

CZECH TELEVISION PRESENTS MINISERIES

# MURDER IN POLNÁ

 Česká televize



## Murder in Polná (Zločin v Polné)

The film, directed by Viktor Polesný, describes the events which triggered off the largest wave of anti-Semitism ever recorded in the Czech Lands.

On the Easter Saturday of 1899, nineteen-year-old seamstress Anežka Hrůzová was found dead on the way between the village of Věžnička and the town of Polná. Her throat had been slashed and she had obviously bled to death. To the local doctors it seemed that there's not enough coagulated blood on the scene of the crime, and the answer to the question where the "missing" blood had gone suggested itself: the Jews had used it in matzos. The potential killer happened to be available, too: a cheeky and not-to-clever youngster Leopold Hilsner, occasional day labourer, tramp and beggar.

The Jew Hilsner was convicted and sentenced to death for the alleged ritual murder of Anežka Hrůzová. Later on, in a renewed trial in Písek, the verdict was confirmed, and the charges extended by sexual deviation: Hilsner was accused of another, still unsolved crime, a murder committed two years before. Zdeno Auředníček, Hilsner's young ex officio defence lawyer, was convinced of his client's innocence – but there were few others sharing his view. The best-known positive intervention in Hilsner's favour was that of T. G. Masaryk, who had the courage, his characteristic quality, to stand up against the medieval superstition about the principle of Jewish ritual killing. It was thanks to him, too, that Auředníček managed to get the sentence of death reduced to imprisonment for life. According to some testimonies, the real killer pleaded guilty on his death bed, and Hilsner was released after 18 years in jail. The effort for remedying the injustice perpetrated on Leopold Hilsner took nearly a hundred years – till the year of 1998.

**Videotape HDTV, 2 x 85', m/e track, English subtitles, © 2016**

Directed by: Viktor Polesný  
Screenplay by: Václav Šašek  
Director of Photography: David Ployhar  
Editor: Lenka Polesná  
Sound: Miroslav Hřebejk  
Music: Zdenek Merta  
Costume Designer: Jarmila Konečná  
Art Designer: Jiří Hlupý  
Producer: Czech Television

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Starring:  
Jaroslav Plesl  
Karel Heřmánek jr.  
Gabriela Míčová  
František Němec  
Luboš Veselý  
Ondřej Kavan  
Martin Myšička  
Jiří Plachý  
Vilém Udatný  
Karel Roden  
and others