

## **Survey of Polish Literature and Culture (Polish 1260)**

Spring 2004

This course satisfies the Literature I and Writing Requirements

**Courseweb.** An updated syllabus for this course is available on <http://courseweb.pitt.edu>. You should consult the courseweb for announcements and changes in or additions to assignments. In addition, a number of readings are made available on the courseweb for downloading and printing out.

**Instructor:** Oscar Swan

**Office Hours:** Mondays and Wednesdays 11-11:45 or by appointment:

624-5707 or swan+@pitt.edu

**Course Meets:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:30-3:45 in room 1432 Cathedral of Learning

**Overview:** This course treats major Polish writers and literary monuments against the national history and cultural periods of Poland, with emphasis on prose fiction. A general outline of periods and major authors (not all of whom will be covered) is given on the third page of this syllabus. Readings include early Polish poetry, short stories, novels, and plays, examined (a) formally, as successful individual objects of artistic creativity; (b) historically, as products reflective of the time and historical-literary stage at which they were written; (c) universally, as reflecting the sorts of important humanistic-philosophical issues all great literature attempts to engage.

In the instance of certain longer prose works for which reputable cinematic versions exist, the film will be used to substitute for part of the reading.

**Papers.** This course is writing-intensive, and satisfies the University's W requirement. PAPERS CONSTITUTE AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF THE COURSE GRADE (SEE BELOW). Submit papers in a computer-printed version, allowing for the computer correction of mistakes. Make sure to run your document through a spell-checker.

There will be three writing assignments of approximately seven pages each, the first two providing the opportunity for rewriting. One paper will involve an analysis of a work on its own merits; one will discuss a work in relation to its period; and one will involve the comparison either of works read or of a work and its cinematic version.

**Grading:** In addition to the papers, there will be a Midterm and a Final Examination. Examinations will be of the short-essay and brief-identification variety. Components of the grade will be distributed as follows: midterm 1/5, final 1/5, each paper 1/5.

**Works to be read, and where you can find them:**

On Courseweb:

Selections from XIV-XVIII Century Poetry.

Jan Kochanowski, "Threnodies" (Laments)

Jan Pasek, Selections

H. Sienkiewicz, "The Lighthousekeeper of Aspinwall," "Yanko the Musician"

In Book Center:

Ignacy Krasicki, The Adventures of Nicholas Wisdom

\*Jan Potocki, Manuscript Found in Saragossa

\*Adam Mickiewicz, Pan Tadeusz

Boleslaw Prus, Short Stories

Stanislaw I. Witkiewicz, Madman and the Nun

Jaroslav Iwaszkiewicz, Selected Stories

\*Witold Gombrowicz, Pornografia

Jerzy Andrzejewski, Ashes and Diamonds

Slawomir Mrozek, Tango

On Reserve, Hillman Library:

\*Wladyslaw Reymont, The Peasants, vol. I

\*Starred works are novels whose movie version may also be shown and discussed.

**Background Reading.** Czeslaw Milosz's The History of Polish Literature (in Book Center) is the standard and best general work on the subject. You should read the sections indicated, paying special attention to the works and writers covered, as well as to authors whose works are not covered but which are mentioned in class. Some authors are not treated in this course simply because current good English translations of their works are not available. If you are interested in the general historical background of given periods, an excellent, readable work is Norman Davies, God's Playground: A History of Poland, Columbia University Press.

**For Those Who Read Polish.** If you would like to read some of the course material in Polish, you are certainly encouraged to do so. Most items can be found in Hillman Library. Most older items, not covered by copyright, can be found in the Polish Internet Library: <http://www.pbi.edu.pl/>. Works before the 18th century can be found on Old Polish On Line: <http://www.staropolska.gimnazjum.com.pl/>. If you have trouble locating an item, ask the instructor for help.

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week-by-week study guide

Dates	Tuesday	Thursday	Pages in Milosz (hardcover)
January 6, 8	intro.	M. Rey	1-60
13, 15	Kochanowski	Kochanowski	60-110
20, 22	Pasek	Pasek	111-152
27, 29	Krasicki	Krasicki	159-181 ◇
February 3, 5	Potocki	Potocki*	181-194
10, 12	Mickiewicz	Mickiewicz*	195-232
17, 19	Sienkiewicz	Sienkiewicz*	308-314 ◇
24, 26	Prus	Prus	291-303
March 3, 5	Reymont*	MIDTERM	369-371
10, 12	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	
17, 19	Witkiewicz	Witkiewicz	414-420 ◇
24, 26	Gombrowicz	Gombrowicz	432-437
31, April 2	Iwaszkiewicz	Iwaszkiewicz	389-393
7, 9	Andrzejewski	Andrzejewski*	490-493
14, 16	Mrozek	Review	513-515 ◇ (rewrite)
21, 23	FINALS WEEK	FINALS WEEK	

◇ Papers due on Thursday of this week.

\* On starred days, movies will be shown.

## Survey of Polish Literature and Culture

### Outline of Major Literary Periods and Authors

Old Literature	Middle Ages	Anonymous
XVI CENTURY	Renaissance	◇ Mikolaj Rey ◇ Jan Kochanowski
XVII CENTURY	Baroque	◇ Jan Andrzej Morsztyn ◇ Jan Pasek
XVIII CENTURY	Enlightenment	◇ Ignacy Krasicki ◇ Jan Potocki
XIX CENTURY	Romanticism	◇ Adam Mickiewicz Juliusz Slowacki Zygmunt Krasinski
	Positivism	Eliza Orzeszkowa ◇ Boleslaw Prus ◇ † Henryk Sienkiewicz
	Young Poland	Stefan Zeromski ◇ † Wladyslaw Reymont Boleslaw Lesmian Stanislaw Wypianski
XX CENTURY	Independent Poland	◇ Jaroslaw Iwaszkiewicz ◇ Stanislaw I. Witkiewicz Zofia Nalkowska Bruno Schulz ◇ Witold Gombrowicz
	Post-War	◇ Jerzy Andrzejewski † Czeslaw Milosz Zbigniew Herbert ◇ Slawomir Mrozek † Wislawa Szymborska Tadeusz Rozewicz

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◇ Authors whose works are read in this course.

† Won Nobel Prize for Literature