

The Splendour of Male Relationship

Andrzej Wajda's *The Promised Land* as a buddy film

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The Promised Land (1974) is a masterpiece. A masterpiece that gave its director his first Oscar nomination and keeps leading various polls for the best Polish film of all times. However this masterpiece is a bit controversial. For two reasons: the first concerns the Polish, while the second the foreign reception of the film. In Poland cinema historians were bothered mainly by the question: whether *The Promised Land* – contrary to other Wajda's films – is a film flattering the authorities or secretly aiming against them? In the West, on the other hand, the critics noticed in the film anti-Semitic themes thus making it impossible for the film to reach international audience ¹ (and allegedly also win the Oscar). The authorities quickly noticed that the film *had the appropriate ideological message* ², since it depicted *terrible exploitation of the working class, solidarity of capital, ideals and dedication to the cause of the representatives of the developing working class movement* ³, so the work had to be used for propaganda purposes especially that Wajda's name was a strong recommendation ⁴. At first the censorship issued an order not to publish critical reviews of the film. Then from the Department of Ideological and Educational Work of the Central Committee of PZPR a secret instruction came showing in what ways the communist authorities intended to use the fact that Wajda *chose his class side* ⁵ which in consequence was to *distance the director from the circles unfriendly towards the engaged art [and] bring it closer to our artistic and propaganda powerbase* ⁶. Tadeusz Lubelski who analysed the film's reception noticed that *the Party critics defended Wajda's work from the attacks of Moczar nationalists from "Rzeczywistość" and "Ekran" who accused the creator of biased, anti-Polish approach*, while at the same time film magazines that were not an ideological speaking tube focussed solely on the work's artistic features ⁷.

The political "fight for Wajda" which started in Poland had no significant influence on the reception of the film in the West where *The Promised Land* had to deal with the accusation of anti-Semitism. Anna Nehrebecka who among others with Andrzej Wajda, Wojciech Pszoniak and Bolesław Michałek participated in a press conference in Los Angeles preceding the Oscar ceremony recalls that event in the following way: *What was happening was for me at the same time terrifying and funny* ⁸, because the problem of anti-Semitism in the film unexpectedly became the main motive of the meeting. Anglo-Saxon critics in their reviews focussed on the way national and ethnic minorities were depicted in the film. In the first place the portrait of the rich Jewess, Lucy Zucker (Kalina Jędrusik) proved problematic.

She was described by a critic from “New York Times” to be a particularly repulsive, piggish woman ⁹ (was this why in the reedited version of the film from 2000 the legendary erotic scene in the restaurant car was missing? ¹⁰). These interpretations ¹¹ in which *The Promised Land* appeared as an anti-Semitist work caused that in other films by Wajda (irrespective of the fact whether they were dedicated to the Jewish problems or not, see: witch-hunt against *Katyn*, 2007 in French press ¹²) the critics looked for anti-Jewish content. So is *The Promised Land* a pro-government (anti-capitalist) or an oppositionist film (criticising in form of a costume drama the consumerism of the Gierek era)? Is it an anti-Semitist or anti-Polish film? Not forgetting these “discrepancies” that threaten to disintegrate Wajda’s work from the inside, I would like to analyse the problem of pan-national male homosocial community depicted here and created by the Jew – Moryc Welt (Wojciech Pszoniak), German – Maks Baum (Andrzej Seweryn) and Pole – Karol Borowiecki (Daniel Olbrychski) and which in the analyses of *The Promised Land* was usually pushed to the background, with the focus on other aspects of the work (adaptation, painting inspirations, political and nationalist context).

Buddy film

Andrzej Wajda – wrote Tadeusz Lubelski – had to destroy Reymont’s fiction in the script in order to save the friendship of the three protagonists. (...) In a film of the 70s of the 20th century similar plot [betrayal of male friendship] would have no sense since it would not correspond to the mores of the era. This was the late phase of the era of dissent ¹³. The fact that the climate of dissent was not unfamiliar to Wajda is proven by his countercultural in spirit film made in FRG, *Pilatus and others* (1971) based on Bulhakov’s *The Master and Margarita*, and also by the American version of *Demons* with Meryl Streep and Elżbieta Czyżewska that the director was preparing right after completing work on *The Promised Land*, which particularly emphasised the generation gap so the performance could be interpreted precisely from the perspective of rebellion ¹⁴. When Wajda was working on *The Promised Land* he wanted the actors to *create three friends reminding us of countercultural ideas* ¹⁵. The director, always sensitive and attentive to the changes of modern cinema, also this time adapted the literary original to the concerns of the world cinema of the time. His inspirations came mostly from American cinema ¹⁶ whose *deep message* was at the time *savouring the taste of male solidarity* ¹⁷.

In short, in order to tell us about male friendship Wajda referred to the American films marked by rebellion, especially to the so-called *buddy films*. The notion of a buddy film was coined to describe the wave of American films from the 70s which focussed in the first place on male (romantic) friendship. Buddy films are treated by the cinema historians either as a separate film genre or as a fictional element of other genres. Robin Wood dates the birth of this genre to 1969 in which three famous buddy films had their cinema premiers (*Butch Cassidy and Sundance Kid* by George Roy Hill, *Easy Rider* by Dennis Hopper and *Midnight Cowboy* by John Schlesinger), they were the model for subsequent films made according to the same pattern (e.g. *Scarecrow*, 1973, by Jerry Schatzberg; *Thunderbolt and Lightfoot*, 1974, by Michael Cimino; *California Split*, 1974, by

Robert Altman)¹⁸. The genesis of buddy films was usually associated with the rise of feminism in the 70s seeing in these films a kind of counteraction to the women's freedom movement. According to Molly Haskell feminism made it possible for the filmmakers to eliminate women from the film narrative which from now on could be dedicated solely to men's things, men's values and men's... passions. So it was not without reason that the feminists were the first to take up the problem of meaning of male bonds in buddy films, the films which – according to them – solely strengthened the power of male hegemony¹⁹. Haskell, following the notion of a buddy system suggested by Leslie Fiedler in the field of literature, notices that what strikes in the relations between men depicted in American films is their emotional intensity which, however, cannot be reduced solely to sexual desire. *Rather, the point is love – love in which men understand and support each other, speak the same language, and risk their lives to gain each other's respect. But this is also a delusion; the difficulties that adventures bring, disguise the fact that this is the easiest of loves: a love that is adolescent, presexual, tacit, the love of one's "semblable", one's mirror reflection*²⁰. Even though Haskell clearly states that buddy films are not about homosexuality, she also notices that they are streaked with it. The echo of these deliberations can be found in the book by the Polish film critic, Maria Kornatowska who analyses such films as *Butch Cassidy and Sundance Kid*, *Midnight Cowboy*, *Scarecrow* or *Easy Rider* in the chapter dedicated to homosexuality, in which she sees in these films *parahomosexual perception of the world*²¹. Kornatowska, however, when interpreting these films does not refer to the notion of buddy films, even though her interpretation reminds one of the interpretation offered by Molly Haskell: *In the stories of fight and unlimited, free spaces there is no place for women (...). The protagonist is usually a wanderer, without a home or family, a stranger, eternal vagabond, going from nowhere to nowhere. The sole companion on the road can be another man as a second I, a mirror reflection, a kind of a double*²².

However Richard Dyer²³ warns us against the danger of seeing in the convention of buddy films solely a smokescreen for the homosexual desire. Of course, this convention uses the same strategies that were used by directors in the era of the Hays Code in order to hide the homoerotic potential of the film narrative. This, however, does not mean that these conventions always function in cinema in the same way. Dyer, analysing the film by Franklin J. Schaffner *Papillon* (1973), emphasises those conventions of buddy films which are aimed at marking the relation between men as love-related but not necessarily sexual: in the first place, when telling us about love between Papillon (Steve McQueen) and Dega (Dustin Hoffman) the director reaches for formal structures which are usually used in cinema to show heterosexual love, secondly, men never say what they really feel for each other and thirdly, their love is clearly distinguished from homosexual desire; for that reason the director introduces an episodic figure of a homosexual, Maturette (Robert Deman), in order to secure himself against attributing homosexual desire to Papillon and Dega and to let us, the spectators, understand what their relation surely is not homosexual²⁴. Even though it is fascinating that in the 70s, American mainstream cinema balanced so dangerously on the border of what in relations between men is sexual and not sexual, it would be a mistake to mechanically attribute hidden homoerotic desire to every buddy film.

The splendour of male relationship

Robin Wood, similarly to Richard Dyer, claims that considering buddy films to be masks for gay films is too simple and in fact misleading. Suggestion that the protagonists of these films are homosexual, but the films cannot admit that is based on the – fundamental for patriarchy – binary division into hetero- and homo-. Wood notices further, and his argumentation strays from Dyer's deliberations, that if men's desire for men may be considered a mask for homosexuality then due to directors' strenuous attempts aimed at denying the central relation the homoerotic character, such a suggestion becomes actually possible²⁵. This contradictory economy of desire is interesting: the more these films deny the homoerotic tension in male relations, the more they support it. Why was it in the 70s – continues Wood – that so many buddy films were made? Why were these films so successful? And why this type of films did in fact disappear from the cinemas in the 80s? Buddy films which were made in the first place by men and with (heterosexual) men in mind referred on the one side, to their hostility towards women, usually interpreted as men's counteraction to the development of feminism, but on the other hand they referred to the subconsciousness of male spectators: they expressed the strong need for male love at the same time testing its correctness. *However one may regret the strategies of disownment – according to Robin Wood – the films would admittedly be unthinkable without them: the heterosexual male spectator's satisfaction would quickly be replaced by panic, and the films' commercial viability would instantly disintegrate*²⁶. It is significant that cinema historians usually start their essays on buddy films with masculine films from the 70s and end with analyses of gay films from the 80s, claiming that the convention of buddy films was absorbed at the time by gay cinema. True, buddy films are streaked with homoeroticism, but surely they are not gay films. In the first place they differ because in buddy films male love cannot be consumed, often due to the most effective obstacle which is death of at least one of the men²⁷. Mark Simpson wrote about it in an interesting way in his essay *Don't Die on My Buddy: Homoeroticism and Masochism in War Movies* dedicated to war buddy films. In these films death is a sacrament: *it makes love between men eternal by removing it from the male body; by cancelling forever the threat of its consummation it ensures that boyish love is immortal, and that queer love, transformed into a cadaver, is buried on the battlefield*²⁸.

The Promised Land was made in 1974 when buddy films were the most popular. The relation of three friends with its emotional intensity resembles male relations from the American movies but it is not only the male love that allows us to include this work in the category of buddy films. Robin Wood²⁹ set six categories of a model buddy narrative: (1) journey (usually from the outskirts to the city), (2) marginalisation of women, (3) absence of a home, (4) male love, (5) figure of an overt homosexual as amendment, (6) death. In *The Promised Land* we have all of Wood's categories apart from the last one (unless we understand death more broadly as disaster): (1) first scenes transfer us from the idealised and poeticised, due to the overexposed texture of photos, mansion in Kurów to the monstrous, diabolic city-monster; (2) women excluded from male community are not figures of equal standing but signs connoting specific (anti)values: Anka (Anna Nehrebecka) symbolising Polishness, is the "pure" lady from the manor who is clearly contra-

dicted by the eroticised *femme fatale*, Lucy Zucker; (3) Karol who calls his father (Tadeusz Białoszczyński) *mummified nobility*, already in the initial scene says that he has to free himself from tradition because these bonds restrict and chafe him; also Maks frees himself from the family past and Moryc is already completely uprooted; (4) male love in the degenerated world seized by the pursuit of wealth is the only and the most valuable value: men are not only loyal to each other, not only do they support themselves but they also cannot live without each other; they are able to sacrifice their patrimonies, fiancés and their ideals for career but not their male love which will survive the hardest test; (5) the figure of a homosexual also appears in *The Promised Land* but it has a different function than in American buddy films, the director not only does not deny the homoerotic element in the male relation but (almost) directly attributes homosexual orientation to Moryc; (6) even though Wajda saves his protagonists he closes the film with a disaster which forces them to start everything afresh. In light of the above *The Promised Land* seems a buddy film *par excellence*.

The anatomy of male homosocial desire ³⁰

Actors who acted out the male romance in front of the camera so well: Daniel Olbrychski and Wojciech Pszoniak defended Wajda's work from accusations of anti-Semitism or anti-Polishness arguing that this was a film about something else, that is about male friendship. *There are a few caricatures of Jews* – explained Olbrychski – *there is the Pole, Wilczek, bastard in relation to the Jewish poor who at the beginning of the film sings off key: "O polska krainooo..."; there is Borowiecki swearing on Madonna's picture; there is the blood sucker Bucholc; there is a lum-mox and nouveau riche Müller; there is another German, lecher and depraver played by Zapasiewicz. (...) And still this is a film in the first place about friendship, the key to the film are the three boys who shaking their hands say: "I have nothing, you have nothing, he has nothing so together we have just enough to have the biggest factory in the city in a year". It is not by chance that this male trio includes: a Jew, a Pole and a German* ³¹. The actor is supported by Wojciech Pszoniak: *For me "The Promised Land" has been a story of a friendship of a Pole, a Jew and a German in the nineteenth century capital of industry, in the world of great wealth and equally great poverty* ³². The more astute critics did not miss the specificity of the structure of the male friendship in Wajda's film. *This friendship and solidarity* – wrote Konrad Eberhardt – *is as a challenge to the wolf pack. We have to admit that in the film, this motive became more beautiful especially due to the nuances added by Wojciech Pszoniak to Moryc whom he awarded with charm, warmth and gentleness. (...) in "The Promised Land", the blaze from this exceptional, youthful relation, even though it cannot dispel the darkness, still constitutes a heart-warming offer for humanisation of the wolfish relations. It is an, obviously, naive offer – but in the world depicted by "The Promised Land" namely naivety seems something priceless and human* ³³. The critic describes male friendship as an *unusual youthful relation*, hence different from stereotype male relations. It seems that Eberhardt aptly sensed the essence of the "triangle" which on screen presents itself as an unthreatened idyll, dream of male solidarity and closeness, dream in which the fear of stigmatisation and exclusion does not exist.

The initial sequence in Kurów, land estate of Borowiecki family – where Karol visits with Maks and Moryc and where Karol's father and Karol's fiancé, Anka, live – introduces us into the ambiguous relations between the protagonists. The erotic tension, surprisingly, does not occur as we could expect between Karol and Anka but is placed outside the relationship sanctified by tradition. When Anka runs out of the mansion and runs towards the men sitting in the garden she is watched in awe not by Karol but by Maks. In order for the spectator not to have any doubts about the nature of this look the camera carefully follows its trajectory: first it moves slowly towards Maks's face and then frames it in a close-up. The next take which shows the protagonists in a long shot allows us to see that the man is watched by Moryc and the expression on his face leaves no doubt, he is aware that his friend is enchanted by the fiancé of their Polish friend. Welt unmistakably guesses Maks's desire since he himself is not without fault. His desire, however, is not towards Anka whom he ignores and pays no attention to, but towards Karol at whom he looks as at a picture. Thus desire in the initial scene is placed not where we would expect it: the Polish engaged couple is the object of the desire of strangers: the Jew and the German³⁴. This dangerous desire, desire which it would seem could threaten the male friendship and destabilise bonds in the homosocial group, in fact stabilises these bonds, strengthens and tightens them. This happens because this desire never reaches sovereignty. It keeps oscillating between disclosure and suppression. It has to remain forever unfulfilled or as Wood and Simpson would have it – unconsummated. Maks and Moryc cannot find the courage to do anything more than silent worship, hidden love, obvious but unspoken. Let us look closer at the opening scenes in which the desire is set in motion: the theatre sequence and preceding scene locate the men against women and demonstrate their radical separation from them, on the other hand the scenes taking place in their flat give us a portrait of male house in its structure resembling not so much *Männerhaus* but a rebellious commune – these scenes locate the male community against patrimony and tradition.

Female figures in Andrzej Wajda's cinema, according to Piotr Lis, *function usually as a sign of a certain situation, similarly as in westerns the daughter of the magistrate judge is not so much an autonomous figure but a prize that the protagonist receives after defeating the bandits*³⁵. Women in Wajda's early works are not rightful figures, they do not undergo metamorphoses before our eyes, they do not evolve in the course of action. From the first to the last scene they are immobilised – as beautiful insects in amber – women-symbols. Dorota from *The Generation* (1954) is *an ideal girl from Gwardia Ludowa*, Ewa from *Speed* (1959) personifies the stereotype of *a soldier's fiancé*, Krystyna from *Ashes and Diamonds* (1958) is a catalyst for Maciek's actions³⁶. In *The Promised Land* – after a slightly misogynist stage at the turn of the 1960s (*Hunting Flies*, 1969; *Brzezina*, 1970) and still before meeting Krystyna Janda who opened in Wajda's career the phase of strong female characters – he returns to his beginnings. In this film there are no women, there are only women-symbols, women-monsters or women-objects. The range of female types is presented by the famous, daring theatre sequence where we are dealing with a multiplied portrait of a rich urban woman. In the theatre the attention of spectators does not focus on the artistic programme but on lounges where the proper performance takes place. The protagonists' attention circles around women

and money. Or in fact: women who have money. They survey the nouveau riche women, covered in jewels, ugly, kitschy and vulgar, without charm and style. Maks notices that *it smells like millions* and Karol astutely replies: *rather like onion and garlic*. Men do not spare the women: one looks as a *pink, plucked goose*, another has entire *jeweller's warehouse on her*. Only Lucy Zucker enchants with her sex appeal. She enchants Karol and Maks, but not Moryc who sees in her solely her diamonds. Her attractive body does not exist for him, because in women he sees only objects of transactions. About Mada Müller (Bożena Dykiel) who values herself at fifty thousand roubles per year, he says: *A strong girl, I would go into this business myself*, what Karol comments with a sneering smile. Moryc is one of these pre-emancipation homosexuals whose desire is defined by rejection of women as sexual objects. In a vivid orgy sequence at Kessler's (Zbigniew Zapasiewicz) that Wajda added to Reymont's novel, a naked woman approaches Moryc. Nervously he throws away his glass. His smiling face freezes in the grimace of disgust. As if he was getting ready for a battle which awaits him. And in fact: he brutally slaps the woman and pushes her away with contempt. Welt is afraid of the threatening female Eros which makes him aggressive towards women. But Karol and Maks contrary to appearances do not treat women in a better way – they completely objectify women. In the theatre the Pole starts flirting with Lucy Zucker only when he notices that she has a secret telegram accessible solely to the tycoons of the Łódź textile industry. So the man's orgasm in the scene in the carriage does not come as a result of sexual satisfaction but thanks to the promise of future profits. For the protagonists it is not women that are exciting but their money. For that reason Borowiecki will not hesitate to leave his fiancé when she stands in his way to wealth. He marries the rich Mada Müller for money.

In *The Promised Land* the rich women of Łódź are women-commodities while the Polish girl was awarded the role of a woman-symbol. Anka is an ideal personification of Polishness. We get to know her when she runs out of the manor with which she is identified. She has blond hair and blue eyes. Her young body is sealed in a long, neat, buttoned up dress. It is characteristic that Anka is loved by Karol only when she is absent (and once she finally appears the relationship falls apart with a bang). Hence she usually materialises in (male) memory. As in the scene preceding the theatre sequence. We are dealing with a kind of striptease of Borowiecki-Olbrychski, a striptease whose sole spectator is another man – Maks. Karol slowly takes off subsequent pieces of clothing while reading a love letter from Anka. The narrative suddenly stops and the attention of the spectator (diegetic and cinema) is directed towards the man's body. A kind of erotic game between the protagonists starts. It seems that the male spectator causes the eroticism and intensifies it, that Borowiecki offers the erotic performance with Maks in mind. But why does he expose his body additionally intensifying the erotic tension with love phrases? Why does Karol decide to make this erotic performance? It is not in order to seduce Maks but rather in order to make sure that the German is really interested in Anka. Every time Karol looks at Maks he avoids his eyes clearly ashamed as caught red-handed. The Pole upon leaving the room intentionally leaves the letter on the table and Maks unflinchingly reaches for it observed by Borowiecki – with satisfaction – from the other room. So the German rose to the bait. The certainty regarding Maks's feelings, however, does not weaken their friendship. Why?



The Promised Land, dir. Andrzej Wajda (1974)



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When the protagonist in a male gesture touches his naked torso, reading exalted confessions about roses that Anka received from him, eroticism of the scene dangerously increases. This erotic look is relieved by a retrospective interrupting this performance and showing Anka in a nostalgic light running out of the mansion, man's body in the cinema cannot be directly marked as an object of covetous contemplation of another man. Eroticised manhood seen with an eye of another man is channelled in the image of an appropriate object of desire (a woman). Thus it was not Karol's body that aroused Maks' desire but the initiated by the love letter memory of Anka. However, the memory of innocent femininity quickly disappears and Maks's lustful look, instead of her body, examines the naked body of her fiancé³⁷. It seems that this complicated, seemingly marginal scene, appears not so much in order for Karol to become sure of Maks's feelings for Anka but to saturate the picture with male eroticism. Especially that this scene has no fictional consequences. Woman once again proves to be only a pretext. She is a midwife of desire which remains closed within male community. Hence women fulfil in *The Promised Land* two functions: commodity of male exchange (Mada Müller, Lucy Zucker) and medium of male closeness (Anka). On their own they do not count at all. Male homosocial desire constitutes itself in *The Promised Land* as much in opposition to women as in opposition to family, patrimony and tradition – problems considered the most important in Andrzej Wajda's work whose symbolic function – as the director often underlined – is to honour the memory of the fallen fathers. *[It] translates to a certain extent – as Christopher Caes wrote – to the inability to go beyond the role of a son. Instead, the spectacle (death) of the father (that son's cinema is about) in a way permanently attracts the son's look. The father's death has consolidated Wajda's generation in the role of sons*³⁸. The American Slavic expert associates this process with the oedipal complex³⁹ and Elżbieta Ostrowska follows in his footsteps: *Since (...) the "son" cannot disobey the father, the process of becoming a man in a certain sense has to be postponed. Maybe this explains why most of male protagonists in Wajda's films are "boys" (...). "Boys" so still "not-men" without fully formed identity, also sexual identity, still under the parents' law which in Polish conditions was codified by the Romantic tradition under such notions as country, honour, freedom, sacrifice, duty*⁴⁰. Hence *The Promised Land* is in Wajda's work a special film, because here the son disobeys the father. The father in a fierce speech accuses the son of abandoning the national ethos: *You all laugh at the past. You call the tradition a corpse, nobility a superstition and virtue – a prejudice. You sold your souls to the golden calf*. However we are not dealing here solely with the conflict: noble tradition versus *the golden calf* but also and maybe in the first place – the national community versus the pan-national male community. Borowiecki rejects the family tradition, which in consequence leads to his exclusion from the national community. He chooses *the golden calf* and male community. Starting the "business" with Mada Müller he sells himself in an obvious way, but is it not how he manages to save the male love? Not without reason Moryc encourages him to leave Anka and marry (for the money) the German. He knows that marriage with the Pole would destroy their male "triangle" while relation with Mada would be a pure transaction. Moryc would have his beloved for himself. Borowiecki, as it seems, had to sell himself in order for the love "triangle" to survive. Some cinema historians claim, however, that this male community does

not carry with it any positive values. According to Ewelina Nurczyńska-Fidelska *Wajda depicts the actual void of their [Moryc's, Karol's and Maks's] life led by one idea – getting money, the sole mechanism initiating their dynamic energy*⁴¹. If the protagonists were only after money would they act on loyalty? Why does Borowiecki not accept the better offer from Bucholc (Andrzej Szalawski) and Moryc from Kessler and Grünspan (Stanisław Igar)? Why when the factory by Karol's fault is on fire the men do not part in disagreement? Again answers to these questions can be found in the scenes which are marginal for the plot itself.

Moryc enters their flat with Karol on his arms. When he crosses the doorstep they hear voices from Maks's alcove. Men look interested into the room and then Moryc – having seen a naked woman in the German's arms – quickly heads with disconsolate Karol towards another room. Borowiecki falls into a short nap and Moryc kneels in front of him as in prayer. He lifts his dreamy face to him as if expecting a kiss. Contemplating the Pole's body Welt reveals his new face – his lyrical side⁴². A moment later men fill the flat with their freed corporeality: Moryc looks out of the bathroom naked, Karol proudly carries his naked torso, finally, not seeing anything inappropriate in it, he enters Maks' room while he is still having sex, and Maks does not protest at all. This freedom of customs, freed corporeality, free love and lack of any self-consciousness are characteristic rather for rebellious communes than Polish mores at the end of the 19th century. The protagonists reject the standards of interpersonal life choosing another lifestyle, style which distances them from the family, past and tradition. However, does this film sequence taken from a dissent movie show the void and moral decay of men? Can we overlook that these men are capable of dedication, tenderness, love (but – in fact – only towards other men)? That the streaked with eroticism male relation is the source of their dynamic energy?

The sequence taking place in their flat is preceded by a scene just after the orgy at Kessler's. Karol gives the drunken Moryc a secret message about the increase of custom duty on cotton, the message sobers the latter up within seconds. He covers Karol in kisses and jumps at him, embracing him with his thighs on his waist. *So we can – says Welt – give each other a kiss now*, as he was looking for an occasion to get closer to the Pole. What is interesting Borowiecki does not seem bothered by this effusive tenderness, on the contrary – it makes him laugh and it flatters him. Also in other scenes Karol, but also Maks, are surprisingly sensitive towards Moryc. When greeting him or saying goodbye they kiss him on the forehead even though they do not offer similar gestures towards each other. This tenderness towards Moryc seems decisive for their male relation. It is the Jew who seals the male homosocial group. Behind him – as opposed to Karol and Maks – there is no centuries-old family tradition. He comes from a poor family (in fact we know that his mother is related to Grünspan but the latter has never helped her so she was forced to trade on the market) with which he cut all the contacts. He is uprooted. Apart from Maks's and Karol's friendship he has nothing. It is thanks to him that the German and the Pole distance themselves from their families and national communities and head towards the (double) Other. And the Other is always outside, far from what is collective (no matter whether national, ethnic or class). It is significant that Welt feels uneasy both in Kurów, where he has to chase away the dogs and in Łódź where he has to fight to stay afloat. He wants male tenderness, closeness and

love which Karol and Maks offer to him being propelled by it themselves. *Somebody had to hit him a few times with a whip* – Wojciech Pszoniak used to say about his protagonist – *brutally reject him as the dirty Jew because he has in him both the pain and distrust and at the same time dreams it was different, he wants to cross the border, he wants to be seen as a man, human being and not as a typical specimen of an ethnic group or race. He loves Borowiecki. (...) Have you ever been at the asylum for homeless dogs? They are afraid of men but at the same time long for human love. And this was the Welt I created*⁴³. Under the thick skin Moryc hides fragility that his friends instinctively feel and answer to. With tenderness.

The motive of male community streaked with eroticism leads to another contradiction which makes the film's national narrative explode from the inside. On the one side Wajda idealises the gentry manor, scenes taking place there are saturated with nostalgia (overexposed frames, wistful waltz) on the other hand – maybe against the director's intentions – incredible light, as astutely noticed by Eberhardt, emanates from the male relation assigned to the monstrous urban space. The rural world is so ideal that it is untrue. The protagonists make an impression of ghosts from the past, ones for whom there is no future. Meanwhile life pulsates in the murky and immoral Łódź-monster where Anka and Borowiecki's father, full of honesty and goodness, will not be able to find their way. The artificiality of the Kurów motive being a kind of visual shortcut depicting the mythical world located in the past is additionally intensified by the lack of authenticity in the way relation between Karol and Anka is presented, devoid of emotions, passion, and life (they love each other when they are not together). Hence the film is divided into two motives: the heterosexual national and the homosocial saturated with male eroticism. Borowiecki could not be a part of the national community while being at the same time a part of the stigmatised by Otherness multinational, homosocial community which carries with it openness to sexual diversity – this does not fit within the national discourse. It is impossible to reconcile – as Gombrowicz has once noted – national community personified by the “pure” lady from the manor and equally virtuous (and beautiful) Pole, with homosexuality which (allegedly) is foreign to the Polish national identity. Even though national community is idealised by Wajda, the homosocial community is not presented as a dangerous, destructive or evil power. Multinational male homo-community offers an alternative to the family and national life. Thus in *The Promised Land* the outgoing patriotic ethos clashes with the developing, diverse, future-oriented and representing modernity, community⁴⁴. The ending of the film suggests that the director unambiguously chose the national community: Karol who chooses the male community and not the national one has to be punished for the betrayal of the national ethos. However, it is the full of life male relation that emanates light...

Ideal body and anti-body

Hayden White in the text *Bodies and Their Plots* wrote, *that changes and transmutation can be braced across different parameters of time and space. Moreover a history – any history, any kind of history – in order to create and identify the body whose “story” it would tell, must postulate, if only implicitly, some kind of anti-body, an anomalous or pseudo-body. This anti-body marks the limit or horizon*

that the normative body, in the process of its development, evolution, or change may not cross without ceasing to be a body proper and degenerating into a condition of bodilessness⁴⁵. In *The Promised Land* the normative body, the ideal body, is Karol's body while the body of Moryc is the body-anomaly, the anti-body. The body of Borowiecki is sensual and beautiful while Moryc's body is hysterical. Heterosexual Pole of noble roots personifies the norm negated by the uprooted homosexual Jew. What is interesting, male pairs in American buddy films are created according to the principle of similar binary oppositions. They are composed of tough and (more or less) effeminate men. The male one was either John Voight (*Midnight Cowboy*), Gene Hackman (*Scarecrow*) or Steve McQueen (*Papillon*), the soft one – usually Dustin Hoffman (*Midnight Cowboy*, *Papillon*) or Al Pacino (*Scarecrow*). In an analogous way in Wajda's film the male is Olbrychski, and the effeminate – Pszoniak, however, with one difference that in American buddy films those effeminate men were never, as in *The Promised Land*, marked as homosexual.

According to Tadeusz Lubelski *the dramatic figure of Olbrychski came from the collective subconsciousness of Poles. This was a protagonist that had to appear in the public discourse if the collective psychotherapy offered by a film from the Polish school was to prove effective. And the fact that Olbrychski's dramatic type occurred, at least for a few years, and in full light, confirmed that the Polish school fulfilled its role as a psychotherapist. The passage through the bitter-tragic experience of reliving one more time the defeats of the protagonists from "Canal" and "Eroica" was necessary in order for the protagonist of "The Deluge" and "The Promised Land" to appear; Cybulski was necessary for Olbrychski to appear*⁴⁶. Hence Olbrychski was an awaited actor. Active, dynamic, passionate and monumentally beautiful. Devoid of intellectual dilemmas, reflectiveness or pain of uncertainty. Lubelski in the actor's screen image saw *a noble knight, observing the rules of the code of honour, ready to defend the weak and fight for the honour of the Holy Lady and at the same time not falling into the ridicule of national megalomania*⁴⁷. *The Promised Land* brings the reverse of the image of a Polish knight. Borowiecki is a demoted knight. Daniel Olbrychski before taking the role, however, was not afraid that he was to play a negative character. He was afraid of something else – that this was not a spectacular character. Borowiecki's role appeared in his career right after historical performances in Jerzy Hoffman's *Colonel Wolodyjowski* (1969) and *The Deluge* (1974) in which the actor got used to wide gesture and male attributes: horse and sabre. And in *The Promised Land* the sabre is just a decoration at the manor in the estate of a Polish nobleman, where one goes riding almost solely for romantic trips. So when Andrzej Wajda offered Olbrychski the role of Borowiecki he was to wring his hands and say helplessly: *I have nothing to play. There is no role here*⁴⁸. The actor was and was not right at the same time.

Borowiecki, despite being very active, dynamic, resourceful and organised and even though he consistently aspires to the set goal, is a monolith-figure. Spectacular nature of this figure is not related to action, narrative, activity but solely to his existence. In Hoffman's films Olbrychski was noble and knightly, in Zanussi's – bound, in Kutz's – ideal. However, he was incredibly beautiful, only in Wajda's work. Especially in *The Promised Land* where, it seems, he exists solely in order to be loved. And in fact – he is loved, desired and admired. By the camera, spectators, finally other characters of the film (irrespective of their sex). Just like the orig-

inal title *Lotna* – the object of desire of all men – in another of Wajda’s films. The eyes of men and women are a mirror in which Karol may watch himself. This figure is seen through the prism of desire, a figure-image. The body of Daniel Olbrychski functions here as an erotic object. In the cinema usually women are presented as images to be watched. Beautiful and static. In the classic text *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* Laura Mulvey writes that *the male figure cannot bear the burden of sexual objectification. Man is reluctant to gaze at his exhibitionist like*⁴⁹. Andrzej Wajda bravely challenged this rule of the mainstream cinema. In *The Promised Land* but also in his other films (especially *Canal*, 1956; *Speed* or *Man of Marble*, 1976), *the fetishistic gaze is captivated by what it sees, does not wish to inquire further; to see more, to find out*⁵⁰, the gaze embraces the male body. Never women’s: the sensuality of Wajda’s films is erotic but it is the eroticism of men not women. And desire rarely occurs between male protagonists, usually this is desire connecting the male protagonist with (male) spectators contemplating his beauty⁵¹. Thus in *The Promised Land* (and in Wajda’s cinema in general) men look with admiration at other men (for example Maks looks at Karol) more often, however, the director tries to arouse similar admiration in (male) spectator looking at the male protagonist. Borowiecki’s body is an ideal body that overawes other men (Maks) and rouses desire of both women (Anka, Zucker, Mada Müller) and men (Moryc). The way Olbrychski’s body functions in *The Promised Land* is well illustrated by the scene of conversation with Kessler-Zapasiewicz, the scene taking place during the orgy in his gardens. Closed in a stylish, well-cut tailcoat and cylinder Olbrychski’s body is stylised and powdered while Zapasiewicz’s body is the opposite: we can see drops of sweat on his tired face. We see Olbrychski’s face lit with a strong spotlight in a close-up, carefully following its every twitch. While Zapasiewicz is presented on American shot with a minor worker deprived by him with a wreath on her head by his side. When Kessler says that the Pole is characterised by nobleness, skill and reading we, the spectators, see how he becomes more beautiful before our eyes, his beauty becomes more ravishing: he closes his eyes and smiles seductively. The German continues, however, that this nobleness and skill are just platitudes since Borowiecki is bankrupt. Then the Pole opens his eyes widely and full of lofty pride, but still charming and seductive, says decisively: *If a pig thought about an eagle it would think in a similar way*. Of course the stage design makes this zoological comparison visible to us.

Olbrychski’s corporeality is so incredible because it combines the phallic power and female charm. According to Adam Hanuszkiewicz it was Daniel Olbrychski that acted in *The Promised Land in the manner most typical of film*⁵². This “manner” – straight from classical Hollywood cinema – transforms Olbrychski into an ideal fetish. So it is not true that the mainstream cinema was not able to create conventions which would allow the directors to present men’s body in the similar way as Sternberg presented Dietrich’s⁵³. Andrzej Wajda presented Olbrychski’s body precisely in the way in which female beauty was presented in cinema. Thus the director, not for the first time, completely ignores the cinematic rule pursuant to which male body may not be designated as the object of erotic contemplation (e.g. erotic scene in the restaurant car), may not become an object of erotic look of another man (e.g. the above-analysed scene of male striptease). Mulvey notices that a woman in the cinema is *a perfect product, whose body, stylised and fragmented*

by close-ups, is the content of the film and the direct recipient of the spectator's look⁵⁴. Hence the author wrongly refuses the male figure the status of a spectacular object to watch. This is precisely what Borowiecki is, he is a perfect product and his aestheticised, stylised and fragmented body is the content of the film.

Probably for that reason the critics had greatest reservations in respect of the structure of this character that seemed to them not complicated enough. Aleksander Ledóchowski complained that this was *a one-dimensional figure, and in this meaning incomplete. Maybe it lacks hesitation, breakdowns, conflicts, desperation, trace of tragedy? Or the opposite – there is nothing that would make this figure greater, demonic, gave it superhuman dimension*⁵⁵. Piotr Skrzypczak noticed that Borowiecki is an automaton speaking through tight lips and this effect was created by the fact that he was in permanent suppression of his primal, innate vitality and the acquired acting type⁵⁶. Borowiecki is one-dimensional and static (even though in permanent movement), he is also characterised by a specific automatism, but it is precisely the automatism, static and one-dimensional nature that characterises the majority of film icons (mainly female) in the classical Hollywood cinema. He, just like them, was reduced to the dimension of a fetish. And Olbrychski's protagonist is a special fetish. He is an internally contradictory – once again! – character or better a character contradictory is his corporeality, since on the one side, what is characteristic for male figures, he is the perpetrator driving the film narrative and on the other – in a way typical for the existence of female figures in cinema – he was marked as a spectacular object to watch and desire. This contradiction is demonstrated best by the famous erotic scene in the restaurant car which at the same time offers the image of phallic and passive love. Naked Karol lies indifferently with his hand behind his head and Lucy Zucker eats, drinks and kisses him in spasm. Once again Wajda reverses the traditional division into male activity and female passivity. Jędrusik is passionate, lascivious and bodily and the man is beautiful and seductive. This is additionally emphasised by eroticising the male body movement of the camera moving over Karol's naked body from waist (loins) up (it is worth adding that we cannot attribute this look to the lover and thus justify and neutralise its dangerous character). By the way, in a similar way were created the scenes with Moryc. Karol (the object of desire) is immovable, phallic and static while Welt (the desiring) runs around his loved one, jumps and dances. Why is Borowiecki's body closer to the female than male fetish? Why is his existence associated with aestheticised female beauty and not severe and rough dominating masculinity? Because, as it seems, Wajda does not hide, as American directors did, that male body is eroticised here, that it is an object. In *The Promised Land* he usually does not use any tricks that would transform the eroticism of the male body, channel it or mediate it, in other words, disarm its subversive potential and make it fully safe. Wajda in a bold way demonstrates almost openly this feminised and fetishised – but paradoxically not deprived of its phallic power – ideal beauty of the male body.

If Karol Borowiecki is the essence of masculinity (but, let us add, not rough, male but masculinity full of charm and sex appeal) then Moryc Welt is its simple reverse. Konrad Eberhardt⁵⁷ in the above recalled quotation characterises Moryc with terms typically associated with femininity. *Charm, warmth and gentleness* are not among features typically associated with masculinity. What is interesting, these

female attributes are assessed positively by the critic: they make the motive of male friendship more beautiful. Moryc is a sexual misfit. He was attributed with the features stereotypically assigned to homosexuals: effeminacy and talkativeness, excessive gesticulation and affective way of being, refined elegance and “dandyish” style. This portrait is supplemented also by his aversion towards women and all-embracing love for Karol. If Borowiecki personifies the ideal corporeality, Moryc’s effeminate body reveals itself as the non-normative body. In the initial scene when the protagonist gets off a tandem on which he came to the manor of Borowieccy together with Karol (which, of course, is not insignificant) he runs towards the manor in the funnily exalted, soft, effeminate way. Moryc’s corporeality undermines the fundamental for our culture binary opposition of male-female. *However it is not that* – according to Tomasz Basiuk – *the effeminacy is identical to any specific sexual diversity but that sexual diversity, as we understand it today, developed in relation to the effeminacy. It is so because both categories partly overlap and sexual diversity became recognisable in the form of effeminacy or in relation to it*⁵⁸. Hence the effeminacy always denotes sexual diversity, transgression of sexual standards, subversiveness of sexes, inability to fit dominating models of masculinity. In Moryc this effeminacy is additionally intensified by refined clothes that he wears. He is identified by huge bow ties (white, with colour dots, checked, etc.) and rings that decorate almost all of his fingers. Karol in a friendly way parodies this predilection for aestheticism, splendour and excess which is expressed not only in his clothes, by saying that *Welt likes the ceremonies, colours, fragrances, bells and singing*. These attributes differentiate him from his friends: both from the male, haughty and phallic Karol, and ascetic and sentimental Maks.

But the effeminacy here does not mean that Moryc is devoid of self-confidence, decisiveness or strong character. There is in *The Promised Land* a great scene in which the protagonist unexpectedly turns into a gangster⁵⁹. This is the scene when he comes to Grünspan in order to tell him that he has no intention to give back the borrowed money (yes, Moryc cheats but not for his own benefit – as in Reymont’s novel – but to save joint business⁶⁰). When the former calls the police Moryc with unknown decisiveness and even rapacity makes him realise that there is no proof confirming the credit. So he impersonates the role of a swindler and liar. What is important, this scene is preceded by the image of Moryc standing in front of a mirror: black coat with turned up collar and black hat with a wide brim falling down on his forehead which refer us to the American gangster cinema, they are to make him more confident in the strange to him overwhelming masculinity. There is no trace of the old Moryc: in conversation with Grünspan the previously intrinsic smile does not appear even for a moment on the man’s face. In his old bows, bow ties and rings he would be too weak to commit this punishable deception. Putting on the gangster’s mask, arming himself with male attributes he becomes a merciless criminal. Surprising is the point of this sequence: Welt leaves the banker’s, sheds the gangster’s stylisation and sits down on a bench. The camera shows him now in a close-up thanks to which we see drops of sweat on his forehead. Suddenly Moryc-Pszoniak looks right into the camera, smiles and waves to us, spectators. This scene, on the one hand confirms that this male face was merely a stylisation and costume, while on the other it proves that this very male costume was a burden to him. Why did the director decide to show the backstage of the performance in this

scene? To let us know that the existence of Moryc, as well as the existence of cinema in general, is based on pretence and appearance? That this is the figure that is the key to the entire story? Or maybe that namely Moryc, and not for example Karol, is the director's messenger? It is worth adding that Wojciech Pszoniak who worked with Wajda before in *Demons* presented in the Krakow Old Theatre but also in *Pilatus and others* and *The Wedding* (1972) was at the time the director's favourite actor ⁶¹.

Wojciech Pszoniak ⁶² claimed that the character of Moryc owes a lot to Parolles, the protagonist of *All's Well That Ends Well* by Shakespeare, whom he impersonated in 1971 when Konrad Swinarski staged this play in the Old Theatre. It seems, however, that not only to him. Two years before *The Promised Land* he played a figure of a homosexual in disguise, engineer Andrzej, in unjustly forgotten film by Jerzy Gruza entitled *Przeprowadzka* (*Moving*) which came to light ten years later. The film was banned from distribution in the 70s most probably due to its depiction of the results of the propaganda of success and showing in a distorted mirror the ideology of *dynamic development*. *The Promised Land* and *Moving* touch upon the same problem: the problem of consumerism of the Gierek era, with the difference that Gruza's film makes it openly and Wajda with the use of a historical costume. *Moving* – just as *The Promised Land* – is a model example of a buddy film ⁶³ in which we find motives brought directly from the cinema of dissent ⁶⁴. What is important for us, however, Pszoniak created Moryc's character from the same gestures that he used to create the character of Andrzej, man on the brink of a nervous breakdown. To the critic of "Film" the actor seemed in this role *a mouse that roared* ⁶⁵. Pszoniak's acting – both in *Moving* and in *The Promised Land* – is streaked with hysteria. Borowiecki's corporeality is monolithic and harmonious, while Welt's corporeality (and Andrzej's) is – disintegrated and inconsistent. Pszoniak's acting is full of brisk gestures, faces and acrobatics, bends and jumps. Every part of his body seems to be active. It is a body that is unstable, clownish, vibrating, affective and feverish. Olbrychski's Karol was homogenous, stable and ideal, Moryc (and Andrzej) on the contrary: is changeable, sensitive and picky. He goes smoothly from a wide smile to despair, from joy to crying. This streaked with hysteria Pszoniak's acting in *Moving* is justified by the plot; it is also justified in *The Promised Land* but not in such a direct way.

Hysterical body is a body that talks. What nonverbal message does it transmit in *Moving*? Gruza's film opens with a shot of a tower block housing estate creating a closed, claustrophobic space. A removal van parks in front of one of the blocks. Andrzej, a young engineer who moved in with his wife into a new three-room flat, wants to move out of it. Without his wife, however. *Do you feel ok?* – the truck driver, Staszek (Olgiard Łukaszewicz) asks him, since the man has got only one suitcase with him. The journey that he sets off to will be more symbolic than a real one: he sets off as if he was standing still; he abandons his past but keeps coming back. The aim of the journey is not the journey itself but as Andrzej admits himself – fear. What is he afraid of? What is he running from? Striking with intensity is especially one of the retrospective scenes, the scene of male hysteria: Andrzej in one hand holds a bucket with orange-pink paint, dips his finger in it and before his wife's eyes touches a white wall in the room. Then he uncovers the woman's breasts and strokes with the finger dripping paint one of the nipples and then proceeds to

cover the entire flat in paint: books, TV, record player, curtains, carpets, etc. This scene, on the one hand, shows what Andrzej hates most (little stabilisation, woman, objects) and on the other it is a kind of liberation, an act of rebellion against consumerist monotony, hysterical scream of dissent to live somebody else's life. Andrzej during the journey – non-journey is confronted with his family: first with his father and brother, Antoni (Antoni Pszoniak), then wife (Krystyna Stankiewicz). Antoni tries to bring him back onto the right path: *What does your worker's council say about that?* – he asks and then launches into a tirade about the happy life in a socialist country. Others do not understand Andrzej's lack of acceptance of the world as it is: his brother or limited neighbours see the source of all maladies in his long hair. The conversation with Andrzej's brother was confronted with the images of people jumping with parachutes: *I feel that I am falling. As if my parachute did not open in the air. But I am not falling meekly: I shout, talk, make fun, make faces and this irritates them. I should hit the ground silently, without a shout, in order not to spoil their certainty that green is green, white is white and black is black.* The protagonist does not fit the vision of an individual programmed by the authorities: he rebels because he does not agree to standardisation, he shouts and stamps because he is suffocating in the hypocritical world without doubt, without authenticity, he breaks the silence because he does not agree to the reality in which you cannot be yourself.

The second meeting, with his wife this time, when she appears in the removal van already as the non-wife, sheds a bit more light on what is bothering Andrzej so much in life. We get to know the wife first in retrospectives in which she appears as the reincarnation of the protagonist of *Hunting Flies* – a castrating mantis. Moving a cherry across her thigh in a welcoming gesture she explains to Andrzej the *law of human condition (you cannot waste your individuality)*, in curl-papers she wisely explains what co-existence of *two so different and so complicated creatures as man and woman* is about, then she takes off her tights in an erotic gesture and sermonises that *sadism and masochism are inseparable elements of every, even the most normal love, they constitute two poles of the fight – to possess and be possessed by the other.* In those tirades, as in distorted mirror, Andrzej's life looks at itself. Mentally damaged, repressed, devoured and degraded. His wife is aware of her sexuality which, however, does not work on Andrzej at all. For him she is repulsive, something that he is afraid of. When the wife appears in the van, the protagonist encourages Staszek to seduce her, which he does. However he is punished for it: Andrzej crushes his hand with the wheels of the van and meekly comes back home. Was he jealous of his wife? Jealous – yes, not of his wife, however, but of Staszek. They are connected with a clear, even though unspoken, intimate bond. Staszek feeds Andrzej with pears from a jar; when the engineer is late he shouts at him and slaps him; finally Andrzej lustfully looks at the driver (as in the scene when he is seduced by the wife of the engineer with whose eyes we are looking at the eroticised, uncovered torso of the driver). In the last sequence of the film the protagonist comes back to his wife and their life in the claustrophobic flat. It seems that he has accepted his place in the (socialist) world. These are only the appearances, however. After Staszek and his helpers take Andrzej's luggage up, the camera and we – the spectators – follow it. We look at the removal van from which to the concrete pavement flows... a trickle of blood. Then we see from the window of An-

drzej's flat the van going away with dead Andrzej on top of it. The man once again runs away from the stabilisation and the woman (and maybe: the stabilisation that the woman brings?) towards the male homosocial group.

Life with a woman was presented in *Moving* as oppressive, while male group meant freedom. Also sexual one. In one of the first sequences of the film we see a man painting his nails red. On another occasion the same worker (Wiesław Dymny) demonstrates to his colleague (Antoni Konarek) what orgasm is about. Hence it is not surprising that Andrzej feels at ease in the male space (the space of the van) and he manages honesty.

Staszek: *Andrzej would like to be somebody else.*

Wife: *Who?*

Andrzej: *A woman.*

The sexual diversity reveals itself in *Moving* in the same way as in *The Promised Land*: in effeminacy, in aversion and contempt for women, in longing for being among other men. Hence the way Andrzej commits suicide is symbolic, jumping from the balcony of a flat, being the hated space of a woman onto a truck symbolising a male adventure and community. It is precisely the heteronormative fiction, obligatory heterosexuality that causes the protagonist's hysteria and in the end leads to his self-destruction. This rebellion is – as Krystyna Kłosińska wrote about the rebellion of a hysterical woman – a dagger stuck in one's own body⁶⁶. The already quoted critic of "Film" who in the beginning of his review of *Moving* admitted that this was not a good film, noticed that Pszoniak acted in the upper registers but his shouts and pathos have less to do with a rebellion of a noble romantic against the rotten mundaneness of the world and more with the clinical symptoms of a violently developing schizophrenia. And this is not what it is about⁶⁷. On the contrary, in my opinion *Moving* is precisely about that. Paweł Leszkowicz and Tomek Kitliński, analysing works of Freud on male hysteria according to which hysterical neurosis is caused by human internal bisexuality, notice that hysteria is the reaction to the multiplicity of sexualities. Homosexuality causes a spasm entering as an impulse the interior of heteronormative society and so revealing its subconscious multiple sexuality that is subject to suppression⁶⁸. The conflict between the desire to express one's own individuality and sexuality and the social repression of this desire leads to hysterical symptoms. Even though this diagnosis is closer to the characteristics of women's than men's hysteria which was quickly de-sexualised and connected with trauma (e.g. war) I still think that it renders well the status of the characters played by Pszoniak.

Hysterical symptoms occur here as a result of suppression, denial of desire which has to remain hidden and may not be expressed. Suppressed desire incoherently looks for the way of being expressed in hysterical body language. For the hysterical body speaks. Moryc's body is the most unstable and restless when the opportunity to get closer to Karol appears. As in the scene in which Borowiecki deciphers for Moryc the telegram about the increase of custom duty or when the protagonists mark in birchen forest the place for the new factory. Unblocked and released Welt's body simply dances around Borowiecki. Moryc kisses his friend, jumps at him. He is happy but still controls the awakened desire in order not to reveal it. We are dealing here with a *bodily adjustment*: desire at the same time aroused and repressed is looking for an outlet in hysterical symptoms. However,

Moryc's behaviour is merely streaked with hysteria while Andrzej's rebellion assumed a clearly hysterical form. Moryc is a member of the male homosocial group where he finds male support (e.g. quasi-fatherly kisses) hence the gap between his desire and reality is not as intense as in the case of Andrzej who was locked in a claustrophobic cage with his castrating wife, leading to a horrible struggle, hysterical spasms and dramatic fight for fulfilment of his homosocial desire. Pszoniak's protagonists yearn for the company of other men. But only in the case of Moryc this longing – at least to a certain extent – is satisfied. His divided identity is united by the very presence of his companions. Welt is not locked in a cage with a woman, he is not rejected by his male friends: his otherness (doubled: ethnical and sexual) is accepted by his friends. *Somebody who is afraid of exclusion... – Wojciech Pszoniak said about his creation of Parolles – afraid of being named, of the disgraceful stigmatisation that he is only a theatre hack, joker, gay, Jew, one who can be easily mocked and harmed scot-free... This helped me later in "The Promised Land" with the role of Moryc Welt*⁶⁹. Pszoniak astutely notices that what Moryc – the double other: as a Jew and a homosexual – is afraid of most is stigmatisation, exclusion and rejection. It is significant that it was the actor that came up with the idea that the protagonist should carry Karol's photo with him. The photo falls out of his pocket in one scene. Maks picks it up and surprised informs Karol about the finding. When Moryc quickly takes the photo away the smile disappears from his face as if he was afraid of being unmasked. But Borowiecki in no way – verbal or non-verbal – comments on the friend's lost item. Are his feelings towards him obvious for him? In this love, as it seems, he sees nothing worth contempt. Borowiecki is a narcissist who wants to be loved. He wants to see himself in the looks of thrilled women and men. What is more, Moryc's love is for him more important than Anka's that he cheats on and abandons, while remaining loyal towards his friend to the end. Hence how is it possible that love of another man does not arouse Karol's fear? Let us look at the genesis of the idea of "homosexuality" that will allow us, in my opinion, to understand Borowiecki's openness.

As proven by Michel Foucault in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* at the end of the 19th century a specific category of a homosexual was created, understood as a new type of personality, the category which by becoming a part of criminological and medical discourse, enabled including "sinful sodomites" in social supervision⁷⁰. From now on the homosexual, who was seen as a sick, perverted and immoral individual, could not only be characterised and described but also recognised in the society. According to queer researchers the homosexual identity – or more broadly: identity of a sexual misfit – crystallised in the face of the loud trial of Oscar Wilde in 1895. *Wilde – Tomasz Basiuk writes referring to Moe Meyer – chose martyrdom leading to the equation of the adopted by him pose of a dandy and identity of a homosexual which until then was devoid of a clear mark and as such remained absent in culture and thus inaccessible as an option of social existence*⁷¹. Wilde's body worked as a screen on which the name "homosexual" was written⁷². The author of *The portrait of Dorian Gray* whose aestheticism and dandy's pose were aimed against the Victorian masculinity became almost the synonym of homosexuality of the era. His *emblematic trial* made from his pose a clear mark of homosexuals who became recognisable precisely in the form of effeminacy. So if from Wilde's famous trial of 1895 dates the recognisable by Western



The Promised Land, dir. Andrzej Wajda (1974)

society⁷³ modern male homosexuality then not surprisingly in Wajda's film taking place ten years before that (we are informed about it by Stein – Jerzy Zelnik who informs Grunspan that day before Wiktor Hugo died) Moryc's otherness is not named even though it is expressed in many ways (effeminacy, fear of female Eros, love for Karol). The protagonists do not stigmatise Moryc because in his behaviour, they do not see anything disturbing (he does not satisfy his sexual desire and at the time solely the sexual acts were stigmatised – and punished).

Significant in this context seems the remark by Michel Foucault⁷⁴ for whom the emergence of the modern idea of "homosexuality" led to the emergence of suspicion with which male friendship was treated since then. Homophobia – according to Elizabeth Badinter – turns men into *martyrs of masculinity but also destroys male friendship. Since Freud we have known that male friendship is the sublimation of homosexual desire and that on the other hand men are very reserved in showing their attachment. For that reason many avoid mutual intimacy.* Men in order not to be accused of male-male *desire subconsciously make closer mutual contact more difficult*⁷⁵. In *The Promised Land* dated before the appearance of the modern category of "homosexuality" nothing like this takes place. Karol, Maks and Moryc do not avoid mutual intimacy and do not make closer mutual contact more difficult. On the contrary: precisely due to Moryc's otherness the German and the Pole treat him differently than each other. How do they explain to themselves this tenderness, the caring kisses and consoling of a crying thirty-year-old man? Does the fact that the friendship or in fact love between them was not contaminated by anti-homosexual fear, homophobic paranoia prove that namely the emergence of the idea of "homosexuality" (and thus: homophobia) destroyed male friendship?⁷⁶ Thus modern masculinity would appear as masculinity marked with lack, masculinity constantly looking for its completeness beyond the regime of binary divisions.

The Promised Land was made, however, almost 80 years after the scandal and trial of Wilde. In the West the gay liberation movement fought increasingly openly for its rights at the time. In cinema gay motives appeared with an increasing frequency and were presented in a bolder way, just to mention the Oscar success of *Cabaret* (1972) by Bob Fosse, but also films by Visconti, Pasolini or Bertolucci as well as American buddy films clearly streaked with homoeroticism. Wajda challenges (the question is: to what extent consciously?) the phallic masculinity, stable and unanimous because he boldly erases the border between hetero- and homosexuality. He presents sexual identities which know no boundaries. Nothing in the relation between Karol, Maks and Moryc is obvious, everything seems problematic and ambivalent. In American buddy films the figure of a homosexual was used to differentiate the male relations from the negatively valued homosexual desire (*Papillon*, *Scarecrow*), while Wajda makes this figure, devoid of the negative polish, one of the three key figures creating male relationship. This, of course, has its consequences. Even though *The Promised Land* seems a model example of a buddy film, by attributing homosexual identity to Moryc, the director makes this convention explode from the inside. Male-male love is here more dangerous and risky which makes Wajda's film braver than his exegetes thought till today. Without putting the dot over the "i" the director on the one hand suggests to the international audience that he is an open artist, moving with the times (hence not only homosexuality but also bold at the time erotic scenes including *fellatio* in the scene in the carriage)

while in Poland where homosexuality was still a complete taboo, Moryc's heterosexuality did not have to give rise to any doubt. Robin Wood claims that over homoeroticisation of the relation between men in buddy films surely would cause panic among the male audience. Moryc Welt, however, not only did not cause such a panic in Poland ⁷⁷ but even was the most liked, also by men, figure of the film. Moryc's homosexuality was not, as it seems, recognised by the Polish spectators despite unambiguous signals. The said label is not uttered on screen so there is no need to fear. And even if Welt's otherness was noticed, the film's perception at the time did not reflect it. Of course, we sense that some critics (like Eberhardt) are aware of the erotic tension between Moryc and Karol but they do not say it directly. As if naming it could defile this friendship, stigmatise it with sin, as suggested by Maciej Karpiński in the published in 1976 monograph about *Pszoniak*: *it is also worth noticing with what subtlety and discretion Pszoniak merely marked the inappropriate element of his inclination towards Borowiecki which might be something more than friendship. Just as in the entire role he managed to avoid generic aspects, also here he managed to avoid completely even the slightest triviality* ⁷⁸. Karpiński does not want to call the inclination towards Borowiecki by its name. Even contemporary researchers rarely do: Ewelina Nurczyńska-Fidelska ⁷⁹ writes about the *three brothers from Łódź* (Moryc is Borowiecki's factotum) and Piotr Skrzypczak ⁸⁰ notices that this *a bit ambiguous* liking makes Welt Karol's *younger brother* (what this ambiguity would be about we do not learn, however) ⁸¹.

It is difficult to guess whether the transformation of Reymont's Moryc from a heterosexual traitor into a loyal homosexual was Wajda's or *Pszoniak*'s idea (if Moryc was played by Jerzy Zelnik who was initially selected by the director for this role, Welt probably would not be homosexual). It is certain, however, that this time Andrzej Wajda did not refrain from it ⁸². Welt's otherness was not named but it was presented. For Wajda cinema has always been the art of image and with the use of the images (and not words) he expressed what was really important ⁸³. This is how he structured the political message that would be clear only to the insiders and this is how he created his own language of desire. The language that does without words. This idealised male love (not so much asexual as it would initially seem) is a kind of a dream about the male idyll. Without the existence of homophobia but also recognisable homosexuality (desire is not stigmatised but also may not be consumed). What remains is the light of incredible male love – the love beyond borders of psychosexual orientation (but also beyond ethnic and national borders). The splendour of male-male desire beyond binary divisions, the desire which is ambiguous, unlimited and contradictory. There is something not only utopian but maybe even rebelliously queer in this eradication of borders.

Nation and sexuality

The Promised Land in the West, especially in the USA, was accused of anti-Semitism. In Poland on the other hand it was considered an anti-Polish film and it was concluded that the most spiteful figure of the film was the Pole, Karol Borowiecki. Was it justified? Wajda, when reconstructing industrial Łódź at the end of the 19th century took care, as it seems, to show in equally negative light the greedy, rapacious and two-faced Poles, Germans and Jews. The famous scene of



The Promised Land, dir. Andrzej Wajda (1974)

the morning prayer which is said first by the Pole Wilczek (Wojciech Siemion) then by the German Bucholc and the Jew Grünspan and the object of which is in fact the golden calf suggests equality between the collective characters of the film (in the novel only the Jew prayed to the golden god). In Wajda's work the national and ethnic representation of the 19th century Łódź does not seem very biased. Among the Poles there are on the one hand noble Trawiński (Andrzej Łapicki) who commits suicide because he cannot lie and cheat and on the other – greedy usurer Stach Wilczek merciless towards the poor of Łódź⁸⁴. The Jews on the other hand are represented by the clever Grünspan who does not give credit to Borowiecki in order not to have competition or vengeful Zucker (Jerzy Nowak), but also the sensitive, well read and handsome Stein or charming Halpern (Włodzimierz Boruński) who is fascinated by Łódź. Also the images of Germans are diversified: sadistic and cruel Herman Bucholc is confronted with the idealistic Horn (Piotr Fronczewski), and the image of demonic erotomaniac Kessler is confronted with the portrait of the old, good-natured Baum (Kazimierz Opaliński). So it seems that Wajda distinguishes neither Poles, nor Germans or Jews. On the contrary: he weakens the Polocentrism and anti-Semitism of Reymont who wrote *The Promised Land* on commission from the National Democratic Party. Konrad Eberhardt goes even further claiming that the male “triangle” presented in the film is opposed to national stereotypes: *German, Maks (...) is carefree and full of imagination like a Pole; Karol Borowiecki, depicted clearly by Daniel Olbrychski with his walk, systematic nature and decisiveness resembles more a German; Moryc Welt is in fact clearly a Jew but also a Jew a bit distanced from his community*⁸⁵.

The problem of the national and ethnic representations seems more problematic when we confront them with representations dealing with sexuality. Ewa Mazierska wrote about it in her text on the structure of *different sexualities* in Polish cinema under communism: *Through the narrative, the mise-en-scène and casting (Karol is*

played by Daniel Olbrychski who was the sex symbol of the 1970s) Wajda constructs a sexual hierarchy of his male characters and, by extension, of the nations to which they belong. Thus, Karol is at the top of the hierarchy, having a Polish fiancée who is utterly devoted to him, a Jewish lover and eventually a rich German wife. Below him is Maks who lusts after Karol's Polish fiancée, but fails to seduce her. At the very bottom is Jewish Moryc, who is unhappily in love with Karol (...). Thus, Wajda uses sexual stereotypes to elevate Poles over other nationalities and ethnicities⁸⁶. Heterosexual Pole is on top of the sexual hierarchy of characters due to his unlimited potency, while homosexual Moryc is on its bottom because he has no intention to make use of his fertility. Also Elżbieta Ostrowska dedicated her deliberations to the construction of the images of sexes in the context of national ideology in *The Promised Land*. She focussed on the analysis of female characters: Anka, Lucy and Mada who in Wajda's work were clearly contrasted with each other. *All three characters seem ideal because they are even too unambiguous portraits of the so-called national characters (...) with systems of values stereotypically attributed to them. (...) Subsequent relations of Borowiecki and Anka, Lucy and Mada metaphorically mark the subsequent stages of the process of moral degradation of the protagonist which stems from the rejection of values inscribed in the traditional ethos of Polish nobility*⁸⁷. Especially the figures of Anka and Lucy were created based on binary oppositions. The Pole and the Jew are opposed to each other through the scope and nature of their sexuality⁸⁸. Anka is the personification of sexual innocence and "purity", while Lucy symbolises sexual expansion and possessiveness. National discourse in *The Promised Land* was structured based on the universal narrative regarding the nation in which "our women" are "pure" and the strangers lascivious and bad. According to Ostrowska the representation of Jewish women is characterised here by the *excess of sexuality* thus leading to their reduction to the role of sexual objects (Lucy Zucker⁸⁹) while the representation of Jewish men – by its insufficiency (Zucker is an impotent and homosexuality makes Moryc a faulty man because his sexuality does not support reproduction). The representation of Poles is different: Polish women are characterised by reduction of sexuality solely to procreative functions while Polish men are characterised by sexual power and potency (it is the Pole Borowiecki who gives Lucy a child that Zucker was unable to). The Polishness constitutes itself in opposition to the figure of the Other who in the Polish national discourse is, according to Ostrowska, the figure of a Jew. To sum up, the cultural consequence of losing national independence proved to be in Poland the demasculinisation of men, their symbolic castration, so the phallic masculinity of Borowiecki, that the other friends lack, fulfils in the first place a compensatory role.

The sexual hierarchy of characters on top of which – according to Ewa Mazierska and Elżbieta Ostrowska – is the heterosexual Pole and on the bottom the homosexual Jew is disturbed by other elements of the work (e.g. acting) that destroy the explicitness of this hierarchy. Welt, even though he is equipped with features stereotypically attributed to homosexuals – thanks to Pszoniak's creation – is not, in my opinion a stereotypical character. His non-normativity is not qualified negatively. He is accepted by his friends not because he has abandoned his specifically homosexual sensitivity, that is adjusted to heterosexual standard – as suggested by Ewa Mazierska⁹⁰ – but it was the heterosexual friends who opened to his sexual otherness which, however, they could not define. It is the loyal, spectacular Jew in love, and not the beau-

tiful Pole who appeared to be the character who aroused among the spectators of *The Promised Land* the greatest liking. Karol due to his incredible beauty is, surely, a compensatory figure (Poland and Poles are as beautiful as the Pole presented in the film) but he is also the character judged negatively: he is beautiful but also amoral, seductive and evil. Surely he is not the virtuous son of Poland. Of course, this amorality is also fascinating (and seductive) but it comes from beyond the national discourse eulogising, as Gombrowicz would have it, solely the virtuous national beauty. Thus at the source of *The Promised Land* is the nationalistic narrative which, however, is disarmed by the director and its xenophobic blade is blunted.

* * *

One of the main protagonists of Andrzej Wajda's work is the male homosocial desire, desire particularly dangerous for male national communities. It was noticed by Christopher Caes in the already quoted text in which the author, by referring to psychoanalytical categories, presented the sources of the specific structure of male subjectivity in the work of the director of *Canal*. According to the American Slavic expert this cinema being *the cinema of male relations streaked with erotism*⁹¹ *constitutes a challenge*⁹² for simple binary oppositions: homosocial-homosexual. Even though the structure of male communities in his films (e.g. in *Speed*) and the structure of nationalist relations of men (e.g. *Männerbund*) are streaked with the same erotic desire, in the end they assume in fact different forms. In Wajda's work the male homosocial desire is not, as in the case of nationalistic narratives, a force threatening the protagonists of these films: the director constructs the "ideal of masculinity" in order to later destroy it and in this destruction eroticise the destroyed ideal⁹³. *The Promised Land* magnificently illustrates this challenge posed to the dichotomy of homosocial and homosexual. Not even because we are also dealing here with disintegration and degradation of masculinity full of dignity, omnipotent and unmoved but because among the homosocial group the director places the figure of a misfit. Inscription of a homosexual (or more broadly: sexual otherness) within the male community and – what is even worse – his acceptance does not fit within the frames of national/nationalistic discourse in which gay is always the enemy of the nation (case of Gombrowicz's Gonzal). The functioning of nationalistic male formations is based on simultaneous stimulation and support of male-male eroticism leading to categorical separation of the "healthy" homosocial relations from the "defiled" homosexual relations. The companions in love with themselves could reach the conclusion that their need to be with another man structurally was not different from the desire that homosexuals feel for each other. This fear makes them exclude gays from the national space and leads them to homophobia which, however, never appears in Wajda's cinema. Thus the ideal body of the Pole is confronted in *The Promised Land* with the anti-body of the homosexual Jew, but relations between them are not shaped according to the characteristic for national narrations anti-homosexual scenario.

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- ¹ Despite the nomination for an Oscar American distributors did not decide to present the film in cinemas in New York or Los Angeles (see J. Falkowska, *Głosy z zewnątrz. Recepcja filmów Andrzeja Wajdy w krajach anglojęzycznych*, in: *Filmowy świat Andrzeja Wajdy*, ed. E. Nurczyńska-Fidelska, P. Sitariski, Universitas, Kraków 2003, p. 359-375).
- ² *Zapisy cenzury*, in: *Wajda mówi o sobie: wywiady i teksty*, ed. W. Wertenstein, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 2000, p. 90.
- ³ *Ibidem*, p. 91.
- ⁴ *Ibidem*.
- ⁵ *Ibidem*.
- ⁶ *Ibidem*.
- ⁷ T. Lubelski, *Dwie ziemie jałowe: 1898 i 1974*, "Kwartalnik Filmowy" 1997, No. 18, p. 118-119.
- ⁸ B. Michalak, *Polskie Oscary*, Prószyński i S-ka, Warszawa 2000, p. 215.
- ⁹ C. James, *Land of Promise*, "The New York Times Film Reviews", 5 II 1988. Quoted after: J. Falkowska, *Andrzej Wajda: History, Politics and Nostalgia in Polish Cinema*, Berghahn Books, New York-Oxford 2007, p. 151.
- ¹⁰ *Wajda has demonstrated exceptional lack of tact* – wrote Bartosz Żurawiecki – *not only had he censored one of the best fragments in his work but clearly he had not noticed that the actress became after her death a cult figure (Na falach pruderii*, "Dialog" 2009, No. 3, p. 108). It is possible that castrating his work of one of the best scenes Wajda was not concerned with Anti-Semitism but with sex – all the sexually bold scenes were eliminated from the film (the director cut not only the scene with Jędrusik but also the orgy in Kesler's gardens, including the frame in which Moryc slaps and pushes away a naked woman as well as the scene of sex between Maks and a woman met by chance).
- ¹¹ It seems that Claude Lanzmann thundered the most: *In this film Jews from Łódź are presented as caricatures in "Sturmer", anti-Jewish magazine of Julius Streicher, the most spiteful of criminals* (quote after: *Wajda: Filmy*, ed. J. Płażewski, v. 2, Wydawnictwa Artystyczne i Filmowe, Warszawa 1996, p. 245.).
- ¹² J. L. Douin, „Le Monde”: „Katyń” – *przejmujący i bolesny film dla Wajdy*, trans. J. Kawa, "Gazeta Wyborcza" 14.04.2009; see polemic of A. Michnik, *Narodowość pluszowego misia*, "Gazeta Wyborcza", 14.04.2009.
- ¹³ T. Lubelski, *Wajda*, Wydawnictwo Dolnośląskie, Wrocław 2006, p. 151.
- ¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 156.
- ¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 151.
- ¹⁶ *I have always wanted to make such "American" film*, admitted the director (A. Wajda, *Kino i reszta świata*, Znak, Kraków 2000, p. 162.).
- ¹⁷ T. Lubelski, *Wajda*, op. cit., p. 151.
- ¹⁸ R. Wood, *From Buddies to Lovers*, in: Idem: *Hollywood: From Vietnam to Reagan... and Beyond*, Expanded and Revised Edition, Columbia University Press, New York 2003, p. 203.
- ¹⁹ M. Haskell, *From Reverence to Rape: The Treatment of Women in the Movies*, ed. II, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1987, p. 23.
- ²⁰ *Ibidem*.
- ²¹ M. Kornatowska, *Eros i film*, Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, Łódź 1986, p. 98.
- ²² *Ibidem*, p. 105.
- ²³ R. Dyer, *The Master of Images: Essays on Representation*, Routledge, New York 1993.
- ²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 127.
- ²⁵ R. Wood, op. cit., p. 204.
- ²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 205.
- ²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 204.
- ²⁸ M. Simpson, *Don't Die on My Buddy: Homosexuality and Masochism in War Movies*, in: *Male Impersonators: Men Performing Masculinity*, Routledge, New York 1994, p. 228.
- ²⁹ R. Wood, op. cit., p. 203-204.
- ³⁰ The term of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick: idem, *Between Men. English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*, Columbia University Press, New York 1985.
- ³¹ D. Olbrychski, *Anioły wokół głowy*, BGW, Warszawa 1992.
- ³² W. Pszoniak, *Aktor*, conversation with M. Komar, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 2009, p. 126.
- ³³ K. Eberhardt, *Świat bez grzechu*, in: Idem, *O polskich filmach*, selection and introduction: R. Koniczek, Wydawnictwa Artystyczne i Filmowe, Warszawa 1982, p. 376-377 (first published in "Kino" 1974, No. 12, pp. 10-15).
- ³⁴ It is worth adding that Andrzej Wajda explores two characteristic themes for national narrative to which Polish directors come back very often: a Polish girl (Anka) as a proud object of desire of a stranger (Maks) and a converted to Polishness strange woman (engrossed in Polish literature Mada Müller) in love with the beautiful Polish man (Borowiecki). The first theme was analysed by E. Ostrowska-Chmura (*Polka – dumny przedmiot pożądania*, in: *Ciało i seksualność w kinie polskim*, ed. S. Jagielski, A. Morstin-Popławska, WUJ, Kraków 2009, pp. 139-153); the second was the object of my interest in a different text (*(Melo)dramaty polskości. Naród i pleć w pol-*

- skim filmie patriotycznym, in: *Kino polskie jako kino narodowe*, ed. T. Lubelski, M. Stroński, Ha!Art, Kraków 2009, pp. 57-83.
- ³⁵ P. Lis, *Liryyczny bohater w dramatycznych okolicznościach. O twórczości Andrzeja Wajdy*, in: *W kręgu filmu polskiego XXXV-lecia*, ed. J. Trzynałowski, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wrocław 1981, p. 154-155.
- ³⁶ See. J. Pyszny, *Kobieta w filmach szkoły polskiej*, in: *Polska szkoła filmowa. Poetyka i tradycja*, ed. J. Trzynałowski, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław 1976.
- ³⁷ This mechanism was characterised by Christopher Caes, analysing *Speed: when women appear in the film or when somebody talks about them, they perform a specific function, namely their presence or just a mention about them arouses male desire but then they disappear quickly or their absence is strongly underlined, depriving the desire, already aroused, of its traditional object (Widowiska katastroficzne: trauma historyczna i męska podmiotowość we wczesnych filmach Andrzeja Wajdy*, trans. Ch. Caes, Z. Batko, in: *Filmowy świat Andrzeja Wajdy*, ed. E. Nurczyńska-Fidelska, P. Sitarski, Universitas, Kraków 2003, p. 149). In Wajda's work this mechanism may be seen not only in *Speed*, but also in other films, including *The Promised Land*.
- ³⁸ Ibidem, p. 174.
- ³⁹ *For Wajda's generation (...) war – traumatic death of his father and motherland took place (...) at the moment of maturing sexuality thus disrupting the progress of the oedipal complex towards its solution*. Ibidem, p. 174.
- ⁴⁰ E. Ostrowska, *Niebezpieczne związki. Dyskurs miłosny, erotyczny i narodowy w filmach Andrzeja Wajdy*, in: *Filmowy świat...* op. cit., p. 210.
- ⁴¹ E. Nurczyńska-Fidelska, *Polska klasyka literacka wobec Andrzeja Wajdy*, Śląsk, Katowice 1998, p. 156.
- ⁴² It is not surprising then that Andrzej Wajda called the man full of life energy a lyrical capitalist (A. Wajda, *O polityce, o sztuce, o sobie*, introduction, selection and editing M. Malatyńska, Prószyński i s-ka, Warszawa 2000, p. 194).
- ⁴³ W. Pszoniak, op. cit., p. 126.
- ⁴⁴ Tadeusz Lubelski noticed that all three – after breaking off contacts with their families – are in search of a new ethical model. It should combine effectiveness of action with a certain ideal image of oneself that none of them is able to abandon completely. Maybe for that reason – doing many mean things in the course – they are least salvage their friendship (T. Lubelski, *Dwie ziemie...*, op. cit., 126.).
- ⁴⁵ H. White, *Bodies and Their Plots*, in: *Choreographing History*, ed. S. L. Foster, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 1995, p. 232.
- ⁴⁶ T. Lubelski, *Daniel Olbrychski: Aktor Wajdy*, in: *Być jak Cybulski?* ed. I. Cegielińska, Fundacja Kino, Warszawa 2008, p. 13.
- ⁴⁷ Ibidem, p. 13-14.
- ⁴⁸ D. Olbrychski, op. cit., 210.
- ⁴⁹ L. Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, in: *Feminist Film Theory. A Reader*, ed. S. Thornham, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 1999, p. 63.
- ⁵⁰ J. Ellis, *Visible Fictions*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1982, s. 47, quoted in S. Neale, *Masculinity as spectacle. Reflections on men and mainstream cinema*, in: *Screening the Male. Exploring Masculinities in Hollywood Cinema*, eds. S. Cohan, I. Rae Hark, Routledge, London-New York 1993, p. 17.
- ⁵¹ See Ch. Caes, op. cit., p. 152, 157.
- ⁵² D. Olbrychski, op. cit., p. 212.
- ⁵³ S. Neale, op. cit., p. 18.
- ⁵⁴ L. Mulvey, op. cit., p. 65.
- ⁵⁵ A. Ledóchowski, *Złoty cielec*, in: idem, *Ulotne obrazy*, Polska Federacja DKF, Warszawa 1998, p. 60 (first published: "Film" 1975, No. 8, p. 6-7).
- ⁵⁶ P. Skrzypczak, *Filmowe panoramy społeczeństwa polskiego XIX wieku*, Wyd. Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2004, p. 139.
- ⁵⁷ K. Eberhardt, op. cit.
- ⁵⁸ T. Basiuk, *Casus Wilde'a: homoseksualizm i tożsamość odmienca od końca XIX wieku*, in: *Inny, Inna, Inne. O Inności w kulturze*, ed. M. Janion, C. Snochowska-Gonzales, K. Szczuka, Wydawnictwo IBL PAN, Warszawa 2004, p. 324.
- ⁵⁹ According to Ewelina Nurczyńska-Fidelska (op. cit., pp. 118-126) the entire film was based on the convention of a romantic thriller with elements of gangster cinema. The author recognises in the film archetypical protagonists of this narration: a gangster and his gang (Karol, Moryc, Maks), usurer (Wilczek), assassin (Bum-Bum), femme fatale (Lucy Zucker) and lyrical beauty (Anka).
- ⁶⁰ It is worth adding that in the novel this conversation ends in agreement with Grünspan and thus betrayal of Borowiecki.
- ⁶¹ See T. Lubelski, *Wajda*, op. cit., p. 151. The cinema historian noticed also, referring to the director's memories, that when working on *Demons* when Wajda for the first time worked with Pszoniak, the actor proved to be a real support for him (ibidem, p. 128).

- ⁶² W. Pszoniak, op. cit.
- ⁶³ In Gruba's film we are dealing with all six categories that structure buddy narration – from journey to death.
- ⁶⁴ It is interesting that Konrad Klejsa (*Filmowe oblicza kontestacji. Kino Stanów Zjednoczonych i Europy Zachodniej wobec kultury protestu przełomu lat 60. i 70.*, Trio, Warszawa 2008, p. 26-27), looking in Polish cinema for rebellion films does not take into account *Moving* at all. While he attributes rebellious elements to films which have nothing to do with contestation: inspired by French or Czech new wave in *The Structure of Crystal* (1969) by Zanussi or coming from Dreyer's cinema *Matthew's Days* (1967) by Leszczyński. If the author did not limit himself to hundred most popular Polish films he would find film examples much more adequate than the above-mentioned titles.
- ⁶⁵ Cz. Dondziłło, *Zasłużony półkownik?*, "Film" 1982, No. 39, p. 7.
- ⁶⁶ K. Kłosińska, *Feministyczne lektury "Dory"*, in: idem, *Feministyczna krytyka literacka*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, Katowice 2010, p. 555.
- ⁶⁷ Cz. Dondziłło, op. cit.
- ⁶⁸ P. Leszkowicz, T. Kitliński, *Miłość i demokracja. Rozważania o kwestii homoseksualnej w Polsce*, Aureus, Kraków 2005, p. 197. Hysterical symptoms – according to Leszkowicz and Kitliński interpreting Freud's thought – are the expression of compromise between libido and repression but they may also represent merger of two libido fantasies of contradictory sexual character. These two contradictory fantasies are related to the internal femininity and masculinity or heterosexuality and homosexuality of an individual and the conflict between them (ibidem).
- ⁶⁹ W. Pszoniak, op. cit., p. 103.
- ⁷⁰ M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, vol. 1: The Will to Knowledge*, trans. R. Hurley, Penguin, London 1998.
- ⁷¹ T. Basiuk, op. cit., p. 322.
- ⁷² Ibidem, p. 321.
- ⁷³ Also in Poland at the end of 19th century homosexuality was associated with the figure of Wilde: *the nature of published [in newspapers] statements proved that public was well-informed about the reason of the "sad fame" of the writer, which on the other hand points to the existence of other, apart from the official, sources of information. There must have been shady news brought by foreigners and compatriots coming back from abroad, widespread in cafes and among "friends"* (A. Zawieszewska, "Zostawić całą hańbę", lecz "zwrócić się przeciw tyranii". *Poglądy na temat homoseksualizmu w pierwszej połowie XX wieku w Polsce*, in: *Kultura wobec odmienności*, v. 2, Prasa/Literatura, ed. B. Darska, Fundacja Feminoteka, Warszawa 2009, p. 98).
- ⁷⁴ B. Gallagher, A. Wilson, *Michel Foucault: An Interview*, „Edinburgh Review” 1986, s. 58, quoted in C. Owens, *Outlaws: Gay Men in Feminism*, in: *Men in Feminism*, eds. A. Jardine, P. Smith, Routledge, New York-London 1987, p. 230.
- ⁷⁵ E. Badinter, *XY: On Masculine Identity*, trans. L. Davis, Columbia University Press, New York 1995.
- ⁷⁶ In this context it is worth recalling the realistic *Provincial Actors* (1978) in which Agnieszka Holland presented the story of a difficult friendship between actors – heterosexual Krzysztof (Tadeusz Huk) and homosexual Andrzej (Stefan Burczyk). *Sometimes I wonder* – says at certain point Krzysztof – *whether you are my friend or simply a gay in love*.
- ⁷⁷ Kalina Jędrusik's eroticism, who was identified with Lucy Zucker, caused a scandal (see D. Michalski, *Kalina Jędrusik*, Iskry, Warszawa 2010, p. 313-323).
- ⁷⁸ M. Karpiński, *Wojciech Pszoniak*, Wydawnictwa Artystyczne i Filmowe, Warszawa 1976, p. 52.
- ⁷⁹ E. Nureżyńska-Fidelska, op. cit., p. 118.
- ⁸⁰ P. Skrzypczak, op. cit., p. 140.
- ⁸¹ An exception are works by Elżbieta Ostrowska (*Obcość podwojona: obrazy kobiet żydowskich w polskim kinie powojennym*, in: *Gender-film-media*, ed. E. H. Oleksy, E. Ostrowska, Rabid, Kraków 2001) and Ewa Mazierska (E. Mazierska, *Masculinities in Polish, Czech and Slovak Cinema. Black Peters and Men of Marble*, Berghahn Books, New York-Oxford 2008, pp. 177-213). Also Tadeusz Lubelski considers the possibility to attribute homosexual identity to Moryc. The author notices that the protagonist loves his Polish friend but does not have many gay features. He is more like an adult child who is full of energy but lacks any idea how to gain male maturity (T. Lubelski, *Dwie ziemie jałowe...* op. cit., p. 126).
- ⁸² Differently than in the case of *Innocent Sorcerers* (1960) on the set of which Tadeusz Łomnicki himself suggested to the director to explain the inability to desire young and stripped off Pelagia with Bazyli's homosexuality (Krystyna Stypułkowska, see: *Historia filmu polskiego*, v. 4, ed. J. Toeplitz, Wydawnictwa Artystyczne i Filmowe, Warszawa 1980, p. 166).

⁸³ See A. Wajda, *Moment deziluzji. Spotkanie z Andrzejem Wajdą*, rozm. T. Sobolewski, "Kino" 1991, no. 7, p. 2-7.

⁸⁴ Reymont presents Polish capitalists as righteous, honest and noble and blames the fall of a Polish nobleman on the strangers: Jews and Germans. Polish national identity, as in nationalistic narratives, is created in opposition to the betrayal of strangers. The dot over the "i" is placed by the novel's ending – Karol's naive conversion, the finale that Wajda rightly threw away.

⁸⁵ K. Eberhardt, op. cit., p. 376.

⁸⁶ E. Mazierska, op. cit., pp. 192-193.

⁸⁷ E. Ostrowska, *Obcość podwojona...* op. cit., p. 135.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 140.

⁸⁹ Elżbieta Ostrowska is right writing (*Obcość podwojona...*, op. cit.) that the theme of *femme fatale* is thrown outside the bracket of national community because the Polish mother could be neither sexual nor bad. The director himself judges negatively Lucy's excessive sexuality as proven, for example, by parallel montage of the orgy in the restaurant car and image of copulating dogs that pure Anka fiercely tries to separate. This recognition is confirmed by Kalina Jędrusik who in 1979 admitted: *This is a role played at the director's bidding. (...) "To make it easier for you, I will tell you that this has to be a figure like from Fellini. Drawn with a thick line". I do not know why it was to*

be so repulsive but this is what the director wanted. I had to give in and the difficult, hard days started. First of all he made me put on about ten kilos and worked very hard on it: he'd offer me sweets, before shooting I had to eat big breakfasts – Jesus I was so unhappy! And he would say: "You have to be round, full of milk, ruthless. You have to be a person that nobody loved" (quote after: D. Michalski, op. cit., p. 315-316). Iwona Kurz claims on the other hand that the strength of the most sexual image in the Polish cinema (...) was developed in previous years in Kalina Jędrusik's earlier films ("*Bo we mnie jest seks*". *Kalina Jędrusik – retuszowana ikona seksbomby*, in: idem, *Twarze w tłumie, Wizerunki bohaterów wyobraźni zbiorowej w kulturze polskiej lat 1955-1969*, Świat Literacki, Warszawa 2005, p. 153,186). It is worth adding that the most critical towards Lucy are the feminists who see in her a strongly misogynist character, while she is loved by gay circles (Jędrusik has the status of gay diva/icon) – is it not because Zucker is a liberated woman, aware of her sexuality, a character who always gets what she wants, who does not let men decide about her body?

⁹⁰ E. Mazierska, op. cit., p. 193.

⁹¹ Ch. Caes, op. cit., p. 144.

⁹² *Ibidem*, p. 149.

⁹³ *Ibidem*, p. 144.



The Promised Land, dir. Andrzej Wajda (1974)