

## “Genealogy”

### *Towards the Revival of Feminine Genealogies in the Works of Contemporary Polish Artists<sup>1</sup>*

*Luce Irigaray argues, that in order to re-evaluate and revive the feminine in culture we need to turn our attention to relations between women, especially mothers and daughters, and revive “feminine genealogies from oblivion” (1995:13). In the present text, I scrutinize the works of contemporary Polish artists: Monika Zielińska/Mamzeta and Katarzyna Górny demonstrating strategies they employ to retrace the voices of women and to re-interpret the figures of the mother and daughter. Their art can be viewed as an attempt to transgress the established gender order in a very Irigarayan sense: by bringing up the maternal, and by regaining female genealogies, or even creating “genealogies” instead—the term referring to the work “Genealogy/ginealogy: The Scar After the Mother” by Monika Zielińska, who replaced the supposedly neutral prefix “gyne” with feminine “gine.” Through the representations of the maternal body: sensual and desiring, but also aging, sick, disabled or dying, entirely new understanding of female subjectivity can be acquired. Female corporeality, also the non-normative that typically exists on the margins of the patriarchal culture is finally placed in the centre. Artists, whose works I discuss struggle to find visual language(s) that would enable the expression of women’s experiences, in line with Irigaray’s idea of reviving women’s language(s) and representations along with enlivening their-story, making an important contribution to the attempts at recovering the female voice, which is still undervalued and forgotten in our culture(s).*

Suzanna Danuta Walters (1992), an American researcher and theorist, claims that the relationship between a mother and daughter is “located in culture in the most fundamental sense, where issues of gender, genre, and generation intersect and interact” (4). During the last few decades, the mother-daughter relationship has received increasing attention, both on the conceptual level and in empirical research. In most cases, the point of departure for theorists

and researchers has been mothers' dominant role in the process of daughters' female-identity construction. Thus, researchers usually focus on explaining why women mother and how mothers' choices and attitudes affect daughters' lives. According to Carol J. Boyd (1989), there are two dominant theories that attempt to explain why daughters tend to become like their mothers. The first is based on a psychoanalytical approach (e.g. Nancy Chodorow's idea of identification as the basis for "the reproduction of mothering"), while the second refers to social learning theory (e.g. Weitzman's claim that the relation in question is shaped by the principles of modeling). However, theories or empirical research projects that combine the examination of public discourses and visual representations with the analysis of individual experiences within a particular historical and cultural context, are rare.

I believe that besides scrutinizing individual mother-daughter relationships by the means of qualitative or quantitative research, such an analysis requires critical examination of cultural representations, which function within particular cultural contexts, as they not only embody, but also reinforce social scripts for society's members, and thus play a crucial role in the process of constructing one's identity. On the one hand, gender representations help give meaning to the lived experiences of particular women; on the other hand, mothers and daughters are also active agents in the course of saturating social reality with meaning, and:

come to understand their relationship not only through the exigencies of family life, economic survival, and social policies, but through the systems of representation and cultural production that help give shape and meaning to that relationship. (Walters 1992: 4)

In this paper, I focus on the analysis of gender representations in contemporary Polish works of art presenting the figure of the mother, as well as mothers and daughters. The writings of Luce Irigaray (1980, 1981, 1985, 2000) create an interesting and enlightening framework that sheds light on the meanings these representations convey.

First, we need to recognize that, as numerous studies show, the separation of "woman" and "mother" constitutes an important aspect of the social construction of femininity within our<sup>2</sup> cultural context. "Woman" is defined first and foremost through her body: its attractiveness and sexual appeal, while "mother" is asexual, her role being to give birth and take care of children in a selfless manner, which is supposedly "natural" and easy for every female. Thus, mother is more a symbol than a living person, which makes it even easier to impose the maternal ideal on all women. This separation reflects the way female identity is constructed in general: as something that is embedded in physiology, thus driven by instincts and impulses of the body, but at the same time "veiled," not fully accessible, belonging to the realm of the unknown and undecipherable. Such construction of femininity has very clear social and

political consequences. Ellen Feder and Emily Zakin (1997) conclude that "discourse(s) utilize Woman most effectively when (they) make her magically disappear from consideration" (46). As a result we deal with images, metaphors and mythologies, not complicated and multidimensional human beings.

Critical re-vision of the institution of motherhood for years now has been an important goal of feminist thinkers, scholars, artists, and philosophers; though the strategies they employ and the points of departure they choose differ significantly. It is impossible to discuss or even list all these strategies in the current paper, so I will focus on one recurring motif, which is the search for female genealogy, "her-story" as it is often called. Irigaray (1995), who calls for retrieving "feminine genealogies from oblivion" (13), argues that western culture, which excludes women, associating them with nature and unthinking matter, is founded upon the sacrifice of mothers, and women in general, since they are all associated first and foremost with their maternal role, and as a result devalued and repressed. As Elissa Gelfand (2005) puts it: "the prohibition of maternal desire brought with it the repression of maternal voice. For that reason . . . it is essential that women express their desire, thereby liberating this repressed voice." Thus, in order to re-evaluate and revive the feminine we need to turn our attention to relationships between women, especially mothers and daughters.

Irigaray (1995), who believes that men and women are fundamentally different, holds the view that women can alter cultural norms and re-establish women's position in society by developing mother-daughter relationships, and strengthening their subjectivity, rather than trying to become "like men," because: "life's unfolding is different for woman than it is for man, since it consists for women of much more pronounced physical stages (puberty, loss of virginity, maternity, menopause) and requires a subjective becoming which is far more complex than man's" (1995: 13). An important element of this project is to recognize life-affirming maternal power, which is repressed in our culture, and removed from our intellectual, religious, and artistic heritage.

In the following section of my paper, I scrutinize the strategies used to retrace the voices of women and to re-interpret the figure of the mother, as well as mother-daughter relationships, in the works of two contemporary Polish artists<sup>3</sup>: Katarzyna Górna and Monika Zielińska/Mamzeta.<sup>4</sup> Clearly, they are not the only Polish artists who touch upon the issue of female identity construction, or who try to decipher and interpret dominant gender representations by the means of critical analysis of maternal figure.<sup>5</sup> Their works can be viewed as part of more pronounced trend in contemporary Polish art, aimed at altering the established order in very Irigarayan sense, by focusing on the maternal, liberating both mothers' and daughters' voices and regaining female genealogies.

A macro-photograph titled *Genealogy/ginealogy: The Scar After the Mother* (1999-2001) by Monika Zielińska/Mamzeta gained significant media attention. The photo [Fig. 1] portrays a navel belonging to a person whose gender

is not clearly defined, with an inscription around it that says: “the scar after the mother.” It was exhibited on billboards in several Polish cities as a part of larger project called Outdoor Gallery AMS in which posters created by young artists were displayed on the streets instead of exhibiting them inside professional galleries. The only condition for this project was that the artwork or posters refer to important social issues and concerns. As a result, these works of art were placed in a new context, becoming accessible to the general public, and often provoking controversies and heated discussions. Surprisingly, also to the artist who considered this particular work “polite” and innocent (Zielińska, 2002: 100-101), *Genealogy/ginealogy* ... turned out to be contentious, though contrary to the work by Katarzyna Kozyra *Więzy krwi / Bonds of Blood*, (1995) it was not censored (Toniak, 2002).

Zielińska’s work provoked heated debate in the Polish media, concerning not only this particular photograph, but also the role of artists and contemporary art in the public discourse. It is worth tracing the origins of the controversy. First, Zielińska places the human body in the public sphere, but in a different context than it is usually seen. In contemporary visual culture, bodies, especially women’s bodies, exist in isolated fragments: faces, legs, or breasts; it is seldom that we see the body not fragmented. These body fragments are intended to attract the viewer’s interest or to point the viewer’s attention to the fact that their own bodies are far from what is considered the cultural ideal. The ultimate goal of displaying woman’s body in the public is to persuade the viewers to buy certain goods, or to discipline themselves (Zielińska, 2002: 103). Moreover, as John Berger points out in his classic book *Ways of Seeing*, within the European visual tradition “men act and women appear. Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at.... Thus a woman turns herself into an object—and most particularly an object of vision: sight” (1972: 47). Clearly, Zielińska’s photo escapes this familiar framework—the abdomen on the poster does not belong to any of the above-mentioned contexts. The photograph is de-sexualized; it is devoid of the frame of reference as to the question: who the spectator is. The abdomen is not even clearly gendered, although most commentators are of the opinion that it belongs to a woman. It does not sell anything, nor does it not want anybody to become younger, more beautiful, or thinner.

According to Agata Jakubowska “it is a fragment of the body ... which is self-referential” (2001), therefore, Zielińska’s project might be understood as an attempt to discover “the female signifier.” Jakubowska also suggests that the navel, which connects us to the mother, takes the place of the symbolic phallus, the Freudian father-son relationship thus being replaced by the continuum of mother and daughter. Obviously, even if not fully recognized by viewers and critics, such reversal is dangerous to the established visual imagery based on a clearly defined gender order.

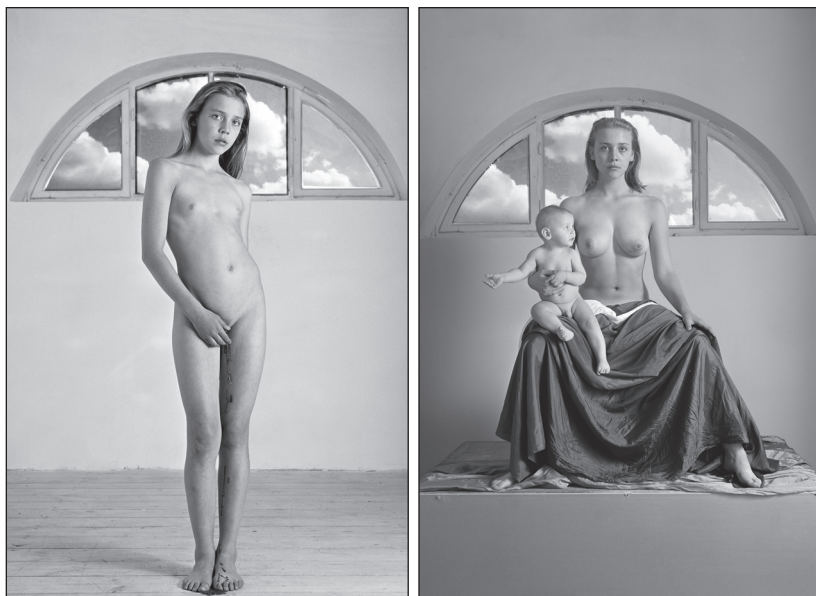
According to the Polish philosopher, Jolanta Brach-Czaina (2005) “if culture is hostile and unfriendly towards women, the only solution is to



Fig. 1: Monika Zielińska, "Genealogy / Ginealogy: The Scar After the Mother."

explore the sphere of signs, which remain neutral. We shall undertake the effort to interpret them, hoping that they do not have contents that would be discriminating and tendentious." Zielińska artwork refers to the navel, which can be considered a "neutral" sign, but clearly, given the context in which it is placed, the part of the body described in the dictionary as "a depression in the middle of the abdomen that marks the point of the former attachment of the umbilical cord,"<sup>6</sup> turns out to signify so much more. By emphasizing "the point of former attachment," the artist draws our attention to the connection between the body of the mother and the body of the child, erased by patriarchal rule. In one of the texts concerning this work, Zielińska (2002) refers directly to Irigaray's claim that the phallogocentric culture "murdered" the maternal. The artist says: "Scar after the mother is the only natural scar on our body, the one which we have from the very beginning of our life. The scar ... as a word, reminds us of a murder that was committed in our culture, the murder of mother.... The fact that this expression brings bad connotations to critics, in my opinion means that the remembrance of this murder still exists in our memory" (103).

But the navel in Zielińska's work also symbolizes the replacement of the history, or even genealogy by—specifically female—"ginealogy." The transformation of language being an important element of some of her artwork, the artist coined the term: "*ginealogy*" replacing the supposedly neutral prefix "*gynē*" with the feminine "*gine*." As Irigaray (2000) puts it, the names we are given after birth replace the navel/the omphalos, but "the family name, and even the first or given name, always stand at one remove from that most elemental identity tag: the scar where the umbilical cord was cut. The family name, and even the first name, slip over the body like clothes, like identity tags—outside the body" (245). Zielińska explores this path, the one, which exists before and beyond words. In this respect, we can consider "*Genealogy/ginealogy*..." an attempt to shed layers of the patriarchal repression in order to reclaim the maternal in a gesture similar to Irigaray's efforts "to peel the dead skins off



Figures 2 and 3: Katarzyna Gorna, "Madonnas."

words and to use them as consciously chosen analogies for female experience" (Burke, 1980: 66).

The responses to Zielińska's work point to patterns embedded in patriarchal culture. While some critics paternalize the artist, claiming that a photograph of a navel can hardly be considered a work of art, others express their disgust and extreme dislike towards the photograph and the artist alike. Some conservative Catholic journalists consider this work not only controversial, but also seditious (Zielińska, 2002: 100-104). Journalists criticized the use of the word "scar," which seems "inappropriate" and "insulting" in the context of the word "mother." Further, reference to the concept of motherhood outside of the dominant discourses, where the mother appears only in her role as the one who reproduces the nation and sacrifices herself for the well-being of others, is offensive. An excerpt from *Nasz Dziennik*, a newspaper representing extremely conservative, orthodox Catholic views, quoted in Zielińska's text, summarizes much of what is relevant here. In the December 28th, 2000, issue of this paper, journalist Stanisław Krajewski wrote: "For me it is Satanism. It is not only an outrage against morals and religious beliefs, against Holy Mother and Her Son. Also, it hurts my most human and deep personal feelings; it offends me and my own Mother" (cited in Zielińska, 2002: 104).

Arguably, *Genealogy/ginealogy* undermines "morals and religious beliefs" by boldly referring to the woman's role not only as a giver of life, but also as giver of meaning. This work may provoke outrage and anger through establishing a continuum of blood and flesh, instead of the continuum of Word and transcendental Order. Interestingly, when criticizing the work, Krajewski



Figure 4: Katarzyna Górna, "Madonnas."

God, traditionally depicted kneeling before her Son, and often presented as a role-model of the humble and submissive female ideal, the figure of Holy Mary inscribed in Christian iconography is a patriarchal construct used to discipline "rebellious" women (Budrowska 2000). Krajewski leans on this tradition with his reference to Holy Mary as a witness of his outrage and also as a supporter of the feminine ideal.

It is significant that works of contemporary Polish women artists often refer to the figure of Holy Mary. Though they offer different re-interpretations of this figure, most relate to her as a source of power and agency. This is in line with some western theorists who have established new feminist paradigms of the Mother of God; for example, Mary Daly, who points out that by being a virgin, Mary transgresses the patriarchal norm according to which women are subjugated to men, whether fathers or husbands (1985). Clearly, Katarzyna Górna and her *Madonnas* (1996–2001) series are much closer to Daly's notions, than traditional perceptions of Holy Mary as submissive and powerless.

Górna's series consists of three large-scale photographs. The artist does not represent mothers and daughters together, but chooses instead to focus on different stages of women's lives, when identification with the role of either mother or daughter defines their social functioning. The first photo [Fig. 2] shows an adolescent girl, naked, with a stream of blood on her thigh. She covers the pubic area with one hand, but looks straight at the viewer, which suggests self-confidence rather than timidity. In the second picture [Fig. 3], we see a beautiful young woman (mother) sitting with a small boy on her lap, and in the last photo [Fig. 4], an ironic re-working of Michelangelo's *Pieta*, an

makes the mother and son couple, the central element of traditional Christian iconography, the ultimate point of reference. He relates himself and his mother to Holy Mary and Her Son, as if trying to reestablish the stability of the order threatened by the artist. In opposition to this supposedly blasphemous depiction highlighting mother's agency as symbolized by the markings that every human-being bears on her/his body, Krajewski makes reference to Holy Mary, symbolic woman subjugated to the law of the Father. Especially in the Polish context, sacrifice and docility of God's Mother (not agency and independence) inform cultural scripts of mothering and womanhood. Impregnated by the "Word" of

adult man clings to the body of his mother (?), an older lover (?), like a child, desperately seeking attention.

When one looks at the women, especially the young mother with a boy [Fig. 3], what is striking is the air of tranquility and nobility that emanate from each of these figures. They look straight forward, neither withdrawing their look, nor gazing with adoration at the child/man, as is usually the case in classic Christian depictions. Their gestures, body language, and facial expressions signify tranquility and pride rather than shyness or anxiety. Obviously, these are women who fully accept their bodies—they are not ashamed, and clearly do not feel intimidated by being half-naked. At the same time their bodies, placed within a religious framework, avoid the sexualization that usually characterize representations of femininity in popular culture and art. The artist stresses feminine agency and power, transgressing passive ideal inscribed in the western tradition. Brach-Czaina (2005) claims that Górna's *Madonna* with child, "...is probably the only depiction of Holy Mary that logically combines the dogmatic understanding of virginity with motherhood." Holy Mary being supposedly free from the original sin should not be ashamed of her body. Also, she can be proud of who she is, because she gave birth to God—the ultimate proof that the female body is not only an extension of God's perfection but possibly the source of it.

This project uncovers discourses structuring images of femininity within the sphere of visual imagery in Poland. Górna establishes a relationship with these discourses, at the same time "seeking from inside to disrupt and move them, creating new meanings and developed representations" (Robinson, 2003: 126). According to Hilary Robinson, Irish scholar and art historian, an analogous strategy was adopted by some Irish artists, such as Louise Walsh and Frances Hegarty, at the beginning of the 1990s. Robinson points out to the fact that model of femininity inscribed in Irish myths, political, and religious discourses "produce the function of representation, 'woman', as being the cypher of nation, while reducing actual women, politically, and empirically, to mothers" (2003: 113). Thus, the works of art disrupting the dominant gender imagery, have both aesthetic and political function. The artists not only re-formulate images of femininity, but also engage in the discussion on the workings of power inscribed in the process of constructing gender roles and ideals. Similarly to Walsh and Hegarty, Górna deploys the motif of mother-daughter relationships to formulate a productive critique of representations of women within religious contexts, in line with Irigaray's invitation to re-think the mother/daughter, daughter/mother relationship and change it, also through the means of visual representation.

Zielińska employs a strategy analogous to Górna, attempting the deconstruction of Christian iconography in a project entitled *When I Grow Up I Will be a Virgin* (2003). The artist re-interprets the figures of Holy Mary, Jesus Christ, and God the Father as if trying to regain the potential of transgression inscribed within them. She takes photographs of mothers and daughters using





Figure 5: Monika Zielińska / *Mamzeta*,  
"When I Grow Up I Will be a Virgin."



Figure 6: Monika Zielińska / *Mamzeta*,  
"When I Grow Up I Will be a Virgin."

settings and scenarios that constitute Christian cultural imagery: Madonna with Child, the Holy Mary in a Pieta-like setting, or the Father and Son couple replaced by two women sitting next to each other. The artist plays with the question of what will happen to the symbolic images if we distort the gender order. Nevertheless, the most interesting element of Zielińska's series is not the simple exchange of positions that results in placing the Other in the position of the One. I argue that by transgressing the images which belong to the dominant culture, the artist explores new dimensions of the female subjectivity.

Significantly, important elements of the project *When I Grow Up...* exist on the margins of what we are used to paying attention to as viewers consuming works of art through the patriarchal lenses of education, knowledge of art history, and cultural production. In this case, the question of who the models are in the photos is very important. Only if we look for information released at the opening of the exhibition, can we discover that Zielińska photographed herself with her daughter, as well as her own mother and grandmother. Thus, the work of art is given a new dimension.<sup>7</sup> The artist not only puts herself symbolically in the position of the Mother of God, but also re-interprets themes from Christian iconographical tradition replacing the well-known masculine narrative with her-story. On the one hand, this gesture may



Figure 7: *Monika Zielińska / Mamzeta, "When I Grow Up I Will be a Virgin."*

be considered a very personal statement, given that some of the photos, such as the picture of her mother holding her sick grandmother in her arms [Fig. 5], belong to the intimate sphere, which is usually closed to outsiders. On the other hand, Zielińska seems to de-naturalize the very ways of seeing, by focusing on the figures that were typically placed in the background, if visible at all, namely bodies that are neither sexually attractive, nor in line with the aesthetic ideal.

One can read this work as critical reconsideration of women's experiences—experiences that typically filtered through patriarchal culture. Seen from this particular perspective, the photos reveal an extra-ordinarily rich vision of the relations between women, especially between mothers and daughters. In the first image [Fig. 5], we see mother holding the girl-child close to her naked body, licking her hand, as if expressing desire to eat or swallow daughter, to have her inside her own body again. One can trace the expression on the woman's face: the unity of two figures, the skin-to-skin contact, the body-to-body closeness apparently give her a sense of pleasure. Clearly, Zielińska refers to those maternal experiences which are still a taboo, such as the sensual pleasures of mothering, the excitement connected with breast-feeding, the joy

that comes with holding child's body and feeling its corporeality. The child's sex is hardly visible; only from other photos included in the series the spectator knows that it is a girl hidden within her mother's arms. Daughter and mother give the impression of being one, united but the girl does not seem to be overpowered. The artist visualizes the *juissance* Irigaray refers to when she writes: "I look at you, you look at me. I look at myself in you, you look at yourself in me.... You/I exchanging selves endlessly and each staying herself. Living mirrors" (1981: 61).

In the project *When I Grow Up...* Zielińska shows diverse phases of every woman's life cycle, highlighting different types of attachments with other women within the family, which dominate during each phase. One of the photographs [Fig. 5] shows a woman with a child; then there is a woman with an adolescent girl, possibly with Down Syndrome [Fig. 6]; and finally a daughter who holds her aging, maybe even dying mother in arms, repeating the gesture of the Holy Mother in the Pieta-like setting [Fig. 7]. It can be argued that the circular nature of their lives connects them to each other, but also to mothers and daughters in different places and times. By repeating this movement they inscribe themselves in the endless continuum of women, not by sacrificing their subjectivity, but by participation.

Despite the numerous similarities, there is an important difference between Zielińska's and Górna's vision, and the one offered by Irigaray. In the French philosopher's view, a mother's personhood seems to dissolve once her daughter abandons her, which is a consequence of women being trapped in the maternal role prescribed by culture and society. According to Helene Vivienne Wenzel, Irigaray "despairs over the nullity of her mother's personhood (as well as her own, by extension), sandwiched as it is between the roles of mother's daughter and daughter's mother—a personhood destined to become nil when her daughter leaves her" (1981: 58). This loads the mother-daughter relationship with guilt, making the daughter partly responsible for killing off the maternal. One may argue that in the concluding paragraph of the text "And the One Doesn't Stir without the Other," Irigaray formulates not only expectations towards her mother, but also expresses fear of causing her death. She writes: "what I wanted from you, Mother, was this: that in giving me life, you still remain alive" (1981: 58). That very fear may be considered a source of anger and sorrow that sometimes fuel mother-daughter relations. This sense of anger and sorrow are absent from Górna's and Zielińska's works.

Despite the fact that Irigaray stresses the importance of developing relationships between women, broken and torn apart by patriarchal authority, in her own writings she seems to take in consideration not woman's continuum really, but rather mother-daughter pairs. The complex choreographies of the generations of women related with each other in multifaceted ways are reduced to the vision where only separate dyads of mothers and daughters seem to exist. In fact, if we embrace the notion of a circular movement, which is to govern women's lives, we may arrive at a conclusion that a mother abandoned

by her daughter, still functions in daughterly position/role by relating to her own mother. Also, a daughter often relates not only to her mother, but also to her grandmother and other emotionally significant women within the family. Arguably, only through the recognition of the shifts between the role of mother and the role of daughter that *constantly* take place within a woman's life, can we escape the vision of "mothers, daughters, all women ... swallowed in the sole function of 'maternage,' mothering." (Wenzel, 1981: 58). Only by placing each and every woman within the context of her relationships towards the continuum of women she is part of, can we truly give voice to long-silenced mothers and daughters.

Nevertheless, there is also another very significant link between Irigaray's project and the works of Zielińska and Górna. They all emphasize the female body, the maternal body as the source of ultimate power that needs to be "subjectified." Through the representations of the body offered by the female artists—a body that is sensual and desiring, but also aging, sick, disabled, or dying—an entirely new understanding of the female subjectivity can be acquired. Female corporeality, also the non-normative one, which typically exists on the margins of the patriarchal culture is finally placed in the centre. And we can imagine the artists saying: we will not give up this place easily. Irigaray writes:

Aside from the return to and reconciliation with genealogy, with feminine genealogies—which are still a long way off—woman, women, needed a language, images, and representations which suited them—on cultural level, even on a religious level.... (1995: 13)

Clearly, Monika Zielińska, Katarzyna Górna, and other contemporary Polish female artists struggle to find visual languages that enable the expression of women's experiences, which are significantly different from that of the men's. I believe that they make an important contribution to the attempts at recovering the female voice, which remains undervalued and forgotten in our culture(s).

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<sup>2</sup>By "our," or western cultural context I mean European and American (U.S.), and it includes also the Polish context. This rather simplistic differentiation excludes most African or Asian cultures, where the figure of the mother and the model of mother-daughter relations respectively, are constructed quite differently. It does not mean that there are no differences between, lets say,

the view on motherhood within the French cultural context and the Polish one, but the length of the present paper does not allow to scrutinize this issue in details. For more on the issue of cultural differences see, for e.g., Mudita Rastogi and Karen S. Wampler, "Adult Daughters' Perception of the Mother-Daughter Relationship: A Cross-Cultural Comparison," *Family Relations* 48 (3) (1999).

<sup>3</sup>I would like to thank Katarzyna Górna and Monika Zielińska / Mamzeta for permission to reproduce their works in the present book. For those who wish to know more about the artists the following sites can be recommended:

*Katarzyna Górna:*

<<http://www.artprogram.art.pl/ARTISTS/GORNA/0prezentacja'pl.htm>>

<<http://www.artfacts.net/index.php/pageType/artistInfo/artist/36996>>

<[http://www.culture.pl/pl/culture/artykuly/os\\_gorna\\_katarzyna](http://www.culture.pl/pl/culture/artykuly/os_gorna_katarzyna)>(in Polish)

*Monika Zielińska / Mamzeta:*

<<http://www.waa.art.pl/mamzeta/frame.htm>>

<<http://www.artfacts.net/index.php/pageType/artistInfo/artist/48276/lang/1>>

<[http://www.culture.pl/pl/culture/artykuly/os\\_zielinska\\_monika](http://www.culture.pl/pl/culture/artykuly/os_zielinska_monika)> (in Polish)

<sup>4</sup>Monika Zielińska presents her works under the name Mamzeta now, but since the article I quote was written under the name Zielińska, in the present text I decided to refer to her as Zielińska or Zielińska / Mamzeta in order to avoid confusion.

<sup>5</sup>Among Polish artists who work with the mother figure and mother-daughter relations are: Anna Baumgart, Zorka Project, Zuzanna Janin, and Agata Groszek.

<sup>6</sup>According to <[www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/naivel](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/naivel)>.

<sup>7</sup>Interestingly, Katarzyna Górny's employs the same artistic strategy in the series "Fuck you, fuck me, peace" (2000), where she photographed herself, her sister and mother (<http://www.artprogram.art.pl/ARTISTS/GORNA/0prezentacja'pl.htm>). This project can be interpreted as a provoking and uncompromising statement on women's sexuality, and analogously to Zielińska's work it comments upon the experiences captured in different moments of women's life cycle.

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