

**SLA226H1: POST-WAR POLISH CINEMA**  
**University of Toronto, Spring 2003**

Instructor: Dr. Justyna Beinek

Office: 121 St. Joseph St. Room 428

Office Hours: Mondays 1-2 p.m. and Wednesdays 6-7 p.m. (after class)

**Class discussions (mandatory): Wednesdays 4-6 p.m. Carr Hall 404, 100 St. Joseph Street**

**Film screenings (attendance strongly recommended): Tuesdays 6-8 p.m., Robarts Library, Media Room.** (Throughout the month of February films will be showed at a different time: 7-9 p.m., same location. You can also watch the films on your own if these times do not suit you but be aware of problems with availability. It is imperative that you watch the films before class discussions. No excuses will be accepted.)

## **I. FILM AND HISTORY**

**January 7**                      Course Introduction

### **REPRESENTING THE WAR EXPERIENCE**

**FILM SHOWN IN CLASS (1/7, CARR HALL 404) : *Passenger (Pasażerka)*, 1963, dir. Andrzej Munk (63 mins)**

#### **READINGS:**

- Norman Davies, chapter 1 “The Legacy of Humiliation: Post-War Poland to the Crisis of the People’s Republic, 1944-1983” from *Heart of Europe: The Past in Poland’s Present* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001) 1-54. Available for purchase at Bob Miller Book Room (see last page of syllabus for info) and at ROBERTS RESERVE
- Marek Haltof, chapters 3-5 (3: “Polish Films – Whose Dreams? Cinema and the Political Construction of Polish National Identity after World War II,” 4: “The Poetics of Screen Stalinism,” 5: “The Polish School Revisited”) from *Polish National Cinema* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2002) 44-145. Available for purchase at Bob Miller Book Room (see last page of syllabus for info) and at ROBERTS RESERVE.

Recommended films: *Canal (Kanal)*, 1956, dir. Andrzej Wajda; *Kornblumenblau*, 1990, dir. Leszek Wosiewicz; *Korczak*, 1990, dir. Andrzej Wajda

**January 14**                      **COMMUNISM AND ROMANTICISM**

**FILM (shown 1/13 at ROBERTS MEDIA ROOM; all films will be shown at that location beginning with 1/13): *Ashes and Diamonds (Popiół i diament)*, 1958, dir. Andrzej Wajda (105 mins.)**

**READINGS:**

- Webpage [www.wajda.pl](http://www.wajda.pl) (browse all materials on *Ashes and Diamonds*, read Wajda's Oscar speech, Steven Spielberg's recommendation letter to the Academy).
- The screenplay *Ashes and Diamonds* in *The Wajda Trilogy* (London: Lorrimer, 1973) 160-239. ROBARTS RESERVE.
- Two final chapters (9 and 10) of the novel *Ashes and Diamonds* by Jerzy Andrzejewski (1948; trans. D.J. Welsh, New York: Penguin, 1962) 208-239. ROBARTS RESERVE.

**OPTIONAL:**

- Sławomir Mrozek's "Ashes? Diamonds?" from *Mrozek Festival* (Cracow: Mrozek Festival, 1990) 127-141. FROM INSTRUCTOR.

Recommended films: *Crossed-Eyed Luck (Zezowate szczęście)*, 1960, dir. Andrzej Munk; *Hands Up*, 1967/1985, dir. Jerzy Skolimowski

**January 21                    STALINISM AND ART**

**FILM (shown 1/20):** *Man of Marble (Człowiek z marmuru)*, dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1977 (165 mins)

**READINGS:**

- Webpage [www.wajda.pl](http://www.wajda.pl) (browse all materials on *Man of Marble*)
- Excerpts from chapter 7 "Camouflage and Rough Treatment" and 9 "The Representation of Stalinism in Polish Cinema" from Haltof's *Polish National Cinema* (146-175, 207-221). ROBARTS RESERVE.
- Chapter 8 "Andrzej Wajda: The Essential Pole" in Bolesław Michałek's and Frank Turaj's *The Modern Cinema of Poland* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988) 129-172. ROBARTS RESERVE.

**OPTIONAL:**

- Paul Coates, *The Story of the Last Reflection: The Alienation of the Image in Western and Polish Cinema* (London: Verso, 1985): Chapter 4, Part 4: "The Epic Political Theatre of Andrzej Wajda: From *Man of Marble* to *Danton*" (147-154). ROBARTS RESERVE

Recommended films: *Man of Iron (Człowiek z żelaza)*, dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1981; *Workers '80 (Robotnicy '80)*, 1981, dir. Andrzej Chodakowski

and Andrzej Zajączkowski; *Interrogation* (*Przesłuchanie*), 1982/1989, dir. Ryszard Bugajski

## II. FILM AND THE INDIVIDUAL

January 28                    “THE NEW WAVE”

**FILM (shown 1/27):** *Knife in the Water* (*Nóż w wodzie*), 1962, dir. Roman Polanski (94 mins)

### READINGS:

- Browse Polanski’s official website for his biography and information on films: [www.rp-productions.com](http://www.rp-productions.com)
- Ivan Butler, *The Cinema of Roman Polanski* (London: Zwemmer and New York: Barnes, 1970) 25-48, 175-190. ROBARTS RESERVE.
- Excerpts on *Knife in the Water* from Roman Polanski’s *Roman by Polanski* (New York: William Morrow, 1984) 173-184, 199-207. ROBARTS RESERVE.

### OPTIONAL:

- “The Subversion of Socialist Realism: *Knife in the Water* from Virginia Wright Wexman, *Roman Polanski* (Boston: Twayne, 1985) 27-32. ROBARTS RESERVE.

Recommended films: (American film) *Rosemary’s Baby*, 1968, dir. Roman Polanski; *The Pianist*, 2002, dir. Roman Polanski; *Night Train (Pociąg)*, 1959, dir. Jerzy Kawalerowicz

February 4                    THE POETICS OF DESPAIR

**FILM (shown 2/3):** *Lonely Woman* (*Kobieta samotna*), 1981/1988, dir. Agnieszka Holland (92 mins)

### READINGS:

- Search [www.perfectnet.com/holland/](http://www.perfectnet.com/holland/) for Holland’s biography and information on this week’s film.
- Chapter 15 “Agnieszka Holland, Barbara Sass and Dorota Kędzierzawska in the World of Male Polish Filmmaking” by Janina Falkowska in *Women Filmmakers: Refocusing* (eds. Jacqueline Levitin, Judith Plessis, and Valerie Raoul; Vancouver and Toronto: UBC Press, 2003) 96-108, 167-179. ROBARTS RESERVE.

- Chapter 8 “Liberation: 1983-1999” from Norman Davies’ *Heart of Europe: The Past in Poland’s Present* 407-433. Available for purchase at Bob Miller Book Room or at ROBARTS RESERVE.

OPTIONAL:

- Annette Insdorf, “Lonely Woman,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 8, 1987
- Gordana Crnkovic, “Interview with Agnieszka Holland,” *Film Quarterly* (1998-1999 Winter; 52 (2): 2-9). Available (free) at website [www.findarticles.com](http://www.findarticles.com).

Recommended films: *Europa, Europa*, 1991, dir. Agnieszka Holland; *Crows*, 1994, dir. Dorota Kędzierzawska; *By Touch*, 1985, dir. Magdalena Łazarkiewicz

**WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE FEB. 4**

**February 11                    ETHICS AND AESTHETICS**

**FILM (shown 2/10):** *A Short Film About Killing (Krótki film o zabijaniu)* and *A Short Film about Love (Krótki film o miłości)* from *Decalogue (Dekalog)*, Episodes 5 and 6, respectively, 1988, dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski (55 mins each)

**READINGS:**

- Browse excellent websites on Kieślowski for his biography and information on *The Decalogue*: [www.filmref.com/directors/dirpages/kieslowski.html](http://www.filmref.com/directors/dirpages/kieslowski.html) (Strictly Film School), [www.petey.com/kk/](http://www.petey.com/kk/) (Kino Kieślowski), [www.facets.org/decalogue/](http://www.facets.org/decalogue/)
- Chapter 4 “*The Decalogue: Ten Short Films about Mortality*” from Annette Insdorf, *Double Lives, Second Chances: The Cinema of Krzysztof Kieślowski* (New York: Hyperion, 1999) 69-124. Available for purchase at Bob Miller Book Room and at ROBARTS RESERVE.

OPTIONAL:

- “Background” and “*The Decalogue*,” “*A Short Film about Killing*,” “*A Short Film about Love*” from *Kieślowski on Kieślowski*, ed. Danusia Stok (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1993) 1-22, 143-171. ROBARTS RESERVE.

Recommended films: Eight other films from *The Decalogue* (see above), dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski, *Double Life of Veronique (Podwójne życie*

*Weroniki*); *I'm So-So*, 1995, dir. Krzysztof Wierzbicki (documentary on Kieślowski)

**February 25            EGALITÉ : TRAGICOMEDY**

**FILM (shown 2/24) *White (Biały)*, 1994, dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski (102 mins)**

**READINGS:**

- Chapter 8 “Landscape after Battle: The Return of Democracy” in Haltof’s *Polish National Cinema* 176-206. ROBARTS RESERVE.
- Chapter 7 „Three Colors – White” in Annette Insdorf, *Double Lives, Second Chances: The Cinema of Krzysztof Kieslowski* 153-165. Available for purchase at Bob Miller Book Room and at ROBARTS RESERVE.

**OPTIONAL:**

- “Three Colors” in *Kieslowski on Kieslowski* 212-228. ROBARTS RESERVE.

Recommended films: *Blue (Niebieski)*, 1993; *Red (Czerwony)*, 1994, dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski

**III. FILM AND THE COLLECTIVE**

**March 3                    WHAT MAKES A CULT FILM A CULT FILM?**

**FILM (shown 3/2): *The Cruise/A Trip Down the River (Rejs)*, 1970, dir. Marek Piwowski (67 mins)**

**READINGS:**

- “Introduction: Mapping the Cult” from *The Cult Film Experience: Beyond All Reason*, ed. J.P. Telotte (Austin: University of Texas, Austin, 1991) 1-38. ROBARTS RESERVE.
- “Comedies” (excerpts from chapter 6) from Haltof’s *Polish National Cinema* 140-145. Available for purchase at Bob Miller Book room or at ROBARTS RESERVE.

**OPTIONAL:**

- (IN POLISH): browse websites [www.rejs.art.pl](http://www.rejs.art.pl) (official site) and [www.rejs.digimer.pl/rejs.html](http://www.rejs.digimer.pl/rejs.html) (unofficial site)

Recommended films: *Sexmission (Seksmisja)*, 1984, dir. Juliusz Machulski; *Teddy Bear (Miś)*, 1981, dir. Stanisław Bareja; *All among Ourselves (Sami swoi)*, 1967, dir. Sylwester Chęciński

**March 10**                    **“THE CINEMA OF INTELLECTUAL INQUIRY”**

**FILM (shown 3/9):** *Illumination (Iluminacja)*, 1973, dir. Krzysztof Zanussi (91 mins)

**READINGS:**

- Chapter 9 “Krzysztof Zanussi: The Cinema of Intellectual Inquiry” in Bolesław Michałek and Frank Turaj *The Modern Cinema of Poland 173-195*. ROBARTS RESERVE.
- On Zanussi in Chapter 6 Haltof’s *Polish National Cinema* 127-131. Available for purchase at Bob Miller Book Room or at ROBARTS RESERVE.

Recommended films: *The Structure of Crystals (Struktura kryształu)*, 1969, dir. Krzysztof Zanussi; *Year of the Quiet Sun (Rok spokojnego słońca)*, 1985, dir. Krzysztof Zanussi

**WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE MARCH 10**

**March 17 HOW TO MAKE A POLISH BLOCKBUSTER?**

**FILM (shown 3/16):** *Pigs (Psy)*, 1992, dir. Władysław Pasikowski (110 mins)

**READINGS:**

- Chapter 11 “Polish Films with an American Accent” from Haltof’s *Polish National Cinema* 241-258. Available for purchase at Bob Miller Book Room or at ROBARTS RESERVE.
- Michael Stevenson, “‘I Don’t Feel Like Talking to You Anymore’: Gender Uncertainties in Polish Film since 1989: An Analysis of *Psy* (W. Pasikowski, 1992)” in *Gender in Film and the Media: East-West Dialogues* (eds. Elzbieta Oleksy, Elzbieta Ostrowska, Michael Stevenson; Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2000) 134-149. FROM INSTRUCTOR.

Recommended films: *Pigs 2. Last Blood (Psy2. Ostatnia krew)*, 1994, dir. Władysław Pasikowski; *Kiler*, 1997, dir. Juliusz Machulski

**March 24**                    **CONTEMPORARY CONCERNS**

**FILM (shown 3/24):** *Eddie (Edi)*, 2002, dir. Piotr Trzaskalski (100 mins)

**READINGS:**

- „Afterword” in Haltof’s *Polish National Cinema* 259-261. Available for purchase at Bob Miller Book Room or at ROBARTS RESERVE

OPTIONAL:

- (IN POLISH ): an open letter about the crisis in Polish cinema, published in the Polish daily “Rzeczpospolita” on April 10, 2002 (signed by Agnieszka Holland and others). [www.stopklatka.pl](http://www.stopklatka.pl)

Recommended films: *Hi, Tessa (Cześć, Tereska)*, 2000, dir. Robert Gliński; *Happy Man (Szczęśliwy człowiek)*, 2000, dir. Małgorzata Szumowska; *A Man Thing (Męska sprawa)*, 2001, dir. Sławomir Fabicki; *Weiser*, 2001, dir. Wojciech Marczewski

#### IV. FILM AND LITERATURE

##### March 31 PARALLEL REALITIES

**FILM (shown 3/30):** *Sanitarium under the Hourglass*, 1973, dir. Wojciech Has (124 mins)

**READINGS:**

- Bruno Schulz, *Sanatorium under the Sign of the Hourglass* in *The Complete Fiction by Bruno Schulz* (trans. Celina Wieniewska; New York: Walker, 1989). ROBARTS RESERVE.
- “Adaptations” from Haltof’s *Polish National Cinema* 113-117. Available for purchase at Bob Miller Book Room or at ROBARTS RESERVE.

Recommended films: *The Saragossa Manuscript (Rękopis znaleziony w Saragossie)*; 1965, dir. Wojciech Has; *Pharaoh (Faraon)*, 1966, dir. Jerzy Kawalerowicz

##### April 7 REVISITING THE CLASSICS

**FILM (shown 4/6):** *Mister Thaddeus (Pan Tadeusz)*, 1999, dir. Andrzej Wajda (125 mins)

**READINGS:**

- The novel in verse *Pan Thaddeus or The Last Foray in Lithuania* by Adam Mickiewicz (trans. Kenneth Mackenzie; London: Dent, 1966) or another translation: *Pan Tadeusz or The Last Foray in Lithuania* (trans. Watson

Kirkconnell; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962). BOTH AT ROBERTS RESERVE.

- Website [www.wajda.pl](http://www.wajda.pl): all materials on *Mister Thaddeus*.

Recommended films: *Promised Land (Ziemia obiecana)*, 1975, dir. Andrzej Wajda; *With Fire and Sword (Ogniem i mieczem)*, 1999, dir. Jerzy Hoffman; *Before the Spring (Przedwiośnie)*, 2001, dir. Filip Bajon

## FINAL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT DUE APRIL 7

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### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Attendance and active participation in class discussions are essential and constitute **20% of your final grade**.
- Written assignments:
  - Two shorter take-home assignments (approx. 7-8 pages each,) to be completed on **February 4 and March 10**, respectively. The assignments will consist of short factual questions about films/readings and analytical essay questions that will give you a chance to respond to the films and issues raised in class. Assignments will be distributed in class one week before they are due. Each assignment is **20% of final grade**.
  - A longer take-home final assignment (approx. 10 pages) that will follow the model of the short assignments but will require you to write a paper on a topic of your choice (approx. 8 pages) as part of the assignment. The assignment will be distributed in class two weeks before it is due but will cover the material up to the penultimate class meeting (March 31). The paper topic can be discussed with the instructor earlier in order to ensure sufficient time for writing. Due last day of class, **April 7**. **25% of final grade**.
- 1-2 class presentations delivered orally (10-15 minutes each) on one of the films, directors, issues, or readings. Topics taken from “Optional readings” listed on the syllabus and TBA. **15% of final grade**.

### WHERE TO FIND READINGS

- On Short Term Loan at Roberts Library: marked in the syllabus ROBERTS RESERVE.

- Available for purchase at Bob Miller Book Room, 180 Bloor Street W. (marked in the syllabus as such):
  - **PRIMARY TEXTBOOK: Marek Haltof, *Polish National Cinema, 2002* (\$41).**
  - **PRIMARY BOOK ON POLISH HISTORY: Norman Davies, *Heart of Europe, 2001* (\$31).**
  - **Annette Insdorf, *Double Lives, Second Chances: The Cinema of Krzysztof Kieslowski, 1999* (\$20)**
  - **David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction, 2003* (\$79).**
- A few readings will be distributed in class by the instructor (marked FROM INSTRUCTOR).
- Readings available on the Internet are marked in the syllabus as such; addresses are provided.

#### **USEFUL WEBSITES:**

- [www.filmref.com](http://www.filmref.com) (English)
- [www.culture.pl](http://www.culture.pl) (English)
- [www.filmpolski.pl](http://www.filmpolski.pl) (Polish; excellent in-depth resource)
- [www.stopklatka.pl](http://www.stopklatka.pl) (Polish)

#### **RECOMMENDED BOOKS ON GENERAL FILM STUDY AND WRITING ABOUT FILM (required reading for students with no or little previous film background):**

- David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2003). 7<sup>th</sup> ed. ROBARTS RESERVE and available for purchase at Bob Miller Book Room.
- Timothy Corrigan, *A Short Guide to Writing about Film* (New York: Longman, 2001). ROBARTS RESERVE.

#### **RECOMMENDED REFERENCE WORKS:**

- *The New Biographical Dictionary of Film*. Ed. David Thomson. New York: Knopf, 2003. (includes entries on Wajda, Holland, Kieslowski, Polanski)

- *The Macmillan International Film Encyclopedia*. Ed. Ephraim Katz. London: Macmillan, 2001.