

Spring 1998
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**E 104: Film and History: Virtual realities. Film and History in Eastern Europe
Ballantine Hall 109; M 1:25-2:15; M 7-10 (film screenings) and discussions**

General Description

Have you ever considered history more than a series of names and events? Have you ever thought of movies as more than entertainment? Do these two forms of human creative endeavor have much in common? This course will open up ways for connecting film and history as forms of story telling, as forms of constructing virtual realities, and as attempts to represent what really happened in the past. As this course suggests, history is not always pure social science, but often a form of craftsmanship, of detective work, or of artistry, since it takes these skills to get to what we call "historical truth." Conversely, while movies are a form of art even when in documentary fashion, they always communicate through a medium--images. That is part of a historical context, past or present. Whether consciously or not, most movies make use of "historical truth" even when attempting to question it. In this course you will be able to explore the use of history by film makers and the use of movies in understanding a number of issues in the history of Eastern Europe. We will focus on three major themes: heroes as significant actors in history; what counts as authentic, real in depictions of the past; and finally, how depictions of the past serve to discuss current problems. The weekly breakdown of the course consists of one lecture, the screening of a movie, and a small group discussion.

Requirements:

All students are required to attend the lecture, screening, and small group discussion. Your grades will be based on the three partial exams, the three short papers (3-5 pages), and in-class participation. The Associate Instructors will provide the details regarding the grade breakdown and the specifics of each assignment, including the exams.

The grades will be based on the following breakdown:

class participation	10%
papers	15% each
exams	15% each

Required materials:

There is a course packet prepared for Collegiate Copies for this course. All the readings will also be placed on reserve at the Media Reserve desk in the Undergraduate Library.

Some of the films for this course will be placed on reserve at the REEI reading room (Ballantine Hall, 565)(the items marked with an *), while the rest of the films will be available at the Media Reserve Desk.

For your final project you will have to compare one of the movies we have watched in the last part of the course with a film not included in the course. You will be able to choose from a small selection of films, TBA.

Week 1: Jan. 12-16. Film and History: an Introduction.

Readings: Edward Carr, *What is History?* (New York: Vintage, 1961): ch. 1.; Nicholas V. Riasanovski, *A History of Russia*, (New York, 1983), pp. 79-87; Louis Giannetti, *Understanding Movies*, 7th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1996), pp. 320-27, 336-39; John E. O'Connor, *Teaching History with Film and Television* (Washington, DC: American Historical Association, 1987), pp. 57-72.

Screening: Alexander Nevsky

Week 2: Jan. 19-23. Historical Film as Drama of the Past: Heroes: Individual action as historical action.

Mon: Martin Luther Day—no class.

Readings: Gianetti, pp. 328-32, 345-54; Pierre Sorlin, *The Film in History. Restaging the Past* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), pp. 3-24; James Goodwin, *Eisenstein, Cinema, and History* (Urbana, Ill.: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1993), pp. 156-178 + 233-34; John D. Simons, "Introduction," in John D. Simons, ed., *Literature and Film in the Historical Dimension* (Gainesville, Fl.: U.P. of Florida, 1990), pp. 1-3.

Week 3: Jan. 26-30. Popular Heroes and the Romanticizing of History: Reds.

Readings; Gianetti, pp. 333-36; Robert Rosenstone, *Visions of the Past. The Challenge of Film to our Idea of History* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U. P., 1995), pp. 83-108, 252-53; Christine Stansell, "Reds," in Ted Mico et al, eds., *Past Imperfect. History According to the Movies* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1995), pp. 192-95.

Screening: Reds.

Week 4: Feb. 2-6. The Crowd as Hero in History: Ideology and Methods of Historical Representation.

Readings: Goodwin, pp. 57-78, 226-27; Riasanovski, pp. 407-408; D.J. Welden, "Battleship Potemkin. Film and Reality," in K.R.M. Short, ed., *Feature Films as History* (Knoxville, Tenn.: Univ. of Tennessee Press), pp. 37-61; Gianetti, 148-60.

Screening: Battleship Potemkin.

Week 5: Feb. 9-13. Anti-Heroism: Historical Actors as Victims.

Readings: Riasanovsky, 503-508.; Gianetti, 328-32; *American Historical Review*, 100, no. 4, (October 1995): 1223-24; Robert Rosenstone, "Historical Film/Historical Truth" *Contention*, vol 2 , no. 3 (Spring 1993): 191-204.

Screening: Burnt by the Sun.

Week 6: Feb. 16-20. First Midterm; no screening.

Week 7: Feb. 23-27. The Question of Authenticity: Representing the Holocaust in a Feature Movie.

Readings: Nora Levin. *The Holocaust. The Destruction of European Jewry, 1933-1945* (New York: Schocken Books, 1973), pp. 185-193, 726; Raul Hilberg. *Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders. The Jewish Catastrophe, 1933-1945* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1992), pp. 51-64, 159-169, 212-216; Frank Manchel, "A Reel Witness: Steven Spielberg's Representation of the Holocaust in Schindler's List," *Journal of Modern History* 67 (March 1995): 83-100.

Screening: Schindler's List.

Week 8: Mar. 2-6. The Question of Authenticity II: Documentary Representations of the Holocaust.

Readings: Levin, pp. 290-316; Gianetti, 339-44; Barsam, Richard Meran, *Nonfiction film; a critical history*. (New York, Dutton, 1973) pp. 1-7.

Screening: The Lodz Ghetto.*

Week 9: Mar. 9-13. Fiction and Historical Truth in Avangarde Cinema.

Readings: Janina Falkowska, *The Political Films of Andrzej Wajda: Datalogism in Man of marble, Man of Iron, and Danton* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1996), pp. 56-67, 102-117; John P, McKay, Bennett D. Hill, John Buckler, *A History of Western Society*,

vol. 2. *From Absolutism to the Present*, 5th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1995), pp. 698-715.

Screening: Danton.

Week 10: Mar. 23-27. JFK and the Question of Authenticity.

Readings: *American Historical Review* Forum on JFK, vol. 97, no. 2 (April 1992): 487-507; Natalie Zemon Davis, "Any Resemblance to Persons Living or Dead: Film and the Challenge of Authenticity," in *Yale Review*, vol. 76, no 4 (Sept. 1987): 457-82.

Screening: JFK.

Week 11: Mar. 30-Apr. 3. Midterm 2.

Week 12: Apr. 6-10. Revisioning the Past: Using Historical Films to discuss current issues.

Readings: Greg Dening, *Performances* (Chicago: U. of Chicago P., 1996), pp. 35-43; Robert Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire, 1526-1918* (Berkeley, Ca.: Univ. of California Press, 1974), pp. 406-430, 438-51; Edward Plater, "Istvan Szabo's Film of Inner Conflict and Political Prophecy: The 'Poseur' in Colonel Redl," *Hungarian Studies Review*, vol 19, no. 1-2 (Spring-Fall 1994): 43-57.

Screening: Colonel Redl.

Week 13: Apr. 13-17. Political Opposition through Historical Film.

Readings: Falkowska, pp. 67-79; R.J. Crampton, *Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Routledge, 1994), pp. 265-74, 318-19, 359-66; Cliff Lewis and Carroll Britch, "Light Out of Poland: Wajda's Man of Marble and Man of Iron," *Film and History*, vol. 12, no. 4 (Dec. 1982): 82-89.

Screening: Man of Marble.

Week 14: Apr. 20-24. The Persistence of Memory: The Permanence of the Past in the Present.

Readings: Denise J. Youngblood, "Repentance. Stalinist Terror and the realism of Surrealism," in Robert A. Rosenstone, ed., *Revisioning History. Film and the Construction of a New Past* (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1995), pp. 139-54, 232-34; Peter G. Christensen, "Tengiz Abuladze's Repentance: Despair in the Age of Perestroika," *Soviet and East-European Drama, Theater, and Film*, vol. 8, no. 2-3 (Dec. 1988): 64-72.

Screening: Repentance.*

Week 15: Apr. 27-May 1. The Circle is Never Broken: Refashioning Identity from the Past in Balkan Film.

Readings: Misha Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia. The Third Balkan War*, 3rd rev. ed. (New York: Penguin, 1996), pp. 70-74, 248-62; Raymond Duncan, "Yugoslavia's Break-up," in W. Raymond Duncan and Paul Holman, Jr., eds., *Ethnic Nationalism and Regional Conflict: The Former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia* (Boulder, Co.: Westview, 1994), pp. 19-28; Dina Iordanova, "Conceptualizing the Balkans in Film," *Slavic Review* 55, no. 4 (Winter 1996): 882-90.

Screening: Before the Rain.

Final Exam: May 4th, 2:45-4:45.