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Chapter Two:

‘The inexpressible unearthly beauty of the cinematograph’:

The Impact of Polish Futurism on the First Polish Avant-Garde Films

**from *The Struggle for Form: Perspectives on Polish Avant-Garde Film 1916-1989*
(Columbia University Press, July 2014, co-edited with Michael O’Pray)**

The apparatus itself is...in a way always theoretical – a concept as much as a form, a machination as much as a machine.ⁱ

The films of Franciszka and Stefan Themerson are often recognized internationally as the only Polish avant-garde films of the 1930s, while the period preceding them remains a distinctly under-researched field, particularly in the English-speaking world. To claim, however, that other avant-garde films existed before and were made simultaneously with the Themersons’ work in Poland seems somehow controversial, since most of this material did not survive. For example, as early as in 1916, Feliks Kuczkowski made his first animated piece, *Flirt krzeselek* (*Flirting chairs*) according to his principle of ‘synthetic-visionary’ film.ⁱⁱ If they had survived, his creations would have been the first examples of avant-garde/artists’ film made by a Pole in the Polish territories.ⁱⁱⁱ Unfortunately, Kuczkowski’s experimental work no longer exists, thus its status in the history of Polish avant-garde film cannot be fully assessed. Jalu Kurek’s film *OR: Obliczenia rytmiczne* (*Rhythmical Calculations* 1934), as well as the first three films by the Themersons share the same faith and now exist only in the form of reconstructions.^{iv}

Nonetheless, as a contemporary researcher of Polish avant-garde film, I find myself in a privileged position of having access to a wide array of materials that have been previously unavailable.^v This makes it possible to claim that in order to fully assess the nature of Polish

avant-garde film, we need to go back to its relationship with avant-garde movements that emerged in the 1920s. In this article I look at the impact of Polish Futurism (1919 – 1922) on the first Polish avant-garde films made in the 1930s. The focus here will be particularly on Kurek's *Rhythmical Calculations*, and despite the fact that much has been written on the work of the Themersons, aspects of *Europa (Europe, 1932)* and *Calling Mr Smith (1943, UK)* will be revisited here in relation to Polish Futurism. Although these films have been present in a theoretical discourse, it is my contention that the impact of Polish Futurism on them has been understated.^{vi} Tadeusz Miczka's article 'Cinema as optic poetry: On attempts to futurise the cinematograph in Poland of the 1920s and 1930s' (1998) remains the most comprehensive account of the relationship between Polish Futurism and avant-garde film and it serves as a starting point in my enquiry.^{vii}

The general absence of critical discourse regarding Polish Futurism's involvement with film is striking. This is related to the fact that Polish Futurism was primarily a literary movement, thus lacking a significant body of work in the field of visual arts. Because of this reason numerous film historians see the Polish Futurists' involvement with film as limited. In this chapter I hope to offer an alternative view. My main aim is to investigate the grounds for what became an avant-garde film discourse in the 1930s. Despite the fact that no Futurist films were made in Poland per se, Polish Futurists' film scripts, cine-novels, cine-poems, as well as their critical writings on film (particularly by Anatol Stern, Jalu Kurek and Bruno Jasioński), contributed to the flourishing film discourse that took place in Poland in the 1920s and which should not go unnoticed when evaluating the achievements of the Polish avant-garde film in the 1930s.^{viii} A larger argument here is that the theoretical discourses were as important in the process of formulating the avant-garde film culture in Poland as the films themselves. Thus projects that were written by the artists, filmmakers and critics but were never turned into films also deserve their recognition as they contributed to the contemporary cultural climate. As Miczka points out

historians of the tenth Muse cannot ignore this area in which “cinema exists without film” since it appears that the art of moving pictures also benefited from the relationship with futurism.^{ix}

Similarly, Tom Gunning believes that the achievements and attempts of early cinema, and I would argue the same could be said about avant-garde film, should not be judged ‘in terms of their realization (or the lack of it), but rather as expressions of broad desires which radiate from the discovery of new horizons of experience.’^x These ‘unrealised aspirations harbor the continued promise of forgotten utopias, as asymptotic vision of artistic, social and perceptual possibilities.’^{xi} Most recently, Pavle Levi in his book, *Cinema by Other Means* (2012), proposes that a history of avant-garde film ‘is a tale of the multiple states or conditions of cinema, of a range of extraordinary, radical experiments not only with but also “around” and even without film.’^{xii}

While investigating the separation between film and cinema, Levi argues that of importance are cinematic, as well as non-cinematic interventions – ‘cinema by other means’ – which involve a number of film related activities (photocollages, drawings, paintings, cine-poems), as well as theoretical writings. Levi also discusses the concept of ‘written cinema’, which was practiced in the 1920s and 1930s within the key avant-garde movements: Dada, Futurism, Constructivism and Surrealism. As he aptly puts it, at stake was the production of the theoretical discourse and the scripts prior to the making of the actual films.^{xiii} Levi proposes that the dialectical interplay ‘between film and cinema’ can only be understood ‘only if we fully endorse the principle of inseparability of theory and practice.’^{xiv} In a similar vein, Jonathan Walley proposes in his concept of ‘paracinematic’ practices, that many early film-related activities were ‘cinematic’ in nature, yet they were not ‘embodied in the materials of film as traditionally defined.’^{xv} The art of film, Walley argues, does not need to be defined by the specific medium of film and instead, cinema’s essence is elsewhere.^{xvi} This reflects Levi’s belief that cinematic imagination reaches further beyond the films themselves, as will be demonstrated here in relation to Polish Futurists experiments with film.^{xvii}

Around 1912 many painters began to see film as an inspiration for representing movement, the most famous example being Pablo Picasso, who was an avid movie-goer. Another Cubist painter Leopold Survage created a series of drawings for his film *Le Rhythme Coloré* (1914), which was never completed because of the outbreak of the war. The 20th century avant-gardes officially began their adventure with the moving image with the Russian Futurist film *Drama in the Futurist Cabaret No.13* (Victor Kasyanov, 1914).^{xviii} Italian Futurists films soon followed, such as *Amor pedestre* (Marcel Fabre, 1914), *Vita Futurista* (Arnaldo Gina, 1916) and *Il Perfido Incanto* (Anton Giulio Bragaglia, 1918). There was also Aldo Modinari's *Mondo Baldina* (1914), disliked by the leader of Italian Futurism, Filippo Thomaso Marinetti.^{xix} Many artists saw film's potential as a 'magic force - a means of creating a world of fantasy', as was the case with Vassily Kandinsky and Arnold Schönberg's ideas for filmic compositions, *Der gelbe Klang* (*The Yellow Sound*, 1911) and *Die glückliche Hand* (*The Hand of Faith*, 1913).^{xx} The latter project was not filmed at the time but was eventually presented as a theatrical production between 1928 and 1930. The most successful attempt of this kind was Hans Richter and Viking Eggeling's 1919 film, an animation composed of their two drawings, *Preludium* and *Horizontal-Vertical Mass* (both from 1919), respectively.^{xxi} Many leading avant-garde artists, poets and critics were interested in making films, yet never managed to realise any of their scripts. Alongside their attempts, they often published critical pieces concerning film. For instance, Kasimir Malevich wrote extensively about cinema but his scenario for an abstract film was never turned into one.^{xxii} Similarly, Anatol Stern's desire to make an avant-garde film never came to fruition, although he wrote articles on film and scripts that were turned into commercially successful films.^{xxiii} Vladimir Mayakowski was less fortunate in this area, as his scenarios were rejected and eventually became adapted stage plays.^{xxiv}

As already mentioned, Poland would have had its first avant-garde film made in 1916, if only Kuczkowski animated experimental film had survived. But they are now lost and among the

most commonly discussed Polish avant-garde films is Franciszka and Stefan Themersons' *Europe (Europa)*, made in 1932. Before I discuss it in relation to Polish Futurism, it is important to point out that the fact that no Futurist films were made in Poland is not surprising, or unusual, especially when considering that Marinetti himself did not formulate his ideas about film until 1916 (the year when Kuczkowski made his first animated film, *Flirting Chairs*). In his article Miczka states, somehow ironically, that 'Polish avant-garde cinematography can [...] boast only two fine works of undoubtedly futuristic origin' (he is referring to *Europe* and *Rhythmical Calculations*)^{xxv}, but it is important to remember that on the whole, only a handful of avant-garde films were made internationally in the early 1920s.^{xxvi} There were several reasons for this. Primarily the limited experience of painters and poets with the new medium of film and the lack of appropriate equipment: only 35mm cameras were available, and these were usually too expensive to experiment with, and were used mainly on large productions. Film was more costly and complicated to produce than painting.^{xxvii} Unlike Eggeling and Richter, and the Russian and Italian Futurists, Polish Futurists did not manage to complete any films. Taking into consideration the fact that at that time German and Russian film industries, for example, were well developed in comparison with that of Poland, which until 1918 was still under occupation, it is hardly surprising that there was little scope for experimentation in the area of film. This wider perspective seems to be lacking in Miczka's otherwise informative article.

Given this climate, it is perhaps also not surprising that the first widely acclaimed Polish avant-garde film, *Europe*, owes its roots to Futurism – the first internationally recognised Polish avant-garde movement. *Europe* is based on a Futurist poem-script of the same title by Anatol Stern, one of the key poets of Polish Futurism.^{xxviii} Stern's 'Europe' is a Dada-like apocalyptic vision of the world. Although the poem was written in 1925, thus some years after the decline of Futurism in Poland^{xxix}, the piece is filled with rage against politicians and the socio-political situation in Europe much in the style of Futurism:

Abecedary of slaughter
of dirt lice fires
and mercy
united states
and argentine brazil chile
states at war
phenomena and noumena
eternity and nothingness – two fattened boxers
who will always win
we
who wolf meat
once a month
we
who breathe sulphur
expensive sulphur
like air –
we who drag along the streets
our queue of sunken bellies
our powerless feasts
stuffing our pockets
we shall
lose
lose
lose
as always!!^{xxx}

Stern's piece was initially illustrated with photo-collages by the Constructivist artist Teresa Żarnowerówna, and then by Mieczysław Szczuka's designs (both from 1929). Szczuka's 'poesio-graphic' composite photographs betrayed the legacy of Futurism in his fascination with

dynamic elements (**Fig.5 – Europa, Szczuka, poem page 1**). His illustrations contain numerous references to cinema: the image of Charlie Chaplin and a drawing of a red film strip with two male figures wrestling and a well-dressed smoking a cigarette is drawn in a fashion that resembles a scene from a film (**Fig.6 –Europa poem page 2**). But this aggressive mood of the poem and its overall energy was perhaps best captured in Stefan Themerson's Dada-like militant depiction of a woman placing her hand inside the mouth of a crying baby in his photomontage of the same title (1930 – 1931).

An anarchic prediction and denouncement of wars and socio-political upheavals, *Europe* was lost during World War Two. What remains of the film are just a few stills and the Themersons' own recollection of the original script. In a letter to Piotr Zarębski, who in 1988 remade the Themersons' *Europe* from the remaining frames, Stefan Themerson stated that 'Stern's poem was not the "inspiration" for the script', it 'was the script, because it was written in the style of a script.'^{xxxix} According to Polish art historian Janusz Zagrodzki

The film faithfully passed on the motif of Stern's poem; a vision of Europe gone mad, blindly racing towards its own destruction. Changes in the tempo of narration and astonishing contrasts were introduced by using the single frame technique, the eliminating certain phases of motion, intensive editing, condensed cuts, multiple images and repetition.^{xxxix}

There was no sound in the 10-minute long *Europe*, thus the images functioned on an autonomous level.^{xxxix} The film aesthetics, it seems, was also reminiscent of Dada. Although as a unified art movement Dada did not exist in Poland, much of its attitude was present in Polish Futurism.^{xxxix} A leading member of Polish Futurism, Aleksander Wat, writing in retrospect, believed that Polish Futurism had its greatest roots in Dada (and Russian Futurism), more than in Italian Futurism.^{xxxix} According to Polish art historian Andrzej Turowski, Polish Futurists, like Dada artists from Zurich, were rebelling against art and believed themselves social revolutionaries.^{xxxix} This political activism and critique is visible in Stern's poem and honoured in the Themersons' film.

In the preserved scenario for *Europe*, which Stefan Themerson recalled to the leader of the Polish 1970s film avant-garde Józef Robakowski in 1973, there was a description of the following scene: ‘drawing by George Grosz -/ in place of a heart: a motor animated frame by frame [...]’^{xxxvii} This suggests both the presence of Dada (Grosz) and Futurist (a motor) aesthetics. This Dada-like energy is also visible in another part of the scenario: ‘[...] a shot of a helmeted soldier in a trench throwing a grenade, the third intersection was barbed wire [...] open hand on a cross, nail.’^{xxxviii} In this context, *Europe*, as an anti-war statement, can also be seen as a reflection of the Polish Futurists’ refusal to glorify the machine aesthetic because of its links to war. Polish Futurists did not share the same enthusiasm for the war as their Italian colleagues and in this aspect they resembled the Dada artists.^{xxxix} In Poland, Futurism emerged in 1919^{xl}, almost a decade after its appearance in Italy (1909) and Russia (1910)^{xli}, in a moment when the country needed fresh national ideology to affirm the new, independent state.^{xlii} This new ideology had to be different from that of the 19th century, since the idea of a struggling Romantic artist now seemed anachronistic.^{xliii} The new socio-political situation called for an adjustment of spiritual values, first of all among the intelligentsia, who were the greatest supporters of tradition and artistic canons, namely Romanticism. The emergence of Futurism in Poland was a reaction to this new and rapidly changing reality of independent Poland. As I already stated, because of the recent memory of the Great War, Polish Futurists, more like the Dada artists, refused to glorify the machine and accept its uses in the war. Stern remarked:

Our poetry broke away from the past traditions, it fought for a new shape of life and art, it aimed at the dynamisation of the world. But Marinetti, in his attempt to awake his nation from a coma, proclaimed the cult of violence, while Polish Futurists, similarly to the Russian Futurists, proclaimed the slogans of rebellion in the name of social justice.^{xliv}

Polish Futurism’s political inclinations were much more to the left and the Italian Futurists’ political extremism did not pass without critique from both Polish and Russian sides, especially

when many Italian Futurists joined the fascist movement.^{xlv} Unlike their Italian colleagues, Polish Futurists saw both tradition and a new technological civilisation, with the machine as its main product, as garbage: ‘we destroy the city. All mechanism-airplanes, tramways, inventions, the telephone. In place of them, primitive means of communication.’^{xlvi} They ridiculed Marinetti’s cult of the machine and ironically proposed loving and marrying ‘electrical machines’ in order to produce ‘dynamo-children.’^{xlvii} This scepticism of Polish Futurists towards the machine and modern technological developments would later be reflected in the work of some Constructivist artists and filmmakers, for instance Janusz Maria Brzeski, whose series of photomontages, *Narodziny Robota (The Birth of a Robot, 1933)*, depicted the world destroyed by technology. In his photomontages and films, Brzeski created apocalyptic version of civilisation and culture destroyed by the improvements of technology.^{xlviii} This catastrophic view of the declining Europe is present in both, Stern’s poem and the Themersons’ adaptation of it. A.L. Rees proposes that *Europe* illustrated ‘a new wave of post-Constructivist imagism.’^{xlix} According to him the Themersons fused ‘Constructivist form with Dadaist iconoclasm [...]’.¹

But in many descriptions of *Europe*, the significance of one detail seemed to have been overlooked: the very fact that the Themersons chose the Futurist poem for the main subject of their film. Despite possessing a wide knowledge of the European literature, the Themersons remained faithful to their Polish heritage. Miczka believes that *Europe* ‘owes its artistic shape primarily to the futurist poetic “script”.’^{li} This suggests not only that Futurist poems could be easily adapted into scripts, but that the Themersons possibly wanted to bring the achievements of Polish Futurism to wider attention. In this way the legacy of Polish Futurism was acknowledged by the leading figures of Polish avant-garde film. This indicates the need for a more detailed investigation of the impact of the Polish avant-garde on the Themersons’ work in general. On the whole, *Europe*, both as a film and a poem, constitutes a convincing example of

the ‘two-way traffic’ that characterised Polish Futurism, where poetry supported cinema and vice versa, as will be explored throughout this chapter.

It is worth mentioning here that, although not based on any Futurist literary source, the Themersons’ *Calling Mr Smith* (1943) can be characterised by the same Futurist and Dada-like rebellious attitude towards Western civilisation. Made in London a decade later, like *Europe*, the film constituted an anti-Nazi statement.^{lii} This surviving poetic documentary uses a fusion of cartoon animated images with photomontages, photograms, double exposure, as well as saturated and solarised imagery to convey the filmmakers’ moral and philosophical stance towards the Nazi atrocities.^{liii} More importantly, *Calling Mr Smith* marks the Themersons’ identity as Poles and political filmmakers, who believed that film could be used as a weapon against social injustice, as remarked in Stern’s already quoted statement. The film poses a question: how Germans, who in the past produced such cultured people, can be so barbaric now? Bach’s music is played interchangeably with the Nazi hymn ‘Horst Wessel Lied’, which is acoustically distorted to add a sense of irony. The majority of slides used in the film were hand-made and filmed through colour filters and newsreel footage, mixed with still images. Shot in Dufay colour, the film is based on powerful contrasts.^{liv} Images of beauty, such as iconic cultural artifacts (Ancient architecture and sculpture, a face and body of Christ features as a medieval sculpture, a pastel of a child’s face, *Helenka* (1900), by the leading Polish Romantic artist Stanisław Wyspiański) are juxtaposed with images of ferocity (the sign of the swastika is depicted shortly before we see documentary footage of starving mothers and dying children and the controversial image of the hanging woman).^{lv} *Calling Mr Smith* alludes to Poland’s martyrological tradition, implying the Christ the cross to be a tortured Europe (i.e. Poland). In its aesthetics and the use of photocollages, photomontages and animated sequences, the film to some degree resembles Norman McLaren’s *Hell Unltd* (1936).^{lvi} Like McLaren’s film, *Calling Mr Smith* mixes archival footage, animation and live action, all rapidly edited. These films are structured not as a narrative but as a sequence of images with political themes,

which are announced in the titles. Both *Europe* and *Calling Mr Smith* demonstrate the impact of Nazi politics on the Themersons' work and their possible affinity with the Futurist and Dada tactics, which reflects Rees' belief that Polish modernism was unique in merging together 'Constructivism with Dada-surrealism, a vivid internationalising blend for the beleaguered inter-war years.'^{lvii}

But to further investigate the connection between Polish Futurists and the Themersons, let us return to Stern one more time. Of all the Futurist poets, Stern was the most widely published in the area of film criticism. He was a fierce defender of film's autonomy from other arts, particularly literature and theatre. He believed that a literary form no longer constituted an appropriate representation of reality and that film should take its place as a new art of contemporaneity.^{lviii} Stern thought that painting and poetry owed to cinema a return to the abstraction of forms, which he believed was also the essence of film: 'Sensual abstraction is the kingdom of cinema.'^{lix} In its form and structure, the Themersons' *Europe* reflects Stern's belief in the links between cinema and poetry as the film constitutes an attempt at finding film's unique language through experimentation. This is seen, as in Futurist poetry, in the simplicity and economy of the use of filmic material. Stern's preoccupation with rhythm in poetry and film is also visible in the Themersons' employment of montage. Conversely, as an example of this two-way traffic, Stern also discussed new ways of writing poems that recalled film editing, stressing simultaneity and the use of short sentences, as in 'Europe'. He considered Jerzy Jankowski a precursor of such style of writing, as seen particularly in Jankowski's telegraphic messages:

The inexpressible unearthly beauty...
of the cinematograph
having seen it once it is worth suffering death^{lx}.

Like the Themersons, Stern valued the achievements of the French Impressionists, embodied in their concept of *photogénie*. He particularly appreciated the films of René Clair, Man Ray and Luis Buñuel^{lxi} for their illogical structures, also favoured by Jalu Kurek. Stern was of the opinion that all the ‘principles of composition as understood till now’ needed to be abolished in order for film to free itself from the conventions of popular cinema.^{lxii} Both Stern and Kurek were in favour of non-realist cinema. For Kurek cinema was not ‘an illustrator of everyday life, or an optical chronicle of life [...] cinema is optic poetry.’^{lxiii} Recalling the French director Abel Gance, Kurek believed that the modern epoch ‘belonged to images’ and for him the main link between film and poetry rested in the condensation of words and images, as well as in the creation of non-narrative structures that evaded coherent interpretations.^{lxiv} Kurek’s *Rhythmical Calculations* (1934) thus possesses many elements of Polish Futurism. This now lost film was a mixture of figurative and non-figurative elements and can now be viewed in a form of a reconstruction by Ignacy Szczepański (1985), from a scenario by Gیزیcki (based on Kurek’s notes).^{lxv} *Rhythmical Calculations* opened with a sequence showing a rotating globe, a schema of a solar system in movement and the rhythm of a heart beat, inter-cut with shots of a clock and an aeroplane about to take off (**Fig.7- Kurek plane**).^{lxvi} This was followed by a more lyrical section – shots of legs juxtaposed with depictions of cityscapes, with skyscrapers and trees.^{lxvii} All of these scenes work on the basis of association rather than the cause and effect-based logical narrative structure. The text appearing on the screen reads: ‘direction, tension’ (upper part) and ‘the life of a man is the beating of his heart, which measures the working patterns of blood’ (lower part). Kurek’s text brings to mind Czyżewski’s poem, ‘Hymn do maszyny mego ciała’ (‘Hymn to the machine of my body’, 1922):

blood
 stomach
 they pulsate
 coils

pepsin
 heart
 the beat
 of my
 brain

blood
blood
strained
intestine

cables to my veins
twisted wire conductor
to my heart
battery
have pity on me
my heart
dynamo-heart
electric lungs
magnetic diaphragm
of the belly

one one one
my heart beats come
electric heart one

transmission belt
of my intestines
two two two

have pity on me
one two

the telephone of my brain
dynamo-brain
three three three
one two three
the machine of my body
function turn
live.^{lxviii}

Czyżewski's lines: 'blood/stomach/they/pulsate/coils [...] the beat/of my brain/
blood/blood/strained/intestine/cables to my veins [...] my heart/dynamo-heart/ electric lungs'
further resemble Kurek's *Rhythmical Calculations*: 'human life', 'blood', 'rhythm of a heart.'
Czyżewski talks about 'electric lungs' and compares veins to cables. The rhythm of a heart is
the rhythm of a working machine and Kurek's film also alludes to this in the images and
sounds of a pulsating heart, a plane's quickly moving propeller and a ticking clock. Both the
poem and the film treat the human body as if it were a machine. This perfectly working
machine - machine-heart, telephone-brain, then sends electrical impulses to the rest of the
body. The emphasis is on anatomy and human physicality. The literal shape of Czyżewski's

poem is that of a human body, which brings to mind the Polish Futurists' treatment of the machine as an organic part of a human body.

It was Jasioński who believed that Italian Futurism saw the machine as an ideal pattern and organism, superior to the human, Russian Futurism treated it as a slave to the proletariat, with a purely economic function, while Polish Futurism saw the human itself as a material machine, as an extension of human biological machinery.^{lxxix} In his preference for the abstracted vision of reality and the employment of the shots of body parts rather than framing whole bodies, or faces, Kurek might have been paying homage to the Italian Futurist film *Amor pedestre* (1914, **Fig.8 – Amor Pedestre**), in which a love story is depicted through close-ups of the protagonists' feet.^{lxxx} In Kurek's film we see the crossed legs of men and women, and finally a man and a woman sitting on a bench (**Fig.9 – Kurek feet**). As also exemplified in Fabre's film, *Rhythmical Calculations* is an expression of Kurek's belief in the redundancy of actors in film. He thought that film should use objects and abstract impressions rather than actors. Kurek's belief also resembles the key concerns of the leading figure of the French Impressionism and another Pole, Jean Epstein. In his theory of animism, Epstein proposed dramatising objects, making them appear cinematic and giving them new meanings.^{lxxxi} In a similar fashion Kurek believed that cinema's unique features could be best explored when actors are eliminated.^{lxxxii} It is not certain that he would have seen Fabre's films, but out of all the Polish Futurists, he enjoyed the closest links to Italian Futurism. From 1922 he was in close correspondence with Marinetti, and in 1924 he studied in Naples, where he met Marinetti and his wife, the painter Benedetta Cappa. From that time on Kurek translated much of the Italian Futurist poetry, eventually publishing an anthology *Chora fontanna. Wiersze futurystów włoskich* (*Sick fountain. The Poems of Italian Futurists*, 1971).^{lxxxiii}

Kurek and the Themersons' approach to experimental filmmaking reflects a Futurist belief in the connection between film and poetry. The Polish Futurists were fascinated by the fluid nature of the cinematograph, which constituted an important component of their poems, many of which remain untranslated.^{lxxiv} The Polish Futurists' attitude to poetry is important here, because to a great extent it defines their approach to film. They were against the mediocre qualities of Polish film scripts, hence their appreciation of Mayakovsky's views expressed in his poem 'Cinema and Cinema' (1922), in which he took aim against the mass production of melodramas and proclaimed cinema as 'a view of the world', 'innovator of literature', 'destroyer of aesthetics' and 'distributor of ideas.'^{lxxv} But it was the innovative poetry of Apollinaire that particularly fascinated Polish Futurists. Stern believed that Apollinaire's way of writing poems (as well as the work of Auden, Cendrars, Jacob and Neruda), could influence 'new poetic aesthetics in film.'^{lxxvi} He translated Apollinaire's poetry and wrote a monograph on Apollinaire, with particular attention to the poet's Polish origins.^{lxxvii} Polish Futurists believed that poetry and film should be surprising, echoing Apollinaire's ideas in 'The New Spirit and the Poets' (1917): 'the new spirit fills the universe with life and will manifest itself formidably in literature, in the arts, and in everything that is known.'^{lxxviii} Apollinaire had a particular influence on Polish Futurism in his employment of free verse and idea of simultaneity as the main rule by which new poetry should be created. For the Polish Futurists this meant that cinema should cease to follow any logical structure and instead, as Stern proposed, resemble the more arbitrary and impulsive nature of poetry. For Apollinaire poetry should be visual, as he insisted on its particular shape on the page and sound effects created by the reading of it: 'a perception of dark/light figures arranged on a light/dark surface.'^{lxxix} This was an attractive proposal to the Polish Futurists since it resembled ways in which one perceives film. Apollinaire's own poems, such as 'Coeur et Miroir' ('Heart and Mirror', 1914) and 'Il Pleut' ('It's Raining', 1916), have visually striking forms, with words running up and down the page, often being broken into separate syllables and letters, with different font sizes. This can be seen in Czyzewski's already mentioned poem, 'Hymn to the Machine of My

Body', which was portrayed on the page in the shape of a human body, bringing to mind Apollinaire's *Calligrammes* (1913 – 1916).^{lxxx}

Most importantly here, in their poetry Polish Futurists referred to the cinema, as well as the experience of watching films. Czyżewski's short poem, 'Sensacja w Kinie' ('Crime in the Cinema', 1921), describes the experience of watching a crime film in a Cinema Palace in Bombay. The poet makes an obvious reference to contemporary cinema by alluding to the names of famous actors, Olaf Fönss (in Czyżewski's poem there is an Ola Föns, 'Ola' in the Polish language is a female name) and Mia Mai.^{lxxxii} When writing about Czyżewski's poems, Polish literary critic, Jan Józef Lipski, describes them as being written like a 'suggestion for a film director' and 'poems-scripts', while using 'a technique of a miniature film scenario.' Lipski mentions a 'transfer of filmic elements into poetry' as the key components of many of the Polish Futurist poems.^{lxxxii} The use of cinematic elements in Czyżewski's poems relate largely to cinema's ability to create a captivating illusion of reality and the laws that govern it. 'Crime in Cinema' intentionally confuses the distinction between fact and fiction: the reader is not certain whether the events portrayed are happening in real life, or whether the author is describing a film.

Jasieński's poem 'Miasto. Synteza' ('City. Synthesis', around 1921) is a good example of Apollinaire-like simultaneity in its depiction of small dramatic scenes set in a variety of scenarios. We read erratic records of people's conversations, placed in a panoramic, synthetic picture of a city's night life, referred to as 'a factory of people.'^{lxxxiii} In the intensity of experiences described, the poem resembles types of cinematic narration:

A steady rain pelts down.
It spits water against the window panes.
A policeman walks, walks on the corner,

Every time he stops – he listens...
Nothing.
The windows have lowered their shades.
There, in the hotel,
A light is burning all night.
Someone is sick.
They have sent for a doctor.
Through the window you can sometimes see a slim brown-
haired woman.
The whole first floor is dark, dead silent...
On the third floor a small light –
An older man has lured there a seven-year old girl
and rapes her on a chair.
The child has wide-opened eyes...

The policeman is walking on the corner
Back and forth. Back and forth.
And looks in the black windows.
From behind a corner a thief spies on him.
It is raining.
They are getting wet.^{lxxxiv}

Jasieński's fascination with the criminal and morbid brings to mind a film thriller, set in a city at night. The poet uses unrestricted narration, so that the reader (the viewer) knows more than the policeman, who is thus unable to intervene. In Jasieński's most cited Futurist poem, 'Przejechali. Kinematograf' ('They Drove Past. The Cinematograph', 1921), the story is told from the point of view of a reporter hiding behind a camera lens. The poet describes watching a film, in which he sees:

A female freckled servant in a polka-dotted white blouse

Someone slender, with heron's feather
- 'Will you come?... ' - I can't...'
Juuump!
Cars. Platforms. Droshky.
The Cinematograph bicycle spoke
with wheels crushed on a dried asphalt.
- 'Wait...' – No, no, don't ask, because I could surrender...'
Ding! Dong!!
A red tram rolled from the alleys,
One. Two.
They passed each other briefly, cutting the way
The ominous singing of the grinding tracks...
A small man in a brownish grey overcoat...
Crack!!!
Stopp!!
Brake!
Aaaaaaaaaa!
They drove past!! They drove past!!^{lxxxv}

Here the influence of film and Apollinaire's concept of simultaneity in the way Jasiński 'creates' sound is particularly visible: 'Ding! Dong!', 'Crack!', 'Stopp!!'^{lxxxvi} Like Stern, Jasiński published many pieces on contemporary film. He saw film as having the potential to achieve something new that had not been done in any other arts.^{lxxxvii} But this potential, Jasiński thought, was wasted by the growing commercialisation of the film industry and its unambitious productions and could only be saved by experimental films.^{lxxxviii}

When talking about the influence of film on Futurist poems Jerzy Jankowski's 'Pszczucie', ('Premonition', 1921, Polish title is deliberately misspelled to subvert the grammatical rules) cannot be omitted. Here the spectre of death is framed as in a series of filmic close-ups, and is

superimposed on the face of a dying woman.^{lxxxix} The reader's attention is riveted to a 'beholding and seeing' omniscient narrator, as in a film. 'Premonition' brings to mind a scene from Fritz Lang's *Destiny* (1921), in which a young woman (Lil Dagover) meets Death (Bernhard Goetzke) in a room filled with life-sized candles. He explains to her the significance of burning candles, which symbolise dead people. As Death parts his hands, he raises a flame off a candle. This image dissolves into a body of a toddler, which quickly vanishes, indicating that the child had died. A series of close-ups on the woman's face, like in Jankowski's poem, shows her despair at the presented image.

All of the above poems could be described as using script-writing methods, embodied in the employment of short sentences, which are often abruptly cut to resemble film editing techniques. Many of them have no particular plot, use de-dramatised action and blur the characters' psychological contours.^{xc} In the above pieces Polish Futurists proposed subjective storytelling as seen in cinema, which was considered by Marinetti the ultimate expression of the Futurist poli-vision. He believed cinema to be an autonomous art that should never copy but rather distance itself from reality:

ONE MUST FREE THE CINEMA AS AN EXPRESSIVE MEDIUM in order to make it the ideal instrument of a new art, immensely vaster and lighter than all the existing arts [...] only in this way can one reach that polyexpressiveness towards which all the most modern artistic researches are moving.^{xc1}

Polish Futurists' poems and cine-poems testify to their belief in the freedom of language, created outside of any logic, which was manifested in the deformation of words, the destruction of punctuation and the use of different typographies and inserts of illustrations. As Polish film historian Tadeusz Miczka suggests, the Polish Futurists' fascination with cinematographic techniques expanded the sphere of literary expression and encouraged 'the futurization of the cinematograph', which began 'on the pre-filmic level' together with 'attempts to modernize script-writing.'^{xcii}

It is worth noting that the cinema seems to have influenced Polish Futurist poetry more than prose, with the exception of Kurek, who wrote numerous film novels and novellas. His *S.O.S. Zbaw Nasze Dusze*, (*S.O.S.: Save Our Souls*, 1927) includes numerous montage-like sequences, collages of seemingly unrelated events, kaleidoscopic changes of action, sensitivity to colour and light and voyeurism of its characters who often go to the movies or look through camera lenses. In this particular novel, the cause and effect rule disappears and the chronology of events, as well as all grammatical codes, are subverted. Images of various events are juxtaposed with on-screen-like text printed in bold, as if to suggest inter-titles in cinema.^{xciii} Kurek wanted readers to feel as if they were watching a silent movie. His other film novella, *Kim był Andrzej Panik? Andrzej Panik Zabił Amundsena* (*Who Was Andrzej Panik? Andrzej Panik Killed Amundsen*, 1926) was written like a script.^{xciv} In this apparently autobiographical piece the main hero is a journalist named Jalu Kurek. Most of the novel's action takes place in the cinema, and the sequence of literary events according to Miczka, was modeled on the film editing process.^{xcv} It is the story of a man who confused his life with a film and its morale is to remember that what we see on the screen has little to do with reality, as the hero finally declares his belief in life rather than events on screen.^{xcvi} The above examples of Polish Futurist poetry and prose in relation to the Themerson and Kurek's pieces constitute a perfect example of this two-way traffic, where poetry influenced film and where literature was 'rejuvenated by cinema.'^{xcvii}

In summary, although Polish Futurists did not make any films, their admiration for the art of film manifested itself in the production of cinematic poems, cine-scripts, film novellas and critical responses to contemporary productions. According to Miczka, Polish Futurism revolutionised script writing and as seen in the example of Stern's 'Europa', many of the Futurist writings were treated as script projects. Aside from their cine-novels, poems and

scripts, Polish Futurists' critical writings on cinema require a closer exploration and evaluation as many of their texts attempted a dialogue with the developments of avant-garde films in other countries. This was evident in the case of Stern and Kurek's interest in the notion of *photogénie* in the late 1920s. In this concept they saw an expression of cinema's ultimate autonomy from other arts, as well as a certain artistic freedom for which these artists fought within the realm of Futurism.

In this chapter I only managed to discuss a handful of the Futurist cine-poems, novellas and critical pieces on film, but there is no doubt that they constituted an important step in the development of experimental film and provided further inspiration for the future attempts at creating alternatives to popular film throughout the late 1920s and 1930s. In order to evaluate the impact of Polish Futurism on the later avant-garde films appropriately, it is important to understand at least some of the reasons why the Futurists did not manage to create any films. Although in his article Miczka offers numerous ideas, among them the lack of theoretical programme and a cinematic manifesto, he fails to offer a more coherent perspective. I looked at Polish Futurism and film in relation to the achievements of the contemporary international avant-garde filmmakers and suggested that the lack of Polish Futurist films in Poland was not unusual at the time, particularly given the general context of avant-garde film (how very few films were made at the time), as well as the poor state of Polish film industry in the 1920s. I thus proposed that the Polish Futurists has a rather significant input to the development of later avant-garde films and discourses. As Miczka writes:

[...] despite the mere handful of futuristic ideas concerning film, the trend was, nevertheless, an important step in the development of cinema, providing inspiration for the future.^{xviii}

Polish Futurism is therefore significant to the Polish avant-garde film not because of its achievements but because of the consequences it had on its later developments in the 1930s, which should not be understated.

ⁱ Philippe Dubois, 'Photography Mise-en-Film: Autobiographical (Hi)stories and Psychic Apparatuses', Patrice Petro, ed., *Fugitive Images: From Photography to Video* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), p.28.

ⁱⁱ For details on Feliks Kuczkowski (1884 – 1970) see for example Giżycki, 'Irzykowski, Kuczkowski and the Tradition of "Visionary Film" in Poland', *Afterimage*, vol.13, Autumn, 1987 and Kuczkowski, 'Wspomnienie o filmie przyszłości', typescript in the collection of the Archive of Polish National Cinematheque, Syg.A.129, Warsaw [1955].

ⁱⁱⁱ See for example, Giżycki, 1987.

^{iv} The reconstruction of *Rhythmical Calculations* can be seen at the *Filmoteka Museum* website: <http://filmoteka.artmuseum.pl/?l=0&id=393>. Excerpts from the film can also be seen in Szczepański's documentary, *Jalu Kurek* (1985). In 2001 the American experimental filmmaker Bruce Checefsky reconstructed the Themersons' first film, *Apteka* (*Pharmacy*, 1930), also available at *Filmoteka Museum* website: <http://filmoteka.artmuseum.pl/?l=1&id=762> and in 2006, *Drobiazg melodyjny* (*Moment musical*, 1933), available on *Vimeo*: <http://vimeo.com/25712651>. Piotr Zarębski's reconstruction of *Europe, Europa II* (1988), can also be seen at the *Filmoteka Museum* website: <http://filmoteka.artmuseum.pl/?l=1&id=1296>.

^v Here I ought to acknowledge the pioneering research of Marcin Giżycki and Ryszard Kluszczyński, the key theorists of avant-garde film in Poland. But it is Giżycki in particular who in his publications resurrected a number of obscured figures of the Polish avant-garde film, namely Kuczkowski. A.L. Rees' essay, which opens this collection, remains a classic piece on the Polish avant-garde film in the English-speaking world.

^{vi} See for example, Giżycki, 1996; Ryszard Kluszczyński, ed., *Film awangardowy w Polsce i na świecie* (Łódź: Łódzki Dom Kultury, 1989) and *Film – sztuka Wielkiej Awangardy* (Warszawa, Łódź: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1990) and Jadwiga Bocheńska, *Polska Myśl Filmowa do roku 1939* (Wrocław, Warszawa, Kraków, Gdańsk: Zakład Naukowy im.Ossolińskich, Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1977). Most of these key sources underplay the impact of Polish Futurism on the development on avant-garde film in Poland in the 1930s.

^{vii} See Tadeusz Miczka, 'Cinema as optic poetry: On attempts to futurise the cinematograph in Poland of the 1920s and 1930s', *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, no.40, March-June, 1998 and 'Kino jako poezja optyczna. Próby futuryzacji kinematografu w Polsce w latach 1918-1939', Jan Trzynandkowski, ed., *Kino-film: poezja optyczna?* (Wrocław: Uniwersytet Wrocławski, 1995).

^{viii} For a collection of some of the Futurists' critical writings on film, mainly those of Anatol Stern and Jalu Kurek, see Giżycki, ed., *Walka o film artystyczny w międzywojennej Polsce* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1989) and Anatol Stern, *Wspomnienia z Atlantydy* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Artystyczne i Filmowe, 1959).

^{ix} Miczka, 1998, p.4.

^x Tom Gunning, 'Loie Fuller and the Art of Motion', *La decima musa: Il cinema e le altre arti. The Tenth Muse: Cinema and Other Arts. Proceedings of the VI Domitor Conference /VII International Film Studies Conference* (Udine: Arti Grafiche Fruilane, 2001), p.25. For a similar approach, see Ian Christie, 'Before the Avant-Gardes: Artists and Cinema, 1910-14', *Ibid.*, and Jan-Christopher Horak, *Lovers of Cinema. The First American Film Avant-Garde 1919-1945* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1995).

^{xi} Gunning, 2001, p.25.

^{xii} Pavle Levi, *Cinema by Other Means* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p.xiii. I am indebted to Greg DeCuir for his recommendation of Levi's book. The phrase 'around film' was borrowed by Levi from the filmmaker Slobodan Šijan. See Levi, p.161.

^{xiii} Levi, 2012, p.xiii.

^{xiv} Levi, 2012, p.xvi.

^{xv} Jonathan Walley, 'The Material of Film and the Idea of Cinema: Contrasting Practices in the Sixties and Seventies Avant-Garde Film', *October*, no.103, Winter 2003, p.18.

^{xvi} *Ibid.*

^{xvii} Levi, 2012, p.46. Here Levi gives an example of Monny de Bouilly's scenario 'Doctor Hypnison, or the Technique of Living' (1923) which was always referred to as a 'paper movie.'

^{xviii} See Christie, 2001 and 'The avant-gardes and European Cinema before the 1930s', John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson, eds., *World Cinema. Critical Approaches* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 'Film as a Modernist Art', Christopher Wilk, ed., *Modernism: Designing New World (1914-1939)* (London: V&A Publications, 2006) and 'From Bauhaus to arthouse', *Sight and*

Sound, vol.22, issue 6, June, 2012. See also AL Rees, 'Movements in Film 1912-40', Stuart Comer, ed., *Film and Video Art* (London: Tate Publishing, 2009).

^{xix} For some literature on the earliest Italian experiments with film, see Bruno Corra, 'Abstract Cinema – Chromatic Music', Umbro Apollonio, ed., *Futurist Manifestos* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973) [1912] and Birgit Hein, 'The Futurist Film', David Curtis, ed., *Film as Film: Formal experiment in film 1910 – 1975* (London: Hayward Gallery, 1979).

^{xx} See for example, Standish D. Lawder, 'Film as Modern Art: Picasso, Survage, Kandinsky, Schönberg', *The Cubist Cinema* (New York: New York University Press, 1975).

^{xxi} See Rees, 'The absolute film', *A History of Experimental Film and Video* (London: British Film Institute, 1999); Michael O'Pray, 'The 1920s: The European Avant-gardes', *Avant-garde Film: Forms, Themes and Passions* (London and New York: Wallflower Press, 2003) and R. Bruce Elder, 'Modernism and Absolute Film', *Harmony and Dissent. Film and Avant-Garde Movements in the Early Twentieth Century* (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2008).

^{xxii} Kasimir Malevich, 'Art and the Problems of Architecture. The Emergence of a New Plastic System of Architecture. Script for an artistic-scientific film', Oksana Bulgakova, ed., *Kazimir Malevich. The White Rectangle. Writings on Film* (Berlin, San Francisco: PotemkinPress, 2002)[1927].

^{xxiii} See Jolanta Lemann, 'Poglądy filmowe Anatola Sterna w dwudziestolecu międzywojennym (na przykładzie publikacji i działalności społecznej)', Alicja Helman and Alina Madej, eds., *Film polski wobec innych sztuk* (Katowice: Uniwersytet Śląski, 1979), p.134. See Miczka, 1998, p.10 for the list of films based on Stern's scripts.

^{xxiv} As Vertov points out, Mayakovsky 'could not overcome cinema's bureaucratic officialdom. His scripts were either rejected or included in the thematic plan but never made. Or they were so disfigured in the process of production that he was "quite ashamed" of them.' See Dziga Vertov, 'More on Mayakovsky', Richard Taylor, eds., *Inside the Film Factory: New Approaches to Russian and Soviet Cinema* (London: Routledge, 1994), p.340 [1934-1935].

^{xxv} Miczka, 1998, p.11.

^{xxvi} Although linked closely to the Constructivist principles, Janusz Maria Brzeski's *Przekroje* (*Sections*, 1931) and *Beton* (*Concrete*, 1933) also betray an interest in the city and the machine much in the futurist fashion. See Janusz Zagrodzki, *Janusz Maria Brzeski, Kazimierz Podsadecki 1923 – 1936. Z pogranicza plastyki i filmu* (Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki, 1981).

^{xxvii} For more details, see Lawder, 1975, pp.46-47.

^{xxviii} There exists an extensive literature on the Themersons. For the most recent catalogue, see Paweł Polit, ed., *The Themersons and the avant-garde* (Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi, 2013). For documentary films on the Themersons, see *Franciszka i Stefan* (Tomasz Pobóg-Malinowski, 1975) and most recent one, *Themerson&Themerson* (Wiktoria Szymańska, 2010).

^{xxix} On the decline of Polish Futurism, see Richard Lourie, ed., *Aleksander Wat. My Century: The Odyssey of a Polish Intellectual* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988) and Stern, *Bruno Jasioński* (Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna, 1969).

^{xxx} Stern, 'Europa (fragment)', *Iluzjon*, no.3, 1989. The translation of the poem used here comes from a display of the exhibition *Breaking the Rules: The Printed Face of the European Avant Garde 1900 – 1937*, British Library, 9 November 2007 - 30 March 2008.

^{xxxi} Stefan Themerson, 'Europa: A letter to Piotr Zarębski', 14 April 1988, Benjamin Cook and Łukasz Ronduda, eds., *The Films of Franciszka and Stefan Themerson*, a booklet accompanying a DVD with Themersons' surviving films (London: LUX, 2007), p.35.

^{xxxii} Zagrodzki, 1981, p.33.

^{xxxiii} For some examples of the contemporary reception of *Europe*, see Jerzy Toeplitz, 'Europa', *Kurier Polski*, 1933; Stefania Zahorska, 'Polski film Dobry!', *Wiadomości Literackie*, no.52, 1932 and Anonymous, 'Europa, czyli grube nieporozumienie z filmem eksperymentalnym', *Ekspres Poranny*, 31 January 1933.

^{xxxiv} See the publication of Kurt Schwitters' non-dadaist texts, 'Dadaism' in the Constructivist magazine *Blok*, no.1, 1924. Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz's (aka Witkacy) *Papierek lakmusowy* (1921) is a pastiche of a Dada manifesto. On the connection between Polish Futurism and Dada, see for example Marek Bartelik, *Early Polish Modern Art: Unity in Multiplicity* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp.171 and 174 and Andrzej Turowski, 'Dadaistyczne konteksty', *Awangardowe Marginesy* (Warszawa: Instytut Kultury, 1998).

- ^{xxxv} Wat, 1977, p.25.
- ^{xxxvi} Turowski, 1998, p.53.
- ^{xxxvii} Stefan Themerson, 'Europa: A scenario', a letter to Józef Robakowski, Cook and Ronduda, 2007, p.28 [1973].
- ^{xxxviii} Ibid.
- ^{xxxix} In their final joint publication, 'Nóż w Bzuhu' ('Nife in the Beli', 1921), the Polish Futurists seemed to have been indebted to the 1916 Dada Manifesto in their nihilism and pessimistic attitude towards Poland's political future. The title refers to Marinetti's original manifesto and the correct Polish spelling would have been 'Nóż w brzuchu' ('Knife in the Stomach'), but Polish Futurists deliberately modified the spelling to challenge the grammatical rules. See Zbigniew Jarosiński and Helena Zaworska, eds., *Antologia polskiego futuryzmu i Nowej Sztuki* (Wrocław, Kraków: Zakład im.Ossolineum, 1978), p.29.
- ^{xl} For more details on Polish Futurism, see Bogdana Carpenter, *The poetic avant-garde in Poland, 1918 – 1939* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1983) and Wat, 'Wspomnienia o futuryzmie', *Miesięcznik Literacki*, no.2, 1930.
- ^{xli} On Italian Futurism, see Umbro Apollonio, *Futurist Manifestos* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973). On Russian Futurism, see Anna Lawton, ed., *Russian Futurism through its Manifestoes, 1912 - 1928* (New York and London: Cornell University Press, 1988).
- ^{xlii} Although Polish Futurism emerged in 1919, the news about Marinetti's 1909 manifesto reached Poland the very same year. Carpenter suggests that Polish Futurism might have started in 1914, with Jerzy Jankowski's (1887-1941) poems, which employed phonetic orthography and were written in the spirit of Italian Futurism. See Carpenter, 1983, p.3. See also Ignacy Grabowski, 'Najnowsze prądy w literaturze najnowszej. Futuryzm', *Świat*, no.40, 1909.
- ^{xliiii} Carpenter, 1983, p.xiii. In addition, see Piotr Piotrowski, 'Modernity and Nationalism: Avant-garde art and Polish independence, 1912 – 1922', Timothy O. Benson, ed., *Central European Avant-gardes: Exchange and Transformation 1910-1930* (Cambridge: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2002), p.315.
- ^{xliv} Stern, *Bruno Jasioński* (Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna, 1969), p.27.
- ^{xlv} For more details, see Stern, 1969, p.61. Mussolini's victory in the 1922 elections was greeted with some interest in Poland. An unsigned article praised the Italians for a 'healthy instinct' in supporting the fascists, thus beating the socialists from ruling the country. Anonymous, 'Zwycięstwo faszystów', *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, no.46, 11 November 1922, p.7.
- ^{xlvi} An excerpt from *Gga*, quoted in Carpenter, 1983, p.7 [1919]. Carpenter, 1983, p.7. See also Jarosiński and Zaworska, 1978, p.52, footnote 4.
- ^{xlviii} For more details see Jerzy Malinowski, 'Janusz Maria Brzeski i Studio Polskiej Awangardy Filmowej. Program kin studyjnych', Kraków, May, 1975 and Zbigniew Wyszyński, 'Krakowska awangarda filmowa lat trzydziestych', *Kino*, no.12, 1975.
- ^{xlix} Rees, 1993, p.90.
- ^l Ibid., p.91.
- ^{li} Miczka, 1998, p.11.
- ^{lii} For more details see Stefan Themerson, *The Urge to Create Visions* (Amsterdam: Gaberbochus + De Harmonie, 1983) [1937].
- ^{liii} Three of the Themersons' surviving films: *Przygoda człowieka poczciwego*, (*The Adventures of a Good Citizen*, 1937), *Calling Mr Smith* (1943) and *The Eye and the Ear* (1944-1945) are available on a DVD compilation: *The Films of Franciszka and Stefan Themerson* (London: LUX, 2007).
- ^{liv} Dufay colour was previously used by Len Lye in his animated film *Colour Box* (1935, UK).
- ^{lv} The British censors considered *Calling Mr Smith* too brutal and requested its removal. The Themersons refused to do so and the film was only shown privately in October 1943 at the Polish Film Unit and the Edinburgh Film Guild. See Stefan Themerson, 1937, p.45.
- ^{lvi} See for example Terence Dobson, *The Film Work of Norman McLaren* (Sydney: John Libbey & Co Ltd, 2007) and Jamie Sexton, 'Hell Unltd', *Screenonline* at <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/id/440480/index.html>. Accessed on 26 September 2012.
- ^{lvii} Rees, 1999, p.54. See also Deke Dusienberre, 'The Other Avant-gardes', Curtis, 1979.

^{lviii} Stern wrote about film obsessively and was an editor of numerous film columns in major magazines and journals. See Stern, 'Kino', *Skamander*, no.28, 1922; 'Przeróbki literackie na ekranie', *Kinema*, no.17, 1922; 'Malarstwo a kino', *Skamander*, nos.29-30, 1923 and 'Uwagi o teatrze i kinie', *Reflektor*, no.1, 1924. See Stern, 1959 and Giżycki, 1989.

^{lix} Stern, 'Uwagi o teatrze i kinie', *Reflektor*, no.1, 1924, p.7. See also Giżycki, 1989, p.82 and Alfred Kowalski, 'U tworców polskiego filmu. Rozmowa z Anatolem Sternem', *Świat Filmu*, no.2, 1937.

^{lx} Jankowski, quoted in Sergiusz Sterno-Wachowiak, *Miąższ zakazanych owoców: Jankowski, Jasieński, Grodziński* (Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo Małe, 1985), p.44 and translated in Miczka, 1998, p.5 [c.1920].

^{lxi} For Stern's recollection of his first meeting with the Themersons, see Stern, 'Europa. Polski film awangardowy', 1959 [1933], pp.168-169. For the connections between French Impressionism and Surrealism, see for example, Ian Aitken, 'Into the Realm of the Wondrous: French Cinematic Impressionism', *European Film Theory and Cinema. A Critical Introduction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2001).

^{lxii} Stern, 'Kilka uwag o przyszłej sztuce ekranu', 1959 [1924].

^{lxiii} Kurek, 'O nowe drogi w kinematografii. Jeszcze o filmie artystycznym', *Kino dla Wszystkich*, no.6, 1927, p.3.

^{lxiv} See Jalu Kurek, 'Kino – zwycięstwo naszych oczu', *Głos Narodu*, 2 March, 1926. For Kurek's other writings on cinema, see 'O nowe drogi w kinematografii. Jeszcze o filmie artystycznym', *Kino dla Wszystkich*, no.6, 1927; 'O filmie "artystycznym" i "stosowanym"', *Kino dla Wszystkich*, no.56, 1928; 'Uwagi o filmie', *Linia*, no.3, 1931 and 'Nogi dziewczęce. Polska awangarda filmowa', *Światowid*, no.26, 1933. See also Giżycki, 1989 for a selection of Kurek's writings.

^{lxv} For more details, see Giżycki's reconstruction of the scenario, 'Aneks: Hipotetyczna rekonstrukcja filmu "Or" Jalu Kurka', Giżycki, 1989. See also Kurek, 'Objaśniam OR', *Linia*, no.5, 1933.

^{lxvi} Giżycki, 1996, p.104.

^{lxvii} For more details see Moassi, 'Awangarda filmowa w Krakowie. "Or" Jalu Kurka i "Europa" Franciszki i Stefana Themersonów', *Nowy Dziennik*, 12 June 1933 and Kurek, 'Wspomnienia ze "Straży Przedniej" (Z dziejów filmowej awangardy krakowskiej)', *Kwartalnik Filmowy*, no.3, 1961 and Zbigniew Wyszyński, 'Krakowska awangarda filmowa lat trzydziestych', *Kino*, no.12, 1975, p.64.

^{lxviii} Czyżewski, 'Hymn do maszyny mego ciała', translated in Carpenter, 1983, p.27 [1922].

^{lxix} See Bruno Jasieński, 'The Polish Nation: A Manifesto Concerning the Immediate Futurisation of Life' and 'Manifesto Concerning Futurist Poetry', Benson, 2002 [both 1921].

^{lxx} Miczka, 1998, p.11.

^{lxxi} See Jean Epstein, 'On Certain Characteristics of Photogénie', Richard Abel, ed., *French Film Theory and Criticism, vol.1: 1907-1929* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1988), p.317 [1924]. See also Zbigniew Czeczot-Gawrak, *Jan Epstein. Studium natury w sztuce filmowej* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Artystyczne i Filmowe, 1962), pp.23-24.

^{lxxii} Kurek, 1928, p.8. One of the first Polish avant-garde filmmakers who made films without actors and made this central claim in his writings on film was Kuczkowski. In the 1920s, similar views were shared by a number of art and film critics, namely Stefania Zahorska. See Zahorska, 'Film abstrakcyjny', *Wiek XX*, no.8, 1928, p.15. See also Whoopee, 'Bez aktorów. Wizja przyszłości', *ABC*, 16 sierpień, 1932 and 'O prawdziwe kino. Co widzimy na ekranie, a co jest istotą sztuki filmowej', *ABC*, 16 March, 1930.

^{lxxiii} Kurek was often referred to as 'the disciple of Marinetti', although he objected to such label. He claimed that Polish poetry was in no way influenced by Marinetti: 'I was not a pure futurist [...] I was an heir and student of Marinetti but I was in the senior class.' Kurek, *Chora fontanna* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1971), p.7. See also Elżbieta Cichla-Czarniawska, "Heretyk awangardy" *Jalu Kurek* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Lubelskie, 1987), pp.14-36.

^{lxxiv} For details see Ewa and Marek Pytasz, 'Poetycka podróż w świat kinematografu, czyli kino w poezji polskiej lat 1914 – 1925', Helman and Miczka, eds., *Szkice z teorii filmu* (Katowice: Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski, 1978) and Jan Kucharczyk, 'Pierwiastki filmowe w twórczości literackiej Tadeusza Peipera i Jalu Kurka', *Kwartalnik Filmowy*, no.1, 1965.

^{lxxv} Mayakovsky, 'Cinema and Cinema', Christie and Taylor, 1994, p.39 [1922]. For some examples of the Polish critics' disappointment with the state of Polish cinema, see Antoni Słonimski, 'Bezczelność

producentów tandety’, *Wiadomości Literackie*, no.44, 1928 and Seweryn Romin, ‘Śmierć sztuce’, *Kino-Teatr*, no.11, 1929; Barbara Armatys, ‘Dorobek publicystyczny i działalność społeczna “STARTU” (1930-1935)’, *Kwartalnik Filmowy*, no.1, 1961 and Leszek Armatys, ‘Myśl filmowa i działalność artystyczna “STARTU” (1930-1935)’, *Kwartalnik Filmowy*, no.1, 1961.

^{lxxvi} See Lemann, 1979, p.142.

^{lxxvii} Translations of some of Apollinaire’s works appeared in the Polish press in fragments. *Alcools* (1913) was published in the early 1920s. Stern’s book, *Dom Apollinaire’a* (1973), with a cover designed by the Constructivist artist Henryk Berlewi, is devoted solely to the author’s investigation of Apollinaire’s Polish origin and it testifies to the Futurists’ fascination with the figure of the poet. For a selection of Polish sources on Apollinaire, see for example, Julia Hartwig, *Apollinaire* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1961) and ed., *Guillaume Apollinaire. Listy do Madeleine* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1976) and Adam Ważyk, ‘Guillaume Apollinaire’, *Wiadomości Literackie*, no.1, 1928.

^{lxxviii} Apollinaire, ‘L’Esprit nouveau les poètes’, Roger Shattuck, ed., *Selected writings of Guillaume Apollinaire* (New York: A New Directions Book, 1971), p.237 [1917]. See also Francis Steegmuller, *Apollinaire, Poet Among the Painters* (London: Penguin Books, 1963).

^{lxxix} See Shattuck, 1971, p.19.

^{lxxx} Czyżewski’s other poem ‘Ogród mechaniczny’ (1922) also resembles Apollinaire’s visual poems. See Carpenter, pp.28-29.

^{lxxxi} See also Miczka, 1998, p.5. Olaf Fönss (1882 – 1949) was a Dutch actor, who often played in crime and period films. Mia May (1884 – 1980) was an Austrian actress, one of the first divas of the German cinema, who starred in many UFA productions.

^{lxxxii} Jan Józef Lipski, ‘Tytus Czyżewski’, Irena Maciejewska, Jacek Trznadel, Maria Pokrasenowa, eds., *Literatura polska w okresie międzywojennym*, vol.3 (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1993), pp.15-17.

^{lxxxiii} For an in depth discussion of Polish Futurist poems see Carpenter, 1983, pp.21-64. For materials on individual Polish Futurists, see for example Edward Balcerzan, *Bruno Jasiński. Utwory poetyckie, manifesty, szkice* (Kraków: Polska Akademia Nauk, 1972); Nina Kolesnikoff, *Bruno Jasiński. His Evolution from Futurism to Socialist Realism* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1982); Alicja Balcuch, *Tytus Czyżewski. Poezje i próby dramatyczne* (Wrocław, Warszawa, Kraków: Zakład im. Ossolińskich, 1992); Sergiusz Sterno-Wachowiak, *Między zakazanych owoców: Jankowski, Jasiński, Grodziński* (Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo Małe, 1985); Andrzej K Waśkiewicz, ed., *Anatol Stern. Wiersze Zebrane, tom 1 and 2* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1986).

^{lxxxiv} Jasiński, ‘Miasto. Synteza’, translated in Carpenter, 1983, p.36 [c.1921].

^{lxxxv} Jasiński, ‘Przejechali, Kinematograf’, Lentas and Ogonowska, 2008, p.40 [1921]. My translation.

^{lxxxvi} For a discussion on the sound aspects of Polish Futurist poems, see Beata Śniecikowska, “*Nuż w Uhu?*” *Koncepcje dźwięku w poezji polskiego futuryzmu* (Wrocław: Uniwersytet Wrocławski, 2008).

^{lxxxvii} Here one could also add the critical writings of Tadeusz Peiper, who can be seen as a bridge between Futurism and Constructivism. He argued ‘the most essential and important element of every art is what other art cannot bring out.’ Peiper, ‘Ku specyficzności kina’, *Zwrotnica*, no.3, 1923, p.11 and ‘Futuryzm (Analiza i krytyka)’, *Zwrotnica*, no.6, 1922.

^{lxxxviii} Jasiński, ‘Kina krakowskie’, *Zwrotnica*, no.3, 1922. See also Czyżewski, ‘Krajobraz w kinie’, *ABC*, 3 October 1932; ‘Film abstrakcyjny’, *ABC*, 19 July 1932 and ‘Film konwencjonalny’, *ABC*, no.290, 1932.

^{lxxxix} Miczka, 1998, p.5.

^{xc} See Miczka, ‘Literatura odnowiona kinem’, *Film na Świecie*, nos.325-326, 1986, p.45.

^{xci} See Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, with Bruno Corra, Emilio Settemelli, Arnaldo Ginna, Giacomo Balla, Remo Chiti, ‘The Futurist Cinema’, *Apollonio*, 1973 [1916], p.208. See also Marinetti, ‘The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism’ [1909], ‘Destruction of Syntax – Imagination without Strings – Words-in-Freedom’ [1913], as well as Marinetti’s letter to the readers of *Zwrotnica*, ‘List’, *Zwrotnica*, no.6, October 1922.

^{xcii} Miczka, 1998, p.9.

^{xciii} For an overview of the influence of the cinematograph on literature, from the Young Poland to the 1930s, see Katarzyna Taras, *Witkacy i film* (Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza Errata, 2005). See also

Sterno-Wachowiak, 1985 and Edward Balcerzan, 'Wstęp', *Bruno Jasiński. Utwory poetyckie, manifesty, szkice* (Kraków: Polska Akademia Nauk, 1972).

^{xciv} See Kurek, 1961, p.58.

^{xcv} Miczka, 1998, p.6. For more details on Kurek's novels, see Cichla-Czarniawska, 1987, pp.46-56 and Taras, 2005, pp.50-56.

^{xcvi} See also Bolesław Prus' story 'Widziadła', *Pion*, no.15, 1936, pp.6-7 and Irzykowski's play, *Człowiek przed soczewką. Czyli sprzedane samobójstwo* (*The Man Behind the Lens or a Suicide for Sale*, 1908, first published in 1938), which can be compared with Apollinaire's short story, 'A fine film' (1904), part of 'The False Messiah, Amphion or The Stories and Adventures of the Baron of Ormesan' (1907). See Christie, *The Last Machine. Early Cinema and the Birth of the Modern World* (London: British Film Institute, 1994), pp.48-49 and Levi, 2012, p.72.

^{xcvii} Miczka, 1998, p.4.

^{xcviii} *Ibid.*, p.2.