

The Leon Schiller National Film School in Łódź

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Summary of the doctoral dissertation

‘Torwald Helmer as a dissocial personality in the interpretation and stage performance of the role in the play ‘A Doll's House’

by Henrik Ibsen, directed by Agnieszka Lipiec-Wróblewska’

Preparatory work began at the Arnold Szyfman Polish Theatre in Warsaw in May 2017 for the staging of Henrik Ibsen's play titled 'A Doll's House', directed by Agnieszka Lipiec-Wróblewska. The play is a depiction of a few days in the life of a bourgeois family. The woman is an exemplary wife and mother of two, she takes care of the hearth and home. Husband - a defence lawyer, a fledgling bank director. They tried and tested all responsibilities and spousal roles and they have worked them through for eight years. Everything seems to be arranged and heralds a peaceful future for the family, or at least a pleasant Christmas time that is about to come. However, over the past few years, cracks are beginning to appear on the carefully manicured masks of the characters, which in changing circumstances disrupt the pseudo-harmony of the household.

One of the components of the present work is the role of Torwald Helmer, the husband of the main character in this drama. The purpose of the written commentary on the doctoral thesis is to show how the character is read, how it is presented on stage, and to describe the intellectual base that was created in the process of constructing the role, with the general assumption of a dissocial personality as the source of the character's intentions and actions.

This work consists of ten chapters. The first chapter is an introduction to the title terminology understood in a colloquial way. An analysis of the wide range of meanings attributed to the term psychopathy and a review of the perceptions of representatives of this group appearing in stock photo catalogues, online forums, social media or signposting thematic articles.

The second chapter, titled 'Conjunction of the terms psychopathy/sociopathy', is devoted to showing the motives for the interchangeable use of the nomenclature of the assumed disorder, dictated by the desire to dramatise the term or to draw attention to the source of the disfunction.

Chapter three is an analysis of the presence of the term psychopathy in the most authoritative sources for classifying and defining mental disorders, which are: ICD-10 (International Classification of Diseases and Health Problems, 10th edition) and DSM-5 (Classification of Mental Disorders of the American Psychiatric Association, 5th edition).

Chapter four presents psychopathy as a combination of three personality disorders: narcissistic, histrionic and antisocial.

Chapter five is a general overview of the research history regarding above problem, the evolution of its understanding and changes in its scope of meaning.

The sixth chapter, divided into 16 paragraphs, details and describes the symptoms of psychopathy based on Harvey M. Cleckley's work titled 'The Mask of Sanity.' The author was the first one to systematise and characterise psychopathy in detail, which was originally the primary focus of psychiatry at its inception.

Chapter seven presents psychology as one of the possible tools of the actor's professional workshop to assist in the role preparation process. Against this background, the assumptions of the concept of neuroticism according to Karen Horney, proposed by the director of the performance as the key to understanding the characters in the drama, were presented.

Chapter eight summarises play's course of events.

Chapter nine deals with the problem of translations of Ibsen's 'A Doll's House' arising from the peculiarities of the Norwegian language.

Chapter ten presents in detail the assumptions of the character's dissocial personality throughout the process of preparing the role of Torwald Helmer.