

ALEKSANDRA DRZAŁ-SIEROCKA, **Disease as the process of dying. Cultural images of AIDS at the turn of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century**

**Abstract:** There is no doubt that AIDS – describing as the plague of XXI century – is perceived and regarded as one of the *signs of our times*. Images of AIDS that appear in media are interesting examples of the cultural perception of illness which is inextricably linked to a death. What is very characteristic, is the fact that in many cases AIDS is presented as *the process of dying*. In my thesis I analyzed social campaigns, TV mini-series *Angels in America* (by Mike Nichols) and Derek Jarman's documentary project – *Blue*. These are three ways of speaking about death – difficult and “forbidden” subject during the era of beauty and youth.

My key questions are inter alia: Who is a person sick with AIDS or infected with HIV? What “signs” indicate disease and approaching death? And last but not least: How the metaphors of disease are intertwined with the metaphors of death?

**Keywords:** AIDS, HIV, terminal disease, social campaign, documentary, TV-series.