

## Advanced Polish: Polish Through Film: K. Kieślowski's "Dekalog"

Course meets: TH, 2:30-3:45, 1432 Cathedral of Learning

Instructor: Oscar Swan, 1417 CL (Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures), 624-5707

You are encouraged to communicate with the instructor by e-mail: <swan+@pitt.edu>.

**Course Description:** We will view and read the film script to one 50-minute film per two-week period from the series "Dekalog" by the Polish film director Krzysztof Kieślowski. Situated in the a set of rather drab Warsaw apartment-house blocks, these films are loosely based on the Ten Commandments and how they relate to everyday life situations and choices. The films lend themselves both to analytic discussion and to being retold, and they feature an extremely good selection of everyday vocabulary.

Emphasis in this course will be on getting the gist of, retelling, and discussing the stories, and on vocabulary building. Additionally, we will familiarize ourselves with the language of critical analysis by translating excerpt from published reviews of the Dekalogs. Subsidiarily, we will work on grammatical tasks which facilitate retelling and discussion, such as participle and verbal-noun formation, word order, sentence analysis, noun-ending review, uses of the conditional, and other such topics.

Factual comprehension will be assisted by a set of from 20 to 30 questions handed out one week before the film itself is to be seen. Many of the films as actually made differ substantially in detail and sometimes even in concept from the film as originally scripted, this fact providing another aspect from which the films may be discussed.

### Required:

The course website is <<http://polish.slavic.pitt.edu/dekalog>>

√ *Dekalog I-X*, film scripts by Krzysztof Kieślowski and Krzysztof Piesiewicz, to be downloaded and printed out from the course website under **Scenariusze**.

√ Instructor's Questions on *Dekalog I-X*, to be downloaded and printed out from the course website.

√ Stills from *Dekalog I-X*, to be downloaded and printed out from the course website.

√ A good Polish-English and English-Polish Dictionary.

√ Recommended: the video or DVD version of *Dekalog*. The videos may be borrowed in the Slavic Department Office and viewed in 1432 CL as long as classes are not in session there. They will also be shown on Monday afternoon at 1:00-2:00 in 1432 CL.

**Attendance and Evaluation:** This course may include students of differing ability levels. To the extent possible, students in the course will be evaluated on the basis of progress made from the initial state to the end of the course. On occasion, assignments may vary according to the ability level of the individual student. Since the reading and analysis of the stories will take place cumulatively over the course sessions, attendance at all sessions is crucial. Unexcused absences will affect the course grade. Each class session will have a daily assignment to be completed which will be graded on a scale of 3 (best), 2 (good), 1 (satisfactory), 0 (absent). These grades will be converted to an A, B, C, D, F scale two times during the course, once at mid-course, and once at course end. Announced **Quizzes** on grammatical topics and on vocabulary may be given, with grades on the 1-2-3 scale being added to the daily grades described above. The final grade will be based on the average of the first half of the course and the second half of the course.

Your work must be your own. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY WILL RESULT IN COURSE FAILURE.

**Weekly Routine.** The course will cover seven of the ten *Dekalog* films. Each film will be covered in a two-week sequence.

**Tuesday #1**

1. Watch the film on your own time, and read the Cannon review of it.
2. Translate into Polish a single selected paragraph from the Cannon review.

**Thursday#1**

1. Translate the first 1 or 2 scenes from the Dekalog, as assigned.
2. Read the first half of the Dekalog, and write out and hand in answers to the first half of the questions.

**Tuesday #2**

1. Read the second half of the Dekalog, and write out and hand in answers to the second half of the questions.

**Tuesday #2**

1. Write a one-page (at least) synopsis of the Dekalog, in Polish.
2. Picture quiz on the Dekalog.