

Foreword

The present issue collects six articles written by leading specialists in Ukrainian Modernist literature on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the birth of the renowned Ukrainian writer and poet Lesja Ukrajinka. We editors would like to thank our Ukrainian colleagues at the Volyn National University in Luc'k and the National University of Ostroh Academy: Prof. Nadiya Koloshuk, Prof. Maria Moklytsja, Prof. Serhiy Romanov, Prof. Galyna Yastrubetska, Prof. Svitlana Kocherha, for their proposal of a guest edited issue of "Studi Slavistici" dedicated to Lesja Ukrajinka.

The contributors – who live and work in different countries such as Australia, Italy, Ukraine, and the United States – have examined works by Lesja Ukrajinka which have previously received scant attention, and investigated a number of open questions which still remain controversial and to some extent unanswered. In doing so, they have employed new methodological tools, offered fresh interpretations, and provided original solutions to long-standing problems. The first five articles focus on some of Lesja Ukrajinka's lyrical poems (*One Word* and *Spring in Egypt*) and theatrical dramas (*In the Wilderness*, *Rameneis*, *Rufin and Priscilla*, *Orhija*, and *Forest Song*). The authors touch upon fundamental topics and methodological issues such as Orientalism and Post-Orientalism, Modernism in Ukraine and Europe, Ecocriticism, and the aesthetical and social function of art. Tamara Hundorova's concluding review article provides an overview of the most important topics explored in the published papers and the new threads and discussion they engender. The editors of this thematic collection hope that the following contributions, while celebrating the jubilee of a writer who is yet to be fully appreciated in Western literary discourse, will stimulate further interest in Lesja Ukrajinka and her intellectual milieu among the wider scholarly community. We also hope that the encounter between Ukrainian and international scholars will open up the possibility of new critical approaches to Ukrajinka's work.

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