

**LATIP 2021****International Conference on Language and Technology in the Interdisciplinary Paradigm****THE AMERICAN MOVIES AS A DISCOURSE AND A SOURCE OF  
RUSSIAN STEREOTYPES**

Olesya Gennadievna Orlova (a)\*

\*Corresponding author

(a) Novosibirsk State Technical University, K. Marksa Sq., 20, Novosibirsk, Russia, orlovaog@mail.ru

**Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to describe the American art cinema as a discourse in which stereotypes about the Russian people function. We are also aiming at description and systematization of stereotypes of Russia. The methods used are discourse analysis, description, comparison, and systematization. Cinema discourse is a discourse in which plots and characters are unfolding. The main concepts are the values shared by both filmmakers and viewers. This discourse is heterogeneous, generated by both verbal and visual texts. The most important concepts of the American feature films in which Russian characters are present, are democracy, freedom, the integrity and safety of the United States. A stereotype is the most typical content of frame terminals; it is characterized by typicality, specificity for the discourse, emotionality; they are nationally conditioned. The paper highlights the stereotypes of food, behavior, appearance; social professional stereotypes; cultural stereotypes: historical, geographical. The way of naming (Ivan, Chekhov, etc.), including the use of Russian suffixes in surnames (-ov, -skiy, etc.) is described as one of the means of Russian man stereotyping. The stereotype in the discourse of cinema performs affective, generalizing and a nominative or indicating function; so, by demonstrating a frequent and unambiguously associated feature of a Russian man the creators of the image only indicate the national-cultural affiliation of the character. This phenomenon causes a feeling of unnaturalness. Only a genuine research position can allow creators of feature films to avoid rejection of the product on the global market and conflicts in intercultural communication.

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*Keywords:* American feature film, cinema discourse, discourse analysis, Russian people stereotypes, Russia stereotypes, stereotype



## 1. Introduction

Cinematography is an effective means of influencing (whether political or ideological) on the audience, therefore it is an interesting and relevant material for the stereotypes study. It is important for us to conceive the art cinema as a special discourse, in which actual meanings and values are formed that create images of the world, generally accepted by the mass consciousness as a desirable / potential or undesirable / avoidable way of life. Seen in this light, filmmakers and audience represent a continuum of consensual agents of film discourse; in other words, it is impossible to offer for the viewer an assessment or an image with which he would not have been previously familiar: “Images and cultural traditions do not arise from a silent and passive population or descend on a silent and passive population <...> they always express identities that have been formed by historical circumstances” (Nikolenko, 2013, pp. 58-59).

## 2. Problem Statement

American films, which feature images of Russia and Russians, have repeatedly become the subject of study; the results of such studies were presented in works of both journalistic and scientific culturological nature. A large article on how Russia is represented in American films has been published in the online magazine Profile (<https://profile.ru/culture/movie/pochemu-gollivud-vse-vremya-izobrazhaet-russkix-ploximi-parnyami-137998>). “During the Golden Age of Hollywood (between the 1930s and the early 1950s), the Russians and the USSR received little attention from American filmmakers. <...> During World War II, the Russians, being allies in the anti-Hitler coalition, are portrayed in American films as rather positive heroes. <...> But at the same time, Hollywood could not ignore the “red threat”. Outright propaganda films are released in which the Russians are presented as a dangerous enemy from which the United States and its ideals must be protected. <...> Anti-Soviet sentiment intensified in the 1980s, amid the war in Afghanistan and the accelerated arms race. In 1983, President Reagan called the Soviet Union an “evil empire”. The apotheosis of “Soviet phobia” was the film “Red Dawn” (1984), which tells how the USSR and the countries of the socialist camp attacked the United States. <...> But the period when this tonality was relevant did not last long. Soon the USSR collapsed, and the construction of capitalism began on its ruins. The forms of that process were frightening, and capitalism itself was very wild. Russia again began to be perceived as a threat to the “civilized world”. <...> Although the Russians do not harm the Americans they are still portrayed as wild Ivan. Cosmonaut Lev Andropov (“Armageddon”) (1998), while at the space station, wears a hat with earflaps, and fixes technical malfunctions of the devices by thrashing them with an adjustable wrench. In non-historical films the tendency remains the same: Russians, most likely, are somehow connected with crime. <...> In a discussion on the Quora website, the following thesis is put forward: “Who, except Russians, can cope with the role of a serious enemy? France? North Korea? Quebec?” <...> Tom Brook, the author of the BBC article “Hollywood Stereotypes: Why Are Russians Always Bad Boys?” (2014) uses the term “demonization of a separate nation”. Among other things, he gives an example of how Hollywood was forced to abandon the demonization of China for purely financial reasons. The PRC film distribution market is the second largest in the world after North America, and film companies do not

want to risk profits by annoying Chinese viewers. So, in the remake of the above-mentioned military drama “Red Dawn” (2012) the Chinese troops attacking the United States first appeared, but during the filming they were hastily replaced with North Korean ones: one of the producers realized that otherwise the film would not enter the PRC market <...> Joe Quinnan in his article “Comrades in Arms: Why Bad Guys Are Always Russian on the Big Screen” (The Guardian, 2014) draws attention to the fact that Hollywood manages to avoid accusations of political incorrectness even if the Russian heroes are negative, while the appearance of the representatives of other ethnic groups in the role of villains arouses indignation in the Western public”.

Fedorov (2015) writes that:

The last bright film peak of the Cold War came in the first half of the 1980s, when the Russians, as part of a monolithic and aggressive system, were portrayed as products of their environment – malicious, violent, actively revolutionary all over the world. In the early 1980s, love and marriage, as well as religion almost disappeared from the American films about Russia. Almost all Russian characters were shown as unambiguous carriers of violence: these were men who hated and usually threatened the American way of life. (p. 34)

The task of his work was to identify stereotypes within the framework of the theme of ideological confrontation in Western feature films of different genres. The stereotype is understood by the author structurally, as a typical scheme of the unfolding plot. So, the stereotypical plot of the film of the dramatic genre is as follows:

“the historical period, the place of action: any period of time from 1917 to 1991, the USSR, the USA, other countries;

furniture, household items: modest homes and household items of Soviet characters, luxury homes and household items of Western characters;

techniques, depicting reality: quasi-realistic or conventionally grotesque depictions of people's lives in “hostile states”.

An example of the Western version of the image of events: New York is a modern bright metropolis, cozy and comfortable, democratic and dynamic melting pot of nationalities and cultures. And on the other side of the ocean there is Moscow, a dark, gloomy city with long queues at the entrances to shops and military patrols on the streets.

characters, their values, ideas, clothing, physique, vocabulary, facial expressions, gestures: positive characters are the carriers of democratic ideas; negative characters are the carriers of inhumane, militaristic ideas. The characters share not only social, but also material status. Soviet characters are often shown as rude and cruel fanatics with primitive vocabulary, perpetually frowning faces, active gestures and unpleasant voice timbres;

a significant change in the lives of the characters: negative characters are going to bring their anti-human ideas to life;

the problem that has arisen: the lives of positive characters, as well as the lives of entire countries, are under threat;

the search for a solution of the problem: the struggle of positive characters with negative ones;  
the solution of the problem: the destruction / arrest of negative characters, the return to a peaceful life” (Fedorov, 2015, p. 35-36).

### 3. Research Questions

“Presumably, etymologically, discourse comes from the Latin ‘discurrere’ – to run back and forth, or from its nominal variation – ‘discursus’ (“to run away”, in the figurative sense – “to get carried away; to allow yourself something” or “to give information about something”). The medieval Latin ‘discursus’, in addition to ‘conversation’, also meant ‘arguments and talkativeness’ < ... > Discursive meant discovered, realized through concepts and thought of in concepts <...> Vaas lists the following meanings of “discourse”: 1. (General): speech, conversation, discussion <...> 5. Behavior governed by the rules; leads to a chain or interconnected system of statements (=forms of knowledge) (medicine, psychology, etc.)” (Ticher et al., 2009, p. 45-46).

This leads to several important theses about the essence of discourse. Firstly, discourse is a researcher’s view of the phenomenon of human communication carried out in an activity. Secondly, human activity is governed by rules, norms, values; linguistically, by concepts. Thus, if a researcher studies texts as facts that record the unfolding concepts in the human activity (professional, personal, public, or any other), then he is engaged in a discourse analysis.

Cinema discourse, thanks to the popularity of films, attracts the attention of researchers. The definition and differentiation of the concepts of cinema discourse, cinema text, and film (Neljubina, 2013) are of great importance; the definition of the concept of cinema discourse, its units, and, in general, its structure are being studied (Oljanich, 2015); the study of the formation of stereotypical thinking (about Russians) on the material of cinema discourse is being held (Fomenko, 2016); cinema discourse is also an object of linguistic study (Poltorakova & Shumbasova, 2019).

The artistic film discourse, distinguished as a part of the film discourse, is a set of film texts based on the figurative depiction of events and characters <...> In the space of the semiosphere, the film discourse is a certain delimited area, in the complex composition of which it is possible to distinguish artistic, documentary and other types of film discourse. < ... > The core of the semiotic space of the artistic film discourse of the historical genre is the conceptual sphere, which is an ordered set of key concepts typical for this type of film discourse. (Zaichenko, 2013, p. 71)

The film text is a heterogeneous text, which is a set of different sign systems: verbal, visual, and sound. The complex structural interaction of several sign systems in the film text is considered by Yu. M. Lotman. Defining the essence of cinema as a story which is created with the help of pictures, the scientist emphasizes that cinema is essentially a synthesis of two narrative trends: visual and verbal. Moreover, the word in the film discourse is not optional, or an additional feature for the film narrative, but it is a mandatory element (Petukhova, 2015, p. 56).

For us, it is interesting that the film discourse can be seen in its two guises: film discourse as a discourse external to the events of the film, and film discourse as a discourse created by the characters and the plot of the film itself.

From the point of view of our research task – to study the stereotypical images of the Russian people in the American feature films – we should take the term “cinema discourse” as a working research term and consider that the discourse created by the Russian plot and Russian characters in the American feature films is our research construct.

Metelkina (2002) notes that social stereotypes are an ordered set of generalized images and representations of social reality; these are information models based on certain evaluation criteria, key stimuli or features of the object of stereotyping, even if they are not inherent in it. Sometimes the stereotype may not reflect the real properties of an object; i.e., the motivation of a stereotype by the properties of real objects is not a mandatory component for its emergence and functioning (Prokhorov, 2008, p. 73).

Quasthoff (1978) characterizes a social stereotype as follows:

A stereotype has a logical form of judgment, in a sharply simplifying and generalizing form, with an emotional coloring that attributes certain properties or attitudes to a certain class of people <...>. Expressed in a sentence (e.g.: Professors are scattered). Such statements describe the stereotypical ideas, common truths, peculiar to a certain group, the bearer of culture. (p. 34)

Stereotypes perform a number of cognitive functions: schematization and simplification, formation and storage of group ideology, they “save” mental and, accordingly, language efforts. Quasthoff (1989) identifies the functions performed by stereotypes: cognitive (generalization); affective; social (p. 40). The social and ideological functions of cultural stereotypes are as follows: affective, differentiating, integrating, reducing, adapting and selective (Nechaeva, 2004).

Now let us correlate the idea of the stereotype with our research construct “the discourse of American art cinema”, and define the stereotype.

So, we have revealed that the cinema discourse is a heterogeneous discourse because it is represented by different sign systems, both verbal and visual. It has a heterogeneous audience, which, however, a priori shares the main values transmitted by the creators of the film. Linguists also describe such components or categories of discourse as goal and chronotope, content and values of discourse (concepts), participants of discourse and their communicative strategies and tactics, genres of discourse (Karasik, 2002). In our case, the country of origin of the studied films is the United States, and its genre is a feature film. All these define the intentions of the creators of the films and their concepts. The chronotope of the films is determined by their plots, communication strategies and tactics are clarified when analyzing their genre identity (comedy, detective, action, adventure, etc.).

Russian films selected for the study contain images of Russian people. Russian themes are revealed in the discourse of American art cinema stereotypically, i.e. through the familiar, well-known and shared schemes of representation of the Russian theme and the Russian people. So, the Russian theme forms the frames of discourse. “The stereotypical nature of information is fixed in the frame structure

(Zajchikova, 2005). Frames have a structure consisting of elements – terminals (domains or subframes, clusters and slots, etc.). The stereotype is the most typical content of frame terminals; it differs from a simple set of associations to the name of the concept because of its typicality for the discourse, national and cultural peculiarities and emotionality.

The stereotype of Russia and Russians has already been the object of research (Orlova, 2011). It was revealed that stereotypes form a system in accordance with the culture in which they are embedded, as well as with respect to the discourse that determines the ideological and value characteristics of the concept, and the concept itself, which contains various frames in its structure.

So, among the geopolitical stereotypes, the following are noted out: “Russia is a special country”; “Russia is a huge, great country”; “Russia is the source of the Cold War”; “Russia is aggressive”.

Russian political stereotypes include the following: “Russians are unhappy and suffering people”; “Russians are politically illiterate”; “Russian politics are not reasonable”; “there is no democracy in Russia”; “there is no freedom in Russia”; “Russia is in ruins”; “Russia is an authoritarian country”; “Russians love a strong ruler”; “nothing changes in Russia”.

Social stereotypes are stereotypes about “poverty”, “backwardness”, “crime”, “corruption of society”, “nationalism”. Russian people's opinions about Russia are interrelated with the ideas about the Russian character: the ability of the Russian people to do with little, the inconsistency of his character, love for the Motherland and chauvinism, narrowness of thinking; they also are interconnected with such stereotypes as backwardness and lack of civilization in Russia.

The ethnocultural stereotypes were singled out in a separate group; they became the sources for the formation of subject symbols of Russia. They reflect the unique realities of the Russian way of life and mentality. Russian symbols such as “banya”, “dacha”, “samovar”, “vodka”, “snow / winter”, “troika” send us, for example, to the peculiarities of the “Russian character” / “Russian soul”: hospitality, breadth of soul, patience, prowess. In the American journalistic discourse such ideas about the Russian character as love for the motherland, resourcefulness, and inconsistency are also updated. Russian man's prototype is a Russian peasant – moujik. The symbol of Russia is a “bird-troika”; it is a precedent phenomenon and it has a textual origin. Russian bear is a stereotypical symbol that has frequent discursive relationships with political and geopolitical stereotypes; for example, this symbol implies aggressiveness, savagery, and uncivilized character of the Russians' policy.

The visualization of stereotypes about Russia in Internet communication was also studied (Orlova, 2016). The following conclusions were obtained. “Visualized stereotypes (and symbols) have a noticeable ideological component, which is reinforced by visualization. Complex abstract meanings become clear. The visualization of ideological meanings is a kind of verification of what is expressed in the language, in the text, in the discourse. In general, a visualized stereotype (symbol) is an ideal form of its representation. A stereotype is a reduced, schematic image. For example, we say “Russia is boundless; Russia is birches and the Russian soul”; thereby we reduce the concept to a few features. Verbally, “reduction” is expressed in the fact that the stereotype tends to “simple” representation with the same set of lexemes and simple syntax. Since visual images are unambiguous, simple and easily perceived, the stereotypes tend to this way of expression <...>. Thus, a discourse can have a visual representation. Russian discourse visualized images prove that visualized discourse and verbal discourse are one and the

same discourse, Russian discourse or discourse about Russia, which has the properties of coherence, repeatability and continuity” (Orlova, 2016, p. 126).

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The aim of this study is to describe American feature cinema as a specific discourse in which stereotypes about the Russian people are formed. On the other hand, we aim at describing and systematizing the stereotypes of the Russian people, as well as cases of distortion of the characteristics of the Russian people, leading to the effect of rejection of the film, and, consequently, to intercultural conflict.

#### **5. Research Methods**

The methods of this study are: discursive analysis, description, comparison, and systematization. First of all, it is necessary to understand the concept “discourse” and determine the idea of such a theoretical and research construction as “the discourse of the American feature films”.

#### **6. Findings**

For this study 17 films of the American film production that were released between 1994 and 2020 were selected and analyzed. In these films, part of the events (the plot) takes place in Russia, and some characters (although not the main ones) are Russian.

These are the following films: *Police Academy – 7: Mission To Moscow* (1994); *Fair Game* (1995); *Maximum Risk* (1996); *Happiness* (1998); *Rounders* (1998); *Armageddon* (1998); *The Boondock Saints* (1999); *25th Hour* (2002); *Big Trouble* (2002); *Sum Of All Fears* (2002); *Running Scared* (2006); *Hitman* (2007); *Indiana Jones And Kingdom Of Crystal Skull* (2007); *2012* (2009); *Pawn Sacrifice* (2015); *Atomic Blonde* (2017); *Tenet* (2020).

The heroes of these films are: a Russian police officer Commissar Rakov (head of Moscow police), Lieutenant Talinsky, head of the UBOP, Sergeant Katya Sergey, translator for a group of Americans, Konstantin Konali, head of the Russian mafia in Moscow; Colonel Ilya Pavel Kazak, Rose, a female hitman from the Cossack squad; Dzasokhov, a major Russian bandit in New York, Yuri, an assistant to a Russian bandit; Kirov, head of the Russian mafia; Vlad, a Russian emigrant who likes to live in New Jersey and work in a taxi; owner of the nightclub Teddy KGB; cosmonaut of the Mir station Lev Andropov; Ivan Chekhov, Russian bandit; Kostya, a minor bandit in the Russian mafia; Ivan, an illegal arms dealer; Russian President Alexander Nemerov; FSB adviser Anatoly Grushkov; Russian bandit Anzor Yugorsky, head of the Russian mafia in Brighton Beach Ivan Yugorsky; Yuri Marklov, senior FSB officer; Mikhail Belikov, President of Russia; Udreh Belikov, brother of the President of Russia; Captain Gudnayevev, head of the St. Petersburg police; General Kormarov, major army officer; Russian oligarch Yuri Karpov, his wife Tamara, his children Alek and Oleg, pilot Sasha; Spassky, Russian chess player; Bremovich, senior KGB officer in East Berlin; Russian oligarch Andrey Sator.

This list of characters shows that the most vivid associations with Russian life and the most fruitful images are caused by such areas of activity as crime (mafia, arms trade, etc.), security (KGB, FSB, army),

power (president), space (cosmonaut), business (oligarch, investor), sports (chess), science. Only one character of all the films – Vlad – turned out to be a simple philistine, an emigrant and a taxi driver (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Vlad. (Happiness (1998))

The names that Russian characters of the American films bear have a Russian national flavor: Ivan, Mikhail, Yuri, etc. However, the following features of the Russian characters naming should be noted. The surnames of the Russian (Soviet) famous personalities (politicians, writers) are often used to emphasize their belonging to the Russian world: Andropov, Chekhov, Karpov. The creators of the Russian characters also demonstrate awareness of the basic word-formation mechanisms (frequency suffixes) that are used in Russian surnames: -sky, -ovich, -ko, -ov. However, when trying to convey the character's belonging to the Russian world with the help of his surname, “absurdities” often arise in the sound of the surname of a Russian person: Nemerov (Neverov); Kormarov (Komarov); Marklov (Markov); Gudnayev; Grushkov. It is also necessary to pay attention to the fact that in the Russian names and surnames the creators of American films often use a combination of Russian and “non-Russian” components: Udreh Belikov, Andrey Sator, Teddy KGB. The first is intended to indicate belonging to the Russian world, the second – to the peculiarities of origin, or their life in emigration, etc. Some surnames in combination with the name create the effect of excessiveness, hyperbole: Katya Sergei, Ilya Pavel Kazak, Lev Andropov, Ivan Chekhov.

Let’s consider the stereotypical features of the Russian world and the Russian people transferred by the films. We will focus on those stereotypes that create a distorted image of the Russian people, as well as on the identification and systematization of various types of stereotypes.

**Social political stereotypes:** *USSR, station MIR, Soviet flag, Russian flag, weapons, Kalashnikov.* They convey patriotism which is similar to a constant state of war. These stereotypes are also associated with aggressiveness of the Russian people.

For example, Udreh Belikov. The brother of the President of Russia, uses drugs, is dressed in a robe, pants and a gold chain, a fan of weapons, looks like Rasputin. Drinks a lot, sniffs cocaine, shoots machine guns with two hands (Hitman (2007)).

**Social professional stereotypes (stereotyping by field of activity):** *thief, cosmonaut, military, civil servant (Interior Ministry, FSB, KGB), oligarch (businessman, investor), sports (boxing, chess).*

It was investigated (Orlova, 2011) that one of the stereotypes that characterize the Russian world is crime. This explains the fact that numerous images of the Russian man in American films are images of criminals, mafiosi, etc. So, for example, Vlad. Russian emigrant, works in a taxi. Vlad is very direct, assertive. He doesn't miss Russia. He used to be a thief, knows how to play the guitar, wears a T-shirt “I love New Jersey” (Happiness (1998)).

Such areas of activity are often associated with money. This implies another social characteristic of the Russian people associated with power, crime, business or law – wealth.

For example, Yuri Karpov. Speaks English with a heavy accent, dresses like a millionaire without national color, a former boxer; is moderately kind, merciless to traitors, sacrifices himself to save children (2012) (2009).

Spassky. A very confident chess player, who trains not according to the traditions, pays much attention to the study of the psychology of the opponent. Prone to excessive nerves and spontaneous display of emotions when alone. At the same time, he remains calm in public (By Sacrificing a Pawn (Pawn Sacrifice) (2015)).

***Ethnocultural stereotypes: bathhouse, khokhloma, samovar.***

Quite common stereotypes about Russian life are household stereotypes, such as a bath, a samovar, etc. They are emotionally and nationally colored, exotic, and therefore easily remembered as associations to the Russian life. However, it should be noted that some details of Russian life, noted in American films, actually, were never so common. Thus, khokhloma (dishes or furniture painted with red, yellow, orange, green and blue colors) was expensive in production and was made for trade abroad.

For example, Teddy KGB. Teddy speaks English with an accent and wears a beard. In his office there is a Russian painted clock under khokhloma (Rounders (1998)).

***Ethnocultural behavioral stereotypes: triple kiss, drunkenness.***

One of the features associated with the behavioral characteristics of Russian high-ranking officials is a triple kiss (on the cheek, on the lips). It appeared thanks to L. I. Brezhnev and is now often attributed in feature films to Russian officials.

Russian drunkenness (and the traditional alcoholic drink of the Russians – vodka) is known all over the world. Some areas of activity (cosmonautics, education, security, transport, medicine, and others) are not compatible with alcohol, so attributing signs of alcohol intoxication to a Russian character, an astronaut by profession, is a distortion of reality.

For example, Lev Andropov. Unshaven, drunk, wearing a tankman's helmet, an astronaut at the Mir station. At the second appearance Andropov is wearing a hat with earflaps and a T-shirt with the inscription “USSR”, he has a Soviet flag hanging at the station. In mortal danger, Andropov ignores the possible death and is ready to sacrifice himself for the sake of saving others. Andropov (Figure 2) behaves like a drunk and repairs the engine by hitting the dashboard with a wrench (Armageddon (1998)).



**Figure 2.** Lev Andropov (Armageddon) (1998)

***Ethnocultural food stereotypes: caviar, tea (teapot on the table), vodka.***

For example, Dzasokhov. Russian bandit in New York, walks around in gaudy suits, speaks slowly, with a noticeable accent, owns a Russian restaurant “Bohemia” with live music in Russian. In the evenings he eats fresh red caviar with lettuce leaves. Prefers to threaten and seek information through violence. Yuri. A Russian bandit's henchman. He dresses in a crimson jacket and black shirt, and wears a gold chain around his neck. Kirov. The head of the Russian mafia. When he meets with important people, he kisses them three times. An icon hangs on the wall of his office. He walks around the house in a dressing gown, reading “Crime and Punishment” by F. M. Dostoevsky. Negotiations are held in the bathhouse, where there is an accordion player playing “Katyusha” (Maximum risk (1996).

Captain Gudnaev. He directs the St. Petersburg police. He calls an Interpol investigator for coffee, but they actually drink vodka (Hitman (2007).

***Ethno-cultural stereotypes (appearance): a crimson jacket, a gold chain, a robe, a hat with earflaps, orders and medals on the uniform, fur (fur collar on the coat).***

For example, Irina Spalko (figure 3). Three times awarded the Order of Lenin and Hero of Socialist Labor, dressed in military uniform, has a saber, often threatens with cold weapons, understands archeology, speaks English with a noticeable Russian accent, does not drink vodka, does not shoot very accurately from a Kalashnikov (Indiana Jones and Kingdom of Crystal Skull) (2007).



**Figure 3.** Irina Spalko. (Indiana Jones and Kingdom Of Crystal Skull) (2007)

Another example: Commissar Rakov (figure 4), the head of the Moscow police, wears a uniform with a large number of awards, uses a three-time kiss when greeting, communicates on the phone with Yeltsin when the later takes a bath. He speaks English with a slight accent. In the office of Rakov there is a portrait of Dzerzhinsky and there are two policemen standing at attention, the doors are covered with

carpet. On the table there are Russian flags and a teapot (teapot) in the form of the Spasskaya Tower. Lieutenant Talinsky wears a uniform with five medals. Sergeant Katya Sergey puts on a coat with a fur collar and a hat in autumn. Konstantin Konali. The head of the Russian mafia in Moscow. He wears a wide-brimmed hat, talks to his snake, holds meetings on Red Square, and speaks English with a slight Russian accent. In the restaurant at Konali's the balalaika plays. There are samovars on the tables. Konali reads the newspaper "Pravda". Takes women on a date to the ballet "Swan Lake" (Police Academy: Mission to Moscow) (1994).

So, the association (stereotype) of the Russian military, security service employee, Ministry of Internal Affairs are the medals on the uniform. It is known that Russian higher ranks have awards and wear them on solemn occasions, but not daily for service. In this case, it is used to emphasize the character's belonging to the Russian world of military (power) structures.



**Figure 4.** Rakov. (Police Academy: Mission to Moscow) (1994)

In the fragment of the film analyzed above *cultural historical (geographical) stereotypes* also appear: Red Square, Spasskaya Tower.

**Cultural stereotypes:** accordion, F. M. Dostoevsky, icon (The Most Holy Mother of God), "Katyusha", balalaika ("Apple, where you roll"), "Swan Lake", the newspaper "Pravda".

**Cultural stereotypes (signs of speech):** Russian speech, Russian accent, Russian obscene lexis.

For example, Anzor Yugorsky. He's obsessed with the John Wayne movies. He calls his wife "blyad" (in Russian) (Running Scared) (2006).

Russian people are also stereotypically attributed some signs of character. So, one of the frequency properties of the character of a Russian man is his aggressiveness.

For example, Cossack. An extremely vicious and unbalanced type. He speaks English without an accent, and rarely uses Russian words. He does not have a clear national color. Rose, a female killer from the Cossack group. Devoid of femininity, paints her lips red, has constantly a stupid and evil expression, fights well (Fair Game) (1995).

Ivan Yugorsky. A typical scumbag, in a jacket and with a shirt unbuttoned at the neck. He speaks with a slight accent, slowly and calmly. Bit off another bandit's ear (Running Scared) (2006).

A few more characteristics of the Russian character: the desire for self-sacrifice, impulsiveness, promiscuity to detail. On the other hand, a Russian man is characterized by strict taciturnity, avarice in emotions, generosity, and religiosity.

For example, Ivan. Taciturn and generous, can deliver drinks for free, speaks with a noticeable accent, illegally sells weapons, little emotional. Prefers tracksuits. Even when wounded, he does not swear in Russian (*Big Trouble*) (2002).

Pilot Sasha. Reckless, dashing, religious (in a difficult moment he looks at the icons), loving: he picked up Tamara. Speaks Russian with a heavy accent (2012) (2009).

The American publicists of the XIX century noted in the character of a Russian man such a strange property as a love for a woman and cruelty at the same time (Orlova, 2011).

Sator, a hero of the modern American feature film, is a brutal and ruthless arms dealer. He has agreements with unknown forces in the future who are interested in destroying humanity. Married, at the same time loves and despises his wife, periodically beats her and is very jealous. He considers his wife weak and does not expect revenge from her, ready to kill if necessary. Drinks vodka, likes to take risks, respects risky partners. Prefers to spend time on a yacht. He does not speak Russian. He speaks English with a slight accent (*Tenet*) (2020).

## 7. Conclusion

First of all, we need to draw a conclusion about the specifics of the discourse of the American art cinema. We have come to the conclusion that it is possible to separate the external and internal film discourses. The internal “discourse of American art cinema” is a researcher’s position in relation to the plot of films; it is a discourse(s) in which the plots, characters, and the main concepts and values shared by both the creators of the films and their viewers (agents), are unfold in accordance with the laws of the genre. This discourse can be described as heterogeneous, created by both verbal and visual texts. The most important concepts and values that are revealed in the American art cinema in which Russian characters are present are: democracy, freedom, the integrity and safety of the USA.

Secondly, we should describe and systematize the stereotypes about the Russian people that function in this discourse. Among the previously mentioned stereotypes about Russia and Russian people (Orlova, 2011), only the following two are found in the new material: geopolitical – “aggressiveness”; social – “crime”. The list of ethno-cultural and social stereotypes is expanded: ethno-cultural food, behavioral, appearance stereotypes are highlighted; social professional stereotypes are found out. Cultural stereotypes are described, including historical and geographical ones. Russian names (Ivan, Boris, Chekhov, etc.), including the use of Russian suffixes in surnames (-ov, -skiy, etc.), are defined and described as a way of stereotyping the image of a Russian man. Hyperbole as a name creation model of Russian characters is noted.

Finally, it is necessary to explain such a phenomenon as a distortion of the Russian reality that occurs when using the stereotype of Russia and Russians in the discourse of the American feature films. In our opinion, the stereotype in the discourse of cinema performs, in addition to affective, generalizing and other functions, a function that was not previously distinguished by scientists. We mean the function of naming, indicating; in other words, by demonstrating a frequent and unambiguously associated feature

(stereotype), the creators of the image only indicate, call the national and cultural identity of the character. In this function, a stereotype acts as a frozen, non-dynamic image; it is like an akin to a picture, photo, or collage – a simple visualized representation of a feature. However, being placed in the plot – in the action – it becomes ridiculous and inadequate, because it does not develop together with the plot, does not correspond to how events could develop in a natural way or to the potential / possible / real course of things. In other words, the stereotype “drops out” of the discourse; it freezes and exists as a picture outside of time and outside of the plot. This phenomenon causes a sense of unnaturalness, distrust of the film, rejection of the image and, as a result, rejection of a film as a whole. Thus, only a genuine research position, the desire to return the stereotype to its vitality, to fit it into the true social and cultural conditions can allow the creators of feature films to avoid rejection of the product on the global market and conflicts in cross-cultural communication.

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