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**Co-influences of Directors Methods In Between Documentary and
Fictional Filmmaking In the East-central Europe In the First Decade
of the 21st Century**

DOCTORAL THESIS SUMMARY

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I. INTRODUCTION

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I. 1. The importance of the subject and research motivation

The cinematographic language is continually changing. When a certain genre of film reaches its limits, it opens up to the influences from other genres.

Documentary film has often served as the conscience of fictional film (e.g. the emergence of such movements as *Italian Neorealism, Free Cinema, some movies from the Czechoslovak New Wave, the Budapest School, Dogma 95*), but fictional film has also often been an inspiration for documentary film (*Cinéma Vérité, Direct Cinema, etc.*). Consequently, the changes brought on by this period to the cinematographic language are well worth investigating, when - after the fall of the communist regime - a new system of cinema funding came into place and many young directors have come to enjoy noteworthy international success.

Researching the directing methods used by these young artists may serve as an important source of inspiration and information in the individual search of young cinematographers for the development of their own directing techniques.

I. 2. Thematic framing (generation, territory, era, style)

The point of interest for the study we have undertaken is the generation of young directors who started their career after the year 2000, because they still had the possibility to learn analog filming in the institutions of higher education for cinema,

but also fully experienced the period brought on by the digital revolution. The delimitation in time by means of technology is motivated by the fact that digital filming, being much cheaper, has offered many the possibility to film, but has also somewhat limited the possibilities for the use of technical means of expression compared to those of offered by working with film stock. Consequently, a new image aesthetic had to be devised which would hide the deficiencies and make use of the advantages of digital technology. The conclusion of this period of research is thus motivated by the fact that the digital image (especially through the emergence of large-sized sensors) managed to eliminate many of the deficiencies it had in comparison with the analog film.

The common life-experiences that resulted from post-communist political, social and economical changes, as well as the similar funding possibilities for cinema (both on a national and international level) outline in a way the borders of this research. On the other hand, the common cultural and territorial affiliation on the Western European film market is also important. This is the reason why we limit our research to Romania, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland, excluding the Baltic states, the Balkans, as well as the post-soviet states of the former Yugoslavia.

Subjects of study for this work are only those directors who, by creating films that span between documentary and fiction, managed to achieve international success, thus becoming a sort of positive example for the even younger generations, significantly influencing the cinematographic language of these countries.

I. 3. Research difficulties

The main difficulty of this research is based on the fact that there is no specific methodology for analyzing directing methods. By watching the film, we may get to certain conclusions regarding the *audiovisual conception*, based on certain conventions of the cinematographic language. We may intuit the development process of the *narrative structure*, but many details regarding, first of all, working with the actor or the ways of *approaching the characters* rest unseen. This is the reason why the development of a personal methodology of research was necessary,

one that along with observation and analysis also includes interviews in some domains as a secondary source, and in others, as a main source of information.

Another important difficulty is the lack of a precise terminology, a common one, regarding the different styles used in the making of a documentary film. There are emerging new terms, such as *creative documentary*, generated by international finance forums, but these have not been canonized yet. There are also terms such as *situational documentary*, *docudrama*, *fictional documentary* – used by colligations, schools, different circles, but with different meanings. As a conclusion, defining a valid terminology for this paper is necessary.

I. 4. Hypothesis and objects of researching

In the time frame and territory we plan to research, as a consequence of all the changes we described and the junctions of directing methods between the documentary film and the fiction film, we find that the notion of *cinematic realism* redefines itself, generally speaking leading to a change in the audiovisual language.

Aiming towards discovering the important aspects of these changes, the objectives of this research are the junctions between documentary and fiction on the level of *directorial concepts*, narrative structure, the *methods of working with the actor* in fiction films, the *methods of approaching the characters* in the documentary films, as well as the *audiovisual conception* of the films.

II. THEORETICAL APPROACHES, CLARIFYING THE NOTIONS

II. 1. The documentary film is actually the creative representation of reality. In the documentary film, regarding the expectations of the audience, there is no such thing as impartiality. The subjective interpretation of the author takes place when he chooses the filming camera's point of view, but also by choosing not to film a certain part of the seen reality or by eliminating some parts of it during the editing process. Actually, all the technical elements of an image impose a choice and a certain partiality from the author. This is why the reality of a film is not the same as the

reality of life. A documentary film creates fiction, based on the factors of reality, by using the same methods of expression as the fiction film.

II. 2. Fictional film may have a story based on reality, but the action is made up, therefore fictive. It involves amateur or professional actors who, by interpreting their roles, are put in situations that are different from those from their personal lives.

II. 3. Relations between documentary and fiction films:

Almási Tamás, a Hungarian director, says that in fiction films he thinks something about reality, and he makes up a story and an audio visual language to transmit these thoughts as efficiently as possible. He does the same with documentary films, with the only difference that he does not create, but discovers (finds) the story.

Naturally, there are many ways of looking at the differences and similarities, but it's not the authors' attitude towards reality that defines the difference between documentary and fiction film (even though this seems to be the most important aspect to most of the audience), but rather the level and the possibility of exact planning of the production.

The ideal documentary film (which does not exist) would be the one where the action is not being planned at all. On the other hand, there is no such thing as a complete fiction film either, because it is the document of author's fantasy. As a consequence, notions such as documentary film or fiction film are merely poles for reference, and what we are interested in this paper, is finding what lies in the middle of the way between these two poles.

II. 4. Defining some documentary film genres

From the point of view of content and formal language, we can outline the following sketch: documentary content + formal documentary language = documentary film; documentary content + formal fiction language = docudrama; fiction content + formal documentary language = mockumentary; fiction content + formal fiction language = fiction film.

Another two important aspects of classifying the documentary films are:

1. the attitude towards the problem: some study the problem, the subject being the problem itself, (like global warming), and others focus on the effect a certain problem has upon people.
2. the present tense or the past tense used in the film's story

From this point of view, both the situational and observational documentary films focus on the effect a problem has on the characters, and the story takes place in the present day (the action takes place in front of the camera). The difference between these two is very subtle and it depends on the involvement of the camera in the process of filming the action: whether it participates up close to the action or it merely observes it from a distance. These two attitudes of the camera may coexist simultaneously in the same film, the border between them not being exact.

The creative documentary (the documentary being nonfiction) is defined with an analogy by defining nonfiction literature through five elements:

1. concerning the theme, one meaning is exposed and another one is hidden.
2. because of the duality we have mentioned, the work is not bound to actuality (specific to journalism).
3. it needs to have a narrative character (to tell a story). For this purpose it uses elements that are typical to the dramaturgy of fiction works (a hero, a stage, an action).
4. it has a reflexive characteristic from the author – constituting a complete idea.
5. it has a high finesse of formal language.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

III. 1. Goals and indicators

There may be multiple reasons for the analysis of artistic creation. One of the goals of this work is to discover the motivation behind the analysis of the creative process – that is to say the way in which the director analyzed his own creation in the course of the creative process leading to the realization of the cinematographic

project. In the case of cinematographic projects, such an analysis accompanies the screenplay – in the case of fiction films also the treatment (which in turn contains a description of the theme and possibly a sketch of the screenplay) –, known in documentary films as the director's concept. This contains the following:

1. the author's reflections regarding the narrative structure (particularly in the case of documentary films where a concrete screenplay is not possible)

2. *the method of selecting and working with the actors* – in the case of fiction films and the *modalities of approaching the characters* – in the case of documentary films

3. the film's *audio-visual concept* – in both cases. So it is understandable that the analysis of the directorial methods should also revolve around these topics, the sought-after indicators being the elements of a documentary character in the case of fiction films and those of a fictional character in documentary films.

Since the motivation for this work is of a theoretical nature, a complex analysis of the films will not be undertaken, only the above-mentioned traces of mutual influence will be sought out in each case – of which there are more in some films and less in others (for this reason, not every author will be researched to the same extent). This search for traces (indicators) will be made based on the conventions of the cinematographic language of documentary and fiction films.

III.2. Conventions of the cinematographic discourse in documentary and fiction film

It is crucial to emphasize that the differentiation (the definition of indicators specific to one genre or the other) will be undertaken on the basis of the cinematographic language generally valid at the start of the research. Because this language is continually changing, the goal of this work being precisely that of discovering these changes.

1. The narrative structure: On this level, the differences derive from the fact that in the ideal fiction film everything is exactly planned – consequently the whole narrative is based on cause-and-effect structures – while a documentary film can't be planned as precisely, hence the events aren't as tightly linked to each other which

may lead to the appearance of *irrelevant events* from the point of view of the logic inherent to the narrative, some solutions emerging unexpectedly and leaving the ending generally open. These elements of a documentary nature in fiction film first appeared with the *Italian Neorealism* (the 1940's). We may assume that documentary film first started being influenced by fiction film at the end of the 1950's through *Cinéma Vérité* and *Direct Cinema* (happening more or less unconsciously up to that time). Concrete references to this fact will be made within the analysis of specific films.

2. Choosing and approaching the characters, working with actors: The use of amateurs as actors in fiction films brings on a documentary character, because civilians play themselves, consequently revealing their own personalities. On the other hand, documentary films may also make use of ways to introduce amateurs into fictional situations (in which they may simply be surprised, or by interpreting a role other than their own) with the purpose of freeing them of the masks of self-protection that we all wear in our everyday lives.

3. The audiovisual concept:

On this level too, the differences may be deduced from the starting point: precise planning as opposed to the lack of it (i.e. improvisation) with the purpose of leaving as much space as possible for reality to unfold. The differences are most visible at the level of lighting (where the documentary prefers general, but less aesthetic lighting), but the analytical montage (which creates the sensation of temporal continuity) also draws attention to the fictional character, because cutting an image that is in motion requires it to be filmed twice, from two different angles. The hand-held camera also possesses a documentary character, because if we view it as a method and not as a style, it is a consequence of the desire to react as freely and quickly as possible.

III. 3. The phases of research

1. Criteria for the selection of the analyzed films

The personal interest for this subject comes from the desire to analyze and synthesize a process that I also took part in as the author of a few films that also span between documentary and fiction. Regarding my films (*Hai noroc! – Bahrtalo!*, *Land of Silence*, *Moszny*, etc.), I will only annex one study, written by Gábor Gelencsér and published in the January 2013 edition of the magazine *Filmvilág*.

Having finished my studies in cinematography in Poland, in the year 2000, I gained entrance to the world of cinema production, establishing relations with my colleagues from the countries studied in this thesis, but also with theoreticians (especially due to the frequent encounters at festivals, but also at various international programs for the development of cinematographic projects), following the cinematographic production of the region through the entire period encompassed in this study. My acquaintances from the trade, who are too numerous to be mentioned in this extract, drew my attention towards films I would have missed otherwise, had I searched only in the databases of important festivals.

In this study, we will concentrate on the directors who enjoyed international success with feature films destined for theatres, because these – being examples of success – may have a significant impact on the development of audiovisual language.

2. Observation as a starting point

After finding the indicators sought in the viewed films, we will proceed to their detailed analysis. In the cases where the supposed motivations of the director form a logical and well defined system, or where the mutual influences sought after aren't very well emphasized (being present in only one of the three topics pertaining to the director's concept), we need not rely on interviews. On the other hand, in other cases, we will proceed to elaborate the methods of directing on the basis of the author's declarations.

3. The interview

In most cases it functions as a secondary source of information, that is to say it underlines the assumptions of the author of this thesis. In these cases, short quotations will appear in the thesis (the words of the directors that can be found on the DVD found in the Appendix), continuing the ideas of the author. But in the majority of the

cases where they are used as a primary source of information – in the areas where the directorial method cannot be precisely deduced from the film (e.g. working with the actor), the interviews are paraphrased. This paraphrasing is necessary for the purpose of organizing the information along the lines of the indicators specified before. As every director has a specific system of thought and point of reference, they treat these indicators in a random manner, in a different order, often drifting from one to the other only to come back again, etc. - because the structural elements of the film don't form a linear structure either, but rather a spatial one, perhaps even one of multidimensional space.

4. Conclusions

The conclusions of this thesis imply a process composed of several phases. In fact, the analysis of the methodology of each director already partially includes certain conclusions. Based on these, at the end of each chapter (dedicated to individual countries), a generalization is attempted. At the end of the thesis, a higher level of generalization is attempted, many of the partial conclusions (especially those of a particular nature) not being repeated.

Due to considerations of space, at the level of this extract, particular detailed analyses will be omitted; they will appear combined with the partial conclusions, to be exact. For the same reasons, only the films and aspects that are the most significant for the purposes of the research will be mentioned in the extracts.

IV. THE ANALYSIS OF DIFFERENT DIRECTING METHODS

IV. 1. Romania

Not all films termed by the critics as belonging to the *Romanian New Wave* have a pronounced documentary character, but since the films of Cristi Puiu, the first to attract international attention (pointing out a possible way towards the important film festivals), have this characteristic, the other films are also worth being analyzed from this perspective.

At the level of the *narrative structure* the similarities with Italian Neorealism - like the partial loss of the absolute significance of events structured around cause-and-effect and the amplification of the role of chance, the open ended nature from the dramaturgical point of view, the presence of details of action termed „microscopic action” by André Bazin or „irrelevant details” by David Borwell – are evident and punctuated by many publications. On the same level, we may observe a similarity to the films – which are centered around a specific type of situation – of the group led by Robert Drew within *Direct Cinema*, who asserted that when involved in a crisis situation (e.g. in *The chair* an attorney attempts to acquit a convict from being executed on the electric chair), the character reveals truths which otherwise would stay hidden, the material being interesting almost in its entirety, it does not require editing (which constituted an ethical problem for many documentary filmmakers as editing means manipulation), etc. By searching for this aspect, that is to say the *dramaturgy of crisis* within the *Romanian New Wave*, we may observe that the story of most films unfolds in a very short time interval in which the character gets involved in a crisis situation: *Goods and Money*, *12:08 East of Bucharest*, *The Happiest Girl in the World* and *Hooked* – from morning to sundown, *4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days* – from morning to midnight, *The Death of Mr. Lăzărescu* – a single night, but the action of the other films also takes place in a relatively short period of time in which the characters don't have the time for such a clear change of personality as they would have with a long narrative.

Cristi Puiu introduces the notion of the arrogant narrative, by which he names the narrative's interior logic, which leads us to feel that its author is omniscient. He tries to communicate towards the spectator by the means of film language that he knows that he doesn't know, that he can only assume that it is kind of like that, an assumption often based on apparently „irrelevant details” that in fact describe the characters and the world of film - consequently they are *peripheral contents* in regards to the essence of the narrative, but not the whole story.

In his case, the notion of arrogance also exists on the level of the audiovisual structure concerning the attitude of the camera when it behaves as if it already knew what will happen (it precedes the action). As a matter of fact, *Goods and Money* is filmed as a situational documentary as the camera almost participates in the events, with its behavior pointing to the fact that the perspective is an exterior one (that of the author), focusing its view from time-to-time to where it wants to, without strictly

following the action. The editing also draws attention to this subjectivity that produces leaps in time even where this wouldn't be necessary. In *The Death of Mr. Lăzărescu*, the appearance of the so-called framing scenes may already be observed, which are characteristic of several films from the Romanian New Wave, but which have their origin in the *Direct Cinema* movement, in which Hancock preferred to eliminate whole scenes, for instance those that remained in a single frame, because it was the opinion of many that editing would falsify reality as it was an expression of selectivity and consequently of the author's subjectivity. With *The Happiest Girl in the World*, Radu Jude follows in the footsteps of Puiu (even though some of his solutions applied in tight spaces are reminiscent of Mungiu), especially regarding the observational documentary attitude. In his work, the mounted camera follows the intimate scenes from a distance using lenses with a narrow opening angle.

Judging by the visual style from the beginning of the film, Mungiu's *4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days* could also be a film by Puiu, but in the course of the film, Mungiu slowly backs away from this documentarian attitude and, in a gradual and subtle manner, introduces means of visual expression characteristic to classic fiction cinema (lighting, analytical montage, etc.), creating a dramaturgy of these elements.

All these films (and many others that we can't mention here because of a lack of space) attempt to differ from each other (and succeed), but it's perceivable that they are the results of very similar systems of thought, which it seems, have the same set of values.

IV. 2. Hungary

Just the wind by Benedek Fliegauf, based on the true story of the execution of a couple of gipsy families in Hungary a few years ago, looks like an observational documentary – followed from a distance, with long focus lenses. The way the director came to making this film is also interesting, because in most cases he works with amateurs whose personality's match those of the characters imagined by him and is inspired by stories heard from friends. His first great discovery in the domain of the narrative structure is that, regardless of what he does, the viewers feel obliged to construct the story based on what they see and hear. He came to this conclusion with the help of his short film *Talking heads* in which different characters, involved in the

situation of a TV interview, relate an event from the perspective of those who witnessed them. The only fact altered by the director was the fact that in every one of these stories, the main character was named Laci. Even though these stories suggested that Laci is in fact a different person in each of them (they described characters with very different personalities), in his mind, the viewer looks for the reason behind Laci's change in personality. This mechanism of thought was used by the director in his film *Milky Way*, where we can only see very distant characters, the interactions between them not being clear.

Most of his films are defined by a very pronounced formal minimalism (in one film we can only see close-ups, in the other only a general view with the camera moving very slowly around the characters) and a very elaborate sound design, especially on the atmospheric level. He arrived to this image aesthetic because in the beginning he was constrained to working on video – where, for example, he wasn't able to obtain a shallow image depth, only in close ups with a telephoto lens. His documentarism consists mainly in the way of approaching the characters. He would rather work with amateurs, because professional actors want the director to steer them by saying what his thoughts are, but an amateur is interested in showing his own thoughts to a director, which is an important source of inspiration. Fliegauf follows somewhat Béla Tarr's footsteps, whose first film appeared in the so-called time of the *Budapest School*, whose particularity was the reproduction of a story that took place, but without using the characters of the specific story: it used characters that could have been in their place. The difference is that Béla Tarr's visual stylization took place after having estranged himself from this trend, while the one of Fliegauf took place simultaneously with it.

György Pálfi is always looking for different methods of making a film. In his film *I am not your friend* he was looking for a way to find out more about the adults in Hungarian society, who already know how to protect their image when filming situations occur. This is when he decided introduce them to artificial (fictional) situations, to surprise them in these new situations, forcing them to make decisions without time to think – therefore instinctually. These people practically made up the story of the film through their spontaneous reactions – because the director did not give them any indications besides who married to whom, whispering in their ear who's cheating whom.

Defining the characters and the relations between them took place based on the director's observations during the casting and the auditions – for example, who talked to whom during the coffee breaks, who took whom home in their car and other similar actions. The director only intervened by creating contextual situations, avoiding getting involved in characters' motivations, which make up the main subject of the film. Because of this work method, the image looks similar to the image of situational documentaries.

The roots of this method can be found at Jean Rouch in the *cinéma vérité* period, when he got to the conclusion that the characters finding themselves in fictional situations, having the sentiment that they are living in someone else's skin, express more truth regarding their own personality than they would if they had to play themselves. As a consequence, „the only way to grasp reality is through fiction.”

Csaba Bollók's 2006 film *Iszka's Journey*, is in every way related to the Romanian New Wave, except for the fact that alongside professional actors (who have supportive roles that actually lead the narrative discourse) he also uses amateurs (with whom it didn't happen, but it "could have happened" - see the Budapest School) for the main and episodic characters - the cases where the mood they induce is very important.

Nemes Gyula holds the same deconstructivist-anarchist attitude towards the film making process as his mentor, Karel Vachek of FAMU (Czech School), where he studied. In his film *My One and Onlies*, he introduces the filming process to a civil space (street, station, coffee shop, metro, cinema theatre, etc.) and he uses minimal equipment in order to be able to catch on film the reactions of the passers-by who do not know a film is being made. There are times where the actors are being instructed to involve passers-by in the film making process. In spite of this method, he has previously written script, that he puts aside while filming. After the filming is complete, the filmed material is cut into pieces that serve for the making of another film (sometimes only using the beginning and the end of a frame, that would usually be cut off while editing) – because he is interested in the truth of the film, not in his own preconceived truth. This is how he reaches very interesting solutions while showing an interior point of view of the character. For an example, the girl asks a question in a night scene, and the boy answers at daytime. Or in a close-up we see a character, but in the wider edited frame it disappears, and in the third frame it appears again. It's a way of destroying the continuity of perception, believing this is the way

of seeing with the eyes within. Nemes Gyula is Karel Vachek's follower only in principles, but he does not copy his style. It's is rather under the influence of the experimental spirit of Balázs Béla Stúdió – maybe the only experimental film studio in the Eastern Bloc, to be subsidized by the state in the communist era.

IV. 3. The Czech Republic

The fiction films of younger generations are rather classically set up and very few of them have an image aesthetic resembling the aesthetic of documentaries, but they do not use directing methods derived from documentary films. However, there are many creative documentaries, probably derived from the fact that the FAMU has a separate specialization for documentary films, taught by many well known directors who activated during the Czechoslovak new wave, but who were prohibited in the '70s to make fiction films. As a consequence, they started making documentary films using all their knowledge and experience obtained during the making of fiction films, and this had a great impact on younger generations. This way a Czech documentary film language started to take shape, which can be characterized by provoking the characters, and by deep reflexivity concerning the directors' work methods, which draws the attention of the audience upon the ways the film making process distorts reality. Most of these films have an intellectual character that can be hard to understand for those who are not familiar with the Czech reality. This is why these films are less-known internationally. The greatest success was probably the one of Filip Remunda and Vít Klusák's *The Czech Dream*, a film that documents a social challenge, where the two directors create a campaign for *The Czech Dream* supermarket, where all the goods are half-priced; but when the crowd gets to the entrance of this supermarket, they find out it is only a shallow wall with a wasteland behind it.

Most of the Czech creative documentary's characteristics can be found in Vít Klusák's student film *Jazz War*, a film about his own father, who had always neglected him and does not want to take part in the film; this is why the director replaces his father with a person resembling him that found in a newspaper ad, after which he reproduces scenes that took place between him and his father, asking the double about what the father's (who's role he interpreting) thoughts might have been when he was acting in a certain way. The director often shows up inside the frame

while filming, giving directions, the microphone and the lights are often visible, and all the situations are extremely artificial, provoked by a very concrete filming plan, using elements (situations, objects, locations, characters) that have a strong symbolic value.

IV. 4. Slovakia

The Slovakian *creative documentary* is under the influence of the Czech documentaries, because the film school of Slovakia is still young (dating since 1989) and most films are made as Czech-Slovak co-productions. Péter Kerekes, a well-known director for his films *66 Seasons* and *Cooking History*, uses all the methods of expression described in the case of Czech films, his naive provocations giving rise to a warmer humor, compared to that of the Czech films which tend to be more sarcastic.

Kerekes solves the great problem of documentary films about the past, which are usually less emotional because of the time distance and because the story does not unfold in the present (in front of the camera) by putting the characters in artificial situations, that are symbolically bound to their past, producing an emotional action in the present time, in front of the camera.

Kerekes has a certain style that could be defined by the *replacement method*, because in *66 Seasons* the pool from Košice replaces the sea, real ships and airplanes are replaced by toys, and even certain characters are replaced (e.g. when they are talking about their youth). In *Cooking History*, the history isn't told by historians or soldiers, but by people who couldn't take any important decisions, the military cooks. In this film, instead of the usual archive footages, we see images of different cooking procedures, and instead of bombs hitting buildings, we see food exploding on the plates. With all these replacements, and with the fact that he leaves in some details that remind (with humor) the spectator that everything is directed (e.g., when the grandmother practices with the director's assistant what her lines are), the director draws attention to the fact that this is actually a replacement of life's reality with the film's reality – that also includes the reality of the situation of filming, yet this context does not exclude the reality of the characters, it just places it in a context created by the director.

The TIFF Festival of 2013 drew attention upon a new wave in the Slovak cinematography through the *Focus Slovakia* program. This wave of fiction film started rather late, only at the end of the decade, because it is only then that the Slovak Cinematographic Fund was created (up to that point, the films were financed by the Minister of Culture, but not on a regular basis).

Thanks, Fine, the film of Mátýás Prikler is similar in style to *Dogma 95*. Even though it had a concrete script (with all the scenes inspired from reality), it was filmed as a documentary. The actors interpreted entire scenes, with no interruptions for changes in lighting or the camera's point of view, without even knowing whether they are in the frame or not. The director instructed the cameraman while filming. They used a general stage-lighting to be able to give the actors freedom of movement and they only used the lights they found on the set (amplified a little by changing the light bulbs).

The film *House*, directed by Zuzana Liová, has documentary characteristics through the attitude of the cine-camera, which in most cases behaves in the manner of observational documentaries, like the director herself emphasizes: „as if we were visiting someone, we do not cross over a certain limit of intimacy.” Yet in this film, similarly to Mungiu's *4,3,2*, there is a slow crossover towards using classic means of expression.

The film with most documentary characteristics is Iveta Grófová's *Made in Ash*. The story of the tainting of Dorotka, a young Gipsy woman, is filmed with many authentic characters in the manner of observational documentaries (standing at a distance, without disturbing the intimacy of the characters), with a very concrete script, but with the majority of the scenes being improvised by the characters. The approach of the characters in the scene where the heroine and her friend Sylvia are talking in a local with prostitutes is very interesting. Initially, the director wanted some dressmakers to play the parts of prostitutes, but they declined her request. As a consequence, the director asked some real prostitutes to play the parts of the dressmakers whom, during the improvisation, forgot about the roles they were supposed to interpret and started making hints, and finally started talking about their real profession.

IV. 5. Poland

The generation of directors that had finished their studies at the end of the decade had to wait a long time to finally have the opportunity to make their debut, because the new cinematographic financing institute (PISF) started its activity only in the last third of the decade. The old institution preferred older and well-known directors. The famous Polish film tradition and its academicism hallmarked the young directors' films as well, causing them to try less cinematographic experiments than their colleagues from other countries. On the other hand, it seems like the Polish cinematography, with its wide market (almost 40 million citizens with a tradition in watching especially Polish films) is less oriented towards international success than towards its own audience. Therefore, a lot of great fiction and documentary films are made, but they all have a more classic nature.

In his film *Retrieval*, Sławomir Fabicki embraces situational documentary film aesthetics. He uses a hand-held camera and closely follows the character, getting involved in the events, but this is due more to the fact that he made this film in a time when this aesthetic, which originates in documentaries, was already acknowledged in fiction films, just like the general stage-lighting which is a necessity in documentaries and is consciously used in fiction films starting with John Cassavetes.

The method of shooting the entire scene with the actor, without any interruptions, is due to the preference of the actor in the leading role. This style however does not appear in the case of the rest of the young directors.

The Polish documentary film is also rather classical, with many great observational films, but these are outside the points of interest of this thesis.

V. POSSIBILITIES FOR EXTENDING THE RESEARCH

Being a process that is not yet completed, the research can be continued in the following years, as it may also deserve to be extended towards the past, beginning with the moment where the political regime changed in these countries. On the other hand, it may also be extended towards the other countries that were part of the Communist Bloc in the past. But before it all, this research should be extended the observational and situational documentaries in the aforementioned countries.

VI. FINAL CONCLUSIONS

The direct criticism of society present in these films has appeared as late as it did because immediately after the regime change, it would have been perceived as a sign of preference of the old regime instead of the new one, even though this critique does not blame the regime, but it shows that society is the way it is, because the members of society are the way they are. This is why the heroes of these films aren't any better than the other characters, and we only cheer for them because of empathy (a very important means for the viewer to identify with the characters in classic films too, but in classic films these characters also have more positive features).

The documentary nature of the narrative structure in the fiction films we have analyzed does not only manifest itself in their open ended nature, but very often in their open beginning, for in most of the cases the problem of the main character already exists and with the first critical moment it only worsens.

In the case of observational documentaries this is a normal thing, because the filmmaker only steps in after the problem has already occurred, for it is only then that he sees the potential for a film. The presence of these *peripheral contents*, that a while ago have been called *insignificant details*, automatically intervene in the lives of these characters, and they cannot always be eliminated by editing; in the fiction films we have studied, these elements are consciously used by the directors. The presence of these adepts of classic cinema, where there isn't a single glance thrown without serious consequences from the point of view of the story, give the sensation of dramaturgical imperfection. Yet all these *imperfections* of the characters, of the dramatic structure, and the image with a documentary aspect, only amplify the sensation of reality.

In creative documentary films, these *peripheral contents* are details of the filmmaking process that the directors reveal to the audience.

In some directors' cases, using video technology was a necessity that led the aesthetics of image towards the documentary film, which has already embraced this type of aesthetics. But not all the directors followed this pattern; the directors of the Romanian New Wave work with 35mm film, therefore they consciously use the aforementioned aesthetics, which in their case does not derive from the necessity of giving greater freedom to the actors, since they work with professionals, and they make many rehearsals; yet these *peripheral contents* are the ones that require this aesthetic, because we have learned to view these contents (that we consume in short

forms, [for example, on the internet], whether they have a natural observational character, or a very artificial one) in this manner.

All of his put together may resemble to a subtle form of a lying to some, and a form of *skeptical realism* to others.

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