

**Code: FLMD-314E.20**

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**Course title: Popular Eastern European Cinemas During and After Socialism**

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**Course convenors:** Balázs Varga

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**Class time and place:** Thursday 09:00-10:30 -137

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**Course type:** Seminar

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**Course content:** The course will explore major themes and trends in Eastern European popular cinemas during and after socialism. Besides the examination of the given local cultural, social and artistic contexts of the given film cultures (the different cultural tradition in – among others – Czech, Polish, Hungarian and Russian culture), the course will explore its topics by analysing the trends and transformations of the different genres (comedy, crime film, adventure film, war film, historical epic, melodrama, musical, etc.).

**Themes and topics:**

1. Introduction: Genres and Popular Cinema
2. Political-Cultural Traditions and Contexts
3. Eastern European Comedies and Its Traditions from Cabaret to Operetta
4. Comedies and Everyday Socialism
5. Adventure and Historical Films in Eastern European Cinemas
6. Eastern Westerns
7. Red Stars: Past, Present and Future in Eastern European Sci-fi
8. Postsocialist Nostalgia and Contemporary Eastern European Popular Cinemas
9. Genre Films of/on the Transition: Crime Thrillers and Comedies
10. Contemporary Eastern European Film Comedies
11. Heritage Films in Contemporary Eastern European Cinemas
12. Parodies and Hybrid Genres in Eastern European Cinemas

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**Requirements:** Participants are required to regularly attend the course (more than 3 absences result in an incomplete), to watch the films, read the assigned texts weekly and give a presentation during the course.  
Course grade is calculated after final essay exam (1000-1500 words), with regard to students' inclass activity.

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**Film list (to be discussed and fixed at the introductory meetings):** Árpá: Argo 1-2  
Balabanov: Brat 1-2  
Bereményi: The Bridgeman  
Bekmambetov: Night/Day Watch / Irony of Fate 2  
Fonyó: Made in Hungaria  
Ford: Knights of the Teutonic Order  
Haussmann: Sonnenalle  
Hrebejk: Big Beat  
Jakubisko: Bathory  
Koltai: We Never Die  
Lipsky: Limonadovy Joe  
Machulski: Sexmission  
Maetzig: The Silent Star  
Motyl: White Sun of the Desert  
Pasikowski: Psy 1-2 / Jack Strong  
Piwowski: Cruise  
Révész: Isle of the Lion  
Ryazanov: Carnival Night / Irony of Fate  
Szulkin: O-Bi, O-Ba: The End of Civilisation  
Tarkovsky: Solaris  
Tímár: Dollybirds  
Todorovsky: Stilyagi  
Várkonyi: The Stars of Eger

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Wajda: Pan Tadeusz  
Weresniak: Och Karol 2.

- Indicative Reading:** 'The Good Soldier Švejk and After: The Comic Tradition in Czech Film', in Diana Holmes and Alison Smith (eds): *100 Years of European Cinema: Entertainment or Ideology?* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 64–76. 2000.
- Berdahl, Daphne: "(N)Ostalgie" for the Present: Memory, Longing, and East German Things. *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology* (1999) no. 2.
- Beumers, Birgit: Soviet and Russian Blockbusters: A question of genre? *Slavic Review* (2003) no. 3. pp. 441–454.
- Caoduro, Elena – Carroll, Beth: Introduction: Rethinking Genre Beyond Hollywood. *Frames Cinema Journal* (December 2014) no. 6.  
<http://framescinemajournal.com/article/introduction-rethinking-genre-beyond-hollywood/>
- Dobрева, Nikolina: East European Historical Epics. In: Imre Anikó (ed.): *Companion to Eastern European Cinemas*. Malden, Wiley-Blackwell, 2012. pp. 344–365.
- Dyer, Richard – Vincendeau, Ginette (eds.): *Popular European Cinema*. Routledge, London, 1992.
- Eidsvik, Charles: Mock Realism: The Comedy of Futility in Eastern Europe. In: Horton, Andrew (ed.): *Comedy/Cinema/Theory*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991. pp. 91–105.
- Grant, Barry Keith: *Film Genre: From Iconography to Ideology*. London: Wallflower Press, 2007.
- Haltof, Marek: *Polish National Cinema*. Berghahn Books, 2002.
- Hanáková, Petra: "The Films We Are Ashamed of": Czech Crazy Comedy of the 1970s and 1980s. In: Eva Närke and Andreas Trossek (eds.): *Via Transversa: Lost Cinema of the Former Eastern Bloc*. Koht Ja Paik/ Place and Location. Studies in Environmental Aesthetics and Semiotics. 2008. pp. 105–117.
- Horton, Andrew: *Inside Soviet Film Satire: Laughter with a Lash*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Imre Anikó: Adventures in Early Socialist Television Edutainment. In: Imre Anikó – Havens, Timothy – Lustyik, Katalin (eds.): *Popular Television in Eastern Europe During and Since Socialism*. New York: Routledge. pp. 30–46.
- Imre Anikó: Eastern Westerns: enlightened edutainment and national transvestism. *New Review of Film and Television Studies* (2011) no. 2. pp. 152–169.
- Iordanova, Dina: *Cinema of the Other Europe: The Industry and Artistry of East Central European Film*. London: Wallflower Press, 2003.
- Larsen, Susan: National Identity, Cultural Authority, and the Post-Soviet Blockbuster: Nikita Mikhalkov and Aleksei Balabanov. *Slavic Review* (Fall 2003) pp. 491–511.
- Mazierska, Ewa – Närke, Eva: Gender Discourse in Eastern European SF Cinema. *Science Fiction Studies* (2014) no. 1. pp. 136–162.
- Mazierska, Ewa: *Polish Postcommunist Cinema: From Pavement Level*. Peter Lang, 2007.
- Miller, Cynthia J. – Van Riper, A. Bowdoin (eds): *International Westerns: Re-Locating the Frontier*. Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2013.
- Moine, Raphaëlle: *Cinema Genre*. Blackwell Publishing, 2008.
- Neale, Steve: *Genre and Hollywood*. London – New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Prokhorova, Elena: The Man Who Made Them Laugh: Leonid Gaidai, the King of Soviet Comedy. In: Beumers, Birgit (ed.): *A Companion to Russian Cinema*. Oxford/Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2016. pp. 519–542.
- Rinke, Andrea: *Film Musicals in the GDR*. In: Conrich, Ian – Tincknell, Estella (eds.): *Film's Musical Moments*. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2006. pp. 183–194.

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**Learning outcomes:** Participants will become familiar with the basic strategies of representing the state socialist past and post socialist present in the Eastern European national cinemas, practice film analysis skills and academic writing skills.

