Abstract

Between Place, Experience and the Word.

An Anthropological Study of the Works of Andrzej Piskulak

This doctoral dissertation presents the first comprehensive monographic study of the works of Andrzej Piskulak – a Polish poet, prose writer, playwright, journalist, and publicist associated with the Świętokrzyskie region. Its principal aim is to demonstrate that his oeuvre constitutes a coherent literary project in which place functions as the central anthropological category organising the experience of memory, journey, work, community, and the word. The dissertation interprets Piskulak's writings as a coherent literary anthropology of place, revealing the internal unity of his poetry, prose, drama, and journalism.

The study adopts a hermeneutic and anthropological approach, drawing on geopoetics, the anthropology of place, ritual theory, and cultural memory studies. Within this framework, literature is understood as a space in which individual and collective experience is transformed into symbolic structures of meaning. This perspective makes it possible to interpret Piskulak's works not merely as representations of regional experience but as reflections on universal dimensions of human existence, including the relationship between human beings and landscape, memory, everyday life, work, and the sacred.

The dissertation analyses the author's formative biography together with his poetry, prose, drama, and journalism, combining chronological and thematic approaches. Rather than treating these genres separately, it demonstrates their mutual interconnectedness and reveals the continuity of the author's creative imagination across different forms of literary expression.

The research demonstrates that the fundamental categories organising Piskulak's works – place, home, journey, memory, work, ritual, femininity, and liminal experience – remain present throughout his literary career, assuming new meanings while preserving their underlying anthropological coherence. The study further shows that the Świętokrzyskie region functions not merely as a geographical setting but as a symbolic and existential space in which history, religion, everyday life, and communal memory converge. Consequently, Piskulak's writing transcends the category of regional literature and acquires a broader universal dimension.

The originality of the dissertation lies in providing the first comprehensive monographic study of Andrzej Piskulak's entire oeuvre and in proposing its interpretation from the perspective of the literary anthropology of place. The dissertation demonstrates the continuity of the author's creative imagination and the internal coherence of his literary output across poetry, prose, drama, and journalism, thereby filling an important gap in Polish literary scholarship and situating his work within contemporary research on geopoetics, the anthropology of place, and cultural memory.

Keywords: Andrzej Piskulak; literary anthropology of place; geopoetics; cultural memory; homo viator; regional literature; Świętokrzyskie region.