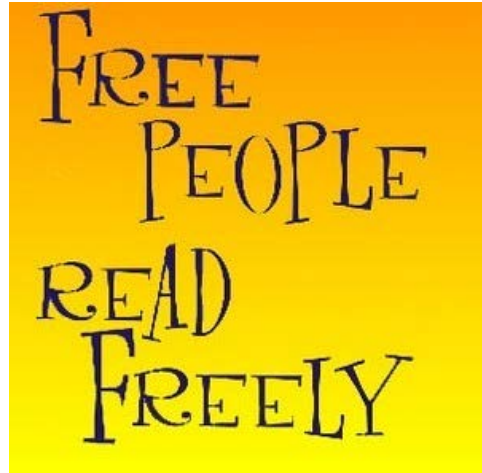


Polish Studies Program Spring 2009

Polish Literature in Translation: Dangerous Books POL 323/HIS 295/SOC 323/ ENG 281

Marta Cieslak

Wednesday 3:00-5:40



For a very long time books were in Poland as dangerous as any other political activity that could undermine a dominant political system, no matter if under Russian, Prussian or Austrian control during the partitions, German or Soviet occupation during WWII or during the post-war communist epoch. At different points of Polish history censorship was one of the biggest challenges for writers, poets and journalists. Paradoxically, the greatest Polish texts have been written under these difficult social and political circumstances. Even after 1989, when Poland finally regained its independence, some books are still provoking discussions on the limits of such concepts as freedom of speech, freedom of artistic expression, or independence of scholarly research in case of non-fiction works.

This course will discuss books that were censored, banned, or considered controversial while at the same time shaped Poland and the notion of Polish identity. We are going to read texts by such authors as Aleksander Wat, Tadeusz Konwicki, Witold Gombrowicz, and Manuela Gretkowska among others.