

A Cinema of Resistance

Professor Kirshner
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INTL 4941.03
Fall 2022

What is a cinema of resistance? Since the inception of the art form the movies have been subject to strict and often draconian censorship by dangerous, frightened governments (and abetted by timid studios). Yet throughout history brilliant films of dissent – expressing subversive and forbidden ideas – have been able to find production, despite the ominous, watchful eyes of brutally repressive dictatorships (and hypocritical censorious democracies). This class looks closely at a number of dissident masterpieces produced under chilling circumstances from around the world—and the contentious political contexts in which they were crafted.

We will screen one film a week, Monday evenings at 7:00. **Attendance is required.**
Screenings will be in McGuinn 121.

There are three principal requirements for this course:

- A historical paper, reviewing one country's censorship history, due **Friday, October 21**
- A long analytical paper, featuring a close read one film, due **Monday, December 5**
- Active and thoughtful class participation

A note on the requirements: students are expected to come to class prepared to actively and thoughtfully discuss each week's film, informed by the readings assigned for the week. The first part of each session will begin with a lecture presenting some background context about the film, filmmakers, and related political and cinematic movements. But ultimately this is a seminar, and its action takes place through active student engagement with the material each week. ***Class participation will account for 30% of the course grade.***

Note that this is an electronics free seminar – no laptops, no phones, no anything

The books listed below been made available for purchase at the campus store, and can also be ordered from various on-line retailers. Additional required readings will be accessible through the course Canvas site. Follow the syllabus to keep track of each week's readings.

Marek Haltof, *The Cinema of Krzysztof Kieslowski* (Wallflower, 2004)
Peter Hames, *The Czechoslovak New Wave* (Wallflower, 2005)
Julian Preece, *The Lost Honor of Katrina Blum* (BFI Film Classics, 2022)
Ed Sikov, *Film Studies: An Introduction* (Columbia University Press, 2nd ed., 2020)
Steven Ungar, *Cléo de 5 a 7* (BFI Film Classics, 2nd ed., 2020)
Chris Wagstaff, *Il Conformista (The Conformist)* (BFI Film Classics, 2012)
Biltreyest/Winkel (eds.), *Silencing Cinema: Film Censorship around the World* (2013) [Recommended]

Regarding Academic Integrity: University policy is clear: *“Students have a responsibility to maintain high standards of academic integrity in their own work, and thereby to maintain the integrity of their degree. It is their responsibility to be familiar with, and understand, the University policy on academic integrity.”* Be sure you have carefully read and understood fully the academic code:

<http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/offices/stserv/academic/integrity.html>

Disability Services: If you are a student with a documented disability seeking reasonable accommodations in this course, please contact Kathleen Duggan, (617) 552-8093, dugganka@bc.edu, at the Connors Family Learning Center, regarding learning disabilities and ADHD. Other students, with medical, physical, psychological, and temporary disabilities, should register with the Disability Services Office. Go to the following link for more details to register: <https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/offices/student-affairs/sites/student-outreach-and-support-services/disability-services.html> **Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations.**

Course Outline

Week 1: Overview and Introduction (Tuesday August 30)

Readings:

Ed Sikov, *Film Studies: An Introduction* (Columbia, 2020), pp. 1-23.
Shirley Li, "How Hollywood Sold Out to China," *The Atlantic*, Sept. 10, 2021.
Benjamin Lindsay, "Iranian Filmmaker Jafar Panahi Ordered to Serve 6-Year Prison Sentence," *The Wrap*, July 19, 2022.

Week 2: What Price the War on Terror? (Tuesday September 6)

Readings:

Ed Sikov, *Film Studies: An Introduction*, pp. 24-70, 89-115.
Open Society Initiative, *Globalizing Torture: CIA Secret Detention and Extraordinary Rendition* (2013), pp. 11-28.

Film (Monday, September 5*):

A Most Wanted Man (Corbijn, 2014)

[*BC is not in session 9/5, alternate screening arrangements TBA]

Week 3: Living Under Occupation (Tuesday September 13)

Readings:

Ed Sikov, *Film Studies: An Introduction*, pp. 116-42.
Alan Riding, *And The Show Went On: Cultural Life In Nazi-Occupied Paris* (Random House, 2010), pp. 187-205.
Julian Jackson, "France and the Memory of Occupation," in Chirot, Shin and Sneider (eds.), *Confronting Memories of World War II* (2014), pp. 135-52.
Samm Deighan, "Outraged, Broken, Martyred: Jean-Pierre Melville's *Army of Shadows*," *Diabolique Magazine*, June 28, 2018.

Film (Monday, September 12):

Le Corbeau (Clouzot, 1943)

Week 4: Fighting for the Lost Cause (Tuesday September 20)

Readings:

Giles Tremlett, *The International Brigades: Fascism, Freedom and the Spanish Civil War* (Bloomsbury, 2021), pp. 1-10, 499-539.

Jeremy Treglown, *Franco's Crypt: Spanish Culture and Memory Since 1936* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013), pp. 3-11, 193-226.

Paul Julian Smith, "The Spirit of the Beehive: Spanish Lessons," *Criterion Current*, September 18, 2006.

Erik Kohn, "Parallel Mothers: Why It Took Over 40 Years for Pedro Almodovar to Confront Spain's Darkest Chapter," *Indiewire*, October 11, 2021.

Film (Monday, September 19):

La Guerre Est Finie (Resnais, 1966)

Week 5: Weapons of the Weak? (Tuesday September 27)

Readings:

Matthew Evangelista, *Gender, Nationalism, and War: Conflict on the Movie Screen* (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 25-79.

Roger Ebert, "The Battle of Algiers," *Chicago Sun Times*, May 30, 1968.

Madeleine Dobie, "The Battle of Algiers at 50: From 1960s Radicalism to the Classrooms of West Point," *Los Angeles Review of Books*, Sept. 25, 2016.

Film (Monday September 26):

The Battle of Algiers (Ponticorvo, 1966)

Week 6: Somebody is Listening . . . (Tuesday October 4)

Readings:

Peter Hames, *The Czechoslovak New Wave* (Wallflower 2005), pp. 1-77.

Film (Monday October 3):

The Ear (Kachyna, 1970)

Week 7: . . . And the Whole World is Watching (Tuesday October 18)

Readings:

John Lewis, "Slouching Toward Chicago in Search of Peace and Love: Medium Cool and Chicago 1968," in Mark Shiel (ed.) *Architectures of Revolt: The Cinematic City Circa 1968* (Temple, 2018), pp. 112-140.

Justine Smith, "The Year the Revolution Brought the Cannes Film Festival to a Halt," *Little White Lies*, April 29, 2018.

Jesse Lerner, "Cinema and the Mexico City of 1968," in Shiel, *Architectures of Revolt*, 189-211, pp. 140-63.

Orr & Ostrowska (eds) *The Cinema of Andrzej Wajda* (Wallflower, 2004) pp. 31-8.
Stanley Corkin, "New York, 1968," in Shiel, *Architectures of Revolt*, pp. 140-63.

Film (Monday October 17):
Medium Cool (Wexler, 1969)

First Paper Due Friday October 21

Week 8: Show, Trials (Tuesday October 25)

Readings:

Joan Neuberger, "Eisenstein's 'Ivan the Terrible' in Stalin's Russia," *Not Even Past* (March 2019).

Tony Sharp, *Stalin's American Spy: Noel Field, Allen Dulles and the East European Show-Trials* (Hurst, 2014), pp. 1-6, 209-18, 245-52, 275-96.

John Sbardellati, *J Edgar Hoover Goes to the Movies: The FBI and the Origins of Hollywood's Cold War* (Cornell, 2012), pp. 1-8, 97-105, 131-41, 147-58.

Film (Monday October 24):
The Confession (Costa-Gavras, 1970)

Confirmation of Film for Final Paper Due Friday October 28

Week 9: What at Makes a Fascist? (Tuesday November 1)

Readings:

Chris Wagstaff, *Il Conformista (The Conformist)* (BFI Film Classics, 2012)

Film (Monday October 31):
The Conformist (Bertolucci, 1970)

Week 10: The Media is the Message (Tuesday November 8)

Readings:

Julian Preece, *The Lost Honor of Katrina Blum* (BFI Film Classics, 2022)

Film (Monday November 7):
The Lost Honor Katrina Blum (Schlöndorff and von Trotta, 1975)

Week 11: The Personal is Political (Tuesday November 15)

Readings:

Steven Ungar, *Cléo de 5 a 7* (BFI Film Classics, 2nd ed., 2020)

Film (Monday November 14):
One Sings the Other Doesn't (Varda, 1977)

Week 12: What if "They" are "Us"? (Tuesday November 22)

Readings:
Marek Haltof, *The Cinema of Krzysztof Kieslowski* (Wallflower, 2004), pp. 1-74.

Film (Monday November 21):
Blind Chance (Kieslowski, 1987)

Week 13: This is Not a Film (Tuesday November 29)

Readings:
Shiva Rahbaran, *Iranian Cinema Uncensored: Contemporary Film-makers since the Islamic Revolution* (Bloomsbury, 2015), pp. vii-xx, 59-78, 163-78.
Sophia Stein, "Wadjda: A Conversation with Haifaa Al Mansour," *Cultural Daily*, September 26, 2013.
Anchal Vohra, "Can Saudi Arabia's Film Industry Take Off?" *Foreign Policy*, May 5, 2022.

Film (Monday November 28):
Three Faces (Panahi, 2018)

Second paper due Monday December 5