

SUMMARY

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Title: (Non-)stereotypical approach to disability in the works of Olga Ptak and Jacek Hołub

The main research problem and simultaneously the aim of this dissertation was to enrich the field of non-fiction literature studies that present the experience of disability, by means of the analysis and interpretation of selected narratives by mothers raising atypical children. This was carried out through the lens of engaged humanities and within a chosen research methodology.. Additionally, in order to supplement and deepen the theoretical considerations, a survey was conducted to explore the reception of the analysed texts. The aim was to determine the significance of their readership and to assess the impact of disability-related literature on the experiences of the respondents.

The analysis focused on Olga Ptak's book *„Kto ukradł jutro, czyli dlaczego nie jest jak z obrazka?”* (2019), and two reportages by Jacek Hołub: *„Żeby umarło przede mną”* ; *„Opowieści matek niepełnosprawnych dzieci”* (2020) and *„Niegrzeczne. Historie dzieci z ADHD, autyzmem i zespołem Aspergera”* (2020). The selected analytical tools were drawn primarily from contemporary literature, characterized by its socially critical and educational profile - particularly important in the context of disability studies.

The main methodological framework employed in this literary dissertation was disability studies. A significant theoretical strand shaping the dissertation was literary disability studies, which apply traditional literary methods to the analysis of texts. Narratology also provided a key theoretical foundation, allowing the identification of aesthetic strategies within the selected works. Furthermore, the dissertation drew on motherhood studies (in the context of exploring maternal narratives and experiences within literary and cultural circles) and hermeneutics (used to uncover hidden meanings and references, especially in the analysis of the graphic layout of Olga Ptak's book and the survey responses, where readers' dialogue with the text and its author enabled a more individual interpretation). The construction of the research toolkit was guided by the interdisciplinary nature and thematic breadth of the research topic, as well as the literary analytical approach adopted.

This dissertation consists of five main chapters, which are the result of a critical engagement with (non-)stereotypical representations of people with disabilities and their families in the works of Olga Ptak and Jacek Hołub.

The first chapter focused on the theoretical analysis of disability studies, which shaped the direction of the undertaken research. Key concepts and phenomena relevant to the chosen methodology were explored. This chapter, consistent with the perspective of engaged humanities, provided the theoretical foundation for understanding the socio-cultural functioning of people with disabilities and their caregivers. Referring to disability paradigms and the stages of emotional experiences of parents raising children with disabilities served as a starting point for analysing the social contexts of narrative representation and the politicisation of difference.

The discussion on the theoretical framework of writing about the experience of disability continued in the second chapter. These considerations concentrated on the function of stereotypes in literature, as they form the basis for a critical reflection aimed at challenging established patterns of thought regarding people with disabilities and their families. The chapter also addressed the issue of the matrocentric turn in literature, where the experiences of mothers raising disabled children take centre stage in the narrative. Emphasising the interdisciplinary nature of the dissertation, cultural, social, and political issues were combined with the perspective of engaged humanities, within which disability studies, motherhood studies, maternal discourse, and malady theory intersect. This theoretical approach laid the groundwork for the analysis and interpretation of the non-fiction narratives of Olga Ptak and Jacek Hołub.

Chapter three focused on the analysis of non-fiction disability narratives in the reportages by Jacek Hołub. This section drew attention to the phenomenon of hypermotherhood, into which women raising disabled children are often involuntarily pushed. The ways in which the main female characters constructed their stories in Hołub's reportages were analysed - narratives that allow these mothers to step out of the shadows and speak in their own voice. These uncompromising accounts represent a synthesis of disability studies and motherhood studies, revealing the personal, cultural, and social realities, while simultaneously challenging stereotypical conventions surrounding people with disabilities and their families.

Chapter four explored the functional application of narrative strategies in Olga Ptak's work, which contribute to public education and the fight against disability stereotypes. The universality of the text makes it accessible to a wide readership. The interdisciplinary literary space of the analysed text allowed the integration of cultural, social, and political issues within a theoretical and analytical framework, intertwined with an emotional, educational-therapeutic narrative. The fictional story of a boy with autism - explaining how his mind works- was also examined, as it serves to educate the reader and foster familiarity with difference. Particular attention was given to the book's graphic design, as the non-standard structure and cover design supported the interpretation of the book's message, while its ambiguity allowed for the discovery of hidden meanings and multiple interpretations.

Chapter five extended the context of the dissertation by presenting the results of a study on how disability is experienced through reading by students of teacher training programmes. The aim of this research was to implement the core goals of disability studies: to educate society, challenge stereotypes, and promote the emancipation of people with disabilities. The empirical exploration focused on gathering respondents' opinions about how atypical individuals and their families are perceived in light of social stereotypes. It also aimed to uncover reading preferences and familiarity with disability-themed literature. The primary goal of this diagnostic work was to determine the influence of such literature on the reading experiences of the surveyed individuals.

The dissertation concludes with a summary chapter that recaps the main arguments and offers a general reflection on the analytical perspectives used.

An appendix is also included, containing the questionnaire used in the empirical research.

Keywords: Olga Ptak, Jacek Hołub, contemporary literature, disability studies, stereotypes, disability emancipation, motherhood, disability experience, interdisciplinarity, engaged humanities, reception studies, non-fiction, reportage, narration