

Abstract

The article analyzes the character of Bess in the script of Lars von Trier and Vivian Nielsen's drama *Breaking the Waves*. The portrayal of Bess' behavior, life, and relationships to her husband, the church and God are interpreted from the perspective of feminist theology as introduced by Isabel Carter Heyward. The main message of the play is the parallel to Jesus' sacrifice of pure altruism leading towards physical self-destruction; other possible interpretations offered in the article are the images of self-sacrifice as a type of mystical obsession or as a type of internalized manipulation conveyed by means of discursive power.

Keywords:

faith in God, self-sacrifice, power, freedom, feminist theology, Lars von Trier, Vivian Nielsen.