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Marcel Cornis-Pope and John Neubauer, eds. *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe: Junctures and Disjunctures in the 19th and 20th Centuries. Volume III: The Making and Remaking of Literary Institutions. Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages 22.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2007. 522 pp. 978-9027234551.

This recent volume in the ICLA's Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages focuses, as its subtitle indicates, on *The Making and Remaking of Literary Institutions*. The volume's four parts—(1) Publishing and Censorship, (2) Theatre as a Literary Institution, (3) Forging Primal Pasts: The Uses of Folk Poetry, and (4) Literary Histories: Itineraries of National Self-Images—offer a thorough examination that leaves out any possibility of exclusions from a vast pantheon of literary institutions in East-Central Europe over the last two centuries. The enormous cross-cultural institutional architecture, “transnational rather than comparative” (as the first page of the General Introduction emphasizes), traverses on the horizontal line from Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Serbia, and Croatia, to Hungary, Romania, and Ukraine. Vertically the axis runs from Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, and Finland down to Albania, Macedonia, and Bulgaria, covering a region known by such diverse names as *MittelEuropa*, *Zwischeneuropa*, *Südosteuropa*, East-Central Europe, Central-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, Central and Eastern Europe, or Central Europe.

One can only imagine the tremendous amount of research and selection that informs the long list of literary institutions profiled in the volume's insightful and judiciously chosen commentaries attached to a particular culture, event, or literary development. Piled high and deep to include “not so much shared institutions” but rather “such region-wide analogous institutional processes as the national awakening, the modernist opening, and the communist regimentation, the canonization of texts, and censorship of literature” (xi), the volume's elaborate configuration features “a series of independent articles,” or what the editors, early on in the Preface, call a “multiple scanning” of commentaries (ix). At a time when the European Union appears ready to forfeit the region's cultural diversity, the publication of *The Making and Remaking of Literary Institutions* is a particularly welcome and intellectually enriching work that brings into prominence the national awakening and institutionalization of literature that have taken place over the past two centuries in the cultures of the region. As the volume's editors state in the Preface, “at the heart of a national awakening we always find such institutional as-

pects [of] literature as language renewal, the introduction of the vernacular and its literature in schools and universities, the building of an infrastructure for the publication of books and journals, clashes with censorship, the establishment of national academies, libraries and theatres, and the (re)construction of a national folklore and writing histories of the vernacular literature” (xi).

In a General Introduction by John Neubauer (with Inna Peleva and Mihály Szegedy Maszák), the history of literary institutions in East-Central Europe is broadly divided into three periods. The first involves the period of national awakenings and the institutionalization of literature through the processes and venues detailed in the passage just quoted (1800-1890). Then come the literary institutions of Modernism (1890-1945), an era whose most important sites were the cabarets and literary cafés (which also functioned as the emergent space of the East-European avant-garde), especially those arising after World War I. This was the time when the Baltic countries and Czechoslovakia became independent for the first time, Poland regained its independence, and Croatia, the Voivodina, Transylvania, and other former Austro-Hungarian territories became parts of greater Yugoslavia and Romania, thus setting the stage for the glorification in the new countries of a national literary culture with roots in indigenous folk art. The final period encompasses the radical reform of existing institutions under the communist regime (1945-1989), an interval that covers both Stalinism and the Post-Stalinist Thaw.

The first major part of the volume, “Publishing and Censorship,” includes its own, very thorough Introduction by John Neubauer (with Robert Pynsent, Vilmos Voigt, and Marcel Cornis-Pope) that focuses on national awakenings presented in the form of an extensive list of printers and publishers of newspapers, literary journals, and books going back as far as the sixteenth century. It then turns to the opening to modernist aesthetics (inspired in part by literary and artistic trends in France but acquiring a different orientation in East-Central Europe) that began in Poland (with the Warsaw positivists and the Cracow *Stanczycy*) and Hungary. This trend had become present everywhere in the region in the 1890s. The region also saw the publication in 1877 of the world’s first journal of comparative literature, the *Acta comparationis litterarum universarum* in Kolozsvár (Transylvania). Meanwhile, Populism or Agrarian Nationalism emerged in spite of modernist literary trends advocating the autonomy of literature. By 1948 the literary institutions in all East-Central European countries, including publishing houses, book distributors, and theatre, had been nationalized, triggering publications in exile, such as *Kultura* (arguably East-Central Europe’s most important and fiercely independent exile journal) and underground publishing or *samizdat* (e.g., “self-publication” in Russian). At the conclusion of the section the writer(s) is wondering, tongue-in-cheek, if the post-1989 “burgeoning telecommunication towers of globalization will adequately replace the Babel of the old East-Central European cities” (61).

The first section of Part One, “Publishing,” provides a detailed review of some of the region’s outstanding publications, such as Neil Stewart’s analysis of the Polish *Moderni revue* (1894–1925), complete with a history of its founders

and beginnings, central themes and basic features, cosmopolitan dimension, and public stance as a modern institution. József Szili follows with an examination of “the uncompromising standards” of the Hungarian journal *Nyugat* (1908–1941), credited with creating modern Hungarian literature and establishing a relationship with world literature. Marcel Cornis-Pope then offers a comprehensive treatment of two influential magazines and literary *cénacles* in post-World War I Romania, *Sburătorul* (Winged Spirit/Incubus, 1919–27) (whose founder and leading figure, the literary critic and novelist Eugen Lovinescu promoted the theory of synchronization, which held that Romania’s literature had to follow in step with Western cultural and literary canons) and *Gândirea* [Thought, 1921–44] (whose director-editor Nichifor Crainic initiated and encouraged a regressive version of Modernism and ethnocentric, implicitly xenophobic attitudes). Also discussed is Tomislav Brlek’s *Krugovi* (A Croatian Opening, 1925–58), a literary monthly credited with breaking with the previously dominant ideological molds of fascist nationalism and Bolshevik artistic orthodoxy and with introducing some of the remarkable writers of the next decades. Other less analytical but informative pieces address underground publishing in Estonia under Soviet Censorship (Kersti Unt), Slovak journals caught between Languages and Censorship (Dagmar Roberts), and the national role of the Albanian literary journals (Robert Elsie).

The essays in the next section of Part One, “Censorship,” meticulously examine various ways in which discourse was suppressed. The first is Jan Čulík’s “The Laws and Practices of Censorship in Bohemia,” with a detailed commentary that extends from the days of Empress Maria Theresa through the 1800s (from the pre-1848 Czech National Revival to the harsh censorship triggered at the dawn of the new century by the “strict absolutist and harsh censorship” [97] during World War I). Čulík then turns to the post-Stalinist Thaw, the 1966 Press Law that legalized censorship, the post-Prague Spring, and the purges of 1972 (that once more emptied all public libraries of materials “critical of Marxism-Leninism, the policy of the Socialist States, and the Marxist-Leninist Parties” [99]), closing with the *samizdat* literary culture (notably Josef Skvorecký’s “Sixty-Eight Publishers” press) and the fall of communism. In “Censorship: A Case Study of Bogumil Hrabal’s *Jarmilka*,” Kees Merks discusses the discrepancies in the different published versions of Hrabal’s text and substantiates his views with extensive quotations—namely by comparing the complete first and third versions published in 1952 and 1992 with *Jarmilka* II published in 1964, at the height of communist censorship, which lacked the political jokes and allusions of the other two texts. Dagmar Roberts’s “Religious and Political Censorship in Slovakia” is a short but historically relevant piece followed by an excellent discussion by Mihály Szegedy Maszák of the tense political milieu and the role of communist censorship in Hungary during the brief but memorable 1945–49 period. The presence of Soviet troops at that time facilitated the infiltration back into the country of what the author calls “the Muscovite communists.” This was a group that had lived in the Soviet Union before and during the war and that included such notable luminaries as the film critic and writer Béla Balázs, the philosopher György Lukács, the journalist Andor Gábor, and the highly controversial critic and ultimately tragic

József Révai, among others. Although constrained by page limitations, Maszák's discussion is highly informative, especially for those interested in a short course on Lukács's specification of the cultural attitudes that needed to be combated in order to achieve the desired goal of literary realism: "aristocratism, the rejection of equality, the contempt for the masses, the underestimation of economic, political and social causes, the cult of irrationalism and myth, an emphasis on the vanity of life, a distance from life, and a focus on the psyche" (121).

Another interesting, well-documented, and chronologically extensive analysis of censorship is Violeta Kelertas's "Strategies against Censorship in Soviet Lithuania: 1944–90," a review that also includes a noteworthy list of the subversive methods that were employed to bypass Stalinist taboos, such as the practice of magic realism, historical displacement, and the use of an unreliable narrator. Concluding the section are Włodzimierz Bolecki's "Getting Around Polish Censorship: 1968–89," which contains an interesting discussion of the "68 generation" from both a political and a literary perspective, and Karl Jirgens's "Censorship after Independence: the Case of Aleksander Pelēcis," which is particularly informative on Latvian writers' rejection of Soviet-style Socialist Realism in general and on the poet and author Pelēcis in particular—especially his *Siberia Book*, which chronicles its author's twenty-three-year imprisonment in Siberia and was published in the United States by the Latvian Press Book in 1993.

Turning to a more animated topic, the volume's second major part, "Theatre as a Literary Institution," follows a structure similar to the first one. The General Introduction by Dragan Klaić divides the region's theatre history since 1800 into three phases: (1) national awakening and realism as a period when, according to Klaić, the playwright took the central role; (2) modernism and the dominance of theatre directors; and (3) theatre after World War II. Beyond acknowledging Klaić as the author of the Introduction(s) that precede each of the commentaries, this reviewer can only offer a rather mechanical "scanning" of the three phases, which are overwhelming in their accumulation of cultural information.

The first of the many reviews on the first phase of national awakening and the centrality of the playwright is Zoltán Imre's analysis of Hungarian theater in 1837 and all the anxieties connected with building the theater and with opening night. Imre's report is followed by Lado Kralj's one-paragraph commentary on Jesuit school performances in 1657 that were turned into opera in Slovenia and Ondřej Hučín's more extensive assessment of the Czech theater that touches on such issues as early theatrical venues and fin-de-siècle consolidation and diversification. The next short commentaries outline the theater world of Slovakia, which started as "an amateur endeavor," and the spiritual unity the theater provided in divided nineteenth-century Poland, then turn to the school, court, and clandestine theater performances in Lithuania and the politics and artistic autonomy of the Estonian theater. The section ends with two crisp reports on the multilingual dimension of the Romanian stage and on the emergence of a national theater in Bulgaria.

The second phase of Part Two, significantly titled "Modernism: the Director Rules," consists of a long list of generally short reviews. Coverage includes theater performances and superb dramatists in Croatia (Stjepan Miletić and-

Branko Gavella) and Hungary (Thalia Tarsagag) and modernist stage developments vis-à-vis their respective cultural milieux throughout the region. Topics range from the Czech (“Modernist Inroads into Czech Theatre”), Slovak (“The Interbellum Emancipation of the Slovak Stage”), Romanian (“Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism Clash on the Romanian Stage”), and Bulgarian situations (“Institutionalization and Innovation in the Bulgarian Theatre”) to the Lithuanian (“The Stage in Independent Lithuania”), Latvian (“Kiking with Poetry: Female Trailblazers on the Latvian Stage”), and Estonian theaters (“The Ebbs and Flows of Modernist Energy in Estonian Theatre”).

Of particular interest are the essays on the Bohemian brothers Karel and Josef Čapek and on Polish modernist drama. The first, Veronika Ambros’s “Fuzzy Borderlines: the Čapeks’ Robots, Insects, Women, and Men,” treats Karel Čapek’s centrality in modern Bohemia (“flanked on one side by the compulsive storyteller Jaroslav Hašek, on the other by the constructor of the modern myth Franz Kafka,” 183), as well as his experimentation with literary conventions in texts that parody traditional genres, mock medieval mystery and morality plays, and ridicule the techniques of *commedia dell’arte* and popular culture. Ambros focuses next on particularly relevant works, such as Karel Čapek’s *RUR (Rossum’s Universal Robots, a Collective Drama with an Initial Comedy)* that foregrounds both human characters and a collective hero, the robots. This neologism comes from the Czech word *robota*, meaning drudgery, so we realize that robots were originally seen not as mechanical creatures but as biologically produced androids. Discussion then turns to the Čapek brothers’ jointly written comedy *The Insect Play* and Josef Čapek’s expressionist text *A Land of Many Names*, which confronts utopia with dystopia, and concludes with Karel Čapek’s *The White Plague* and *Matka* (critically acclaimed as an openly anti-fascist work). In the essays on Polish drama, Ewa Wachocka discusses the new Polish theater, mentioning several early twentieth-century figures, such as the Polish-German playwright Tadeusz Rittner and, more importantly, the last of the avant-garde, Witkacy and Witold Gombrowicz. In a cluster of essays, Eleonora Udalska and Violetta Sajkiewicz examine such playwrights as Stanislaw Wyspianski (credited with having inaugurated modern Polish stage design) and Leon Schiller’s innovations in plays that were often based on a unifying political idea. Also discussed is the influential *Reduta* Theatre established in 1919 as a chamber stage of Warsaw’s Variety Theatre. Following Dorota Fox’s short reviews on popular amusement and the Polish cabaret, Michael C. Steinlauf examines the Yiddish Theatre, legalized in 1905 along with the Yiddish press, and the status of Warsaw as the Yiddish theater capital.

The third and final phase of Part Two reviews the situation of Czech theater in “The Short Interlude of a Liberal Czech Theatre,” which sets the chronological parameters for the next cluster of essays focused on theater in East-Central Europe. It begins with the period of transition (1945–48), turns to the decades of building communism (1948–68), continues with repression as normalization (1968–86), and ends with a last stretch from perestroika to the Velvet Revolution. Although the bulk of the less structured but informative short reviews that follow focuses on theater developments of general interest in countries throughout the re-

gion, some commentaries stress specific aspects of the stage world, such as a very interesting contrast between Tadeusz Rózewicz (especially his revolutionary play *Kartoteka*) and Sławomir Mrożek and their affiliations with the theater of the absurd in Poland. Other commentaries address ideology and moral rectitude, the rejection of Expressionism, theater censorship and contemporary plays in Slovenia, and (especially notable) the role of silent censorship, intertextual grotesques, and theater as metaphor for society in Yugoslavia. The third phase concludes with a short but thought-provoking epilogue on the continuity of the theater as an institution that has served the region's national emancipation; on the impacts of modernism, revolution, and socialism; and on current efforts to grapple with "European integration and the cultural consequences of economic globalization" (268).

Since the history of theater as an institution is linked with national emancipation, the next important part of the volume, Part Three, "Forging primal pasts: The uses of folklore," explores the function of the region's folklore in forging a primordial past for the countries of East-Central Europe. The Introduction by John Neubauer centers on folklore and national awakening. Neubauer begins with a brief summary of Ismail Kadare's novel *The Three-Arched Bridge* (1976-78), which presents "the bridge construction as a capitalist invasion of a small community" (269) while connecting the story's narrator with a fictional collector of folk ballads, one of which depicts the immurement of a woman during the construction of a local castle and seems to be relevant to the building of the bridge. Neubauer's clever conceit draws an interesting and critically appealing parallel between the fictional collector's rewriting of the ancient ballad to help his company build the bridge and the philologists and folklorists who revived folklore for the purpose of nation building in East-Central Europe. To this end, the Introduction includes two mini-sections that examine (1) the case of folklorist Vuk Stefanović Karadžić and the Serbian folksongs he collected in the four-volume *Book of Serbian Folk Poetry* (1815) vis-à-vis Marcel Cornis-Pope's discussion of the Romanian folk ballad *Meșterul Manole* and its ramifications throughout the Balkans; and (2) a list of the necessary conditions that led to the national institutionalization of folk poetry, such as linguistic standardization; reconstruction of texts so that their heroes become moral, religious, and national exemplars; and adjustment of the history and theory of national literature to produce a normative type of literature.

The various processes that led to the institutionalization of folklore are next briefly reviewed in the cases of Estonia, where "literature and folklore are seen as two distinct fields of research and forms of discourse" (289), and of the other Baltic states. In addition to examining interesting stock characters like the Latvian trickster Velns, this cluster of essays offers interesting historical and geo-political insights into the word "Baltic" (290). The remaining short articles report on the role of Czech folk culture in the country's national rebirth or the contribution of folklore to the making of Slovak literature. A thorough examination of Romanian folklore demonstrates its active part in forging a literary culture involving collectors, interpreters, and rewriters dating back to the seventeenth century. Next, in "The Row about the Wild Rose," Vilmos Voigt summarizes the 1864 debate on the origins of folk ballads, which is followed by an extended analysis of folklore's

role in establishing the Bulgarian nation. Concluding the section are short pieces on the rediscovery of folk literature in Albania and a noteworthy examination of the deep roots of Macedonian and Bulgarian culture in folk traditions.

The final part, "Literary histories: Itineraries of national self-images," begins with John Neubauer's comprehensive Introduction that asks challenging questions like "Was Kafka a Czech writer?" and "Should Joseph Conrad and Eugène Ionesco be included in Polish and Romanian literary histories?" For Neubauer and the authors of the literary histories, the main question is instead "whether the national narrative was embedded in a broader, European perspective or was it restricted to the national tradition in the vernacular" (349). To this end, Neubauer tackles "organicism in literary history," concluding that "in practice the folkloric anchoring of a nation's literary history meant excluding transnational mixing and heritage" (351), as well as "transnational literary histories." However, Neubauer does bring up two striking cases of the latter. The first, entrenched in the political realities of the mid-1800s, involves the Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz, who called on the "youthful tribe" of Slavs to offer a decaying West the means to moral and spiritual renewal and who upheld Poland's messianic European mission at a time when Russia and Serbia were the only independent Slavic states. The other is that of Sándor Eckhardt, a Professor of French in Budapest, whose plenary lecture on "Comparative Literary History in Central Europe" at the first International Congress of Literary History (1931) claimed that Hungary, just like Vienna to which Hungary was allied historically via the Dual Monarchy, had its own sphere of influence that extended to Slovak, Romanian, Croatian, and Serbian literature.

The remainder of Part Four incorporates an extensive set of commentaries dealing with such issues as shifting ideologies in Estonia, Latvian literary histories and textbooks, and an overview of Polish literary histories that integrate what the writer, Jolanta Jastrzębska, calls "the sorrows and glories of a nation's soul" (361). There are also sketchy but relevant remarks on Romanian literary histories and a comprehensive examination of a Croatian literary canon from 1900 to 1950. The latter moves from a discussion of geographic boundaries to the area's inherent provincialism, Nazi incursions, and the obsession with "independence" from the 1097 battle of Gvozd and the proclamation of a Croatian state in 1941 to a review of Croatian poetry as a nation-saving instrument. Next comes a particularly informative account of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century rift in Serbia between criticism and literary history followed by Robert Elsie's succinct literary history of Albania. Alexander Kiossev offers an incisive examination of national identity and literary history textbooks in Bulgaria that draws on insightful arguments from Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* and Homi K. Bhabha's article "DissemiNation" to express reservations about and even to oppose Bakhtin.

More comprehensive in content are a few articles that deserve special notice. The first is a detailed examination of nineteenth-century Czech literary history and national revival that also addresses the issue of forged manuscripts. The second is a persuasive plea for recognition of Slovak literary histories ("How should one respond to those literary historians of the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries who adhered to the concept of a single Czechoslovak literature?" or "Is there

a literature in Slovakia that is different from Slovak literature?" [377]), an endeavor filled with what the writer, Dagmar Roberts, holds to be "full of pitfalls," especially for attempting to overcome Czech and Hungarian perspectives. A third article, by John Neubauer, provides a well-structured evaluation of Hungarian literary histories. Opening with Ferenc Toldy, the co-editor of a 1828 handbook of Hungarian literature and Secretary of the Hungarian Academy (1835-61), and Pál Gyulai, the leading literary figure of the 1860s, 70s, and 80s, he then discusses Zsigmond Bodnár, author of the introduction to the first volume of his Hungarian literary history (1891), and Zsolt Beöthy, "the quasi-official literary historian of the 1896 celebrations of Hungary's millennial existence" and author of his own "little mirror" (388) of Hungarian narratives (1885-87), and concludes with Istvan Sötér, the pre- and post-author (with institutional associates) of the six-volume *Literary Studies of the Hungarian Academy* published in 1964-66.

The volume's last commentary, Endre Bojtár's aptly titled "Pitfalls in Writing a Regional Literary History of East-Central Europe," rounds off the wealth of information this volume offers to its readers. In examining the dangers of a comparative literary history of the region, Bojtár lists three culprits: the view that literary history is not a scholarly discipline of literature but a servant of history writing, the impossibility of defining a region in a vast expanse that can cover "everything from Germany/Austria to Russia, from Finland to Greece" (421), and the lack of specialists in the region. Each point is argued intelligently and persuasively, leading up to the concluding paragraphs, which articulate once again several open-ended questions. Among them is one that bears emphasis (and even adds a note of provocation) given the recently announced independence of Kosovo: "Should we include in South-Eastern Europe" (Maria Todorova's more neutral term for the Balkans) "all the literatures that were written in former Yugoslavia, including Kosovo and the Hungarian Voivodina?" And, going a step further, how does the emphasis, boldly upheld by the European Union, on common experiences (or, alternatively, cultural blandness) come to terms with what István Bibó has called, in the volume's last quote, "the misery of the small Eastern European states," with the lesson of Kosovo reminding us of the key role that ethnic attachments and religious animosities have played in defining national identities?

Ileana Orlich, *Arizona State University* (USA).

Jean-Paul Engélibert and Yen-Mai Tran-Gervat. *La littérature dépliée: Reprise, répétition, réécriture*. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2008. 522 pp. 978-2753505704.

Aptly, this 2008 collection of essays begins with an invocation of Roland Barthes, forty years after the summer of 1968, and with an invitation to see modern acts of writing as recurrent, burgeoning, and even perpetual. Along with such proliferation, however, come two risks, that of unadmitted repetition and that of barbarism for the editors. Engélibert and Tran-Gervat take Barthes' characterization of the modern, and Agamben's connection of degeneracy to the transition from artisanal