



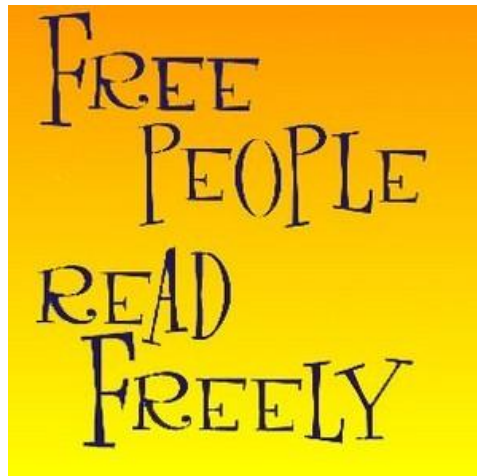
Polish Studies Program Spring 2010

Polish Literature in Translation: Dangerous Books

POL 323/HIS 331/ENG 281

Wednesday 1:00 - 3:40, 102 Clemens

Instructor: Marta Cieslak



For a very long time books were in Poland as dangerous as any other political activity that could undermine a dominant political or social system. At different points of Polish history censorship was one of the biggest challenges for writers, poets, and journalists. Paradoxically, under the extremely complex conditions the greatest Polish texts were created by the most uncommon literary minds of the country.

Dangerous Books will look into social, historical, and political circumstances that have shaped different forms of artistic expression in Polish literature. Literary texts written between the period of Polish Romanticism and the present will help us investigate the interdependence between Polish literature and what it means to be a *real* Pole under different historical circumstances. We will try to answer such questions as: Why is a particular text considered dangerous? Who or/and what may be threatened? Who decides on the perils literature may provoke?

We will read novels, plays, poetry, and essays that have been banned, censored, or considered controversial under different political systems in Poland. We will also explore literary themes that have been of particular interest to Polish authors and compare them with other national literatures of the same periods.