

1. From a review by Adam Hlebowicz in DZIENNIK BAŁTYCKI, 21 April 2000,

It is an important book. Too important to be a bedside reading. Andrzej Wajda has convinced us many times that he has an important message to convey. He does the same in this book. It is not a "substitute" prepared in a rush to get something published on the occasion of his receiving the Academy Award. It is an important book which was created with the help of the diaries which he has been writing for almost all his life.

It is not an autobiography in the usual sense of the word. Although the fans of biographies will certainly find a lot of very interesting information here, they will also be able to read about the process of Wajda's becoming an artist. He thoughtfully describes his gurus, youth fascinations and choices he once made...

Without this book it would be difficult to understand Poland's after-war culture and the way it came into being, as well as the pressures it had to confront and how the best artists of the time managed to work in spite of external difficulties.

Some chapters of this book are just magnificent like the one about the future of cinema, the one about his "Pan Tadeusz" or Poland's condition at the beginning of the new century. It is worth to reach for this book not only because of all the talk about Wajda's Academy Award, fame and crowds gathering around him... There are a few things in it about all of us and it is worth to think about them.

2. From a review by Jerzy Armata in GAZETA WYBORCZA, 7 April 2000

It is rather an autobiography of thoughts, both the most important ones and the ones which the author leave behind. Wajda writes about childhood, his parents and old friends, student times, his debut as a director as well as the Polish school of cinematography and the cinema of moral unrest, about the phenomenon of Zbigniew Cybulski, about his "affair" with the communist authorities, about censorship and how he (Wajda) wanted to become Walesa's chauffeur; he writes about the fascination with Japan and the works of Fyodor Dostoyevsky, he comments on his best films and talks about the projects he had given up.

3. From a review by Bożena Janicka in KINO , 6 June 2000

The title of the book already sets the hierarchy of the matters and does not leave any doubts as to what is most important to Andrzej Wajda. The book includes fragments of childhood memories but probably because the author feels that they constitute important sources of his art. It is similar with the fragmentary memories of early youth during WWII, then the private matters almost disappear. But the book is not only about cinema because without "the rest of the world" there would be no cinema of Andrzej Wajda and this is indeed what his book is about...

Wajda often writes how he is afraid of his audience and how he respects them, "*I have always believed in my audience and for this reason I lived in constant fear whether my films can reach those who know the best truth about our country*"...

Wajda devotes most attention to his "fight with the topic". The work on the scenario, search for new solutions for the production, work with the actors and even decisions regarding costumes – all that influences the final shape of his film...

4. From an article by Adam Ziemianin in GAZETA KRAKOWSKA, 3 April 2000

It was difficult to get inside the Centre of Japanese Art and Technology "Manggha", for the promotion of the latest autobiographical book by Andrzej Wajda, *Cinema and the Rest of the World*. Wajda, this year's Academy Award winner, was welcomed with standing ovation and greeted by Znak's CEO, Henryk Woźniakowski...

The director of *Promised Land* was full of vitality and sparkled with wit. "The world is changing, and Poland even all the more so," said Wajda. "That is why it is no surprise to me that nowadays a book can be published within a few days. I'd been thinking about writing an autobiography for a long time. Maybe it is unfair that there are people who are not mentioned in my book, but I had to make choices"...

5. From a review by Andrzej Bukowiecki in ŻYCIE WARSZAWY, 27 April 2000

What image of Andrzej Wajda emerges before our eyes as we read *Cinema and the Rest of the World*? It could be described as a "no false modesty" one.

The director, who contributed many great works to the arts of theatre and cinema and has been involved in many events of public importance, admits, "Nothing extraordinary has ever happened in my life. I made films or worked in the theatre, sometimes I wrote scripts and screenplays."

Both the real Wajda and the one emerging from the autobiography is aware of the role that a Polish intellectual/ artist had to play at a time of limited sovereignty of the state he lived in, i.e. People's Republic of Poland...

In *Cinema and the Rest of the World* there are two threads that are most important. One is the director's professional life, the other: his behaviour as a citizen. In the latter Wajda sometimes explains his choices and decisions. Yet does he have to confess why? After all, he gave his fellow-countrymen *Man of Marble*, without which the Solidarity movement of August 1980 may not have happened...

Apart from the already generally well-known story of the making of *Man of Marble*, the most interesting parts of the book are the ones about the budding of Wajda's career as a director: the student times in the Lodz Film School, the filming of *The Generation*, *The Canal*, and *Ashes and Diamonds*.

Wajda's poignant observations might trigger off future discussion. For instance, the director poses the question why the Polish national cinematography did not come into being between the world wars, when Poland was a free country, but when Poland was under the communist regime? Maybe this is really something to reflect on.

6. From a review by Tadeusz Lubelski in TYGODNIK POWSZECHNY, 30 April, 2000

One aspect of the autobiography is virtually invaluable for the admirers of Wajda's art: the reflection on his own life, the attempt at understanding it in connection with his life's work. As outstanding artists tend to do, Wajda often confessed that his work was, in fact, mostly beyond him, that he himself did not grasp it entirely and that there

were many elements in his films and theatre performances, of whose significance he had not been aware, as if there were some layers of the “author’s reserves“ behind them, inaccessible even to himself. The autobiography is an attempt at describing these mysterious layers, and even partial disclosure of their mystery.