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Dialogism in the political films of Andrzej Wajda Man of
Marble, Man of Iron and Danton

by

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Comparative Literature Programme

McGill University

PhD Thesis March 1993

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and
Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



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Summary

This thesis is an attempt at an analysis of Andrzej Wajda's political films, **Man of Marble**, **Man of Iron** and **Lanton** in a broad cultural and historical context. The manuscript is divided into five chapters. The first chapter, "The Political Film of Andrzej Wajda - Issues of Methodology", presents a theoretical basis for the discussion of political film. Bakhtin's dialogism complemented by linguistic pragmatics provides the methodology used in the thesis to illustrate the dialogical process of meaning formation in political films of Andrzej Wajda. Chapter two discusses Wajda as the carrier of the political message, while chapters three, four and five, respectively, contain the historical, the dramatis personae and the aesthetic discourses in the films under study.

Résumé

Cette thèse offre une tentative d'analyse des films politiques d'Andrzej Wajda, **L'homme de marbre**, **L'homme de fer** et **Danton**, dans un vaste contexte culturel et historique. Le manuscrit contient cinq chapitres. Le premier chapitre, "Les films politiques de Andrzej Wajda = question de méthodologie" présente les bases théoriques pour une discussion de la cinématographie politique. Le dialogisme de Bakhtin, concepts dérivés d'une théorie pragmatique de la linguistique, fournissent les éléments pour la méthodologie que cette thèse met en jeu afin d'illustrer le processus dialogique de l'émergence du sens dans la cinématographie politique. Le deuxième chapitre contient une présentation de Wajda, tandis que les troisième, quatrième et cinquième chapitres contiennent une analyse des protagonistes, des analyses historiques, et esthétiques dans les films étudiés.

Note of Thanks

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for a long time. Only the recent changes in Eastern Europe have made such publications possible. She encouraged me in all aspects of my work and her cooperation and support greatly enhanced my chances for success.

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INTRODUCTION

Andrzej Wajda is one of the greatest Polish film directors. Moreover, he is considered by many to be one of the most important masters of the world cinema. Also, next to Krzysztof Penderecki and Witold Lutoslawski, he is regarded as one of the most famous ambassadors of Polish culture and art in the world.

He has been present in the Polish culture for thirty five years. Within this time he was extremely successful but also suffered some downfalls - he created superb films followed by weaker ones, and was also active in the theatre and in television.

During his artistic life he has never failed to instigate violent reactions in the spectators. His films have always aroused emotions of both love and hate, and stimulated long political discussions in the media. Most of his films deal with historical and political issues of importance to the Polish society, and, consequently, provoke unremitting discussions concerning the fate of Poland, its glorification and its restoration; the essence of the Polish character; the nature of political power; and the convolutions of Polish history.

Wajda always says of himself "I am a Polish film director" which is not an empty declaration in his case. His films, with very few exceptions, can be read as an incessant contention: how to be a Pole. However, "Polishness" is not the only theme of his films. He deals with historical and political questions of his time and his country - the period

after the Second World War; the moral concerns of the fifties and sixties; the rise of Solidarity; the overthrowing of the Socialist system; and the Jewish question. His films, however, never treat these historical processes in an impersonal or abstract way but they always present people in their context, both as political subjects and as ordinary human beings.

In his films a man is shown as either trying to oppose the historical reality or as being annihilated by it. Wajda defends man as an independent subject of history, not its passive object. In most of his films a protagonist faces certain moral choices within a defined historical reality. His or her internal fight is always watched with tension by spectators who painfully negotiate the meanings of the images on the screen with which they identify or which they passionately reject.

Wajda is a political film director in many senses of the word: first, he is political because he usually deals with the painful periods of Polish history during which the ruling class had to be abolished and the dominant ideology repudiated; second, he is political because he uses such blatantly political tools in the glorification of a new dominant ideology as elements of propaganda, docudrama, documentary film or political collage; third, he is political because he uses man in his films in an instrumental way - to prove one or another political credo (this is the sense in which Wanda Wertenstein uses the word "political"); and fourth, he is political in the sense of making a subversive use of cinematic means. However, in all these cases, Wajda is a representative of society and a contender on behalf of a social cause. Whatever he does in his films is to present a man's dilemmas in a complex historical and social reality.

His films are usually controversial, painful, stimulating and cinematically beautiful. The meaning of his images is never accepted by the spectator without an internal resistance

to his more obvious statements on the screen, and some images provoke a reaction of laughter. At the same time, Wajda knows how to build the narrative, how to construct the world on the screen in a painfully realistic way and how to draw the spectator into his protagonists' conflicts and personal tragedies. Rarely does the spectator, especially the Polish spectator, remain unmoved during the screening.

The three films I chose for this thesis: **Man of Marble**, **Man of Iron** and **Danton**, are exemplary both for the themes he presents in his films and his cinematic style. They are "political" in many senses of the word and involve the spectator in an emotional act of identification with and/or rejection of the images. Furthermore, the films best illustrate the dialogical formation of meaning in the sense of Bakhtin's socially and historically inscribed dialogism.

Man of Marble, **Man of Iron** and **Danton** present three different artistic approaches to the depiction of history on the screen. **Man of Marble** presents history in the form of a dramatized story of a man of the times it wants to portray, with historical events neatly incorporated into the main story, which takes place in contemporary times. **Man of Iron** displays a collage of real facts and fictional events, where the former play a more significant role than the latter. **Danton**, on the other hand, is a dramatized story which takes place in the past entirely, and only an interpretive approach to the presentation of the main personae dramatis creates references to the contemporary history of Poland. In all the films, the spectator takes an active part in the dialogical negotiation of the historical discourse presented on the screen. The three films force the spectator to arbitrate the films' historical message within the background of his or her vision of history and the political reality which has been present throughout the years after the Second World War in

Poland.

In their texture, the films reveal multiple cultural discourses which interact with the overtly historical and ideological. The richness of the films' aesthetics is directly conditioned by the mosaic of discourses which contribute to the films' numerous layers of meanings.

The thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter, **The Political Film of Andrzej Wajda - Issues of Methodology**, presents a theoretical basis for the discussion of political film in general, and the films of Andrzej Wajda in particular. Through the analysis of possible uses of the concept 'political' in relation to film, linguistic pragmatics and Bakhtin's dialogism I have established a methodological framework for the analysis of the political film of Andrzej Wajda. The interpretation of the films discussed in the thesis will be positioned within the frame of Bakhtin's theory of dialogism which will be used as a concept for this broad research project and as a discursive strategy, in a similar manner to that applied by other Bakhtinians in their analysis of literary and nonliterary discourses.¹ Bakhtin will be able to serve here as "a kind of opening, or a crypto-syllogism, that can liberate or break down discursive barriers."² Bakhtin's dialogism complemented by linguistic pragmatics and Jauss's historically oriented analysis are used as a mode of thinking - a modus operandi in my attempt at an analysis of the political film of Andrzej Wajda.

The second chapter, **Andrzej Wajda - the Carrier of the Political Message**, presents the artist in the context of his activities as a film director, theatre director and a cultural activist. Additionally, the chapter presents Wajda's role as a carrier of the political message in the films discussed in the thesis.

The third chapter, **The Historical Dialogue in Wajda's Films**, examines the historical discourse in the three films as

the constitutive substance of the film text. The fourth chapter, **Wajda and His Dramatis Personae**, is devoted to the dramatis personae in his films, which are directly conditioned by Wajda's specific constitution as an artist and a director. Finally, the fifth chapter, **The Films' Dialogical Aesthetics** debates the films' cultural discourses, which interact in the dialogical construction of the films' aesthetics. Additionally, **Appendix I - Film Synopses**, introduces a detailed account of scenes and sequences in each film discussed in the thesis.

Finally, I would like to add that I enclosed in the thesis many quotations from Polish sources. In chapter III dealing with the historical discourse in the films, Polish press reviews are extensively quoted as they represent some of the voices of the audiences indispensable for the dialogical negotiation of the historical meanings in the films. Also, in chapter V, on the films' dialogical aesthetics, several lengthy quotations are presented from the book by Wojciech Włodarczyk, Socrealizm (Socialist Realism), a unique publication referring to the cultural phenomena occurring during the period of Stalinist rule. The arrival of this book was possible only recently thanks to the political changes in former Eastern Europe.

All these important Polish sources have never reached the Western reader before. They represent crucial cultural and social discourses which have been revealed in the three films discussed in the thesis.

NOTES

1.I refer here to all the attempts at such an analysis presented in Bakhtin and Otherness. Social Discourse vol.III nos 1&2, spring-summer 1990.

2.Barsky, R.F. & Holquist, M. "Dialogue." Bakhtin and Otherness. Social Discourse. International Research Papers in Comparative Literature. vol.III, nos 1&2 spring-summer 1990,5.

I CHAPTER

THE POLITICAL FILM OF ANDRZEJ WAJDA - ISSUES OF METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is first, to define the concept "political" in relation to film in general, secondly, in relation to the films **Man of Marble**, **Man of Iron** and **Danton** by Andrzej Wajda, third, to present Bakhtin's concept of dialogism as an interpretive procedure and a mode of thinking applicable to the analysis of these political films; and fourth, to present an application of Bakhtin's dialogism to film analysis.

The Concept "Political" in Film Analysis

In contemporary film research the concept "political" is being indiscriminately applied to all levels of film analysis. Films are often described as "political" or as implying and revealing political content. On the other hand, the analysts of the formal aspects of film talk about political film form or about films made "politically".

Andrzej Wajda's film is often described as "political" or as implying and revealing political content. Before analyzing Wajda's three films it is necessary to explain what is meant by the very term "political" in the thesis. First, we must ask ourselves a question - Where does the word "political" appear in relation to film in general, and, next, in relation to Wajda's film, in particular?

The very word "political" in relation to film is used in several senses on two different levels of analysis: one of them applies the term "political" to film interpretation in general, and the other, to a particular category of films. Thus, on one level, the concept "political" pertains to the process of interpretation of any film, and, on another level, the term "political" defines films which form a polyphonic heterogeneous patchwork named "social problem films", "resistance films", "revolutionary films", "ideological films", etc. depending on the intention and focus of the film researcher. In employing the term "political" in relation to film, ideally, the film researcher should indicate in which sense the word "political" is being used. This would save theoreticians from the inconvenience of Swift's Laputans, who carry on their back a sack full of the objects they might need

in conversation, which they have to hold up to each other as a way of talking.

In the interpretive sense, the term "political" is sometimes used to refer to a radical, new approach to an analysis of any film. The word "political" is applied to any film interpretation which differs from the interpretation established as a "norm" at a particular time of film criticism. "Political" implies contestation and revolt against the given, the existing, and, in addition to this, the term indicates a strong declaration of new values as opposed to the old ones.

Two examples of such a use of the term "political" in relation to film interpretation are those of a "radically political" or "resistant" reading of film, and the poststructuralist reading. These film readings are considered "political" from different epistemological perspectives: the first meaning of "political" signals a radically different interpretation of the film **content** while the second understanding of the term refers to a description of a radically different film **form**.

The first meaning of the term "political" pertains to the film interpretation process which can be named "seeing films politically." The politically radical theory which advocates this approach postulates that every film comprises certain ideological values not necessarily detected by an ordinary spectator. What is represented as visible in the dominant discourse is in fact made **seeable** by the mediation of the dominant ideology that posits one and only one meaning for it. The dominant discourse, in fact, makes things invisible in a film, and only the critic's intervention brings them to light.

The term "dominant ideology" is understood here in a strictly Marxist sense as "the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophical - in short, ideological - forms in which people become conscious of the economic conditions of

production and fight them out"¹. For instance, Mas'ud Zavarzadeh, a representative of a politically radical interpretation of films, in his book Seeing Films Politically², demonstrates how aesthetic notions obscure the ideological effects produced by viewing films, particularly the production of the spectator as the subject of social class. In this sense, films are read not as aesthetic acts but modes of cultural exchange that form (desired) social subjectivities. Films, even most trivial films, constitute **political spaces** that contest or naturalize the primacy of those subjectivities necessary to the status quo and suppress or privilege oppositional ones. Zavarzadeh states that dominant ideology circulates in any film, and helps to establish an "imaginary" relation between the spectator (the subject) and the world. Through such imaginary relationships, the discourse of dominant ideology creates meaning for the film's viewer. As Andrew Sarris had already stated without the methodological conceptualizations of radical politics,

it can be argued that all films are ultimately political either as statements or as evasions. It is widely realized that films in general reflect the currents and attitudes in a society and its politics. The cinema does not exist in a sublime state of innocence, untouched by the world; it also has a political content, whether conscious or unconscious, hidden or overt.³

In this approach the viewer's interest, is not so much in **how** (aesthetics) but **why** (politics): why these films mean what they are supposed to mean in a particular cultural and historical context. Zavarzadeh, instead of focusing on the formal aspects of the film, concentrates on the ideological conditions of the possibility of the formal, and chooses one specific site of the film to inquire into the way that film produces the kind of reality that is supportive of the

existing socioeconomic arrangements. The filmic space or story is called by him the film tale. He states,

This filmic space I have called the **tale**: the way that a film offers a narrative - and proposes that narrative to be a paradigm of intelligibility - not simply through its immanent formal devices but also by relying on historically dominant and contradictory assumptions about reality.⁴

In his analysis of "trivial" films such as **Desperately Seeking Susan**; **Terms of Endearment**, and others, he constantly constructs the **tale** of the films which basically confirms that the ideological position of the films solidly remains within the dominant ideology of the ruling class. Seeing films, according to this theoretician, is part of the political struggle over cultural intelligibilities, subjectivities and representations.

A similar political struggle is vivid in the "political" reading of film often called the 'ethical' to emphasize the self-fashioning autonomy of the subject. It places its primary emphasis on the "resistance" of the subject as "agent" rather than on the "domination" of prevailing social arrangements (Foucault, 1980, 1988; Deleuze and Guatarri, 1983, 1987; Lyotard, 1987; Barthes, 1975; De Lauretis, 1984; Gallop, 1988; Silverman, 1988). Such a political reading situates "resistance", in Foucault's word, 'everywhere' and thus in all the activities of producing and viewing film - from the aesthetic counterforces within the filmic text itself to the refusal of the spectator to go along with the subject positions offered by the film. This position has been especially strongly postulated in establishing the site of cinematic pleasure, particularly in works dealing with the theory of the "desire" of the spectator and its role in the formation of the subject. Radical theorists such as Laura

Mulvey (1975), who have theorized cinematic pleasure from the feminist point of view, have posited the patriarchal cinema as a political apparatus through which the female body is subjugated and fetishized as the object of a pleasurable male "gaze". The term "political" in this sense refers to the political strategy in which the functioning of desire is evoked for emancipatory practices: to critique the oppressive practices of mainstream cinema.

This first example of a "political", interpretive analysis of film has to be dissociated from the idea of "the political" put forth by poststructuralism concerning the interpretation of film's structure. This kind of "politics" deems the political to be a matter of the film's discursive self-consciousness, a doubling back upon the formal procedures for representing the real in the film: "a self-reflexivity that renders the 'meaning' of a text an 'undecidable' and contingent effect of the rhetorical tensions between containment and excess".⁵ In post-structuralist film theory, ideology is a synonym for unproblematic **representation** and has very little to do with the radical notion of "politics" as diverse semantic practices serving class interests. In this reading, the continuity editing that marks the classic Hollywood film is subverted so that the material discontinuity of the film is displayed as a means of showing the arbitrary connection of the signifier with the signified, thus deconstructing the logic of representation. In this sense, the films are made politically, without necessarily displaying a political content by challenging or supporting the status quo in society. In this understanding of the word "political", avant-garde and experimental films can be considered "political" because they subvert or transform the classical film form.

The term "political" in the two above senses would imply

subversion of popular or widely accepted methods of film reading on the one hand, and subversion of the methods of film construction, on the other. In other words, these two senses of the word "political" imply resistance or opposition to dominant ideologies in film content and film structure (for instance, the dictates of the capitalist market influencing the narrative form of mainstream Hollywood cinema).

The concept of "opposition to" and "resistance", but also of a strong statement in favour of new values, lies at the basis of the concept "political" when it is applied to films with explicitly political subject matter. In the basic, dictionary definition, the word "political" can mean either "relating to government, or the conduct of government; involving or charged or concerned with acts against a government or a political system" or "related to politics, and especially party politics"⁶, which, according to Betty Kirkpatrick, implies "any activities concerned with the acquisition, apportionment or exercise of power within an organization including manoeuvring and intrigue."⁷

These two senses of the word imply (signify) the existence of specific economic forces and dominant ideologies of the ruling classes in a strictly Marxist sense. The dominant ideology poses social relations of power in such a way that an alternative order is seen as neither practically possible nor morally justifiable. Such an ideology can be conquered only through a revolutionary restructuring of economic relations and not through an ideological struggle that reforms semiotic relations rather than socioeconomic ones. Thus "dominant ideology" in a Marxist sense signifies a "false consciousness of social and economic realities, a collective illusion shared by the members of a given social class and in history distinctively associated with that class."⁸

In a film called "political" the dominant ideology in its

basic, Marxist sense can be challenged but it can also be reinforced. A film which challenges the dominant ideology would be called oppositional and one which reinforces it - propaganda. In opposition films the dominant ideology is being confronted more or less openly, its postulates are questioned and the wrongdoings of the ruling class are exposed. In propaganda films, on the other hand, the currently dominant ideology or new emerging ideologies are being presented in a positive light, openly praised and venerated. John Grierson's classic definition, "Propaganda is the art of public persuasion"⁹ does justice to the concept of propaganda but also explains its political power.

This kind of "political" films Furhammar and Issakson describe as "open propaganda movies"¹⁰. Such films serve the purposes of the government itself, propagating its views and reinforcing the values the government endorses. Both "open propaganda" and "hidden propaganda" films (both terms are used by Furhammar and Issakson) are conspicuously political in the second sense of the word "political" in that they propagate the values of the officially sanctioned status quo. Furhammar and Issakson describe "hidden propaganda" in the following way:

Hidden propaganda takes many forms. Every society which is built on a reasonably firm and homogeneous set of values, strives to reinforce and maintain them through times of change. Social outlooks and standards are passed on in upbringing and education, but attitudes can also be conveyed and implanted in ways which are more unsystematic and less intentional - for instance, through the various forms of entertainment. Here, myths and values are not presented as such but camouflaged and, going unnoticed, are taken as self-evident and indisputable.(...) It is an active process of reinforcement: we watch the realisation of our values in

escapist drama with a sense of unreflecting emotional satisfaction. On the other hand, influences which openly conflict with established values are easily distinguished and rejected. Our defence mechanisms against experiences which run counter to our accepted ideas and attitudes are extraordinarily efficient; we safeguard our values as fiercely as if they were part of ourselves.¹¹

As this brief discussion of the two levels of analysis - one which refers to the interpretation of any film and the other which characterizes political films as a category - reveals, the challenge or reinforcement of the dominant ideology is characteristic for both of them. After all, the post-structuralist interpretation of film was also considered "political" at a certain time, and its postulates were considered threatening to the dominant ideology which, in the Western world, also implies male supremacy and heterosexual exclusivity. That is why, on both levels of analysis we are speaking about "politically correct" or "politically incorrect" film interpretations and "politically correct" or "politically incorrect" films with political content. The word "correct" signifies acceptance or lack of acceptance by the dominant ideologies depending on the perspective of the word's user.

Consequently, although the two meanings of the concept "political" seem to pertain to different methodological approaches constructed by restrictive conceptual paradigms, they are both characterized by the understanding of "political" in a Marxist sense, which implies resistance to the dominant ideology, its questioning or challenging, or, alternatively, its reinforcement.

Let us return now to the second level of analysis: the political film as a category. In the theoretical treatises on

film published so far there seems to be no consistent line of reasoning or mode of thinking regarding the definition and categorization of political film. The political film is alternatively called "confrontation cinema" (by Lester Friedman), "social problem film" (by Peter Roffman and Jim Purdy), and "ideological film" (by Peter Rollins).¹² Other films, such as the films produced in the Soviet Union of the twenties, or films produced in Latin America, are referred to as being "political" because they have served as overt tools of revolution.¹³

The situation is similarly ambiguous when we consider the formal features characterizing (specific to) political films. In fact, there seem to be none which specifically determine that a film belongs to a possible film category called "political film". Neither can "political film" be considered a separate film genre. In film criticism, a genre is usually defined as a category or group of films about the same subject or marked by the same style - musicals, for example, or westerns, gangster, war, science fiction or horror films. Films in the same genre tend to look alike and observe certain conventions, although there are exceptions to both rules even in classic Hollywood cinema. Why have not political films been widely recognized as a genre? One of the reasons is that these films lack internal consistency. Although many films centre on politics or social problems, the forms of these pictures vary wildly, from comedy to melodrama.

At this moment we should ask ourselves a question - if film is considered an enunciator¹⁴ - where does its enunciative power lie? Where, in other words, does "the political" appear in relation to a film? It seems that the political enunciative power of a film lies specifically in the discursive relationship with the spectator in the sense of active interaction with him or her individually or collectively. Consequently, the term "political" has to be

treated as a commentary, added on by the audience which interprets the film as being political or not in a particular context.

Thus, political films should not even be called by this name at all. A political film as a genre does not exist. What does exist, however, is **a genre plus its "political" interpretation**. The film researcher should not concentrate on the search for an imaginary genre "political film", but rather on the term "political" in relation to film. He or she has to decide why certain films are perceived by audiences (and by what kinds of audiences) as political and others are not. At a particular point of time the audience decides that a film is "hot" in terms of the political message it transmits. Several years later its political "aura" slowly disappears giving way to the "core" value of the film, that is, whether it is a good cinematic story. Moreover, the film may have done the political work in the past but its "political" value vanishes soon after the completion of the political task and no longer provides an alibi for aesthetic weakness. The film **Man of Iron** discussed in the thesis is an example of a politically powerful film hastily produced and edited for political reasons, but very uneven in form.

The concept "political", when referring to the films revealing political discourse, seems to be an empty vessel which is filled with semantic substance by audiences at a particular time of viewing a film. "The political" in film exists as "the contemporary" closely related to the socio-historical conditions of viewing. Consequently, also in the sense of film interpretation, the concept "political" seems to refer to certain interpretation practices which were considered political at a particular time (such as post-structuralist interpretation or the radical feminist interpretation) and today are considered established interpretation processes originating historically at a

particular time. They are no longer always considered revolutionary and would not be called "political" in the sense of challenging the dominant ideology.

Thus it seems, that in the political films, the message of the film is actively **negotiated** by the spectator in a particular context of viewing. This act of negotiating the film's meaning becomes a process of a continual accommodation and rejection of different ideological positions presented and not a process of the films' instructing the audience how to make sense of the global reality of the culture - how to fit together the details of reality to compose a coherent model of relations through which, as radical politics suggests, an all encompassing picture of the real emerges.¹⁵

If we consider film as a text written by a specific cinematic language and conveying a certain ideological message, then an act of film viewing would have to be seen as an act of communication. This social aspect of meaning formation has already been postulated by Marx in his notion of language as social. In The German Ideology, Marx and Engels write that "language is the immediate actuality of thought"¹⁶ and point out that the empiricity of the world "out there" is mediated through language, which is itself a historical product. The notion of the intelligibility of the sign as the site of social contestation is further discussed by Volobinov¹⁷ in Marxism and the Philosophy of Language.

The process of interpretation of a film with a political message would thus be more reminiscent of a historical poetics than of the symptomatic or schematic interpretation which David Bordwell so scrupulously analyzed in his influential book on film interpretation, Making Meaning. Inference and Rhetoric in the Interpretation of Cinema. (1989).¹⁸ If the interpretation of a political film relies on the audiences which are inscribed within a tangible, sociohistorical

context, then interpretation must situate its protocols within a broader historical inquiry. What was political thirty years ago is no longer considered political today but, instead, becomes a historical representation of power structures and ideological apparatuses frozen in a specific time and space. The film theoretician analyzing a film produced in the past must refer to a specific historical time and space and recreate the dialogue between the audience **then** and the way the messages on the screen were presented in a political way in that particular time. The next step in the film's interpretation would concern the process of re-interpretation or finding inferences and possible interpretations of the discourse from the past by the audiences of the present. In this way, the process of film interpretation would concentrate on the **function** of the film in a particular time as a vehicle of the political message. Only then will the film's mysterious mythographic elements reveal its concrete extratextual references for the director's audiences, and the film's explicit messages - the trace of various, sometimes conflicting political purposes. Moreover, the historical poetics of film interpretation would have to account for the responses of audiences situated in different times and different historical and social spaces so that the final making of film meaning would emerge as a polyphony of different historical voices.

The very word "political" will thus be understood within its historical and material grounding - within what Bakhtin referred to as "the power of the word to mean."¹⁹ This power evolves from concrete situational and ideological contexts, that is, from a position of enunciation that reflects not only time and place but values as well. The concept "political" is constituted in language in which (as Bakhtin points out) there have never been "'neutral' words and forms - words and forms that can belong to 'no one'; language has been completely taken over, shot through with intentions and accents."²⁰

"Political" in Andrzej Wajda's Films

In the dictionary sense of the concept "political" the political in Wajda's films seems to lie in its addressing two aspects of the concept: the films present the opposition to the "dominating" but also propagate the ideology of the "dominated" in an aggressive way. As Andrew Sarris bluntly summarizes this kind of political film "it is almost invariably People against Them".²¹ In this sense of the "political film", **Man of Iron**, openly criticizes the government for its totalitarian practices, the society for its act of consent to such practices, and sympathizes with that part of society which dared oppose the dictatorship. Before this film arrived, with its openly antagonistic stance, "political film" in Poland was represented by "the school of moral concern", which dared discuss only social problems and indirectly criticize the government and its policy.²² **Man of Marble**, another film which I use in my analysis, initiated this trend. This film criticizes the dominant ideology in a less aggressive way than the later **Man of Iron**, but has been comprehended by the general public and film historians as the most powerful Polish political film of the seventies.

It is worth noting, however, that Marx's concepts of "dominant ideology", "class" and "political system" do not entirely explain the issue of "political" in the films of Andrzej Wajda. In fact, Wajda's films do not question the political system itself nor the economic relations in Poland but rather the practices of the Party apparatus and the government members. In the analysis of Wajda's films as being political, Marx's concept of "dominant ideology" would have to

be replaced by Foucault's notions of the "dominating" and the "dominated", and a fluctuating, discursive concept of "power". The ambiguous social relations in Poland are actually characterized by both the victims of the system and its executors on occasions remaining within the same ruling class²³. Consequently, opposition to the "dominant ideology" would have to give way to opposition to the "dominating power" residing within the same social class as the "dominated".

In Foucault's postmodern interpretation of power class as a separate entity is eliminated, and "dominated" and "dominating" coexist on the plane of the social as entities with movable and changing frontiers. John Fiske sums up the retreat from "class" in a postmodern social theory in the following way:

One of the many debts we owe to Foucault is his insistence that power relations cannot be adequately explained by class relations, that power is discursive and is to be understood in the specific contexts of its exercise, not in generalized social structures.²⁴

Foucault's interpretation of power relations accurately defines the political film of Andrzej Wajda in that the latter basically questions a system of domination created within social structures by the Party nomenclature and the members of the government. In **Man of Marble** and **Man of Iron** political opposition directly addresses this system of domination through the powerful images of Wajda, the filmmaker who remains a convinced socialist at heart. In this sense Wajda's films are "political" because they reveal and counteract the wrongdoings of those in power.

At the same time, however, the concept "political" manifests itself in another way in Wajda's films as well. In his films Wajda propagates new competitive ideologies in an aggressive way. In order to contravene the ideology of the

"dominating", Wajda presents a counterideology - that of the "dominated" which he conspicuously dresses in propagandist garb. In this way, Wajda's films become "political" in the propaganda sense in that they communicate the set of values established and sanctioned by the ideology of the "dominated". The rival ideology is not necessarily different from the dominant ideology in its principles but it stresses its idealistic components. The propaganda elements in Wajda's films severely criticize the negative phenomena in the "dominating"'s execution of power while praising the positive elements of the "dominated". Especially in **Man of Iron** Wajda openly uses most of the obvious elements of propaganda: glorification of the victims of the political system; condemnation of the authorities; reviving mythical or religious beliefs; superseding reality; direct address at the audience, and black and white characterization of the protagonists, among others. These cinematic devices help convince the viewer of the legitimacy of the "dominated"'s claims. All the elements of his films have to be analyzed in order to reveal how powerfully Wajda employs the two notions of "political" in the three films discussed in the thesis.

Although produced in the same country and relating to approximately the same historical period, both **Man of Marble** and **Man of Iron** are different in that they present the social and historical contexts deeply inscribed in the Poland of the time of their production. The importance of society and history in the meaning formation explains also the enunciative power of **Danton**, relating the historical events of the French Revolution. All three films provoke a dialectical formation of meanings where the semantic synthesis is produced somewhere between the films' thesis and the spectators' antithesis.

These political films of Andrzej Wajda form a site of contestation and unrest where various beliefs and opinions are openly revealed and challenged. The site of contestation is a

collection of rich images which constitute Wajda's sumptuous cinematic language. The concatenations of images in his films create distinctive political statements which originate both in Eisenstein's **Potemkin** and in the theatrical tradition of the Polish theatre. The language of these films demands an immediate emotional response, and instigates a polemical debate with the spectator.

In subversion of the ideology of the "dominating" Wajda's films, especially **Man of Marble**, use parody, pastiche, irony, and laughter, in general. As the postmodern film theory states, these are used as devices through which the connection between the signifier and the signified is deferred and the "obviousness" of established meanings is "obscured". In Wajda's films, moreover, the subversion is met by the spectator half-way. The spectator recognizes the necessary referents and laughs because he or she knows what the object of laughter is, or knows what the filmmaker refers to. This variety of political subversion constitutes an important element of the films' semantic structure.

As stated earlier, the meaning of the term "political" which seems to bind the three films by Wajda is related to the sense of opposition to the authorities and of open or hidden polemic with the authorities and the society at large which has consented to the policies of the government; but also, it is related to the meaning of "political" in the sense of propaganda. An interpretation following this line will be presented in the discussion of the films **Man of Marble**, **Man of Iron** and **Danton**, as in all three of them, on the one hand, the "dominating" are challenged and openly opposed and the revision of social relations leads to a revolutionary restructuring of social practices; and, on the other hand, the "dominated" propagate their own values in an ostentatious manner. While those in power are mercilessly mocked, defied or

see their authority subverted in a more or less open attempt to abrogate the existing social relations, the victims of the system are glorified and revered.

On the other hand, the "political" in Wajda's films is negotiated by the initiated audience and results from its response to the clashes of various discourses on the screen. Our purpose in the thesis will be to present these discourses and the audience's reactions to them. The final, "political" meaning of the film will arise from the process of negotiation of these meanings by the audience.

The presence of the audience in the meaning formation and the inscription of meaning in the historical and the social, creates a need for an interpretive procedure which would situate the film meaning somewhere between the film text and a response to it. Film meaning would have to comprise both the sender and the receiver of the message in a broad cultural and historical context.

A possible concept, an interpretive procedure, an interpretive device - with all its referential and aesthetic nuances - could be brought to life by Bakhtin's theory of dialogism which incorporates the indispensability of the reader/spectator to meaning formation. Bakhtin's understanding of language, with its inscription in the class struggle, would provide an interpretive procedure accounting for the images on the screen in the sense of Bakhtin's "words", permeated with the historical and the social.

Bakhtin's Dialogism as an Interpretive Procedure

Bakhtin's dialogism offers the possibility of analysis of film meaning as resulting from an interaction between film texts and readers' responses to them in a broad historical and cultural context. In the thesis I will be trying to use Bakhtin in order to do something which has not been done yet in film scholarship: provide an analysis of the dialogical relations within the images of the political film of Andrzej Wajda and propose that the final interpretation of the images results from a process of their negotiation with the spectator.

This kind of analysis has already been proposed not for film but for the poetry of Emily Dickinson by Lynn J. Shakinovsky.²⁵ As Holquist, a distinguished interpreter of Bakhtin and an authority on Bakhtin, his writings and his epoch, noted in his remarks about this article,

Bakhtin is in fact being invoked not so much as a source of particular ideas that will advance a broader understanding of Emily Dickinson, but as a skeleton key opening the door to a set of connections that otherwise would have remained closed.²⁶

As in Shakinovsky's work, Bakhtin's dialogism will be used in the thesis as an interpretive procedure, and a mode of thinking, and not a concise and complete theory, which Bakhtin never intended it to become, anyway. By "Bakhtin's model", I do not mean a schematic 'superstructure' of his writing only, but also the writings of the main members of his group, P.N. Medvedev and V.N. Volosinov. Some interesting additions and

interpretations related to Bakhtin's notion of dialogism which later made it possible to apply this concept to other fields of research will also be quoted when needed.²⁷ Bakhtin's dialogism would function as a gate opening onto new horizons and new possibilities in the interpretation of a work of art. In my opinion, the political films of Andrzej Wajda especially comply with Bakhtin's understanding of language as an argumentative entity, a phenomenon which is meaningful **only** in relationship, only in the context of someone talking to someone else, even when that someone else is one's own inner addressee.

Bakhtin, a Soviet literary theoretician of the twentieth century, has inspired not only literary but also film and art criticism with his stimulating concepts of the carnivalesque, dialogism and polyphony, among others. In the twentieth century, literary criticism tends to become polarized between Saussure's abstract system of language, resulting in a conception of literature as a self-contained system on the one hand, and a Marxist sociological approach on the other. The synthesis of these poles which Bakhtin attempted and the concept of dialogue in his works have posed a dilemma for a number of scholars working on a reevaluation of Bakhtin. The most important aspect of Bakhtin's model of analysis lies in his treatment of **language** as the centre of the study of literary discourse. His linguistic model is not a conventional one, however. Bakhtin argues in Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics²⁸ that the analysis of discourse should be based not so much on linguistics as on "metalinguistics" which studies the word neither within the system of language nor in a "text" which is removed from dialogical intercourse itself, but within the sphere of the genuine life of the word. It is the word itself which Bakhtin profoundly redefines and attempts to infuse with its original Greek sense of logos as discourse²⁹, speech or reason. Language is understood by Bakhtin as a

battle, in the sense of an opposition and struggle at the heart of existence. His understanding of language does not imply systematicity, but rather the coming and dying of meaning. Language is a living, volatile entity, always dialogized and pulsating with rich, contradictory lives. Bakhtin postulates in Dialogic Imagination,

The linguistic significance of a given utterance is understood against the background of language, while its actual meaning is understood against other concrete utterances on the same theme, a background made up of contradictory opinions, points of view, and value judgements...³⁰

This approach binds Bakhtin to the Marxist postulate that language is a social phenomenon. Marx and Engels write,

language is practical, real consciousness that exists for other men as well and only therefore does it exist for me; language like consciousness, only arises from the need, the necessity of social intercourse with other men (1976, 44).

In other words, Marx and Engels situate intelligibility in the social as a site of restlessness and semantic agitation. For Marx, the sign (intelligibility) is the scene of semiotic stirrings because it is the site of class struggle, the space where various social groups attempt to contest the established and assigned meanings of the sign.

As Clark and Holquist³¹ have noted, this focus on utterance did not mean that Bakhtin rejected the notion that there is constancy and systematicity in language or speech. Instead, according to him, it is in the utterance that constancy and systematicity enter into contact and struggle with unique, situated performance. Furthermore, the constancy

and systematicity that he did see in language were not limited to the types of phenomena linguists typically examine. While readily acknowledging the need to study "the specific object of linguistics, something arrived at through a completely legitimate and necessary abstraction from various aspects of the concrete life of the word"³², Bakhtin argued for the need to create an alternative approach that would incorporate a concern with how utterances and the voices producing them are organized in their socio-cultural context. Specifically, he argued for the need to create an approach that transcends the concerns of individual existing disciplines, an approach that Clark and Holquist (1984) have termed **translinguistics**. Translinguistics according to these theoreticians, is "the study of those aspects in the life of the word [i.e. in speech], not yet shaped into separate and specific disciplines, that exceed - completely and legitimately - the boundaries of linguistics"³³.

For Bakhtin, dialogism includes, but extends far beyond, the process whereby one speaker's concrete utterances come into contact with the utterances of another speaking consciousness (e.g. in face-to-face dialogue or in the process of understanding outlined above). His original understanding of language as a set of utterances - a living, volatile object - required a definition of the relation of movement between utterances and within them; this movement would mold utterances and semantically restructure them in a constant flux of ideas. Dialogue, dialogism, dialogicality, etc. were the terms that Bakhtin used to express this.

The very term **dialogism** has generated multiple interpretations and transpositions of its semantic and connotative content into the areas of literature. Kryszewski notices the interesting fact that Bakhtin never really defines 'dialogue'³⁴, but creates a sort of "semantic field" around

the notion of dialogism.³⁵ Krysin'ski sees Bakhtin's dialogism as a "convergence" towards the undefined notion of dialogue which is realized as a semantic field of such concepts as "dialogicity," "dialogical activity," "Socratic dialogue," "great dialogue," "dialogical attitude," and so on.

As Stam explains in his introductory remarks to "From Dialogism to **Zelig**" Bakhtin's dialogism consists not in the passive meeting of two voices, but in the fact that every utterance is emitted in anticipation of the discourse of an interlocutor.³⁶ In Bakhtin,

a word, discourse, language or culture undergoes 'dialogization' when it becomes relativized, de-privileged, aware of competing definitions for the same things. Undialogized language is authoritative or absolute. (...) Dialogism is the characteristic epistemological mode of a world dominated by heteroglossia. Everything means, is understood as a part of a greater whole - there is a constant interaction between meanings, all of which have the potential of conditioning others. Which will affect the other, how it will do so and in what degree is what is actually settled at the moment of utterance.³⁷

Wertsch proposes a way of capturing and applying this theoretical perspective in concrete cases in the form of what he terms "the Bakhtinian question. This question is: who is doing the talking? The pervasiveness of dialogicality in Bakhtin's view means that the answer will inevitably identify at least two voices. For example, in the case of parody, which was one of the phenomena of dialogicality, or multivoicedness, that interested Bakhtin, the effect derives from the fact that two voices, speaking simultaneously, are discernible. On the one hand, the speaking consciousness producing the concrete parodic utterance is obviously speaking; on the other hand, it

is only by populating, or appropriating the utterance of another, that parody comes into being. Hence the phenomenon is inherently multivoiced."³⁸

Dialogical discourse has to be understood in opposition to **monological discourse** which is single, unitary, fixed, finalised, univocal. It is the discourse of the single subject, the discourse of "definition, truth, denotation, logical analysis"³⁹. In the epic, for example, discourse is monological as it possesses no "dialogue of language" and as the narration remains "limited by the narrator's absolute point of view"⁴⁰. Dialogical discourse, on the other hand, is polyvalent, multidetermined, and multivocal. In contrast to the unity of vision implicit in monological discourse, the dialogical discourse is composed of "distances, relationships, analogies, and non-exclusive oppositions..."⁴¹. Dialogical discourse, emphasising the double aspects of language, and indeterminacy of reference, concerns itself with the tensions between multiple viewpoints, several narratives; it is a discourse in which "language parodies and relativises itself"⁴².

McClellan stresses this two-fold relation in his article, "The Dialogic Other: Bakhtin's Theory of Rhetoric".⁴³ As he notes,

Nowhere is the rhetorical genealogy and basis of Bakhtin's discourse theory more evident than in his concept of dialogism (...)

In double-voiced discourse the intentional movement is directed towards an object of reference and also another's utterance. In comparison, monologic discourse is oriented primarily towards a referential object and contains only a single, dominating intention.⁴⁴

McClellan later elaborates on the theme by introducing

the term 'semantic intention' which differs depending on the type of discourse, whether monological or dialogical. In the monological discourse, "even if it incorporates another's utterance - such as in direct quotation - this second utterance is completely subsumed under a single overriding intention"⁴⁵, while the dialogical discourse has two semantic intentions or two 'voices' residing and conflicting within the verbal utterance. In the dialogical discourse the authorial 'voice' infiltrates the original utterance from within, and the two different 'voices' or intentions cohabiting in the utterance may affect each other but neither obliterates nor subsumes the other.

Herrman adds that Bakhtin distinguishes between at least five different types of dialogic relationship. Double-voiced discourse arises between individual words, "if that word is perceived ... as a sign of someone else's semantic position, as the representative of another person's utterance; that is, if we hear it in someone else's voice." It also arises between whole utterances, between language styles or social dialects, in relation to aspects of one's own previous utterance, and among different semiotic phenomena such as images belonging to different art forms.⁴⁶

A concept closely linked to dialogism, and indispensable to its understanding, is the idea of **polyphony**⁴⁷ which roughly means the simultaneous existence of parallel discourses within one text, within the logos of the character, or even within one word. Polyphony would account for the hybridization of artistic images or words, which, to Bakhtin, present a mingling of one's own word with the other's word. This globalization of the dialogic sees every text as a polyphonous structure of cultures, languages and ideological positions.

Polyphony (or heteroglossia) also refers to the shifting

stratifications of language into class dialects, professional jargons (lawyers, doctors, academics), generic discourse (melodrama, comedy), bureaucratic lingos, popular slangs, along with all the other specific languages generated by cultural praxis. The languages composing heteroglossia represent "bounded verbal-ideological belief systems," points of view on the world, forms for conceptualizing social experience, each marked by its own tonalities, meanings and values. The role of the artistic text, be it a novel, a play or a film, is not to represent real life "existents" but rather to stage the conflicts inherent in heteroglossia, the coincidences and competitions of languages and discourses.

Beside the concept of dialogism or the dialogic Bakhtin introduced numerous other concepts and ideas, which, in their unpolished and intuitively formulated manner anticipated major poststructuralist themes: the denial of univocal meaning, the infinite spiral of interpretation, the negation of originary presence in speech, the unstable identity of the sign, the positioning of the subject by discourse, the untenable nature of inside/outside oppositions, and the pervasive presence of polyphony. In this way, unbeknownst to himself, Bakhtin foreshadowed the discourse of the art of post-modernism.

Bakhtin's contribution to the analysis of the literary text lies in the fact that he considered the social, the interactive, factor as the most important element in the construction of meaning. This particular approach was later employed in so called "political criticism"⁴⁸ on the one hand, and linguistic pragmatics (pragmatics of discourse) on the other⁴⁹. In both approaches, although taken from different methodological perspectives, the interlocutor, the reader, the audience or, in general, the recipient of the

message plays an important part in the construction of meaning. In fact V.Wertsch⁵⁰ postulates a certain overlapping of boundaries between translinguistics and pragmatics,

Bakhtin's comments indicate that translinguistics overlaps with the study of what today is called pragmatics of discourse, but no easy definitions can be created using such contemporary terms because of Bakhtin's grounding of translinguistics in a set of unique categories, especially voice and dialogicality.⁵¹

For Bakhtin, one of the major shortcomings of linguistic, as opposed to translinguistic, analyses is that the units of analysis (e.g. words, sentences) are abstracted from voice called by contemporary linguistics "social register" or "social code". The resulting units then belong to nobody and are addressed at nobody. Moreover, they in themselves are devoid of any kind of relation to the other's utterance, the other's word.⁵²

The importance of participants' interaction is also stressed by Volosinov⁵³, Bakhtin's disciple, the pioneer of pragmalinguistics, whose works are considered by some researchers to have been written by Bakhtin himself.⁵⁴ Volosinov states that the functioning of any human society is deeply rooted in the mutual activities of individuals, called "social intercourse" or "social communication". Understanding of the text becomes a pragmatic process, which, according to Volosinov implies that,

To understand another person's utterance means to orient oneself with respect to it, to find some proper place for it in the corresponding context... Therefore, there is no reason for saying that meaning belongs to a word as such. In essence, meaning belongs to a word in its position between speakers; that is, meaning is realized in the

process of active, responsive understanding...⁵⁵

Bakhtin's dialogism seems then to correspond to the basic concepts of pragmatics of discourse. In an elementary sense, pragmatics deals with the conditions of linguistic communication in terms of interactive relations between the sender, the receiver, the message and the context. According to this definition, the sender is someone who sends the message, the receiver is someone who receives it, the message itself exists as a discrete, clearly defined object, and the context is a separate entity which conditions both the act of sending the message and its reception. In its rigidity, the pragmatic foursome - sender, receiver, message and context - does not allow for the fluidity of the semantic movement between the four elements of the communication situation.

Bakhtin's dialogism, on the other hand, seems to transcend the concept of a pragmatic understanding of the act of communication as something that occurs between the sender of the message and its receiver in clearly defined conditions of the communication act. In Bakhtin, the four concepts interact in a global process of dialogic struggle which is more metaphorical and symbolic than a pragmatics of discourse dealing with the real participants of the communication act only. For instance, in Bakhtin, every utterance recalls earlier contexts⁵⁶ of usage, without which it could not mean anything at all. However, these contexts of usage are internalized in the utterance itself, and do not exist as independent constructs, as pragmatics of discourse proposes.

It would seem that, as in the pragmatic understanding of the speech act, in Bakhtin, the speaking subject, or author of the utterance, interacts with another speaking subject, or receiver of the utterance. Nonetheless, the Bakhtinian text as utterance has to be understood as existing on the boundary between two consciousnesses, not resulting from the actual communication between subjects, as it does in pragmatics. It

seems suspended between the two while also reflecting other texts and interconnections in a multiplicity of ideas. While pragmatics deals with specific, natural language utterances, Bakhtin treats literature as an utterance, a discourse in action, which engages two consciousnesses (that of the writer/speaker and that of reader/listener) in active understanding.

Although the dialogical nature of Bakhtin's word (logos) can be compared to a pragmatic understanding of the communication act with its sender, receiver, message and context, Bakhtin's model seems to extend the concept of the communication act beyond its rigorous perception as existing in a single speech situation.

In Bakhtin, any utterance (text) is a link in a far reaching chain of communication. Texts treated as utterances enact "addressivity," awareness of the otherness of language in general and the otherness of given dialogic patterns in particular. Similar to pragmatics, they involve particular people in actual social and historical situations but they treat their addressees as implicit objects immanent to the text, not existing outside the message, where pragmatics places them.

Despite the differences between pragmatics and dialogism I would argue that Bakhtin unknowingly anticipated the extremely important part pragmatics assigns to response, an approach which was later utilized in pragmatically oriented spectatorship theory approaches.⁵⁷ As Bakhtin insists,

In the actual life of speech, every concrete act of understanding is active: it assimilates the word to be understood into its own conceptual system filled with specific objects and emotional expressions, and is indissolubly merged with the response, with a motivated agreement or disagreement.

(...) Therefore (the speaker's) orientation toward the listener is an orientation toward a specific conceptual horizon, toward the specific world of the listener; it introduces totally new elements into his discourse; it is in this way, after all, that various different points of view, conceptual horizons, systems for providing expressive accents, various social "languages" come to interact with one another.⁵⁸

Krysinski also notes the similarity of Bakhtin's concepts to pragmatics. The following criteria for dialogue in Bakhtin's theory, as summarized by Krysinski, resemble the pragmatic foursome of sender, receiver, message and context:

- "1) The alternation of two opposed roles: that of the speaking subject and that of the hearing subject. (...)
- 2). The construction of a communicative act as a situation in which two interlocutors participate. (...)
- 3). The interpenetrability of the two opposed worlds. (...)"⁵⁹

As Krysinski mentions, there can be a fourth feature added at this point, namely that "there should be a common elaboration of the code which the two speakers should share."⁶⁰ These four conditions are similar to the pragmatic conditions of a speech act. The first condition predicts the existence of participants of the communication exchange in a speech act, the second presupposes formation of the speech act itself, the third predicts the existence of felicity conditions, and the fourth one prescribes the common set of presuppositions.

Although living and working earlier in the twentieth century, Bakhtin foresaw major literary criticism and media criticism movements which appeared only in the second part of the twentieth century. Moreover, Bakhtin allowed for the revolutionary concept of the reader's inscription in the work of art, and for a variety of relations between the two, in opposition to the rigid unilateral motion from the work of art

to its receiver present in numerous approaches to reception which were proposed by Western researchers of the twentieth century, such as Gibson, Eco, Riffaterre, Brooke-Rose, Prince, Culler, Holland, Fish, Jauss⁶¹, and others ⁶² who lived and worked after Bakhtin's death. When Bakhtin's works finally reached the world of literary and philosophical research, contemporary literary theoreticians realized that the Russian scholar had already introduced the concepts of audiences, context, cultural and historical background, and pragmatics, though he never used the respective terms themselves. Inventing names and providing a more rigorous scholarly shape for these concepts was to be accomplished by other scholars, much later than Bakhtin.

Dialogism and Film

Although the application of Bakhtin to film studies has been criticized or treated with distrust by orthodox Bakhtinians⁶³, there have appeared a number of film theoreticians who have carefully grappled with the application of Bakhtin to film.⁶⁴ Critics of the application of Bakhtin to film analysis have postulated that film is a different means of enunciation than a natural language and Bakhtin's concepts cannot be automatically transferred from the latter to the former. Also, Bakhtin and his revolutionary concepts always have to be seen within the Russian tradition and the philosophical tradition from which he emerged.⁶⁵

Despite these reservations, almost all of the Bakhtin's concepts and ideas proved to be broad and explanatory enough to find application to film. So far, the most consistent analysis of film in the light of Bakhtin's theory has been presented by Robert Stam in his book Subversive Pleasures. Bakhtin, Cultural Criticism and Film (1989).

According to this theoretician, Bakhtin's approach seems to have a built-in "place" for film, since Bakhtin sees verbal language as part of a continuum of forms of semiosis sharing a common logic. Purely linguistic definitions of an artistic language and its elements, Bakhtin suggests in "The Problem of the Text," can serve only as "initial terms for description," for what is most important "is not described by them and does not reside within them."⁶⁶ I agree with Stam here that if the cine-semiologists in the Franco-Italian tradition had known Bakhtin earlier, they would never have concentrated on the langue as a possible linguistic equivalent for film, but rather on parole which is totally utterance oriented. After

all, "it is not phonemes and morphemes that enter dialogism , but utterances, and it is as utterance that the cinematic "word" acquires relation to the spectator and to life."⁶⁷

In his book, Stam elaborates on the relevance of Bakhtin to cultural and mass-media critiques and shows how Bakhtinian conceptualizations can help analyze, teach and generate mass-mediated culture. The "rightness" of a Bakhtinian approach to film derives, Stam suggests, basically from the fact that Bakhtin's method allows for crossing the boundaries between various fields and disciplines. His dialogical style of analysis applies both to the centre and to the borders of academic disciplines. Moreover, film as a medium seems to originate from the popular culture and the erudite culture as well while it combines all the developments in literary theory and criticism together with their new and often radical methodologies.

Stam recapitulates finally that in view of all these developments "the encounter of Bakhtin with film might be viewed as virtually inevitable,"⁶⁸ a view which I share completely with Stam, and which I will try to elaborate in the thesis.

In his book Stam speaks not only about the critical use-value of "carnival" in the cinema, but also of other Bakhtinian concepts - his "politicized vision of language as pervaded by dialogism (i.e., the transindividual generation of meaning), heteroglossia (the interanimation of the diverse languages generated by sexual, racial, economic, and generational difference), and tact (the ensemble of codes governing discursive interaction)."⁶⁹ While Chapter 1, "Translinguistics and Semiotics" stresses film **as** language, Chapter 2, "Language, Difference and Power," addresses language **in** film, and specifically the ways in which Bakhtin's non-unitary approach can help illuminate the impact of language difference (polyglossia and heteroglossia) on the cinema in terms of such issues as translation,

postsynchronization, subtitles and the like.

Chapters 3 and 4 of the book deal with diverse aspects of the Bakhtinian notion of carnival. In chapter 5, "The Grotesque Body and Cinematic Eroticism" Stam draws out the implications of Bakhtin's corporeal semiotic for an analysis of cinematic eroticism, emphasizing its potential for enabling both a critique and a transvaluation of pornography. In chapter 6, "From Dialogism to **Zelig**," Stam extensively discusses the concept of dialogism as applied to the analysis of rap music and Woody Allen's film **Zelig**. Mostly, Stam's application of the concept of dialogism refers to the cultural phenomena within the film itself. Stam treats film as another kind of literary fiction where characters take part in a multicultural dialogue. In this chapter, Stam has chosen a specific application of Bakhtinian dialogism to illustrate the presence of multiple cultures in the text of **Zelig**. He especially has seen the validity of Bakhtin's method in explaining Zelig's ideological mobility, cultural multivoicedness and historical complexity in the sociohistorical representation of a Jew. In interpreting Zelig's chameleon personality, Stam applies the Bakhtinian view of the self as "a kind of echo chamber of socially orchestrated voices"⁷⁰ operating on several cinematic levels - the images, as well as the musical and linguistic phrases, operate side by side in Zelig's numerous impersonations of the diverse synecdochic cultural figures with whom he comes in contact.

The chapter devoted to dialogism has drawn most of my critical attention and has produced a certain dissatisfaction with Stam's solutions. My impression is that Stam has stressed mainly the multivoicedness of the film, and not necessarily its dialogic tension or struggle in the accommodation of the opposites which Bakhtin himself postulates in his definition of the dialogic.⁷¹ Stam's analysis emerges as an enumeration of cultural and ideological traces but not as a presentation

of the relational attributes of dialogization. Although he notices the potential for a variety of meanings and interpretations among multiple spectators who would, presumably, each interpret the film differently, he does not develop this idea in his analysis. Nor does he feature the pragmatic, communicative angle in Bakhtin's writing, dealing only with the semantic potential inherent in the Bakhtinian understanding of language as a system conveying a multiplicity of meanings.

It could be argued here that one of the reasons for Stam's rejection of (or disregard for) the interactive and dynamic property of dialogization in **Zelig** is that Stam would not necessarily see this dynamic in the film (or that the film itself would not invite such an interpretation at all). Woody Allen's film would be interpreted as an example of a multiplicity of discourses existing side by side in the film and not involved in any way in an internal struggle. This would be brought about by the chameleon characteristics of the protagonist Zelig himself, who does not allow for (does not care for) any dialogical tension in the flow of discourses.

Despite these methodological shortcomings, Stam's extensive analysis of **Zelig** is a vivid attempt at a comprehensive application of Bakhtin's concept of dialogism to film. In general, his contribution undoubtedly lies in the fact that in Subversive Pleasure Stam discovered numerous possibilities for the application of Bakhtin's concepts to film and mass media analysis.

What Stam has also noted is that Bakhtin's concepts of dialogism and polyphony are especially inspiring when we consider the film's textuality itself. Bakhtin's ingenious understanding of the concepts of "text" and "language" allows for diverse interpretations of filmic textuality. Thus, based on Bakhtin's methodological approach to the latter, film can be treated in a variety of theoretical ways. One approach is

to treat film as text. As Stam notes,

What Bakhtin offers film theory and analysis is a unitary, transdisciplinary view of the human sciences and of cultural production, based on the identity of their common materials: texts. Bakhtin's broad definition of "text" as referring to all cultural production rooted in language -and for Bakhtin no cultural production exists outside of language - has the effect of breaking down not only the walls between disciplines but also the wall between "text" and "hors-texte."⁷²

On the other hand, film is understood as constructed by a complex of signs in Bakhtin's understanding of "language" as any coherent complex of signs, meaning any communication system employing signs that are ordered in a particular manner, which encompasses everything from literature to visual and aural works of art.⁷³

However, film can also be treated as an utterance, the reception of which is conditioned by the interlocutor of the communication event. This kind of approach, which gives credit to the spectator, is especially valued now in the writings of French and British film and media theoreticians, such as Stuart Hall, David Morley, Daniel Dayan⁷⁴ and others. Bakhtin resembles these theoreticians in that he considers interactive discourse as an intrinsic aspect of text. Both the recipients of the discourse, prior discourses, and the author's voice, form a polyphony of voices which themselves constitute an artistic situation, an event shared by the author and the reader. As Stam explains, "Artistic speech is interlocution, the in-between of text and a reader, whose responsive understanding is sought and anticipated and on whom the text depends for its concretization."⁷⁵

In this, Bakhtin's approach seems to intersect the concerns of contemporary reception theory of Jauss and Iser

and of the 'reader response' criticism of Stanley Fish and Norman Holland. Especially Jauss' Erwartungshorizont (expectation horizon), the idea that all texts as all interpretations issue from a distinct vantage point, but dialogically relate to each other, seems especially promising for the analysis of historical discourses in the films, the issue I will deal with in detail in the third chapter of the thesis.

In the approach which views film as an utterance, the latter is perceived as situated within the pragmatic foursome of sender, receiver, message and context, but all of these elements are situated both within the film text itself, and within the situation of film viewing. Film does not exist in a vacuum, and is not understood as a finite, discrete text, an object as given, a product delineated by the spatial and temporal uniqueness of the act of production, but as a porous body of production and reception which allows for a process of filtration in the film utterance. Film is thus seen in the broader perspective of its intertextuality within which it functions as an element of a mosaic of both the producer's and the receiver's presuppositions and assertions.

The notion of the dialogic is pertinent to all the above mentioned concepts of film - film as text, film as a system of signs and film as an utterance. In all cases, Bakhtinian dialogism can be seen as a 'rewriting' of the Saussurean view of language as the diacritical play of difference, recast as the play of difference within the text with all its others: author, intertext, real and imagined addressees, and the communicative context.⁷⁶ The irrevocable meaning (theme) of the film emerges as a final result of this confrontation.

Conclusion

In my opinion, the political film of Andrzej Wajda especially complies with Bakhtin's understanding of language as an argumentative entity, a phenomenon which is meaningful **only** in relationship, only in the context of someone talking to someone else, even when that someone else is one's own inner addressee.

Also, in its social and historical characteristics, the political film of Andrzej Wajda is susceptible of Bakhtinian analysis. By applying his theory of dialogism to the political films of Andrzej Wajda, we are able to treat the sender, the receiver, the message and the context as equal partners in an active process of meaning formation.

The political film, in which I am interested, reveals tensions and interactive relations not only within the film fabric (textuality) but also between the audience and the film, as a premise of its construction. Thus the political film of Andrzej Wajda automatically invites the interactive and pragmatic aspects of Bakhtin's dialogism as the most crucial elements in film analysis.

Such an understanding of dialogism will be applied in the analysis of the three films by Andrzej Wajda, **Man of Marble**, **Man of Iron** and **Danton**. I would postulate that the films reveal multiple aspects of Bakhtin's dialogism. They involve a dialogistic use of cultural and historical events within the film text, as well as attain a realization of dialogism in the film form itself. In all the films the concept of dialogism elucidates a multiplicity of discourses and the process of merging these discourses with the discourses of the responding

audience.

This kind of dialogical understanding of political film would necessitate a detailed discussion of, for instance, various contradictory voices in the interpretation of the role of the film director in totalitarian Poland (as in the explanations of the role played by Burski in **Man of Marble**), fighting discourses of truth and honesty as opposed to the discourse of fear and opportunism in the role of the journalist of Gierek's Poland played by Winkiel in **Man of Iron**, and the inner doubts and internal discussions of Robespierre in **Danton**.

Moreover, a dialogical understanding of the political film of Andrzej Wajda would clarify the internal, formal tensions within particular films themselves. Maybe, the stylistic unevenness of Wajda's films could be explained in terms of the dialogical tension within the films' complex aesthetics. After all, it is the combination of an image and sound which enunciates the film. The internal tensions between the two as well as an attempt to adapt the films' aesthetics to the powerful, historical voices which try to disrupt, or burst through the images, creates a dilemma for the artist who attempts to accommodate the historical glossia within the aesthetic requirements of the cinema.

Moreover, in terms of the films' images, understanding the political film of Andrzej Wajda would mean negotiation of each of its images, scenes and sequences with the interlocutor, with the spectator armed with a set of cultural and historical presuppositions. The whole essence of cinematic language in the political film of Andrzej Wajda undergoes a transformation in the light of Bakhtin's dialogism. Bakhtin's methodology compels the researcher to consider the films' complex contextualizations and creates the possibility of introducing both politics and culture into film study.

It is worth remembering that the interaction with the audience takes place over the head of censorship, an

alternative audience which imposes its ruling on the ideological content of the film. The monological imposition of censorship must be counteracted, its scrutiny avoided, and the exchange between the spectator and the message of the film negotiates the film's meaning in such a way as to distract the censorship's attention. The innuendos and nuances in the political film of this kind, produced in order to deliberately mislead the official censorship, would not be comprehensible without the active participation of an audience willing to decipher them, thus the audiences' interpretive reactions are considered the most important factor in the construction of meaning in the political film of Andrzej Wajda. Depending on the spatial and temporal circumstances of the film screening, and on the historical and cultural backgrounds of audiences, the images are transformed on the screen into multiple and varied chunks of appreciation and understanding in the process of active reception.

Finally, I would like to point out, that there exists one more reason for which Mikhail Bakhtin and Andrzej Wajda seem inextricably linked. Both of them devoted a period in their lives to the analysis of Fiodor Dostoevsky's works, which the two masters considered the most accomplished achievements, in the polyphonic novel, and in the presentation of dramatic conflicts in human lives, respectively. Both Bakhtin and Wajda were fascinated by the complexity of Dostoevsky's fictional world, and both tried to unravel this complexity in their written (Bakhtin) and theatrical (Wajda) performances. Bakhtin felt that,

Dostoevsky's world is the artistically organized coexistence and interaction of spiritual diversity, not stages in the evolution of a unified spirit. And thus, despite their different hierarchical emphasis, the worlds of the heroes and the planes of the novel, by virtue of

the novel's very structure, lie side by side on a plane of coexistence (as do Dante's worlds) and of interaction (not present in Dante's formal polyphony); they are not placed one after the other, as stages of evolution.⁷⁷

Bakhtin analyzed Dostoevsky's work in his most accomplished treatises, such as The Dialogic Imagination and Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, while Wajda directed many plays based on Dostoevsky's texts almost since the beginning of his career as a theatre and television theatre director. Already in 1962 Andrzej Wajda directed an adaptation of Fiodor Dostoevsky's short story ("Cudza Zona i Maz Pod Lozkiem" - "A Different Wife and a Husband Under the Bed") for a well established and widely seen television theatre. In 1971, under his direction, The Old Theatre in Cracow presented Dostoevsky's "Devils" in a brilliant performance. The same theatre presented a play "Nastasja Filipowna" based on Dostoevsky's novel "Idiot" in 1977. In 1984, again the Old theatre in Cracow presented Dostoevsky's "Crime and Punishment" in another astounding theatrical realization by Andrzej Wajda. After directing the play in 1977, Wajda concludes in his conversation with Teresa Krzemien,

Mysle, ze zblizylem sie do Dostojewskiego. A to zostaje na pozniej, tak jak znajomosc z kims niezwyklym, bez wzgledu na to czy sie go lubi, czy nienawidzi.⁷⁸

I think that I can understand Dostoevsky better now. And this feeling will stay with me for ever. The same feeling you have when you know someone exceptional, regardless of whether you like this someone or hate him.

Notes

1. Urmson, J.O. and Jonathan Rée (eds) The Concise Encyclopedia of Western Philosophy and Philosophers. London: Unwin Hyman, 1989, 150.
2. Zavarzadeh, Mas'ud. Seeing Films Politically. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991.
3. Sarris, Andrew. Politics and Cinema. New York: Columbia UP, 1978, 6.
4. Zavarzadeh 8.
5. Zavarzadeh 70.
6. Webster. New Collegiate Dictionary. Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1981, 883.
7. Kirkpatrick, Betty. The Cassell Concise English Dictionary, London: Cassell, 1989, p.1024.
8. Edwards, P. (ed-in-chief) The Encyclopedia of Philosophy. vol.4, The MacMillan Company and the Free Press NY, London 1967, 125.
9. Vas, Robert. "Sorcerers or Apprentices: Some Aspects of the Propaganda Film" in Maynard, Richard, A. Propaganda on Film. A Nation at War. Rochelle Park, New Jersey: Hayden Book Company, 1975, 7.
10. Furhammar L. & F. Isaksson. Politics and Film. transl. K. French, New York, Washington: Praeger Publishers, 1968, 245.
11. Furhammar L. & F. Isaksson. Politics and Film. transl. K. French, New York, Washington: Praeger Publishers, 1968, 245.
12. The political film is alternatively called "confrontation cinema", for instance, by Lester Friedman in "The Necessity of Confrontation Cinema: Peter Watkins Interviewed" Literature/Film Quarterly. 1983 v11(4), 237-248; "social problem film", for instance, by Peter Roffman and Jim Purdy The Hollywood Social Problem Film: Madness, Despair, and Politics from the Depression of the Fifties. Indiana UP 1981,

or "ideological film" as, for instance, Rollins, Peter C. "Ideology and Film Rhetoric: Three Documentaries of the New Deal era (1936-1941), 32-48 in Rollins, Peter C. (ed. & introd.) Hollywood as Historian: American Film in a Cultural Context. Lexington: Indiana UP, 1983.

13. For instance, Fernando Solanas and others.

14. "Enunciation" is understood here as a concept which implies the position of the speaking subject in film. The notion was borrowed from structural linguistics and was later developed by such film theoreticians as Christian Metz and Raymond Bellour. In Emile Benveniste's words linguistic enunciation implies an exchange in which there is both the statement (what is said, the language itself) and the process that produces the statement (how something is said, from what position). In general, enunciation is characterized by the emphasis on the discursive relationship with a partner, whether it be real or imagined, individual or collective. This concept when applied to the cinema roughly means that in every film there is always a place of enunciation - a place from which the cinematic discourse proceeds, which is theorized as a "position", not to be confused with the actual individual, the filmmaker.

15. Zavarzadeh, 8.

16. Marx, Karl. Collected Works. vol. 5. New York: International Publishers, 1976, 446.

17. I.R. Titunik's in "The Formal Method and the Sociological Method (M.M. Bakhtin, P.N. Medvedev, V.N. Volosinov) in Russian Theory and Study of Literature." in V.N. Volosinov Marxism and the Philosophy of Language. transl. Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1973, 175-200, states that the three researchers constituted a closely knit group, which consisted of "such people as his student, follower, and collaborator, V.N. Volosinov, the literary scholars P.N. Medvedev and L.V. Pumpjanskij, the indologist M.I. Tobjanskij, the biologist I.I. Kanaev, the writer K. Vaginov, and the musicologist I.I. Sollertinskij" (176, note 3).

18. Bordwell, David. Making Meaning. Inference and Rhetoric in the Interpretation of Cinema. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1989.

19. M.M. Bakhtin, The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays. ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981, 352.

20. Ibid, 293, 352.

21. Sarris, Andrew. Politics and Cinema. New York: Columbia UP, 1978, 4.
22. For instance, Michalek, B. and F. Turaj, The Modern Cinema of Poland, Bloomington & Indianapolis, 1988.
23. According to the official ideology proclaimed in Socialist Poland the workers constituted the "ruling class". In reality, however, they were the real victims of the socialist system.
24. Fiske, John. Understanding the Popular. Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989. Fiske refers especially to Foucault's work Power/Knowledge. ed. Colin Gordon, NY: Pantheon, 1980.
25. Shakinovsky, Lynn J. "Hidden Listeners: Dialogism in the Poetry of Emily Dickinson" Social Discourse III, 199-216.
26. Barsky, R.F. & Holquist, M. "Dialogue." Bakhtin and Otherness. Social Discourse. International Research Papers in Comparative Literature. 3, nos 1&2 (Spring-Summer 1990): 4.
27. Bakhtin's theory has been discussed in the context of philosophy, sociolinguistics, psychoanalysis, feminism, and many other fields of research.
28. Bakhtin, M. Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson, Minneapolis: U of Minneapolis P, 1984.
29. Discourse is understood here in the sense of a common theoretical usage where "discourse is shared by a socially constituted group of speakers or particular social practice,... and includes all those items, aesthetic, semantic, ideological, social which can be said to speak for or refer to those whose discourse it is". In: Christine Gledhill, "Klute 1: A Contemporary Film Noir and Feminist Criticism." Kaplan E. Ann (ed) Women in Film Noir. London: British Film Institute, 1980, 13.
30. Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination, 281.
31. Clark, K. and Holquist, M. Mikhail Bakhtin. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984.
32. Bakhtin Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics. 1984, 181.
33. Ibid. 181.
34. Kryszinski, Wladimir, "Bakhtin and the Evolution of the Post-Dostoevskian Novel." Bakhtin and Otherness. Social Discourse. International Research Papers in Comparative Literature 3, nos 1 & 2 (Spring-Summer 1990).

35.Ibid. 110.

36.Stam, Robert. Subversive Pleasures. Bakhtin, Cultural Criticism and Film. Baltimore & London: The John Hopkins UP, 1989, 187.

37. Bakhtin, M. Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays. ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, Austin: U of Texas P, 1981, 426.

38.Wertsch, 70.

39.Loy, Martin. Browning's Dramatic Monologues and the Post-Romantic Subject. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins P, 1985, 56.

40.Kristeva, Julia. Desire in Language. Ed.Leon S.Roudiez.Trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, Leon S.Roudiez. New York: Columbia UP, 1980, 77-78.

41.Ibid. 78.

42.Ibid. 79.

43.McClellan, William. "The Dialogic Other: Bakhtin's Theory of Rhetoric," Social Discourse III, nos 1&2, spring-summer 1990, 233-249.

44.McClellan, 236.

45.Ibid. 236.

46.Herrman,A. The Dialogic and Difference. "An/other Woman" in Virginia Woolf and Christa Wolf. NY: Columbia UP, 1989.14-15.

47.Bakhtin's terms of "polyphony," "heteroglossia," or "polyglossia" originally mean "the simultaneous presence of two or more national languages interacting within a single cultural system" (Dialogic Imagination, p.431). Although Bakhtin's two historical models, on which the idea of heteroglossia is based, are ancient Rome and the Renaissance, the terms themselves proved to be so fertile that they have been used by many other theoreticians to describe complex cultural and sociological phenomena.

48.The term was used by Eagleton to cover the analysis of Raymond Williams, Pierre Macherey, Cliff Slaughter, Tony Bennett, Leon Trotsky, Mikhail Bakhtin, V.N.Volosinov, Georg Lukács, Walter Benjamin, Fredric Jameson, and others. See Terry Eagleton Literary Theory. An Introduction. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983.

49.Wertsch, 70.

50.Wertsch, James V. "Dialogue and dialogism in a socio-cultural approach to mind" in Voices of the Mind: A Sociocultural Approach to Mediated Action. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1991, p.66.

51.Wertsch, 66.

52.Bakhtin Speech Genres and Other Late Essays. 1986, 99.

53.Volosinov, V.N. Marxism and the Philosophy of Language. NY/London: Seminar Press, 1973.

54.Anne Herrman in The Dialogic and Difference. "An/other Woman" in Virginia Woolf and Christa Wolf. (NY: Columbia UP, 1989, 11) argues that Bakhtin published under his own name and assumed names borrowed from two friends, V.N.Volosinov and P.N.Medvedev. She agrees, however, that the extent to which Volosinov and Medvedev were authors, coauthors or pseudonyms remains largely undecided. The texts in question are V.N.Volosinov Freudianism: A Marxist Critique and Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, and P.N.Medvedev/M.M.Bakhtin, The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship: A Critical Introduction to Sociological Poetics.

55.Volosinov, 102-103.

56.In Bakhtin, context is understood as the socio-historical situation of the utterance which generates the word but also is an active participant in the word's interpretation. Pragmatics, on the other hand, postulates a more "passive" understanding of context. Context exists as a **condition** for the formation of utterances and not as an active participant, dialogically interacting with the word formation as happens in Bakhtin's understanding of the term.

57.The pragmatically oriented spectatorship theory approaches are represented, among others, by the Italian school and by the German school of film theoreticians. The first school is represented by G. Bettetini, V. Melchiorre, F.Casetti and A.Ferrara, all of them related in one way or another to Scuola Superiore delle Comunicazioni Sociali in Milano, Italy. Their representative works dealing with the spectatorship issues are the following:

Italy

G.Bettetini, "Partecipazione e comunicazioni sociali," Comunicazioni sociali, 1976, no 1-2.

V.Melchiorre, Immaginazione simbolica, Bologna 1972.

F.Casetti, Teorie del cinema dal dopoguerra a oggi, Milano 1978.

A.Ferrara, "A Few Considerations on a Pragmatic Component,"

Versus, 1977.

Germany

G.Schanz, "Filmsprache und Filmsyntax," In: Das glückliche Bewusstsein. Anleitungen zur materialistischen Medienkritik. Ed. H.buselmeier, Darmstadt und Neuwied 1974.

G.Bentele, "Regel und Code in der Filmsemiotik" in Semiotics Unfolding. Proceedings of the Second Congress of the International Association for Semiotic Studies, Vienna, July 1979. Vol.III, ed. T.Borbé, Berlin-New York-Amsterdam 1984, 1569-1577.

58.Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination, 1981, 282.

59. Kryszinski quotes Mukarovsky, J. "Dialog a monolog. Listy filologické LXVIII" quoted from Kapitoly z ceske poetiky I. Prague, 1948, as the originator of this idea. (Kryszinski, 111).

60.Kloepfer, R. "Grundlagen des dialogischen prinzipls in der Literatur" in Dialogizität, R.Lachman, Wilhelm Fink, München, 1982, p.88. (quoted by Kryszinski in "Bakhtin and the Evolution of the Post-Dostoevskian Novel", Social Discourse III, p.112.)

61.The relation of Bakhtin's dialogism and Jauss' "fusion of horizons" will be discussed in the introductory part to chapter III.

62. Most of the reception theory approaches have been discussed, for instance, in Freund, Elizabeth. The Return of the Reader. Reader-Response Criticism. London and New York: Methuen, 1987.

63.See, for instance, a conversation between Robert Barsky and Michael Holquist in Social Discourse III, (1-22), where both interlocutors repudiate the application of Bakhtin to film studies. Barsky's statement is symptomatic of this kind of rejection:

"We have seen some applications of Bakhtin's work to film studies; although we don't have any representative examples of these studies in this issue, there have been some articles as well as a major book by Robert Stam published in this area. There seems to be a danger, however, in undertaking film studies with some of the general categories like polyglossia or heteroglossia in mind. Maybe this is because the theoreticians who have been studying Bakhtin with reference to film theory have not been placing Bakhtin into the Russian tradition or into the philosophical tradition from which he emerged.(ibid 20)."

64. Especially Robert Stam in Subversive Pleasure, and in his recently published book, Reflexivity in Film and Literature. From Don Quixote to Jean-Luc Godard. Irvington: Columbia UP, 1991.

65. Bakhtin belonged to an anti-formalist movement in the Soviet Union in the late 1920s and early 30's which was opposed to a strictly structuralist analysis of the language but favoured a more polemical approach. Titunik summarizes the historical appearance of this movement in the following words, As the decade of the 1920s ended and that of the 1930s began, the formalist movement and the controversy in which it was embroiled came more and more under the effect of changes occurring in the political and governmental life of the Soviet Union. In the interests of argument, of free-wheeling debate and polemics, were being gradually supplanted by the demands of dogma. Increasingly, formalism was put in the position of a "heresy"(...). In the interim, though loyalty to the stand taken by a dogma was a prerequisite, it was still possible to contend with formalism in rational terms. During this period - the late 1920s and early '30s - a certain group of young, self-avowed Marxists (...) were carrying out investigations in the theory of language and literature or, more broadly and accurately, in the field of semiology with particular emphasis on language and literature. The principal of this group was, apparently, M.M. Bakhtin; the membership included P.N. Medvedev and V.N. Volosinov. (Titunik Marxism and The Philosophy of Language, 176).

66. Bakhtin, Mikhail, Speech Genres and Other Late Essays, trans. Vern W. McGee, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986, p.60.

67. Stam, Robert, "Bakhtinian Translinguistics: A Postscriptum" in The Cinematic Text, 344.

68. Stam, Subversive Pleasure, 17.

69. Ibid. 18.

70. Ibid. 216.

71. See for instance Holquist's Glossary, 427.

72. Robert Stam, "Film and Language: From Metz to Bakhtin" in R. Barton Palmer (ed) The Cinematic Text. Methods and Approaches, New York: AMS Press, 1989.

73. This interpretation of film would basically conform with the structuralists' understanding of natural language as discourse - a speech act which is also a social utterance, understood through a social contract. Ferdinand de Saussure wanted to define semiology as "a science that studies the life of signs within society..." (in Ferdinand de Saussure, Course in General Linguistics [1915], Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye (ed), trans. Wade Baskin (rpt. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), p.16.). Thus, for one of the more influential predecessors of contemporary linguistics, the act of speaking, i.e. 'parole' is a historical, social act. However, as Janet Steiger notes, "this postulate was set aside as scholars concentrated on various media as self-contained, synchronic, semiotic systems. Consequently, in a large part for dominant literary and cinema semiotics, language theory moved through a phase of ahistorical, nonsocial idealism in which meanings were assumed decipherable from structured oppositions or decoded via other strategies of analyzing textual syntagmas and semantics" (Janet Steiger "Reception Studies: The Death of the Reader.", The Cinematic Text. Methods and Approaches. New York: AMS Press, 1989, p.355.).

For another theoretician, Tzvetan Todorov, "**discourse** is the structural counterpart of the functional concept of language use" (in Tzvetan Todorov. Genres in Discourse. transl. Catherine Porter. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990, 9.). For natural language the concept is formulated as follows:

...starting from vocabulary and grammar rules, language produces sentences; but sentences are only the point of departure of discursive functioning. Sentences are articulated among themselves and uttered in a given sociocultural context; they are transformed into utterances, and language is transformed into discourse. Furthermore, discourse is not a single entity; it is multiple, in its functions as well as in its forms. (Todorov 10).

The social positioning of discourse, dependence of its genres on "a society's raw material as well as on its historically circumscribed ideology" (Todorov 10) is important for understanding of the film's plurivocality in an active negotiation of its meaning by the spectator. Film in this understanding becomes a fluid cultural and historical discourse and not a closed text.

74. See, for instance, Daniel Dayan, "Television Ceremonies and Their Multiple Audiences. An Austinian Perspective on the Performance of the Public." Series of lectures, Anneberg School, Los Angeles, Nov.1983; Stuart Hall, "Deviancy, Politics and the Media," Deviance and Social Control, P. Rock and M. McIntosh, eds (London: Tavistock, 1974), pp.261-305;

David Morley, The 'Nationwide' Audience, London: British Film Institute, 1980.

75. Stam, Subversive Pleasures, 20.

76. This analysis stands in contrast to what Dana Polan proposes, namely, that "Bakhtinian dialogism is seen as the diacritical play of difference **between** the text and all its others: author, intertext, real and imagined addressees and the communicative context." (Polan, D.B. "The Text between Monologue and Dialogue," Poetics Today 4, no.1 (1983): 145-52). Dana Polan's proposition, as Paul Coates suggests, would reiterate Stam's failure to notice an internal tension within the text.

77. Bakhtin, Mikhail. Dostoevsky's Polyphonic Novel. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984, 31.

78. "Ostatnie miejsce, w którym ludzie jeszcze z sobą rozmawiają" z Andrzejem Wajdą rozmawia Teresa Krzemien, Kultura 30.X.1977. in Wajda Mówi o Sobie (Wanda Wertenstein, Krakow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1991, 210).

II CHAPTER

ANDRZEJ WAJDA - THE CARRIER OF THE POLITICAL MESSAGE

Andrzej Wajda is a film director who introduces important social and historical issues in his films. The films intrigue the spectators, anger them or fascinate, but never leave them unresponsive or bored. The dialogue opened by Wajda's films requires an active response on the part of the spectator, forcing him or her to take sides, to negotiate the meaning on the screen, to compare the images to what the spectator himself or herself knew with reference to the reality presented in the films. As Krystyna Janda, his favourite actress who has appeared both in **Man of Marble** and **Man of Iron** sums it up, "(Wajda) has a real flair for the social, for being a 'social activist,' a label which in Poland is sometimes used pejoratively. He envisions himself in the role of the teacher of the nation."¹

Wajda as a film author who occupies a definite socio-ideological space, is the personified, centring source of the discourse, the anthropomorphized figure that grounds the discourse, but does not create this discourse in its totality, only gives it a socio-ideological orientation and locates it in a historical context. He is more similar to Foucault's conception of author as a discursive function, one that designates its subject position(s).² Especially in his political films, **Man of Marble** and **Man of Iron**, Wajda liberates the reality as is, forcing the spectator to identify

with the here and now in the images and prompting him or her to take sides in the polemical presentation of the film's political credo. His imposition as a film director consists only in such a juxtaposition of various existing social discourses, that their subsequent manifestation and reinforcement forces the spectator to react in an emotional way. In such a construction of the film message Wajda seems to illustrate Bakhtin's individual role of the author understood as "an architect of the plurivocal and pluridiscursive as well as plurinarrative structures."³ I would quote Kryszinski here, that the role of the director, Wajda especially, similar to the role of the author in a post-Dostoevskian novel, should be defined as that of "compiler" or "narrative voice." As Kryszinski notes,

In this sense the polyphony is first of all typological, because it is the product of a constructive consciousness involved in the process of intellectual montage. Within these new parameters of the post-Dostoevskian novel dialogism deserves the name of mono-dialogism. It implies as driving force one's narrator's manipulation of the discourse as well as of the message. In that sense it is interpellating dialogism.⁴

In this sense, film reshapes polyphony and dialogism to some extent. Its ever-growing complexity, while supporting Bakhtin's basic formulations, redefines them in an effort to stop the "glossia" proliferating in the sense of Kryszinski's mono-dialogism which dissolves the dualism of Bakhtin himself.

Andrzej Wajda is one of the most original heirs to the Romantic tradition in Poland but also a calculating artist who produces an artistic effect in a highly determined and rational manner. On the other hand, Wajda is also plurivocal

and pluridiscursive in his own artistic activities, sharing the cinema with theatre and television production. Each element of his artistic biography is dialogically viewed in the light of others. These are often highly disparate in content and style, but each of them contributes to the construction of the intricate polyphonic patchwork of Wajda's artistic sensitivity expressed in separate areas of artistic experience.

Wajda combines in his persona the originality of the painter, the film director and the theatre director. Andrzej Wajda was born in Suwalki on March 6, 1926. He spent the years 1939-1945 in Radom where he worked as a worker and later as a draughtsman at a railway design office. Wajda studied at secret underground sessions during the war. Because he wanted to become a painter he also studied at a (secret underground) session where professor Wacław Dąbrowski lectured on drawing, painting and sculpture. During the Second World War, like many other boys of his age at that time, Wajda performed the function of a courier in the National Army (AK).

After the war, in 1946, Andrzej Wajda enrolled in Cracow Academy of Fine Arts where he studied till 1949. Soon Wajda realized that painting did not completely gratify him. The solitary act of creation on a canvas or a piece of paper did not satisfy his temperament or the need to act. In 1949 he learned about the formation of the Łódź Film School and he decided to go though he was not sure yet whether film was the best medium of expression for him. He passed the entrance exams, and was accepted. He stayed at the film school till 1952. In the course of these studies he shot one brief feature film, **The Wicked Boy** (1950), based on a short story by Chekhov, as well as two documentaries, **The Ilza Ceramics** (1951) and **While You Sleep** (1950).

On completing his studies he worked as an assistant director on the film **Five from Barska Street** (1953) for another famous Polish film-maker, Alexander Ford. Later Wajda

made his own debut as a film-maker with **A Generation** (1955), which had an immediate impact and provided the foundations for the nascent 'Polish School' in cinema. Another famous film director who was also considered a member of the Polish school is Andrzej Munk with his film **Man on the Railway Track** (1956). Wajda and Munk were to be regarded as the most eminent representatives of the Polish Cinema School.⁵

Within four subsequent years Wajda produces three other films which, similarly to **A Generation**, deal with the Second World War fate of the representatives of his generation. These films are **Canal** (1956), **Ashes and Diamonds** (1958) and **Lotna** (1959). The first two films establish Wajda internationally as an important Polish filmmaker. In 1957 he is awarded "Silver Palm" for **Canal** in Cannes, and in 1959 he receives FIPRESCI award for **Ashes and Diamonds** in Venice.

At the same time, Wajda also directs for the theatre (he made his debut in the theatre in 1959 in Gdansk with **A Hatful of Rain** by Michael Gazzo, a realistic, psychological American drama about drug addiction, premiered in New York in 1955). From now on the paths of his creative work in both theatre and film mix and specific parallels can be observed in the development of his work in both areas, despite the very different demands of each art form.

As Karpinski notes, "in the beginning of his career Wajda had little respect for the stage, since the traditional style of presentation that characterized pre-1956 Polish theatre seemed irrelevant to current political and social problems."⁶ The schematic style of presentation clashed with the artist's temperament which required a Romantic turmoil and passionate emotion. Wajda comments on his approach in those years,

Looking back now I think that my views were provoked by the concept of theatre existing at that time, and which we suffer under to this day: that the theatre is a place of high ideals, a sort of salon where gestures are more

precise, voices more melodious, and where people behave more elegantly than in real life (nothing could have been more false and less interesting for me at that time). I think that maybe I was so opposed to that convention of propriety, elegance and good taste because my films seemed to portray the very opposite.⁷

My thesis deals mainly with Wajda's film production, and this aspect of his artistic activity will be primarily discussed below. The only theatrical production we shall deal with in detail will be The Affair of Danton which preceded the production of the film **Danton** itself. The theatrical trait of Wajda's artistic creation is a separate domain which requires a careful analysis falling far beyond the scope of my thesis.

In terms of his film production, in the years 1955 - 1971, Wajda was related to or cooperated with the following film units: Kadr, Rytm, Kamera, Film, Tor, and Wektor.⁸ In the years 1972 - 1983 Wajda was the artistic director of the film unit X which produced many ambitious and politically provocative films. Wajda's films as Karpinski notes, "are marked not only by changes in characteristic details of style and by particular moods, but also by vacillation of artistic intent, which resulted in an uneven standard."⁹ The first films at the end of the fifties are **Generation** (1955), **Canal** (1957), and **Ashes and Diamonds** (1958) which mark the appearance of a controversial and politically courageous film maker. The three films made Wajda and his actors (especially Zbigniew Cybulski) famous and sought after. The fourth film which belongs to this period, **Lotna** (1959), is much weaker although significantly revealing Wajda's particular painter's eye in his construction of the film images. These first films deal with the issues of war, occupation and heroic sacrifice.

The films made in the sixties examine a different area. After producing four films dealing with the subject of the

Second World War, Wajda knew that he could not confine himself to the war themes only. **Innocent Sorcerers** (1960) is an examination of the psychology of contemporary youngsters in the post-war Poland. Next to the later celebrated **Ashes (Popioly)** (1965), a Napoleonic saga based on the controversial Polish novel by Stefan Zeromski written in 1904, there are two other treatments of literary material, **Lady Macbeth of the Provinces** (1962) and **Samson** (1961). While **Ashes** brought Wajda success and stimulated fervent discussions in the press, the two latter films were largely ignored by the public.

In 1962 Wajda produced a twenty minutes long contribution to **Love at Twenty** (1965), an internationally produced collection of short films on the same theme. Other directors taking part in this collaboration were François Truffaut, Renzo Rossellini, Marcel Ophüls and Shintaro Ishihara. The next film, **Gates to Paradise** (1967) was a failure which was never shown on the big screen in Poland. This film marks an end to an important period in Wajda's career during which he produced ten films, directed five theatre plays and realized two TV productions.

The year 1968 starts another, prolific stage for Wajda's filmmaking. In this year he realizes the film **Everything for Sale** (1968), a film about Zbigniew Cybulski who had died in an accident. The film is based on Wajda's screenplay and combines both the elements of fiction and reality, a technique which will later be repeated in **Man of Iron** (1981). During subsequent years he produces two comedies - **Rolly-Polly** (1968) for television and **Hunting Flies** (1969); then he again returns to the theme of the Second World War in **Landscape After Battle** (1970). Other films which belong to this productive stage in his life are: **Birchwood** (1970), **Pilate and Others** (1971), **The Wedding** (1972), **The Promised Land** (1974) and **The Shadow Line** (1976).

In **Landscape After Battle** Wajda returns to Polish problems and to the main theme of "the Polish character." **Birchwood**, on the other hand, presents universal themes of love, life and death while **Pilate and Others** depicts the Passion of Christ in a contemporary environment. **The Wedding**, based on the play of Stanislaw Wyspianski, one of the best films by Wajda, is seen as a vision of Poland and the Polish personality rendered satirically and bitterly. At the same time, the film is a beautifully composed fresco pulsating with rich social and cultural traits. Another theme is presented in **The Promised Land** - this film deals with the industrial development in the Polish town of Lodz in the early twentieth century. Finally, the last film of this period, **The Shadow Line**, based on the novella by Joseph Conrad, is about a young officer made captain and brought into responsibility for all the men under his command.

The next films produced by Wajda initiated the trend of the **films of moral concern** in the Polish cinema. This cinema represents a passionate attempt at defining the truth and sense of socialist Poland. The films of this group could not openly deal with the moral, ethical and social anomalies of the Polish reality, so they showed, in a camouflaged way, the negative mechanisms and phenomena characteristic for the Polish reality of those times. Although the films could not openly attack the Party, they clearly indicated its failures by undermining its 'propaganda of success' and pointing to the problems of corruption and careerism in particular. These films are far more openly critical than any previous films in Polish history. Some of the most important films of this trend were Kieslowski's **The Scar**, Falk's **Top Dog**, Wajda's **Man of Marble** and Zanussi's **Camouflage**. From these films a new sociocultural phenomenon came into being. Film directors tried to illustrate the real life of Poland, with its struggles and conflicts. As Wieslaw Saniewski explains the historical context in which these films appeared in his discussion of the

cinema of the seventies in Poland¹⁰,

The historical events in the seventies not only deeply moved all of us and shocked our collective consciousness, but they also crossed certain psychological barriers. Double standards were attacked, and the so called chutzpah was discredited.¹¹

Other Wajda films which belong to this period are **Without Anaesthetic** (1978), **The Young Ladies of Wilko** (1979), **Conductor** (1980), **Man of Iron** (1981), and **Danton** (1982). **Man of Marble**, **Without Anaesthetic**, **Man of Iron** and **Danton** are rich in political and historical allusions and bring Wajda fame and respect. For all these films Wajda obtains prestigious international prizes.¹²

The Young Ladies of Wilko, on the other hand, is an exception to his politically charged films and constitutes an escape into a world of feelings and emotions, the world of general questions on life and death shot in a masterly way by Wajda - the artist.

The last four films directed by Wajda are the result of his direct cooperation with French, German and British film producers. **Love in Germany** (1983) was shown in France and Germany, also **Les Possédés** (1988) and **Korczak** (1990) were produced with the help of Gaumont films and BBC Films, respectively. The only film produced at that time entirely for the Polish audience was **Love's Accidents (Kronika Wypadkow Milosnych)** (1986). Both **Love in Germany** and **Korczak** deal with the times of the Second World War; the first one tells a story of a love affair between a Polish boy and a German woman in Nazi Germany, while the second one tells about a famous Jewish doctor devoted to his orphaned Jewish children. Both films end tragically and both deal with the issues of honesty and human respect in the difficult times of Nazi Germany.

Since 1978 Wajda has performed numerous political functions in cultural associations and political bodies which were related to or originated in his artistic activities in film. In the years 1978 - 1983 he was the chairman of The Polish Filmmakers' Association (Stowarzyszenie Filmowcow Polskich), and in the years 1978 - 1981 the chairman of The Polish Federation of Film Discussion Clubs (Polska Federacja Dyskusyjnych Klubow Filmowych). In 1988 Wajda was a member of the National Committee established by Lech Walesa for the culture and mass media. Since June 4 1989, Wajda has performed the prestigious function of senator.

Wajda has also been rewarded with many significant prizes for his theatre and film production, and for his cultural activities.¹³ He is an honoris causa of the American University in Washington (since 1981), Bologna University (since 1988), and Jagiellonian University in Cracow (since 1989). As a celebrated and widely known film director both in Poland and abroad, Wajda managed to retain the freshness of his outlook and remain open to new influences and glossia which he absorbed in his films and theatre production.

Wajda emerges from his films as a truly discursive author, disseminating his hesitant, polemic concepts among numerous interlocutors. As William McClellan notices, "the difference between 'real' and discursive authors produces a gap which allows Bakhtin to expand his concept of authorship beyond the limited scope of a single individual."¹⁴ Bakhtin's "voice", in a dialogical relation, can personify a person, a class, a collective or a whole generation. Wajda in his artistic creations presents such a collective of voices, a multiplicity of internal splits and a variety of discourses.

Wajda as a personality torn between reason and emotion is vividly seen in all his films, which function as enunciatory carriers of this internal confrontation. The three films

discussed in the thesis especially reveal repressed undercurrents in Wajda's assessment of historical and political truth.

In **Man of Marble** Wajda functions as a provocateur, an instigator of the discussion carried out between the protagonists in the film and film audiences. In the film, the spectator follows two stories at once, the story of the bricklayer from the 1950s, and the story of a young filmmaker who is making her diploma film about those times. Scibor-Rylski's script was based on the texture of genuine events, as Michalek and Turaj note in their book about Polish film,

In the early fifties, bricklayers, miners, weavers, and others with a rate of productivity exceeding five hundred percent of the norm became part of the propaganda landscape. The so called "work-emulation" movement, based on the Soviet Stakhanovite phenomenon, was cultivated, and chosen workers were exploited for publicity to inspire or pressure their peers to greater efforts.¹⁵

Agnieszka, a young film-maker in the seventies in Poland, is seeking to tell the story of a young Stakhanovite, Mateusz Birkut (played by Jerzy Radziwillowicz), "a simple, good-natured bricklayer who becomes the subject of rampant propaganda and is hailed as a national hero."¹⁶ His accomplishment was to lay thousands of bricks in a record time. These kinds of events in the Poland of the fifties were supposed to stimulate the rebuilding of the country after the Second World War. One of the propaganda shows in which Birkut takes part is sabotaged by unknown perpetrators. Someone, probably one of the co-workers, hands him a hot brick. Birkut cries with pain. The propaganda event stops and the security officers scurry to find the guilty. This particular moment in

the film changes Birkut's life but also constitutes a turning point in the film diegesis. From an idolized worker Birkut turns into a character no longer loved by the authorities. When Witek, Birkut's friend and co-worker is accused of causing the damage during the unfortunate propaganda event, Birkut takes his side in a political trial which follows the accident and is sent to prison himself. From then on Birkut changes into a victim of the system. He loses his position as an exemplary super-worker and he suffers constant scrutiny by the security agents.

Agnieszka discovers this story. She lives in the Poland of the seventies and wants to make her diploma film based on a period during the fifties. The film is to be devoted to the time period of her father's youth. While watching some old newsreels for her film research, a grandiose marble statue of a worker raises her interest. She decides to look for the statute in the National Museum in Warsaw. When she finds it she chooses to use the statue as a beginning for her diploma film. In order to tell the story of the man who was the subject of the marble figure Agnieszka carries out a series of interviews with the people who knew him who now occupy positions of authority in official Polish culture. They help block her efforts to finish the film successfully because in it Agnieszka is going to expose the mechanisms of power in the Poland of the fifties, and, by extension, in the Poland of the seventies (as nothing has really changed).

The TV producer finally responsible for this decision explains that the film is not complete. In reality, the producer's decision masked a fear of revealing the dreadful facts concerning the mechanisms of power in the Poland of the seventies. Still, the film ends on an optimistic note with Agnieszka walking down the corridor of the TV building with the son of Birkut at her side.

The complex structure of the film's ideological content is further re-negotiated in the time of various film

receptions, starting from the time of the first reading of the script (around 1967) up till the early eighties when Solidarity was on the rise. The historical and sociological phenomena depicted in the film are literally re-lived by the Polish spectator together with the protagonists of the events taking place on the screen.

Man of Marble is at once a compelling detective story and a bitter satire on Stalinist-era propaganda and injustices. The film does not refer to actual historical events in such a direct way as **Man of Iron** does. However, rich in allusions and political implications, **Man of Marble** presents all the historical aspects of the totalitarian system and the social atmosphere characteristic for the time of the fifties and pervasive till the time of the seventies.

At the same time the film serves as a reference point to the ideological discussion carried out between the spectators and the political opponents in the seventies. Consequently, the film becomes a message in a global pragmatic situation of communication which takes place **outside** the film, within the domain of the spectator's world of beliefs, provoked by Wajda as the author. The dialogue transcends the textuality of the film itself. The film changes into a cavalry charge of ideas where the actors as carriers of the director's message, and the audience, seem to carry on a continuous discussion with one another. The film carries on a political debate both with the supporters and opponents of Stalinism in Poland, with the censorship at the time of the film production, and with numerous strata of the Polish society. The spectator witnesses here a diversified dialogue with audiences representing various political approaches to the "reality" represented in the film.

Wajda creates his own discourse in opposition to the existing socio-historical discourse, engaging his camera in "a fierce social struggle"¹⁷ in "the dialogic which represents the struggle between opposing discourses arising out of

different contexts, either semantic or sociohistorical".¹⁸ There is no dialectic in the film, however, no reconciliation in the transcending of oppositions by means of a synthetic third term. In the film the dialogic resists the reconciliation of opposites by insisting on the reciprocity of two or more antagonistic voices. Wajda appears as a "monological"¹⁹ author, bringing together numerous glossia into the film, constructing a framework for their performance, but also acting as one of the voices himself. Beyond the dyad Burski-Agnieszka, lies Wajda, the film director, whose film goes beyond this opposition. So, the film **Man of Marble** appears as an assembly of all the voices, the film director's included.

In **Man of Iron**, on the other hand, Wajda presents his monological conviction about the victory of the individual but at the same time, is perplexed by the dubious condition of the Polish intelligentsia. **Man of Iron** is a sequel to **Man of Marble**. Maciek Tomczyk, Birkut's son (played by Jerzy Radziwillowicz, the same actor who played the part of Birkut, the father, in **Man of Marble**) organizes a strike at the Gdansk shipyard. Agnieszka, the journalist from **Man of Marble**, is his wife and political ally at the same time. The film's story begins in the moment of the historic strike at the Gdansk shipyard. A journalist from Warsaw, Winkiel, is sent to Gdansk to produce a broadcast on Maciek Tomczyk, the strike leader. Winkiel gathers the necessary information from a series of conversations he carries out with Maciek's friends and his wife, Agnieszka. The latter meets Maciek when she goes to Gdansk to find a living proof that Birkut existed. Their meeting develops into a love affair (suggested already in the end of **Man of Marble**), and later ends with a marriage.

In the process of gathering information on Maciek, Winkiel, initially in the film representing the authorities, becomes more and more involved in the lives of Maciek and the

members of the opposition movement. Finally, Winkiel changes his political position and joins the striking workers. The strike ends with victory. However, Winkiel is rebuffed by the workers and leaves the shipyard disappointed and sad. On leaving the shipyard he encounters Badecki, the security official, who tells him that the agreement between the workers and the government is not valid.

In this film, Wajda seems to position himself diegetically in the place of Winkiel, as Wajda himself came to Gdansk only at the very end of the strike and, although he did not actively support it, he witnessed the event with sympathy and understanding. He seems to involuntarily position his presentation in **Man of Iron** within the boundaries of his own experience. His ardent depiction of the strike in Gdansk reflects his passionate feelings about the events, but also his ambivalence concerning his own participation. During the strikes in Gdansk Wajda does not actively join the dissident movement but watches it closely. He basically remains within reformist Socialism²⁰, hoping that within the basic structures of Socialism, the political and economic situation can be transformed and improved. However, as a sympathizer of Solidarity he suffers greatly after the defeat of Solidarity. While martial law lasts he is not only attacked by the government and the official press but is also forced to resign as president of the Polish Film Union and loses the directorship of the film unit he had led. This unit had not only been the vehicle for creating many of his own films but had launched numerous young directors.

The choice of Winkiel as the protagonist proper of the film functions as a bitter reminder that Wajda himself was funded by the regime the Solidarity movement was trying to discredit. Winkiel's subjugation to the regime also signifies the nightmare situation for film directors like him whose presentation of the events could go only as far as the

authorities allowed it. The character of Winkiel could thus be interpreted by the spectator as epitomizing the worst scenario for the authors whose power of enunciation depended completely on the whims of the regime. This presentation, however, does not put an equation mark between Wajda and Winkiel, it reflects only the undercurrent of hesitation and guilt in the creation of a mass-media representative in the film.²¹

In **Man of Iron** the protagonist of **Man of Marble**, Agnieszka, forsakes the creative and enunciatory role of the artist for the quiet heroism of the wife of an opposition activist. Agnieszka says that she has abandoned her ambition to become a filmmaker, and now prefers raising a family, political activism, and "speaking freely". But it seems strange²² that Wajda, through Agnieszka, should denigrate filmmaking, as he and his cinema played a crucial role in defining and exposing Poland's growing crisis. Perhaps he merely wished to show that, in the final analysis, art must always take a back seat to direct political action. In this, Wajda makes his intention visible through the words and actions of his protagonists who are representative of whole classes of people in Poland.

The critics often criticised Wajda's haste in the production of **Man of Iron**, claiming that the motive was the approaching Cannes Festival. Their predictions that it would win the prize were right - both the Cannes general public and the Cannes judges were stunned by the film's openness in the presentation of historical and social facts.²³ Thanks to the film's fame Wajda could count on the positive decisions of the Polish sponsors of his films in the future. He also knew that due to the sensationalist aspect of his work in the context of the political events in Poland the public would be prompted to interpret his film not only as an artistic message but also as a premonition of things to come, including their possible threat to the Polish artist.

On the other hand, Wajda wanted to win in Cannes because

the Cannes Festival's reputation would not allow the authorities to deceive the Polish public and put **Man of Iron** away on the shelf. Wajda did not want the public to be deprived of this film as it had been deprived already of **Man of Marble** which waited several years to be widely released. The director hoped, in this way, that the quadrille led by the authorities would never again be repeated. After all, the lack of government permission deprived the public for a long time of another important film depicting the truth of those times - **Robotnicy** (The Workers) by Chodakowski and Zajaczkowski.

Although apparently monological (in the sense of Wajda's imposed voice in the creation of the global message of the film), **Man of Iron** depicts Wajda's inner tensions concerning the role of the artist at important moments of history, the function of the media and the position of the political activist in the formation of history. The film functioned as the director's exposé on the one hand, but also as a presentation of events which, as a text, involuntarily entered a dialogical relation with the public. Everything about this film was questioned by the public: Wajda's intentions, his version of events, his suspicious manipulation of the documentary material, his haste in film production. All these elements, the text film as such, and its complex reception, contributed to the understanding or misunderstanding of Wajda as a film director.

Finally, **Danton**, a film created entirely within the safely enclosed although volatile world of the French Revolution, is a careful reconstruction of the period, with the director revealed through the words and staging of the film's protagonists. The action of **Danton** starts in the spring of 1794, four years after the attack on the Bastille. The government of Robespierre had achieved great military success in the ongoing war. However, Robespierre feels threatened by

the opposition and decides to eliminate all opponents. A period of ruthless terror commences. At this time Danton, the beloved orator and advocate of the people, returns to Paris. As a pragmatist and a sybarite he yearns to end the chaos of revolution and bring bread and peace to the exhausted Parisians. Robespierre and his advocates consider Danton a threat to the revolution (which they want to continue) and decide to eliminate him. A mock trial ensues as a result of which Danton is silenced and condemned to death. Both Danton and several of his supporters die under the blade of the guillotine. Surprisingly, the film ends not with a triumphant but a terrified Robespierre who predicts his own death as a result of the terror which he had instigated.

As we shall see later, in the chapter devoted to the historical discourse in the film, Wajda was rebuked by many French film reviewers in that he took the side of Danton in the film. However, Wajda denies that he identifies with either of the protagonists. "As an author I have to stay a little on the outside of such a conflict. There can be no identification of the filmmaker with one of the characters."²⁴ In this way, Wajda states he would like to eradicate any personal voice on his part and denies the film's ideological similarity or opposition to Przybyszewska's play. The author of **The Danton Affair** was a dedicated Communist in the twenties who, according to Ophuls's interpretation, was in love with Robespierre. The film, to Wajda, did not display an obvious dichotomy. The historical truth is more polyphonic, he seems to say, not displayed in a monological opposition of white/black, univocal statements.

In **Danton** Wajda as an author seems to be overwhelmed by the immensity of the historical and moral dilemmas in the choice between the two seemingly different positions of Robespierre and Danton. As a mature creator of the artistic and moral truth, Wajda is careful not to present an idealistic

picture of either one or the other protagonist, which would produce a monological statement prompting audiences to support a particular ideological position of the author's choice. None of the antagonists is presented as a clear-cut hero. Danton comes closer, with his yearning to end the terror he is partly responsible for, and Wajda underlines this yearning by casting the charismatic Gérard Depardieu in this role. But the director refuses to play down Danton's many eccentricities, and he allows Robespierre a streak of humanity, notably in his compassion for a doomed comrade.

Wajda proposes a duality of positions, where the arguments of both protagonists seem convincing and justified. In this way, Wajda leaves room for the dialogical relation with the audiences which, depending on their own historical position and time of interpretation, side with one or the other monological representative of political truths. Both protagonists face death in the end of the film. The film ends with a wavering between the powers of reason and the powers of emotion, without, however, deciding in favour of one or the other. As David Sterritt notes in his review of **Danton**,

in production notes for the picture Wajda apologizes for turning to such a familiar period (French Revolution). But he notes that all his films address themselves to the issue of Man challenging History. He justifies his French foray by listing its main concerns: "how freedom operates as a motor of history; what things threaten history; and [whether] sacrifices [must] be made to protect freedom"...²⁵

The film is best seen as a wide-ranging meditation on politics and revolution, rather than a coded commentary on specific Polish occurrences, the interpretation favoured especially by the Polish press. Wajda seemed to support this view at the New York Film Festival in a press conference

conducted by telephone from West Berlin, where he was completing his next picture,

The reason for exploring history, is to understand patterns and laws that underlie human affairs. For all its horror and bloodshed, the French revolution 'won' insofar as it brought about new social relationships - just as Solidarity won a 'moral victory' despite its failure to survive as an institution.

However, in France, Wajda's general and dialogical position is treated as a monological interpretation definitely in favour of Danton. Despite Wajda's claim that he wants to position himself outside the conflict, the French spectator suspects him of a monological voice, a uniform presentation of the revolutionary position from Danton's point of view.

Wajda: I try to do everything I can, really **everything** so that both sides can present valid arguments. Because what I am really interested in is the situation these two men place themselves in. There is a certain inevitability in that situation, a tragic inevitability. That's why I chose to make a very calm film in its form, a very 'classical' film. You know?

Ophuls: Do you mind if I say something about that? My impression is that if you tried to be as objective as you say, then you haven't succeeded. That's not necessarily bad, as far as I'm concerned, because I think that subjective moviemaking is always vastly superior to any attempts at objectivity. But I do think you've made an extremely pro-Danton film, and a very anti-Robespierre one. You seem very lenient toward Danton's obvious corruption, his venality, his rabble-rousing, and very contemptuous of Robespierre's thirst for virtue.²⁶

In Poland, the film was interpreted as "more Polish than French"²⁷ both because it was based on a play by a Polish author and also, because it seemed to refer directly to the Polish "revolution" witnessed and experienced both by the Polish viewers and by Wajda himself. Such film reviewers as Leczek and Ostrowski²⁸, for instance, suggest that Wajda, influenced by the very real, political situation of his own country, transfers his feelings onto the heroes of revolution. His sympathy seems to lie with Danton, the emotional and political equivalent of Walesa, the man who instigated the self-limiting revolution in Poland.

By stimulating a fervent discussion both in the Polish and French press (this discussion will be presented in detail in the section of the III chapter called **Historical Discourse in Danton**) Wajda returns to his role as a discursive author, provoking a multitude of interpretations to his highly polemical political film. In **Danton**, Wajda no longer imposes a monological outlook on revolution as he had done in **Man of Iron**, but rather, is sceptical of the revolutionary ideologies represented by both Danton and Robespierre. By making Saint-Just an incorruptible monster who is cruelly indifferent to Robespierre's suffering in the final scenes of the film, Wajda seems to articulate his pessimistic outlook on the course of any revolution - finally, it will end with overpowering Terror carried out by the likes of Saint-Just.

By making the ideological conflict vibrant in human terms, Wajda stimulates a dialogical depiction of the historical truth of the French Revolution (and, in general, of any revolutionary effort). Both the ideologies of the two protagonists, the declarations of their opponents and advocates, permeate the film with a multiplicity of polemical voices, which give credibility to our initial Bakhtinian definition of Wajda as a discursive author whose enunciative political power lies in a passionate, dialogical depiction of historical events and not in their "objective" demonstration

only.

NOTES

1. Szporer, Michael. "Woman of Marble. An Interview with Krystyna Janda." Cineaste. vol. XVIII, no 3, 1991, 14.

2. Foucault, Michel. "What is An Author?" Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews. Trans. D. Bouchard and S. Simon. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1977. 113-138.

3. Krysinski, Wladyslaw. "Bakhtin and the Evolution of the Post-Dostoevskian Novel", Discours social/Social Discourse. Bakhtin and Otherness. 3, nos 1&2 (Spring-Summer 1990), 131.

4. Krysinski, 131.

5. Unfortunately, Andrzej Munk died in a car crash on the twentieth of September, 1961.

6. Karpinski, Maciej. The Theatre of Andrzej Wajda. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989, 7.

7. A. Wajda "In Theatre..." Teatr, 1974, no 14.

8. The biographical information on Wajda and his films is based on Wajda mowi o sobie. Wywiady i teksty. ed. Wanda Wertenstein, Krakow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1991, pp. 259-296.

9. Karpinski, 7.

10. Saniewski, W. "Kino Polskie lat siedemdziesiatych. Dyskusja redakcyjna." Film na Swiecie. no 9, 1979, Warszawa.

11. Saniewski, 63.

12. **Man of Marble** - Fipresci Prize at XXXI International Film Festival in Cannes, 1978;

Without Anaesthetic - Ecumenical Jury Prize at XXXII International Film Festival in Cannes, 1979;

Man of Iron - Grand Prix "Golden Palm" at XXXIV International Film Festival in Cannes, 1981; Oscar nomination in 1982.

Danton - Louis-Delluc Prize for the best film of the year 1982.

13. The most important prizes and orders are the following:
Krzyz Kawalerski i Krzyz Oficerski Orderu Odrodzenia Polski;
Francuska Legia Honorowa;
Bulgarski Order Cyryla i Metodego;
Nagroda Panstwowa I stopnia 1974;
Nagroda Ministra Kultury i Sztuki I stopnia 1975;
Premio David di Donatello - Luchino Visconti (Wlochy) 1978;
Nagroda "César" (Francja) 1982;
Nagroda Aten Fundacji A. Onassis (Grecja) 1982;
Nagroda im. G. Herdera (Austria) 1985;
Nagroda Pirandello (Wlochy) 1987;
Nagroda Kioto (Japonia) 1987.
14. McClellan, W. "The Dialogic Other: Bakhtin's Theory of Rhetoric," Social Discourse vol. III, nos 1&2, spring-summer 1990. p. 239.
15. Michalek B. & Turaj F. The Modern Cinema of Poland.
Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana UP, 1988, p. 156.
16. Ibid.
17. Hirschkop, K. "A Response to the Forum on Mikhail Bakhtin" in
Morson, G.S. (ed) Bakhtin: Essays and Dialogues on His Work.
Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.
18. Bialostosky, D. "Dialogics as an Art of Discourse in
Literary Criticism." PMLA (October 1986), 101(5): 788-97.
19. The term "mono-dialogism" was introduced by Krynski in
his essay "Bakhtin and the Evolution of the Post-Dostoevskian
Novel" (Social Discourse, p. 120). As Krynski states, "Within
the multiplicity of voices, the lyrical voice has the central
position, and its discourse is underlied by that what I would
call 'mono-dialogism,' by which I mean that, although it is
moved by dialogical intention, it tends to become a sort of
cognitive filter of discourse." (p. 120). I find this
definition extremely useful for the analysis of the role of
the political film director.
20. According to Paul Coates "it is arguable though that at the
onset Solidarity itself was a reformist socialist movement;
moreover, the authorities' resistance and martial law drove
Solidarity irrevocably into the arms of the Church."
21. This hesitation and guilt on the part of the director was
already involuntarily present in **Man of Marble** when Wajda
placed his name as assistant director on Burski's launch film.
22. Paul Coates suggests at this point that this decision on
the part of the director was not so strange after all. "Wajda
might have been able to make a difference, by virtue of his

prestige, but a real-life Agnieszka would have been forced out and would have been understandably cynical about the media world."

23. Nota bene, Wajda himself admitted the importance of having **Man of Iron** ready for Cannes in numerous interviews.

24. Ophuls, Marcel. "The Provocation and Interrogation of Andrzej Wajda on the Matter of **Danton** as Performed by Marcel Ophuls." American Film vol. IX, no. 1, Oct. 1983, 28.

25. Sterritt, David. "**Danton**." Christian Science Monitor. 10/6/83, 231.

26. Ophuls, 94.

27. Wertenstein, 236.

28. Leczek, Ireneusz. "**Danton**. Rewolucja francuska według Wajdy." Trybuna Robotnicza. No 39, dated 16/02/1983.
Ostrowski, Marek. "Danton czy Robespierre." Polityka. dated 5/02/1983.

III CHAPTER

THE HISTORICAL DIALOGUE IN WAJDA'S FILMS

Introduction

The three films **Man of Marble**, **Man of Iron** and **Danton** embrace a discourse which encompasses the history of contemporary Poland from the period after the Second World War to the time of the introduction of martial law in Poland in 1981. **Man of Marble** contains scenes from the early times after the Second World War: the enthusiasm incited by the country's new freedom and manifested in an ardent reconstruction of the country, but also the everpresent Stalinism and the growing role of the Communist Party in those times. **Man of Iron** recounts the time of Gierek's rule, the growing power of opposition movements, the strikes in Gdansk in 1980 and the Gdansk agreement between the Government and shipyard workers in August 1980. **Danton**, although its diegesis¹ reflects the times of the French Revolution, dialogically refers to the introduction of martial law in Poland and debates the choice between the totalitarian power of reason and the passion of ordinary people in the formation of history.

In the treatment of the films' historical discourses, I would postulate a dynamic relation between historical fact and film, and discuss this relation in terms of their tensions and oppositions. The films of Andrzej Wajda presented in the

thesis are conditioned by history. On the other hand, the films as carriers of meaning are representations of history. This approach would comply with Bakhtin's notion that textual historical traits constitute the substance of a work of art. Kristeva comments on this point,

Although the Russian formalists were engrossed with the idea of dialogue as linguistic communication, for Bakhtin the significance was far greater. Bakhtin, born of a revolutionary Russia that was preoccupied with social problems, sees in dialogism the insertion of history (society) into a text and of this text into history.²

Thus, Bakhtin's notion of dialogism includes not only the complex relationships between writer, speaker, addressee, but also the text's "intersection with the contemporary or earlier cultural context"³. As William McClellan notes,

The important point is that Bakhtin grounds his theory of dialogics in the concreteness of heteroglossia, the socio-economic and the historical and not in a metaphysical order. "Truth" is not an eternal given but an evaluation that is historically determined and one that is subject to change. (...)

His theory facilitates the possibility of reading, for example, ethnographic narrative as literary discourse and a novel as a social text. Both kinds of texts are seen as producing social knowledge.⁴

In Bakhtin, history is everpresent in a metaphorical sense as it permeates every single word of the text. For instance, in his discussion of the epic, Bakhtin refers to the "interrelationship of times"⁵,

(In the epic) the valorized emphasis is not on the future

and does not serve the future, no favours are being done it (such favours face an eternity outside time); what is served here is the future memory of a past, a broadening of the world of the absolute past, and enriching of it with new images (at the expense of contemporaneity) - a world that is always opposed in principle to any merely transitory past.⁶

In this sense, the films discussed in the thesis relate to the past history constantly. For the spectator to understand the images properly he or she has to relate to the images, absorb them as his or her own and interpret them in the context of their own lives. The border between the public and the private blurs, and the historical events presented or alluded to on the screen gain significance only thanks to their connection with the private lives of the protagonists with whom the spectator in the cinema can identify. In this sense, the spectator relates to his or her past experience in the absorption of the presented message. Also, his or her knowledge of history incorporates the spectator into the historical discourse of the film itself, thus producing a merger of historical horizons, a fusion which Hans Robert Jauss called the "Erwartungshorizont" (expectation horizon) for the process of interpretation of history in a literary work.

The findings of Hans Robert Jauss seem especially crucial in the context of the political films of Andrzej Wajda. It was Jauss who ascribed particular importance to historical context in the interpretation of a literary work within the area of reception theory.⁷ The historical as an indispensable element for the contextualization of the message is this aspect of his theory which particularly binds him with Bakhtin. Jauss presented his study "Literaturgeschichte als Provokation der Literaturwissenschaft" (1967)⁸ as a suggestion for salvaging the historicity of literature by radically curtailing event-

oriented historiography. His goal was to "establish a new relationship between the historical and the aesthetic perspective."⁹ One of Jauss's seven theses reads,

If literary history is to be rejuvenated, the prejudices of historical objectivism must be removed and the traditional approach to literature must be replaced by an aesthetics of reception and impact. The historical relevance of literature is not based on an organization of literary works which is established **post factum** but on the reader's past experience of the literary data.¹⁰

This model postulates a definition of historicity where (in contrast to the history of events), present and past comprise a unity; consequently the mediation of the past and the present becomes the true task of writing history. As Heidegger states that "an interpretation is never a presuppositionless apprehending of something presented to us,"¹¹ so Jauss's stress on the communicative aspect of the aesthetic experience within its historical dimensions offers a crucial point of departure thus far only acknowledged in part and for the most undeveloped by the reception theory scholars of whom, on the one hand, Jauss was a representative but also on the other hand, an innovator who stressed the indispensability of historical contextualization to the interpretation of the literary work. Rather than reconstructing the past, Jauss seeks an integration of past and present, of reader and text, thus allowing a hermeneutically reflected approach to the historicity of literature as well as of its readers.

In this approach, although reception theory concerns itself "with the historical conditions of the aesthetic effect of works of art,"¹² it does not exclude the subject, as Jauss states in an interview,

(reception theory) does not exclude the standpoint and

the activity of the subject, but rather includes him as the condition of knowledge, and this concept is to that extent specific to all sciences which would understand meaning, which proceeds from the assumption that meaning is a yielded truth - and not a given one...¹³

For Jauss any subject is every bit as time-bound as any given text; an encounter between these two elements gives rise to a dialogue, an exchange Jauss describes as a relation between history and (literary) effect. The concept informing Jauss's project, Erwartungshorizont (expectation horizon), a notion borrowed from Karl Mannheim¹⁴ signifies that all texts, like all interpretations, issue from a distinct vantage point. Literature, fundamentally dialogic in nature, stands within, questions, and often seeks to revise the shared assumptions and accepted traditions of a given point in time. The literary historian's task - and Jauss speaks here with this audience in mind and not a wider readership - involves not only recreating the Erwartungshorizont of author and contemporary audience, but also opening these up to a conversation with present and past interpreters. The advantages to be gained are many: reconstructing the expectation horizon enables one to discern the questions for which a text provided an answer; it allows one to establish how previous readers understood the work as well as to apply it to the present reader's situation. This procedure makes it clear that there exists no single definitive reading of any given work. Reception history above all means placing a text within the context of its multiple possible meanings and interpretations.¹⁵ In Jauss's approach interpretation is understood as an interaction between the contextualized spheres of aesthetic and other factors. The explication of meaning would be the result of an interaction between the social and historical, which become fused to produce a particularized reading dependent on the actual context of

reading and on the world of the interpreter's beliefs and convictions. The contextual positioning of the interpreter greatly determines the interpretation of the text itself.

Bakhtin seems to have foreseen Jauss's theory in its postulate of the importance of the historical in the analysis of a work of art. However, while Jauss disregards the possibility of internal tension in the text itself, Bakhtin's dialogism seems to offer a more interesting approach to its interpretation. A passive existence of the work of art is dispensed with, giving way to a pulsating interaction of discourses within it. The meaning of the literary work becomes structured around internal tensions between differing ideologies and points of view within the text itself. Reception theory as represented by Jauss seems static by comparison, with the work of art remaining a stable construct. The Bakhtinian approach allows for tensions to exist within the text, thus permitting a development, a movement and greater possibilities for its interpretation than the rigorous reception theory of Jauss does.

Jauss's reception theory accepts the work of art as a ready-made product to be appreciated and deciphered by the reader in a unilateral relation. The reader engages in an interaction with the work of art based on a set of presuppositions inherent in his own world of beliefs which he then "matches" with particular discourses in the work, trying to decipher or deconstruct its meaning. The work of art itself, however, is treated as a finished product, an aesthetically polished **result** of the artist at work. Jauss's theory tackles only the interpretative relations between the receiver of the text and the text existing as a final product in the sense of the historical conditioning of the process of interpretation.

Bakhtin's model of dialogism, on the other hand, seems to encompass a multiplicity of incomplete voices and

unconcluded positions and assumes an active participation on the part of the reader in the dialogical formation of the meaning, and in the appropriation of the work's multiple discourses. In Bakhtin, history is everpresent in a metaphorical sense as it permeates every single word of the text. Bakhtin thus postulates a dynamic relation between history, society and text.

It is worth noting here that what is normally understood as "historical context" does not exist outside of discourse either for Jauss or for Bakhtin. For both of them, context is an integral part of discourse, constituting this discourse semantically and conditioning the reader's response. Context is situated within the language and within us as the readers and exists as an integral part of the meaning of logos¹⁶.

As in the literary text, history is the very fabric of the film text as well, it exists in the text in the form of images, soundtrack and particular voices of the protagonists. In **Man of Marble**, the memories from the era of Stalinism in the accounts given by the protagonists are transformed into stylized images combining the moments of the past's glorification and its horror. Stalinism is alive in the bluish hues of the security officer's office and in the low angled presentation of the terrified Birkut. Stalinism also persists in **Man of Iron** in the ubiquitous subliminal presence of the powerful authorities which is evoked in the words of Agnieszka in the prison, or in a powerful scene in which the human relations officer from the shipyard forbids Maciek and Agnieszka to start an exhibition of photographs depicting the events of 1970 in their apartment. The totalitarian system introduced by Stalin is later echoed in the totalitarian system of the French Revolution in **Danton**. A similar colour palette as applied in some scenes of **Man of Marble** is constitutive of the texture of the whole film. **Danton** is thus filmed in bluish and greyish tones from the beginning to the

end, thus depicting the overpowering gloom of terror. By such a presentation of colour in his films, Wajda imposes his own interpretation of history. The rhetorical devices he uses create a specific interpretation, a set of figurative statements relating to the past. History in these films is a highly subjective undertaking the perception of which has nothing to do with an absolute truth of the presented events. Thus, as Hayden White comments,

the interpretative or assessmental problem cannot be solved by perception, (...) as other propositions (relating the same period in the past -my addition) must themselves be interpreted or assessed as to their truth value before the comparison can be made.¹⁷

There are scenes, however, in which the representation of reality in the historical discourse becomes almost "transparent", without any intrusion of rhetorical devices. Such transparency is seen in the scenes of **Man of Iron** where the documentary footage coalesces with the fictional narrative. Even then, although the style of this footage seems to be almost devoid of the personality of the filmmaker, the camera angle in particular shots creates other meanings for the spectator. For instance, the bird's-eye view of the Catholic mass in the documentary footage in **Man of Iron** is stunning in its simplicity and enunciative power. Although the purpose of this "objective" shot produced by Zajackowski and Chodakowski in their film **Robotnicy** (and included by Wajda in his film) was to present the Catholic mass with its crowds of people, in juxtaposition with the shot of the stunned Winkiel who watches the mass from the hotel window, the sequence clearly marks the power of the Catholic religion in the formation of opposition movements in Poland.

In general, however, Wajda is no historian in the literary sense of the word. His historical language in the

cinema is not utterly transparent - "like a focussing lens, but an uncolored one"¹⁸. The historical discourse in his films is a part of the whole cinematic experience, not devoid of the personality of the filmmaker. The rhetorical effect of his presentation of history is unique; and the factual knowledge his films present is rendered in such a way that each film tells "its own story", instead of presenting bare historical facts.

The rhetoric of his films constitutes a specific "politics of discourse"¹⁹ which creates a historiography remaining far from politically innocent. In his films depicting stories ingrained deep in the history of his country, Wajda presents his version of events and his interpretation of those times. The fact that the spectators identified with these stories and read them as their own version of events (especially in **Man of Iron**), contributed to the enormous success of the films. Wajda's version of history, however, must not be considered an objective truth, a full reconstruction of the events, historically proven and rationalized. Nevertheless, his presentation of the events creates a specific political impact - the artistic manipulation of the facts and their brilliant cinematic presentation opens a dialogue with the spectator who identifies with the images, painfully negotiates them, and finally accepts them, embracing, in this way, the political message of Wajda himself.

With such an understanding of history - as the constitutive substance of the film text and not an abstract entity on its own - I will analyze the three films. In the following section I will present historical facts which have found their representation, or have been alluded to in the three films, and, later, I will concentrate on particular scenes in the films in question in which the historical discourse is explicitly realized.

Historical Context of the Films

In this part of the chapter I shall present those moments of Polish history which are either directly reported, alluded to or commented upon in all three films. The films **Man of Marble**, **Man of Iron** and **Danton** refer to the time between Stalinism in the fifties and the moment of the implementation and execution of the martial law in Poland in 1981.

In Poland the term "Stalinism" refers to the historical period after the Second World War up to the year 1956. Boleslaw Bierut, the advocate of the Soviet dictator, governed the country following directives straight from Stalin himself. Stalin implemented a Soviet-style communism, preached and practised in the Soviet Union from the late 1920s to the early eighties. In the Soviet Union, the tradition of autocracy was deeply ingrained, on the one hand, in the undisputable cult of the Tsar in the old Russia and, on the other hand, in the revolutionary transformations or deformations of Marx's thought as summarized in Joseph Stalin's Problems of Leninism (1940).²⁰ The totalitarian political and ideological system as espoused by Stalin demanded not only a complete psychological subjugation of Soviet citizens to his dictates but required that every Soviet citizen remain under total government control in all spheres of his or her life. Every human activity, whether public or personal, was monitored by the great leader and his followers. The party controlled industrial growth, agricultural and cultural activity but also oversaw the individual through constant political meetings and propaganda sessions. Ideological argument was swamped by the cult of Stalin's personality and all discussions were brought to a close with a timely or untimely quotation from "The Great

Leader."

An attempt was made to establish the same system in Poland. In those years, Poland was a 'one party state' remaining under direct Soviet control. The Polish economy was redirected to serve military purposes. On the pretext that the socialist bloc was about to be attacked by the forces of American imperialism, Poland and other countries of Eastern Europe were turned into an armed camp.

Moreover, Stalinism was also a mode of thinking, and, as Davies describes it, "a doctrine, a system, and an attitude of mind."²¹ As he summarizes Stalinism in Poland,

the habits of Stalinism penetrated into every walk of life. Statues of Stalin appeared in public places. Everything and anything, from the Palace of Culture in Warsaw downwards, was dedicated 'to the name of J.V.Stalin'. Soviet Russian civilization was upheld as the universal paragon of virtue.(...) In art, 'Socialist Realism', once described as 'the orchestra of the concentration camp', gained exclusive approval. In the sciences, Russian names such as Lysenko superseded Mendel, Newton, and Einstein. In the humanities, Soviet 'Diamat', the allegedly scientific analysis of all human problems, was indiscriminately applied. Nonconformity of any sort was promptly punished. The militiaman and the petty Party bureaucrat walked tall.²²

In the three films under consideration Stalinism appears as a constant trait still existing in the present, and not as a past which is distanced, completed and closed like a circle. The time of Stalinism merges with the time of the sixties and the seventies and imposes its dictatorial voice on the time of the eighties.²³

The Stalinist system remained intact in Poland until

October 1956. The Thaw which started after the 'secret speech' of Krushchev to the Twentieth Congress in the Soviet Union in 1956, recounting a limited selection of Stalin's crimes against the Party and the people, rocked the whole communist world. Krushchev's speech and the death of the Polish Party leader, Boleslaw Bierut, opened wide the doors to internal Party conflict in Poland between revisionists and dogmatists. Intellectuals opting for cultural independence and political change attacked the doctrinaire Party leadership. Also at that time, the first serious social conflict occurred when industrial workers in Poznan, protesting against revised production norms that reduced their take-home pay, demonstrated in the streets in June 1956 to express their grievances. The Government used force to end the demonstrations and caused scores of deaths but failed to strengthen the Party's authority or bring about its unity.

This first Polish crisis after the Second World War revealed a serious disagreement between the workers and the Party and started a slow demoralization process in all the layers of the Polish society. Absenteeism and alcoholism were common phenomena. The workers did not feel any emotional attachment to their place of work as the plants belonged to the state represented by the Party bureaucrats who enjoyed their own perks and privileges. From that moment in the post-war history there is an observable separation of post-war ideals from the socialist reality. The post-war enthusiasm to rebuild the country after the Second World War changes into disillusionment and cynicism. Workers observe the emergence of a new class - a bourgeois elite of the Party officials. Enraged by the schizophrenic disparity between the party postulates (equality, democracy and equal distribution of goods) on the one hand, and a reality which stands in obvious contrast to the ideals, the workers take things in their own hands and try to organize their own lives accordingly. The state plants cease to be important, so the workers purloin

them and support their own, thriving private concerns. (It is worth noting at this point that the party apparatus also took active part in embezzlement, forgery and simple theft, performed in a more sophisticated way than the workers did, as recent documents on this phase of the Polish history reveal).

The demoralization of the whole population caused by the disillusionment concerning the role of the Party in the country's development was also reinforced by an inertia in the political, economic and cultural policies in the sixties. Consequently, other crises followed. The first one, in 1968, was preceded by a political event which revealed a deep disparity in the Polish society between intellectuals, especially Jewish ones, and official Party representatives. The stimulus was the Six Day War in the Middle East and the victory of Israel over the Arabs. Poles reacted sympathetically to this victory which, in turn, precipitated the official reaction of Gomulka, the First Secretary at that time. Using the Party's anti-Zionist policy to accuse Jewish Communists and non-Communists of Zionism and revisionism, he bluntly told the Jews that they had to choose between two fatherlands. After a considerably quiet time following the Second World War, when the Jews who wanted to contribute to Poland's reconstruction and wanted to live in Poland stayed in the country, an open persecution of Jews started in 1968. Many Jews who found Poland a bizarre but a possible country to live in and prosper, were forced to emigrate to Israel, a country they neither knew nor desired to inhabit. They left their cultural heritage, friends and those members of the family who decided to stay against all odds (despite possible retributions in the future) behind them. This second important event in the post-war history indicated a divergence between the policy of the government and the wishes of the people. The public was outraged but feared persecution if it expressed its reactions at that time.

This event was followed by another important crisis in

the same year. In March 1968, intellectuals and students protested against the Party's cultural policy, especially against the premature closing of the play "Forefathers' Eve" by Mickiewicz²⁴, because antitsarist observations mouthed by the protagonists within the play were taken by the audience as a direct reference to the Soviet oppression. It is worth remembering at this point that Poland remained in the orbit of the Soviet influence long after the death of Stalin. Poland "cooperated" with the Soviet Union on the economic and cultural level, compulsory Russian classes were carried in schools, and various forms of pressure were exerted on Poles from the Soviet side. This constant presence of the Soviet spirit irritated Poles, thus a nineteenth century verse functioned like a stimulus which revealed a long buried hatred. The audiences reacted in a spontaneous way. Students and young professors in particular, with the Romantic tradition of revolutionary protests behind them, took part in enthusiastic street demonstrations in Warsaw. These were promptly crushed by Mieczyslaw Moczar, the ambitious Minister of Internal Affairs. A wave of widespread arrests followed.

These two events, together with a third one, which occurred in Gdansk two years later, brought about Gomulka's downfall. Gomulka was unable to develop an effective economic policy that would provide an improved standard of living for the Polish people. The nature of the two following crises, in 1970 and in 1976, was mainly economic, but they prompted serious changes in the country's political life, and, later, led directly to the abolition of the existing political system and introduction of a market economy in the nineties.

The first event, in 1970, occurred due to an unfortunate decision of the Party to publish a list of food and consumer items with new higher prices effective on the 13th of December, just before Christmas. The prices were published on the front pages of the newspapers and produced a reaction of utmost rage and despair in conservative, traditional people

who spent most of their savings on Christmas food and presents. Confrontations erupted in Gdansk, on the Baltic Coast, which were later followed by similar confrontations in Gdynia, Szczecin and other towns. Hundreds of workers were killed and injured in this conflict. The event led to a change of political figures. A group led by Edward Gierek, the provincial Party leader in Silesia, overthrew Gomulka and his closest associates. The new leader carried out a series of talks with the striking workers and finally agreed to the workers' primary request concerning the food prices.

Gierek's early attitude - a willingness to listen to those who had complaints and grievances, a show of respect for his interlocutors from whatever level of society - was widely welcomed. Party membership increased, and the Party's legitimacy seemed to grow. However, although Gierek in the beginning of his leadership significantly increased the workers' standard of living, he did it mainly through loans from the West. The Party's policy of modernizing and expanding industry did not yield the anticipated dividends. By 1975 Poland's debt to the West had reached nearly eight billion dollars, and numerous investment projects were still unfinished. When Gierek himself tried to increase the prices of food in 1976, several protests occurred. As Andrews, a historian, relates,

a major protest occurred at the Ursus tractor manufacturing plant on the outskirts of Warsaw, where workers pulled up the railroad tracks of the Warsaw to Poznan line - a primary east-west transportation link. Another incident occurred in Radom to the south of Warsaw, where workers spontaneously took their grievances to the provincial authorities and were met and forcibly dispersed by internal security troops. Rioting broke out, and several workers were killed or injured and many

arrested.²⁵

This time, however, there was no change in the Government or the Party positions, and Gierek was slowly consolidating his power-base. He did it by strengthening the Party apparatus and making all economic decisions dependent on the final word of Party officials. At that time the hated Radiokomitet, the media institution governing the shape and content of any piece of information coming from TV, radio and other sources was created. Radiokomitet bred such cultural and sociological phenomena as "newspeak" and the "propaganda of success". Gierek wanted to bring the country to the economic level of the West (he spent several years in Belgium and France before and during World War II, which made him appear openminded and accessible), but he did not plan to change the country's political system. During his period of tenure, the Party became extremely corrupt. The phenomenon of corruption was widespread in every sector of the economy and governed almost all the spheres of human life (allocation of the state living quarters, better food, better industrial products for homes, all services - medical, telephone, etc. depended on the "good will", read bribing, of the officials).

As disenchantment with government policies grew, formal opposition movements began to emerge. One of the most powerful was KOR (Komitet Obrony Robotnikow), the Workers' Defense Committee, which was created in 1976. This was an underground, dissident organization with Michnik and Kuron as its leaders.²⁶ This organization, as well as others, led on active opposition to the authorities. Generally speaking, the late seventies were characterized by disenchantment with government policies, stagnation of the standard of living, a worsening Party reputation, and general discontent among people in the whole country. In 1980, the authorities decided to introduce further price rises on food items. Unlike 1970 and 1976, the Government did not plan to make public

announcements that all newspapers would headline on their front pages. The authorities seemed to believe that if they did not draw attention to the price rises, their actions would pass almost unnoticed. Gierek seemed to have made the same mistake as his predecessor. This time, however, the Polish opposition was much better organized, and, immediately after the price increases, work stopped in several plants. The workers demanded wage increases to compensate for the increase in food prices.

Strikes erupted in the whole country. In Lublin they were potentially most dangerous because railway workers who joined the strike of the truck plant workers blocked the railway lines between Lublin and the Soviet Union. This created a risky situation, jeopardizing the safety of the lines of communication between the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact's Westernmost state, the GDR. On 14 August 1980 an historic strike began in Gdansk. Historians, such as Andrews, Taras²⁷, and Ash²⁸, relate the moment of the beginning of the strike.

At 6 a.m. on 14 August 1980, the workers in sections K-1 and K-3 of the Lenin Shipyards in Gdansk put down their tools and left their machines. By the end of the day the entire yard - 17,000 people - had stopped work, and a 13-person strike committee had been formed.²⁹

The strike was an event of extreme importance. The shipyard workers were widely respected for their uncompromising attitude during the 1970 strike. At that time they had risked their lives to express their distress. Polish citizens also felt that the strike was extremely important because the Gdansk shipyard decided to take part in it again. The strike extended to other cities on the Baltic coast - Gdynia, Elblag and Szczecin, and later to voivodship capitals such as Lodz, Wroclaw and Warsaw. In Gdansk, the workers drew up a list of demands which included wage increases, approval

of the erection of a monument devoted to the memory of the workers who were killed in 1970, and the reinstatement of Lech Walesa and Anna Walentynowicz - active members of the opposition, who had been fired just before the strike started.

The Gdansk shipyard was a major employer in the region and an important source of political opposition. Consequently, the authorities wanted to end the strike as soon as possible. Already two days after the strike began, the government seemed to agree to the Gdansk shipyard strikers' demands. However, workers from other plants protested that their grievances had not been taken care of yet. Both the Gdansk strikers and the strikers from other plants felt that finally the time had come to deal with the whole political situation of the country in a conclusive manner. From a job action for a particular cause in a couple of plants, the strike changed into a general event of great political significance. Such a development also meant that the strikers everywhere could obtain the more fundamental gains already fought for by the opposition for a long time before this event. On the sixteenth of August an Interfactory Strike Committee of 13 persons representing striking workers from plants in Gdansk, Gdynia and Sopot drew up a list of demands. The most important ones included acceptance of independent trade unions; the right to strike; freedom of speech, press and publication; restoration of rights to persons dismissed in 1970 and 1976 and to students expelled from schools for their beliefs; informing the public fully about the economic crisis; and selection of the managerial personnel on the basis of qualifications, not Party affiliation.

Unlike during the crises of 1970 and 1976, the representatives of intelligentsia joined the workers this time. The members of the Gdansk Writers' Union lent support to the workers' effort in the strike, and one of them took part in the meetings of the Interfactory Union Strike Committee on the 21st of August. Warsaw intellectuals brought an Appeal

signed by writers, journalists and artists from other parts of the country, with a request to reach a compromise through negotiations and avoid a repetition of the bloodbaths of 1970 and 1976.

The final agreement between the government and the striking shipyard workers was signed on the 22nd of August and had a tremendous effect on the political situation in Poland. The strike revealed that workers could display an extreme level of organization and discipline when needed (e.g. drinking of alcohol was banned during the strike); it signalled a close cooperation between the intelligentsia and the working class; and it revealed the important part played by the Catholic Church in Polish political life. A new trade union, Solidarity, emerged after the strike, which promised democratic changes including all the spheres of society. Although the Polish Party insisted on its leading role even throughout the 16 months of the Solidarity's existence, its actual domination ended as the so called "dictatorship of proletariat" proved to be a fictitious construct. On the other hand, though Solidarity was careful never to call itself a political party, it in reality seized the psychological power in Poland after the strike.

The strike also influenced the neighbouring nations. The news of the strike spread all over Europe. The workers in Eastern Europe especially felt excited and encouraged by the course of events in Poland. Consequently, the ruling parties in those countries placed tighter controls on their own media and on the flow of information. As Andrews comments, "In an era of deepening economic problems, they (the authorities) were more concerned than ever about the stability and popular acceptance of the Communist system (...)." ³⁰

After the registration of the first independent trade union, Solidarity, which was accomplished thanks to the support of Cardinal Wyszynski, the Primate of the Catholic

Church, the movement consolidated. It became, however, increasingly militant and could no longer accept the privileged position of the Party. In December 1981, Solidarity was planning to hold a referendum on important political questions. The first query concerned confidence in general Jaruzelski, the second asked whether a provisional government should be established and free elections should be held. The third and the fourth ones asked whether people were in favour of providing military guarantees to the Soviet Union and whether the Polish United Workers' Party could be the instrument of such guarantees in the name of Polish society. Moreover, Solidarity's National Commission³¹ demanded new elections to the Sejm in 1982.

The referendum would have touched upon crucial political problems - Poland's dependence on the Soviet Union and the role of the Party in the formation of Poland's political fate. In fact, the referendum would have undermined the role of Wojciech Jaruzelski as the country's leader and would definitely have jeopardized the country's political stability. This call for referendum aggravated the relations between the union and the government, it activated a process of deterioration of the political and social situation and, finally, led directly to the implementation of martial law on the twelfth of December, 1981.

Sixteen months passed between the August strike in Gdansk and the introduction of martial law. This time was considered to be the most prolific for the government opposition and most similar to the ideal of freedom Poles had always nurtured in their hearts. Lack of censorship produced a variety of new publications which openly denounced the regime. Poles indulged in a process of "purification" of their national history, trying to reveal all the atrocities of Stalinism and the hypocrisy of the government in hiding historical facts not attractive to them. In this atmosphere of unrest, in the

night between Saturday, 12 December, and Sunday, 13 December 1981, General Jaruzelski had the Council of State introduce martial law in Poland.

During the first days of martial law Jaruzelski's forces arrested most Solidarity leaders and other opposition members. Also, severe organizational measures, such as cutting off telephone and telex lines between Poland and the outside world, establishing a curfew, banning travel between the cities, suspending all trade unions, closing universities and schools, were introduced. Moreover, all government media and certain industrial facilities were militarized.

In an address to the Polish nation on the thirteenth of December Jaruzelski tried to justify martial law by pointing to the threat presented by Solidarity and its strike threats and protest actions, which would have paralyzed the country for months to come. In fact, before martial law was implemented constant strikes all over Poland had produced chaos and risked a malfunction of the economy. Jaruzelski presented himself as the saviour of the country who could do nothing else in this situation but introduce the toughest measures possible to save the country from the impending chaos and from the ensuing Soviet intervention. Jaruzelski could not afford to forget the Soviets' concern. Their continuous pressure simply could not be disregarded. Their ability to influence Poland's economy could not be waved away. Finally, they had a capability for military intervention they had previously demonstrated they were not afraid to use³², and Jaruzelski recognized it was his goal and duty to do whatever was necessary to avoid such a catastrophe.

The momentous decision to implement martial law in Poland was fiercely debated by Polish citizens. It cannot be denied, however, that it brought military order out of civilian chaos. Martial law lasted 17 months - from 13 December 1981 to 22 July 1983. During this time Jaruzelski followed a

consistently repressive policy. In October 1982 Solidarity and other trade unions were banned. Many union activists remained in prisons long after an amnesty law in July 1983. A military-like style was introduced into all spheres of life - administrative, industrial and cultural. Representatives of the military were present at each level of the government, administration, and medical care institutions. Every walk of life was scrutinized and remained under constant control of the military forces. Cultural life was especially seriously affected - journalists were purged; professional theatre directors, actors, filmmakers, dismissed; and the autonomous powers of academic bodies were reduced. In literally every sphere of life both military presence and Party supervision were painfully visible.

Psychologically, martial law caused irreparable damage in Poland as it destroyed their confidence in the army, which was mainly a tool for martial law's implementation and maintenance. Also, the brutality and acts of terror of the riot police during the first days of martial law were never forgotten.

The events of 1980-81 seem to show that the deal struck by the workers in Gdansk with the Party was shaky from the beginning, because the Party was neither unified enough nor capable enough to implement the agreement it had signed. The Party never regained its strength and unity after the Gdansk strike. Instead, it turned inward to debate its mistakes and failed to establish clear policy guidelines for a long-term relationship with Solidarity. As Andrews notes,

Had the Party been more determined and united, Solidarity would have achieved less in the short run. But the two protagonists might have found a basis for coexistence to their mutual benefit. (Of course, had the Party been a great deal more united and determined, it would not have assented to the formation of an independent union at

all.)³³

This period of Polish history, 1945-1982, constitutes the historical discourse in the three films. **Man of Marble** incorporates Stalinism and the time of the seventies in Poland. **Man of Iron** embraces history in statu nascendi, at the time of its creation during the August strikes in Gdansk. And **Danton**, although situated in the time of the French revolution of the 18th century, reveals significant references to the implementation of martial law in Poland. The three films in a way signify and present the development of the Solidarity movement - **Man of Marble** in forecasting its imminence in the presentation of opposition movements, **Man of Iron** presenting it in action, with the political opponents involved in an actual political struggle, and **Danton** when it depicts a political struggle between Danton and Robespierre, (interpreted by Polish spectators as a conflict between Walesa and Jaruzelski, respectively).

In the subsequent part of this chapter I shall present an analysis of those scenes in the films which specifically engage the spectator in his or her appropriation of the films' historical discourse.

The Historical Discourse in *Man of Marble*

The historical discourse in *Man of Marble* is present in stories about the past and the present forming two interchanging discursive chains. The historical events are seen through the eyes of their participants in the past, through the eyes of the protagonists of the film in the seventies (Agnieszka, her crew, and, with the exception of the deceased Birkut himself, all the characters from the stories of the past), and, through the eyes of the spectators.

Some scenes in the film seem especially rich in historical digressions and allusions and prompt the spectator (especially the Polish spectator) to dialogically interact with the filmic discourse and relate it to the context of his or her own experience. The following analyses illustrate how the historical discourse reveals itself in a dialogical negotiation of the scenes' meaning by the participating, active spectator.

One of the first examples of such an interaction is the fourth sequence³⁴ which takes place in the TV studio, where Agnieszka, the film protagonist, sees the films from the fifties. Most of the people taking part in the screenings of the films in the studio are older than Agnieszka. Those times are well known to them or their families. Their look is full of doubt when they consider Agnieszka's attempts. However, there is a constant exchange of looks between Agnieszka and another woman, the studio worker who helps with the reels. She seems to understand fully the risk Agnieszka is undertaking. Her look is a motherly look, full of pity for the aspiring young director, but, at the same time, full of admiration. The

exchange of looks signifies a rich historical discourse on the totalitarian system which allows for an exchange of looks but forbids an open verbal exchange. It is also seen by the Polish spectator as a form of the spectator's involvement in the implied historical reality behind the women's looks - the reality shared by the protagonists on the screen and the spectators in the cinema.

In the same scene, the recreations of films from the fifties, which the woman shows to Agnieszka, dialogically involve the spectator in the appropriation of the film's meaning. In particular, the scene of the fight for food leads the spectator into the discourse of a similar scene in Eisenstein's **Potemkin**, which also featured the workers' discontent and distrust of the authorities. Huge paintings of prominent workers, on the other hand, lead the spectator to the historical area of the whole machinery of Stalinist propaganda. On closer scrutiny, Stalinism appears as a historical and cultural discourse sewn into almost every single scene of **Man of Marble** itself.

The fifth sequence in **Man of Marble** presents Agnieszka's conversation with the director of the films she had seen, Burski. The sequence depicts Burski (played by one of the most famous artists in Poland, Lomnicki), the director of a film about Birkut who, in the seventies, is a well established artistic personality living in a villa with his family, and with a woman servant attending to the family's needs. The villa bears all the signs of luxury and comfort.³⁵ Agnieszka does not fit in here. The class difference, and the status difference are all epitomized by Agnieszka's dress, lack of any material belongings, and her inelegant mode of behaviour. The meeting between the older director and the younger one is read by the spectator in terms of the contrast between the old and the young, the powerful and the weak, the upper and the middle class, and the opportunistic and the rebellious, in the course of Polish history. After all, class differences,

although officially dispensed with in the socialist Poland, were nevertheless present in a society where the distribution of power and influence was no longer dependent on the genealogical tree and/or material assets but on position in the Party ranks or on a relation to Party officials. As a consequence of this power structure, the representative of artistic circles often compromised his or her artistic autonomy in exchange for Party favours which guaranteed a comfortable life equivalent to that lived by the upper classes in the West.

Wajda was trying to complicate this mosaic of contrasts by the acting technique - the actor playing the older director is careful not to be too rash with the young rebel and he is trying not to offend her. The scene was considered by many critics as the scene of Wajda's repentance but also an attempt at an explanation of the artistic cynicism and opportunism on the part of any director in socialistic Poland. That is probably why the scene is full of symbols - Lomnicki wears a black shirt and a white suit, his villa is full of old, Polish paintings, and, in the beginning of the sequence, we have a striking conversation between his maid and himself reminiscent of old, gentry times. What these symbols tell us, among many other things, is that Burski serves as a symbol of a contemporary artist in Poland - a rebel at heart (black shirt) who had to compromise his position (become white in the eyes of the authorities, thus the white suit) in order to start producing films. In this way, Burski tries to lessen the negative impact of Burski's film about Birkut - the director says he had to invent a tour de force in order to survive on the artistic (and the related political) scene, as no one, in the years of Stalinism, could accept his films about poor food rations for the workers.

At present, Burski cultivates old traditions in his own home, as if trying to indicate that there is a certain continuity in the historical and artistic tradition in Poland,

and despite all the misfortunes of History (Stalinism, Socialism, etc), the Polish tradition stands above everything. On the other hand, the director produces a dialogical tension here between the image of aristocratic descent Burski promulgates by the interior he creates in his house, and the implied historical knowledge on the part of the spectator and Agnieszka, who are aware of the degree of subjugation to authority required for such luxury in the home of a private citizen of socialist Poland.

The idealistic historical discourse of Polish nobility overshadows, however, a more sceptical reading of the scene on the part of the Polish spectator. The spectator dialogically interrelates all the tensions and historical contradictions within the scene itself. He or she senses the irony in this presentation and also a certain helplessness in the director who tries to present a positive picture of the Polish artist as someone who despite the impositions of the system tries to preserve the continuity of Polish history. Wajda emphasises this wish in his remark on the film itself,

Poland did not start today, its reality was created after the Second World War; the country went through all kinds of stages, and endured many difficulties. The film introduced this theme, people started to talk about it, and interpret it in many different ways.³⁶

A non-Polish spectator, on the other hand, ignorant of the discourse of history, but hearing something about the artist's position in a socialist state, definitely would react to the scepticism and irony in the scene to a greater extent than the Polish spectator, often guided by sentiment and historical idealism.

The Polish spectator, moreover, interprets this scene in the film in terms of a cultural discourse. Lomnicki³⁷, the actor playing Burski in this scene, has played in

Sienkiewicz's **Trilogy**, which presented an idealistic picture of the Polish nobility. In the eyes of most of the Polish viewers Lomnicki is always associated with Michal Wolodyjowski, a famous and amorous nobleman who fought for independent Poland in the seventeenth century. The fact that Wajda used this particular actor for such a dubious and ideologically suspicious figure might mean that he wanted to be forgiven somehow (in the name of all the Polish artists who compromised their position in Poland) for not telling the whole and unquestioned truth to the spectator, the truth that Agnieszka wanted to reveal. Even Burski's timbre of voice, especially in the scenes with his child and his maid, reminded the spectator of Wolodyjowski so much, that he was forgiven for anything he could have done in the past.

I would consider this particular scene a kind of subliminal manipulation by Wajda of the Polish spectator. It reminds me of the scene of the election later in the film when Birkut says that, despite all the wrongs he has suffered, he does not want revenge because this is Poland, after all, his beloved native country. The same kind of sophisticated manipulation of nationalistic feelings, especially in the older generation of Poles, is seen in the scene with Burski. On the other hand, this scene could also be interpreted as depicting an internal dialogical split in Wajda, the director, who identifies both with Burski and Agnieszka.

The diversity of discourses - historical, cultural and literary, produces an emotionally disturbing combination which interacts with the spectators' sensitivities in their own assessment of the historical viability of Burski's explanations. The scene itself becomes a vibrant combination of voices interacting with each other, where each particular voice conditions others. The historical discourse of socialistic Poland, familiar to the spectators, becomes relativized and de-privileged in its interaction with the

cultural icon of nobility and the ideal of historical continuity which Burski/Lomnicki displays.

The scene with Burski opens up a retrospective scene from the past (the times of the fifties) when Burski was making the film about Birkut. This sequence transports the viewer into another world, compelling the spectator to compare the historical discourse presented by Wajda with whatever they knew, thought about or realized concerning the fifties. The reaction of older spectators was especially violent here as they recognized whole areas of associations (references) which they dialogically related to their own experience.

In this sequence, Burski decides to produce a tour de force - a staged screening of the workers' race for the best construction results. The first secretary, Jodla, the security members, and the film director, all take part in the conspiracy. However, the final word concerning the arrangement of the mise en scène, the action and the choice of actors, belongs to the director. Party corruption goes hand in hand with a cynical manipulation by the media. The event Burski orchestrated was the construction of a wall from thirty five thousand bricks within one day. Such an event had to be carefully prepared, and a worker had to be chosen who would not jeopardize the propagandist value of the whole event. He had to be extremely naive, young, and strong. Birkut served this ideal in the best way imaginable - as a young man from a village, he knew nothing about the manipulation by the media, in his naivety he just wanted to be a good worker and comrade. Birkut was presented as a very naive person, a peasant who believes in the ideals and the purposes of the Marxist ideology.

This depiction of Birkut as a representative of his society at that time contrasts strikingly with the scenes in the beginning of **Man of Marble**. Certain ominous signals of social awareness had already appeared in Burski's early films

from the fifties - the cutting of the cherry trees, mud at the construction site, lack of food, forced labour, and a party official running away from furious workers, constitute a kind of overture to the events which will take place soon.³⁸

In the context of this dismal reality dialogically clashing with the Party's slogans and propagandist shows, a sudden improvement in Birkut's living conditions (he was fed properly, well taken care of by the party officials, dressed and even taken to the barber), infuriated those members of the older generation in Poland who took the propaganda of the fifties seriously, and really believed in the progress of Poland's reconstruction under Bierut's³⁹ rule. The film's reality was perceived by them without any irony or parentheses.

[...] dlaczego nam dzis juz na emeryturze, za nasza robote, glod, reumatyzmy, gruzlice zastarzale, zmarnowana mlodosc, dlaczego nam Wajda naplul w morde ta szynka, ktora karmi przodownika pracy.⁴⁰

Why did Wajda spit in our faces, the faces of retired people, the ham he fed the Stakhanovite, showing no concern for our hard work, hunger, rheumatism, chronic tuberculosis and wasted youth.

As Wieslaw Godzic⁴¹ mentions, such older spectators reacted with a reading emotionally oriented towards one, entirely referential discourse which was related to their own experience. Such an interpretation allows for an entrance into the world of the diegesis at its referential level only, not at the level of articulation. As spectators they rejected the irony in the film which resulted from the dialogical clash of the discourse of historical truth and the discourse of its presentation.

Birkut naively believes in the good intentions of Burski and in his positive presentation of the workers' effort as a joint effort of his team.⁴² At the end of the dramatic race in which thirty five thousand bricks have been laid, we see the twisted face of Birkut, with an animal-like exhaustion in his eyes. At the moment of extreme fatigue no ideals are important, the propaganda machine shows its real face.

The scene is striking because of another emotionally loaded concatenation of images - the presentation of the viewers of the humiliating spectacle - the older workers, tired and disinterested, looking with disbelief at the circus.⁴³ The image of the Party officials - dressed up and businesslike - is later juxtaposed with the image of the sick and mutilated hand of the worker. This dialogical juxtaposition of images created a feeling of repugnance and hatred in the spectator, or rather brought to the surface a feeling which had already been present in the Polish spectator for almost two decades.⁴⁴

On the other hand, some Polish spectators considered Wajda's Birkut as a caricature presentation of a worker in the fifties - an unsophisticated individual who enthusiastically accepts the exposition of his image in the Social Realist monuments.⁴⁵ They detected a dialogical coexistence of several discourses in such a presentation: a discourse of bitterness in Wajda, fighting for the upper hand against the discourse of historical presentation in the depiction of Birkut's heroism and naivety, and the discourse of irony which made the former a comic strip figure of the Social Realist drama⁴⁶.

Some official reviewers in Poland interpreted the scene at the artist's studio, where Birkut's marble figure was made, as playing an important role in the explanation of the film title. They also added that, in this way, Wajda made a symbolic gesture towards the greatness of the worker's toil itself. By immortalizing Birkut in a marble figure, Wajda pays

homage to all the oppressed, naive and abused workers of the fifties. Thus, as they said, **Man of Marble** restored the spectator's belief in a cinema of great passion and reminded them, in a drastic way, of the continuity of Polish history. For instance, Krzysztof Klopotowski, more sympathetic to Wajda than other official critics, wrote about this film in 1981,

It was the only film which claimed the blood, sweat and tears of the working people. Although the film was seen by 2,5 million viewers, Wajda got a bag of insults only for his efforts... It is not a film about a Stakhanovite, as the official critics were trying to convince the general public, it is a film about the notion of the proletariat dictatorship. In those years, the proletariat was given the conditions indispensable for their taking part in governing the country, but, on the other hand, a gigantic propaganda manipulation machine and terroristic security apparatus were initiated to control them.⁴⁷

Other reviewers, like most Polish spectators, sensed a great deal of irony in the pompous erection of Birkut's monument, which was abandoned later in the dusty cellars of the National Museum in Warsaw.

In **Man of Marble**, the sequence of the producing of Burski's film about Birkut serves as a carrier of the historical discourse into other parts of the film. The spectator prepared by the film's exposé of the truth of the historical discourse in the fifties is not surprised by the monstrosities depicted in Wajda's presentation of the authorities in the seventies. The chilling picture of the discourse of GREAT MANIPULATION serves as an ideological and moral explanation of all the atrocities committed by the officials and of the moral degeneration of the people surrounding Birkut. Thus, the moral degeneration of the

decision-makers of the Polish culture in the seventies - the TV producer who decides about the shape and content of Agnieszka's film, and Burski, now a famous director - constitutes an irrefutable consequence resulting from a moral depravity in those early times of Socialist Poland. The historical past and the historical present within the film, that is, the time of the fifties and the time of the seventies, produce a strong dialogical encounter, in as much as both of them dialogically interact with the historical present of the spectator at the time of the film viewing.

One of the most important aspects of the historical reality which Wajda displayed in the film was the frightening and oppressive presence of the Security forces (Bezpieka), which inevitably introduced the discourse of Stalinism. Stalinism is alluded to especially often in **Man of Marble**. The Stalinist totalitarian spirit is referred to in every discursive layer of the film and monologically conditions and manipulates the spectator's reaction towards the film. The Polish spectator, living most of his or her life under the influence of the Stalinist aura, felt especially overwhelmed by the hopelessness and oppressiveness of some scenes.

Stalinism was an important factor conditioning the construction of Polish history, not only in the economic and political spheres but also permeating every domain of life with its ideology and practice.

In the film the discourse concerning the totalitarian threat of Stalinism is revealed especially in the scenes presenting the Security forces. Both in the contemporary discourse and in the discourse from the past the "bezpieka" (the derogatory name for security forces) is presented as a threatening force and a tool of total oppression, mere acquaintance with which proved harmful. The discourse of "bezpieka" (security) is dominating in Burski's film about Birkut, where the security officials took care of the safety

of the participants and kept a close eye on any oppositional movements of potential subversives. This sequence is read by each generation of Poles in a different way - depending on the political circumstances and the knowledge of the real conduct and misconduct of the Security. Exemplary here is the fifth sequence which constitutes a flash-back describing the activities of "bezpieka" from the security agent's point of view. Michalak, the security agent assigned to Birkut and Witek during and inbetween their propaganda shows, describes the event with the brick and then the fate of Birkut as a social worker (Birkut became one after his accident). From Michalak's retrospective, Birkut emerges as an idealistic and naive social worker, not frightened by the apparent sabotage during the fateful event. He was a really idealistic social worker, always ready to defend the cause of the people who sought his help. This made Birkut a dangerous type, impervious to any kind of political and ideological influence from the authorities.

As Michalak shows it, Birkut's naivety was challenged when Birkut's friend, Witek, was arrested for "probable contacts with the West" (the lie fabricated by the authorities).⁴⁸ Birkut goes to the Central Security Office in Warsaw to ask about Witek, despite many warnings from his wife and his friends, begging him not to jeopardize his future. He is received by the Security official with patronizing nonchalance but gets no promises. The scene, in its ambiguity, is similar to a scene when Witek "disappeared". He "disappeared" somewhere in the room of the Security official to which he had been invited for a talk. Birkut had accompanied him to the secretary's room and waited endlessly for his reappearance. When, after several hours he demanded to see his friend, the secretary pushed him into a prison-like room, a cool and frightening interior. The security official sitting in the room cynically tried to convince him that nobody had entered the room before.

This Kafkaesque mise-en-scène and the cynicism of the security officials signifies probably the most important discourse in the film, easily detected by the spectator - fear. Witek's abduction by the Security symbolises a common practice performed by the Stalinist regime which considered human life irrelevant. At this point, I would like to quote Czeslaw Milosz who convincingly related the atmosphere of fear in his book, **Captive Mind**. Milosz rightly notices that

a long period of terror demands an established apparatus and becomes a permanent institution. (...) Fear is well known as a cement of societies. [Under Stalinist rule], if all one hundred thousand people live in daily fear, they give off a collective aura that hangs over the city like a heavy cloud.⁴⁹

This collective aura of overpowering and ever present fear is vivid in all textures of the film - the linguistic texture (ambiguous statements, remarks based on common knowledge), image texture (eye exchange between Agnieszka and the woman in the screening room, also eye exchange between the Security official and his secretary, and many, many other instances), and the musical score. To transcend this fear, as Milosz contends ironically,

a new means must be devised: one must breed a new man, one for whom work will be a joy and a pride, instead of the curse of Adam. A gigantic literature is directed towards this end. Books, films, and radio all have as their themes this transformation, and the instilling of hatred against the enemy who would want to prevent it. To the extent that man, terrified as he is, learns to fulfil his obligations to society of his own will and with joy, the dosage of fear is to be reduced. And eventually, a free man will be born.⁵⁰

Michalak's relation functions as an alternative discourse presenting the historical truths from the position of the authority in the fifties. Together with Burski's depiction of the events and the scenes from authentic propaganda films of the period, the pictures from the fifties form a polyphony of discourses in a dialogical turmoil. The time of the fifties presented itself to the spectator as a mosaic of voices regulated by the monological oppressive power of the totalitarian regime.

The trip to Warsaw ends the first part of the film, and, also, marks the end of the old Birkut - naive, sometimes even stupid in his idealistic belief in people and ideology. Birkut leaves Warsaw as another man - full of bitterness. The man of marble is no longer an ideal statue, the events in the second part of the film start to chip away its ideal contour.

The second part of the film starts with Birkut at a meeting with his comrades where he begs them for help to release Witek. The comrades do not answer his plea, they start singing workers' songs from the fifties and Birkut's words are no longer heard. From then on there is a spiralling movement downward in Birkut's career. He is deprived of his apartment in Nowa Huta and has to move to the slums on the outskirts.

Birkut is thrown in prison. After his release, he is told that his wife has left him. He then decides to leave his job in search for her. This romantic, unhappy love, senselessly broken by cruel fate, is typical of Polish culture, which is full of knights errant hopelessly looking for lost love and lost ideals. The Polish spectator interacts here with numerous cultural discourses and wanders through a vast field of texts belonging to the Polish Romantic literary tradition.

Birkut sees his wife in a nouveau-riche restaurant, with

an older man, her present husband, in snobbish, rich Zakopane.⁵¹ This opposition of a degraded Hanka, and her former idealistic husband, reinforces the black/white dichotomy of character formation. Hanka is ashamed of her betrayal and does not want to return home with her former husband. Birkut disappears after his trip to Zakopane. Nobody knows where he is. Only later does the spectator learn from his son, Maciek, that he remained faithful to his ideals, and fought for the rights of workers. It is only in the last sequence of the film, with Birkut's son, that we learn about his death following the Gdansk demonstrations. Even after his death, Birkut remains the man of marble - invincible in his convictions. The most important sign of his moral invincibility is the fact that he decided to take part in the national elections, although he had suffered so much from the hands of the authorities. His statement "ludzie, tu roznie bywalo, gorzej, lepiej, ale to jest nasz kraj" ("Folks, fortunes have varied here - they've been up and down, but this is still our country"), serves as the final credo of Birkut and of Wajda himself, who despite many offers from abroad, decided to stay in Poland and create his films in Poland, against all odds.

The reference to the Gdansk demonstrations in 1970 reinforces the historical discourse in an abrupt and painful exposition at the very end of the film which reminds the spectator that the fictionalized story is convincing only thanks to its dialogical relation with the real, the world of historical facts and actual events involving real people.

One of the most striking sequences in **Man of Marble** is the sequence number ten in which Agnieszka carries out her third interview, this time with Vincenty Witek, Birkut's former friend and ally. Witek, a former political prisoner, is now a director of one of numerous Polish "industrial miracles", the gigantic construction site of Huta Katowice.

Witek seems to enjoy the role of a successful manager, who, full of satisfaction, tells about his own achievements. Not much is said about Birkut, however. The statement uttered by him "O, Birkut to byl prawdomowny czlowiek. Dzisiaj juz malo takich, a przydalby sie na budowie" (O, Birkut was a truthful man. There are not many like him nowadays, he would be useful at our construction site) is shockingly banal and jars the ears of the Polish spectator with its ideological 'newspeak'.⁵² This sequence constitutes a historical recapitulation of the time of the seventies with its fascination with industrialization, technocratic propaganda system and subordination of the human needs to the requirements of "historical necessity" as propagated by the power system.

The sequence presenting the Huta Katowice site was widely criticized by critics and film analysts in Poland. Alicja Helman from Cracow University, for instance, considers this sequence (and especially this part of it where Wajda presents an idealistic picture of the industrial landscape from a bird's eye view) as an act of condescension to the system on the part of Wajda, and a final proof that Wajda basically did not reject Socialism, and found some of its phenomena (industrialization, for instance), fascinating and worth showing.

Wajda procured an interesting effect in this scene. In view of the dynamic presentation of Huta Katowice, human values and feelings, violated in the times of the fierce construction of the socialistic state, looked especially bleak and non-important. After all, the cause was important - the rebuilding of the impoverished country, its industrialization and progress. Another witness from the past, Jodla, the Party official in Nowa Huta, whom Agnieszka met later in Nowa Huta in order to put together her fragmented picture of Birkut, summarized it sharply for Agnieszka: "Co pani wie o tamtych czasach? Samo sie nie zrobilo, nie?" (What do you know about

those years? It /Nowa Huta/ wasn't built by itself, was it?). This discourse of the justification of rough measures by the Party policy clashed unsympathetically with the presentation of life in those times earlier in the film - although, at the same time, it introduced an unsettling note that, maybe, the Party official was right, after all. The lack of response on the part of Agnieszka in that scene allowed for the discourse of the totalitarian regime to creep in and introduce a discordant note of doubt. That was the reason why the Nowa Huta sequence and the conversation with Jodla (Party official in Huta Katowice) were so fiercely debated by ordinary spectators and by film critics.

The spectator reacted very strongly to this scene in the film in the seventies. Godzic⁵³ notes, for instance, that the film creates in this sequence a "fiction the wrong way up", which creates a new context reformulating or putting in an ironical quote the connotations of the underlying diegesis of the reality in which Agnieszka exists. The scene in the context of the whole film looked like an example of an internally polemical discourse. It caused confusion in the spectator - the position of the director seemed self-doubting or self-questioning. It looked as if Wajda had allowed for a coexistence of various discourses in this scene - a polyphony of different approaches to contemporary reality, not to be monologically evaluated by the director's imposition of authorial truth.

The Poland of the seventies in this particular film sequence seems to be the country of "success" (which agreed with an official line of state propaganda) - of modern, contemporary buildings of Warsaw, the Lazienki route, and full of the enthusiasm of the builders of Huta Katowice. Poles are seen as a society of active, industrious people.

This optimistic presentation of Polish reality in the seventies is ironically contrasted with the discourse of the

Poles' own experience. What happened to Polish viewers during the presentation of this sequence was that they looked at themselves in disbelief and wondered how Wajda dare include a typical official "success" story in his film. In the context of the seventies in Poland - a country of grey and neglected cities, impatient and unhappy people working without enthusiasm or belief "in the good of the cause", - a colourful scene from Huta Katowice introduced a dissonance into the film⁵⁴.

Wajda is more faithful to his public in the presentation of the historical discourse when he shows one of the last sequences in the film, the Gdansk shipyard. A kind of grimness is vividly apparent in the shipyard early in the morning, when the workers go to work. The atmosphere of apathy gives way to growing dread and the imminence of final solutions to the political crisis. (Although Wajda claims that there is no causal relationship between the film and the strikes in Gdansk, he thinks that "it's not unreasonable to see a connection between them, if only of mutual concern"⁵⁵). As Godzic notes "the presentation of the Gdansk shipyard reminds one of the famous fog sequence in the port after murdering Vakulinchuk in **Battleship Potemkin**", when the imminence of final dreadful solutions to the crisis was equally threatening. The scene is monologically clear to the spectator - the pervasive discourse of fear comes to the surface again as the dominating overtone of the historical discourse in **Man of Marble**.

The examples of scenes in **Man of Marble** given above illustrate how the historical discourse is present in every layer of the film - in the film diegesis, the construction of mise-en-scène and the film dialogues. It is revealed in the dialogical clash of the ideological positions of the protagonists, in the concatenation of semantically opposing

images and in the linguistic commentaries of the representatives of all the film glossia.

Moreover, the historical discourse in **Man of Marble** evokes certain reactions in the spectators who, in their attempt to match their personal historical truth with the history on the screen, try to appropriate the latter in the act of spectatorship.

The Historical Discourse in Man of Iron

In **Man of Iron** history is no longer delicately alluded to or presented in the form of multiple glossia in the film's content and form. In **Man of Iron** history is unmercifully present in almost every scene of the film. It is recalled in flashbacks, it is quoted in the form of original footage, and it is present in the artistic interpretation of the events of 1980.

The interpretation of the events of the shipyard strike is imposed on the spectator as the first synthesis of August 1980, the time of the strikes in Gdansk, and the time of the beginning of significant changes in Polish political life. Wajda's position is monological in the film in the sense of a uniform ideological position which he propagates through the authoritarian voices of his protagonists. The world of the "dominating" will be gone soon, he seems to say, and the world of the "dominated" with its own dominant ideology is approaching. In presenting this monological position in the film, Wajda makes his message "divested of its language diversity,"⁵⁶ and his authorial language inevitably resembles "an awkward and absurd position of the language of stage directions in plays."⁵⁷ In **Man of Iron**, Wajda is no longer a ventriloquist, he no longer speaks "through (the) language"⁵⁸ of his characters as he had done in **Man of Marble**, but practices "an authoritarian enforced discourse"⁵⁹, the purpose of which is to support the main thesis of the film. Through flashbacks, a crude enforcement of documentary footage, staged and fictionalized interviews, propaganda techniques and other cinematic methods originating in the documentary tradition, but also deeply ingrained in Socialist

Realism, Wajda produces a film depicting history "in statu nascendi", a passionate and one-sided depiction of the Gdansk strike.

The strike was not a local incident, as we noted in the section on historical context of the films, but an important event which completely changed Polish political and social life. The strike action spread from the historic moment of the downing of tools by the workers of sections K - 1 and K - 3 of the Lenin Shipyards in Gdansk on 14 August 1980, to multiple strike actions elsewhere in Poland. The shipyard workers' action on 14 August became a catalyst for similar decisions in the next few days elsewhere on the Baltic coast - in Gdynia, Elblag, and Szczecin -and in other major industrial centres like Lodz, Wroclaw and Warsaw. As Andrews reports in his book Poland 1980 - 81. Solidarity versus the Party, "A leader of the KSS/KOR dissident organization, Jacek Kuron, called it a 'sensation'. He was quoted as saying, "It is a solidarity strike and has a political character."⁶⁰

Wajda created his own artistic vision of the historical event before anybody proposed another one. He not only presented his own version of the events, but, because he was the first one to present them to the public at large, he became the co-author of a specific version of history which later was to be proliferated in other parts of the country. Wajda produced his perspective on history for both aesthetic and moral reasons, and not necessarily for its epistemological value.⁶¹ Other discourses, such as newsreels, the BBC relation, radio broadcasts and television programs prepared by other foreign TV crews, existed as historical documents but they never reached the general public, especially not in Poland.⁶² In point of fact, censorship was still so strong in August 1980 that, although the TV public knew that something was happening in Gdansk (they were informed by TV reporters about work stoppages in the Gdansk shipyard), they had no idea what was really going on. Filmed six months after the strike

Wajda's text became a proto-text, a singular artistic source for establishing the discourse depicting these events, one which the Polish public could trust. Although the Polish audiences were aware of the fact that Wajda's film was a fictionalized account, not an analysis or a document, they accepted this as an artistic presentation which communicated not only the historical truth but the spirit of the August strike as well. Consequently, Wajda's film was not only an artistic event but also a social one, extremely important for the people of those times who were never properly informed about the strike by the authorities. As Andrews notes,

Party propaganda was to stress the hardships that work stoppages caused and the costs of the Baltic strikes in terms of idled ships and consequent foreign trade losses, production shortfalls, and market-supply interruptions. Party editorials were to play on the themes of responsibility, domestic peace, common sense, and the need for self-discipline and normal, productive work.⁶³

The party's propaganda created its own version of history in an attempt to counteract the revolutionary impact of the strike. Both ideological opponents: Wajda and the party apparatus presented their own historical account. These two political discourses, one of the party apparatus, and the other of Wajda's film, created two different historical narratives which, as Hayden White explains, are always

a mixture of adequately and inadequately explained events, a congeries of established and inferred facts, at once a representation that is an interpretation and an interpretation that passes for an explanation of the whole process mirrored in the (historical) narrative.⁶⁴

Wajda's narrative, however, reflected, to a greater

extent than the narrative of the party apparatus, the feelings of Poles, and it addressed them in a more emotional and direct way than the sagacious orations of party officials. The propagandistic presentation which Wajda initiated in **Man of Iron** dealt with the basic feelings of oppression and the fight for freedom on which the rebellious Poles always set a high value. In this, Wajda violated the delicate balance between the private and the public which had existed in his far better **Man of Marble**. In the earlier film social and political events gained meaning only thanks to their connection with private life; in **Man of Iron**, on the other hand, the private life of the protagonists serves as a pretext for Wajda to proclaim a political credo of the "dominated" only.

One of the important historical processes which **Man of Iron** initiated was the partial abrogation of censorship. This had already happened in the earlier **Man of Marble**, but this time Wajda openly laid bare the facts without the earlier stylistic obfuscations. Wajda's film favoured a direct presentation of facts over the elaborate formal figures which had enveloped facts and dates in his former film.

In **Man of Iron** the events of the plot are constituted by the very course of the history itself, which is too fresh and too painful to coexist with the cinematic stories of the heroes on the screen. **Man of Iron** entered into a relation of painful confrontation with the spectators' memories.

The following scenes illustrate the dialogical presence of historical and fictional discourses in the film which, together, constitute a polyphony of voices making the fabric of the film vibrant and pulsating with a life of its own. In particular the glossia: the relation between the fictional and the factual; the presentation of authority; and the presence of religion in the film most significantly reveal tensions in

the dialogical negotiation of the film's meaning by the spectator.

Wajda combines **the fictional and the factual discourses** in the film, causing a dialogical tension in the spectator's appropriation of the message. The spectator compares the image on the screen with what he or she knows, has heard about, or what he or she directly experienced. There are several ways in which Wajda combines the fictional and factual discourses. The most revealing are: voicing of historical facts by fictional protagonists; appearance of real historical persons on the screen; and, a combination in one sequence of the fictional and factual footage describing particular historical events.

The voicing of historical facts by fictional personae, is present already in the beginning sequences of **Man of Iron**. In the third sequence⁶⁵, for instance, at the office of the police official, Badecki the first scene - an interview on a TV screen - introduces the spectator directly into the problematic of the strike. The scene begins with a close-up of a television screen. In the following shot the camera zooms back to the room in which the TV monitor is situated, and where Badecki "briefs" Winkiel on Maciek Tomczyk, the strike leader. The historical event of the strike is presented within the framework of the official media - a fact which the Polish spectator always scrutinizes carefully. Used to years of propaganda manipulation, TV "newspeak", and the political announcements of Polish party leaders on the TV screen, the spectator senses an emotional tension in the presentation of the discourse of the revolutionary ideology in the official media. Could it really happen, or was it Wajda's idealistic wishful thinking that the discourse of the strikers could be established with full power on the screen of official TV? This juxtaposition of two discourses: the discourse of revolution and the discourse of the "dominating" creates a dialogical

tension in the film text which has to be negotiated by the spectator and accommodated by him or her depending on the political orientation.

In its monological simplicity the revolutionary discourse presents historical facts, historical names (e.g. Anna Walentynowicz), the names of the Gdansk shipyard (K3), and the name of the real leader of the strike (Lech Walesa). Unlike other official presentations on Polish TV, usually full of more or less concealed lies, the discourse of the revolutionary ideology established its authoritarian power simultaneously: on the TV screen, and on the diegetic plane of **Man of Iron**.

The presence of Badecki in the room where the screening takes place introduces an element of ironical tension, while the whole scene is undergoing a process of hybridization thus "contain(ing) mixed within it two speech manners, two styles, two 'languages', two semantic and axiological belief systems"⁶⁶, that of the "dominating" and the revolutionary one.

This imposition of the conflict of ideologies onto the fictional diegesis makes the didactic monologism of Wajda overpowering in its initial enunciation. The spectator is immediately exposed to historical fact, which requires from him or her careful attention in the appropriation of images on the screen. The spectator is *in* the discourse of the film and becomes an inherent part of it.

On the other hand, the placing of the factual in the mouth of the fictional hero produces an additional dialogical tension which generates disbelief. The spectator wonders whether there is any disparity between the historical fact and the voice of the fictional character relating the historical narrative. Where does the truth lie? In a sense, this alternation of the fictional and the factual, forces a recognition of the way the film constructs historical reality for the spectator. Like the staged documentaries of Michelle

Citron (especially **Daughter Rite**, 1978), the film "challenges assumptions about the 'reality' of documentary in relation to narrative"⁶⁷. The spectator rationally acknowledges the power of such a presentation but emotionally reacts with a dose of scepticism.

Another way the factual is realized in the film is by the presentation of real, historical persons. For instance, Lech Walesa and Anna Walentynowicz appear in **Man of Iron** several times. However, while their arrival in the historical footage or in the staged scenes related to the strike itself strengthens the enunciative power of the message, their artificial incorporation in the fabric of the film fiction, (as in the scene of the wedding of Agnieszka and Maciek), strikes a false chord. As Mariusz Muszkat noted,

Proporcje zwyczajnosci i podnioslosci zostaly w filmie jakby zachwiane, a najbardziej chyba w scenie slubu z udzialem Walentynowicz i Walesy w roli swiadkow. Ci ostatni nie byli jednak tamtymi sprzed Sierpnia, zbyt wyraznie malowala sie na ich twarzach pewnosc siebie, jaka dalo oszamalajace zwyciestwo. W scenie tej, tak bardzo teatralnej, przemieszano rozne czasy. To powazny dysonans.⁶⁸

The proportions of ordinariness and sublimity have been obliterated, especially in the scene of the wedding in which Walesa and Walentynowicz took part as witnesses. They were not the same people as they had been before August. Confidence, caused by an unprecedented victory, was all too clear on their faces. In this theatrical scene two times were mixed. This was a serious dissonance.

In this case, the spectator could not dialogically come to

terms with the proximity of fiction and reality on the screen. He or she seemed unnecessarily manipulated into a forceful combination of two disparate discourses in one scene. The feeling of uneasiness on the part of the spectator and his or her inability to negotiate the meaning of such a convergence is best expressed by Jędrzejewski who concludes,

W "Człowieku z żelaza" wprowadzenie niektórych sekwencji inscenizowanych jest dwuznaczne moralnie wobec widza i fragmentów dokumentalnych. Zastosowanie tego zabiegu ma jeszcze jedną konsekwencję. Połączenie dokumentu z fabułą przesadza o powierzchowności, szkicowości fabularnej warstwy filmu.⁶⁹

In "Man of Iron" the insertion of some staged sequences is morally equivocal, both in relation to the spectator, and to the documentary footage. This device has another consequence as well. The combination of documentary footage with fictional footage causes the fictional layer of the film to become superficial and sketchy.

The reaction of uneasiness and shock on the part of the spectator was especially vivid in the case of combinations of the fictional and the historical footage in one sequence. The ninth sequence is an example of the device, which Wajda used throughout the whole film. In this sequence, Wajda liberally mixes documentary footage from the past, documentary footage from the strike in August 1980, and fictional events. From the moment of Dzidek's and Winkiel's meeting in the studio where Dzidek works, the film diegesis is presented in the form of two parallel temporal paths: the present and the past. The present path carries the discourse of the society in August 1980, during the time of the strike. The past discourse, on the other hand, contains numerous flashbacks, explaining the development of Maciek Tomczyk as a political activist and

referring to historical events which have shaped him.

In the first flashback, the documentary discourse is simple and frightening in its power. The film shows authentic shots of walls with dissenting slogans; demonstrations of workers; tanks dispersing them; tear gas; and then, the shipyard wall, frightened faces of the workers and crying women. This documentary sequence is echoed by the fictional images of the workers ten years later: the images of the workers, their wives and mothers, in front of the shipyard. Both the factual and the fictional discourses function as a unity and strengthen the monological discourse of presentation of "the striking people".

A fictional flashback later in Dzidek's relation recalls Birkut, Maciek's father, and the protagonist of **Man of Marble**. Dzidek witnesses the quarrel between the two. Birkut does not allow his son to join the students who decided to go on strike to support the liberal protests in Warsaw in 1968. He justifies his decision with the supposition that probably this would mean a provocation. Birkut summarizes the 1968 demonstration as "porachunki inteligenckie" (the intelligentsia settling accounts) and he also thinks that students are being used by Party factions as pawns in Party infighting.

Another fictional flashback leads the spectator to the demonstrations of 1970. The scene shows the room in the students' hostel from which Maciek, Dzidek and other students watch the demonstrating workers in the street below. This time it is the workers who call the students to demonstrate. Dzidek shouts back that they do not agree to join the workers. In the following dead silence the two students see the events unfolding from the window. The window frames the attacked workers, the tanks, and structurally frames the sounds of shots and cries. The Polish spectator thus recalls the historically documented tension between the workers and the intelligentsia. The window in the students' hostel functions

as a metaphorical framework which symbolically alludes to the conflict.

The third flashback in the same sequence introduces one of the most powerful scenes in **Man of Iron**, partly fictional and partly documentary. The fictional restaging of the procession of the workers with the body of a dead worker on the door board is accompanied by a documentary soundtrack recorded by the police. On the soundtrack the policemen monitoring the procession relate in a matter-of-fact voice where the procession is heading and what should be done about it. One of them suggests that the corpse should be got rid of because the impression is horrible and the procession could instigate a series of demonstrations.

This mixture of historical footage and fictional footage was openly rejected by some spectators not only because of its emotional impact but also due to historical inconsistencies in the film. For instance, Surdykowski treated the film as a very real statement and a serious relation of the events. He reacted to **Man of Iron** as if the film were a documentary different from the 'pseudo-documentaries' of propaganda pieces on television.

(...) scena niesienia zwlok mlodego robotnika (...) nakrecona jest zupełnie gdzie indziej, co wobec mieszkancow Wybrzeza, a zwlaszcza najtragiczniej w Grudniu doswiadczonej Gdyni podwaza wiarygodnosc fragmentow dokumentalnych. Ludzie niosacy zwloki ida po torach tramwajowych, podczas gdy w Gdyni nie ma ani metra toru na ulicach! (...) Tak sie po prostu nie robi!⁷⁰

(...) the scene of the carrying of the young worker's body (...) was shot in a completely different place. This fact impairs the credibility of the documentary footage for the inhabitants of the Gdansk-Gdynia-Sopot region

(Wybrzeze), and especially for the inhabitants of Gdynia, afflicted most tragically in December. The people carrying the body walk along a tramway track while in Gdynia there is not a trace of one on the streets! (...) One should not do that!

The spectator demanded from the director a journalistic scrupulousness and precision in the presentation, and disregarded the necessity for consistency of cinematic diegesis and for the aesthetic compactness of the cinematic image. It is worth noting at this point that this lack of precision of place was noticed by Gdynia and Gdansk spectators only. Some of them were witnesses of the December event, others knew about the place and time of this event from spoken and written relations. The violent reaction of the audience questioned every single detail of the film, blurring the borders between the fictional and the factual.

Also the scene of Birkut's death was debated by the participants in the event. The place where Birkut supposedly died was full of people so no militiamen could penetrate the crowd. The victims died on the other side of the fly-over, where no students could see them. These and other examples of journalistic inconsistency (e.g. the appearance of the gate at the shipyard, the presence or absence of certain topographical points in the film image) were ferociously contended and questioned. The film was supposed to perform the function of a truth tester, a counter-balance to the hypocrisy of the mass media and historical treatises describing strikes in Poland previously. The demands of the spectator disregarded the requirements of the filmic metaphor, metonymy and parable. The spectator was not interested in the effect of condensation which required, for instance, that Wajda put together the images of Birkut's death, and students witnessing it from the windows of their student residence, against the logic of the real place of the action in December 1970. The spectator

demanded documentary truth of the presentation and, like Surdykowski, considered the factual inconsistencies as "zgrzyt zelaza po marmurze" (the screeching of iron over the marble).

This fascinating debate concerning the fictional and the factual reminds me of the controversy regarding the relation of the poetic function to the referential function. Jakobson notes, "the supremacy of the poetic function over the referential function does not obliterate reference... but renders it ambiguous,"⁷¹ while Willemen explains for film,

Many of the more assiduous filmmakers have become aware of this contradiction, complaining that it is impossible to shoot slums and misery without somehow aestheticizing them - a paradox generated by the widely held but nevertheless false premise that images represent more 'accurately' than other forms of representation, and that the choice is between imprecise (poetic) 'pictorialism' and precise, referential 'photography of record'.⁷²

Thus, what fulfilled the poetic function for many non-Polish spectators, breached the referential function for the Polish spectator, and especially the spectator constrained by geographical positioning within the site of the mise en scène. The Polish spectator reacted first and foremost to the inconsistencies within the referential function, treating the poetic function of the cinematic image as secondary.⁷³

This imposition of the discourse of fact in the film meant that the spectator was forced to negotiate every image on the screen with his or her own factual experience. The result was that from the very beginning of the film viewing the truth on the screen was being ferociously negotiated with the historical truth of the time. The spectator appropriated and reappropriated the images on the screen in an attempt to render them acceptable to himself or herself. Consequently, at

every moment of the film's viewing the spectator also negotiated the credibility of Wajda's presentation of the psychological motives of his protagonists in the context of the historical reality at the time of the strike. For instance, in the thirteenth sequence the historical discourse imposes a fictional "unreality" onto the creation of the scene in the car when Dzidek and Winkiel go to see Mrs Hulewicz at her house. Winkiel should not have gone to a house which posed a danger of exposure for the representative of the official press. The facts of those times contradicted the fictional reality on the screen.

On the other hand, this improbable scene had to be artificially introduced by Wajda in order to give the spectator a chance to see the next events in the diegesis, which were to be related by the representative of "real, simple people", here Mrs Hulewicz. In any case, the spectator forgave Wajda for the impossibility of the dialogue between Winkiel and Dzidek, in which Winkiel totally exposes himself, and Dzidek pretends that he has not noticed this.⁷⁴ My reaction as a spectator was that, in this way, Dzidek could considerably jeopardize the safety of the families of the striking workers. Still, I understood Wajda's intention in this improbable positioning of the fictional discourse. If the monological truth of the fighting worker were to be presented, no obstacles, such as improbable dialogues and situations, could prevent the director in his imposition of the authorial truth. This moment was noted by Czeslaw Dondzillo who stated,

"Czlowiek z zelaza" otrzymal nagrode przede wszystkim za to ze jest, oraz za to jaki jest. W tym miesci sie i wymowa polityczna tego filmu i ksztalt artystyczny, (...) warstwa dokumentalna i warstwa fabularna, inscenizowana, rozwiązania dramaturgiczne udane i mniej udane (my emphasis - JF), sylwetki psychologiczne postaci udane i mniej udane, sylwetki psychologiczne postaci bogate i

jednowymiarowe, i na koniec wreszcie intencje i sympatie tworców.⁷⁵

"Man of Iron" obtained a (Cannes) prize primarily because it appeared at all, and, because it appeared in the form it did. This includes its political message and its artistic form; its documentary layer and fictional (staged) layer; more or less successful dramaturgic solutions (my emphasis -JF); successful and less successful, and rich or one-dimensional, psychological profiles; and, finally, the intentions and preferences of the film authors.

In order to make the factual in **Man of Iron** more credible Wajda additionally positioned it within the monological framework of the voice of "the people". The historical facts voiced by simple people from the street reinforce the enunciative power of the presentation.

According to Czeslaw Dondzillo, the situating of the film's discourse in the minds of "the people" was intentional as Wajda wanted to reveal the mass character of the reform movement (masowy charakter ruchu odnowy).⁷⁶ In particular, history seen from the point of view of the most vulnerable "spectators" of history - old women - strikes the spectator as an extremely powerful device. Mrs Hulewicz, an old woman, at whose house Maciek rented an apartment, is introduced in sequence thirteen, which serves as an insertion into the past relating Maciek's life. Technically, the sequence consists of several flashbacks relating the life of Maciek, and, accompanying them, bitter, tearful commentaries.

One of the flashbacks relates the event of searching for Birkut's grave on the first of November the following year - on the Day of the Departed - a day devoted to the memory of the deceased when traditionally all families gather at the

graves, light candles and lay flowers. Birkut's grave is nowhere to be found. In response to the brutal and inhuman desecration of the grave, Maciek puts an iron cross at the place where his father died. The coarse symbolic of this act is monologically direct - a cross made of iron, polished by Maciek in the shipyard serves as a symbol of Maciek himself but also as a premonition of the times to come. Neither Maciek nor any other participant of the 1970 events was ever going to forget. In its symbolic, the cross functions here as a solemn reminder of the dead but also of the power of the opposition unified under the banner of Catholicism in Poland. At this point, Mrs Hulewicz introduces the historical discourse of Gierek in an attempt to explain the political twists of his decisions which always remained a mystery to common people like her.

Another flashback reported by Mrs Hulewicz (the fourth in sequence thirteen) refers to Maciek's discussions at the shipyard, where he tries to convince fellow workers that they should officially support the strikes of 1976 in Radom. The workers of the Radom factories responded with strikes to food price raises. The disillusioned workers from other parts of the country did not believe in active support of the common cause. At that time, there was resignation among the Polish workers, who did not believe that anything could be changed. This resignation is appropriately displayed by the shipyard workers as well. When approached by Maciek at the shipyard they say that they want to live quietly as long as possible, work hard and feed their families. The atmosphere of defeat is blandly pessimistic, shared by all the members of the Polish society at that time. It is present in the workers' words "we shall always be defeated (by the authorities)" and in the union official's threats directed at Maciek. When Maciek approaches the shipyard union official with a request for formal support for Radom, the latter threatens him with dismissal. The conversation between Maciek and the union

official comprises a whole array of historical details which later, in the diegetic time of 1980, were restated in a different context. Maciek asks for support for Radom and Ursus, stating that this is "the last chance for the unions" (meaning the officially sponsored unions), and, adding that if they do not support the strikes, they can simply terminate their existence ("a potem mozecie sie spokojnie rozwiaczac"). The only reply from the union official is that the shipyard does not need rabble-rousers like Maciek. The following day Maciek is fired.

This part of the flashback is dialogically related to the historical discourse of the dissolution of the official unions in 1981, following the establishment of the Solidarity Union. The official unions proved to be obsolete when the new unions came into being. The scene also provides a dialogical insertion of the historical truth behind the numerous firings or harassments suffered by countless workers and representatives of the intelligentsia in the whole country who jeopardised their livelihood when they voiced any opposition in the workplace. This scene, when juxtaposed with the final scenes of the film, seemed a reminder of past events and marked ensuing steps in the fight for the rights of the people.

The scene of Maciek's firing is a shocking and violent illustration of the methods used by the authorities at that time in Poland. Maciek is stopped by the shipyard official guards at the gate to the plant and refused entry. He is physically stopped by them while the payroll clerk gives him the money and the human resources official hands him his notice. In the general atmosphere of confusion and shock the spectator watches the scene with a vague feeling of déjà vu. Both Maciek's violent reaction and the comment of the human relations clerk ("If I do not give you the notice, I will be fired as well") are familiar to the spectators, who either witnessed similar events or heard about them.

Mrs Hulewicz finishes her account with a statement which was almost the credo of a fighting artist. In simple, naive words Mrs Hulewicz explains "We must win. If not now, then the next time." (To przeciez musi byc wygrana. Jak nie teraz to nastepnym razem.) She also adds that Agnieszka, Maciek's wife (and the protagonist of the film, **Man of Marble**) brought her many Polish history books which told her interesting things. "There must be justice," she says, "the one which is described in the history books, in the constitutions, in the monitors, at least this kind of justice." (Sprawiedliwosc musi byc. Ta, ktora jest tam napisana, w konstytucjach, w monitorach, chociaz taka.)

Wajda introduces the discourse of history in this scene by drawing a direct reference to written reference - the confirmed discourse of the history books. The film becomes a process of gathering evidence on the rights and wrongs of history. Allusion to the history books strengthens Wajda's argument concerning the rights of the striking workers.

An interesting voice which dialogically relates to the enunciative power of the discourse of "the people" is the voice of Agnieszka, a representative of the intelligentsia, introduced in sequence sixteen. This sequence changes the spectator's reaction from slightly distrustful of the monological, authoritarian presentation of the opposition movement in Poland to an enthusiastic acceptance of a living, real protagonist on the screen. Agnieszka's laughter and lack of fear are shared by the spectators at the time of the screening.

Agnieszka's voice is, additionally, a comment on the life of simple people - real workers who, although deprived of Party privileges and perks, live as much as the others do - a life which is a little freer than the career life in Warsaw. The discourse of alternative lives - the life of the workers, and of the opposition in Poland - is described with humour and

warmth. The activists' adventures with the security agents remind the spectator of the escapades of school kids who are not afraid of anything. "It is great pleasure not to be afraid of anything", she says. "And when you are in prison you cannot be put in prison again, can you?". Agnieszka's monologue introduces the discourse of liberation, and her optimism and stamina infuse the spectator with a feeling of hope.

Agnieszka's discourse introduces a sense of humour into the historical depiction of the life of the opposition in Poland. It was difficult for the spectator to accept the deadly seriousness in any approach to the opposition activists in Poland. This aspect of the film was especially challenged by the representative of the opposition movement itself. Mariusz Muskat from Tygodnik Solidarnosc openly questions certain scenes in the film from the point of their historical credibility,

Owszem byly przypadki stosowania przemocy fizycznej (ze strony wladz - JF) ale kazda prawie rewizja konczyla sie kpinami i zartami z policji oraz przechwalkami, jak to udalo sie temu czy owemu wyprowadzic ja w pole.

Szkoda ze zabraklo tego w filmie, bo to bylo bardzo znaczace zjawisko, gratka dla scenariusza."⁷⁷

It is true that there were violent incidents (initiated by the authorities - JF), but almost every search ended with bantering and jokes about the police. Everybody was bragging how he or she fooled them. It is a pity that nothing of this was present in the film, as it was a significant phenomenon at the time which could have been a windfall for a screenplay writer.

The last scenes of the film combine all the elements of the fictional and the factual in an awkward blend. The camera leads the spectator to the hall of negotiations where the

final agreement is being signed by the representative of the government and Walesa. On the way to the hall the spectator sees a triumphant Lech Walesa and Maciek in a fictional shot; an enthusiastic Winkiel and Anna Hulewicz; and Agnieszka and Maciek who finally meet after Agnieszka's stay in prison. The historical soundtrack carries the speech of Jagielski who tells about the painful time of negotiations and announces signing of the final agreement documents.

The spectator reacts to the closure of the fictional strand with uncertainty. The sentimental, melodramatic scene of Maciek's and Agnieszka's meeting in the hall, where the famous Gdansk agreement between the workers and the government was reached, leaves a feeling of a narrative closure which is too simplified and too didactic in its monological power. Maybe, the rhetoric of the revolution required this kind of closure - with an impersonal crowd with their backs turned to the spectator, and the loving couple immersed in their feelings.

In the next sequence, the documentary footage continues in its presentation of Walesa before the shipyard facing a huge crowd of enthusiastic people and, later, showing Walesa on the arms of the workers and the crowds chanting "dziekujemy" (thank you). In the context of this historical footage, the fictional story of Winkiel, unfolding after the historic agreement in Gdansk, introduces a discordant and pessimistic note. In sequence nineteen Winkiel is denounced by Badecki's driver, who wants him to see Badecki in front of the shipyard. Dzidek uncovers Winkiel's microphone with the words "To juz moze pan nosic na wierzchu" (This you can carry openly now). Winkiel will not be easily forgiven by everyone - definitely not by Dzidek or by any of the shipyard workers, as in their eyes he still belongs to the hated regime.

Winkiel then encounters Badecki, who smilingly tells him that the agreement is not important because it was signed under duress. In this statement it looks as if Wajda doubted

the persistence of the workers' stubborn resistance to the government's impositions of power and, also, menacingly foresaw the pitiful end to the victory. "It is only a piece of paper," Badecki said, as if aware of the fact that only sixteen months after the agreement the government would decide to introduce martial law.

With this final scene, Wajda seems to say that the post-talks 'raison d'état' will decide about the outcome of the Gdansk victory. In a way, the later events of martial law confirmed Wajda's suspicions. So, after all, Wajda did not have to suppress his own historiosophy and his artistic temperament in producing **Man of Iron**. Without the final scene of the talk between Winkiel and the security agent, Wajda would have had to consider the course of events in August 1980 as meaningful and just, and would have had to change his own pessimistic outlook on history. The tragic historiosophy was not replaced by an optimistic one, and a sequence of passionate portraits subordinated to one optimistic trait has not produced a convincing synthesis.

To recapitulate, the fictional and the factual clash dialogically in the film in many ways. The predominance of the factual in **Man of Iron** makes the negotiation of meaning more violently polemical than in the case of a more fictionalized approach to history, such as depicted in **Man of Marble**. The images in **Man of Iron** deeply affected the spectator and almost completely eliminated the distance between him or her and the "reality" on the screen. The spectator had to relate dialogically not only to the fictional discourse but also to the factual one as well. Moreover, he or she had to negotiate the relation between the two.

Within the fictional discourse in **Man of Iron** Wajda establishes two voices: "us" vs "them", where the former

refers to the discourse of opposition and the latter to that of **the authorities**, the government, the hated and the distrusted. Already at the outset of the film, in its first sequence, the poem by Czeslaw Milosz⁷⁸ initiates the discourse of the opposition movement in Poland. Thus, in the beginning of the film, Wajda makes the discourse of poetry a linguistic carrier of the historical revolutionary message. "Maybe they will not notice it", comment the radio technicians, referring to the censorship officials. Milosz's text serves as a blatantly subversive message directed to the striking workers, and to the representatives of the opposition in Poland, from the official radio network. This discourse is commented upon by Winkiel, who appears in the first scenes of the film as the one representing the worst aspects of the authorities. As a representative of the infamous RADIOKOMITET (the radio and television media organization in Poland), he constitutes a combination of all their vices. He is cynical in his remarks, slightly threatening, drunk and unwieldy. Immediately, in the opening scenes of the film, Winkiel undermines the monologic voice of authority he is supposed to represent and give voice to with an outward appearance and behaviour which make him repugnant to the spectator.

This presentation of Winkiel produced a dialogical tension in the spectator himself or herself, who reacted with disgust to the image of the drunken Winkiel on the screen. As Surdykowski indicates, Winkiel became "chlopiec do bicia" (whipping boy) through Wajda's unconvincing, caricature presentation of the persona of the journalist. The journalists in Poland reacted violently to such a demeaning portrait of a representative of their profession, arguing that Winkiel's cynicism and alcoholism are only screens which hide acute moral dilemmas much more convoluted and interdependent than a simple fear of incrimination by security agents.⁷⁹ In Surdykowski's words,

Choc marzylaby sie rzecz o prawdziwym obliczu redaktora Winkla i jego duchowych korzeniach, to podobna jak w "Czlowieku z Zelaza" taniutka karykatura dziennikarza funkcjonuje i funkcjonowac bedzie powielana niestety w tysiacach egzemplarzy przez standardowa literature i scenopisarstwo. Spoleczenstwo potrzebuje swoich chlopcow do bicia.⁸⁰

Although one dreams of seeing the real face of the journalist, Winkiel, and his psychological roots, one is aware of the fact that the cheap caricature of the journalist presented in "Man of Iron" functions and will continue to function, copied in the thousands by standard literature and screenplay writing. Society needs its whipping boys.

Winkiel is in the process of producing a radio broadcast in which three young women who are greatly upset by the strike present their opinions. However, while the women are trying to show their support for the strikers, Winkiel tries to make them present the version prepared by himself - a censored text supporting the position of the government. The opposition of discourses signalled in the first few images discussed above is thus further strengthened by the linguistic opposition of the two statements. The women finally present the version Winkiel wants. But when Winkiel leaves the room for a moment, his departure is illustrated by a comical musical motif which sums him up as a person and as a representative of the authority.

Winkiel is notified about a telephone call from his supervisor, through which he is informed that he has to see him immediately. The frightened journalist is taken there in a business car. In the car, Winkiel is presented as a little man belonging to the system but frightened of it at the same time. He is comical in his fear but also pathetic. His total

subjugation to the system is openly revealed.

At the office of the chief Winkiel is accepted as part of the "gang". The court-like scenario of the chief's office, with lackeys waiting at the door, begins to envelop Winkiel as well. Winkiel gets an order to go to Gdansk, the heart of the revolution, and produce a broadcast about the events. He is given money and radio equipment and is ushered to the door with a smile and a remark "everything remains between us". The impression of conspiracy and blackmail is blatantly present in this discourse of authority. It is monologically powerful, and, unquestionably, evokes in the spectator an immediate reaction of contempt and opposition. The conspiracy aspect, especially, was correlated with the personal experience of the audience, the fact that ordinary people were often unaware of the historical decisions regarding their fate. Such decisions were never openly discussed with the society at large but were imposed on them in government decrees. Blackmail meant that the authorities had something on Winkiel and used this information to send him to report on the leaders of the strike - the method broadly applied by the government in recruiting their agents.

The same aspect of the discourse of the authorities as the "bad guy" is later reinforced in the conversation between an official in Gdansk - Badecki, and Winkiel. Badecki, in a brutally honest monologue, states that the interview with Tomczyk which he and Winkiel have seen on TV serves as basic material for a smear campaign which Winkiel is supposed to start with his radio broadcast. Winkiel learns that he is supposed to concoct a radio broadcast which would destroy Maciek Tomczyk. When Winkiel expresses his surprise and revulsion, he is immediately reminded of an event from his past when the very same official helped to conceal the evidence after Winkiel's fatal car accident in 1971. An obvious blackmail on the part of Badecki places Winkiel in a

situation of deadlock, and immediately introduces the discourse of submission and dependence within which Winkiel will operate and which he will try to escape later on.

The discourse of the authority situates the government within the framework of exclusively a "bad guy", unlike in **Man of Marble**, where the position of "them" could still be debated, questioned, and, reluctantly in some cases, accepted.⁸¹ Here, the representative of the authority, Badecki, is presented as a drunkard who shouts that they (the Party) will not share power and that the only way to get rid of the workers is to dispose of Tomczyk. This aspect of Wajda's presentation irritated many spectators in Poland. They doubted especially the excessively literal quality of Wajda's presentation. As Szpakowska states,

Na ogol "Czlowiek z zelaza" odznacza sie nadmierna doslownoscia. (...) szwarccharaktery ociekaja zloscia, potem i wodka. Jesli ktos jest zly, to jest takze brzydki i zle wychowany; jesli stanal po wlasciwej stronie, to rowniez oznacza sie subtelnoscia.⁸²

In general, "Man of Iron" is over-explicit. (...) the bad guys ooze anger, sweat and vodka. If one is bad, one is also ugly and badly brought up; if one is on the right side, then one is also subtle.

In the context of this clear-cut discourse of the "bad guy" Winkiel emerges as a schizophrenic epitomization of oppression - both the victimizer and the victim. The short conversation with Badecki, full of the oppressive monologue of the authorities, presents the victimisation of Winkiel as clear and obvious. But the conversation also signifies a first faint sign of dissent in Winkiel. He reacts with disgust to Badecki's exposition. Finally, he agrees to the order and leaves the office with a bottle of whisky the official

presents him with on his departure. This subjugation of Winkiel is carried out without any reservations on the part of the officials. They know they own Winkiel as they had owned RADIOKOMITET and innumerable journalists who had to succumb to the authorities' power to keep their jobs.

There were some voices in the Polish press which tried to justify such a presentation of Winkiel. Among them Andrzej Bernat tries to understand Winkiel's position,

Naprawde autentycznym problemem, jaki kazda z postaci w filmie ma uniesc, jest uswiadomienie sobie pewnych oczywistych prawd o rzeczywistosci, a tym samym problem okreslenia sie wobec wladzy i wybor okreslonej drogi postepowania. Wiazalo sie to jednoznacznie z przyjeciem badz odrzuceniem podstawowych wartosci moralnych.⁸³

The most authentic problem with which each of the protagonists has to grapple is the realization of certain basic truths about reality and along with that: how to define one's position against the authorities and the choice of one's way of acting. This related unambiguously to one's rejection or acceptance of basic moral norms.

In general, however, Wajda was criticized for the monological presentation of the authorities. Both Badecki and Winkiel, (the latter in the first half of the film in particular), revitalise the negative discourse concerning the behaviour of the people in power in socialist Poland. Every spectator in the cinema related to the images on the screen, which produced a violent feedback based on memories, hidden facts revealed by the underground publications of the opposition movements in Poland, and the underground discourse of social knowledge circulating in the form of gossip, conjectures and personal experiences. As Pawel Jedrzejewski states,

W "Czlowieku z zelaza" jest zimnie i jesiennie. Esbecy maja skorzane marynarki lub nasuniete na oczy kapelusze. Tak zwani decydenci i prominenci sa odrazajacy i do rozpoznania ze stu metrow. Swiat jest jednoznaczny. Zabraklo charakterystycznych - zapisanych we wczesniejszych filmach Wajdy - pozorow normalnosci. ⁸⁴

In "Man of Iron" reality is cold and autumnal. Security agents are dressed in leather jackets or have their hats pulled down over their eyes. The so-called decision makers and VIPs are repulsive and recognizable from one hundred metres away. The world is unequivocal. The appearances of normalcy, so characteristic for earlier Wajda's films, were missing.

The discourse of the authorities as "bad guy" is additionally reinforced by the discourse of widespread alcoholism in the Poland of those times. The spilt alcohol in the bathroom serves as a pathetic symbol which leaves Winkiel vulnerable and subjugated to the two supplementary discourses: authority and alcohol. The wide-spread consent to alcohol in every sphere of life produced a social phenomenon of camaraderie which subjugated all the opposing discourses and made them "feel at home" with the authorities. Alcohol blurred the differences between the good and the bad, the honest and the dishonest. Not surprisingly, the declared abstainers were treated with suspicion and distrust by their colleagues. It is alcohol which leads Winkiel to the bar in the hotel where he is trying to get some despite the ban imposed by the striking workers. The discourse of striking workers functions here as an alternative monological power clashing with the discourse of alcoholic permissiveness in Poland.

The underlying discourse of violence and of the frustration of authorities no longer able to use such violence

strengthens the monological depiction of "them" as the "bad guy" only. Sequences fifteen and seventeen illustrate this undercurrent in a perfect way.

In sequence fifteen Winkiel, who is beginning his convoluted journey of revolt against the authorities, faces his boss, who has come to Gdansk personally to supervise the smear campaign against Maciek Winkiel was supposed to start. This sequence immediately introduces the atmosphere of idolatrous respect and paternal leniency. The boss gives Winkiel a glass of vodka to calm his craving for alcohol and, in the next move, demands the journalistic materials. The conversation between Winkiel and the boss introduces the discourse of power and reminds one of the existence of the discourse of fear which had already been present in **Man of Marble**. The boss demands an answer to the question whether Winkiel has had any contact with the striking workers in the shipyard. When Winkiel tries to dodge the question the boss answers with a threat - Winkiel will be beaten some day by somebody if he does not answer correctly. In language which reminds the Polish spectator of the rude and absolute power of the Party apparatus in ordering people around, the boss tells Winkiel that his first material will be on the air the following day. When Winkiel tries to interrupt with an objection that the material is not finished yet and that he needs some time for editing, the boss intervenes rudely that Winkiel is not the person who will edit the material. Here, the Polish spectator was reminded about the years of manipulation of information, its transformation and distortion by the media.

The boss reminds Winkiel that the Party secretary is mostly interested in the people from the "second line", and when Winkiel, surprised, asks him what he means by that, the answer the boss gives is an example of a hated and ridiculed "newspeak". He answers with the words "There are hidden antisocialist elements which feed on the healthy response of

the working class. These elements act with a definite purpose in mind." (Na zdrowym odruchu klasy robotniczej zerują ukryte elementy antysocjalistyczne, które działają w ściśle określonym celu). This ambiguous but ridiculous statement, a statement which was so characteristic of the Party officials and the journalists representing the official media at that time, generated laughter in the audience but also summed up the policy of divide and rule which up to 1980 helped the authorities to dissipate the imminent danger of numerous uprisings and strike actions in the country.

Laughter as a dialogical reaction to oppression seems the only weapon that the audience could use in its appropriation of these images on the screen. It originated from a rich context of historical resistance which forced Poles to employ any weapon they could, whether irony, a political joke or the outright laughter of ordinary people, to fight violence.

The undercurrent discourse of violence permeating sequence fifteen as a mood only is depicted with full force in sequence seventeen. On his way out of the restaurant in which he had met his boss Winkiel passes the gym at the police headquarters where Wirski, whom he had encountered earlier in the hotel, notices him and demands material on Maciek. Winkiel tries to explain his delay and squirms under Wirski's eye like a worm. Wirski, in a sports outfit, looks with contempt at Winkiel who tries to find an escape in the habit of smoking. When Wirski forbids him to light a cigarette, Winkiel suddenly takes a police truncheon from the officer and begins to hit the wooden mannequins on which the police train the power and the precision of their beatings. At first slowly, later ferociously, Winkiel begins to hit the mannequins as if trying to unload his hatred of the system and of his subjugation to the opportunism of the oppressors.

Wirski watches him carefully and takes the truncheon back. In a physically violent encounter Winkiel blurts out

that the existence of security files does not give the security officials the right to construct a screenplay with which they would jeopardize the fate of the activists. He also adds that thanks to the security he was able to get in touch with fantastic people from the shipyard and he no longer will work for the regime. At this moment Wirski becomes physically offensive. He grabs Winkiel by the collar and reminds him of his unfortunate accident several years ago. He tells him that a similar file exists on him, and, as the spectator infers from the way his words are phrased, on everybody in a totalitarian society. This physically explicit, powerful encounter expresses the frustration and helplessness of both opponents. The mutual hatred cannot be expressed in the elemental way, by physical struggle but, instead, has to give way to political means - the power of the words which do not really express the feelings of everyday people. Winkiel is let go. Like a schoolboy Winkiel runs downstairs with an outcry "Get off me! At last I will be left in peace!" (Odladujcie sie, mam nareszcie swiety spokoj.)⁸⁵

There is no place left for the audience to relate dialogically to the images on the screen in this scene. The "good" guy in this scene (Winkiel), and the "bad" guy (Wirski), are openly hostile, the feelings of revulsion and hatred exposed on their faces. Consequently, the audience breathes with relief when the smiling Winkiel enters the shipyard and calls the Warsaw Radiokomitte offices from the strike headquarters. Winkiel wants to resign, he tells the secretary of his chief.

This easy resolution of the conflict - in the form of escape on the part of Winkiel - enraged many spectators. Klotowski claims, for instance, that "instead of revealing the symbolic images residing in popular subconscious, Wajda decided to play on easy feelings."⁸⁶ (zamiast wydobyć na jaw symboliczne obrazy drzemiacie w zbiorowej podswiadomosci, uchylił sie od roli - grając na łatwych uczuciach). However,

as Kłopotowski argues,

Widzowie poszli za Wajdą, ponieważ jego film daje upust gromadzonej przez lata nienawisci i nadziei. "Człowiek z żelaza" niszczy mit, że władza chce dla nas dobrze. Po raz pierwszy otwarcie pokazuje złą wolę i egoizm, o które społeczeństwo podejrzewało aparat partyjno-panstwowy od kilkadziesiąt lat.⁸⁷

The spectators went along with Wajda because the film gives vent to feelings of hatred and hope pent up over the years. "Man of Iron" destroys the myth that the authorities only wanted the good of the people. For the first time it shows the ill will and egoism of the authorities, of whose existence the society had suspected the party and government agencies for decades.

In this sense, the spectator forgave Wajda the monological presentation of the authority and accepted the monochromatic image as a political necessity.

The historical discourse which is most surprisingly overt in **Man of Iron**, after years of silence in the films and mass media in Poland, is the presence of **Catholic religion**. Wajda captured in this film the significant part the Catholic religion played in supporting the opposition movements and the Gdansk strike. By inclusion of documentary footage of the crowds engrossed in prayers, and the images of religious icons on the shipyard fence, Wajda stressed the importance of Catholicism in Poland but also signified its ritualistic value. The significance of the Catholic religion, when the opposition grew in size, meant not only an impressive spectacle but also a notable addition to the opposition's power which undermined the authority of the government and constituted a parallel, powerful resistance current.

What Wajda showed was that he considers Catholicism not only as an impressive show with praying crowds and huge masses - although this aspect of religion seems especially tempting for a director who was trained as a painter - but also as a ritual in which the bad forces of the Government were to be eliminated and the good forces in the form of the Catholic religion were to be revived. However, Wajda did not pay attention to other important aspects of religion in the film - its importance in the active support of the Polish opposition and the reasons for this opposition seeking support in religion. What was the role played by religion? - did the people in the shipyard pray for help or for moral support against the powerful fear which dominated their activities? Or, rather, did the prayer serve as a pretext for a demonstration and as another kind of global behaviour standing in contrast to the officially accepted 1st May demonstrations or other demonstrations supporting the totalitarian system of Socialism? The latter were imposed on the general public, and refusal to take part in them brought about open or hidden sanctions.

Catholicism in Poland played an extremely important part in the formation of the political "other". The prayers had a "sociotechnical" impact of integration, compensation and autotherapeutics. But also, thanks to its deeply ingrained importance at all levels of authority or education, culturally inscribed in all the strata of society, Catholicism in Poland served as a natural barrier against the oppressiveness of the Party apparatus and Party ideology. Paradoxically, the members of the Party were usually deep believers themselves. This was the reason, probably, why the rage connected with the death of the priest Popieluszko was shared by literally everybody, as the security officials violated not only the right of a human being to remain alive, but also widely shared beliefs concerning the inviolability of the priest. Police intervention in a church ceremony would always be understood

as blasphemy, so numerous representatives of the authorities shuddered at the thought of imposing their force there. However, as history showed later, and Agnieszka Holland's film **To Kill a Priest** - based on the actual events of the murder of the priest mentioned above - illustrated, the authority of religion in Poland at that time and after the introduction of martial law was so great that it filled the oppressor with religious awe but also religious zeal in killing.

These questions are not rhetorical at all as without answering them properly the shipyard workers' Catholicism, so often exposed in the film, seems bizarre in its spectacular value. Still, it formed a considerable part of the documentary footage and had to be included in the film as a rare open depiction of the real power of the Catholic religion in the support of opposition movements. It also activated a magical concept of religion not only as a ritual but also as a supernatural force which induces the victory of the workers. This kind of interpretation is almost forced upon the spectator by Wajda's incorporation of the footage of the mass from a bird's-eye view. The spectator sees the praying masses from above - the sea of people and the murmur of their voices impose an interpretation of God-like omnipotence thanks to which the strikers won. It seems that Wajda wanted to note, to engrave in the spectator's subconsciousness, the existence of religion in the workers' lives and mark its everpresence in the political and social strata of the Polish society.

On the other hand, Wajda does not offer any power of enunciation to the church itself, which played an extremely important role not only in supporting Polish opposition movements but also in placating the militant Solidarity in its first phase. As Andrews comments on this situation,

Solidarity, slowly organizing itself from the plant level upward, had a long way to go. At the top, differences arose as to what Solidarity should be and do. On one

hand, Walesa followed a moderate policy of seeking to resolve problems through negotiations, an approach compatible with the Church's position. On the other hand, many young regional leaders and some KSS/KOR members and their associates, acting as union advisers at various levels, concluded that only a tough confrontation would compel the Government to negotiate a reasonable settlement. (...) Although many Solidarity members harboured genuine feelings of sympathy and gratitude toward intellectuals for their past support, they did not want to feel obligated to them or, for that matter, to the Church for their every decision.⁸⁸

In this aspect, the role of religion in the fictional scenario seems to be downplayed. The Catholic religion does not appear as a strong political voice, able to "work according to a long-term program of gradual change"⁸⁹, but, rather, as a supernatural power having no contact with the actual politicians, the real "glossia" in the political reality of that time.

The introduction of religion in the film was noted by Western critics. For instance, Vincent Canby wrote that "the most interesting thing about **Man of Iron** is the way it dramatizes the immense political importance of Polish Roman Catholicism at this time."⁹⁰ Also Polish critics, Tadeusz Szyma⁹¹ for instance, noted the presence of religion in Wajda's film. In his opinion, the director's moderation in presentation of the theme causes the symbolic of the cross to function with extreme power.

The multiplicity of historical glossia with which Wajda attacks the spectator in his film and which acts as a reinforcement of his monological position sometimes produces an unsettling effect of a mosaic of political allusions and

side remarks. It can be argued that this unsettling effect is caused by the disparity between the complicated mode of presentation and the actual simplicity of the message. This kind of impression is created especially in the eleventh sequence when Winkiel is suddenly surrounded by representatives of the Gdansk Workers' Union who want him to sign a statement indicating their solidarity with the striking workers and confirming their opposition to the regime. Wajda based this scene on a real event, which marked an important moment of understanding and support for the working class on behalf of the intelligentsia. On the other hand, Wajda wants to show in this scene how Winkiel, a representative of a huge group of opportunist journalists who could not decide whether the shipyard strike was the "real thing" or whether it was just another clash with the totalitarian system, finally gives in to these enthusiasts, and out of shame and slowly rising optimism, signs the statement. The camera lingers on Winkiel for a long time. First, Winkiel hopes that it is only a matter of an innocent signature on a piece of paper. Thousands of declarations were to be signed during a long and convoluted Polish history, usually supporting the regime. Winkiel did not mind that. However, when he realised that the declaration stated openly that so far the main role of the journalists in socialist Poland had been to confuse the reading public and to show a distorted picture of the realities of life, he hesitated and did not know how to react. "It is very ambiguous," reacts Winkiel to one of the most non-ambiguous messages in the journalistic discourse of the previous 35 years. Finally, Winkiel signs the paper with a look of resignation on his face. The scene functions as a reminder that such an event took place. It produces an impression, however, that Wajda wanted to present all the historical facts pertinent to the times the film was about, but he failed to neatly incorporate them in the fictional discourse of the film.

In **Man of Iron** history imposes its monological power in the form of the immediacy (simultaneity) of historical events which, with their raw factuality, outshine their fictional interpretation. History per se dialogically intervenes into the act of spectatorship, as the film viewing coincides with the viewer's fresh perception of the changes in Poland in August 1980. After years of political "newspeak" in the media, the spectator yearned for a truthful presentation of the events of August 1980.

Raw truth, in the form of scenes from documentary films and in the form of the direct monologues and dialogues of the protagonists, overwhelmed the spectator. Finally, the spectator heard what he had wanted to hear about the political and social life in Poland for thirty five years since the implementation of Socialism in 1945. No censorship intervention was apparent, the film revealed a direct address to the public, which completely identified with the message, though not necessarily with some aspects of the presentation coming from the screen.

The fictional lives of the protagonists and the artistic intervention of the director were useful only in as much as they introduced the spectator into the process of truth revelation. Through the faces of the main protagonists the spectators were able to enter the world of history in the making, and dialogically relate to the presented facts with whatever they knew, imagined or had heard about. Wajda's artistic confabulation served as an entry to the world of the historical truth, which was, in fact, the truth of montage and artistic presentation. The monological, black and white version of the historical truth appealed to the spectator to such an extent that he or she enthusiastically accepted the film despite its artistic sketchiness, inadequate narrative line and character development.⁹² The spectator desired a monological truth about the events so much that he or she approved of the dispersed, uncertain, and artistically uneven

presentation by Wajda as if it were the last word.

The Historical Discourse in Danton

Danton, as a historical film relating the time of the French Revolution in the eighteenth century, depicts a time impossible for a spectator in the eighties of the twentieth century to experience. However, the way Wajda presents history relates his depiction to contemporary time, on the one hand, and to the understanding of historical sources and populist legends, on the other. In this sense, the dialogical interaction between the past and the present functions as a constant clash between the presented and the imagined, the visual and the referred to.

The representation of revolution shows its specific, grim face already in the beginning of the film. In the first sequence, in the scene at the gates in Paris in spring 1794, the mood of the film is established. The time of the II Republic is depicted as a time of brutal searches for aristocratic fugitives and their families. Every passing cart is carefully searched for people. The carts are prodded by harsh and dishevelled citizens of the republic. The spectator's insertion into the discourse of the historical presentation is thus immediately crude and produces a reaction of distaste. Sombre, sad and ugly colours and jarring music add to this feeling.

In one of the carts there is Danton with his mistress, unkempt and sad. His eyes look at the dreary Paris and linger on the guillotine which looms ominously in the square. The image of the guillotine makes the spectator reflect on the pervasive interpretation of the French revolution as the time of terror and executions when death was an ordinary occurrence. The feeling of a grim imposition of the historical

power of the revolution is reiterated in the next scene when a little boy is forced to learn by heart the dictates of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen. The discourse of the historical past reminds the spectator of the political discourse of every totalitarian society, whether French at the time of the Revolution or Polish at the time of the screening, where the regime was trying to educate whole generations of young people to change their mentality and their understanding of reality and history. The time of Stalinism with its ideological impositions, and the time of martial law in Poland when the autonomous powers of university rectors and academic bodies were reduced and the Party tightened its supervision over academic research institutions, immediately came to the Polish spectator's mind. As Ray Comiskey notes in his film review, *Danton* can be seen as "a passionate statement about the present based on events in the past."⁹³

Sequence 3, as well as the ensuing ones, serves as an example of such an interpretation. The beginning scene of sequence 3, when angry citizens of the Republic wait in the rain to get bread, and spies walk around them to hear what they say, dialogically introduces the discourse of constant, persisting shortages in the food distribution in Poland in the sixties and seventies. Due to the lack of proper distribution organization most Poles spent their time in long queues complaining constantly about the government. The scene of the abduction of a young girl by the police after she has commented on the beauty of the passing prisoner in the same sequence monologically introduces the discourse of terror during the first months of the introduction of martial law, so well known to the Polish spectator. Ordinary citizens could be interrogated on any charge then and kept at the police station without any legal reason for forty eight hours.

In sequence 4, on the other hand, the scene in which Robespierre reads Desmoulins's gazette, followed by the scene

in which Desmoulins's printing plant is demolished, transports the Polish spectator into the early months of martial law when the police and the representatives of the Polish army could enter an apartment of a citizen under suspicion, carry out a brutal search, and, on finding printing materials or machines, could demolish the latter and turn the whole apartment upside down.

Robespierre's tense demeanour and brutal decisions position him on a par with Jaruzelski who, at the time of martial law, brought pressure on writers to conform to the standard set for loyalty to the regime and reinstated effective Party control over the intelligentsia. The brutal demolition of the plant, with smashing of machines and window panes, is immediately followed by a scene presenting Heron, the executor of Robespierre's order, leaving the plant with the paper in his hands. The printed material falling from his full hands is obediently picked up by young boys attracted by the turmoil in the plant. Thus, the brutality of the police of the revolution is placed within an ironical framework of newly "educated" young citizens of the Republic, who see how the law of the Republic is implemented, and know that it has to be respected and obeyed.

The scene of the fifth sequence, when Robespierre is taken care of by the barbers, presents Robespierre as a pompous, stiff-necked individual, concerned about his outward appearance who puts on his costume as an armour against the outside world. This "inhuman" presentation of Robespierre does not give credit to the great historical person, who, according to professor dr Jan Baszkiewicz, the historical consultant of the film **Danton**, was an advocate of "a utopian, sans-culotte program of an egalitarian society who wanted to stabilize the revolution by introducing and strengthening its basic reforms in the years 1789-93."⁹⁴

In general, Robespierre is presented as a martinet advocate of the revolution obsessed with the ideas of

egalitarianism and populist notions. This kind of presentation dialogically interacts with the popular presentation of the general Jaruzelski in the Polish mass media. A stiff-necked, very private, never smiling general, was obsessively concerned about *raison-d'état* and about the implementation of the repressive regulations of martial law. Similarly to Robespierre, Jaruzelski also wore "a stiff corset" under his general's uniform. He never changed his outward appearance during martial law and long after it. His image, similar to the image of Robespierre, is that of a solemn and formal politician, consistently following the outlines of his own policy. Surprisingly, Robespierre shows some human attributes when he does not agree with his confederates about the accusations against Danton. Similarly, Jaruzelski admitted in many interviews after the termination of the martial law that he considered the introduction of the latter as his own, private tragedy. Both Robespierre and Jaruzelski seemed to consider the imposition of terror as a necessary, painful condition for the service of the state.

Despite Wajda's continuous denials that the film **Danton** does not refer to the Polish context⁹⁵, such an interpretation was repeatedly presented in both the Polish and the French press after the film's screening. For instance, Ireneusz Leczek in the film review in Trybuna Robotnicza states,

Ci, którzy uruchamiaja potezna machine spolecznego ruchu, padaja jej ofiara wypierani przez innych. Intencje prywatne miesza sie ze spolecznymi. Naiwni dzialacze funkcjonuja obok wytrawnych graczy politycznych, chcacych wladzy i pieniedzy. Bardzo to wszystko jest bliskie niedawnych spraw polskich i dlatego uwazam, ze **Danton** jest o wiele bardziej polski niz sie moze wydawac.⁹⁶

Those who start the huge machinery of a social movement become its victims, thrust out by others. Private intentions mix with the social ones. Naive activists operate alongside experienced political players yearning for power and money. All this is very close to recent Polish affairs. Consequently, my opinion is that **Danton** is much more Polish than it may seem.

Accordingly, the Polish spectator, the author of this thesis included, persistently saw numerous Polish references in the film. Not only was the general interpretation of Robespierre's and Danton's motives closely related to the Polish historical experience of the conflict between Jaruzelski and Walesa, respectively, but also particular scenes in the film recalled Polish political culture. For instance, sequence six, which presents a meeting between Danton and his supporters in the Parisian street, dialogically relates to the historical phenomenon of conspiracy - the constant subversive political activity against the oppressor in the course of Polish history. Over one hundred years of partition in Poland and the domination of the Soviet Union after the Second World War produced determined insurgents endlessly debating possible political overthrows and revolutions. Similar to the French Revolution, this subversive political activity had to be secret, so the scenes of whispering insurgents were strangely familiar.

Also, sequence number seven, which depicts the meeting of the Convention, conjures the idea of the Polish Sejm and its notorious deliberations (sejmikowanie), during which every voivode (the principal of the province) could frustrate the directives of the government. The Sejm's debates continued endlessly in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, leading to chaos in the country and lack of solutions of many of its problems. This political culture of constant deliberations, conspiracy and political fighting was so inscribed in the

Polish mentality that even the new union Solidarity could not withstand this tradition. Within the union itself there appeared various factions and oppositions just after its commencement.

The policy of introducing new decrees in order to silence the political opponent (in sequence nineteen the new decree introduced by The Committee for Public Safety and implemented during Danton's trial successfully silences Danton), as well as the methods of 'setting up' the opponent (Robespierre and his advocates fabricate false accusations against Danton and force Legendre to sign the false deposition about a plot planned by Desmoulins's wife and Danton's friends) are well known to the Polish spectator, used to the policies of conspiracy and the unfair and traitorous methods used by the authorities. The Polish public saw the film as a distinct metaphor of their current situation, where ideological and political so-called 'reasons of state' are at variance with human needs, happiness and personal freedom.

That the temptation to see **Danton** in terms of Solidarity was unavoidable was corroborated by many critics. Danton, the popular spokesman, loudly demanding a spotlight for his own protection, echoes the very public perils of Lech Walesa, while the inflexible authoritarian, Robespierre, who seems bound to suppress him, looks at first glance to be a perfect fit for Jaruzelski. Some critics⁹⁷ read whole areas of possible discourses into Wajda's film when they wonder if the director intends **Danton** as a metaphor for recent Polish events, with Danton as a surrogate Walesa and Robespierre as a stand-in for the military government or even the Soviet regime. Interviewed by filmmaker Marcel Ophuls in **American Film**, Wajda says "Poland was indeed in a revolutionary situation last year", and **Danton** attempts to describe "the atmosphere of revolution". David Sterritt goes even as far as to state that,

It's possible that **Danton** has more biting political meanings and intentions than Wajda cares to let on, fearing for his status in the Polish artistic community (his next project is stage production in Krakow) or his personal well-being. "There are moments in the history of our country when we can afford to make a political film that one is not ashamed to put one's signature to," he told Ophuls, adding that "right now, this is not the case in Poland."⁹⁸

However, Philip Strick noted that the reference to the Polish context also signifies the film's universality,

such parallels as it may contain with events of the 1980s simply confirm the validity of the piece as a philosophical debate relating to the fortuitous (if cyclical) repetitions of history, applicable as much to current French politics (and duly applied, with some uproar, to the 1982 Socialist Party conference at Valence) as to the problems of Poland or anywhere else.⁹⁹

Danton was icily received in France. Most of the controversy surrounding Wajda's **Danton** just before and after its release in Paris, was of a clearly political nature. President François Mitterand, after a special screening at the Cinémathèque Française, is reputed to have walked out as soon as the lights came on, hurrying through a crowd of journalists in order not to have to answer any questions and reveal his displeasure. The reason was Wajda's identification with Danton rather than Robespierre; in the eyes of the French public this was an extremely pro-Danton film, and a very anti-Robespierre one. Wajda seemed to be very lenient toward Danton's obvious corruption, his venality, his rabble-rousing, and very contemptuous of Robespierre's thirst for virtue. As Marcel

Ophuls asks in an interview with Wajda,

Admittedly, both (heroes of the French Revolution) had a great deal of blood on their hands. But should the virtuous, the incorruptible side of Robespierre be considered as nothing more than an infirmity, a psychoanalytic quirk, to be held up to ridicule?¹⁰⁰

In the opinion of the French critic, the fact that Wajda comes from a country which lived through countless revolutions should make him more inclined to a thoughtful and penetrating analysis of all the aspects, of the pros and cons of each of the leaders. Alas, as Ophuls mentions, there is no predisposition in Wajda to do that. Moreover, the expectations of what Wajda would do to present an interesting picture of Revolution were very high. Ophuls himself admits that

For some reason, most of us expect artists and intellectuals from Eastern Europe, who have made their reputations behind what used to be known as the iron curtain, to remain sympathetic to the ideals of revolution, no matter how disenchanted and disillusioned they might have become with revolutions in their own time and their own countries.¹⁰¹

Ophuls, whose opinions match those of the representatives of French Socialism, desired a different portrayal of the revolution and its leaders. His disillusionment was also the disillusionment of the French spectators of various political and cultural orientations who expected a more enthusiastic depiction of the revolution from the director, a former Resistance fighter.¹⁰² The French spectator inscribed into his or her polemic with the film a similarity between the Polish and French histories and a similar passion for the political and the emotional in history. Distressed by the

incompatibility in the interpretations of these discourses the French spectator asks,

Why should any French Socialist today still expect a Polish filmmaker to show any sympathy or even any understanding for the mentality of those leaders of the French Revolution whom he holds, rightly or wrongly, to have been responsible for the ravages of the guillotine? (...) If after thirty years of Stalinist oppression, **Nomenklatura** corruption, broken promises and **Pravda** "truths," a man like Wajda decides to make Robespierre and Saint-Just into what some of us might consider to be caricatures, that's his privilege.¹⁰³

Ophuls's opinion reflects the polemical opposition between the intentions of the film director and the spectator's response. The spectator may understand the artistic message but not every spectator could approve of its ideological content. Thus, in the actual reception of the film, the clash between various aspects of reception produced a spectatorial tension impossible to pacify, both within the spectator polemically trying to unite the points of view of the two protagonists, and between the spectators representing disparate points of view.

As Ophuls sees it, Wajda infuses his Robespierre with all the negative aspects of the Revolution, he charges him with "all the crimes of Stalinism"¹⁰⁴. While attacking his puritanism and ideological hypocrisy, the French spectator thinks, Wajda attacks the very idea of the revolution itself which was embodied by Robespierre.

His two political opponents are also dialogically displayed from another angle. There is an opposition between sexuality and a passion for ideas, explicitly displayed in the whole film, starting from the presentation of the naked boy in the bathtub, through explicit references to Danton's virility

and promiscuity up to an imperturbable Robespierre in front of women and other of life's pleasures. Ophuls sees this opposition between sex and politics, feelings and intellect, as Wajda's allegiance to Polish Romanticism, the Romanticism which is understood by the French with a forbearing smile covering lack of sympathy for passionate Poles for whom feelings were always the guiding principle in their political endeavour.

The polemical construction of the film meaning violently clashed with the French spectator for other reasons as well. He or she questioned not only the semantic construction of the main protagonists but also the presentation of the facts of revolution itself. Robespierre, a clever and knowledgeable politician, was degraded and humiliated in the film, the French critics stated.

At this moment I would like to explain that because original French reviews on **Danton** were unattainable to me I had to rely heavily on the translations of these reviews provided by the Polish Press Agency and used extensively by the Polish film critics in their reviews of the film. One of such critics was Marek Ostrowski who relates in his correspondence from Paris, that Pierre Enkell in Les Nouvelles Littéraires, claims that the film seriously devalued Robespierre and cleared Danton and Desmoulins, though,

A tymczasem, Danton sam pomagal w ustanowieniu terroru, a jako minister w czasie masakry wrzesniowej wiezniow rojalistycznych spokojnie do niej dopuscil. Zas Desmoulins, przedstawiony tylko jako dziennikarz, kilka dni wczesniej sprawil, ze wskutek jego bezlitosnej kampanii poszedl na gilotyne Herbert i 18 innych. Pokazywac obu jako duchy pacyfistyczne, liberalne, pragnace szerzyc demokracje, to bardziej akt polityczny niz przysluga oddana prawdzie historycznej.¹⁰⁵

Danton himself helped in establishing the terror. Also, as a minister, he condoned the September massacre of Royalist prisoners. On the other hand, Desmoulins, depicted as only a journalist, a few days earlier had brought about the guillotining of Herbert and 18 other people through his own ruthless campaigning. To show both of them as pacifist, liberal souls, desiring to propagate democracy, is more of a political act than a service rendered to the political truth.

Also, in Ostrowski's relation, Louis Mermaz, the leading activist of the Socialist Party in France, the Chairman of the National Assembly, defends Robespierre,

Nie ulega watpliwosci, ze w tym okresie, od marca 1793r. do lipca 1794r. Rewolucja osiagnela punkt kulminacyjny... Sprzecznosci miedzy Dantonem i Robespierrem mialy na pewno gleboki aspekt psychologiczny i ludzki, ale byly to rowniez dwie koncepcje przyszlosci rewolucji, ktore sie starly. Danton chcial zawrzec kompromis z "silami burzuzazji". Robespierre byl czlowiekiem, ktory chcial zakotwiczyc rewolucje w masach ludowych. Pokazal to zreszta wiosna i latem 1794 roku, doprowadzajac do przyjecia serii ustaw ekonomicznych i agrarnych, ktore mialy stworzyc baze spoleczna dla zwyciezajacych klas.¹⁰⁶

Undoubtedly, in the period from March 1793 to July 1794, the Revolution reached the culminating point. The discrepancies between Danton and Robespierre had certainly a deep, human and psychological aspect, but these were also two different notions of the future of the revolution, which clashed with each other. Danton wanted to enter into a compromise with the "bourgeois forces". Robespierre, on the other hand, wanted to anchor

the revolution in the masses. He showed his intentions in the spring and summer of 1794, when he brought about the acceptance of a series of economic and agrarian statutes which would create a social basis for the victorious classes.

Other Polish film reviewers agreed with the opinions of the French critics in this matter. For instance, Jan Sajdak states,

Opinia francuska slusnie zarzuca, ze Danton byl prominentem o niezbyt czystych rekach, ze lubil sie bogacic w kazdy mozliwy sposob. Sartre powiedzial wprost - "Kochalismy Dantona jako trybuna - nie mogliśmy jednak szanowac go jako czlowieka." Zupelnie innym typem byl Robespierre. Idealista o czystych rekach powszechnie zwany "Nieprzekupnym". Rewolucja i Republika byly jego jedynym i ukochanym dzieckiem, ktoremu poswiecil cale zycie. To on popiera plan edukacji narodowej - powszechny obowiazek bezplatnej oswiaty. Uwazajac wojne za najlepszy srodek obrony, zdaje sobie sprawe z tego, ze wojna umozliwi zmiazdzenie kontrrewolucji. Terror uwazal Robespierre za zlo konieczne, glosil, ze terror moze byc narzedziem tylko w rekach ludzi naprawde nieskazitelnych. I nie przypadkiem to jego dazenie do oczyszczenia Komitetu Ocalenia Publicznego i Bezpieczenstwa z osob skazonych przyczynilo sie bezposrednio do jego smierci. Zginął prawdziwy patriota, demokrata i rewolucjonista. Stal sie niesmiertelnym i najnowsze badania poczynszy od Jaurès'a i Mathieza stawiaja go na piedestale.¹⁰⁷

The French public opinion rightly states that Danton was a prominent figure with none too clear hands and that he liked to make money in every possible way. Satre said

openly - "We loved Danton as a tribune but we could not respect him as a man." Robespierre was a completely different man. He was an idealist with clean hands, commonly called "incorruptible." The Revolution and the Republic were his beloved only child, to whom he devoted his whole life. He it is who supports the plan of national education - the common obligation to provide a free education. As he considers war the best defense, he knows that war will enable him to crush counterrevolution. Robespierre considered terror as a necessary evil and he stated that terror can only be a tool in the hands of truly honourable people. It was no accident that his desire to clear The Committee for Public Salvation and Safety from corruption immediately caused his death. A real patriot, democrat and revolutionary died. He became immortal and the newest research of Jaurès and Mathiez puts him on a pedestal.

Ostrowski, however, indicates that the French reviewers criticized the way Danton was presented in the film,

Francuscy recenzenci podkreślali po pierwszym pokazie filmu (we Francji), że Andrzej Wajda stworzył film 'całkowicie sprzeczny z francuską tradycją republikańską', przedstawił bowiem w jak najgorszym świetle jakobinów, uważanych za 'duchowych ojców' dzisiejszej Partii Socjalistycznej, sprawującej rządu we Francji.¹⁰⁸

After the film's first screening in France the French reviewers underlined that Andrzej Wajda had produced a film 'completely incompatible with the French Republican tradition', because he presented the Jacobins, considered the spiritual fathers of the contemporary Socialist Party (in power at present), in a very bad light.

The Left resented the distorted picture of the 'Great Revolution.' The left-wing press found Wajda's interpretation of the French Revolution verging on caricature and were especially offended by the characterization of Robespierre. The right-wing critics, on the other hand, praised the film's demonstration of the fact that demagogy and totalitarianism can lurk behind the façade of revolutionary ideals.

This specific representation of the two leaders of the revolution leads, in consequence, to a faulty presentation of history. Two final critical remarks, quoted by Ostrowski in his review of Danton are worth presenting in the discussion of the historical discourse in the film. Louis Mermaz contends,

Film jest mylacy: ostatecznie to nic strasznego dla tych, którzy mają minimum wiedzy. Jednak jest ryzyko, że będzie zupełnie niezrozumiały dla tych, którzy nie mogli skorzystać z nauczania historii.¹⁰⁹

The film is misleading: in the last analysis, there is nothing wrong in this for those who have a modicum of knowledge. However, there is a risk that it will be completely incomprehensible to those spectators who did not learn history.

Laurent Dispot from Le Matin is more critical in his remarks,

Okres, którego dotyczy film, jest dobrze znany uczniom szkolnym. Dostaliby pale z wykrzyknikiem, gdyby mówili o nim jak Wajda, bez najmniejszego odniesienia do hebertystów i dechrystianizacji, nie wspominając o tym, że trwała wojna, że Francja została zaatakowana, że ta wojna była przyczyną i motorem wszystkiego, każdego zdania protagonistów, każdej decyzji, działania

bohaterow.¹¹⁰

The historical period the film deals with is very well known to students. They would fail their history lesson miserably if they reproduced Wajda's version, without any reference to Herbertists or dechristianization; without mentioning the fact, that France had been attacked and that the war had been the cause and the motor of everything - of the protagonists' every statement, every decision and every activity.

Thus, history in **Danton** functions differently for different spectators. It serves as a reference point for the Polish spectator, as the meaning of the film is dialogically related to the spectator's understanding of Polish history. The French spectator, on the other hand, relates the film to his or her knowledge of the French Revolution, the legendary personae of Danton and Robespierre, and the reality of contemporary France.

Danton is a polyphonous film utterance in its dialogical contest with the spectator and with the play on which it is based. The images of the French Revolution not only actively engage with the images of political activities and historical events within the Polish context but also with the depiction of the French Revolution in **Danton**, which implies the existence of various voices cohabiting within this utterance: the voice of the Polish director, who presents a specific, Slavic interpretation of the Revolution, the voices of the Polish spectators who inscribe their own, Polish interpretation into the film, and the voices of French spectators who introduce their own specific interpretation of the historical events in France.

Of the three films presented in the thesis, it is **Danton** which reveals the internal polemical understanding of

discourse to the greatest degree. The images in this film are like the words with a sideward glance, words which "make digs at others". In this situation, the spectator becomes an interlocutor "through his or her willing acceptance of a proffered position in relation to the speaking 'I'". Depending on the positioning of the spectator, different meanings emerge in the final analysis of the film.

The historical is dialogically inscribed in **Danton** in the sense of a trigger which stimulates different responses in the spectator. The film functions within the sphere of a social intercourse, where understanding of the text becomes a pragmatic process which involves the participants of the communication exchange. This film especially gives credit to Volosinov's statement that "meaning belongs to a word in its position between speakers" and the text itself - the film - is a link in a very thoroughly organized chain of communication.

NOTES

1. The term "diegesis" is understood in Metz's interpretation as "the film's 'represented' instance - that is to say, the sum of a film's denotation: the narration itself, but also the fictional space and time dimensions implied in and by the narrative, and consequently the characters, the landscapes, the events, and other narrative elements, in so far as they are considered in their denoted aspect." (Christian Metz. Film Language. A Semiotics of the Cinema. Translated by Michael Taylor. New York: Oxford University Press, 1974.)
2. Kristeva, Julia. Desire in Language. Trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, Leon S. Roudiez. Ed. Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia UP, 1980, 68.
3. Kristeva, 65.
4. McClellan, William. "The dialogic Other: Bakhtin's Theory of Rhetoric", Social Discourse, vol. III, nos 1&2, spring-summer 1990, 245.
5. Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination. Four Essays. Michael Holquist & Carol Emerson. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981, 19.
6. Ibid.
7. Hohendahl, P.U. "Introduction to the Reception Aesthetics", New German Critique, No 10, Winter 1977, 29-65.
8. Jauss, H.R. Literaturgeschichte als Provokation der Literaturwissenschaft, Frankfurt am Main, 1967.
9. Jauss 155.
10. Jauss, H.R. "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory" in New Literary History 2:1 (Autumn 1970), 9.
11. Heidegger as quoted by Rentschler, E. in "Expanding Film Historical Discourse: Reception Theory's Use Value for Cinema Studies" in Cine-tracts. A Journal of Film and Cultural Studies. Vol. 4 no 13, 1981-2, 57-68.

12.Segers, R.T. "An Interview with Hans Robert Jauss", New Literary History 11, No 1, 1979, 83.

13.Segers 86.

14.Mannheim, K. Man and Society in Age of Reconstruction. NY: Hartcourt and Brace, 1940.

15. Schmidt, H.J. "Text-Adequate Concretizations and Real Readers: Reception Theory and Its Applications" New German Critique 17, Spring 1979, 158.

16.By way of additional explanation, a pragmatic concept of context as existing outside the film discourse was often used by film theoreticians in determining the film interpretation. This idea was strongly opposed by Gidal (Peter Gidal, Materialist Film) who notes that "what must be resisted in a complex analysis of films is the imposition of an idea of 'context' in any way which would give itself a power to overdetermine the material (film) at hand/to eye. The realization must be that the 'I' is both produced by, and producing. (and further he states) "It is neither a simple 'individual consciousness makes the world' nor a straightforward 'social relations produce consciousness, produce the I', but rather a fusion of the two positions is required." (p.19) In strong words of criticism Gidal opposes the hegemonic imposition of context when he says that "context position allows any interpretation to hold, rationalized via lit-crit sociologese." (p.19).

17. White, Hayden. Theories of History. Papers Read at a Clark Library Seminar, March 6, 1976. Los Angeles: University of California, 1978, 7.

18.White 11.

19.White 24.

20.Davies, N. A History of Poland. God's Playground. New York: Columbia UP, 1982, 577-581.

21.Davies, 578.

22.Davies, 581.

23.The films seem to be constructed around Stalinism's distanced image. As in Bakhtin's interpretation of the epic, where "contemporaneity is a reality of a 'lower order' in comparison with the epic past." (Dialogic Imagination, 19).

24. Adam Mickiewicz, one of the most important poets of the Polish Romanticism, propagated in his poems the ideas of freedom, truth and honesty which were especially dear to Poles during the period of partition.

25. Andrews, Nicholas G. Poland 1980-81. Solidarity vs. the Party. National Defense University Press, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, DC 20319, 18.

26. As prof. Coates notes, Gierek argues in his autobiography that KOR was allowed to develop by Kania, another party official who used it for his purposes (or rather, allowed it to live relatively unmolested) to undermine Gierek's own position.

27. Taras, Ray. Poland. Socialist State, Rebellious Nation. Boulder & London: Westview Press, 1986, pp. 64-73.

28. Ash, Timothy Garton. The Polish Revolution. London: Granta Books, 1983, pp. 41-47.

29. Andrews, 27.

30. Andrews, 37.

31. Solidarity's National Commission was elected during the Solidarity Congress in September 1981.

32. Soviet military intervention in Poland recalls for the Poles not only the Soviet smashing of the Hungarian revolution of 1956, the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, and the intervention in Afghanistan in 1979, but most particularly the Russian tsarist occupation of eastern Poland throughout the 19th century until the First World War. It summons the fear that during the next occupation the Polish state may well lose its sovereignty, the Polish people will see their standard of living brought down to the Soviet level, Polish culture gradually destroyed, and Polish traditions suppressed. Polish experience with Russian rule during the last century is strengthened by the judgement of most Poles that the Soviets were responsible, at Katyn and elsewhere in 1941, for the massacre of Polish officers captured during the Soviet military occupation of eastern Poland in 1939. These experiences sharpen Polish determination to avoid providing the Soviets with sufficient motive for military intervention. (after Andrews pp. 264-265).

33. Andrews, 272.

34. For the division of the films into scenes and sequences see Appendix I.

35. It is worth noting that the symptoms of luxury so clearly read by the Polish spectator were read differently by the Western spectator, to whom the fact of possessing a house with a garden and a car is a fact of everyday life. In this case, the Western audience did not understand the class implications of the unusual dialogue between the two directors - one who belongs to the elderly generation and the other starting her career. In Poland, where most of the members of the intelligentsia used to live in ugly housing estates or old, neglected houses (such as the one occupied by Agnieszka's father), the luxury of a single home meant either relations with the Security (SB), connections with the Black Market (illegal dealing in dollars) or a very comfortable position within party circles. Wajda here refers to the fourth possibility, the privileged position occupied by famous artists (such as Wajda himself) who were kindly allowed decent living conditions in return for sympathetic presentation of the regime. Only sometimes could artists well known to the outside world present their own position, under constant threat, however, of retribution and persecution.

36. Wajda, Cineaste Interviews, Georgakas, D. & L. Rubenstein. The Cineaste Interviews. On the Art and Politics of Cinema. Chicago: Lake View Press, 1983, 10.

37. Lomnicki died in 1992 while directing a play in the theatre.

38. The fragments shown during the projection in the projection room are in fact fragments of the excised footage from Burski's films.

39. Bierut was the President of the Polish Republic from February 1947 to his sudden death in Moscow in February 1956. He was the politician who followed Stalin in his every move, and Poland under his rule was a weaker replica of the Stalinist Soviet Union. The same propaganda machine functioned in both countries, but also the same horror of Security with its trials and persecutions.

Bierut's death happened in the same year which was later declared the year of political and ideological THAW. As Davies mentions, "The crisis of 1956 which rocked the whole communist world was launched by Krushchev's 'secret speech' to the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in Moscow recounting a limited selection of Stalin's crimes against the Party and the people." (Davies 583)

40. This opinion was presented by Z. Zaluski in his article "About **Man of Marble**" in Literatura no 14, 1977, 10.

41. Godzic, W. "Political Metaphor - **Man of Marble** by Andrzej Wajda," Analyses and Interpretations. Polish Film. Alicja Helman and Tadeusz Miczka (eds), Katowice: Uniwersytet Slaski, 1984, 114.

42. Birkut worked with two other workers as a three man team. One of them gave him the bricks to be laid and the other gave him the mortar. Birkut's aim was to lay the bricks as fast as he could. After the Second World War the country had to be rebuilt. There was no other way to force the workers into undertaking such an enormous task with poor pay and insufficient food, without starting a huge propaganda machine based on the workers' competition. The more the worker worked, the more bricks he laid, the more respect he supposedly earned from his co-workers, and the more privileges from the party authorities.

43. During the Stalinist regime, the workers were slowly though reluctantly getting used to the spectacles organized by the Party. The anger and hidden awe, on seeing officials from the higher echelons of the Party, slowly gave place to inertia and indifferent attendance at the party meetings and festivities. In the years of Gierk (1970 -1980), the years in which the film was produced and, also, Agnieszka's time in the film, "the Party's reputation for honesty, fairness and morality slumped. It became known by a word of mouth that Party and Government officials at the national, regional and local levels were taking advantage of the relaxed moral climate; they were feathering their own nests and using their positions and influence to do favours for their relatives and friends. Corruption increased, and a new class of privileged Party people emerged. Elitism among the higher echelons of the Party bred an arrogant attitude toward the people and a disdain for their concerns. The links between the Party hierarchy and the masses, especially the industrial workers, became rusty with disuse." (Andrews 22)

The image of Party officials in **Man of Marble** has to be seen in the context of the abuse of power, and the constant humiliation of the people who knew about the abuse or suffered from it but could do nothing about it (out of fear or lack of belief in the positive results).

44. It is worth noting at this point that the norms Birkut was trying to raise were not popular with the general public, the horrible race was detested by hard working people and treated as a propaganda trick to increase productivity and maintain a high level of readiness for work. The workers within the film about Birkut, aware of the degree of cynical manipulation, were reluctant to express their opinion for fear of being deprived of scarce goods and privileges.

45. For instance, Wierzewski, W. "Nowe filmy polskie. Czas teraźniejszy, czas miniony." in **Kultura** no 53, dated March 4, 1977, p.8.

46. The presence of the Social Realism discourse in Wajda's films, especially **Man of Marble** and **Man of Iron** will be discussed in the chapter devoted to the films' aesthetics.

47. Krzysztof Kłopotowski is quoted by Bolesław Holdys in the speech presented at The Jagiellonian University in Cracow on October 13th, 1980, at the conference "Young Polish Cinema," reprinted in Powiększenie. Students' Film Monthly. April, 1981, Cracow: Jagiellonian University Press, 46.

48. The spectator enters dialogically the discourse of Witek's trial as he confronts it with the historical fact that in 1976 any contacts with the West were considered suspicious. In the early fifties these contacts were severely treated "on the doubtful pretext that the socialist bloc was about to be attacked by the forces of American imperialism" (Davies 578). Also later, till the early eighties, letters, telephone conversations, trips to the West were usually heavily scrutinized and everybody could suffer unpleasant consequences (interrogations at the Security Office, withdrawal of the passport or talks with the Party officials at the place of work). Therefore, Witek's trial was doubly unpleasant to all the spectators who suffered in similar circumstances. Although no trials of the type common in the fifties took place in the eighties, that is, no flimsy evidence of the sort presented at the trial could throw a person into prison, still, the Kafkaesque paranoia of those trials was vaguely reminiscent of other historical, more recent trials which took place after the workers' revolts in Poland.

49. Miłosz, Cz. The Captive Mind. New York: Vintage Books, 1981, 239.

50. Miłosz, 239.

51. The fact that Wajda chose Zakopane, and not any other little town, is significant for the film's symbolic and presentation of historical truth. It is also almost conspicuous in its postulation of a black/white opposition in the presentation of Birkut and Hanka. Zakopane became the first most famous abode of the Polish new rich who built luxurious villas in the beautiful Tatry mountains. Zakopane was (and still is) a very expensive skiing resort, where both the party officials and private entrepreneurs met in a curious concoction of money, contacts and influence. The owners of the restaurants (such as Hanka's new husband) or the owners of small boarding houses made a lot of money renting rooms to skiers. They were quietly tolerated by the authorities who

also made use of their services.

52.A similar kind of jargon was generally used on TV and in the radio as a famous "propaganda sukcesu" (success propaganda), when the reality presented in the media was **only** colourful, never black or grey. In this particular sequence Wajda introduces the historical discourse characterized by this style, which reached its height in the late seventies.

53.Godzic, 115.

54.As prof.Paul Coates notes, this idealistic presentation of the industrial landscape in **Man of Marble** could be compared with the industrial sublime of **Ziemia Obiecana (Promised Land)**, another film by Wajda which shows the process of industrialization, this time in the XIXth century Lodz.

55.Cineaste Interviews, 323.

56.Dialogic Imagination, 327.

57.Ibid.

58.Dialogic Imagination, 299.

59.Dialogic Imagination, 345.

60. Andrews, Nicholas G. Poland 1980-81. Solidarity versus the Party. Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, DC 20319: National Defense University Press, 27.

61.On the discussion of historical discourse in general, consult Hayden White. Metahistory. The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe. Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973.

62.According to Malgorzata Szpakowska "Prawdy i nieporozumienia" in Kino, 1983,pp.9-12, the following materials were used in **Man of Iron**: materials from Polska Kronika Filmowa (Polish Film Chronicle); materials from Telewizja RFN (German Television); fragments of the films **Sierpien** (August) by Ireneusz Engler and Leon Kotowski, and **Robotnicy 80** by Andrzej Chodakowski and Andrzej Zajaczkowski.

63. Andrews, 30.

64.White, Hayden. Tropics of Discourse. Essays in Cultural Criticism. Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978, 51.

65. See Appendix I for the division of the film into scenes and sequences.

66. Dialogic Imagination, 304.

67. Ellis, Jack C. The Documentary Idea. A Critical History of English-Language Documentary Film and Video. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1989, 267.

68. Muszkat, Mariusz. "Laury niezasuszone." Tygodnik Solidarnosc. no 14, dated 21/08/81.

69. Jedrzejewski, Pawel. "Wajda na Linie." Ekran. no 35, dated 30/08/81.

70. Surdykowski, Jerzy. "Zelazem po marmurze." Zycie Literackie. No 154, dated 08/09/81.

71. Jakobson, Roman. "Concluding Statement: Linguistics and Poetics," Style and Language. T. Sebeok (ed), Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1960, 371.

72. Wollen, Peter. "Photography and Aesthetics", Screen, vol. 19, no 4, Winter 1978-79, pp. 9-28; quoted by Willemen, p. 162.

73. It is interesting to note that almost all Polish film reviewers reviewing the film immediately after the film release first commented on the credibility of the images, and then reacted to its artistic power; the reviewers were emotionally concentrated on the enumeration of possible inconsistencies of the images with historical facts, and only secondarily mentioned the heart-rending impact of beautifully orchestrated scenes.

74. As Paul Coates suggests, meetings with characters in present are just pretexts for getting into their flashbacks to the past (punctuation marks, as it were).

75. Dondzillo, Czeslaw. "Bez ochronnych barw." Film. no 34, dated 23/08/81.

76. Dondzillo, *ibid*.

77. Muszkat, *ibid*.

78. Wlodarczyk calls Milosz "najlepszy jak dotad polski tropiciel meandrow psychiki doby stalinowskiej" (the best Polish analyst so far of the twists and turns of the psychology of the Stalinist era) in Wlodarczyk, W. Socrealizm. Sztuka Polska w latach 1950-1954. Krakow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1991, 7.

79.Surdykowski, Jerzy. "Zelazem po marmurze." Zycie Literackie, no 154, dated 3.09.1981, 5.

80.Surdykowski, ibid.

81.This interpretation is openly questioned by prof. Paul Coates who postulates that a more complex discursive situation is present in **Man of Marble**. In fact, unquestionably, what is open to debate in **Man of Marble** is the question of the filmmakers' relation to "them" (for instance, Burski). However, "they" are clearly bad guys as well.

82.Szpakowska Malgorzata. "Prawdy i nieporozumienia." Nowe Filmy, p.10.

83.Bernat, Andrzej. "Powrot 'Czlowieka z zelaza'." Przeqlad Katolicki. dated 19.03.1989.

84.Jedrzejewski, Pawel. "Wajda na linie." Ekran. no 35, dated 30/08/81.

85.Many members of the Polish society decided that they wanted to be "left in peace" already in the fifties when they saw no escape from Stalinism. This social and cultural phenomenon is called "internal emigration" and constitutes both a political and emotional escape from the turmoil of the social life in Poland.

86.Kopotowski, Krzysztof. "'Czlowiek z zelaza.' Kontrowersje. Odpowiadam na zarzuty." Tygodnik Solidarnosc. no 14, dated 6/11/1981.

87.Kopotowski, ibid.

88.Andrews, 75.

89.Andrews, 72.

90.Canby, Vincent "Act of Bravery. **Man of Iron**." The New York Times Film Reviews. (October 12, 1981): C14:3.

91.Szyma, Tadeusz. "Czlowiek z zelaza." Tygodnik Powszechny. no 28, dated 12/07/81.

92.The analysis of the film's aesthetic impact will be discussed in the chapter devoted to aesthetics.

93. Comiskey, Ray. "A Polished Parable." Arts and Studies. Dublin, Nov.14, 1983.

94.This remark, together with an insightful analysis of the role played by Robespierre in the French Revolution was presented by prof. Jan Baszkiewicz in an interview conducted by Krzysztof Kreutzinger for a popular Polish weekly **Film**, dated April 10, 1983.

95.In one of the interviews Wajda openly states that the statement that his film refers to the Poland of the eighties is "niemilym uproszczeniem. Jesli mialoby sie szukac analogii historycznych, nalezaloby je odniesc do zupełnie innej epoki." (is an unpleasant simplification. If we were to look for an analogy, we would have to refer it to a completely different epoch). Ostrowski, M. "Danton czy Robespierre", Polityka, dated 5/02/1983. On the other hand, as Paul Coates suggests, such denials could themselves be political in nature - to allow him to continue filmmaking in eighties Poland.

96.Leczek, Ireneusz. "Danton. Rewolucja Francuska wedlug Wajdy." Trybuna Robotnicza. No 39, dated 16/02/1983.

97.Sterritt, David. **Danton**. Christian Science Monitor, 10/6/83, Film Review Annual (p.231).

98.Ibid.

99. Strick, Philip. "Danton." Monthly Film Bulletin, 9/83, p.242.

100.The Provocation and Interrogation of Andrzej Wajda on the Matter of Danton as Performed by Marcel Ophuls (American Film, vol. IX no.1, Oct. 1983).

101.Ophuls, 24.

102.As Wajda himself admits in the Cineaste interview, neither of these features ought to imbue Wajda with enthusiasm for revolution - his declared socialism, however, ought to have done so.

103.Ophuls, 25.

104.Ophuls, 94.

105.Ostrowski, Marek. "Danton czy Robespierre". Polityka. Warszawa dated 5th of February, 1983.

106.Ibid.

107.Sajdak, Jan. "Dwaj adwokaci przed sadem historii." Odra, Wroclaw, May 1st, 1983.

108.Ostrowski, *ibid*.

109.Ibid.

110.Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

WAJDA AND HIS DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Wajda's dramatis personae - Agnieszka, Birkut, Burski, Maciek, Winkiel and Robespierre - reflect his own history and sociocultural positioning. These personae also reflect the multiple positions of Polish society, which is highly historicized and politicised, and has been entangled in problems of moral choice and forced to take sides in political struggles throughout the ages .

Wajda, a film director, himself becomes, on the one hand, an initiator of and, on the other hand, a participant in, the dialogue between his protagonists and the audience. Furthermore, Wajda's character creations are conditioned by his own specific constitution as an artist and a director. Wajda emerges from his films as a truly discursive author, disseminating his hesitant, polemic concepts among numerous interlocutors.

The three films reveal a certain continuity in the development of Wajda's dramatis personae. From his depiction of naivety and youth in **Man of Marble**, the spectator is led to the maturity of position in **Man of Iron** (especially in Wajda's presentation of Agnieszka), and, then, to a broader ideological speculation in **Danton**. The dramatis personae serve as the carriers of the ideological position of youth, then they change into "men of iron", by becoming complex

epitomizations of revolutionary heroes of the idealist revolution, and they carry on their struggle to the bitter end and become both the victims and the carriers of Terror in **Danton**. In the last film, the ideological and political dilemma - what to do with the Revolution conceived to solve the social problems? - is transformed into a political debate on the incompatibility of ideals and gruesome reality. Robespierre and Danton, both advocates of the same cause, turn in two different directions: Robespierre insisting on introducing the principles of the Revolution while Danton goes with the flow of the wave of love for the people he comes from.

Wajda presents the spectator with a multiplicity of positions, with a plethora of voices which make the spectator question the integrity of Wajda's intentions, the homogeneity of his thoughts, and enter a passionate dialogue with his films. In this interpretation, the self, the agent of discourse, is not conceived as a closed off, monadic entity but a fluid subject/site who constructs himself and his discourse from the already given utterances of others. Statements are constructed in dialogue with previously uttered statements, ideas, and evaluations, and the agent of discourse must contend with a multiplicity of other meanings.

The interpretation of Wajda's *dramatis personae* is a passionate dialogical process of accommodation and rejection on the part of the spectator. The protagonists of his films are both on the screen and among the audience, their ideological positions intertwined with those of the disillusioned members of the Polish society on the one hand, and the members of the French society (in the case of **Danton**), on the other.

One of the reasons why Wajda's presentation invokes a violent clash of feelings in the spectator is that the director shows the *dramatis personae* in his films as

individuals produced by social mediations.¹ In this approach, Bakhtin's understanding of the individual psyche as a locus where inner and outer speeches meet in a dialogical interaction would serve as an explanatory procedure for the elucidation of differences in the interpretation of the protagonists. According to Bakhtin, the self is completely and thoroughly permeated with the social and ideological:

The individual, as possessor of the contents of his own consciousness, as author of his own thoughts, as the personality responsible for his thoughts and feelings - such an individual is a purely socioideological phenomenon. Therefore, the content of the "individual" psyche is by its very nature just as social as the ideology, and the very degree of consciousness of one's individuality and its inner rights and privileges is ideological, historical and wholly conditioned by sociological factors.²

All the protagonists in the three films represent different aspects of the society at large. However, of all of them, Agnieszka seems to be the most profound presentation of the development of a political character in Wajda's films. She appears in both **Man of Marble** and **Man of Iron**, and constitutes a meta-comment on the political development of a citizen of the Poland of the seventies and the eighties. Her personal story - from a naive but enthusiastic student to a conscious thinker, up to an unorthodox revolutionary who commits her life to the cause despite personal inconvenience and misery, is a significant achievement by Wajda.

Agnieszka is the most prominent female character who functions as Wajda's alter ego but also as a symbol of the militant intelligentsia and its growing social consciousness. Agnieszka is presented as an androgynous figure, neither man nor woman³ carrying out a masculine scenario. She is

introduced right away in the first sequence of **Man of Marble**, and her character is further delineated and attains its complex maturity in the second film, **Man of Iron**.

Already in **Man of Marble** Agnieszka plays the leading role in the film - that of the instigator of the action, but also as an ideological "double" or counterpart of the idealistic Birkut, the object of her search and the subject of the parallel discourse in the film. As Birkut's "double" and the film director's alter ego, Agnieszka dispenses with her feminine characteristics and plays on the masculine trait in her androgynous presentation. The presentation of Agnieszka as an independent woman meant that the film also provoked far-fetched feminist analyses in the West, and thus brought a feminist "voice" into the film reception. How complex this interpretation is in the context of this film, and in the context of Polish history, is partly explained by Janda in her interview with Cineaste:

Cineaste: You have been called not only the icon of Solidarity but also of the emerging feminist consciousness in Eastern Europe. What makes your role really attractive is this feminist sensibility which is really quite unprecedented in Polish film. You play very decisive women fighting not for some stereotypical set of values but for a deeply human individualism. You play strong, determined, independent-minded, and, above all, thinking women. How do you see your energetic activism on the screen as reflecting what Polish women today think?

Janda: I really believe that this strength of character comes from our tradition. In our literature or other forms of cultural expression, women are much stronger than men. The woman in her role as the mother figure is certainly cherished. In contrast, all our Romantic male heroes fail. They have their weaknesses - they want to kill the tsar but they catch fever. Kordian, Konrad,

Gustav - they are all weaklings. These men have terrible doubts and problems. The women, even though they don't play principal roles, are really the ones who endure, who wait, who suffer, who really make do under trying circumstances. Women are marginal but strong. There are no winners in our tradition as far as the hero is concerned but the women hold their own.⁴

This Polish tradition in the presentation of women is especially striking in **Man of Iron**, where Agnieszka is depicted as an ideal mother and wife, patiently waiting for her activist husband to come out of prison, but also enduring the hardship and danger of activist work herself. **Man of Marble**, on the other hand, presents her as a strong, aggressive woman, resented in this presentation by many Polish spectators of the older generation. Janda herself admits,

No woman before acted like that in our films: such a role never existed. In **Man of Marble**, there is not a single moment when I am self-involved. Aside from a brief scene with my father when I express some personal doubts, I don't think about myself. I'm always forging ahead, attacking the matter at hand, pursuing an idea, taking care of someone else. I move forward, I make the decision.⁵

Agnieszka was resented particularly by older spectators, mostly Party members who, in their writings in the official publications in the seventies, represented the position of state authority. These spectators felt indignant about everything connected with Agnieszka - the way she dressed, her constant smoking, her casual, free-wheeling life style, her cynicism and her tone of voice. They associated Agnieszka with the cynical representatives of her age group who tried to build their career at any cost - the careerist intelligentsia

who used their chutzpah in order to advance their career prospects.

Symptomatic for the audience of this group of spectators is the review by Bozena Sycowna⁶, who, starting from Agnieszka's dress and finishing with her ideological position, presents an overall negative picture of her. As Sycowna states,

Agnieszka is not a nice protagonist. In a jeans suit from top to bottom, in wooden sandals, often photographed with wide angle lens, she appears to be a monstrous figure. She decides to make a film about the fifties not because this is the time of her father which she wants to recount. It is not entirely true. She acts from a very egoistic point of view as she wants to have a "catchy" story for her diploma film.⁷

Sycowna describes the second sequence at the National Museum in Warsaw where Agnieszka, in a whipper-snappish manner, opens the door to a cellar with the monuments from the fifties, and rapaciously surveys the marble figures. This scene is interpreted by Sycowna as an unnecessary intrusion into the world of the past. Sycowna considers Agnieszka to be too rude and too openly aggressive to be able to cover all the intricate contextualizations of that period. The emotional tone of Sycowna's review indicates how deeply she rejected Agnieszka as an epitomization of a Romantic seeker of truth and justice, remaining far from the ideal hero who would seem appropriate for the task set by Wajda.⁸

Sycowna also criticizes Agnieszka's attitude to her elderly cameraman, whom she should have first contacted and talked to about the difficult years, before starting the diploma film. In Sycowna's opinion, Agnieszka patronizes Mr Leonard, treating him as a technical help only, disregarding his uneasiness and his fear of eventual consequences after

revealing the truth from those years. Agnieszka ignores Leonard's experience and takes the creative initiative literally into her own hands, as if claiming absolute access to the truth. The cameraman does not want to take a shot of the marble figure of the worker from the fifties because, as he says, "I want to reach a comfortable retirement". His reluctance to be a part of Agnieszka's film is dictated by fear of repercussions from the authorities. Neither the cameraman in the film, nor the director, state this openly. The audience bring in their own glossia to fill the gap in the screenplay.

Interpreters from the older generation were also angered by Agnieszka's ignorance of the time of the fifties. The fact that some films were not presented to the public because of "technical reasons" was perfectly understood by the older generation who comprehended this euphemism as a censorship manoeuvre for the rejection of films which could not be screened for ideological and political reasons. They interpreted Agnieszka's involvement as excitement over a "hot" theme. Her naivety, they argued, made Agnieszka unaware of possible repercussions, which could result in a complete and ultimate breakdown of her artistic career.

Agnieszka must have known from her father how difficult that time was (although many parents were trying to spare their children and did not reveal the sordid facts from the fifties). Michalek and Turaj remark that,

The young knew little about Stalinism, the ruthlessness and fear as well as the intensity of ideological pursuit that marked the period. It had all been shrouded through the years and muffled in silence.⁹

A different interpretation of the sequence is demonstrated by the younger group of spectators, who saw in Agnieszka a youthful representation of a superman (superwoman)

opening all the forbidden doors to reveal the truth of the fifties. The symbol of her courage is not only the omnipotent camera (the phallic possession of which Agnieszka announces already in this sequence by taking it away from the older cameraman) but also her hair clasp which serves as a passkey to the mysteries of the National Museum. At this point, during the film's screening in Polish cinemas, Agnieszka was loudly encouraged by the audience to go on. This group of the audience especially identified with Wajda's own remarks concerning the part, as Janda explains,

When Andrzej Wajda first gave me the part in **Man of Marble**, he told me that in whatever I do, I had to enchant, anger or irritate, because I had to carry half the film.

He told me that my role should announce to the world: "Watch out, here comes a generation that will not only open doors which were closed for so long. It will force them off their hinges." And he was absolutely right because my age group created Solidarity. He deliberately exploited my behaviour and my personality to forge a new idea.¹⁰

Generally, for Polish spectators, Agnieszka is a link to Wajda's Romantic hero, Maciek, from the film **Ashes and Diamonds**. Maciek was an Underground fighter and nationalist, devoted to the ideal of an independent Poland, free from the Soviet influence. He was ordered to assassinate an old good Communist, Szczuka, a terrorist act hampering the consolidation of Party power and process of political stabilization. He finally commits this senseless destructive murder but he himself is soon killed, not in an act of retribution, but as the result of a misunderstanding on the part of some militiamen. Maciek represents youth and its idealism contaminated by death, brutal innocence. He carries

with him the mystery of his generation, people who have matured too fast in a bloody struggle. It is hardly surprising that this figure, as magnificently interpreted by Zbigniew Cybulski, became a legend for the young of the fifties and the sixties. In portraying the figure of Maciek, Wajda clearly meant to evoke the tradition of Polish Romantic culture with its theme of the nation as martyr, symbolically crucified between the two villains, Russia and Germany.¹¹

It seems that Wajda, in a way a romantic figure himself¹², seems to identify with both Maciek and Agnieszka in their quest for truth, but he envies them their trusting naivety and their youthful behaviour (in both figures there is a kind of boyish playfulness and tomfoolery). This kind of behaviour, a certain superficiality in the presentation of the character, their selfishness (Maciek likes to "play" war in the beginning of the film before his forced ideological maturity) are phenomena which make some Polish spectators of the older generation uneasy.

There is a certain ideological and characterological similarity between Agnieszka and Birkut, another protagonist in **Man of Marble**. Both Birkut and Agnieszka come from the same poor family background. Their CV could be started in a similar way "he/she came from a poor village near Cracow". Birkut is a country boy caught up by the labour currents of a big construction site. He brings with him strength, skill, willingness, and a kind of country honour and truthfulness. Wajda turns him into a proletarian hero. Agnieszka is an educated girl of the seventies, modern, with little direct emotional connection to the past. As she learns about Birkut, she begins to identify with him. Despite her jeans, her feminine aggressiveness, her style, she is basically cast in the same mould as Birkut. They meet across a generation of time, a quarter of a century, bridging the gap in their desire to see lies repudiated.

Agnieszka, however, constitutes one element only in the mosaic of society presented in **Man of Marble**. She is also a mediator between the world of the fifties and the world of the seventies. **Man of Marble** is not a monologue of Agnieszka, relentlessly and bravely trying to pursue her ideas, but it is a constant dialogue which seeks to disrupt the assimilation of differences sought by a monologic discourse. There is no "single" truth in the film and no single authorial message. The representation of reality which Agnieszka would like to see as her own subjective, monologic view of that time is disrupted or supplemented by other monologues, those of Witek, Birkut and his wife, the representative of Security, the young Stalinist director, and others. This polyphony of voices is originated by the director who seems to disappear behind the richness of the Polish glossia only to reappear as a polyphonous demiurge with his own complex experience as a citizen of Poland and an artist.

As if to make the dialogical character of **Man of Marble** even more vibrant, the dialogicity is reiterated and recapitulated in time and space. Agnieszka, as the enunciator, moves within different times and different spaces, trying to coin a synthetic presentation of the time of the fifties in Poland. The protagonists of her film project engage in dialogical exchanges both with themselves in different times and spaces, and with other protagonists criss-crossing these spaces. Witek in 1970 asks Agnieszka whether she had already contacted Birkut, anticipating his (Birkut's) private version of the events of 1950's. Every protagonist in the film has something to say about the dreadful time, but also relates his/her own experience to the time of the film (1976), while Wajda himself situates the monologue of Agnieszka in the context of disillusionment with the then present regime of Gierek. The spectators, on the other hand, depending on the time and place of their private viewing of the film, engage in

their own dialogue with the film, and are emotionally and ideologically involved in the process of the film viewing. The meaning "in" the film becomes a discursive dimension of the dialogic which, like Volosinov's word, is

a two-sided act. It is determined equally by **whose** word it is and **for whom** it is meant. As word, it is precisely **the product of the reciprocal relationship between speaker and listener, addresser and addressee**. Each and every word expresses the 'one' in relation to the 'other'. I give myself verbal shape from another's point of view, ultimately, from the point of view of the community to which I belong.¹³

In the sense of Bakhtin's word, Agnieszka functions as a link between the two films, **Man of Marble** and **Man of Iron** and the two worlds - the world of budding social awareness and the world of an open revolutionary struggle. In **Man of Iron**, Agnieszka seems to have developed into a fully formed, mature character. She is the mother and the wife but also a strong, revolutionary activist, completely convinced of victory. Janda explains the development of the part herself,

My development is obvious in **Man of Iron** which came four years after **Man of Marble**. My Agnieszka changed (...). For example, I knew Agnieszka would not enter the shipyard, I knew that, as a woman, I should stay with the child. We considered, for a long time, whether I should participate in the strike. And Andrzej (Wajda) said, "No, because now you have to make yourself over into another symbol - the mother who protects the future. Because that's how it ought to be. This is already the next stage in the historical development."¹⁴

Wajda's requirements produced a subdued, mature Agnieszka who displayed her personal emotions of love for Maciek and despair that she must leave him when he becomes involved in political activity, but, also, she was presented as a tough, political activist herself, and a mature, sarcastic political opponent. Her dialogue with Winkiel in a prison cell defined her as the toughest of them all - the activist who knows the weaknesses of her opponents and who is strong enough to joke about them and ridicule them. By this presentation, Agnieszka again denied the traditional role ascribed to women in the Polish film as "flowers to look at and admire which just floated across the screen and really didn't hold power."¹⁵

Agnieszka as mother-Poland and an icon of Solidarity, presented in the scene in her apartment when she is offered help by Maciek's co-workers, fulfills a symbolic function which dialogically clashes with her irritating performance in **Man of Marble**. A multiplicity of voices, a fascinating display of characterological traits, and the narratological complexity of the parts played by her in the two films, make Agnieszka the most plurivocal and most dialogically complex protagonist in the films discussed.

Completely monological, however, are the characters who relate the flashbacks in **Man of Iron**. These have little importance in themselves; cardboard cutouts, they exist merely to narrate history. Only Dzidek (Boguslaw Linda), a TV studio technician who long ago compromised his student idealism, seems ever to have faced any doubts or dilemmas. Lech Walesa, Anna Walentynowicz, and Tadeusz Fiszbach all appear as themselves, but all, especially Walesa, function as icons rather than as characters who propel the drama. The introduction of the historical personae in the film dialogically functions in terms of the relation between history and reality, producing an overwhelming effect of

authenticity.

However, a completely fictional persona, Maciek in **Man of Iron**, also seems, sadly, entirely monological. In his attempt to present Birkut's son Wajda appears to have set too high goals. Maciek had to match his father's uncompromising attitude, his honesty and marble-like, virgin naivety. In **Man of Marble**, while presenting Maciek's father, Birkut, Wajda dared introduce a grain of doubt, of comic relief, which made this tragic figure accessible to the spectator. In **Man of Iron** nothing like this happens. The tragic historical events overwhelm the psychological construction of the characters. Too much has to be said about the justification of the Gdansk agreement, too many historical circumstances have to be explained. The tragic and courageous hero of **Man of Marble** is not replaced by an equally dialogical character of the son but by a monological cardboard cutout, dull and boring in its univocal presentation.

Maciek is in fact a series of dates: 1968, 1970, 1976, 1980; and a series of statements about complex relations between workers and intelligentsia. He is also a simplified juxtaposition of social roles: a naively enthusiastic student, a despairing son, a lonely rebel, and, then a leader. Least of all is he a living man, as a man usually hesitates, doubts, seeks a better solution and decides where the decision is not necessarily obvious. Maciek Tomczyk, however, always, with mechanical regularity, takes the side of an obviously good cause.

Maciek is without a flaw, a monological giant. Although he breaks a chair during the inauguration speech of Edward Gierek in 1970 his rage seems to be justified as caused both by despair resulting from the death of his father, and by the feeling of helplessness. After the event and after spending some time in a psychiatric asylum in order to avoid a harsher punishment from the authorities Maciek does not

say much any more. His actions become monologically devoid of any human attributes - the spectator does not hear any discussions between him and anybody else, rarely does Maciek show any feelings, he becomes the monological carrier of the revolutionary purpose which seems to result more from a private act of revenge for the death of his father than from a mature political belief.

Szpakowska suggests that the reason why Maciek's character is so monologically dull is Wajda's lack of decisiveness in the way he presents the historical events of August 1980,

Jedno bowiem z dwojga: albo kronika historyczna albo ludzie. Wajda wybrał zrazu kronikę, nie potrafił jednak zaufać jej do końca. Chciał przedstawić zapis wydarzeń lecz jakby zwatpiał, czy to wystarczy. Zrobił przegląd lat kilkunastu: z autentycznych dokumentów, z inscenizacji rzeczywistych wypadków. Lecz zawahał się. W ciąg wydarzeń politycznych wplotł bohaterów z innego swego filmu, dodał na polę sensacyjną fabule, watek miłosny, gagi, pomysły. Jakby nie zdając sobie sprawy, że w tym właśnie przypadku wszystkie te zabiegi, wszelka sztuczność i fikcja obrocić się mogą przeciwko niemu.¹⁶

One of the two: either historical chronicle or people. First, Wajda chose the chronicle but could not trust it to the end. He wanted to present a chronicle of events but he doubted whether it was enough. He made an overview of several years: authentic documents, and stagings of real events. Into the midst of political events he introduced the protagonists from his other film, added a sensational plot, a love story, gags and new cinematic ideas. He did not realize, however, that in the case of this film, all these endeavours, all

artificiality and fiction could turn against him.

Maciek also constitutes a specific social hybrid: he is neither a student nor a worker. Maciek gave up studying and started work in the shipyard, partly as a sign of protest against the December events. However, Maciek is not convincing in the role of a revolutionary who goes "pomiedzy lud" (among the people) and tries to organize the masses. This pattern matched the revolutionary events in Tsarist Russia where the masses were truly ignorant and needed the help of the "clever" intelligentsia to understand what the totalitarian system had done to them. The Polish workers were neither that stupid nor that disorganized. They did not need any Macieks, disillusioned intelligentsia, to be able to start their strike. Only when the intelligentsia joined them on the basis of partnership did they accept their advice and comradely help (as happened historically during the Gdansk strike, preceded also by the opposition work of KSS-KOR).

Wajda here risked many objections both from the critics and from the workers who might protest against his schematic presentation of Maciek. Instead of a cliché of a worker with a schematic life story clearly presented and recapitulated, there could be a real man - tough and ugly in his contradictions, a living **man of iron**, trying to find his place in history. Maciek's ideal status turned him into an improbable icon of a worker. A real worker, by comparison, would often get drunk, maybe would strike his wife sometimes, would curse and complain and get things done in a stubborn, not eye-catching way. His fight needed a lot of psychological resistance, as it meant, on the personal level, constant insecurity, constant harassment at work and at home, and continual complaints from the family. Such stress lasted sometimes for months on end. The activists' struggle had none of the spectacular quality of a western

but it required more will power than a short, victorious attack on the barricades. This fight required a stronger resistance and a strong belief in the values they were fighting for.

Spectators were quite outspoken in presentation of their criticism of Maciek. Kłopotowski expresses his disappointment in the following words,

Widzowie znaleźli się w fałszywej sytuacji, ponieważ nie mają gdzie ulokować swoich uczuć. "Naszym człowiekiem" nie jest główny bohater budzący tylko politowanie. Nie jest nim również Tomczyk, zbyt mało naznaczony inteligentnym dylematem: awans czy uczciwość. Maciek bowiem jest robotnikiem z wyboru, z pańskiego gestu. Co to ma wspólnego z normalnymi ludźmi?

Maciek ma najwięcej wspólnego z dobrze urodzonymi rewolucjonistami, którzy w ubiegłym wieku "szli w lud" szykować przewrót. Wajdzie bowiem najbliższy jest typ poszlacheckiego indywidualisty. (...) Gdyby Maciek miał być prawdziwy, musiałby przejść do "pierwszej linii", rozpychając prawdziwych przywódców.¹⁷

Spectators found themselves in a false situation as they could not invest their feelings anywhere. Their hero was neither the main protagonist in the film, who provoked nothing but pity; nor Maciek, who seemed to them an epitomization of a dilemma of the intelligentsia: to be promoted or to be honest. Maciek **chose** to be a worker, it was his lordly gesture. He has nothing in common with ordinary people. Maciek is similar to highly born revolutionaries who went "among the people" in the last century to prepare a coup d'état. Wajda seems to be attached to the type of post-

nobility individualist.(...) If Maciek were to be real he would have to go to the "first line", pushing aside the real leaders.

Wajda's presentation of Maciek could be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand Maciek can be criticized as a person from "the outside", not a real worker, but someone whom Wajda envelops with workers' respect and recognition. On the other hand, however, the persona of Maciek served as an epitomization of the suffering militant working class. The first aspect was quickly used by the opponents of the Solidarity movement to argue that the movement's nature was manipulated and structured by influences from "the other" - the intelligentsia disguised as a worker, probably supported by the West (this particular "reading" of the Solidarity movement was very popular in the government mass media trying to incapacitate this most important historical event in socialist Poland by showing it as a subversive act supported by the West). Winkiel, in fact, was supposed to uncover evidence of a 'second line' of CIA financed counter-revolutionaries.

The second aspect was highlighted in the Western press - the film was understood as a compensation for the effort of all the anonymous workers, a tribute to their courage and persistence. The Golden Palm was Wajda's reward for the first attempt at a synthesis of the Gdansk event, and the presentation of the workers' stamina and courage. This mythologization of their fight would mean thanking them for the years of humiliation and lies; for their persistence and their loneliness; for the character test which not everybody endured; and for the personal tragedies followed by enforced silence.

Despite the title of **Man of Iron**, the man of iron, Maciek, does not become the main figure in the film. The

main hero in **Man of Iron** is the television fellow with no moral backbone, and his development is at the centre of the spectator's attention. Winkiel, the protagonist "proper" of the film, hardly functions as more than a simple structural device. He constitutes an interesting conglomerate of those character features typical of representatives of the Polish society who mainly evoked revulsion and disgust. True, he frequently sweats, grunts and grimaces in dismay, but his discomfort seems less that of a living character facing a crisis than that of a desperate actor struggling to vitalize a passive, banal figure. On the other hand, as David Denby notes,

(Winkiel is) secretly in love with the idea of revolt, (but he is also) scared and vindictive - he won't let himself believe that the workers can win. He's a coward and buffoon - Falstaff to Maciek's Prince Hal - but he's also intensely sympathetic, and he gives the movie its soul.¹⁸

This inner conflict in Winkiel is visualized in the dialogical tension between his "official" self - in the moments of fulfilment of his official journalistic assignment - and the Winkiel of triumph and relief when he hears the news about the success of the Gdansk talks.

With Winkiel in **Man of Iron**, as with Burski in **Man of Marble**, Wajda may be referring to elements of bad conscience in his own character. "I am no more innocent than anyone else," he has said, referring to an early Stalinist propaganda film he worked on as a young assistant director. More generally, Winkiel clearly stands for all artists and intellectuals, whom Wajda regards with a jaundiced eye. In a conversation in New York he said, "More than once I thought I knew where history was going, but I was wrong. The workers have more imagination." It was a worker at the

Gdansk shipyard who gave his new film its title when he asked Wajda: "When are you going to make the film about us men of iron?" "Artists must be humble," said Wajda. "We are in public service. If we can fix up society we could make such wonderful films."¹⁹

Winkiel, with his restless eyes and constant fear, epitomizes the schizophrenic consciousness of the opportunistic strata of the Polish society. The only opiate which keeps his fears at bay is alcohol, profusely served by the Party officials at every occasion. Probably, the film would have been more authentic had Wajda left Winkiel in the role of a passive, non-intrusive observer. The spectator would then identify with him in a joint, reverent admiration for the courage of the working class. By making Winkiel a scoundrel (though with a potential for reforming), Wajda alienated the spectator, who had nobody to turn to for investment of his or her feelings. Klopotowski accurately expresses the spectators' disappointment,

Na milosc boska, Panowie, gdzie mieliscie serce i rozum
zalatwiajac porachunki z telewizyjnymi fagasami, gdy
Polska brala wiraz historyczny?²⁰

For God's sake, gentlemen, where were your heart and reason when you settled accounts with TV flunkies while the whole of Poland changed its historic direction?

The presentation of the characters in **Man of Iron** bypassed the expectations of the spectator. The spectator expected a film about the formation of the real leaders of the social movement and about the development of working class consciousness - the two phenomena which seem most important in the shipyard strikes. The spectator, deeply moved by the real events of the real strike itself, expected a film about a real working class hero (such as Walesa, for

instance), and not necessarily about Maciek, an unconvincing leader from the second lines; Winkiel, an alcoholic journalist; or the ordinary workers, whose grievances they knew very well. What spectators wanted was a film about the heroes of their times - the leaders of their revolution.

While the spectator expected a documentary presentation of their heroes' lives, from the inside of the making of history, the whole film has been shot from the position of an outsider, Winkiel, a representative of the intelligentsia, poking about in the workers' life stories. This was partly the situation of the director himself, as Klopotoski writes,

Wajda appeared at the shipyard at the very end of the events and for a moment only. Despite his sympathy for the strike, Wajda did not join the striking workers, and tried to learn what had happened only from the position of an onlooker. ²¹

The spectatorial investment was almost immediate in **Danton** where the spectator instantly could identify with the figure of Danton. Danton, played by Depardieu, is rough-hewn, street-wise, sensitive, a charismatic blend of virility and dignity. His quick-silver Danton is believable as the revolution's most popular hero, a forgivable scoundrel, a public performer, a private intriguer, amusingly insouciant, passionately serious. Depardieu's Danton goes through an astonishing range of mood and personality changes. His opportunism, oratory and sybaritic lust for life are offset by his live-and-let-live humaneness, as the least polemical and bloodthirsty of the cadre of revolutionary power brokers. This presentation of Danton was widely interpreted as a symbolic surrogate for "the warm, cuddly Polish dissident"²² (an obvious reference to Walesa). In this way, Depardieu's interpretation

perpetuated the populist public image of Walesa widespread in the West.

The movie makes of Robespierre a pious fanatic, whose religion is the revolution. However, power corrupts, and **Danton** "lays bare this corruption in its central, dramatic confrontation between Danton and Robespierre. In the scene of the dinner in the Restaurant Rosé the two former allies confront each other over an epicurean feast that Danton has prepared. Danton sniffs and coos gluttonously over the lavish dishes, as if trying to seduce the puritanical Robespierre into the sensual joy of liberty. Robespierre sits like an icy statue; the one swift sip of wine he takes shows the terrifying suppression of his own humanity."²³

However, the persona of Danton was rejected by many spectators who expected a more complex presentation consistent with the historical background. In absolute filmic terms (without the historical contextualization) Danton was accepted as a sybaritic, popular leader of the masses, while Robespierre was rejected as Danton's relentless opponent. Both personae dramatis were too much conditioned in their reception by the complex, polyphonic coexistence of voices on many levels to be uniformly accepted by the spectator. The voices of the critics, historians and politicians both in Poland and France formed a mosaic of interpretations where the historical truth, the director's intentions and the the actors' personalities themselves fought for the enunciatory power. Undoubtedly, the audiences sought answers to the issues of history, politics and the formation of the political leaders. In this sense, **Danton's** dramatis personae engage in a fierce struggle of characters, presenting their position both as politicians and as people. While Robespierre is monologically uniform in his approaches and his personal life, Danton is dialogically inconsistent, dispersed,

suspended among the glossia characterizing his personal life of a sybarite and his political credo of doing everything for the people. Danton in the film does not invite the interpretation of Viscount Morley, a distinguished English politician and historian who claims that Danton's political object was to "reconcile France with herself; to restore a society that, while emancipated and renewed in every part, should yet be stable, and above all to secure the independence of his country, both by a resolute defense against the invader, and by such a mixture of vigor with humanity as should reconcile the offended opinion of the rest of Europe."²⁴

Danton is an epitomization of Bakhtinian polemical discourse where the main dramatis personae are also the main glossia in the film's meaning. This formation of the film's meaning was considered to be its strength and its weakness. Leon Bukowiecki calls the film "an acting duel between Pszoniak and Depardieu"²⁵, which is based on contrasts of ideological positions but also on the contrasts in the ways these are associated with the dramatis persona. As Bukowiecki notes,

(Pszoniaka) przerażająco zimny, wykalkulowany Robespierre powoduje dreszcze grozy. Nikt nie chciałby się znaleźć w trybach prowadzonej przez niego maszyny. Czy to całkiem zgodne z historią, to inna sprawa. Taki kierunek nadal tej postaci scenarzysta i Pszoniak jest idealnym wcieleniem zamiarów twórczych. Przy nim jakby nieco zazenowany, jakby trochę jowialny, jakby "populistyczny" Depardieu - Danton przegrywa i jako postać i jako aktor gdyż scenariusz a może sztuka nie dały mu argumentów.²⁶

(Pszoniak's) terrifyingly cold, calculated Robespierre makes the spectator awestruck. Nobody would like to

find himself in the cogs of his political machinery. Whether it agrees with history is another matter. This kind of presentation was proposed by the scriptwriter and Pszoniak is an ideal epitomization of his creative suggestions. Next to him Depardieu - a bit embarrassed, somewhat jovial and "populist", loses as Danton, both as a protagonist and as an actor because neither the screenplay nor the play itself provided him with arguments.

Malgorzata Szpakowska is even more forthright in her criticism, which is partly based on the inconsistency between Wajda's proposal and Przybyszewska's play, on which the film **Danton** was based²⁷,

Przybyszewska przedstawila powiklane interesy wielu osob, tragiczne skutki dzialan podejmowanych w szlachetnych intencjach, niechciane sojusze i przymus walki przeciw najblizszym; Wajda ograniczyl sie do jednoznacznego konfliktu protagonistow. Slowem, Przybyszewska starala sie pokazac, ze historia jest skomplikowana; Wajda - ze jest w gruncie rzeczy prosta.²⁸

While Przybyszewska presented the complicated affairs of many people, the tragic results of activities undertaken with honourable intentions in mind, unwanted pacts and the compulsion to struggle against one's closest friends, Wajda limited his presentation to an uncomplicated conflict of the protagonists. Thus, Przybyszewska wanted to show that history is complicated and Wajda showed that it is, in fact, simple.

The monological simplicity of the dialogue between the

two protagonists obliterated the complexity of other dramatis personae in the film. As Bukowiecki notes,

W związku z tym trzeba było poświęcić szereg innych, wybitnych historycznych postaci, z których ostał się Philippeaux w znakomitej interpretacji Serge Merlin. (...) ale pozostali jakby przeszkadzają głównemu pojedynkowi...²⁹

Beacuse of that, several other outstanding historical personae had to be sacrificed. Only Philippeaux was left in the outstanding interpretation of Serge Merlin. (...) The others, however, seem to interfere with the main duel...

The match between the two historical opponents, and the cool presentation of ideological positions, makes Danton and Robespierre the most mature, and least "Polish" of Wajda's dramatis personae. On the other hand, this match introduces an opposition of other layers in the film: the power of voice, the power of image and the power of soundtrack which, together, constitute a specific interrelation of glossia in the film which form its aesthetics.

To recapitulate: Wajda's dramatis personae discussed in this chapter are not the only ones taking part in the dialogical process of the creation of film meaning. However, these are the ones which combine the characterological traits and glossia most typical of everything Wajda was always interested in - inner passion, honesty, struggle for "the cause", nonconformism and almost Dostoyevskyan internal conflicts. The other dramatis personae in his films function as supplementing or conflicting social voices which provide a necessary background for the internal struggles of the main protagonists.

NOTES

1. Paul Coates reflects here that maybe the real cause of the clash is the result of conflict between monologism and dialogism. This clash could thus account for my understanding of the function of the film director as mono-dialogical rather, than only monological or dialogical.

2. Volosinov, V.N. Marxism and the Philosophy of Language. Trans. L. Matejka and I.R. Titunik. New York: Seminar P., 1973, 34. Quoted by William McClellan "The Dialogic Other: Bakhtin's Theory of Rhetoric", Social Discourse, vol. III, nos 1&2, spring-summer, 1990, 242.

3. The problem of presentation of women in Wajda's films demands a separate study. Already in these three films, however, Wajda's ambivalence in his presentation of women is strikingly visible. Agnieszka in **Man of Marble** and **Man of Iron**, Anna Hulewicz in **Man of Iron** and Mme Lucille Desmoulins in **Danton** are not classical female characters steered by subjugation to the patriarchal order and submission as a determining factor in their lives. All these women are highly politicised, taking an active part in the political events, risking their careers and freedom, active in a very masculine way. They are both masculine in their actions and feminine in the way they treat their families - as the most important aspect of their lives.

4. Szporer, Michael. "Woman of Marble. An Interview with Krystyna Janda." Cineaste. vol. XVIII, no 3, 1991, p.12.

5. Ibid.

6. Sycowna, Bozena. "Człowiek z marmuru." Powiekszenie, SCK UJ Rotunda, April 1981.

7. Sycowna, 36.

8. The Romantic hero in Polish Romantic and Post-Romantic literature was usually an idealised individual (mostly male) who complied with the requirement for a well-behaved, nice person, at least not unnecessarily obnoxious, as Agnieszka sometimes used to be.

9. Michalek, Turaj, 156.

10. Szporer, Michael, 12.

11. It is worth noting at this point that Polish literature is closely linked to the Romantic Movement of the nineteenth century, embodying the nationalistic notion of rebellion against the state. Between the final partition of Poland by Russia, Prussia and Austria in 1795, and the First World War, Poland existed only in history as there was no Polish state. The caretakers of Polish lore and letters prior to World War I - figures like Wyspianski and Reymont - constituted a Polish "government of the soul" in lieu of an autonomous political entity. In Poland, it is still considered to be the mission of the artist to do no less than mould history, and substitute for impossible political actions. Thus, both Maciek and Agnieszka can be seen as romantic heroes, both of them trying to "undo" history in their own ways.

12. Wajda himself noted, "The Romantic artist had to transcend himself... He had to be more than a maker; he had to be the conscience of the nation, a prophet, a social institution." (Michalek and Turaj, 136).

13. Volosinov, V.N. Marxism and the Philosophy of Language. Trans. Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1986, 86.

14. Szporer, 14.

15. Szporer, 13.

16. Szpakowska, Malgorzata. "Prawdy i Nieporozumienia." Nowe Filmy. 1981.

17. Klopotowski Krzysztof. "Pocieszmy Wajde." Solidarnosc. dated 21/08/1981.

18. Denby, David. "Man of Iron." New York 12/7/81, p.157.

19. Kroll, Jack. "Man of Iron". Newsweek. 12/28/81.

20. Klopotowski, *ibid*.

21. Klopotowski, *ibid*.

22. Adair, Gilbert. "Danton", Sight and Sound, Autumn 1983, p.284.

23. Kroll, Jack. "Danton". Newsweek 10/10/83, p.94.

24.This opinion is related by Ostrowski in his review of **Danton** -see Ostrowski, Marek, "Danton czy Robespierre", Polityka, Warszawa, dated 5/02/1983.

25.Bukowiecki, Leon. "Danton i inni." Za i przeciw., dated 10/04/83.

26.Ibid.

27.The literary origin of the film, Przybyszewska's play **Sprawa Dantona**, will be discussed in the chapter on the films' aesthetics.

28.Szpakowska Malgorzata. **Danton**. Kino. dated 12/05/1983.

29. Bukowiecki, ibid.

V CHAPTER

THE FILMS' DIALOGICAL AESTHETICS

The dialogic in the films is realized not only through a heteroglossia of voices fighting through the dramatis personae and the film director behind them, but within the dynamic of the cinematic image itself. The films' images demonstrate a whole array of cultural discourses which interact in the dialogical construction of the films' aesthetics. Among the cultural discourses in the three films discussed the following glossia are especially vivid: the tradition of Eisenstein's montage; Socialist Realism; Polish Romanticism; **Citizen Kane**; and the theatre tradition in Poland.

Consequently, the films' aesthetics obey the screenplays' main narrative line but mostly transcend the illustrative intention of the director and produce an independent artistic message generating an artistic effect going far beyond the historical alone. It will be interesting to see how various elements of the cinematic image - the mise-en-scène, colour, music and sound - are integrated to form an aesthetic whole which represents the discourses mentioned above.

In the presentation of Socialist Realism I enclose numerous quotations from a book by Wojciech Włodarczyk Socrealizm (Socialist Realism). Only recently, due to the change of power in Poland, could this book be published. It illustrates the grim reality of Polish art under the Stalinist rule. As such materials are still rarely accessible in the West, I decided to translate substantial portions of the text

and include them in this chapter.

The Tradition of Eisenstein's Montage.

The tradition of Eisenstein's montage is visible in many scenes created by Wajda. In order to produce a specific emotional impact, Wajda combines elements belonging to disparate semantic domains and, through montage, creates a unique, complex whole full of tensions.

For Eisenstein, each shot has figural meaning; at the same time, however, this figural meaning is conflictual in that it gives rise to "a textual process that undoes the meaning of the individual shots by neutralizing, fragmenting, and making them conflict with one another."¹ As Ropars interprets it,

produced abstractly by the juxtaposition of images, the concept cannot in any case be linked with a particular image... it is the original division of shots - equally removed from representation and signification - which produces a signification not only irreducible to representation, but even, at the extreme, independent of it.²

The shot itself can of course be polysemous or univocal, but for Eisenstein it is montage which provides meaning, by extracting dominant meanings from individual shots. Each shot is finally dependent for its meaning on juxtaposition, and thus upon the montage itself. Consequently, an increase of semantic potential within the shot can only lead to an increase of activity in the montage.

Eisenstein compares the montage technique to the construction of the message in Haiku poems. He was greatly influenced by the laconic form of the haikai which he

considers to be "little more than a hieroglyph transposed into phrases."³ The method of its resolution is completely analogous to the structure of the ideogram. As Eisenstein explains,

As the ideogram provides a means for the laconic imprinting of an abstract concept, the same method, when transposed into literary exposition, gives rise to an identical laconism of pointed imagery. Applied to the collision of an austere combination of symbols this method results in a dry definition of abstract concepts. The same method, expanded into the luxury of a group of already formed verbal combinations, swells into a splendor of **imagist** effect.⁴

The most important element in Eisenstein's discovery is that he treats haiku poems as if they were montage phrases, shot lists. Also, he brilliantly transfers the reception of such a juxtaposition of shots into the psychological domain of the reader. He stresses the blurring of the edges of the intellectually defined concepts formed by the combined ideograms but also reveals that in their emotional quality the concepts blossom immeasurably. Haiku poems appeal to Eisenstein as, in them, the emotion is directed towards the reader, for, as Yone Nobuchi has said, "it is the readers who make the haiku's imperfection a perfection of art."⁵

A stress on juxtaposition and the sharing of meanings by particular images is what ties Eisenstein's montage to the dialogical understanding of Bakhtin's word. All the codes in the images cooperate in such a way as to produce inner tension in the shot or in the sequence of shots.

The following examples of scenes from **Man of Marble** can serve as an illustration of the dialogical juxtaposition of

shots which produce a particular perlocutionary effect. **Man of Marble** is especially rich in the emotionally loaded concatenations of images. Two scenes from the reconstructed films serve as examples of the dialogical clash of images within the scene. In one of them the first shot presents a bulldozer flattening the ground for future houses. This optimistic picture is later followed by a shot of the same machine cutting down beautiful blooming cherry trees. The concatenation of images produces a reaction of disbelief and distress in the spectator. The montage effect, through a combination of such semantically distinct images is striking and upsetting.

Another example of this kind, from the same sequence, shows an opposition of two worlds during the propaganda show in which Birkut performs his brick-laying techniques. The image of the older workers, tired and disinterested, looking with disbelief at the circus, is juxtaposed with the image of the Party officials - dressed up and businesslike. The latter image is later followed by the image of the sick and mutilated hand of the worker shown in a close-up. This dialogical encounter of images creates the feeling of repugnance and hatred in the spectator, or, rather, brings to the surface a feeling which had already been present in the Polish spectator for almost two decades.⁶

My suggestion is that the basic concept of montage was employed by Wajda to produce striking effects in film and to reveal social contradictions not only by concatenations of images per se but through the juxtaposition of image and sound, image and language, and image and music. Moreover, whole scenes from different films, when juxtaposed, reveal the same principle that Eisenstein's montage does. These "extensions" of montage technique to larger textual units than shots or scenes, and to different components of the film texture, such as sound and music, produce an emotional,

perlocutionary effect in the spectator. Examples of these extensions will be presented below.

For instance, in **Man of Iron**, it is not only the montage of images but the montage of images and sounds, and images and spoken or written language, which, together, produce a new entity, a novel aesthetic object affecting the spectator in a different way than a concatenation of images only.

Man of Iron is well known for its combination of sound and image which produces a striking, mostly frightening effect. Sound functions here as an independent semantic component which, by combination with the image, forms a new, unified whole. For instance, in the scene of the procession with the dead body of the worker carried by his compatriots on the piece of the board, the soundtrack superimposed on the images introduces a chilling reading. The soundtrack for this scene is composed of authentic records of the militia groups' short-wave radios through which the militia-men cooperated in monitoring the procession. The dry, crackling observation in the form of short, informative sentences, for instance, "a group of people moves in the direction of street x", or, "several hundred people gather in place y and should be dispersed", constitutes a frightening commentary to the solemnity of the procession. The image of the dead body of a worker is juxtaposed with an impersonal observation by the authority figures interested only in maintaining order and in avoiding another political confrontation. In the scene, there is not only tragedy and pathos but also a kind of metaphor for a human revolt, honour and despair.

Another semantic element which reinforces the perlocutionary impact of the image in **Man of Iron** is the natural language in its written and oral manifestations. Linguistic phrases form an integral part of the sequence but also contradict the semantics of the image, clash with it or supplement it. The verbal signifiers are present in **Man of Iron** not only in specific phenomenal forms, such as soundtrack

or as writing within the field of the image (e.g. slogans on the walls of the houses), but they form hybrid forms of signification with the image and with music, interpenetrating each other.⁷

The film employs texts from poetry which constitute a linguistic framework situating the fictional and factual message of the film in an artistic context. The film begins with Maja Komorowska, a great Polish actress, reading Czeslaw Milosz's poem "Nadzieja" ("Hope"), and it ends with a ballad about a shipyard worker killed in 1970, written by an anonymous author. These two texts give a monological interpretation to the cinematic dialectic on the screen; they placate the political and historical disruption and constitute a bitter commentary to the historical events. The linguistic sparsity and discipline of poetry binds the hope in the beginning of the film and the despair sensed by the spectator in the end of the film, in an emotional condensation. The two poems tell about similar things. The first one tells about the feeling of power given to man when he realizes that reality is constant, and the other poem tells that the shipyard worker's death did not happen in vain. The poems tell about hope based on religious belief, and about events which, though they happened long ago, still have the same sense and nothing can deny their importance, and their factual existence. The poems delineate an emotional climate which dominates the whole film.

The poetic framework envelops a mosaic of other linguistic messages which illustrate the people's discontent and their hope for victory. These texts are, among others, the nervous outburst of the woman from the crowd in front of the shipyard, commenting upon the prices of food; workers' postulates heard from the loudspeakers; the reminiscences of Mrs Hulewicz; the journalists' protests; and statements of the representatives of the authorities. Also, written linguistic messages infiltrate the text of the film. The authorities' flyers distributed from airplanes clash with the workers'

spontaneous slogans painted on the walls. Words dominate the film but are not constitutive for particular personae dramatis. Rather, they describe various ideological positions, political attitudes, and different ways of seeing reality. By putting them together, by juxtaposing them, Wajda produces an invaluable accomplishment in that he arrests on the screen the historical coexistence of social attitudes. The cinematic image powerfully reveals not only the brutal verbatim quality of the linguistic message but also the actors' faces and the grim background of the mise en scène reinforcing the enunciative power of the natural language. What is even more important, the juxtaposition of these diverse semantic components of the image reveals new meanings in the reality itself and shows how social reality does not match the slogans of the authorities' 'newspeak'.

Thus, the image voice, the aural voice and the linguistic voice all cohabit the same utterance, formulating the final meaning of the intended message. The three of them interact in a dialogical struggle, and by a symbolic opposition of image vs. sound, image vs. the linguistic utterance, or all three of them engaged in a violent polemic, create a cinematic unity full of internal contradictions and tensions.

Also music constitutes an additional semantic principle of unity in the films which gives the images its own power. In **Man of Marble**, the film starts with the songs of the fifties, then proceeds to a kind of squeaky musical score in the scene at the museum. But, then, it properly illustrates every scene in the film. Wajda himself stresses the importance of music in his films,

Is music indispensable? As far as my own films are concerned - those in which I knew where I was going and what I wanted to achieve - I knew in advance what music

would best support the story.⁸

He also realizes that some music, as in some sections of **Man of Marble** is non-existent, inaudible - a transparent discourse which merges ideally with the images on the screen.

Some people say that good film music is inaudible. That may be another way of complimenting the composer by saying that he has done his job so well one is not aware of the music as an outside element.⁹

In **Man of Iron**, on the other hand, Andrzej Korzynski's score is mainly tense and spare but breaks through exuberantly when the occasion calls for it. It is **Danton** where "an apparently anachronistic modern music composed by Jean Prodromides succeeds in capturing the essence of the picture: the sense of things tearing apart."¹⁰ Music magnificently conveys the immediacy of the Terror due to the grim, metallic orchestrations of the soundtrack, which contrives to sound continually on the point of explosion. The executions, seemingly unattended, are "almost Bressonian matters of blades and blood in brief proximity"¹¹. Jean Prodromides' jagged, nervy score, with its opposition of the jarring sound of the imminence of terror, and full of life and toughness in the scenes with Danton, adds a discordant note of the dialogical clash of attitudes, emotions and judgements.

The following scenes, on the other hand, constitute a dialogical montage of larger semantic units. The first scene ends **Man of Marble** while the second constitutes a semantic continuation of the same scene in **Man of Iron**. Even though the scenes are not placed side by side, as is typical in Eisenstein's montage, the perlocutionary effect of these two scenes, when compared with each other, is that of a dialogical clash of two opposing sequences.

In the last scene in **Man of Marble** Agnieszka and Maciek return to Warsaw in order to meet the TV producer and finish the film about Birkut. Maciek is a living proof that Birkut exists. That "proof" is necessary for the opportunistic film producer who invented the requirement that it be provided in order to be able to kill Agnieszka's diploma film. Agnieszka's triumphant return to the TV studio in Warsaw with Birkut's son at her side is juxtaposed with the humorous presentation of the TV producer whose only reaction to this is to hide in the men's toilet.

On the other hand, the last scene constitutes an amalgam of discourses in a curious blend of the fictional and the real. The film diegesis tells the spectator that Agnieszka will never finish her diploma film because nobody will ever let her. However, the film **Man of Marble** has already been made, and after the three hours of the screening, the spectator sees the task completed. In the last scene, the fusion of the real (Wajda), and fictional (Agnieszka) subjects of enunciation, or, a sort of absorption of Agnieszka into Wajda¹², seems absolute. Agnieszka/Wajda, Wajda/Agnieszka triumphantly look from the screen with an expression of a sacred duty fulfilled on their faces.

The last scene functions on another level as well. It complies with the Hollywood principles of a movie with a happy ending, thus introducing a point of departure for the reflections concerning the relation of Wajda to the American film industry, his fascination with Hollywood films (especially **Citizen Kane** by Orson Welles), and with American films' technique.

At the same time, the American trait is slightly mocked, and appropriated by Wajda with a Polish, sarcastic sense of humour in **Man of Marble**. The last scene reveals the Hollywood paradigm of a patriarchal plot with **him** and **her** united by love, and **him** delicately taking control of the situation (Maciek puts his hand over Agnieszka's shoulder in a paternal

gesture). This discourse of traditional family values and love reemerges later in the next film, **Man of Iron**.¹³

In **Man of Iron** the same scene ends in an abrupt and brutal way. The dialogical exchange of ambiguities in **Man of Marble** is replaced by a monological outburst of an openly disclosed hatred for the system. Agnieszka describes this scene in her conversation with Winkiel, which took place in prison. This time, the spectator is not left with a pleasant array of possibilities of interpretation but is bombarded with a literal presentation of the totalitarian monological imposition of the authority. When the TV producer learns from Agnieszka that Birkut had been killed in Gdansk in 1970, a fact Agnieszka has no intention to hide, he declares his final decision that the film will be taken from Agnieszka and she herself must never appear in the TV studio again.

The claustrophobic space of the TV producer's office constitutes a visual contrast to the feeling of openness in the TV studio corridor which was supposed to lead the spectator into a polyphonous world of freedom of expression in **Man of Marble**. The spectator feels trapped in the small, cluttered office in **Man of Iron** which culminates the triumphant walk of **Man of Marble**. The expectations of the spectator, raised so highly in the first film, are squashed in the corners of the little office. The brightness and visual lightness of the last scene in **Man of Marble** gives way to the dark colours in **Man of Iron**. The blue and the white in the last scene of the first film are replaced by the brown and the yellow of the office which literally throw the spectator down from his heavenly expectations to the dirt and dreariness of the bureaucrat's den.

The two scenes, one from **Man of Marble**, and the other from **Man of Iron**, constitute an aesthetic continuum, which verbalizes the development of the political situation with aesthetic means. On the other hand, the juxtaposition of the

two films itself forms a kind of dialogue, summoned forth by the "to be continued" air of the last scene in **Man of Marble**. At the same time, the two scenes constitute two semantic units from two different films which, when juxtaposed, create a dialogical clash of meanings and expectations.

Socialist Realism.

Another cultural discourse manifested especially in **Man of Marble** and **Man of Iron** is Socialist Realism. Socialist Realism - an artistic version of Stalinism, produced a whole artistic school both in the Soviet Union and in Poland which propagated the ideals of Stalin in paintings, sculpture and film. In Socialist Realist paintings, for instance,

(...)nie ma miejsca na swiadomie zaplanowana czy to tajemniczosc, czy smiesznosc, czy intymnosc wyczuwalna nieraz w atmosferze akademickich plocien. Autor z gory eliminuje zaskoczenie, uprzedza nasze watpliwosci. Akcja najczescie ukazana jest w kluczowym momencie, ale z zapowiedzia oczekiwanego, zadowalajacego rozwiazania.¹¹

(...) there is no place for the premeditated mysteriousness, humour or intimacy detected sometimes in the atmosphere of academic paintings. At the outset the painter eliminates surprise and doubts. The action is usually shown in the crucial moment, at the same time projecting a positive, anticipated solution.

All the artistic creations of this time (the Socialist Realist period is said to have been at its peak in the years 1950 - 1954), monologically impose the ideological credo of those times - they propagate work, the cult of Stalin and they are uniformly based on a black and white dichotomy in character presentation. The character was either good or bad; or he or she was foreign, which meant that he was either on the right or on the wrong side of the barricade. This code excluded any evolution in the character's development or psychological

explanation. The protagonist was a perfect construct of the Stalinist system and, in his activities, was totally subjugated to ideology and politics.

Both **Man of Marble** and **Man of Iron** exhibit the Socialist Realist discourse. However, while **Man of Marble** does it in an ironical and selfmocking way, **Man of Iron** seems to exploit basic techniques of Socialist Realism in a monological imposition of its ideological stance. In **Man of Marble**, for instance, Birkut, though serious and monologically self-righteous in most of the film, allows for a moment of ironical doubt when he looks in disbelief at the marble figure of him carved by a Soc-realist sculptor. Birkut almost winks at the spectator. In **Man of Iron**, however, Birkut's son changes into a monolithic, humorless and inhuman giant who treats himself with upmost seriousness. The monological reading is imposed on the spectator through the work of the camera and the construction of the *mise-en-scène*. Even in the construction of space in the images Wajda seems to recapitulate the specificity of the construction of space in Soc-Realist painting,

Zasadnicza cecha kompozycji obrazów socrealistycznych jest specyficznie budowana przestrzeń. Dwa chwytów są najczęściej stosowane: zabieg perspektywy monumentalizującej postaci i świadoma deformacja zasad perspektywy linearnej wydobywająca w nienaturalny sposób z płaszczyzny płotna bohaterów prezentowanych wydarzeń.¹⁵

A basic feature of composition of the Socialist Realist paintings is that space is constructed in a specific way. Two devices are usually applied: a low-angle perspective which made the presented figures look enormous; and a deliberate deformation of the linear perspective

principles which made the figures stand out from the paintings' space in an unnatural way.

An example of such a construction of an image is found in the sequence where Agnieszka is presented as a symbol of mother-Poland. The construction of the *mise-en-scène* places Agnieszka, the madonna with unborn child looked up to by Birkut's fellow workers with pious adoration, in the centre of the picture. Agnieszka looks monumental, statuesque, presented without any ironical comment, however. As Gilbert Adair notes,

In **Man of Iron** Agnieszka and Birkut's son were apotheosised - statufied, so to speak - as pious, forward-straining heroes out of a tradition that can be described only as Stalinist; and the fruit of their hard-working Stakhanovite loins was blessed in a pathetic little cameo appearance, by none other than Lech Walesa himself.¹⁶

In this film there are no three-dimensional people, only one-dimensional abstractions that represent historical forces. On the one side Maciek, a virtuous and courageous working class protagonist. His enemies admire him; his friends and loved ones include salt of the earth grandmothers as well as intellectuals drawn moth-like to the light of his integrity. Even Lech Walesa stands in as best man at his marriage, which takes place in a church and signifies the ostensible communion of Church, working class and intelligentsia. Against the idealistic hero, on the other hand, are arrayed a motley and assiduously villainous crew consisting of scheming bureaucrats, spineless newsmen, alcoholic police informers, and unscrupulous security police - all representatives of an oppressive and machiavellian dictatorship. In this way, Wajda repeated the Socialist Realism paradigm of strict division of roles - into good ones or bad ones without any psychological

explanations. As Michal Glowinski notes, such a strict division of roles was characteristic for Socialist Realism,

Rozdanie rol charakteryzowalo socrealistyczne fabuly - bez wzgledu na to, czy opowiadano je w produkcyjnej powiesci, czy w dramacie lub w filmie. Role te bowiem, jak w folklorze, byly z gory dane, jakby przedustawnie ukszaltowane. Wrog byl zawsze wrogiem - i latwo mozna go bylo rozpoznać, nawet gdy sie podstepnie maskowal; wahajacy sie inteligent byl zawsze wahajacym sie inteligentem, nawet gdy zmierzal ku dobremu i nie chcial pomagac wrogowi w realizowaniu jego niecných zamiarow; bohater pozytywny byl bohaterem pozytywnym nawet gdy w chwilach slabosci odznaczal sie porywczoscia, czy dzialal w sposob malo przemyslany.¹⁷

A strict division of roles was characteristic for Socialist Realism plots, regardless of whether in a "production" novel, a drama or a film. These parts were predetermined and pre-formulated, as in folklore. An enemy was always an enemy, easily recognized, even if he or she were in disguise; a hesitant intellectual was always a hesitant intellectual, even if he or she intended well and did not want to help the enemy in the realization of his nefarious plans; and, a positive hero was always a positive hero, even if, in the moments of weakness, he was over-eager or acted in a thoughtless way.

Both **Man of Marble** and **Man of Iron** reveal such a division of roles, the latter film more emphatically, however. Much of **Man of Iron** is inspirational in tone, with Maciek and Agnieszka serving as the model for a new-style anti-Stalinist couple. In fact, the Maciek/ Agnieszka couple in **Man of Iron** seems to recapitulate the Birkut/Hanka paradigm in **Man of**

Marble, thus producing a dialogical tension between the two films in terms of its Socialist Realist construction. However, while the couple in **Man of Marble** was historically inscribed in the cultural fabric of the fifties, the repetition of the same schema to illustrate the time of the seventies and eighties strikes the spectator as ironic.

The scenes of suffering are presented in **Man of Iron** in a conspicuously monological way, the aim of which is to establish priorities, as in a typical Socialist Realism drama again. As Glowinski notes,

Cala narracja polega jakby na ustanawianiu wartosci, a wiec tworzeniu swiata, ktorego kazdy skladnik podlega bezposredniej waloryzacji.(...) Ta potrzeba wartosciowania obejmuje nie tylko bohaterow, w istocie zagarnia wszystkie elementy, pojawiajace sie w fabule filmowej. (...)Wszedzie pojawiaja sie podzialy dychotomiczne.¹⁸

The whole narration consists in establishing priorities, that is, in creating a world, each element of which undergoes an immediate valorization (...). This need for assessment encompasses not only the protagonists but all other elements of the film narrative as well. (...) Everywhere, dichotomies appear.

One of the examples of such a presentation is the scene of the search for the body of Maciek's father in a city morgue. The scene Wajda creates here is monologically grim and desperate. In the bluish interior of the morgue, Maciek and Mrs Hulewicz are looking for Birkut's body. The bodies of all the victims are covered. Only their feet stick out with identifying labels on them. Thanks to an accident in the past during which one of Birkut's feet was disfigured, both Maciek

and Mrs Hulewicz could recognize the corpse. The dressing of the body starts from the symbolic covering of the feet. Maciek, the son, takes off his own shoes and puts them on his father's feet. This scene, together with the scene of the burial of the father's body at sunset with the romantic but ominous sky in the background, Maciek's naked feet on the snow, and the menacing figure of the security official threatening the participants of the burial, create a melodramatic effect which mixes sentimentalism with agit-prop and produces the unnerving effect of imposing the director's monological ideological credo onto the image.

In both scenes the composition of the mise-en-scène is distinctive. In the first scene, Birkut's feet are vividly exposed, while in the second one, it is the wooden cross from the birchwood branches at the head of the freshly dug grave. In both scenes the elements most emotionally loaded are also most exposed, subjugating other elements of the picture to their emotional monologicity. "Composition" governs these images which,

rozbraja obraz od wewnątrz, paralizuje go, obezwładnia jego elementy składowe.(...) Nie wolno było w obrazie socrealistycznym rozwinąć innego porządku niż "kompozycyjny", a więc na przykład kolorystycznego, światłocieniowego, efektów fakturalnych, nastroju związanego z przestrzennym charakterem malowidła.¹⁹

disarms the painting from within, paralyzes it, overpowers its components. (...) It was forbidden in a Socialist Realism painting to develop another order than the "compositional" one, for instance, a colour order, a light and shade order, a facture order, or cultivate a mood related to the spatial character of the painting.

Even film titles reiterate the monological, agit-prop

function of the films. As Włodarczyk notes, the title played an important role in Soc-Realist art,

Tytuł, jeden z najbardziej ideologicznie nasyconych składników dzieła, a jednocześnie jako element dzieła "rozpoczynający", posiadający moc skutecznego modelowania go jest w socrealizmie bardzo ceniony, i wyraźnie podkreśla się jego znaczenie. Tytuł usiłuje spetryfikować dzieło, unieruchomić je w porządku ideologii, podporządkować jej, aż czasami do zamazania sensu dzieła. W latach dominowania doktryny socrealistycznej nie mogły powstawać obrazy bez tytułu. Tytuł narzucał i gwarantował pozadana przez władze interpretację. Tytuł spełniał rolę pośrednika, katalizatora między socrealistycznym dziełem a odbiorcą. Tytuł był ładunkiem ideologii, który malarz musiał umieścić w odpowiednim momencie i miejscu w socrealistycznym obrazie.²⁰

The title, one of the most ideologically saturated elements of the work of art, and "initiating" and molding this work at the same time, is highly regarded and valued in Socialist Realism and its significance is clearly emphasized. The title tries to petrify the work of art and immobilize it in the ideological system subjugating it to such a degree that, sometimes, the sense of the work of art is obliterated. In the years of the domination of the Socialist Realist doctrine, there could be no works without titles. The title imposed the interpretation guaranteed and required by the authorities. The title acted as an intermediary, a catalyst between the Socialist Realist work of art and the receiver. The title functioned as an ideological charge which the painter was obliged to place in a specific moment and place in a Socialist Realist painting.

Both **Man of Marble** and **Man of Iron** comply with the rules of title formation. However, while "man of marble" refers sardonically to the awful statues of Birkut made when he was a "hero" of communist labor, "man of iron" literally symbolizes the manufacture of Maciek's own character. The title of **Man of Marble** allowed for a dialogical exchange of presuppositions concerning Socialist Realism; the director assumed that the spectator functioned within the cultural and historical discourse of Stalinism and could relate to the film's irony in the presentation of Birkut as man of marble. The wink was literal especially in the scene when Birkut looks with awe at the marble figure of himself and then directs his eyes at the camera, smiling, as if communicating to the audience his own ironical commentary.

In **Man of Iron**, however, there is no place for irony. The title is literally reworded by the images of the iron cross Maciek builds for his father after his death; by the place he works in - the shipyard, where most elements of the ship are still welded in an old fashioned way which literally imposes the association with iron and its treatment; and by the "iron" characterization of Maciek who monologically imposes his inhuman unbending determination in ideological choices.

Socialist Realism is an important cultural discourse within which Wajda functioned as a film director (after all, Burski, from **Man of Marble** constitutes Wajda's alter ego), the legacy of which is vivid in the creation of a specific perlocutionary impact. In this sense, the films moved but also irritated the spectator who discerned the presence of this discourse in every layer of the film. Another such discourse was that of Polish Romanticism.

Polish Romanticism

All Wajda's films, and the three ones discussed especially, are permeated with the discourse of Polish Romanticism, which complements the discourse of Socialist Realism, thus forming a curious blend of the sentimental, the romantic, and the pathos - laden.

Polish Romanticism was a period in Polish culture which greatly influenced Poles not only at its commencement, that is some time after 1820, but also during the two world wars, and up to the time of Solidarity. Romanticism was the artistic outlet for the ideological ferment which was stirring the whole nation. The feeling of insecurity and injustice caused by the decisions of the Congress of Vienna and the presentiment of the coming struggle for independence and social justice inspired both Mickiewicz, the great poet, and Chopin, the pianist and composer. Although only very few groups among the young intelligentsia readily accepted the revolutionary ideology propagated by Mickiewicz, romantic poetry made an immediate conquest of the hearts and minds of the educated population.

The appearance of the first works of Romantic literature gave a death blow to the concepts of the Classical School. The first volume of Adam Mickiewicz's poems was printed in 1822 and Antoni Malczewski's poem **Maria** in 1825. The most important feature of Romanticism seems to be its breaking away from rigid forms and its opposition to the cold reasoning of the Classical School. Romanticism meant passion and emotional involvement which counteracted the rigors of Classicism.

Another important feature of Romanticism was an introduction of the "simple folk". The thoughts and desires of

simple people were given priority in the literature and poetry of that time - again as a challenge to the culture of the salons. This trend was especially characteristic of Polish Romanticism as it reflected the desire for liberation from both the constraints of Classicism and the Russian and German oppressors who held Poland in their grip during the partition of Poland at that time.

Romanticism gave rise to an important literary movement. Romantic poets, such as Adam Mickiewicz and Juliusz Slowacki, transformed the language of expression of a whole generation. Their passionate, highly emotional long poems and ballads awoke national consciousness and brought the attention of Poles to the issues of patriotism and national identity. The leading theorist of Romanticism at that time, Maurycy Mochnacki, made it quite clear in his work O Literaturze polskiej XIX w. (On Polish Literature of the 19th century) in 1830 that "one of Romanticism's main tasks was the awakening of national consciousness."²¹

The fate of the common people, the nourishing of national consciousness and the desire for freedom are themes which persistently appear in many Wajda's films (especially in **Wesele [The Wedding]**). The three films discussed in this thesis are no exception. In **Man of Marble**, the common man is romanticized and glorified. Birkut is always presented in a favourable way, his image on the screen is surrounded by a halo of diffused, orange light, the contours are soft as if enveloping Birkut in the mist of the spectator's sympathy and understanding.

One of the most striking scenes in the film illustrating Wajda's love for common people shows Hanka and Birkut moving from the apartment in Nowa Huta which they had obtained from the state. Birkut is deprived of the apartment and has to move to the slums on the outskirts. On the cart there are modest pieces of furniture, the table, the chair and the case, but

the most important piece of his belongings seems to be a traditional red geranium, which Birkut and his wife handle with great care. This symbol of love for Polish peasant tradition seems to epitomize Birkut's love for truth and honesty.

The common people tradition is later recounted in **Man of Iron**, in the heart-breaking recollections of Mrs Hulewicz, and in her naive acceptance of Winkiel realized in her inclusion of him in the discourse of the common people's customs. Winkiel is invited for a cup of tea but he is also included in the activity of peeling potatoes - a symbolic compendium of peasant culture, the family, and the intimacy of everyday life.

The Romantic, populist tradition finds its final realization in **Danton**, where the main protagonist of the film, Danton, with whom the audience identifies, is the epitomization of the common people. The whole construction of the image - Danton, not always clean, dishevelled, with uncombed hair, feeling uneasy in clothes which always look too big for him; but passionate, robust and impetuous - propagates the image of the common man popular in the Polish Romanticism. The feelings and emotions are critical in a man of Romanticism, not necessarily his polished looks or refined speech. This trait in Polish Romanticism was intensely criticized by Sniadecki, for instance, who in his article "On the Classical and Romantic Writings" (1819),

fiercely condemned the romantics, accusing them of mysticism, of glorification of the irrational superstitions of the country folk, and, last but not least, of undermining the social order by proclaiming the superiority of wild imagination over enlightened reason and healthy common sense.²²

One of the most interesting elements of Polish Romanticism was its Messianism. Messianism, according to Walicki, is "a type of religious consciousness closely bound up with millenarism, i.e. with the 'quest for total, imminent, ultimate, this-worldly, collective salvation. It is a belief in a redeemer, individual or collective, mediating between the human and the divine in the process of history."²³ Polish Messianism, realized especially in the writings and lectures of a great Polish Romantic poet, Adam Mickiewicz, was in fact a form of modern social utopianism - a form, however, which was religiously inspired, and which consciously adopted the old millenarian patterns.

This kind of Messianism is subliminally adopted by Wajda in the creation of his protagonists, and in the passionate organization of the film message. Karpinski in his analysis of Wajda's theatre stresses the fact that almost all his productions are "vehicles for a philosophical, moral and political message."²⁴ Similarly, in film, Wajda is not merely a bystander but an active participant in the history of his own country, who tries to shape the world with his art. According to Karpinski, "Wajda, as an artist with the mission is a part of the Romantic inheritance."²⁵ Also Stefan Morawski, quoted by Karpinski, considers Wajda a true Romantic artist,

(Wajda's) conviction that the deepest artistic function is a critical attitude, drawing attention to negative episodes in history in the light of positive ones, makes him one of the most 'romantic' perpetrators of the Romantic tradition today.

I would have no hesitation in describing him as a visionary, who seeks in the past, the best possible road to the future.²⁶

This visionary aspect of Romanticism in his films - the

aspect of Messiah as the redeemer - is present in all the films discussed. Agnieszka in **Man of Marble** tries to undo history, and open the eyes of the spectator to the historical truth; Birkut, in the same film, openly believes in social utopianism, literally becoming a social worker after his fatal accident. Maciek, in **Man of Iron**, devotes his life and the well-being of his own family to the organization of the opposition movement against the oppressive communist system, and, finally, Danton loses his head in an attempt to save the revolution. The Romantic trait of the saviour appears and reappears in all the films discussed, passionately present in the protagonists.

The religious element in Polish Messianism is especially present in **Man of Iron**. This characteristics of Romanticism, as Walicki points out, is representative of its Polish variety,

A full-fledged Messianism, national and religious at the same time, striving for an imminent and total regeneration of earthly life, was born in Poland after the defeat of the November uprising. The really new element in it - an element from which the entire structure of messianic thought could be derived - was the conviction that traditional faith was not enough, that Christianity should be rejuvenated or reborn, and that the fate of Poland depended on the universal religious regeneration of mankind.²⁷

The religious element of Polish Messianism is overpowering in **Man of Iron**. It is present in the images of Catholic masses, crosses and cemeteries; in the scenes with obvious religious references (as in the scene of sharing bread by Anna Hulewicz and Winkiel); and in the scene of offering help to the pregnant Agnieszka. It is also present in the

soundtrack when the spectator is exposed to the religious hymns during the erection of the cross, during the mass, and, on leaving the house of Mrs Hulewicz by Winkiel and Dzidek. Religious rituals, like the wedding in the Church, the Catholic mass, and the Catholic burial of the dead, are openly related to the political and the ideological in a passionate dialogical relationship. Thus, the political and the religious merge in the monological presentation of the Romantic Messiah.

Passion and feeling, the hallmarks of Romanticism, characterize the presentation of all the Romantic traits in the film, the religious, the Messianic, and the populist. Sometimes, however, the films' Romantic emotionalism borders on the sentimental and campy. For instance, in **Man of Iron**, the presentation of Agnieszka as a symbol of Solidarity and "mother-Poland" is almost unnatural in its sentimentality. The scene combines all the necessary ingredients of the Romantic sauce: the messianic function, the populist tradition, and the religious elements - all merged in an elaborate shot of Agnieszka, the saint, accepting humbly the money offered by the workers.²⁸ The spectator reacted impatiently to such a blatant exposure to national and religious symbols. However, whatever the perlocutionary effect on the audience, Polish Romanticism constitutes an important discourse in Wajda's films. It elucidates his films' sentimentalism, but also gives a reason for the ardent presentation.

Citizen Kane

The Romantic and the Social Realist discourses are interrelated in Wajda's films, producing a dialogical collage of traits, accompanied by a completely different discourse, the one of Hollywood influence. Wajda was fascinated by Hollywood film as he openly admits in his book Double Vision. My Life in Film. Even American directors are role models to him,

We've all seen photos of D.W.Griffith or Eric von Stroheim on the set, striding, gesticulating, always on their feet: for me that expresses the American film of energy and action that I love and admire above all others.²⁹

There are direct references to this American film "fascination" in **Man of Marble** when the TV producer tells Agnieszka that this is not the way to produce films in Poland. However, the film which specifically reveals itself as a trace of Hollywood discourse in **Man of Marble** is the phenomenal deviation from Hollywood's norms, Orson Welles' **Citizen Kane**. Critics such as Otis Ferguson³⁰ or David Bordwell³¹ consider **Citizen Kane** as a departure from the Hollywood norm both in form and in style. Moreover, the film diverges from the usual practice of the classical Hollywood production by leaving some of the motivations of the protagonists ambiguous - an unheard of idea in the mainstream films of those times.

Andrzej Wajda in numerous interviews referred to **Citizen Kane** as his "inspiration"³² and "the sort of marvellous, brilliant cinematic discovery which appears only from time to

time (wspaniale, olsniewajace odkrycie kina jakie pojawia sie tylko raz na jakis czas)"³³. **Citizen Kane** is present in **Man of Marble** in the way the plot is built, the satirical outlook on the issues of power is realized, and the camera work is utilized in the creation of space. Some traces of **Citizen Kane** are also apparent in **Man of Iron**.

Jan Dawson, in Sight and Sound, even refers to **Man of Marble** as "an East European **Citizen Kane**."³⁴ Like **Citizen Kane** the film is concerned with the mechanics of mythology: it explores the creation of a public image while simultaneously pursuing its own investigation into the reality behind the official myths. It is also concerned with the power of the media in manipulating truth.

Man of Marble is many-layered and multi-dimensional. As in its model, **Citizen Kane**, the reminiscences that structure its narrative all reveal something - usually ironic - about the characters themselves and the kind of choices they have made. The plot of **Man of Marble** almost literally reproduces Herman Mankiewicz's plot of "the film about the life of a famous American, as seen from several different points of view."³⁵ Like **Citizen Kane**, **Man of Marble** is a mixture of flashbacks, crosscutting and contained discontinuity. Both **Citizen Kane** and **Man of Marble** show refinement in their plot construction, where "chaotic as it seems at first, every loose end turns into an elegant bow."³⁶ As Thomson notes,

Kane confirms the way Hollywood films progress not like life but like a clever toy or a perfect construct.(...) **Kane's** development grows out of cuts, slow dissolves, flashbacks - all of which were common, if not normally put together with such mannered ingenuity. They are also devices of dislocation making for an artificial coherence.³⁷

Wajda enriched this technique by producing films within films

textured and structured as different discourses evoking separate times and spaces. Thus, meanings clash not only within shots, scenes and sequences, but also between the main frame of the film and the "inserted" films of the fictional footage from the past in **Man of Marble**, and the footage from the past and actual newsreels in **Man of Iron**. The semantics of the whole film changes inasmuch as the inserted glossia constitute a semantic addition reinforcing the overall perlocutionary impact.

In **Man of Marble**, the recreations of films from the fifties themselves are a brilliant accomplishment by Wajda who has produced a masterly collage of old newsreels and contemporary film produced with special colour effects. Both the new and the old parts look as if they came from the same diegetic time - that of the fifties. An example of such a film within films is **Architects of Our Happiness**, a prize-winning documentary made 24 years before by the fictive director, Burski. **Architects** would be a parody if it were not such a precise recreation of the era's socialist newsreel propaganda, albeit one that incorporates Burski. We see him on a reviewing stand as the actual papier mache effigies of Truman, Franco and other enemies of socialism file past. To the upbeat Poland-on-the-march narration ("They sallied forth to join the struggle for a better future"), **Architects** dramatizes Birkut's official life, which if one can judge from the optimistic workers' chorus, went on happily ever after. Wajda does not parody outright here, but the edge of satire is unmistakable, trenchant.

The same construction of the plot is present in **Man of Iron**. Rather as he had used the technique of footage collage in **Man of Marble**, Wajda tried to introduce the technique of reminiscences from the past in **Man of Iron**. While it worked brilliantly in **Man of Marble**, in **Man of Iron** it seems like a catalogue of old tricks. The technique of reminiscences is too

obviously the dominating thread of the whole film. The pattern is boringly repetitive: whenever somebody begins to reminiscence, a close-up of his face is next, and, necessarily, the trip into the past follows. The cause-effect relation between consecutive shots is obvious in its mechanical tautology.

The lack of a decent plot is "sweetened" by a general commotion on the scene which makes an impression of "real life". For instance, when a character comes into the room, or shows his identity card, small events intervene. The film gives a general impression of a discordant combination of scenes, without a consistent train of thoughts. Presumably, as Daniel Bickley notes, "Wajda deliberately refrained from imposing on the film a recognizable, visual 'style', probably to emphasize and heighten the film's 'documentary' nature."³⁸

However, critics such as Tim Purtell praise the film's form despite its apparent "choppiness". To Purtell, **Man of Iron** is "an inventive multi-dimensional collage of flashbacks, television images, documentary footage and romantic drama."³⁹ Wajda combined all these elements to produce a film which integrates history and politics in a personal way.

The discourse of **Citizen Kane** is also pervasive in the way Wajda uses space in both **Man of Marble** and **Man of Iron**. The use of wide angle lenses and the creation of low angle shots account for mannerist spatial distortions in both films. Actors lean aggressively into his lens, they appear very small or very large. "Space is opened out: The middle ground is stretched."⁴⁰ As Thomson notes,

On **Kane**, all of Toland's skill and some of his unattempted dreams were adapted to Welles's visual interpretation. Depth and darkness embody the megalomaniac's view of his own plight, trapped at the center of an infinite but crushing space. The optics of

the new wide-angle lenses Toland used distort the eye's normal vision. (...) Yet the pressure of space remains, and the relationship of the human figure to space - a key cinematic bond - exaggerates his tininess in the distance and his oppressiveness in the foreground. One feels an emotional force in those spatial relationships, and that is one of **Kane's** glories.⁴¹

The wide angle lens camera is the tool of Agnieszka's profession, which she literally drags with her wherever she goes. In the flashbacks in **Man of Marble**, and in **Man of Iron**, the camera imposes its presence in low angle shots themselves. The films about Burski in **Man of Marble**, and almost all the scenes in **Man of Iron**, are shot with an excessive use of this technique, as if stressing the emotional bond between the protagonists and the spectator, addressing him directly.

Alluded to in an ironical way, copied or transformed, the discourse of **Citizen Kane** is a profuse source of references and additional subtexts in the films. Especially in **Man of Marble** it transforms the overt literariness of Socialist Realism into a mocking parody of the genre.

The Theatre Tradition in Poland

A completely different cultural voice is present in **Danton**. Wajda's theatrical activities constitute an important trait in this film creation. In **Danton** the spectator observes a dialogical clash between the cinematic and the theatrical. Also, the film director engages in a dialogue with himself as a theatre director, having produced a version of the same play in a Polish theatre several years earlier.

The film **Danton** is based on Stanislawa Przybyszewska's play **The Danton Affair**. Her play is primarily an intellectual drama on the philosophy of history, in which human issues are of secondary importance. My analysis of Przybyszewska's **The Danton Affair** and the play based on this drama will be based on the book The Theatre of Andrzej Wajda by Maciej Karpinski⁴², a long time friend of Andrzej Wajda who, since 1974, has collaborated with the director on a number of theatrical productions.

In the play, **The Danton Affair**, Przybyszewska stresses the ethics of revolution which are inspired by reason and not passion, and not its imminent outcome - the emergence of Terror. The French Revolution is used by her as an example of an historical confrontation of opposed ideals. While Robespierre adheres to principle, Danton embodies revolutionary compromise. Przybyszewska's text clearly shows her fascination for Robespierre. Although she realizes that Robespierre's devotion to revolutionary standards could turn at any point into a dogmatic absolutism "that would betray its initial idealism and bring destruction in its wake"⁴³ her play leads through political discussions and masterly exegeses

of ideological points, sanctioning Robespierre's clarity of argumentation, and, in general, the purity of the intellectual debate.

On the basis of this play, Wajda prepared his own **The Danton Affair** in Teatr Powszechny (Popular Theatre) in Warsaw in 1975. The part of Robespierre was played by Wojciech Pszoniak (who was later cast in the same part in the film), and the part of Danton was played by Mieczyslaw Pawlik (later replaced by Gerard Depardieu in the film). A very rigid style of production (bare floor on the stage, a heavy wooden table as the basic prop) stressed (reinforced) the strongly defined behavioural differences in the characterization.

In the play all the characters are strongly individualized with the main dramatic responsibility falling upon the two antagonists, Robespierre and Danton, whose acting styles, as Karpinski notes, had one thing in common, "a dominance, an undefinable sense of dangerousness that made their impersonation of the great historical figures truly convincing."⁴⁴

In his analysis of the play Karpinski states that although it seemed to be weighted in Robespierre's favour, "yet in the final scene, after the execution of Danton, the surviving titan of the Revolution remains alone with his conscience and at the mercy of his own doubts, gripped by a metaphysical fear of the growing and uncontrollable Terror."⁴⁵

The film **Danton**, on the other hand, reveals a change in the interpretation of Robespierre and Danton. Robespierre turns into a dogmatic, cold advocate of the revolutionary idea while Danton becomes a charismatic champion of the populist cause. This was definitely caused by the events in Poland where the severe, impersonal reality of martial law with general Jaruzelski behind the decision was juxtaposed with the heroic, populist, sometimes unpredictable, but human, persona

of Walesa.

Danton is played out in a series of mostly small, intimate, beautifully defined confrontations between the robust, commonsensical Danton and the steely Robespierre. The rigorous, formal theatrical construction of the film dialogically clashes with the power of words emitted, the colours used, the music and the soundtrack.

It must be stated, however, that Wajda's French Revolution is a modest spectacle. Crowd scenes are few, and enclosed, with the result that the Convention sequences, with their packed assembly, make a vivid display of government in turmoil. The court where Danton and his fellows rail against injustice is a packed, almost intimate place. Wajda has chosen to put the emphasis on high moments of chamber drama and on the opposed temperaments of his two protagonists. The film's power comes mostly from its faces and performances. The film's sequences show mainly close ups of faces of the protagonists, in a quick, rhythmical succession of shot-reverse-shots ideally matching the rhythm of the spoken word. In this, Wajda seems to repeat his technique of a direct dialogue with the audience which he had already applied in his first presentation of **The Danton Affair** in Teatr Powszechny. In this staging of the play, as Karpinski relates, Wajda dispensed almost completely with the conventional stage, which inevitably distances the audience from the action. Instead, he transported the action into the auditorium amongst the spectators. The spectators, seated on the chairs among the actors, actively participated in the play.

A similar procedure of making the spectator an active participant in the events is used by Wajda in the film **Danton**. This time, although Wajda was not able to place the spectators within the world of the film, he used the technique of a close up with such refinement that the spectator felt a part of the

conflict. Close-ups, shot-reverse-shots and the display of the facial expression in the shots cause the spectator to be as emotionally and intellectually engaged in the process of the film viewing as in the process of direct viewing of the play itself. The facial expression of the protagonists becomes the most important "word" in the film. The glassy, reptilian fervour of Wojciech Pszoniak is juxtaposed here with Depardieu's unashamed play to the gallery. Pszoniak is almost expressionless, with devastating effect. The film becomes a carefully orchestrated theatrical accomplishment of all the protagonists.

At the same time, the facial expression functions as a carrier of the political discourse uttered by the protagonists. The words and the images complement each other, reinforcing the power of the political message. The film speaks constantly, a flow of words emitted from the screen functions as a meaning carrier for the film director but also as a trigger for a volatile discussion with the spectator, especially the Polish and the French spectators who respond to the film's assertions concerning their countries' past and more recent histories. The film is a celebration of the power of the spoken language. In **Danton** speech is action. Characters race through the night and burst into rooms in a lather, holding forth as they walk; they address large groups of people, small meetings, a cell, sometimes just another person, and in every case Wajda conveys the feeling that the fate of Europe hangs on the success of these utterances. The film becomes a passionate argument about power, authority and freedom where to continue to speak well is to control history. The argumentative power and richness of the words collides with the austerity of the images. As David Denby notes "behind the film's many physical and rhetorical epiphanies one senses the twin traditions of epic and avant-garde theatre merging triumphantly."⁴⁶ As in the theatre performance, the austerity of the images clashes with a display of a large scale gesture

and utterance.

Furthermore, the film medium gives Wajda another possibility of expression. The colour and the construction of mise-en-scène are those elements which especially relate dialogically to the severity of the theatrical production. In **Danton**, this dialogic aesthetic is utilized to present the opposing forces of the French Revolution. While the world of Robespierre and his preference for reason is presented in cool whitish and bluish colours, the world of the rustic Danton is rich in reds, yellows and greens. The colour palette in the film's cinematography (by Igor Luther) accurately captures the colours and textures associated with Jacques Louis David's paintings of the period. As Kevin Thomas notes,

Wajda had his superb cinematographer, Igor Luther, desaturate his stock to the extent that **Danton** seems a black-and-white picture shot in color, giving it the look of vintage prints that are essentially studies in black, white and gray with touches of red so rusty that it looks like dried blood. And for all the elegance of its period, **Danton** has the authentic feeling of **La Nuit de Varennes**: People may wear silks and satins but there's lots of sweat and grime, and their drawing rooms, for all their crystal and tapestry, look shabby. You can all but smell the stink all that perfume was supposed to hide.⁴⁷

The symbol of Robespierre's Revolution is Robespierre's room, cool and ugly. Robespierre's room functions as the epitomization of the dogma of revolution - empty, rigid, and cruel in its bare necessities. Its bluish walls enclose modest furniture and sparse objects, together forming an austere image which opens and ends the film and constitutes a rigid framework enclosing the deep, passionate conflict reigning within **Danton**. In the final scene of the film, the room constitutes an epilogue to the historical lesson of the

revolution which ends in terror. Danton looks up to the room before going to the guillotine. He hopes to see Robespierre there but the latter is not present. Danton shouts in the direction of the empty window that Robespierre will soon follow him. The room, thus, functions as a comment to the imminence of Terror which will annihilate both the oppressed and the oppressor.

In contrast, Danton's revolution is the revolution of the masses, pulsating with the desire to live, eat well, drink, and make love. The pristineness of Robespierre's room is juxtaposed with Danton's quarters, where passion and vitality reign. The predominant colours are red, brown and orange while the rooms are cluttered with an abundance of objects; they live their own, human life. This vitality of Danton's persona, the life he lives and the ideas he propagates is rigorously clenched at the end of the film by the image of Robespierre's room which symbolizes the cruel reign of terror; the whiteness of the sheets covering Robespierre the efficiency of terror which embraces all the participants of the insanity of the revolution. In the end of the film the image of the sheets covering Robespierre brings in (clashes with, interacts with) the discourse of martial law in Poland, which was especially tenacious for the Polish spectator at that time. The Polish spectator dialogically compares the inevitability of terror ending the French Revolution with the inevitability of the martial law which ended the revolution in Poland. Both are associated with the colour white - the colour of the white sheets in Robespierre's bedroom, and the colour of the snow when martial law was implemented (Polish martial law was announced on a December morning by the government decree).

An additional reinforcement of the voice of terror in the film is the lighting. It is shockingly cold and white, almost sepulchral, especially outdoors, where the sun never appears and everything turns the slategray colour of the guillotine.

The theatrical and the cinematic form an absorbing mosaic of glossia which make the spectator indulge in the beauty of the presentation of the ideological conflict and in the cool, artistic images. Unlike **Man of Marble** and **Man of Iron**, however, **Danton** lacks romanticism and passion. Wajda's **Danton** does not create the perlocutionary effect where the spectator may be influenced by the film so much as to identify with the protagonist indisputably in the way he or she identified with Agnieszka or Maciek in the two other films. **Danton's** aesthetic leaves the spectator viewing the film unemotionally though with prudent concern for the artistic detail.

The three films discussed in the thesis all reveal the five aesthetic discourses discussed in this chapter. **Man of Marble**, **Man of Iron** and **Danton** all display traces of Polish Romanticism mixed with the propagandistic depictions of Socialist Realism and the theatrical positioning of the dialogues of the protagonists. All the films reveal traces of Eisensteinian montage and the Wellesian approach to the narrative and creation of space within the *misè-en-scene*. Undoubtedly though, the latter artistic discourse is most recognizable in the first two films, while the theatrical tradition is clearly discernible in **Danton**.

It would be interesting to see in which film sequence most of these discourses coalesce and form a tumultuous dialogical interplay of the romantic, the pompous, and the propagandistic. Though in all three films scenes revealing this complexity of discourses do appear, the best choice for a comprehensive, dialogical analysis seems to be the second scene of the fifteenth sequence in **Danton** depicting Robespierre posing for his portrait in David's studio.

The scene starts with a panning movement of the camera shooting the young naked boy who poses for David, the painter.

This scene reminds the spectator of a similar one from **Man of Marble** in which Birkut posed for the sculptor. However, unlike the cheerful and humorous scene of **Man of Marble**, in **Danton** the discourse of Socialist Realism mingles with the inevitability of the terror of revolution suggested by the disturbing music. The next shot shows an unfinished mural on the wall behind the young model, which reiterates the discourse of Socialist Realism. The artistic tradition of the latter also required the production of huge wall murals which displayed celebrated contemporaries or the common people at work.

The next shot shows Robespierre trying various costumes for his portrait as Caesar. This particular shot simulates the discourse of the Romantic tradition with its concept of the Messiah, the saviour of the nation. The discourse of Messianism, however, clashes with an ironical presentation of Robespierre in this scene as he hesitates on the choice of the olive branch and other ornaments for his depiction on the mural. Moreover, the mode of presentation of Robespierre reminds the spectator of the low-angled presentation of Citizen Kane in Welles' film.

The grandiose depiction of Robespierre clashes with the sincere evocation of judge Fouquier who enters the studio and tries to convince Robespierre that the planned execution of Danton can produce unpredictable results. The moment is accompanied by sombre music again. In reply, Robespierre shouts theatrically that the execution is for the good of the people, to which Fouquier has no answer and leaves the studio. Robespierre takes off his attire and orders David, the painter, to remove the portraits of the traitors from the mural. The scene ends with an image of a huge marble foot - a visible reminder of **Man of Marble** and the Stalinist discourse permeating the latter film's every layer.

The whole sequence reveals a dialogical interaction

between the discourses of the Socialist Realism, the Polish Romanticism, **Citizen Kane**, and the discourse of the theatrical tradition. The pomposity of Social Realist paintings, the grandiosity of the Romantic messiahs, the sombre presentation of Citizen Kane, and the passionate theatrical tradition of the Polish theatre, all form a densely interwoven braid in which each of its elements exerts pressure on the other and interpenetrates it. The scene illustrates the Bakhtinian essence of the "word" with its internal dialogism "that penetrates its entire structure, all its semantic and expressive layers."⁴⁸

NOTES

1. Brunette, Peter "Toward a Deconstructive Theory of Film," in Palmer The Cinematic Text. Methods and Approaches. New York: AMS Press, 1989, p.228.

2. Marie-Claire Ropars Wuilleumier, La texte divisé, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1981, p.39.

3. Eisenstein, Sergei, "From Film Form. The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram." in Mast, Gerald & Marshall Cohen (eds) Film Theory and Criticism, New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.93.

4. Eisenstein, 92.

5. Eisenstein, 93.

6. Wajda was greatly influenced by Pudovkin's "linkage of symbols" and by Eisenstein's "clash of symbols" (terms introduced by Peter and Sandra Klinge in Evolution of Film Styles Lanham, New York, London: University Press of America, 1983, p.v). He literally employs references from the originator of the montage concept. In particular, the scene of the fight for food in the film from the past leads the spectator into the discourse of Eisenstein's **Potemkin**.

7. In this statement I oppose the ideas of film analysts related to linguistics, which, "by restricting language to its phenomenal forms, the currently dominant ideologies, promoting the notion of the audio-visual, assert that the orders of the figure and of the word are two homogeneous blocks that can only be juxtaposed, confronted or combined, but can never be merged in hybrid forms of signification, interpenetrating each other." (see Paul Willemen "Cinematic Discourse: The Problem of Inner Speech" in Heath, S. & Mellencamp, P. Cinema and Language, Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1983, p.142-143.

8. Wajda, Double Vision. My Life in Film. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1989, 114.

9. Wajda, 114.

10. Ibid.

- 11.Strick, Philip. "**Danton**." Monthly Film Bulletin 9/83, 242.
- 12.The remark suggested by prof. Paul Coates.
- 13.**Man of Marble** is a film full of multiple ironies which function as additional glossia in the film. The film directs the spectator to the question of humour in Eastern Europe, its dialogical relation to the influences from the West and its derisive quality. For instance, the last scene in **Man of Marble** suggests the following questions: Is Wajda mocking Hollywood or does the mockery fall short? Are the ironies all under control or are they implied by a sarcastic spectator conscious of Western "snobbery" in Poland?, etc. The answers to these questions fall beyond the scope of the thesis. The problem of humour in Eastern Europe requires a detailed analysis of cultural and literary glossia which contribute to its qualities.
- 14.Wlodarczyk, Wojciech. Socrealizm. Sztuka polska w latach 1950 - 1954. Krakow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1991, p.17.
- 15.Wlodarczyk, 17.
- 16.Adair, Gilbert. "**Danton**." Sight and Sound, Autumn 1983, 284.
- 17.Glowinski, Michal. "Fabryczne dymy i kwitnaca czeremcha." Kino. no 5, 1991,28.
- 18.Glowinski, 29.
- 19.Wlodarczyk, 125.
- 20.Wlodarczyk, 121.
- 21.Gieysztor, Alexander. History of Poland. Warszawa: PWN, 1979, p.379.
- 22.Walicki, Andrzej. Philosophy and Romantic Nationalism: The Case of Poland. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982, p.101.
- 23.Walicki, 241.
- 24.Karpinski, 119.
- 25.Karpinski, 119.
- 26.Morawski, Stefan. "Glowny Topos Andrzeja Wajdy." Dialog, 1975, no 9. Quoted by Karpinski, p.119.
- 27.Walicki, 243.

28. Paul Coates suggests that, probably, what sinks this scene is less its iconography than the workers' shy "this is our solidarity" statement. The spectator could have been annoyed by a timid flag-waving in this scene which additionally reiterates the monological potency of the discourse of Solidarity.

29. Wajda, Andrzej. Double Vision. My Life in Film. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1989, 92.

30. Ferguson, Otis. "Welles and His Wonders." in Leo Brady and Morris Dickstein, Great Film Directors. A Critical Anthology. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978, pp.760-765.

31. Bordwell David and Kristin Thompson. Film Art: An Introduction. McGraw-Hill: Montreal, 1990.

32. Wertenstein, 246.

33. Wertenstein 206.

34. Dawson, Jan. "Man of Marble." Sight and Sound. Autumn 1979, 260.

35. Thomson, David. "Orson Welles and Citizen Kane." Coates, P. (ed) Art as Film. Montreal: P.S.Presse, 1990, 35.

36. Thomson, 40.

37. Thomson, 40.

38. Bickley, Daniel. "Man of Iron" CINEASTE, vol.XII, No.1, 1982, 48.

39. Purtell, Tim. "Man of Iron." Films in Review. 2/82, 110.

40. Thomson, 43.

41. Ibid.

42. Karpinski, Maciej. The Theatre of Andrzej Wajda. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989, pp. 34-57.

43. Karpinski, 49.

44. Karpinski, 53.

45. Ibid.

46. Denby, David. "Danton", New York, 10/10/83, 87.

CONCLUSION

In my long-time quest for a convincing (exhaustive?, explicit?) interpretive methodology for film I crossed a variety of theoretical fields in film theory, among them, film semiotics, film linguistics, auteur theory, spectatorship theory, linguistic pragmatics, and reception theory, and, finally, I approached Bakhtin's idea of dialogism which I found to be a unifying theoretical paradigm or mode of thinking, applicable to film.

The PhD thesis, Dialogism in the political films of Andrzej Wajda - **Man of Marble**, **Man of Iron** and **Danton** - is an attempt at an analysis of film within Bakhtin's concept of dialogism which, in the thesis, combines film language and film spectator in a mutual relationship. Film meaning, in this approach, becomes a negotiated entity, a product of a creative interaction between the image on the screen and the spectator in the cinema auditorium. The final film meaning appears on the border between the seen, and the accepted, rejected or negotiated in the mind of the spectator.

The thesis consists of five chapters. In the first chapter, called **The Political Film of Andrzej Wajda - Issues of Methodology**, the first part of the chapter, "The Concept 'Political' in Film Analysis" analyzes various uses of 'political' in relation to film in general. The second part of the chapter, "'Political' in Andrzej Wajda's Films" explains why the term 'political' is traditionally used in the description of Wajda's films. In the third part of the first chapter, "Bakhtin's Dialogism as an Interpretive Procedure" Bakhtin's dialogism is proposed as a methodological framework

for the analysis of political film. The fourth part of the first chapter, "Dialogism and Film", discusses the theoretical attempts so far to apply Bakhtin to film analysis.

As the first chapter elucidates, the interpretation of the films discussed in the thesis is positioned within the frame of Bakhtin's theory. In my application of Bakhtin's dialogism to film, the explication of meaning is the result of interaction between the social and historical factors, which become fused to produce a particularized reading dependent on the actual context of reading and on the world of the interpreter's beliefs and convictions. A passive existence of the work of art is dispensed with, giving way to a pulsating interaction of discourses which involve the spectator directly and rouse him or her to an active negotiation of meanings.

Bakhtin's emphasis on the social and his profound feeling for the historical were those elements in his theory which especially appealed to me as an opportunity and a challenge in the analysis of the political film of Andrzej Wajda. The latter would seem rather simplistic and artificial unless presented within a broad social and cultural context. The meaning of every image on the screen in these political films, where parable and a certain condensation of meanings are necessary to communicate the polemical structure of the image, is conditioned and formed by its historicity. This historicity is recaptured, restored by the spectator in the active and dialogical construction of meaning.

In my opinion, the political film of Andrzej Wajda especially complies with Bakhtin's understanding of language as an argumentative entity, a phenomenon which is meaningful **only** in relationship, only in the context of someone talking to someone else, even when that someone else is one's own inner addressee. Andrzej Wajda's film can be considered an example of a specific, intimate relationship between the film, its director, the social and political conditions structuring

the film; and the spectator, his background and his needs. By applying Bakhtin's theory of dialogism to the political film of Andrzej Wajda I was able to combine the accomplishments of linguistic pragmatics and Jauss's reception theory in a unified approach which treats the sender, the receiver, the message and the context as equal partners in an active process of meaning formation.

In my analysis of the differences and similarities between the reception theory of Robert Jauss (called reception history) and Bakhtin's dialogism I claim that the latter seems to encompass more interpretative possibilities than the former because of its postulate of a fluid relationship between the text and the reader. Reception history accepts the work of art as a ready-made product to be appreciated and deciphered by the reader in a unilateral relation. The reader engages in an interaction with the work of art based on a set of presuppositions inherent in his own world of beliefs which he then "matches" with particular discourses in the work, trying to decipher or deconstruct its meaning. The work of art itself, however, is treated as a finished product, an aesthetically polished **result** of the artist at work. The Bakhtinian approach allows for tensions to exist within the text itself thus permitting a development, a movement and greater possibilities for the text's interpretation than the rigorous reception theories do.

Thus, the meaning of the art work becomes structured around internal tensions between differing ideologies and points of view. Bakhtin's model of dialogism seems to encompass a multiplicity of incomplete voices and unconcluded positions and assumes an active participation on the part of the reader in the dialogical formation of meaning.

Such an understanding of dialogism is applied in the analysis of three films by Andrzej Wajda, **Man of Marble**, **Man**

of **Iron** and **Danton**. I postulate in the thesis that the films reveal multiple aspects of Bakhtin's dialogism. They involve a dialogistic use of cultural and historical events within the film text, as well as attain a realization of dialogism in the film form itself. In all these films the concept of dialogism accounts for a multiplicity of discourses and for the process of merging these discourses with the discourses of the responding audience.

Moreover, in terms of the films' images, understanding the political film means negotiation of each of its images, scenes and sequences with the interlocutor, with the spectator armed with a set of cultural and historical presuppositions. The whole essence of cinematic language in the political film of Andrzej Wajda undergoes a transformation in view of Bakhtin's dialogism. Bakhtin's methodology compels the researcher to consider the film's complex contextualizations and creates the possibility of reintroducing both politics and culture into film study.

The political film I am dealing with in the thesis activates that traditional (dictionary) meaning of the concept "political" which implies open or hidden polemic with the authorities and the society at large which has acquiesced in the policies of the government. In this sense of the "political film", both **Man of Marble** and **Man of Iron** openly or surreptitiously criticize the government for its totalitarian practices, the society for its act of consent to such practices, and sympathize with that part of society which dares oppose the dictatorship.

These are films which look at political reality in post-war Poland with unbiased frankness. In their political content and conditions of production, Wajda's films are unique in that they propagate revolutionary notions but do not become overt tools of revolution such as the films produced in the Soviet Union of the twenties, or films produced in Latin

America, where the cinema has become a weapon in the service of the revolution itself. Wajda's films combine elements of the "confrontation cinema", "social problem film" and "ideological film", all of which relate to different areas of the concept "politics" in film.

The first theoretical chapter serves as an introduction to the practical application of Bakhtin's dialogism to the analysis of Wajda's films. The second chapter, **Andrzej Wajda - the Carrier of the Political Message**, is devoted to Wajda, the film artist and his films, which are directly conditioned by Wajda's specific constitution as an artist and a director. The third chapter, **The Historical Dialogue in Wajda's Films**, examines the historical discourse in the three films as the constitutive substance of the film text. The chapter consists of five parts. The first part, "Theoretical Introduction", binds Bakhtin's dialogism with Jauss's concept of "Erwartungshorizont" and explores the issue of historical truth in Wajda's films. The second part, "Historical Context of the Films," presents a detailed account of the historical facts of the Poland after the Second World War till the introduction of martial law on the twelfth of December 1981. The third, the fourth and the fifth parts form a close analysis of the historical discourse in the films.

The three films **Man of Marble**, **Man of Iron** and **Danton** embrace a discourse which encompasses the history of contemporary Poland from the period after the Second World War to the time of the introduction of martial law in Poland in 1981. **Man of Marble** contains scenes from the early times after the Second World War: the enthusiasm incited by the country's new freedom and manifested in an ardent reconstruction of the country, but also the everpresent Stalinism and the growing role of the Communist Party in those times. **Man of Iron** encompasses the time of Gierek's rule, the growing power of opposition movements, the strikes in Gdansk in 1980 and the Gdansk agreement between the Government and shipyard workers

in August 1980. **Danton**, although its diegesis reflects the times of the French Revolution, dialogically refers to the introduction of martial law in Poland and debates the choice between the totalitarian power of reason and the passion of ordinary people in the formation of history.

The fourth chapter, **Wajda and His Dramatis Personae**, analyzes the films' protagonists which reflect multiple positions of Polish society. Wajda's *dramatis personae* - Agnieszka, Birkut, Burski, Maciek, Winkiel, Danton and Robespierre - reflect Wajda's historical and sociocultural positioning. These personae also reflect the multiple positions of Polish society, which is highly historicized and politicised, has been entangled in problems of moral choice and forced to take sides in political struggles throughout the ages.

Wajda, a film director, himself becomes, on the one hand, an initiator of and, on the other hand, a participant in, the dialogue between his protagonists and the audience. Furthermore, Wajda's character creations are conditioned by his own specific constitution as an artist and a director. I follow Kryszynski here, in that the role of the director, similar to the role of the author in a post-Dostoevskian novel, should be defined as that of "compiler" or "narrative voice." In this sense, film reshapes polyphony and dialogism to some extent. Its ever-growing complexity, while supporting Bakhtin's basic formulations, redefines them in an effort to accommodate the intricacy of the films' multiple "glossia." As a film author who occupies a definite semantic socio-ideological space, the film director is the personified, centering source of the discourse, the anthropomorphized figure that grounds the discourse, but does not create this discourse in its totality, only gives it a socio-ideological orientation and locates it in a historical context.

Finally, the fifth chapter, **The Films' Dialogical Aesthetics** debates the films' cultural discourses, which

interact in the dialogical construction of their aesthetics. Here, the dialogic in the films is realized not only through a heteroglossia of voices fighting through the *dramatis personae* and the film director behind them, but is realized within the dynamic of the cinematic image itself. The films' images demonstrate a whole array of cultural discourses which interact in the dialogical construction of the films' aesthetics. Among the cultural discourses in the three films discussed the following glossia are especially vivid: the tradition of Eisenstein's montage; Socialist Realism; Polish Romanticism; **Citizen Kane**; and the theatre tradition in Poland.

Consequently, the films' aesthetics obey the screenplays' main narrative line but mostly transcend the illustrative intention of the director and produce an independent artistic message generating an artistic effect going far beyond the political or the historical alone. The chapter shows how various elements of the cinematic image - the *mise-en-scène*, colour, music and sound - are integrated to form an aesthetic whole which represents the discourses mentioned above.

The thesis ends with an **Appendix I - Film Synopses** which provides a detailed account of scenes and sequences in each film.

Only during actual work on my thesis did I realize how much I was trying to do. The subject matter overwhelmed me but also filled me with fascination and enthusiasm. Nobody, so far as I know, has attempted a critical analysis of the political film of Andrzej Wajda in this way. The dialogue between the spectator and the text was especially revealing when I followed the historical references in the films. Depending on the historical background and even geographical positioning of the spectator, the interpretations were negotiated in a different way. I had been working on the spectatorship theory and practice for four years now. I still remember my first

humble attempts to create a proper questionnaire on the reception responses to Polish film distributed among McGill students. The results were debatable, due both to the nature of the questions and to the whole idea of asking for responses. However, this modest attempt at a rigorous approach to the issue of reception opened new venues for my research and convinced me that there exist interesting responses out there which should be taken into consideration as they contribute highly to film interpretation.

Consequently, in my research for the thesis I decided to consult newspaper reviews, critical work on films in question and critical works on political film as a category. It was difficult work for many reasons. First, there exist few critical, "close text" analysis of political film, and none of the three films I had discussed. Second, Polish film reviews and public responses to the films were so emotionally and politically loaded themselves that I had to scrutinise them very carefully and provide a metacomment on the comment to a film which itself constituted a comment on the historical fact. Third, from hundreds of allusions, references and crossreferences I had to choose the ones which would properly illustrate the dialogical negotiation of meaning by the spectator. A lot of material had to be left out because it mostly illustrated a monological imposition of the political position of the film director. The films fascinated and irritated the spectators when they presented a half-truth, an approximate truth or lies. Consequently, the chapter on the historical discourse in the films is an account of chosen reactions only, and is not a historical analysis discussing both the conditions of reception, the spectators themselves and the validity of their remarks. This task would require another thesis. However, what the chapter shows is that the interpretation of historical truth on the screen is a painful negotiation process in which the images dialogically clash with the spectators' beliefs and knowledge. The spectator must

constantly reassess the seen in relation to the believed and the known.

In the fifth chapter, other traps awaited me. From an enormous plan to present a shot by shot analysis of each film which would have discussed the aesthetics of the images on the screen, I had to wind down to the most important cultural discourses, and present examples of shots and scenes which illustrated these discourses. There was no space left for an analysis of the dialogical tension between the discourse of Stalinist aesthetics, the discourse of Romantic tradition in "painting" the image on the screen (after all, Wajda was also a painter), the discourse of the theatre and the discourse of an ironical and snobbish attitude of Poles to the so-called "West" and the Hollywood tradition of filmmaking. All these discourses were carefully recorded only, without providing further meticulous analysis of the intricate dialogical relations between all of them. Again, there was too much material to deal with, while the discourses I chose had to be sorted out, and presented properly. This chapter awaits further development and will constitute a starting point for a close text analysis of the aesthetics of the film texts.

In general, the issue which bothered me while writing the thesis, and doing this kind of research work, in general, was maintaining proper balance between, on the one hand, the **presentation** of methodology, historical background, the film texts themselves, and, on the other hand, the critical **interpretation** of the latter. The issue is not as simple as in the case of literary texts familiar to Western critics. In the thesis, I had to present relatively unknown films in a foreign historical and cultural context. It was difficult to manage both the presentation and interpretation issues in a balanced manner. Sometimes the balance shifted to the former, unfortunately.

Finally, a word on my "other" - Paul Coates - who was an additional voice in the thesis. As a supervisor, but also as a person who is familiar with both the historical and cultural context of the films and the production of Polish filmmakers, he constructively related to my interpretations and comments. Each of his comments was carefully analyzed, and, while some of them had to be left out for lack of space, most of them found their way to the endnotes. The endnotes constitute an additional discourse of the thesis which dialogically relates to its main discourse. Paul Coates also provided additional historical, cultural and sociological references, as well as critical comment.

Not surprisingly, the analysis of the films revealed the audience behind it. And, as usual, when presenting the picture of society and its discontent, a lot of elements had to be left out. Undoubtedly, Bakhtin's inspiring mode of thinking encouraged me to examine with a fresh eye the multiple complexities of the films' aesthetics, an issue I will definitely return to in my future research. This, and tens of other topics which emerged during the actual work on the thesis, will, hopefully, constitute the themes of my next research projects. The work on the thesis has allowed me to see how complex the process of negotiating meanings in film is, and how much more there is to be said about other glossia.

I have finished this thesis with a feeling of sadness. In my attempt to create a picture of "the other" - the spectator with his or her capacity to extract meanings from the film, I was trying to recall my own "other" - the country of my origin - Poland. In those volatile years (1945 - 1983) Poland was a country in which the political discourse constituted the fabric of social and cultural life. Andrzej Wajda's films discussed in the thesis constitute a powerful illustration of

47. Thomas, Kevin. "Danton," Los Angeles Times, 10/14/1983,
Calendar, 2.

48. Dialogic Imagination, 279.

those times.

APPENDIX I

FILM SYNOPSES

Man of Marble

The film **Man of Marble** was produced in 1977. It was created by the director Andrzej Wajda on the basis of a screenplay by Aleksander Scibor-Rylski. The main parts in the film are played by Krystyna Janda and Jerzy Radziwiłłowicz. Other actors include Tadeusz Lomnicki, Michał Tarkowski, Piotr Wojcik. Music was composed by Andrzej Korzyński.

Man of Marble is a film of precise construction and rhythm. It consists of two parts which are vividly distinguished. The division into thirteen sequences relates to the two temporal planes of the film - the contemporary and that of the recalled past. The essential part of the film consists of the first ten sequences, which deal with Agnieszka's work on her diploma film. In this part, flashbacks from the past play an important role in reiterating (or reinforcing) the diegetic equiponderance (or equivalence) of the two plots in the film. Agnieszka's plot is as important as Birkut's. The former would not be able to exist without the latter. This mutual dependence functions on many planes in the film - the diegetic one, as Agnieszka's 'misfortunes' with her

diploma film are similar to Birkut's 'misfortunes' in his life as a Party member in the fifties (both protagonists are driven by a desire to be honest and sincere in their lives); in character formation, as both protagonists reveal similar characterological traits (they are naive and outspoken at the same time); and, structurally, within the diegesis itself, as both of them constitute the axis along which other protagonists of the film meet (all the protagonists of the first ten sequences appear both in the time of the fifties and in the time of the seventies, united by the persona of Birkut, and exhumed by the persona of Agnieszka).

The following is the construction schema of the film. The first section of the film is divided into two subsections where particular sequences are titled according to the place of action. This schema takes into consideration both temporal realms - that of the time of Agnieszka and the time of Birkut, so that flashbacks and projections of old newsreels and Burski's films, play an equally important part in the film's diegesis.

Film schema

I PART

Subsection 1:

1 sequence

The film starts from the documentary shots of Bierut during the May 1st parade in the 50's. Smiling workers parade in the street of Warsaw.

The next shot shows a huge portrait of a distinguished worker being taken down.

2 sequence

In this sequence the TV producer and Agnieszka talk about Agnieszka's diploma film. Agnieszka wants to produce her

diploma film about the time of her father's youth. The producer opposes Agnieszka's project because such a dangerous theme had never been presented on the screen before. He wants Agnieszka to make a completely different film, a film about steelworkers and the results of the socialist economy, which would be more in line with the party policy. Agnieszka insists on her project as the theme proposed by her could interest everybody. The TV producer refuses to give her forbidden film material and reminds her that she has only 21 days to finish the diploma film.

3 sequence

The next sequence takes the spectator to the National Museum in Warsaw where Agnieszka and her film crew sneak into the museum and film the marble figure of Birkut despite the formal prohibition of the director of the museum.

4 sequence

Projection room in TV studio - projection of films from the fifties. The projection starts by showing discarded footage from the film **The beginning of the town**. This footage presents the film director, Burski, taking shots of living conditions at a big construction site: the muddy boots of the workers, food lines, the destruction of the cherry orchard, construction equipment sinking in the mud, the throwing of food at a Party official. The next film from the fifties, **They build our happiness**, shows Mateusz Birkut as a distinguished worker who has contributed to the development of the country. The film is a brilliant collage of old footage and contemporary restagings of scenes from the fifties. It shows Birkut's life as full of successes - from his origins in a small village near Cracow to his career as an exemplary worker and a union activist.

Agnieszka finally is shown the forbidden footage in which the huge portrait of Birkut is being taken down.

5 sequence

The fifth sequence introduces the spectator to the meeting

with the film director, Burski. From the older cameraman, Mr Leonard, Agnieszka learns that the film about Birkut got a prestigious prize in the fifties. Mr Leonard feels that the theme Agnieszka is dealing with is potentially dangerous and verbalizes his doubts. Agnieszka does not offer comfort to the older cameraman but asks him to shoot the whole film with a hand-held camera, not from the tripod.

Agnieszka is next seen at the Okecie airport in Warsaw where the director Burski is arriving from a film festival. She accompanies him to his house and on the way tells him about her plan to produce a film.

6 sequence

The sequence presents the meeting between director Burski and Agnieszka. Burski describes the making of the film about Birkut at the construction site in Nowa Huta. He starts his relation from a conversation with the party official Jodla who helped him in the creation of the new "Stakhanovite". In this sequence Wajda shows a calculated and careful construction of a Stalinist myth by a cynical film director and a condescending party official despite initial opposition to the plan on the part of more rational representatives of the party committee.

7 sequence

This sequence shows the meeting between Michalak and Agnieszka. Michalak is a security officer who had taken care of Birkut in the fifties. He accompanied him on all his propaganda shows during which Birkut and two other co-workers had to lay 30 thousand bricks during a one-day shift.

Michalak relates the event of the sabotage in Zabinka Mala. During a usual propaganda show someone passes a hot brick to Birkut. Birkut drops the brick and screams with pain. The whole event is stopped and Michalak looks for the guilty party. On the way back from the show Michalak suspects Witek, Birkut's friend, of sabotage.

The next scene in the sequence shows Birkut involved in social

work in Nowa Huta. As Michalak explains, Birkut could no longer work as a normal worker as his hands did not heal properly. The scene where Birkut helps the Nowa Huta workers move to a new apartment is immediately followed by the scene of Witek's visit to the security office in Nowa Huta. Witek has been called to the office for questioning concerning his presumed contacts with the West. As Birkut waiting for his friend realizes later, Witek has been detained in the office. Birkut goes to the central security office in Warsaw to save his friend. This scene marks the diegetic and ideological turning point in the film and ends the first subsection of the first part.

Subsection 2:

8 sequence

The sequence starts from the Party meeting in Nowa Huta to which Birkut comes directly after his trip to Warsaw. At the meeting he addresses to fellow workers a desperate call to save Witek. The workers dismiss his call and start singing a Party song. Birkut leaves the meeting hall alone.

The next part of the sequence shows Birkut moving out from his new apartment in Nowa Huta. Birkut starts drinking, and, after a binge with a Gipsy troupe he throws a brick at the Cracow Party Headquarters.

9 sequence

The ninth sequence starts from another conversation between Agnieszka and the TV producer. The TV producer is very dissatisfied with the results of Agnieszka's work and insists that she does not touch forbidden subjects. Instead, he demands that she go to Huta Katowice and make an interview with Vincenty Witek, Birkut's former friend.

The next scene in the sequence shows the projection room in the studio. Agnieszka examines the documentary material related to Birkut. The film "Skocznia affair" is a relation of Polska Kronika Filmowa (Polish Film Chronicle) about the political trial of three suspects. Among them is Vincenty

Witek, accused of suspicious contacts with the West. During another part of the trial Birkut, himself accused of terrorist activities, revokes the accusations he was forced to utter against Witek and openly mocks the whole trial.

10 sequence

This sequence shows the meeting between Agnieszka and Witek in Huta Katowice. Witek, one of the managers of the construction site at present, takes Agnieszka for a ride in a helicopter and relates Birkut's life after his return from the prison into which he was thrown after the trial.

In the flashback Birkut is seen returning from the prison, enthusiastically greeted at the railway station, and later looking desperately for his wife, Hanka.

11 sequence

This sequence shows Agnieszka and her crew conducting an interview with Hanka in Zakopane. Hanka relates how Birkut came to Zakopane to find her only to realize that she had betrayed him both as a husband and a comrade.

12 sequence

Agnieszka is back in Warsaw. The introductory materials for her film are being seen by the TV producer and the commission. Agnieszka sits in the corridor, smokes a cigarette and waits for the verdict.

The TV producer leaves the projection room. He complains that Agnieszka found neither Birkut himself nor his son. He tells Agnieszka that he cannot give her any more tape or equipment. When Agnieszka insists that she must finish the film she is given only two weeks more for final editing and sound.

When she returns to the projection room, the projectionist shows her film about Birkut's participation in the national election.

II PART

13 sequence

The sequence shows the meeting between Agnieszka and her

father. Agnieszka tells him about the decision to take her film away from her. The father insists, however, that she finish the film without the equipment. He would like to see what happened to Birkut and how the whole story ended. Cheered up, Agnieszka leaves for Gdansk.

14 sequence

The sequence shows the meeting between Agnieszka and Maciek at the Gdansk shipyard. Agnieszka explains the reason for her arrival and asks Maciek to come with her to Warsaw.

15 sequence

The last sequence in the film presents Maciek and Agnieszka at the TV studio, going to meet the TV producer.

The thirteenth sequence, which shows Agnieszka's conversation with her father, constitutes a kind of stillness, a pause in the action but, on the other hand, a recharging of batteries; the fourteenth sequence, at the Gdansk shipyard, indicates a new situation in the film diegesis; and the fifteenth sequence, in the TV studio, with Agnieszka and Maciek, indicates the beginning of a new diegesis, which later will be developed in a new film, **Man of Iron**.

There are certain regularities in the structure of the film. For instance, the retrospective events are symmetrically distributed; and also the camera movements reveal a certain structural order which serves the ideological premises.

In the first subsection of the film, Agnieszka's movement towards the camera in the TV studio scene serves as an introduction to the diegesis. In the second subsection, the opposite movement shows a turn in the development of the action. In sequence number fifteen, on the other hand, the setting of the scene in the first subsection is repeated, signifying a classic closure but also an introduction to a new diegesis. Agnieszka and Maciek go in the direction of the

camera, as if introducing another film.

Man of Iron

The film **Man of Iron** was produced in 1981. It was created by Andrzej Wajda on the basis of the screenplay by Aleksander Scibor-Rylski. The main parts in the film are played by Jerzy Radziwillowicz, Krystyna Janda, Marian Opania (playing the part of the journalist, Winkiel), Boguslaw Linda and others. Music was composed by Andrzej Korzynski.

The film is a sequel to **Man of Marble**. The film consists of several interviews carried out by Winkiel and numerous flashbacks referring to past events in the life of Maciek Tomczyk and Agnieszka. The following is the basic schema of the film.

Film schema

1 sequence

The film **Man of Iron** starts in Warsaw at the Polish Radio Studio. The recording of a radio broadcast is in progress. One of the most respected actresses in Poland, Maja Komorowska, recites Milosz's poem about hope and love.

Winkiel, the journalist at the Polish Radio Studio produces a broadcast with three women about the inconveniences of everyday life caused by the strike. Then he gets a telephone call from his supervisor through which he is informed that he has to see the chief of RADIOKOMITET (Polish media organization) immediately. The frightened journalist is taken there in a business car.

At the chief's office, Winkiel gets an order to go to Gdansk,

the heart of the revolution, and produce a broadcast about the events. He gets a lot of money and the radio equipment and is ushered to the door with a smile and a remark "everything remains between us".

2 sequence

The next sequence takes the spectator to the railway station in Gdansk. On leaving the train Winkiel is approached by an elderly man, the driver appointed to pick him up from the station and take him to the party official, Badecki.

3 sequence

At the office of the official, Badecki, the first scene introduces the spectator into the problematic of the strike. This is an interview seen on a TV screen in Badecki's office. Tomczyk, the leader of the strike, is interviewed by a French crew about the circumstances of the strike, its beginning and the reasons why it started at all. Only a couple of minutes later does the spectator realize that the discourse of the strike is presented within the space of authority. Wajda implements a skilful technique here which he also used in his other film, **Wszystko na Sprzedaz** (Everything for Sale) - the scene starts from the events on the TV screen, forcing the spectator to remain within the reality of the reported events, and then the camera zooms out into the room where the TV set is placed. The spectator has an impression that he is both a participant of the events reported on TV and their commentator a couple of seconds later. From the scene of the interview the spectator is taken directly to Badecki's office.

Next, there is an outright attack by Badecki on the striking workers and the opposition in general. Badecki, in a brutally honest monologue, states that the interview serves as introductory material for a smear campaign which Winkiel is supposed to start with his radio broadcast. Winkiel learns that he is supposed to concoct a broadcast which would destroy Maciek Tomczyk. When Winkiel expresses his surprise and revulsion, he is immediately reminded of an event from his

past when the very same official helped to conceal the evidence after Winkiel's fatal car accident in 1971.

4 sequence

When Winkiel comes to his hotel room he realizes that someone has already been waiting for him there. It is captain Wirski from the security forces who has brought the file on Tomczyk. Wirski presents Tomczyk as a reactionary with a suspicious-looking curriculum vitae. Before Wirski leaves, Winkiel turns on the TV and listens to a speech of the Party First Secretary in Gdansk who warns the public against participation in the strike. With disgust on his face, Winkiel listens to this unbearable monologue - the monologue of "newspeak", of slogans and hidden threats, and, in response to it, unscrews the bottle of whisky. Suddenly, the bottle slips from his hands and crashes on the floor. Winkiel takes a hotel towel and tries to save the remains of the alcohol by squeezing the towel into the hotel cup.

5 sequence

Thirsty Winkiel goes to the hotel bar. He learns there that not only can he not get alcohol but he cannot contact Warsaw either because the telephone lines have been cut. He also learns that the striking shipyard workers are in total command in Gdansk.

6 sequence

When Winkiel is back in his hotel room he witnesses a mass in front of the Gdansk shipyard which he sees from the window. The next couple of sequences show documentary shots of the huge mass held for the workers and, next, the workers in front of the shipyard itself.

7 sequence

Winkiel decides to go to the shipyard. Together with Winkiel the spectator is led to the workers behind the shipyard gate who complain about their life, to the women in front of the gate and to the erecting of the cross commemorating the workers' deaths in the demonstrations of 1970 in front of the

shipyard.

8 sequence

At the shipyard gate Winkiel meets Dzidek, an aspiring engineer he had met a long time ago. Dzidek will function as Winkiel's guide in the world of the striking workers, he will also become one of Winkiel's main sources of information about Tomczyk. When both men decide to go for a cup of coffee, the camera tracks the workers sitting on the wall of the shipyard, the loudspeakers are blaring with the speeches of the strike activists, and the general atmosphere is that of a state of siege but also of joy and excitement.

9 sequence

From the moment of their meeting in the studio (the place of Dzidek's work), the film diegesis is depicted in the form of two parallel temporal paths: the present and the past. The present path relates the discourse of the society in August 1980, during the time of the strike. The past discourse, on the other hand, contains numerous flashbacks, explaining the development of Maciek Tomczyk as a political activist and referring to historical events which shaped him.

The first flashback takes the spectator into the historical event of the demonstrations in Gdansk 1970. Dzidek turns on the projector with an illegal documentary film. At the same time, Winkiel turns on the tape-recorder which he had hidden in his jacket. He is going to register the subversive conversation and try to record derogatory information on Tomczyk.

In the second flashback a conversation takes place between Birkut and Maciek, his son. It concerns the latter's participation in the student demonstrations in 1968. Winkiel asks about Tomczyk and Dzidek tells him about the events of 1968, when Maciek asked his father to influence workers to join the students in their demonstration against the authorities. The fictional flashback recalls Birkut, Maciek's father, and, at the same time, the protagonist of **Man of**

Marble. Dzidek witnesses the quarrel between the two. Birkut does not allow his son to join the students who decided to go on strike in 1968 to support the liberal outbreak in Warsaw. He justifies his decision with the supposition that probably this will mean a provocation.

The third flashback leads the spectator to the demonstrations of 1970. The scene shows the room in the students' hostel from which Maciek, Dzidek and other students watch the demonstrating workers below in the street. This time it is the workers who call on the students to demonstrate. Suddenly a woman enters and tells Maciek that his father had been killed. Maciek asks where his father is now. She tells him that he is at the fly-over. Maciek comes nearer her in a state of a shock. With a maternal gesture the woman folds a scarf around his neck. Maciek, in despair, lays his head on her shoulder. The next scene introduces one of the most powerful scenes in **Man of Iron**, partly fictional and partly documentary. The fictional restaging of the procession of the workers with the body of a dead worker on the door board is accompanied by a documentary soundtrack recorded by the police. In the next scene, Maciek and his student friends arrive at the fly-over to collect the body of Maciek's father. The body is no longer there. In the meantime, the boys observe the police beating a worker. Before the boys run away, Wajda introduces another documentary scene of the police and their methods of interrogation.

In the fourth flashback, after the strikes of 1970 in Gdansk, the students listen to the inauguration speech of the newly appointed First Secretary of the Communist Party, Edward Gierek. The balanced, quiet voice of Gierek, providing an explanation for the bloody events, serves as a pacifier, a bitter candy after the killings. In this real TV footage, Gierek repeats the well known phrases of all his predecessors - that specific conclusions should be drawn from these painful experiences of the last weeks. The students in the hall listen

in silence but Maciek shows a completely different reaction. With a frown of disgust on his face Maciek rises from the chair, throws his jacket at the TV box and shouts "Nie chce, nie chce" (I don't want to). Two students take him away while others look at the scene in silence. When the police arrive the students politely report that their friend had a nervous attack and was taken by the ambulance.

The fifth flashback takes the spectator to the scene at the psychiatric hospital where Maciek had been detained. Dzidek carries out a conversation with Maciek's doctor who tells him that from the beginning Maciek was normal and healthy and needed no treatment. On leaving the hospital with Dzidek, Maciek tells him that he has decided to abandon his studies. When the film diegesis returns to the time of the strike we are still in the radio studio with Dzidek and Winkiel. Winkiel wants to know what happened to Maciek after this conversation. Dzidek replies that Maciek disappeared. Another flashback (the sixth), however, shows Maciek and Dzidek after some years in Gdansk. Dzidek is a young engineer with a diploma who has sent Gierek a congratulation telegram, while Maciek has finished the compulsory stay in the army and works in the Gdansk shipyard. The meeting ends abruptly when Maciek tells Dzidek with anger to hang the telegram to the Party secretary on the button of his jacket.

The conversation between Dzidek and Winkiel is resumed again in the studio. This time Winkiel wants to learn a little more about Maciek, whether he finished his diploma and how long he worked in the shipyard. When he learns that Maciek was soon fired from the shipyard, his voice reveals excitement. "Because of the father?" "I don't think so," Dzidek answers. "Another surname, another shipyard." "It doesn't fit. I am trying to fit all that together. (Jakos mi to wszystko nie pasuje. Probuje cos sklepic)." Suddenly Dzidek is suspicious: "What for?". "In 1970 I wrote something about his father. Maybe I will write about him now." Winkiel uncovers his cards.

Dzidek shows no reaction.

10 sequence

Winkiel and Dzidek leave the studio. Winkiel goes to the shipyard fence hoping that he will be able to get into the shipyard. As one of the workers in the shipyard explains, however, access to the shipyard is forbidden even to the workers' mothers. Maciek's mother is one such person. She asks for the privilege of seeing her son and is refused. Winkiel accidentally overhears the conversation and shows his sympathy.

11 sequence

The next scene situates the diegesis of the film precisely during the eighth day of the strike. This statement comes from the interview with the Japanese TV crew who comment on the fact that the striking workers show the symptoms of tiredness.

From this scene Wajda leads Winkiel directly to the moment when he has to decide whose side he will take in this conflict. Winkiel is suddenly surrounded by the representatives of the Gdansk Writers' Union who want him to sign a statement indicating their solidarity with the striking workers and confirming their opposition to the regime. Winkiel reluctantly signs the letter.

12 sequence

The next scene takes place in a TV studio where an interview is carried out with a real historical person, the First Secretary of the Communist Party in Gdansk, Mr Fiszbach. Winkiel listens standing in the open door of the studio. The interview continues when Dzidek approaches Winkiel and comments on Fiszbach's words about the threat of a civil war in Poland. He also promises that he has something else for Winkiel to see. This time it is a film which consists partly of fictional footage and partly of documentary footage. The fictional footage shows a scene where Maciek reads the demands of the workers from the Interfactory Strike Committee

(Miedzyszakladowy Komitet Strajkowy). The second part constitutes authentic documentary footage showing Walesa and the representatives of the government (among them Jagielski) marching in the direction of the negotiating hall. This part of the footage is followed by documentary scenes of the strike itself.

13 sequence

The next scenes lead Winkiel to the meeting with Mrs Hulewicz, Maciek's landlady. In the car which takes them to the meeting Winkiel further discloses his real intentions to Dzidek when he says that he is not a thoroughbred journalist, but a mongrel, completely dependent on the will of his superiors. Winkiel almost decides not to carry out the interview and becomes convinced by Dzidek only when he promises Winkiel that he will get a coveted pass to the shipyard from Mrs Hulewicz's daughter.

In the first flashback, Mrs Hulewicz relates the scene of Birkut's death in 1970 to Winkiel. She tells Winkiel how he had walked straight into the militia gun bullets as if he wanted to die. Although Mrs Hulewicz ran to stop him, Birkut did not stop at all. Birkut was killed on the fly-over.

In the second flashback Mrs Hulewicz and Maciek look for Birkut's body in the hospital's mortuary and they bury him secretly at the cemetery with the official's warning not to say a word to anybody.

The third flashback relates the event of looking for Birkut's grave on the first of November the following year - on the Day of the Departed - a day devoted to the memory of the deceased when traditionally all the families gather at the graves, light candles and lay flowers. Birkut's grave is nowhere to be found. In response to that brutal and inhuman desecration of the grave, Maciek puts an iron cross at the place where his father died (fourth flashback). In the fifth flashback, Mrs Hulewicz refers to Maciek's discussions at the shipyard where he tries to convince his fellow workers that they should

officially support the strikes of 1976 in Radom.

14 sequence

After leaving Mrs Hulewicz Winkiel goes to the shipyard. The next sequence takes place inside the shipyard where Winkiel is let in by Mrs Hulewicz's daughter. In the flashback which Anna Hulewicz relates, Maciek is seen sticking posters about the events in Radom and Ursus in Gdansk underpasses and streets. Suddenly, two security agents in civil clothes force him to get into a private car with them. The scene of abduction is observed by a group of opposition members who were nearby accidentally. After some time, when Maciek is released from prison, where he served three months, the same people talk to him on the beach.

15 sequence

Winkiel leaves the shipyard. The moment of leaving the shipyard is immediately followed by religious hymns initiating a mass. The next shot shows Walesa himself reciting a prayer for the striking workers. The next scene places Winkiel at the hotel where he listens to the prayers on the radio. Suddenly there is a telephone call summoning him to the restaurant where the chief of Radiokomitte (a probable reference to Maciej Szczepanski) is awaiting him. Winkiel who, unbeknownst to himself, had been disarmed, touched, drawn in by the discourse of truth in the workers, is reminded brutally that he serves another master. He suddenly finishes the telephone conversation with the words "the wrong number" and tries to escape through the back door of the hotel. On his way he is stopped by one of the hotel personnel who is in the know and asked to enter the restaurant anyway.

The Szczepanski figure demands an answer to the question whether Winkiel has any contact with the striking workers in the shipyard. When Winkiel tries to dodge the question the boss answers with a threat - Winkiel will be beaten some day by somebody if he does not answer correctly. The boss tells Winkiel that his first material will be on the air the

following day. When Winkiel tries to interrupt with an objection that the material is not finished yet and that he needs some time for editing, the boss intervenes rudely that Winkiel is not the person who will edit the material. Winkiel reacts violently, shouting that he does not want to do it. In response to this, the boss blackmails him with the proofs of Winkiel's guilt. He tells him that he had already signed the papers for this assignment and there is no way back.

16 sequence

Winkiel wants to do an interview with Agnieszka who is in prison but also, as an old acquaintance (Winkiel worked at the TV studio when Agnieszka was making her diploma film in Warsaw) he wants to warn Agnieszka about a possible provocation regarding her husband, Maciek. The meeting between Agnieszka and Winkiel is organized by one of Winkiel's acquaintances from the Security. Agnieszka describes her life with Maciek from the beginning, from her first meeting with him in Gdansk, through their unfortunate visit to the TV studio where Agnieszka brought Maciek as a proof that Birkut exists, up to the process of the "silent revolution" in Gdansk. The next part of Agnieszka's monologue is an interplay of flashbacks and Agnieszka's commentaries, formally conducted by Wajda in a similar way to the interview with Mrs Hulewicz. The first flashback takes the spectator to the scene at the TV studio in Warsaw where Agnieszka took Maciek, Birkut's son, as a living proof that Birkut existed.

The next flashback leads the spectator to the railway station in Warsaw. Maciek leaves Warsaw and asks Agnieszka to come with him to get to know the people and the places where Birkut lived and worked. She would take photos, and they would be able to present them at an exhibition devoted to Birkut's memory. In this way, Agnieszka would finish her work on the film and would provide a necessary closure to the diegesis of **Man of Marble**. Agnieszka agrees and goes with Maciek. The next flashback shows her at the Gdansk cemetery looking for

Birkut's grave and leaving flowers at the gate of the cemetery - a symbolic gesture with which she showed her respect for Birkut whose grave could not be found, and for countless other victims of the 1970 massacre.

The next scene shows Maciek and Agnieszka preparing an exhibition of photographs in Maciek's house. The preparations are interrupted by the human relations officer from Maciek's work place. The officer threatens Maciek that his exhibition will have dire consequences. The next parts of Agnieszka's relation describe in detail the growth of love between the two of them, her return to Warsaw, then back to Gdansk and her wedding at the church. The continuous interplay of flashbacks and Agnieszka's monologue is interrupted at a certain time by a parallel insertion of the documentary footage from the shipyard negotiations. At a certain moment during this scene Agnieszka calls the shipyard and instead of Maciek's voice hears the voices of premier Jagielski and the representative of the Inter-factory Strike Committee, Swiatlo, who carry out official talks at the shipyard.

When the relation from the shipyard ends, interrupted by the security agents at the police station, Agnieszka begins her description of her life as an activist of the opposition. The next flashback leads the spectator to the city trains in Gdansk where both Agnieszka and Maciek distribute political leaflets after which Maciek is tried and sent to prison. In another flashback the pregnant Agnieszka is seen working in the shop and accepting money from the colleagues of Maciek. The next flashbacks show the return of Maciek, a brutal police search in the house, and, finally, Agnieszka leaving Gdansk with her newborn son. Only later, from the conversation with Winkiel does the spectator learn that Agnieszka went to her father.

17 sequence

On his way out of the police station Winkiel passes the gym at the police headquarters where Wirski, whom he had encountered

earlier in the hotel, notices him and demands material on Maciek. Winkiel does not want to produce this material and leaves the gym relieved that he cut ties with the regime.

18 sequence

Winkiel goes to the shipyard and calls the Warsaw Radiokomitet offices from the strike headquarters. Winkiel wants to resign, he tells the secretary of his chief.

The camera leads the spectator to the large negotiating room where the final agreement is being signed by the representative of the government and Walesa. On the way to the hall the spectator sees a triumphant Walesa and Maciek in a fictional shot; an enthusiastic Winkiel and Anna Hulewicz; and Agnieszka and Maciek finally meeting after Agnieszka's stay in prison. The historical soundtrack relates the speech of Jagielski who tells about the painful time of negotiations and signals the act of signing the final agreement documents.

The documentary footage continues in its presentation of Walesa before the shipyard facing a huge crowd of enthusiastic people and, later, showing Walesa on the arms of the workers and the crowds chanting "dziękujemy" (Thank you).

19 sequence

Winkiel leaves the empty hall of negotiations. He realizes that he had been denounced by Badecki's driver who wants him to see Badecki in front of the shipyard. Winkiel leaves the shipyard. He approaches the car containing Badecki who, with a smile, tells him that the agreement is not important because it was signed under duress.

20 sequence

The film ends with Maciek's monologue addressed at his father on the fly-over.

Danton

Danton was shot in France in 1982. The screenplay was written by Jean-Claude Carrière on the basis of Stanislawa Przybyszewska's play, **The Danton Affair**. The French actor Gérard Depardieu plays the part of Georges-Jacques Danton, the Polish actor Wojciech Pszoniak plays the part of Maximilien Robespierre. Polish actors also play the parts of the members of Robespierre's camp, while French actors perform in Danton's camp. Music was composed by Jean Prodromides.

In addition to M. Depardieu and Mr. Pszoniak, the cast includes Patrice Cherau as Danton's journalist-friend, Camille Desmoulins; Angela Winkler as Lucille Desmoulins, Camille's wife who followed him to the scaffold; Boguslaw Linda as Saint Just, and Roger Planchon, as Fourquier Tinville, who prosecuted Danton and his associates in a rigged trial.

The film consists of 23 sequences. Most scenes are in the form of tableaux - each of them takes place in a closed, theatrical space, and involves the protagonists in an emotional exchange of ideas. The form of the film is directly conditioned by the screenplay which was based on Stanislawa Przybyszewska's play **The Danton Affair**. The theatrical composition of the scenes in the film makes the polemical power of the arguments presented on the screen even more pronounced. The important moments in the film are always connected with the speeches or responses to them by the film's protagonists.

Film schema

1 sequence

The film starts with the scene at a guard-post. The guards are

checking the carts for aristocratic fugitives. Danton is in one of the carriages returning to Paris. He looks at the buildings and at the guillotine in the square.

2 sequence

Robespierre's wife washes her little brother in the tub. She forces him to recite the Declaration of the Rights of Man and The Citizen. Robespierre is seen lying in bed; he looks sick, feverish.

3 sequence

Angry people wait in a line for bread in the rain. Spies walk around them and listen to their complaints. A young prisoner is led to prison. A girl waiting in line comments on his beauty, which leads to her arrest later.

Danton appears in the carriage nearby. He emerges from it greeted by enthusiastic crowds. This scene is watched by Robespierre from the window above the street.

4 sequence

A member of the Committee for Public Safety reads Desmoulins's newspaper "Vieux Cordelier" to Robespierre. Robespierre orders the printing shop demolished. The next scene presents the act of demolition of Desmoulins's printing shop. Desmoulins opposes this act of vandalism. Heron tells him that he is no longer allowed to say anything. The remains of the printed material are picked up by young boys in front of the shop.

5 sequence

The scene presents Robespierre being taken care of by his barbers (at the same time as the printing shop is being demolished), the entrance of Saint-Just and his remarks about Danton and Desmoulins. Saint-Just suggests that there may be an overthrow of the government in the future due to Danton. Robespierre goes to the Tuileries, to the meeting of the Committee of Public Safety where the question of Danton is being discussed. Billaud Varenne accuses Danton and his friends of countrevolutionary activities. Robespierre does not agree to put Danton on trial although, personally, he does

not believe him. Collot and others present arguments against Danton. Amar, the Chief of Police, comes with the documents denouncing Danton.

6 sequence

The sequence presents Danton and Fabre discussing the situation in the arcades. Danton learns about the conspiracy against him. He is still convinced that nothing can happen to him because the whole of Paris is behind him. Desmoulins and others approach Danton and tell him that the paper which Danton supports has been closed. Philippeau, a representative of the centre, wants to talk to Danton about a possible overthrow of the government. Danton opposes this move as he is against a bloodbath.

7 sequence

The sequence presents a meeting at the Convention. Bourdon attacks the methods of the secret police and its chief, Heron. One of the members of the Committee of Public Safety relates this speech to the Committee. They blame Danton for the demand to arrest Heron. Robespierre decides to meet Danton and wants the meeting arranged. Robespierre and Saint-Just talk about the meeting with Danton. Saint-Just suspects that Robespierre is afraid of Danton.

The members of the Convention run to Danton sitting outside the Convention hall drinking wine, and celebrate the victory with him. Amidst the turmoil Danton is warned of the Committee's accusation of treason.

8 sequence

In this sequence Danton prepares the parlour of the restaurant Rosé for a meeting with Robespierre; he fusses about the food, the wine, and the choice of flowers; he also gets rid of other guests in the adjacent rooms of the restaurant.

The meeting takes place between Danton and Robespierre. In the ensuing discussion, Danton and Robespierre reveal marked differences in their outlook on revolution. Danton considers Robespierre's policy inhuman and destructive. Robespierre, on

the other hand, considers Danton's accusations childish. Robespierre wants Danton to join his Committee and the latter refuses. The two leaders do not reach any agreement.

Danton is later seen walking in the arcades in the evening, where he is joined by Fabre who urges him to take action. A more radical Fabre wants Danton to overthrow Robespierre. Danton refuses saying that he does not want a bloodbath. He turns to the oncoming women to get rid of Fabre.

9 sequence

Camille Desmoulins and Lucille, his wife, talk about what has happened at the convention. Lucille is frightened. She senses that something bad may happen soon. Robespierre, who is Desmoulins's close friend, comes to his house to convince him that he should make a speech at the Convention stating that Danton was using him. Desmoulins refuses and throws Robespierre out.

On the way to and from Desmoulins's room Robespierre meets Lucille. Lucille, frightened, realizes that both she and her husband are lost.

10 sequence

The Public Safety Committee members meet to discuss the affair of Danton. Robespierre sets the time of Danton's arrest for 3.30 a.m. that day. The list of the accused is produced. The sequence is composed of a number of scenes in which each of the members of the committee presents his opinion. Saint-Just writes an indictment. All of the members of the Committee (with one exception, Varenne) sign the list of the accused. The list includes Desmoulins as well.

11 sequence

Danton comes home in the evening. Desmoulins, who had been waiting for his return, accuses Danton of treason. Danton realizes that Robespierre has visited Desmoulins and concludes that their arrest is imminent. He sits at the fire and contemplates the options.

The list of the accused is being completed by Robespierre and

his people. The accused are being rounded up in their living quarters.

Danton sits in his house at the fireplace. A young man sent by Lindel (a member of the Public Safety Committee) comes in to warn Danton that he will be arrested soon. Danton tells his mistress to run away and take the money with her.

Danton gets arrested by the policemen in his own house.

12 sequence

The Convention Hall is full. People talk angrily. A young man announces that Danton has been arrested. The Public Safety Committee members enter the Convention Hall. Legendre takes the stand and demands that Danton be heard in the Convention Hall. Other speakers want to defend Danton as well.

Saint-Just pushes potential speakers away from the rostrum, and tears up the pieces of paper with the names of other speakers. People shout: Down with the dictator.

Robespierre produces a demagogic speech against Danton.

Suddenly Bourdon says that he was fooled by Danton for a long time. In this way he cuts himself off from Danton. He finishes his deposition intoning "La Marseillaise". When he leaves Lucille Desmoulins, who heard his declaration, slaps him in the face.

13 sequence

In the temporary prison Desmoulins talks to Philippeau about their arrest. Danton, also detained in the same apartment, explains to Desmoulins that the trial has nothing to do with political justice. He tries to justify his behaviour in order to convince Desmoulins that he deliberately made the arrest happen to open the eyes of the people about the committees.

Somebody comes with information that the Convention has accepted the charges against them and they have to go to the main jail. Danton still believes that the trial is simply a political duel.

Robespierre comes to this temporary prison to see Camille. Desmoulins refuses to see him. As an answer Robespierre gets

only laughter from all the prisoners.

14 sequence

On the second of April the prisoners are tried by the Revolutionary Tribunal, along with thieves. Danton protests against this. The press is not allowed to take notes by the main judge, Vadier.

The judge reads the indictment. Danton produces his great speech and demands a public trial.

Next door to the court the judge and the members of the Committee speculate about how to shut Danton up.

15 sequence

Robespierre and his wife are in the room. Robespierre is tense, and does not want to talk.

Robespierre is in David's studio and chooses poses for his portraits. Fouquier, the judge who is conducting Danton's trial, comes and tells Robespierre that they are in trouble. Robespierre explains that they must have Danton dead because the good of the Republic is at stake. He then comes up to David and orders him to remove the traitor, Fabre, from the mural he has painted.

16 sequence

Danton addresses the people in court but is interrupted all the time. The judge uses the decree that the accused is not supposed to address the observers in the hall. The observers react violently to this refusal. Consequently, the guards are called and order is restored. Danton then speaks in complete silence till he literally loses his voice.

17 sequence

Danton goes to the main prison, Conciergerie, with other convicts. He is bidden farewell by the people on the way with the exception of a man who spits in his face and says that there is some justice if such people as Danton are also condemned to death.

In the prison Danton is locked in the same cell as the others.

18 sequence

On the fourth of April the members of the committee make Legendre sign a false deposition about a plot planned by Desmoulins's wife and Danton's friends. Robespierre and the members of the committee talk about introducing a new law which forbids the accused (they especially mean Danton) to speak during the trial at all.

19 sequence

During the trial at the Convention Danton states that the trial is "rigged" and that the Committee wants to get rid of him.

The delegates of the nation come in with the new decree which bars Danton from speaking.

The accused leave the court. Lucille Desmoulins holds her naked baby high in the air and calls her husband's name.

20 sequence

The Guillotine is washed. On the fifth of April the verdict is read by the members of the court in the empty hall of the convention. Lucille Desmoulins faints when she hears that all the accused are condemned to death and their belongings will be confiscated.

21 sequence

The guillotine is being prepared for the next "killing session". Danton and his colleagues have their hair cut in the prison before death. Danton and the other prisoners are led out of prison with their hands tied behind their back. They are put on carts. David, sitting on the wall near the prison, draws the convicts.

Outside prison Danton looks up to the window of Robespierre's apartment.

22 sequence

The Guillotine at work - shots of the blade and the pouring blood.

Robespierre wakes up suddenly as if he had a bad dream.

Danton climbs the scaffold. He asks the executioner to show his head to the crowds.

23 sequence

Saint-Just enters Robespierre's apartment, sits on the bed of the sick Robespierre and tells him that he has to accept his role of a dictator. Robespierre, very sick, takes off the sheets from his face and states that democracy is an illusion. Saint-Just leaves.

The guillotine is washed after the killing. Lucille Desmoulins ties the red ribbon round her neck in the foreground.

The little boy, the brother of Robespierre's wife recites the decrees to Robespierre while he listens in horror. The image and the sound fade.

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