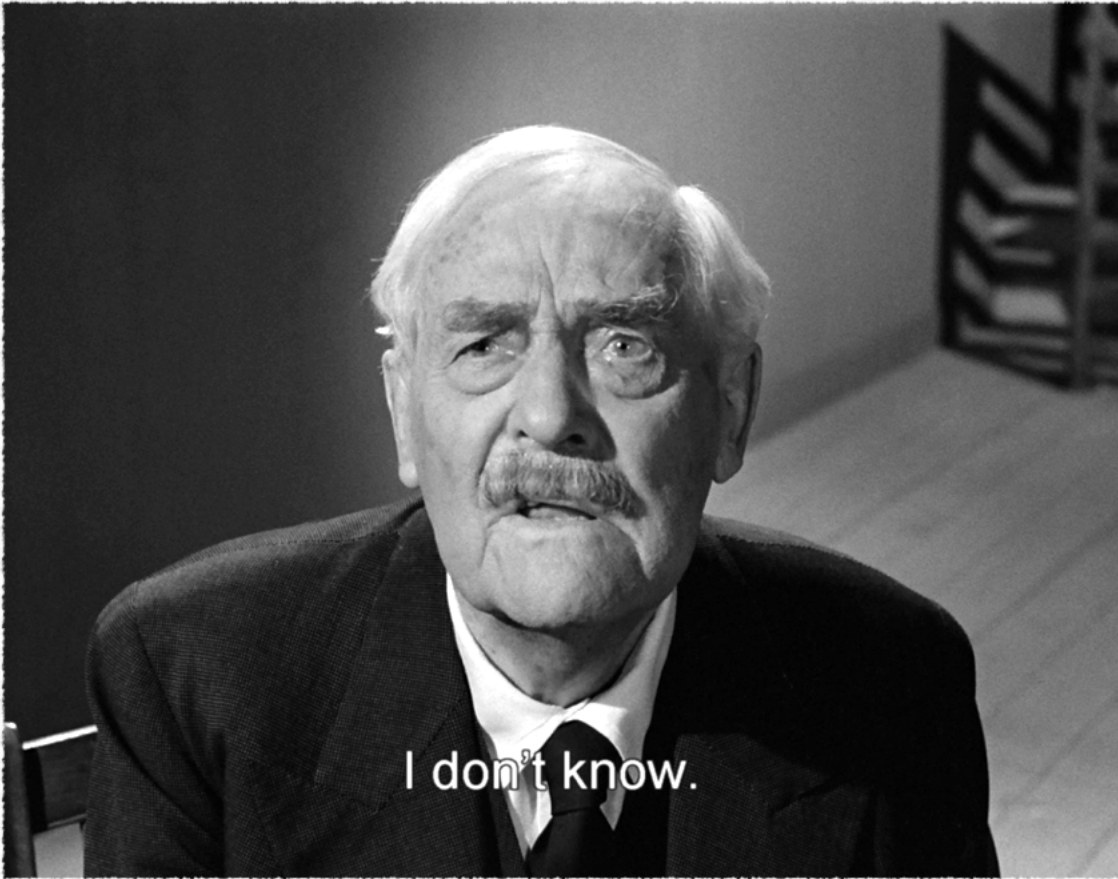
38. Does the accumulation of knowledge grant the holder of that knowledge *wisdom*?



39. Does intellectual acuity correlate positively with *emotional* intelligence, in our films? Does one usually accompany the other?



40. Do our characters have epiphanies—sudden moments of clarity—in time to save themselves?



41. Are our characters more adept at self-knowledge or self-deception?



42. Does Nature (the weather, animals, etc.) provide a tonal counterpoint to characters' feelings in our films, or does it tend to reflect, or even magnify, character emotion?



43. Is Nature a friend or foe to our characters?

