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**“Political discourse in the Russian cinema 2000-2015” Jakub Benedyczak**

**Drafted under supervision of Professor Andrzej Czajowski**

## SUMMARY

The PhD thesis is an attempt to show how the socio-political reality of Russia was manifested and reflected in the films of Russian directors in the years 2000-2015 and how the socio-political content of these films was discussed in Russian - and sometimes also non-Russian - public discourse. The work covers the period of presidency and the post of the head of the government by Vladimir Putin, when he twice held the office of the President of the Russian Federation (2000-2008), head of the Russian government (2008-2012) and once again the president of the Russian Federation (2012-?). However, due to the complementation of contemporary Russian political discourses, two sub-chapter deals also with films from 2016 and 2017. The doctoral dissertation does not include historical films, because its purpose is only to describe contemporary Russian reality in the movie lens.

The work includes films made by fifteen directors (Pawel Lungin, Alexei Balabanov, Valeryi Todorovski, Alexandr Sokurov, Andrei Konchalovsky, Alexei Uchitel, Nikita Mikhalkov, Vyacheslav Ross, Boris Khlebnikov, Dmitri Kisielov, Alexandr Voitinsky, Anton Megerdichev, Fyodor Bondarchuk, Yuri Bykov and Andrei Zvyagintsev) and twenty-two films (“Oligarch”, “Brother 2”, “War”, “Zhmurki”, “Cargo 200”, “The stoker”, “House of Fools”, “Alexandra”, “Captive”, “My Step-Brother Frankenstein”, ”55”, ”12”, ”Siberia Monamour”, ”A long, happy life”, ”The Postman's White Nights”, ”Black Lightning”, “Metro”, “Attraction”, “The Major”, “The Fool”, “Leviathan” and “Loveless”). In addition, in individual chapters, such images as “Break Loose” by Alexei Uchitel, “Generation P” by Viktor Grinzburg, “Bed stories” and “The Student” by Kirill Serebriennikov were mentioned.

In four theoretical chapters, titled- “Artist in relation to politics, ‘political’ and political action”, “The ‘political’ definition in the context of cinema, “Political film” and “Author cinema”- the artist's position and relations with politics were defined, then one has defined when the film is or becomes political in the context of political discourse and whether there is a phenomena such as a “political film”. It is organized by the key of the author's

cinema (directors' persons), which is an expression of the aesthetic vision and worldview of the director, combining the mass culture (social consciousness) and high culture (rich discursive knowledge).

The empirical (film) part is arranged according to the chronology of the socio-political life of the Russian Federation in the years 2000-2015. Pawel Lungin's "Oligarch" describes the process of "cleaning the state" by Vladimir Putin after the transformation crisis of the 1990s (2000-2004). Alexei Balabanov's films are an emanation of regaining national pride and position on the international stage by Russia (2000-2007). The next chapter concerns Chechnya and the threats of Chechen terrorism (both wartime and post-war periods) described from four different perspectives (2000-2009). The culmination of "recovered dignity" is the work of Nikita Michalkowa who is part of the political establishment in Russia, and whose films are full of pathos and national pride (2007). Patriotic pathos has been contrasted with grim images of the Russian province from three different perspectives (2011-2014). The search for a new national idea and reflection on the further direction of the state was shown through an adventure, science fiction and catastrophic films (2009-2017). Deterioration of international relations, the economic crisis, wars in Ukraine and Syria resulted in the final by pessimistic and anti-system films by Yuri Bykov and Andrey Zvyagintsev (2013-2017).

The work is only of descriptive and explanatory character. It is deprived of the ambition to evaluate, create theory, diagnose, generalize and forecast. Its aim is to enrich Polish knowledge about Russia by treating modern Russian cinema as the source of this knowledge since it provides discursive knowledge about the politics, society, socio-economic processes or the way of thinking and acting of Russian Federation's contemporary decision-makers.

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