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Editor of the Abstract Book

Assoc. Prof. dr. Renata Šukaitytė,
Head of the Centre for Journalism and Media Research
Faculty of Communication, Vilnius University
renata.sukaityte@kf.vu.lt

Designer and Layout of the Abstract Book

Skaistė Ašmenavičiūtė

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info@leidykla.vu.lt, www.leidykla.vu.lt/en/
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PARTICULARITY OF POPULISM IN THE TELEVISION CONTENT OF SOVIET LITHUANIA: ENEMIES, HEROES AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE PAST

Tomas Vaitelė (PhD student), Vilnius University, Faculty of History/Faculty of Communication (Lithuania)

Email: tomas.vaitele@if.vu.lt

Abstract

The history of television in occupied Lithuania started in 1957, and its main goal was to change people's minds by rethinking the past and reshaping the present. In the 1960s–1980s, television not only became a powerful tool of communication, but also made documentaries and talk shows which showed some of the typical examples of propaganda work and new heroes of the socialist reality. In this paper, the researcher undertakes to analyze how these pictures reflect populism and what were the key features visible on the screen. Even the most popular fictional TV movies and series had direct traces to the cultural policy of the Soviet regime. This paper explores how Lithuanian SSR television and radio committee journalists and directors presented 'bourgeois enemies' and 'socialist heroes' on TV screen. This research investigates the key topics in making the socialist narratives and the impact of those TV examples on the Lithuanian society and wonders whether it is right to call it populism based on the definition of this term.

Biography of the presenter

TOMAS VAITELĖ is a PhD student in the field of history at Vilnius University. He is currently working on his doctoral dissertation *Soviet Television in Lithuania (1957–1991): Between the Regimes' Goals, Public Expectations and Professional Ambitions*. His research interests include control and censorship of media in the Soviet Union, popular culture during the Cold War, and film and music history.