

# LEARNING MODULE DESCRIPTION

## GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Module title: Contemporary Documentary Filmmaking on Human Rights Violations
2. Module code: 03-AP-HRV
3. Term: Winter
4. Duration: 30 h
5. ECTS: 5
6. Module lecturer: Prof. Grzegorz Ziólkowski
7. E-mail and www: [grzeg@amu.edu.pl](mailto:grzeg@amu.edu.pl); [www.grzeg.home.amu.edu.pl](http://www.grzeg.home.amu.edu.pl)
8. Language: English

## DETAILED INFORMATION

1. Module aims  
The course aims at teaching how to:
  - a. carry out in-depth studies of contemporary documentary filmmaking on human rights violations;
  - b. investigate selected cases, critically assess materials related to them, and share findings within a group presentation or an individual essay.
2. Pre-requisites in terms of knowledge, skills, and social competences (where relevant)  
Not applicable.

## READING LIST

1. General reference
  - a. Plantinga, Carl. "What a Documentary Is, After All." *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 63, no. 2, 2005, pp. 105–117.
2. Case study 1
  - a. Falconer, Bruce. "The Torture Colony." *American Scholar*, vol. 77, no. 4, 2008, pp. 33–53.
3. Case study 2
  - a. Blaine, Patrick. "Representing Absences in the Postdictatorial Documentary Cinema of Patricio Guzmán." *Latin American Perspectives*, vol. 40, no. 1, 2013, pp. 114–130.
  - b. Guest, Haden. "Ad Astra per Aspera: An Interview with Patricio Guzmán." *Cinéaste*, vol. 36, no. 3, pp. 20–25.
  - c. Martin-Jones, David. "Archival Landscapes and a Non-Anthropocentric 'Universe Memory'." *Third Text*, vol. 27, no. 6, pp. 707–722.
4. Case study 3
  - a. Abbott, Mathew. "'The Look of Silence' and the Problem of Monstrosity." *Film-Philosophy*, vol. 21, no. 3, 2017, pp. 392–409.
  - b. Behlil, Melis. "'The Act of Killing': An Interview with Joshua Oppenheimer." *Cinéaste*, vol. 38, no. 3, 2013, pp. 26–31.
  - c. Liere, Lucien van. "The Banality of Ghosts: Searching for Humanity with Joshua Oppenheimer in 'The Act of Killing'." *Journal for Religion, Film and Media*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2018, pp. 15–34.
5. Case study 4
  - a. Boyle, Deidre. "Finding the Missing Picture: The Films of Rithy Panh." *Cinéaste*, vol. 39, no. 3, 2014, pp. 28–32.
  - b. Boyle, Deidre. "On a Morality of Filming: Conversation with Rithy Panh." *Cineaction*, issue 97, 2016, pp. 39–44.
  - c. Cazenave, Jennifer. "Earth as Archive: Reframing Memory and Mourning in 'The Missing Picture'." *Cinema Journal*, vol. 57, no. 2, 2018, pp. 44–65.

## SYLLABUS

Week 1: Presentation of the course's programme, its aims, methodology, outcomes, and assessment criteria. Introduction to the subject matter and problematics of human rights.

Week 2: Exploring dark landscapes and sinister zones: Contemporary documentary filmmaking on human rights violations – an overview.

Weeks 3–4: Case study 1 – CHILE: The "Colonia Dignidad" – a horrendous German sect in Chile in historical and political contexts. Analysis and interpretation of José Maldavsky's documentary film *Colonia Dignidad: A Nazi Sect in the Land of Pinochet* (2006; 52').

Weeks 5–6: Case study 2 – CHILE: Patricio Guzmán's documentary film achievements in political and historical contexts. Analysis and interpretation of Guzmán's cine-essayistic *Nostalgia for the Light* (2010; 94'), the first part of his poetic and philosophical film trilogy on Chilean history, nature, and politics.

Weeks 7–9: Case study 3 – INDONESIA: “Anti-communist” purges in Indonesia (1965–66) in historical and political contexts. Analysis and interpretation of Joshua Oppenheimer’s documentary film diptych *The Act of Killing* (2012; 115’) and *The Look of Silence* (2014; 103’).

Weeks 10–11: Case study 4 – CAMBODIA: Red Khmer’s Genocide (1975–79) in historical and political contexts. Analysis and interpretation of Rithy Panh’s documentary *The Missing Picture* (2013; 92’).

Weeks 12–14: Case studies introduced, analysed, and interpreted by students after consultations with the lecturer.

Week 15: Final discussion, summary, and assessment.