

spotted in this book, the one found on the first page of chapter 9 (p. 323) should be mentioned because of the importance of that chapter: the seventh line from the bottom is misplaced, and should follow the thirteenth line from the top.

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A HISTORY OF BULGARIAN LITERATURE, 865–1944. By *Charles A. Moser*. Slavistic Printings and Reprintings, 112. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1972. 282 pp. 60 Dglds.

A thorough history in English of Bulgarian literature has long been needed. C. A. Manning and Roman Smal-Stocki were the first to attempt to fill this lacuna with their *History of Modern Bulgarian Literature*, published in 1960. Unfortunately the book was neither accurate, comprehensive (medieval Bulgarian literature was not included), nor analytical. Charles Moser's *History* surpasses their work in both comprehensiveness and erudition.

A meaningful presentation and analysis of Bulgarian literature over an entire spectrum of eleven centuries would be a mammoth, if not impossible, undertaking were it not that the history of Bulgarian literature is marked by lengthy gaps. Medieval Bulgarian literature, which flourished after the dissemination of the writings of Saints Cyril and Methodius and their disciples in the ninth century, declined precipitously from the eleventh to the mid-eighteenth century, except for a brief period of vitality in the fourteenth century (the "silver age"). Moser says of the whole medieval period that there is "often nothing specifically Bulgarian or very original in the major literary monuments." On the other hand, Old Bulgarian literature is surprisingly varied, ranging from Orthodox church writings to the various medieval genres of "unofficial" literature—apocryphal as well as belletristic.

Bulgaria's Renaissance is usually dated from the appearance of Paisii Khilendarski's *Slavianobŭlgarska istoriia* (1762) and extends to the liberation from the Turks in 1878. Moser's chapter covering this period reads partly like a historical survey, since the output was almost wholly polemical or didactic in character, with little of aesthetic value. Moser also traces the inception of Bulgarian theater and discusses folk poetry and the literary scholarship associated with it, as well as the rise of the literary verse form.

It was not until after 1878 that Bulgarian literature began to mature and branch out, as Moser notes. He stresses that Bulgarian literature from 1878 to 1896 was still geared to serve social ends. The sole exception was the humorous and satirical writing of Aleko Konstantinov, who remained outside the mainstream of Bulgarian literature.

The last two chapters of the book, dealing with the period 1896–1944, are fascinating as well as unique contributions to the history of Bulgarian letters. Moser discusses the dominant position which the literary historian and critic Kiril Krŭstov assumed in the years 1896–1907, when his journal *Misŭl* attracted a pleiad of Bulgaria's finest poets and prose writers, including Pencho Slaveikov, Bulgaria's sole nominee for a Nobel Prize. The most complex period in Bulgarian literature was, however, the era from 1918 to 1944, which was replete with all manner of ideologies and literary and philosophical credos. Moser most admirably conveys the distinctive *Zeitgeist* of this dynamic period in Bulgarian literature.

His critical appraisal of Communist writers such as the poets Geo Milev and Nikolai Vaptsarov and the prose writers Liudmil Stoianov and Georgi Karaslavov remains objective. He also does not neglect the literary scholarship and criticism of those years. It is understandable that his extensive eighteen-page bibliography cites primarily Bulgarian works, since relatively little of merit has been written on Bulgarian literature by Western authors (though one would question the omission of approximately a dozen articles published in German over the past forty years). It includes general histories of the periods discussed, as well as monographs on individual Bulgarian writers.

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SYMPOSIUM

AMERICAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF SLAVISTS, WARSAW, 1973, AUGUST. Vol. 3: HISTORY. Edited by *Anna Cienciala*. Slavistic Printings and Reprintings, 297. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1973. 215 pp.

CONTENTS: Imre Boba, "Przyczynek do dyskusji na temat śladów działalności świętego Metodego w krajach nad Wisłą." Jarosław Pelenski, "The Incorporation of the Ukrainian Lands of Old Rus' into Crown Poland (1569) (Socio-Material Interest and Ideology—A Reexamination)." Bickford O'Brien, "Russo-Polish Relations in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century." Edward C. Thaden, "Nationality Policy in the Western Borderlands of the Russian Empire, 1881-1914." Joseph F. Zacek, "Slovakia and the Czech National Revival: Introduction to a Case Study." Philip Shashko, "Greece and the Intellectual Bases of the Bulgarian Renaissance." Gale Stokes, "The European Sources of Nineteenth Century Thought and the National Liberation Movement in Serbia." Peter J. Georgeoff, "Educational and Religious Rivalries in European Turkey Before the Balkan Wars." John J. Kulczycki, "The School Strike of 1906-1907 in the Province of Poznań." Edward D. Wynot, Jr., "The Polish and Czech Struggles for Silesia and Their Impact on the Unity and Consciousness of the Slavic World in the Years 1918-1921." Victor R. Greene, "Slavic American Nationalism, 1870-1918."

LETTERS

TO THE EDITOR:

Professor Orest Subtelny's reassessment of "Peter I's Testament" (December 1974, pp. 663-78) is a curious piece of history, which seems to stand facts on their head in order to prove Hungarian complicity in the creation of a myth of Petrine imperialism. His thesis is based on the claim that in 1706 the leader of the Hungarian War of Liberation, Ferenc Rákóczi II, aimed at fomenting a Russo-Turkish war in order to take Habsburg pressure off Hungary. The author speculates that the "Hungarian Prototype" of the testament was expected to provoke the Turks and force Austria to go to the aid of Muscovy, "an old and tried ally of the Habsburgs" (p. 665).

The assessment of Habsburg-Romanov relations on which Dr. Subtelny's thesis is based is contradicted by standard interpretations. In 1699 the Austrians signed the Peace of Karlowitz without the consultation of their Russian ally,