

Title: The Image of Family in Polish “Women’s Drama”: 1930s and Post-1989

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One of the phenomena of the general blossoming of literature created by women post-1989 is the emergence of what might be termed “women’s drama,” focusing on the social situation of women. This phenomenon is in a sense a repeat of the interwar period when there occurred a short but fertile explosion of drama, already then labeled as “women’s.” The goals of the proposed paper are two interconnected topics. On the one hand, the author will present the image of the family as it arises out of these two groups of plays. This will be a feminist perspective that takes into consideration the workings of the families as a collective, relationships within the family, as well as possibilities of life for women outside the family. On the other hand, the formal aspects of these dramas will be discussed, as they have a direct bearing on their reception. Overall, the differences between the two groups of plays are one of degree, rather than of fundamental ideological differences. Both present the Polish family in a state of crisis. However, hope for any possible changes is much weaker in the post-1989 group. One of the primary elements in creating a more pessimistic picture is the predominance of a grotesque form, that alienates the recipient, instead of drawing him/her in emotionally. Moreover, this is a form that does not assume the resolution of problems. Conversely, the 1930s plays in general favor a realistic form that tries to establish an emotional closeness with the recipient and that does presuppose a resolution of posited issues.

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