

*Literară*) as well as an international broadside in a paid advertisement in *The Times*. (These are included in the volume as appendixes I and II.)

The unstated objective of Péter's collection of essays is to counter polemics and vindictive personal attacks with reasoned arguments and effective documentation. Although all the essays are well written, they are of mixed quality regarding both the stated and unstated objectives of the volume. The strongest essays are those which deal with the major issues of the Romanian-Hungarian debate: settlement, i.e., Daco-Roman origins, continuity of presence; institutions, i.e., voivodship, regnum; sources of data, i.e., "Anonymus" Chronicle, archeology, etc.). In this sense, both George Cushing's "Hungarian Cultural Traditions in Transylvania" and Adolf Armbruster's "The Portrayal of the Transylvanian Romanian in Saxon Historical Writings" are only of peripheral interest. The strongest essays are the analyses of Dennis Deletant, the essay by Domonkos Kosáry and the introduction of László Péter.

The introduction is an excellent short history of Transylvania and at the same time a framing of the central question voiced by George Orwell in 1984: "Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past." Péter points out that this is as applicable to the neo-socialist nationalists in present Romania as it was for the red fascism of Nicolae Ceaușescu. However, the hope is that efforts by responsible historians can counter their historical disinformation.

The moderate tone, the concern for documentation and fairness is also the hallmark for Deletant in his analysis of "Anonymus" as a source for the "settlement" of Hungarians and Romanians in Transylvania. His essay on Romanian historiography displays this commitment as well, from his treatment of some of the earliest writings (Școala ardeleană) to that of the age of Ștefan Pascu and Ilie Ceaușescu. Ambrus Miskolczy's assessment of Nicolae Iorga's historical perspective and the Norman Stone and Martyn Rady evaluation of the three-volume *Erdély története* also reflect the search for balance and openness to different interpretations. This is also reinforced with the summary text of debates that took place in Hungary at the University of Debrecen following the publication of *Erdély története* (appendix III).

The volume is highly recommended for all English-language specialists of ethnic politics in east central Europe, for historians of the region of whatever nationality, particularly Romanians and Hungarians whose fate is most directly involved. It is an excellent overview of the sources of the different perceptions *in* and *about* Transylvania. However, there are two critical observations about the presentation. The place names should be cross-indexed in at least Romanian, Hungarian and German, or given in all the relevant languages on first mention in the text, e.g. Brașov (Brassó, Kronstadt). The E.A. Bielz map of Transylvania leaves a lot to be desired. It is a German-language map, greatly reduced, on which most non-specialists would have an impossible task locating the places mentioned without the aid of a magnifying glass. These two blemishes must be corrected before the next edition of an otherwise very important contribution to the understanding of both Romanian and Hungarian history.

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**Modernists, Marxists and the Nation: The Ukrainian Literary Discussion of the 1920s.** By Myroslav Shkandrij. Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1992. xii, 265 pp. Index. Hard bound.

The appearance of Shkandrij's monograph could not have been more timely. Among issues raised in the literary discussion of the 1920s, perhaps the most crucial was that of orientation: east or west. In the newly reborn Ukrainian state, in its post-colonial rebirth that question is as problematic as ever, be it in terms of literature, culture or political alignment. Although little is ever learned from history, it is hoped that the meticulous presentation of what transpired during the literary discussion can be of

use not only to students of intellectual history but to those who are trying to understand contemporary Ukraine.

Although it's a pity that every author writing on Ukrainian literature in English feels compelled to start with an introduction which scans all of modern Ukrainian history, Shkandrij does well in grounding the literary discussion firmly in the various intellectual choices faced by the intelligentsia in Ukraine in the nineteenth century: the choices between the paths of Nikolai Gogol' (literature in Russian, the language of the empire) and Taras Shevchenko (literature in Ukrainian, the native language of the author); Mykhailo Drahomaniv (Ukrainian as language for the education of the masses) and Ivan Nechui-Levytskyi (Ukrainian language for all in all spheres of life); Borys Hrinchenko/Serhii Iefremov (utility of a literary work) and Mykyta Sriblianskyi/Mykola Ievshan (aesthetics of a literary work). Such a grounding makes the literary discussion a natural outgrowth of the preceding age and not something unique to the 1920s. While the first chapter shows the roots of the literary discussion, the political origins in chap. 2 provide the reader with the soil on which the literary discussion had to develop.

Shkandrij set out to present the "first comprehensive monograph" on the literary discussion. This he did. For anyone who is not familiar with what went on during the literary discussion, Shkandrij's book is an essential resource. In the brisk eleven chapters and a conclusion, he retells and supports by quotations the arguments pro and con as they appeared. Although not so exhaustively, Iaroslav Hordynskyi and George S.N. Luckyj, however, have done something similar, and Abram Leites and Mykola Iashek have provided the fundamental bibliography. Shkandrij's monograph would have been much more valuable had he gone farther not only in collecting but in interpreting. Perhaps under the influence of the rather catchy and oblique title of this monograph I expected more analysis and interpretation: I would like to have more of Shkandrij's own views on what it was all about. I also would have welcomed some speculation on the rather peculiar notion that writers take upon themselves that they "create an ideal world" and feel that it is their duty to do this. Even those who supported the European orientation in the literary discussion did it within a typically eastern/Russian context, i.e., the literary "intelligentsia" felt that it was its duty to be the social avant-garde.

Shkandrij summarizes the attacks of one group upon another, as he does, for example, of Mykhail Semenko's *Nova Generatsia* vs *VAPLITE*. For a reader who already knows *what* happened it is somewhat frustrating that Shkandrij does not venture beyond the surface of the events. One longs for some sort of interpretation. Did Semenko really believe that VAPLITE was fascist? Or did he say this and attack VAPLITE more out of envy that the VAPLITE "Olympians" in their emphasis on quality did not include him and his poetry? Or, Shkandrij states that "The party manipulated the Discussion to ensure the triumph of the politically conformist and artistically incompetent." True but why? Why did the Party insist on the plebeian? Is the politically conformist by definition artistically incompetent? Is there something inherent in a totalitarian system, like communism, that cannot abide artistic quality? Questions of this nature are not addressed by the author. He also shies away from any literary interpretations of the works around which the literary discussion raged. Some of the works do carry relevant elucidation to some of the participants' mindsets during the discussion. Had Shkandrij, for example, given Khvylovyi's *Woodsnipes* some thought he might have wondered why Ahlaia Epanchyna was Russian and why Dimi Karamazov had that specific surname. He might have come to the conclusion that already at that time Khvylovyi saw the end of his struggle and realized the reason for such an outcome. Although Shkandrij summarizes Khvylovyi's views: "[Khvylovyi] wrote that if the national policy in Ukraine over the last ten years had all along been a mistaken one, and all Ukrainian communist [Woodsnipes] had, unwittingly, been 'agents of Muscovite imperialism, blind tools in the hands of cunning Russian great-power mongers [Aglaia],' the only logical solution for them all would be to 'immediately organize a club for suicides.'" This is the storyline for *Woodsnipes* yet Shkandrij never makes the connection.

Where Shkandrij substantially enlarges on what had been done by his predeces-

sors is in the last three chapters of the book. Here he takes the literary discussion outside Soviet Ukraine and also expands its contextual frame to include the artistic avant-garde, both art and cinema, in Ukraine. I also expected more of a synthesis in the concluding chapter. Instead, one finds more of the same resummation of the various sides and their positions. In an interesting enlargement of the literary discussion, however, Shkandrij does point to the long lasting impact of the discussions: "They exploded in a second 'literary discussion' among Ukrainian emigres in the years immediately following the Second World War. . . . and rehashed much of the preceding dialogue; even the opposing camps bore a marked resemblance to those of the twenties." Yes and no. All of the émigrés wanted a literature of high quality; there was no talk of serving a class, proletariat or any other. There was a conflict between literature free from political considerations and one that was to be "engaged" in the "struggle for Ukraine's freedom." What is more frightening in the repeat of the literary discussion by émigrés is the persistent notion that writers must be united into an all-embracing organization. In the western world authors organize at best into small divergent groups united by a given aesthetic or world outlook. Yet for the émigrés now in the west the all-embracing union of writers was almost "a priori"—all of them believed that there had to be an organization of writers and a great part of their discussion centered on who had a right to belong, the criteria for membership, who had the decisive voice in what was to be published.

But there are also specific problems. The title of chap. 3, "From Modernists to Marxists," sounds nice but is misleading. It is not from the aesthetic to the political as the title would imply, but rather it is a repeat of the path charted in Luckyj's *Literary Politics* and should have been called something like "A Struggle for Predominance." "From Modernists to Marxists" is also a bit strained when one takes into account the following statement about Khvylovyi: "Ironically, the communist [Khvylovyi] who in 1921 had advised 'burning all the rottenness of feudal and bourgeois aesthetics and morals . . . severing all links, denying all foregoing traditions,' emerged in 1925 as a defender of cultural values and continuities in European intellectual culture." Certainly this seems more like the reverse, "From Marxist to Modernist," since the later views of Khvylovyi-the-defender-of-cultural-values are more consistent with modernist aesthetics.

Although the book is very well constructed, supplemented by very handy chronologies of the relevant articles in the discussion, an index of pertinent names for the discussion and is almost devoid of typographical errors (I spotted four), there are some small annoyances. First concerns footnotes. The notes in this work are extensive and it is most annoying to have to flip to the back of the book after every sentence or two. Some notes, of course, are just reference indicators and do not add anything to the text one is reading but others are further elucidations and explanations which must be read in conjunction with the main text. Considering the capabilities of today's technology in page setting, it is hard to understand why the notes are not at the bottom of the page. The second deals with the translated rendition of names of journals and newspapers. Why translate the names of journals? Would one in writing about *Le Monde* call it "The World"? or the Polish Parisian *Kultura* as "Culture"? When cited in footnotes, transliteration not translation is given. This is as it should be. Finally there are some unnecessary repetitions and some details that, though interesting, do not add anything to the subject of the book (for example, interesting as it might be, the item about Tychnya "allowed to sleep on bundles of old newspapers, keeping a tub of water with pieces of bread floating in it to drown the rats" is a detail totally out of place.

But quibbles aside, Shkandrij's book is extremely well researched and very thorough in the presentation of the facts. His achievement lies in the way he manages to weave all of the various strands which pertain to the literary discussion into a coherent tapestry, to show clearly and decisively who, what and when. It will serve for years to come as the introductory source to this important aspect of Ukraine's intellectual history.

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