

BETWEEN GOGOL' AND ŠEVČENKO: POLARITY IN THE LITERARY UKRAINE: 1798–1847. By *George S. N. Luckyj*. Harvard Series in Ukrainian Studies, vol. 8. Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1971. 210 pp. DM 38.

Few things in the study of the Slavic world are more fascinating, bewildering, and exasperating than its paradoxes about inter-Slavic relations. On the one hand there is the powerful myth of Slavic brotherhood and unity, which can be traced back at least to Herder and has produced such movements as the Brotherhood of Cyril and Methodius in the 1840s, the Slavic congresses of 1848 and 1867, and the scholarly International Congresses of Slavists in the twentieth century. But running parallel to this cult of Slavic solidarity is a series of bitter conflicts that have provided the Slavs with two hundred years of noble excuses to hate, distrust, oppress, and kill one another—the Polish Question, the conflict between the Czechs and the Slovaks, the conflict between the Croats and the Serbs, the Macedonian Question, and the conflict between the Ukrainians and the Russians.

The most perplexing of all these issues in our day is undoubtedly the Ukrainian Question. On this question, among scholars of Russian and Ukrainian background alike, and even among scholars who have no Slavic ethnic heritage at all, dispassionate objectivity is almost as scarce as hens' teeth.

Almost, but not quite. The Ukrainian-born Canadian citizen George S. N. Luckyj has long distinguished himself in scholarship for his remarkable ability to find his way through the wilderness of Ukrainian-Russian relations, even though so few existing maps of the territory correspond to what is actually there. Professor Luckyj's new book is at least as important a contribution to Russian literature as to Ukrainian. However much otherwise objective scholars in Russian literature may wish, along with Belinsky, that the Ukrainian Question would just go away, and however justifiable their impatience may be with the inflexible extremists of Ukrainian nationalism, the fact is that Russian literature from its beginning to the present cannot possibly be understood in isolation from the Ukrainians. This book concentrates on the crucial period in the first half of the nineteenth century when Ukrainian writers were struggling to decide whether to make their special contribution in Russian, as the Scots and Irish have done in English and the Austrians and Germanic Swiss in German; or whether to develop a complete Ukrainian literature in the Ukrainian language. As the title implies, Gogol made the first choice and Shevchenko the second. Luckyj's admirably balanced and highly informative discussion of both choices should be required reading for all who refuse to face the facts about the Ukraine—or think they already have them.

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BELINSKIJ AND RUSSIAN LITERARY CRITICISM: THE HERITAGE OF ORGANIC AESTHETICS. By *Victor Terras*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974. vii, 305 pp. \$17.50.

In the following passage Victor Terras sums up the main argument of his study in the origins, formulations, and legacy of Belinsky's critical theory: "Belinskij's concern with 'Russian literature,' rather than with specific writers and poets, and his tendency to see a given literary figure in the context, and as a necessary product, of his age, are Hegelian traits. Belinskij invested Lomonosov, Deržavin, Žukovskij,

Puškin, Gogol', and Lermontov with distinct historical roles, not only in the development of Russian literature but in the very development of the Russian national consciousness" (p. 64).

The best virtue of this work is, in fact, its unswerving determination to zero in on the central trait of Belinsky's criticism: its "organicism." (The classroom teacher's repetition of a main point marks the discussion in many places. Chapter 4 begins: "Belinskij's world view always remained 'organic.'" Chapter 5 begins: "Belinskij's conception of the work of art is organic from beginning to end.")

What does "organic" mean? Two related things: seeing literature "as a function of both nationality and society, on the one hand, and as 'a living whole,' on the other" (p. 119); seeing Russian literature as an integral part of the national life and national consciousness, to which it gives both expression and direction. This is the essence of Belinsky's message as a critic. Everything else is commentary. And this book derives its unquestionable validity from its concentration on this main critical argument of Belinsky's work.

This study in the development and latter-day fortunes of this critical tradition in Russia raises, in fact, a very big question (a question one could wish to offer to Belinsky for his answer): Is this "organic" emphasis in the conception of Russian literature something that Belinsky created or something that he reflected? Does Belinsky's real significance reside in his special ability to elaborate and transmit a view of literature that was growing in the national soil? Are the moral earnestness and ethnic concern that both glorify and imperil Russian literature a result of historical conditions that also created Belinsky?

For example, didn't Pushkin and Gogol and Lermontov and Turgenev and Dostoevsky and Goncharov provide the foundation for Belinsky? Shouldn't their work be listed among his "sources"? To wonder if there may be something characteristically Russian in Belinsky's critical emphasis is of course only to add lustre to Belinsky's fame as a national critic (unless one prefers to denounce Belinsky and his influence and turn away from this controversial Russian seriousness about literature).

Both the friendly and the unfriendly student of Belinsky will find this study useful. Nowhere else is so full a treatment offered of most of what one needs to know about this famous spokesman of Russian literary thought.

One nagging query: How should one pronounce "Schellingian"?

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DIE ENTDECKUNG DER UNTEREN VOLKSSCHICHTEN DURCH DIE RUSSISCHE LITERATUR: ZUR DIALEKTIK EINES LITERARISCHEN MOTIVS VON KANTEMIR BIS BELINSKIJ. By *Wolfgang Gesemann*. Veröffentlichungen des Osteuropa-Institutes München, vol. 39. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1972. 315 pp. DM 68, paper.

There is hardly any writer in Russia in recent centuries who has not dealt with the lower strata of the population (referred to as *muzhiki*, *podlyi narod*, *prostoi narod*, *chern'*, and so on). Gesemann, in his *Habilitationsschrift*, examines the treatment of this theme in literary works, travelogues, and diaries of writers and literati in general, from the first quarter of the eighteenth century until the middle of the nineteenth. Terms such as *narod*, *narodnost'*, *narodnyi*, *natsional'nost'*, and