

scious of their distinctive regionalism, these intellectuals engaged in a flurry of literary creativity, praising the provincial life and its folklore. Individual writers tended to identify with the province's cultural values and idealized the province in their writings, and, for the first time in Silesia's intellectual life, not national but regional customs and traditions helped mold its literature.

A strong emphasis is placed on examining the different non-German groups in Silesia (especially the Polish) and the considerable influence the German Romantic movement had on them. Here, too, literary activity was confined to extolling provincial folklore, folk songs, customs, and traditions. Like its German counterpart, the Slavic Silesian Romantic movement was cultural, not political, and thus failed to express the dissonance that characterized the ethnic as well as the linguistic cleavages of Silesia in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

On the whole, this is an excellent treatise on Romanticism in Silesia, and even the critical reader will be hard pressed to find sources the author neglected to consult.

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LETTERS

TO THE EDITOR:

The famous anecdote about how Nicholas I supposedly determined the route of the St. Petersburg-Moscow Railway, discussed by Richard Mowbray Haywood in his article, "The 'Ruler Legend': Tsar Nicholas I and the Route of the St. Petersburg-Moscow Railway, 1842-1843" (*Slavic Review*, December 1978), has at least one variant that Haywood neglects to mention. I first heard this variant in March 1979 from an educated friend in Leningrad who really seemed to believe it. He insisted that the quite abrupt curve near Lake Vereb'e, about two hundred kilometers from Leningrad, in the otherwise "dead-straight" track between Leningrad and Moscow, was where Nikolai's thumb had hung over the edge of the ruler as he arbitrarily laid out the route of the railroad.

I wrote to Professor Haywood about this version, and he replied that he had initially included a footnote on the thumb story, but later excised it, first, because of space limitations, and second, because "my wife requested me to cut it, fearing that otherwise there would be nothing left on the topic to discuss at cocktail parties with my colleagues in the field." Haywood's missing footnote asserts that the apocryphal thumb print was actually "a relocation of the original route of the railway near the Vereb'e Station, meant to avoid the heaviest gradients over the Valdai Hills in the direction of Moscow and to replace two of the longest and highest of the original wooden trestles, which were falling into disrepair, with shorter ones. The new line was built in the years 1878-1881 and made the total length of the railway 609 instead of 604 versts."

Thus are we taught to reject, as a useful rule of thumb, all such pretty stories as "the legend of the ruler's thumb."

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FROM THE EDITOR:

As a result of a mistake on our part, we failed to comply with Professor Danylo Husar Struk's request that we use the form "L'viv" rather than "Lwów" in his article, "The Summing-up of Silence: The Poetry of Ihor Kalynets," which we published in the March 1979 issue. We offer this correction and our apology to Professor Struk and to others who may have been offended by this usage.