

Leśmian in Europe and Around the World

Summary

Bolesław Leśmian – a Polish writer of Jewish descent, a bilingual author, who spent his youth in the territory of modern-day Ukraine and received Russian-language education, an essayist who used to create both in Polish and Russian with such fluency that his poems had been included in the anthologies of Russian poetry before the World War II, a poet, who was also able to read in French and German – in the field of the Polish literary language, he achieved such mastery that one might metaphorically say he founded a state within a state by establishing new rules of artistic expression, to which his successors would have to refer. Consequently, everyone attempting to translate Leśmian's works into a foreign language is bound to reach the borders of the language and subsequently bring to life a new language within their mother tongue. Is there anything more thought provoking for a translator to encounter? – asked one of the Ukrainian translators after she had discerned this phenomenon. Where could a translator find a more artistically admirable challenge? If they are equal to it, they will bring, along with the translation, the greatest possible added value to their language. They will make the comprehension of an idiom feasible. By pursuing the preservation of that which is peculiar about it, they will present its most creative, and at the same time, most universal dimension. In this book, we ponder the issue of the presence of the poet's legacy outside Poland and its connections with European and world literature. There are twenty articles contained within the volume:

- articles indicating Leśmian's foreign, historically verifiable sources of literary and other inspirations (from many periods) and situating his legacy against an international comparative background.
- articles presenting the studies of selected translations of Leśmian's literary works (currently present – especially in the poetic version – i.a. in Slavic, Germanic, and Romance languages)
- articles discussing selected literary and possibly intersemiotic references to Leśmian's works.

The thematic content of the book finds its reflection in its composition. It comprises 5 chapters *Explorations: intermediations – parallels – traditions; Translations into Slavic languages: contexts – comparisons – analyses; Translations into Romance languages: contexts – comparisons – analyses; Continuations: literary – translational – intersemiotic*. In the articles published in these chapters, we aim to portray the place of the Polish poet, prose writer, essayist, and dramatist in the canon of European and world literature by scrutinizing selected international, interepochal, and follow-on contexts of his writings, and to bring the reception (literary and artistic) of his works closer to readers outside Poland. In the book, we also present studies that allow determining, in a historically verifiable manner, the connections of the Polish poet's literary legacy with writings of other authors (like Rainer, Maria Rilke, or Milo de Angelis), whose accomplishments left or might leave an imprint on the history of European and world literature. The studies of translations of Leśmian's works into foreign languages are displayed in the book as well (i.a. Russian, Czech, Slovak, Bulgarian, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, English, and German). Our work has been completed with the conviction that this research deserves a broad continuation, not to a lesser degree than Leśmian's works deserve international popularization.

Translated by Przemysław Strzelecki