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**Orzeszkowa's Bestiary.**

**A study of animals and people in the works of Eliza Orzeszkowa**

SUMMARY

The subject of the doctoral dissertation entitled *Orzeszkowa's Bestiary. A study of animals and people in the works of Eliza Orzeszkowa* is the human-animal bond in the works of the nineteenth-century writer, Eliza Orzeszkowa.

The non-human heroes present the variety and abundance of fauna (and also flora) in particular European regions as well as specify what factors influenced the approaches to the moral status of animals in the age of steam. The attempts to overcome fear of humans (*domesticating*) clearly contrast with the glorification of wildness (*freedom*).

The first chapter of the dissertation starts with Orzeszkowa's biography, reconstructed on the basis of the letters in which numerous references to fauna of specific geographical areas appear, through the latest state of research in outline, confirming that the positivist's ideas are still alive and provoke new readings, to the juxtaposition of the concepts of nature and culture (along with a reflection on the duality of human nature) and their initial analysis. Moreover, the "animal" philosophical thought is discussed, and it shows how the status of non-human animals (from "thing" to "person") changed.

In the second chapter, anthropocentrism dominates, primarily the female perspective (enriched with the literary "animality"). The concepts of animalization (*objectification*) and bestiality, allegories, and Franciscan and hermitic attitudes determine two ways of treating animals. The consumption patterns of Thorstein Veblen (*conspicuous consumption*) are also discussed here.

There are Orzeszkowa's short narrative forms – short stories and selected novels mentioned in the next chapter. The constructs of wildness and civilization are analyzed on the basis of the works of the positivist, here – the novel *Dwa bieguny*. The issue of hunting, based on male rivalry and having far-reaching consequences for non-human inhabitants of cities and villages, is also important in the discussion as well as the reflection on the possession of animal skins (*leather goods*). While the first subchapter is devoted to the human "wildness", the others focus on specific species: worms (the novel *Niziny*), bird and dog heroes in Orzeszkowa's

works. Particularly noteworthy is the subchapter *Orzeszkowa's zootheratology – Pani Dudkowa*, explaining the problem of (“unseen”) animal suffering.

In the last chapter, examples of animal metaphors, excerpted from Orzeszkowa's works, are discussed: address forms and pseudonyms, anthroponyms and affectonyms used to create the literary world. In addition, the use of phraseology and “animal” comparisons is analysed. Some of them contain an ideological message; others portray the representatives of the world's fauna.

At the end of the dissertation, there is a conclusion summarizing the above reflections.

The works of Eliza Orzeszkowa provide invaluable material for research on “animal” 19th-century literature, raise questions of animals' figurative significance, and help to reimagine diverse human-animal relationships. Importantly, the binary opposition homo / animal is not the most essential here, but the similarities between all (non)human beings are.

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