

Summary

I titled this doctoral dissertation *Inclusion – companion species – alter ego. A perception of the wolf in the prose of Maria Nurowska and Marek Harny*. The aim of this dissertation is to present the coexistence of people and wolves based on Maria Nurowska's and Marek Harny's novels from the perspective of *animal studies* in the context of the pro-ecological turn. The primary objective of this research is the depiction of the wolf in novels related to the description of the Bieszczady Mountains, and in particular in works created after 1998 which turned out to be a new form of giving voice to these predators in the context of the end of the anti-wolf policy of the PRL period, and entering these animals on the list of protected animals. Most notably I am interested in the following issues making up the description of the wolf, which is on the borderline between literature and biology: (1) what means were used to create the cultural image of the wolf in the novel, and (2) whether this image corresponds to the image of *Canis lupus* presented in the novel from a biological perspective. Moreover, this dissertation also aims to explore the way the wolf is depicted on the basis of the description of interspecies coexistence and human-predator relations in the context of its protection, and finally, whether this image can be considered innovative in the context of previous depictions in Polish literature and the pro-ecological turn.

The basis for analysis are Maria Nurowska's novels such as *Nakarmić wilki* (eng. *To Feed the Wolves*) (2010) and *Requiem dla wilka* (eng. *Requiem for the Wolf*) (2011), as well as *Wariatka z Komańczy* (eng. *A Madwoman from Komańcza*) (2015), and *Dziesięć godzin* (eng. *Ten Hours*) (2017), which occur contextually. As for Marek Harny's prose, *Samotność wilków* (eng. *The Loneliness of Wolves*) (2006) was chosen. The dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters (divided into subchapters) and a conclusion. The subject matter of the first chapter, entitled "At the meeting point of science," is the biology and ecology of the wolf, as well as ecological and political aspects of the interest in wolves in Poland, emphasizing the turning point of 1998 when they were covered by species protection in Poland. Furthermore, I outlined an aspect of the wolf's cultural presence in Polish literature and art in a European context, and presented methodological issues with special emphasis on *animal studies*. In addition, I proposed to isolate the cultural stages of the evolution of the human-wolf relationship into: co-evolution, the marginalizing category of the *bestia sacer*, and a natural-cultural inclusion.

The next chapter focuses on the portrayal of *Canis lupus* in Maria Nurowska's novels as an example of a visible change in the way the wolf is perceived, i.e. from exclusion to inclusion, manifesting itself mainly in the empowerment of animals and dehumanization of people. This change is also evident in the refutation of the ethological falsehood about the wolf, including the rebuttal of the myth of the alpha wolf and the depiction of the life of a pack of wolves in imitation of primitive cultures and the issue of animal biographism related to it, as well as the idea of becoming-an-animal, and the issue of a hidden *alter ego* in the context of magical realism (*Dziesięć godzin*, eng. *Ten hours*).

In the third chapter, entitled "The history vs. stories about the wolf in Marek Harny's novels," I considered the question of giving the metaphorical meaning to the wolf in the context of the loneliness and solitude felt by the characters in *Samotność Wilków* (eng. *The Loneliness of Wolves*). Furthermore, I paid special attention to the threefold way of presenting wolves as creatures perceived as 'familiar', 'unfamiliar,' and 'other'/distinct beings, and pointed to the impact of the historical context concerning the Polish-Ukrainian conflict of 1943-1948 and the activity of the UPA company in Bieszczady on maintaining the negative image of the wolf as a manifestation of an analogy between ethnic and species purge.

Finally, in the section dedicated to the conclusion, I encapsulate the results of my research so as to prove the thesis about the innovative way of presenting the wolf, depicted in the spirit of the ecological turn in Maria Nurowska's and Marek Harny's novels against the background of changes after 1998.

Key words: wolf, Nurowska, Harny, inclusion, companion species, *alter ego*, UPA, *bestia sacer*, species purge

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