



Polish Studies Program Spring 2013

POL 211/HIS 211/DMS 212: Polish History in Film
Tuesdays/Thursdays: 9:30-10:50, 111 Baldy
Dr Anna Mazurkiewicz, Visiting Professor,
University of Gdansk and Polish Studies, UB
Registration number: 21015



This course will provide the students with a survey of the most important and most interesting Polish historical movies of the last fifty years. The movies will be analyzed and interpreted against the background of Polish history. More than eleven centuries long, the turbulent past of Poland offers a plethora of captivating stories, which all constitute fascinating material for cinematography. However, as important as original scripts or books on which some of the movies were based are the circumstances under which the movies reconstructing the past of Poland were made. As this course will focus on selected historical films made since the late 1950s, their interpretation must be thus placed in the context of directors either serving the official communist propaganda or fighting against censorship and adopting subtle and allusive ways to convey their message.

This course will not teach history through watching movies presenting events of particular periods. Instead, the students will examine what historical events were portrayed, how they were presented and what shaped the interpretations of particular historical events. The questions that will be addressed include:

- What was the role of historical movies in Poland under the communist regime and after its demise?
- How have the conveyed messages and interests in particular historical periods changed over the last fifty years?
- How are films about Polish history useful in European history classroom?