

11. Karel Kachyňa: *The Coach to Vienna* (Kočár do Vídně, 1966)

Screenplay: Jan Procházka, Karel Kachyňa. Director of photography: Josef Illík. Music: Jan Novák. Cast: Iva Janžurová, Jaromír Hanzlík, Luděk Munzar. 76 min.

Spring 1945, Moravia, near the border with Austria. The war is close to its end. A Czech peasant woman has lost her husband, who didn't fight against anybody but is hanged as a warning because he stole some sacks of cement. She buries his body the same night, because the front is nearing and she doesn't want to wait. Two soldiers of the German army come to the house of mourning before dawn. The soldiers don't know what happened. They order her to prepare a wagon, to harness the horses and to go with them. She says to herself that this is a clear hint from God. She prays to God to be strong and have the strength to execute justice.

This is the beginning of the film. This unconventional picture about the war, the Czech-German (or Austrian) relationship and "last minute" partisans provoked widespread discussion in the sixties. The film won the Third Main Award at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival in 1966; after 1969 it was banned for twenty years.

Our copy does not have English subtitles, but the story is practically without words and some dialogues are in German.

Assigned reading:

Hames, Peter. "The Czechoslovak New Wave. Desire – The Coach to Vienna"