## CANADIAN AMERICAN SLAVIC STUDIES

## REVUE CANADIENNE AMÉRICAINE D'ÉTUDES SLAVES

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В. В. Зайцев, составитель и редактор

Three of the ten essayists (who are all women) focus on male German-language writers. The editor Valentina Glajar describes three travel writers in Eastern Europe during the nineteenth century who consider themselves at the European periphery where the residents are quite simply "half-Asian" and inherently inferior. Debra Prager takes up Thomas Mann and thus the most memorable "Oriental" woman in German literature Clavdia Chauchat of *The Magic Mountain*, while Anaa Holden turns to another classic author Austrian Robert Musil. In his 1906 novel *The Confusions of Young Torles*, Musil used a Slavic villager in the slut stereotype as a key element in revealing the young man's existential crisis that also became Musil's analysis of Europe's ills before the Great War. Holden likens Musil to the post-Nazi novelist Bernhard Schlink, whose East European slut is partly used as a metaphor of the Third Reich's seductiveness for Germans.

An additional theme in several of the essays concerns the question of whether "Central Europe" exists (or existed) as a buffer and bridge between the continent's West and East. A corollary question, of course, asks how much of the traditional differences will survive the unifying, conforming forces of universal mass media. Regardless, and despite the unevenness and occasional defensiveness of the essays, the book is an important sign of new scholarship.

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Deutschland und Russland: Aspekte kultureller und wissenschaftlicher Beziehungen im 19. und fruehen 20. Jahrhundert. (Opera Slavica, Neue Folge 47). Edited by Dittmar Dahlmann and Wilfried Potthoff. Wiesbaden: Harrossowitz Verlag, 2004. 275 pp. EUR 49,50 (paper).

It is Wilfried Potthoff in his own contribution to this collection of essays that resulted from a series of guest lectures at the University of Bonn, who explains the raison d'être of the work itself: that the Russians had from the very beginning a contact with the Germans that was unique among non-Slavic peoples, and those relationships, at times controversial, represent a compelling field of study. This modest compilation aims not at a comprehensive overview, but selects moments that reflect the expertise and interest of the original speakers in a year-long seminar held in 1998-99. This brought together some of the most distinguished names in German Slavic studies for a glimpse into their own work and a fascinating set of perspectives for students and scholars.

The titles of the articles themselves along with the names of their authors best indicate the scope of the work. Even those with limited knowledge of German might be able to work their way through articles in their specific fields of interest. I list here the contributors with their topics: Hubertus Hahn on St. Petersburg and its fascination for Germans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; Joerg Stadelbauer on Alexander von Humboldt's trip to Russia; Reinhard Lauer on Heine in Russia; Horst-Juergen Gerigk on Dostoevsky and Germany; Rolf-Dieter Kluge on Turgenev and his German contacts; Wilfried Potthoff on the Germans and Germany in Russian literature; Urs Heftrich on Gogol' in the works of Thomas Mann; Detlef Gojowy on German and Russian musical interconnections; Heijo Klein on Kandinsky; and Dittmar Dahlmann on Max Weber.

The selection of speakers and thus of the collection's authors aimed at a broad spectrum of topics and interests. In several instances these are internationally recognized scholars. For example, Gerigk's article draws from and summarizes his own monograph, Dostojewskij: der "verrakte Russe" (2000). His abbreviated version is nonetheless strik-

ingly broad in its overview of German Dostoevsky scholarship, from the philosophical and philological to his impact and influence on German writers in their works and comments. His conclusion examines how Dostoevsky continues to live today for German readers and translators. The article is, in a sense, a culmination of German Dostoevsky studies and of Gerigk's own significant contributions to that field. Kluge digs deep into the past to re-examine the extensive intersections of Turgenev with Germans and Germany. Now somewhat overshadowed by other Russian writers, Turgenev was for a time in the nineteenth century the Russian most connected intellectually and artistically to Germany. Pothoff examines the image of Germans in Russian literature. His "imagological" approach proceeds from Karamzin through Gogol', Goncharov, Turgenev and Dostoevsky to Ivanov and Mandel'shtam.

While Slavic literary scholars are well served, others will find wonderful bits and pieces of information and food for thought. Kandinsky begins his artistic career in Munich. Is it not then proper to see him as German artist returning to Russia? Several color prints of his art enhance the article. Thomas Mann, who cites at length his fascination with Russian authors, is revealed to have created with Felix Krull a twentieth-century reincarnation of Chichikov.

Thought-provoking, engaging, an example of meticulous scholarship and clear analysis, this volume should find a place in your library's holdings.

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Städt und Öffentlichkeit in Ostmitteleuropa 1900-1939: Beiträge zur Entstehung moderner Urbanität zwischen Berlin, Charkiv, Talinn und Triest (Forschungen zur Geschichte und Kultur des östlichen Mitteleuropa, Band 14). Edited by Andreas R. Hofman and Anna Veronika Wendland. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2002. 308 pp. Euro 58,00.

Collections of papers presented to conferences are notoriously difficult to review, and that is particularly the case here of a conference held in Leipzig in 2000 on topics as problematic as *Öffentlichkeit* and an "East Central Europe" which stretches to the Eastern reaches of Ukraine.

Öffentlichkeit is a category of recent German social theory which cannot be translated but only paraphrased. What it means literally is "openness," and it refers to the social arena of the public which is neither private nor state administered, but in which people communicate with one another in greater or lesser degrees of immediacy. It is, or is thought to be, the process by which society observes and defines itself at various levels ranging from neighbors engaged in face to face gossip and rumor, through private associations for a variety of purposes to ultimately the mass media. It encompasses a wide range of spaces: markets, streets, churches, schools, theaters. And it includes a wide range of activities: civil, communal, national, philanthropic, athletic and cultural.

It is with a sense of relief when one passes in this collection from the attempts to define Öffentlichkeit to the studies which demonstrate it, and which deal with many different problems facing the cities of "East Central Europe" in the early twentieth century. The common denominator for virtually all of them was their ethnic heterogeneity. Even such a pristine example of medieval Polish cultural glory as Krakow was shared with a significant Jewish population, who, while initially willing to second the Polish nationalist aspirations of the city's elite, would also be drawn to the alternative nationalism of Zion-