

PSC 255/FS 256B  
**Political Film**

Lattimore 201  
 Th 2:00-4:40 PM  
 Fall '06

Professor Ewa Hauser  
 ewa.hauser@rochester.edu  
 Harkness 101, tel: #5-1677  
 Office hours: W 3:00-5:00 PM  
 or by appointment

Special screenings Mondays 7:40 in Dewey 2110 D

Cinema, according to Lenin, the “most important art,” was not to be a bourgeois entertainment. It has functioned instead as a tool of self-conscious state propaganda. Similar function was assigned to cinema in the Nazi state with its racist myths. Both totalitarian systems monopolized information and politicized and policed all aspects of life. Following 1945, Eastern European states in the Soviet sphere of influence adhered to state monopoly on information, preventive censorship, and control over all political and cultural policies. We will examine film as the dominant form of expression under total state patronage of the arts, and as an expression of and a tool for creating collective memory and national and gender identity.

We will discuss the origins of fascism, and the military history and human tragedy in films that were propagating, documenting or trying to explain various vantage points on World War II.

**Participation:** All students are required to attend each class and to view the films during the additional screenings. Students, who do not attend classes without a serious and explicit reason, cannot expect to pass this class--regardless of how well they would do in other course requirements. Additionally, attendance and participation account for 10 percent of the grade.

**Texts and reading assignments:** Both films and readings are considered required texts. Reading is available in the library on reserve. You may find additional film reviews in the Reference section of the library or on the web: imdb.

**Writing assignments:** To each class you must bring a short review, 1-2 pages, with your reaction and observations made during the viewing of the last week's film. Cumulative grade for the reviews will count as 30 percent of the final grade. 10 best reviews will be graded.

**Examinations:** You will take a midterm test covering the first part of the course on October 19 and a final. The midterm examination will count for 20 percent of the course grade. Final examination will count for 40 percent of the final grade. Students who would like to do a research project, must get my permission by November 15, to write a final paper (5-7 pages) instead of the final. The paper would be due at the last class on December 7.

### Week One

September 7

Introduction: Cinema in East European tradition.

In class screening: *Propaganda*, 29 min

Readings:

Taylor, "Introduction" and "Propaganda and Film" in: Film Propaganda; Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany, 3-17 **e-reserve**

Bell, "German Nazism" 77-97 in The Origins of the Second World War, **e-reserve**

### Week Two

Monday, Sept. 11

Screening: *Triumph of the Will*, 114 min

September 14

Cinema as a tool of National Socialism

In class screening: excerpts of *The Wonderful Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl*

Readings:

Taylor, "Nazi Germany: Historical Background..." 125-152, and "Triumph of the Will" 162-174 in: Film Propaganda

Rother, "The Genius of Nazi Filmmaking" 45-74 in: Leni Riefenstahl

### Week Three

Monday, Sept. 18

Screening: *Mephisto*, 144 min

September 21

Cinema as a tool of National Socialism, cont.

In class screening: *Goebbels*, 55 min.

Readings:

Wright, "Psychological Warfare Nazi Style" 66-78 in The Ordeal of Total War 1939-45

Indorf, "The Ambiguity of Identity: Mephisto..." in Indelible Shadows, 159-163 **e-reserve**

Week 4

Monday, Sept. 25

Screening: *Aleksander Nevsky*, 104 minutes

September 28

In class screening: excerpts *Three Songs of Lenin*, 57 minutes  
*The Fall of Berlin*, 72 min

Readings:

Taylor, "Soviet Russia-Historical Background" 21-28  
"The Needs of Revolution" 28-50,  
"Three Songs of Lenin" 74-84,  
"Aleksander Nevski 85-98 all in: Film Propaganda: Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany

Week 5

Monday, Oct. 2

Screening: *Lotna*, 90 min

October 5

In class screening: WWII documentary

Readings:

Wright, "Europe on the Brink" 1-9, "The Destruction of Poland" 17-19, in The Ordeal of Total War 1939-45  
Caes, "Catastrophic Spectacles: historical Trauma and Masculine Subject in Lotna" 116-131, in Orr and Ostrowska, The Cinema of Andrzej Wajda  
Iordanova, "The Burden of History" 58-66 in Cinema of Other Europe e-reserve

Week 6

October 12 Soviet Great Patriotic War

In class screening: *Cranes Are Flying*, 94 min,  
excerpts of *Ballad of a Soldier*, 85 min.

## Readings:

Bell, "Soviet Communism" 123-138  
 in The Origins of the Second World War **e-reserve**  
 Wright, "Reshaping of German Strategy, Victory in the East" 32-43 in The Ordeal of Total War 1939-45  
 Liehm, "Where Did the Cranes Fly?" 199-210 in The Most Important Art **e-reserve**

Week 7

Monday, Oct. 16

Screening: *Korczak* 115 min

October 19

In class screening: excerpts of *Generation*, 95 min

## Readings:

Wright, "The Underground in Eastern Europe" 154-161 in The Ordeal of Total War 1939-45  
 J Korczak, Ghetto Uprising  
 Insdorf "Korczak" 268-272 Indelible Shadows **e-reserve**  
 Stevenson, "Wajda's Filmic representation of Polish-Jewish relations" 76-92 in Orr and Ostrowska, The Cinema of Andrzej Wajda

**Midterm take home due Monday October 23**

Week 8

Monday, Oct. 23

Screening: *Canal*, 95 minutes

October 26

War Trauma in the Polish School of Film.

In class screening: excerpts of *Eroica*, 80 min.

## Readings:

Davies, Rising '44 **e-reserve**, pp. 250-251, 255-256, 269-270, 281, 289-290, 292-293, 317-318, 399.  
 Wright "German Rule in Occupied Europe: Hitler's New Order, Colonization and Germanization, Economic Exploitation, Repression and Liquidation" 107-129 in The Ordeal of Total War 1939-45  
 Mazierska, "Eroica" 55-63 in The Cinema of Central Europe **e-reserve**

Michalek, "Introduction," "Postwar beginnings" and "The Polish School," in The Modern Cinema of Poland, 19-34 **e-reserve**

Liehm, "Polish School" 174-181 in: The Most Important Art **e-reserve**

### Week 9

Monday, Oct 30

Screening: *Closely Watched Trains*, 92 min

November 2

Czech resistance

Readings: Wright "German Rule in Occupied Europe: Hitler's New Order, Collonization and Germanization, Economic Expoitation, Repression and Liquidation" 107-129 in The Ordeal of Total War 1939-45

Liehm, "The Miracle of the Young Wave: Czechoslovakia after 1963"

275-305, in: The Most Important Art **e-reserve**

Hames, "Closely Observed Trains" 117-127, in The Cinema of Central Europe **e-reserve**

Iordanova, "The Czechoslovak New Wave" 96-102 in Cinema of the Other Europe **e-reserve**

### Week 10

Monday, Nov. 6

Screening: *Europa, Europa*, 113 min

November 9

Readings: Schafft, "Race and Racism" 200-220 in From Racism to Genocide. Anthropology in the Third Reich **e-reserve**

Iordanova, "Ways of Remembering: Victims and Perpetrators" 74-82 in: Cinema of the Other Europe **e-reserve**

Perel, Europa Europa

Insdorf, "Styless of Tension" 43-58, "Political Resistance," 139-158 Indelible Shadows

### Week 11

November 16

Screening in class: *Kolberg*, 111 min

Readings:

Giesen, "Goetterdaemmerung: Kolberg and the Fall of the Third Reich" 163-184  
in Nazi Propaganda Film **e-reserve**

Taylor, "Kolberg" 196-207 in Film Propaganda

### Week 12

Monday, Nov. 20 The end of the Third Reich and memory. (make up class)

In class screening: *Good Morning Mr. Hitler*

### ***Thanksgiving November 23***

Monday, Nov. 27

Screening: *Divided We Fall*, 120 min

November 30 Collective memory of WWII Conclusions

Readings:

Wright, "The Dislocation of the Nazi Empire" 189-203 in The Ordeal of Total War 1939-45

### Week 13

December 7

Final exam

### **Films screened in class:**

September 7 documentary *Propaganda* 29 min

September 14 documentary *Goebbels*, 1998, 55 min

excerpts of *The Wonderful Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl*, 1998, 55 min

September 28 excerpts of *Three Songs of Lenin*, 1934, 57 min,

Reisman, *The Fall of Berlin*, 72 min

October 5 ***WWII documentary***

October 12 ***Cranes Are Flying***, 94 min, excerpts of ***Ballad of a Soldier***

October 19 ***Generation***, 95 min

October 26 *Eroica*, 80 min.  
 November 6 excerpts of *Europa, Europa*, 113 min  
 November 16 *Kolberg*, 111 min

### Film screenings Mondays, Dewey 2110 D at 7:40 pm

September 11 Riefenstahl, *The Triumph of the Will*, 1935, 114 min, Germany  
 September 18 Szabo, *Mephisto*, 1981, 144 min, Hungary  
 September 25 Eisenstein, *Aleksander Nevsky*, 1938, 100 min, USSR  
 October 2 Wajda, *Lotna*, 1959, 90 min, Poland  
 October 16 Wajda, *Korczak*, 1990, 101 min, Poland  
 October 23 Wajda, *Canal*, 1957, 118 min, Poland  
 October 30 Menzel, *Closely Watched Trains*, 1966, 93 min, Czechoslovakia  
 November 9 Holland, *Europa, Europa*, 1990 113 min, Poland  
 November 27 Hrebejk, *Divided We Fall*, 2000 120 min, Czech Republic

### Books on reserve

Bell, P.M.H. The Origins of the Second World War, 1986, 1997  
 Davies, N. Rising '44, 2004  
 Giesen, Rolf, Nazi Propaganda Films, 2003  
 Hames, Peter (ed) The Cinema of Central Europe, 2004  
 Held, Joseph (ed), Columbia History of Eastern Europe, 1991  
 Insdorf, Annette Indelible Shadows: Film and the Holocaust, 2003  
 Iordanova, Dina Cinema of the Other Europe, 2003  
 Liehm, M. & A. The Most Important Art: East European Film after 1945, 1977  
 Michalek, B & Turaj Modern Cinema of Poland, 1988  
 Orr, and Ostrowska The Cinema of Andrzej Wajda: The Art of Irony and Defiance  
 Paul, David W. Politics, Art and Commitment, 1983  
 Perel, Solomon Europa, Europa, 1997  
 Rother, Rainer Leni Riefenstahl, 2004  
 Schafft, Gretchen From Racism to Genocide. Anthropology in the Third Reich, 2004  
 Taylor, Richard, Film Propaganda: Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany, 1998  
 Wright, Gordon The Ordeal of Total War 1939-1945, 1969