

**The image of the Polish society in Wojciech Smarzowski's films.
A sociocultural study**

Summary

Wojciech Smarzowski, a Polish film director, made his debut in 2004. So far, he directed seven full-length films: *Wesele* (2004), *Dom zły* (2009), *Róża* (2011), *Drogówka* (2013), *Pod mocnym aniołem* (2014), *Wołyń* (2016) and *Kler* (2018). He is considered to be one of the most important film creators in temporary Polish cinematography, which is made evident by many rewards he has won on film festivals and competitions.

No holistic studies on the subject have been conducted thus far. There are no texts depicting the comprehensive analysis of the author's (Wojciech Smarzowski's) vision of the Polish society (however, there are publications concentrating on his selected films or surrounding topics). The key purpose of this research is to fill in that void by:

(1) Conducting a sociocultural study, that is a research of society as a whole as depicted in W. Smarzowski's films with the use of sociological perspectives and terms (such as social norms, structures and relations), as well as the perspective and terms characteristic for culture studies (social behaviour, traditions and values). Consequently it will be possible to distinguish the most vital elements of Smarzowski's vision of the Polish society, cataloguing thereof and finding their mutual relationships.

(2) Viewing of Smarzowski's collected works as a coherent whole (mediotext) rather than stand-alone and separate pieces of culture.

(3) Creating a monograph of W. Smarzowski's full-length features focused on analysing the image of society within as set in the actual sociocultural reality to which it relates.

(4) Applying the mediolinguistics analysis which approaches films as a form of media as well as a form of language inside of real-life discourse.

(5) Studying linguistic structures (mainly delivered by the films' characters) in correlation to other forms of artistic expression (vision and sound).

In this study film is treated as an artistic representation of reality created by the director. W. Smarzowski concentrates mainly of his vision of society. He creates characters that are relatable, universal as well as diverse when it comes to their social backgrounds. Thus he creates a micro world for his characters to exist in which reflects the macro world of social reality. His characters are therefore representations of (potential) "typical" social group members with their problems, behaviours, reactions and attitudes. In his works the director touches subjects that are important,

current but also delicate to Poles. The films depict national stereotypes. Thus the most important questions for an analyst are: what is the Polish society like according to W. Smarzowski's films? What personality traits shine through the characters' language? For language has been proven to be the primary source of human understanding of the world (means of its perception) as well as the substance of society and culture.

This dissertation consists of introduction, eight chapters, summation, bibliography, and a list of abbreviations. It also includes lists of tables, graphics, action shots and paintings.

The primary subjects of this study are society and culture (sociocultural analysis). Various sociological and humanistic theories are a starting point for the thesis [chapter I].

The subsequent part of the following dissertation deals with the axiology and norms in society. This section strives to define and classify "values" and "norms", which are basis for social attitudes and behaviours [chapter II].

Chapter III concentrates on stereotypes. It considers the many difficulties that arise because of the interdisciplinary character of the term "stereotype".

Aside from stereotypes and values, I consider identity as the third social metacategory. The theoretical discourse takes the historical background of events into consideration (prevalent mainly in psychosocial and sociocultural studies) [chapter IV].

The fifth part revolves around the issue of methodology. It has been determined that taking the interdisciplinary approach is a must to look at any society (as a complicated formation) through the art of film. I have adopted the mediolinguistics concepts which regards film as a media and lingual phenomenon [chapter V].

The analysis consists of three parts. First of them is focused on values and attitudes in Wojciech Smarzowski's films [chapter VI]. The second part deals with social stereotypes which are the most popular in temporary culture and at the same time, they are (re)presented in Smarzowski's films. I focus namely on gender, national, ethnical and work-related stereotypes. This section of the research is based on ethnolinguistic method of analysis, created in Lublin and described in detail in *The Dictionary of Stereotypes and Folk Symbols* [Bartmiński 9–25] [chapter VII]. The last part explores the issue of identity in two of Wojciech Smarzowski's films: *Róża* and *Wołyń*. The plots of aforementioned films are set during World War II, which was an extremely important period of history for Poles in terms of national identity [chapter VIII].

The summation takes into account the types of society and social groups which are present in Wojciech Smarzowski's films. It uncovers the most important aspects of Polish values, stereotypes and identity. The most principal Polish characteristics are highlighted. I also refers to the author's (Wojciech Smarzowski's) style. As he uses many artistic means and intertextual elements which construct the intertextual vision of the Polish society.

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