

transplanted Italian art forms initially introduced to the Hungarian court of Matthias Corvinus by Tuscan artists. Some restriction of the abundant details would bring, it seems to me, a better balance between true Italian imports and the large number of castles, town halls, and houses that merely reflected the new style by incorporating or reworking individual elements.

Unlike preceding chapters, "The Town" is heterogeneous. It contains a brief discussion of three important painting examples, followed by the classification of types of parapets, a description of the town hall in Poznań, and finally, an example of town planning in Zamość. These art forms are decidedly different from the Italian works because of the influence of northwestern Europe. The architecture in Gdańsk is part of that trend, while in Bohemia, the architectural tendency is partly related to the Lombardic-Italianate influence of the southern German evolution.

The last category, the vernacular, to which the parapet variations in fact belong, might turn out to be Eastern Europe's real contribution, assuming, of course, that it is not measured by Italian standards. The hybrid forms, which are not based on classical models, are exuberant and occasionally wild, and breathe more life of their own than the transplanted Italian efforts, for such foreign imitations do not reflect East European artistic continuity. One would like to learn more about those autochthonous reactions that give one a feeling of the *genius loci*.

Another desideratum of Renaissance art is painting. Białostocki's treatment is so cursory, however, that the uninformed reader might misunderstand its significance in the context of north European art. If more space could not have been allotted in the present book, perhaps it would have been better to leave it out altogether.

The three hundred fifty-one illustrations and twenty drawings are an excellent and inseparable counterpart to the text. It is a pleasure to read the names of places and people in their authentic form, a rare practice, unfortunately, among scholars when they venture into strange territory. The only problem I found was in the wavering between two forms used for the royal hill in Prague; I see no reason why the German-inspired *Hradshin* should alternate with *Hradčany*. Finally, a remark on figure 1, a map which was undoubtedly drawn far away from central Europe (in Ithaca, New York?): the crippled Labe (Elbe) River, which somehow lost its upper course, is miraculously connected to the Oder River.

MOJMÍR SVATOPLUK FRINTA
State University of New York at Albany

THE RUSSIAN FOLK THEATRE. By *Elizabeth A. Warner*. Slavistic Printings and Reprintings, 104. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1977. xviii, 257 pp. DM 75.

Few full-length books of Russian folklore scholarship have been written in the English language; thus, the appearance of a new study is indeed an occasion to be noted. Moreover, Dr. Warner's work is hardly disappointing and provides a good example of sound scholarship: it is a well-documented presentation of an important topic derived from little-known primary and secondary sources. In addition to its numerous interesting and valuable insights, this study also identifies many new areas for future research in the study of both folklore and Russian drama.

The book is divided into four parts: "Ritual Drama," "The Puppet Theater," "Non-Ritual Drama," and "The Folk Actor and His Art." The author's approach is generally cultural and relational; each section discusses how various aspects of the "theatrical" have penetrated Russian culture, ranging from games and ceremonial rituals to the elaborate and almost "literary" folk play *Tsar Maksimilian*. Dr. Warner takes advantage of classic works on Russian theater, such as V. N. Vsevolodskii-Gerngross's *Istoriia russkogo teatra* and numerous recent studies by Soviet folk-

lorists, and enlarges upon them by using the less theoretically restricted theories of contemporary Western psychology, sociology, and anthropology. The resulting insights provide a new look at the spectrum of ritualized Russian folk life as it is expressed in the communal transformation of "real" experience into dramatized analogies which carry special conscious and unconscious meanings for those who participate in the creative act.

Perhaps the least "new" information is contained in the first part of the book, which treats the various ceremonial rituals of rural Russia. This section retells much of what is already found in Sokolov's venerated but over-Stalinized *Russian Folklore*. Nevertheless, for the neophyte, Warner's analysis provides a good theoretical base with which to understand how the less ritualized theater is built upon ceremonial life.

The other chapters provide a wealth of information about various theatrical activities in rural Russia. The section on the puppet theater is the first study, to my knowledge, to relate the various kinds of Russian puppet plays and techniques to each other and to their European counterparts. Little has been done, for example, to explore the relationship between the Russian *vertep* and the Western miracle play of the Middle Ages. It has been commonly stated that the modern Russian theater grew out of the seventeenth-century Kiev Academy, which, in turn, drew its inspiration from the Western miracle plays of Poland. Perhaps this observation ignores cultural influences closer to home. Puppets have always gotten away with things that persons could not. Certainly, the Russian religious *vertep* contained many of the features found in the early Russian academic "miracle" play. Both dramatized episodes from the Bible, used similar characters, and even differentiated dialogue in alternate "sacred" and "profane" scenes. A *vertep* presentation may have inspired some Kiev academicians to try the same thing with humans. There is certainly room for discussion in this area.

Of the many nonritual dramas, only a few remain today. Dr. Warner concentrates particularly on the most elaborate of these, *Tsar Maksimilian*, whose main episodes and themes she has distilled from some twenty extant variants. The three main parts of the play are discussed in detail: the martyrdom of Adol'f, the duel scenes, and the interludes. To the comparativist, the discussion of stock comic characters is particularly interesting since counterparts of the Russian figures of the Jew, Cossack, devil, gravedigger, and doctor may be found in numerous Western dramas as well as in the commedia dell'arte. A brief chapter comparing *Tsar Maksimilian* to the *Saint George* plays of England may be of interest particularly to British readers. A final section of the book touches on the devices of folk acting and on the ritual aspects of the actor dealing with an audience.

Among the many questions implicit in the book, the most intriguing deal with the relationship of the Russian folk theater to that of the West. Clearly, parallels may be drawn between episodes, stock characters, and dramatic devices without much difficulty. The similarities between the *Petrouchka* puppet play and the Punch-and-Judy Show beg for further research. Was there a connection linking the Western and the Russian folk theaters through various fairs and festivals? Who were the instruments of the transmission of images—foreigners or Russians? Another area untouched by Dr. Warner, but requiring research, concerns the formal, poetic aspects of the folk drama.

Certainly, in this time of renewed interest in world folklore, Dr. Warner's study is a valuable work. Her scholarship and method of presentation not only contribute a timely approach to a long-neglected field, but also provide an excellent model for future study of Russian folklore.

GEORGE KALBOUSS
Ohio State University