

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

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History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe: Junctures and disjunctures
in the 19th and 20th centuries
Edited by Marcel Cornis-Pope and John Neubauer

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IN THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES
VOLUME III: THE MAKING AND REMAKING
OF LITERARY INSTITUTIONS

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Preface

History is a series of ruptures and reconnections. One of the editors of this *History*, John Neubauer, has worked on this project for years in a building that reminds those passing by that at this site the Transylvanian Hungarian Miklós Tótfalussy Kis operated his internationally famous printing shop in the seventeenth century. The other editor, Marcel Cornis-Pope, completed editing work on this volume in a university building that once belonged to Colonel Henry Anderson, prominent Richmond lawyer and President of the American Red Cross, who traveled to the Eastern front of World War I, bringing support to the Romanian army caught between the assault of the combined forces of Germany and Austria and the raids of unruly Bolshevik units across the border. The manuscript of the present volume goes to an Amsterdam printer and publisher just a few days following the entry of Romania and Bulgaria into the European Union.

Our *History* examines the intraregional connections and analogies within the literary cultures of East-Central Europe. East-West literary relations are not its primary focus. Yet the intraregional and the interregional relations are no more separable in the literary realm than they are in the political one. The reconciliation of Eastern and Western Europe, furthered by the current expansion of the European Union, depends vitally on the cooperation of the East-Central European nations and minorities among each other. It is this internal reconnection that we wish to further in a modest way with our project.

I. The Idea of a Regional Literary History

A transnational reconsideration of East-Central Europe's national literary histories inevitably involves rethinking some general problems of writing literary histories today. The method we chose involves creating an elaborate structure of "multiple scanning" that occupies the middle ground between a traditional comprehensive narrative based on the fixities of dates, borders, and national identities, and more recent attempts, such as Dennis Hollier's French literary history and its followers, to turn literary history into a series of independent articles, each attached to a particular date and literary event. Multiple scanning (mapping) entails going through the region's last two-hundred years not once but several times, each time focusing on different dimensions of its literary cultures. Upon completion, the four volumes of this project will contain five parallel histories: a political history of literature, a history of literary genres and movements, a literary history of cities, regions, and transitional areas, a history of literary institutions, and, finally, a history of literary figures and types.

By limiting ourselves to the history of "literary cultures" we also seek a middle ground between histories that treat only texts and their writers, and more recent cultural histories that no longer distinguish between specifically literary texts and other cultural texts based on verbal, visual, and other kinds of signs. While we have much sympathy for the latter approaches, we had to acknowledge pragmatically that a comprehensive cultural and multimedia history of the whole region would have become unattainable at this point. Furthermore, we believe that literature and

its culture possess a modicum of specificity, however difficult it may be to define their borders with other cultural phenomena.

The contingency of borders is both our central argument against various national conceptions of literary history, and a key feature in our effort to define an East-Central European region. In the General Introduction to our first volume, we reviewed the history of such terms as *Mitteleuropa*, Central Europe, and Eastern Europe before arriving at the following notion East-Central Europe:

For our purposes the unifying feature of East-Central Europe is the struggle of its peoples against the German and Russian hegemonic threats. In this sense, the region is a liminal and transitional space between the powers in the west and the east, a long but relatively narrow strip stretching from the Baltic countries in the north to Macedonia in the south. To the west it is clearly bounded by the hegemonic German cultures of Germany and Austria; to the east it is hemmed in by Russia's political and cultural sphere, but the border is, admittedly, less distinct, for the Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldavia were both part of Russia's hegemonic power and suppressed by it. Their literatures developed both in tandem with, and in opposition to the dominant Russian one. (*ECE* 1: 6)

This interstitial, dynamic concept of the region includes also a Turkish presence and influence, especially in the south. As we argued in vol. 1, the long Ottoman occupation also had a decisive impact on the East-Central European region, even if it occurred prior to the period we are covering and even if it directly affected only its southern part. Its living cultural legacy includes a sizable Muslim population, "oriental" motifs embedded in the literatures and cultures of the region, as well as a wealth of national myths, legends, and literary works on fighting the invaders that continues to shape the region's notions of ethnicity and nationhood. Indeed, integrating the Muslim heritage and admitting Turkey into the European Union have meanwhile become major issues for Europe as a whole.

II A *History of Multiple Histories: Its Structure*

The first volume of our *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe* (published in 2004) consisted of two parts (see its Table of Content at the end of this volume: pp. 495–97). In the first part, we grouped the literary refractions of political history around select nodal points. The featured temporal nodes, 1989, 1968, 1956, 1948, 1945, 1918, 1867, 1848, and 1776, pursued in counter-chronological order from the immediate past towards older anticipatory evolutions, function as "crossroads," at which national narrative strands come together, without forming an organic unit. At each nodal point we have considered both the participation of the writers in the events and the memory of these events in literary works. The second part of the first volume approaches literary periods, genres, and movements through a similarly differentiated perspective, offering paradigmatic studies that attempt to exemplify how such traditional national categories as Symbolism or the historical novel may be reconsidered within transnational approaches not based on an east-west dichotomy. Aware of the dangers of holistic and organicist periodization, we have minimized the use of such traditional blanket terms as Romanticism and Realism, preferring to highlight transitional and context-specific literary categories more relevant to the region.

Our second volume (published in 2006) considered the topographic grounding of the region's literary cultures by focusing on the literary histories of its specific cities, rivers, border areas, and sub-regions (see the Table of Contents pp. 499–501). In doing so, this volume inverts the expansive momentum of comparative studies towards ever broader regional, European, and world literary histories. While the main focus remains on the literary culture of East-Central Europe, this volume foregrounds the non-national or hybrid traditions at the heart of the national and local ones.

The present, third volume focuses on the making and remaking of those institutional structures that engender and regulate the creation, distribution, and reception of literature. We study here not so much shared institutions but rather such region-wide analogous institutional processes as the national awakening, the modernist opening, and the communist regimentation, canonization, and censorship of literature. While these processes took place in all of the region's cultures, they were asynchronous and subjected to different local conditions. The volume's premise is that within East-Central Europe national awakening and the institutionalization of literature were symbiotically interrelated. Indeed, at the heart of a national awakening we always find such institutional aspects 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 theaters, the (re)construction of a national folklore, and writing histories of the vernacular literature. We focus on four main aspects of literature's institutional history: (1) Publishing and Censorship, (2) Theater, (3) The Uses of Folk Poetry, and (4) Literary Histories.

In the fourth and final volume (to be completed in 2007) we focus on historical and imaginary literary types and figures. The literary figures (national icons, figures of male and female identity, figures of the other) considered in this volume are not static but rather subjects that assume shifting positions in literary history as they are canonized or suppressed, ejected from or absorbed into the national and regional narratives.

Acknowledgements

We want to express, first of all, our deep gratitude to our contributors for the quality of their articles, for their enthusiasm for the project, and for their generous patience, both in responding to our many queries and in accepting the delay of the publication. We acknowledge with pleasure the continuing support of the Coordinating Committee of the ICLA, and the detailed suggestions and judicious recommendations of its external readers, Professors Joep Leerssen (University of Amsterdam) and Călin-Andrei Mihăilescu (University of Western Ontario). László Boka (Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, Budapest) and Kees Mercks (University of Amsterdam) have given us special help in tracing obscure items.

We thank the Országos Széchényi Könyvtár (Budapest) for providing us with the picture of Frigyes Karinthy, Otto Urban, for the reproductions from *Moderní revue*, and the Polish National Museum for a permission to reprint Stanisław Wyspiański's *Self-portrait*.

Initial funding for this four-volume project was provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Netherlands Institute of Advanced Studies, the Netherlands Research Board, the University of Amsterdam, and Virginia Commonwealth University.

The preparation of the present volume was supported with a grant from the Coordinating Committee of the ICLA for incidental expenses; with a travel-expense subsidy from Virginia Commonwealth University's College of Humanities and Sciences and its English Department for Marcel Cornis Pope; and a fellowship from the Collegium Budapest for John Neubauer. We appreciate very much all the support we have received..

Marcel Cornis-Pope and John Neubauer
Editors

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1. Frigyes Karinthy in a *kávéház*. Courtesy of the Országos Széchényi Könyvtár (National Széchényi Library), Budapest, Hungary. [p. 21]
2. The First Budapest Cabaret: The *Bonnbonnière*. [p. 23]
3. Members of the Romanian Avant-garde; the Drawings are by M. H. Maxy. From *M. H. Maxy. Der integrale Künstler/Artist Integralist*. Ed. Michael Ilk. Berlin: Günter Linke, 2003. p. 37. [p. 31]
4. Karel Hlaváček's cover for Stanisław Przybyszewski's journal *Życie*. Courtesy Otto M. Urban. [p. 66]
5. Karel Hlaváček's cover for *Moderní revue*, 1896/97. Courtesy Otto M. Urban. [p. 67]
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7. The Hungarian National Theater (A Nemzeti Színház). Franz Sandmann's colored lithography, based on a drawing of Rudolf Alt. 1845. Courtesy of the Országos Színháztörténeti Múzeum és Intézet (State Museum and Institute for Theater History), Budapest, Hungary. [p. 146]
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10. From the performance of *Zidari* that opened the rebuilt National Theater. Dir. Hr. Zankov. Courtesy Joanna-Spassova-Dikova. [p. 194]
11. Georgi Raičev, *Elenovo zarstvo* (1929). Dir. Y. Yakovlev, décor A. Popov. Bulgarian National Theater, 1934. Courtesy Joanna-Spassova-Dikova. [p. 195]
12. Micaela Eleutheriade, *Ana's Immurement*. 1949. [p. 274]

General Introduction

John Neubauer

(with Inna Peleva on Bulgaria and Mihály Szegedy-Maszák on Kölcsey and Széchenyi)

We divide the following introduction to the history of literary institutions in East-Central Europe into three broadly conceived periods that cover (1) the national awakenings and the institutionalization of literature (1800–1890), (2) the literary institutions of Modernism (1890–1945), and (3) the radical reform of the existing institutions under the communist regimes (1945–1989). The introduction offers regional perspectives for the national accounts that take up most of the volume; it fills the gaps left by the latter, and highlights certain key ideas, questions, and events.

Our treatment is “transnational” rather than “comparative,” for we seldom compare different works or writers in the traditional manner of comparative literature. Instead, we describe and analyze common historical mechanisms that operated in the literatures of the region. Thus, the national awakenings that we describe below shared some common frameworks and a common historical mechanism. They followed a common pattern, even if they were called *Ärkamisaeg* (National Awakening) in Estonia, *Rilindja* (Rebirth) in Albania, *VÄzraždane* (Revival) in Bulgaria, *Obrozeni* (Rebirth) in Bohemia, *Redeşteptare culturalÄ şi naşionalÄ* (Cultural and National Awakening) in Romania, and *Nemzeti Äbredés* (National Awakening), or just *Reform Kor* (Age of Reform), in Hungary. The different terms refer to similar historical events.

Admittedly, the analogous mechanisms were triggered at different moments in the various cultures, were propelled at different speeds, and were shaped by different local conditions. The chronology of their evolution cannot be represented in a simple pan-regional scheme, and even our above-mentioned broad tripartite division should be treated with caution. Estonian literary culture, for instance, was a Johnny-come-lately that leaped forward where others crept along: “Nowhere else in Europe have people rushed directly from folklore to modernity; the only bridges between these distant worlds were a Bible translation and a handful of purely practical or edifying tracts. Even the Balkan nations, which had lived for centuries under Ottoman rule, had some previous ‘high culture’” (RÄhesoo, p. 164 below). Historically different literary phenomena coexisted, mingled, and formed hybrids within every national culture, and often even at a single geographical location. Classicism, Romanticism, Realism, and other imported terms from Western literary histories should be applied to the East-Central European literatures cautiously and after explaining their local meaning — even if the poets and scholars of the region have freely used them. As in the case of Modernism, we redefine them to suit the context and to reveal the specificity of the region.

I National Awakenings and the Institutionalization of Literature

“Our profession emerges with the current of the national idea; it is not a scholarly observer but part of it” (János Horváth, *fejlődéstörténete* 58)

Literary scholarship was born in the decades around 1800. Its nineteenth-century institutionalization was deeply implicated in the formation and evolution of modern nationalism, especially in East-Central Europe. The story of how this Europe-wide process took place, how concepts of national literature crossed borders and reappeared under new guises has yet to be told. We offer here only an outline focused on our region.

Around 1800, none of the people in East-Central Europe constituted an independent nation. The Baltic area was dominated by the Germans and the Russians; Poland was divided between Prussia, Russia, and the Austrian Empire, which ruled also over the territories liberated from under Ottoman occupation further south; the rest of the Balkans was still under Ottoman rule. A long and turbulent prior history of migrations and ever-changing foreign dominations had already uniquely intermixed East-Central Europe’s various religions and ethnic groups.

Two centuries later, the region is divided into independent nations whose number continues to grow even as we complete the writing of our *History*, yet most nations still include significant, though dwindling, minorities. The new nations, each claiming ancient ancestry, are products of various nineteenth-century national awakenings that reshaped the region’s stateless cultures. The emerging national ideologies clashed both with one another and with the former hegemonic powers that reasserted their rule via Nazism and Communism after most of the region’s people had achieved their political and cultural independence.

The (re)birth of the East-Central European nations has produced some remarkable literary and cultural achievements, some of which acquired European, and even world-wide, fame. Yet the focus on national identity, national culture, and national literature has inevitably fostered also provincialism, as well as monolingualism and intolerance against those who did not belong to the presumed national body. As the histories of cities and regions in the second volume of our *History* show, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity gradually diminished and nearly disappeared in cities like Riga, Vilnius, Czernowitz, Pest, Trieste, or Plovdiv and in regions like Galicia, Bucovina, or Transylvania. What disappeared in some of these places were not only the suppressed, banished, or simply annihilated minorities, but also the possibility of having multiple ethnic and linguistic identities, such as they existed in early-nineteenth-century Bulgaria (*ECE* 2: 360) or Buda and Pest (*ECE* 2: 162). In the early nineteenth century, several bona-fide Hungarian aristocrats (e.g., Alajos Mednyánszky, János Majláth, and János Csaplovics) would write in German as well as Hungarian, as did the great early scholar of the university, Lajos Schedius, leader of the German community in Pest. The Serbian Jovan Muškatirović wrote in Serb, Hungarian, and Latin; Mihály Vitkovics (Mihailo Vitković) could regard himself as both a Hungarian and a Serb and write in both languages; for Jakov Ignjatović a generation later, such a double loyalty became already a source of painful self-reflections (*ECE* 2: 229–30). In early-twentieth-century Vilnius many Lithuanian writers, artists, and scholars would still write also in Polish, but the different language cultures moved by then towards isolation in this Polish-Lithuanian city, which was also the birthplace of the Belorussian literary language (*ECE* 2: 22–23). The Pole Stanisław Przybyszewski

started to write in German, the Slovak Pavel Hviezdoslav and the Romanian Liviu Rebreanu in Hungarian; but they all reverted to their native tongue, in the case of Hviezdoslav with a strong resentment against Hungarian and the Hungarians. The champions of Yiddish and Hebrew spoke and often wrote still in Polish, Russian, or German, but Yiddish died out and Hebrew had to find a new home in Israel. After 1945, only a handful minority writers, among them Danilo Kiš, were able to write in more than one language; bi- and multilingualism survived mostly among writers in exile or emigration, but, as in the case of Tristan Tzara, Milo Dor, Emil Cioran, Agota Kristof, Milan Kundera, and many others, the second language became now a Western rather than an East-Central European one.

Today, one of the important cultural and political questions of East-Central Europe is whether it can overcome its cultural provincialism, whether, after its various national awakenings, it can regain in some new form the cultural and literary diversity it once possessed — a diversity of which its past literature still offers some evidence. Joining the European Union pushes these countries towards Europeanization and globalization, but achieves relatively little in reconciling them among themselves.

A Typology of National Awakening

What were the main cultural factors that triggered the awakening of a national consciousness? What, more specifically, was literature's function in forming a national identity? What were the links between the emergence of national literary traditions and what we call "the institutionalization of literature"? The following typology attempts to answer these and other questions.

In East-Central Europe, vernacular literature and national philology were major forces in shaping the emerging modern nations. Poets and philologists, many of whom became political leaders, forged the identity of their people by constructing both *institutions* and *texts*:

MODES OF SOCIAL AND MATERIAL CONSTRUCTION

1. Founding journals and newspapers in the vernacular
2. Establishing publishing houses
3. Founding literary and cultural societies
4. Staging plays in the vernacular
5. Building National Theaters and Opera Houses
6. Establishing National Academies
7. Establishing National Libraries
8. Establishing university chairs for the vernacular language and literature
9. Including the vernacular language and literature in the school curricula

MODES OF TEXTUAL CONSTRUCTION

1. Language revival
2. Translations into the vernacular
3. Writing lyric poetry in the vernacular
4. Collecting and publishing oral poetry
5. Editing and republishing older texts

6. Writing new national epics
7. Writing historical fiction
8. Canonizing national poets
9. Writing national literary histories.

We should keep in mind that textual construction was occasioned, and often made possible, by the new material institutions of literature and philology. While Friedrich Schlegel, August Wilhelm Schlegel, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the first modern literary historians, had no institutional support, their East-Central European successors could write in the relative comfort of jobs at universities, libraries, or academies. Writers of national tragedies and operas were welcome in the new National Theaters and Opera Houses, and often subsidized by the Academies. The literary institutions enhanced the national character of a city, yet as cultural centers they also attracted many foreign students, artists, and intellectuals, who gave it a cosmopolitan flavor that the nationalists and populists resented (see the section on Populism in the introduction to Part I below).

Building national institutions for literature, the arts, and learning was heavily dependent on the degree to which a nation had an independent constitutional tradition, whose vestiges would usually survive even after the loss of political independence. Hungary, and, to a lesser extent, the Czech lands, profited from such a tradition and were able to establish their key national cultural institutions relatively early. Poland also had a constitutional tradition, but its partitioning allowed a limited development of Polish institutions only in the Austrian-ruled Cracow. In Warsaw, which was severely restricted by the Russian occupiers, the national institutions were largely suppressed.

In some countries, several cities vied for becoming the national cultural and literary center. In Hungary, an ancient rivalry existed between the twin cities of Buda and Pest, but power shifted to the latter as the University was transferred to it, and the Academy, the National Theater, the National Library, and the National Museum were all established there. The rivalry was resolved with their merger in 1872. In Estonia, the coastal port of Tallinn (now the capital) has been competing with the university town of Tartu, formerly called by its German name Dorpat (see Kirss in *ECE* 2: 28–39). The center of Serbian culture gradually shifted in the course of the nineteenth century from Buda and Pest to Novi Sad and from there to Belgrade. In Bulgaria, liberation shifted the power from Plovdiv to Sofia, and in Romania the early literary preeminence of Iași gradually weakened as Bucharest became the nation's capital.

Institutionalizing literature was a matter of national self-consciousness rather than of economics. The process unfolded relatively slowly in England and France, whereas Germany, Italy, some Scandinavian, and most East-Central European societies with problematic identities had started earlier to exploit literature and philology for national purposes. Here they played a key role in the struggle for a national language and political independence: reforming the language, writing grammars, textbooks, poems, historical novels, historical dramas, and national literary histories — all these propelled the cultural and political movements towards national self-consciousness.

The renewal of a vernacular language and culture came into conflict not only with the hegemonic cultural powers of Germany, Russia, or Turkey, but also with the national aspirations of the neighbors and the minorities within. For example, the Hungarian national awakening and its state-supported projects to strengthen the Hungarian language and literature soon had to face

both Czech efforts to get recognition within the Habsburg Empire and the national awakening of the country's Slovak, Romanian, and Croatian minorities. Furthermore, the national renewal movements were often internally split not only between conservatives, liberals, and radicals, but also between advocates of different conceptions of the nation. This was a special problem for the Slavic people. Do all Slavs constitute one language and culture? Do the Czechs, Moravians, and Slovaks have a common language and culture? Do the Serbs and the Croats? The Croats and Dalmatians? Which of the Slovak dialects should become the standard one? The leaders of the various national awakenings opted for one among many possibilities, but their choices often became vexing problems for the next generations.

Building National Academies, Museums, and Libraries

The Hungarian National Museum and its Hungarian National Library were founded in 1802, when Ferenc Széchenyi donated his personal library, his manuscripts, and his coin collections to the nation. The library opened on December 10, 1803. The Hungarian Academy of Sciences (*Magyar Tudományos Akadémia*) was founded in 1825 upon the initiative of Ferenc's son, István, under the name *Magyar Tudós Társaság* (Hungarian Society of Scholars), which first convened in 1831 in Pozsony (Bratislava). Its Division of Linguistics, the first of the six original ones, supervised the publication of the first spelling rules (*A magyar helyesírás*; 1831) and of a grammar (*A magyar nyelv rendszere*; 1832). A plan for a dictionary was presented to the Academy in 1839, but the six volumes of Gergely Czuczor's and János Fogarasi's *A Magyar nyelv szótára* (Dictionary of the Hungarian Language) were published only in 1862–74. The Academy's language-oriented interest in literature was complemented by the literary activities of the *Kisfaludy Társaság* (Kisfaludy Society), founded in 1837 and named after the romantic poet Károly Kisfaludy. As time passed, the latter held on, however, to a national and folk-poetry oriented concept of literature that was hostile to Modernism.

In Prague, a *Königlich-böhmische Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften* / *Kralovská česká společnost nauk* (Royal Bohemian Society of Sciences) was established in 1790, and a *Gesellschaft des vaterländischen Museums in Böhmen* / *Společnost vlastenského museum v Čechách* (Society of the National Museum in Bohemia) in 1820. Both soon became purely Czech institutions. In the Austrian partition of Poland, a Cracow Learned Society was founded in 1815, which became in 1872 the *Polska Akademia Umiejętności* (Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences), a learned and cultural society for the whole country. In Zagreb, Croatia's limited independence allowed the opening of a *Hrvatska Akademija Znanosti i Umjetnosti* (Croatian Academy of Learning and Art) in 1867. A *Romanian Literary Society* was founded in April 1866, renamed a year later *Societatea Academică Română* (The Romanian Academic Society), and in 1879 *Academia Română* (The Romanian Academy). Elsewhere, a National Academy could be founded only once the country had achieved independence. Thus, for instance, a *Bălgarskata Knižovno Družestvo* (Bulgarian Learned Society) was founded in Brăila, Romania in 1869, but its building in Sofia was inaugurated only in 1893 and it achieved full national status only in 1911, when it was renamed the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

Building National Universities

East-Central Europe may have lagged behind Western Europe in establishing National Academies, but it was ahead of it in setting up university chairs for the respective vernacular languages and their literatures. As Eric Hobsbawm writes, “the progress of schools and universities measure that of nationalism, just as schools and especially universities became its most conspicuous champions” (*Revolution* 166). Indeed, whereas August Wilhelm Schlegel assumed the first German chair in literature (*Literatur und die schönen Wissenschaften*) in 1818 at the University of Bonn, and the first chair for English literature was established at the University of London only in 1829, Cracow and Prague, among the oldest universities of the Continent, were ahead: Cracow’s chair for Polish literature was established in 1782, and František Martin Pelzel (Pelcl) assumed the new Chair for the Czech language and literature at the Charles University of Prague in 1793. At the University of Pest, establishing a chair for German had to come first (András Frigyes Halitzky), but in 1791 an inter-faculty chair was founded for Hungarian, which was occupied first by the geographer András K. Vályi and then, in 1802, by Miklós Révai, the distinguished Hungarian grammarian, lexicologist, and linguist, who held it until his death in 1807. Juraj Palkovič was appointed to the first Chair for Slavic language and literature at the Lutheran lyceum of Bratislava in 1803; the Serbian gymnasium of Novi Sad (whose director later became Pavel Josef Šafárik) was opened 1810. In the Romanian principality of Moldova, Gheorghe Asachi introduced education in Romanian language at the *Academia Mihăileană* (Mihăileană Academy), which he opened in 1835. In other countries, foreign domination delayed the process. The study of Estonian was introduced at Tartu University only after 1874 (see ECE 2: 29); Bulgarian became a subject at the Bulgarian National University (now Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski) only in 1888, though “History and Philology” was its first and, for a while, only Faculty.

Merely enumerating the new chairs in the vernacular would ignore the turbulent history of the universities. The venerable Charles University, for which King Charles IV issued the founding charter on July 4, 1348, became a Jesuit institution in 1622 and reverted to the state after the abolition of the Order in 1773. Non-Catholics were permitted to study there as of 1781, and German replaced Latin as the language of instruction in 1784. A century later, in 1882, the university was split into independent German and Czech universities. Tartu University was founded by King Gustav Adolf of Sweden in 1632, but in 1802 it was legally declared to be the Russian State University in Dorpat, even though its language of instruction was German. During the late-nineteenth-century Russification, it was renamed in 1895, *Imperatorskij Jur'evskij Universitet*, with Russian as its official language of instruction. Tartu University became an Estonian institution only once the country became independent in 1918. The universities of Vilnius and Zagreb were founded as Jesuit institutions, in 1579 and 1669 respectively. The latter reopened in 1874 as a secular institution; the former, which was secularized in 1773, became the Imperial University of Vilnius under Russian rule in 1803, but was closed by the Russians after the 1830 Polish uprising and reopened only in 1919, as a Polish university. Warsaw University, founded 1816, was also closed down after the 1830 uprising. The “Main School” reopened with a few departments during a brief liberal intermission in Russian politics but was closed down in the aftermath of the January Uprising of 1863. By contrast, the “Polonization” of the ancient University of Cracow became possible in 1879 within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The University of Latvia was founded on September

18, 1919 as the Latvian Superior School and renamed University of Latvia in 1923. Tirana was the last capital of the region to open a State University in 1957.

The national movements received, however, some of their most important stimulation from students studying at foreign universities. The center of the Slovene national revival was, around 1800, the University of Graz; the University of St. Petersburg was the hotbed of nationalist radicals from Bulgaria and the Baltic countries; the Slovaks Juraj Palkovič, Josef Šafárik, and Jan Kollár were “awakened” at the University of Jena; important nationalist impulses came from the Romanian and Serbian students at the University of Pest and, later, of Vienna.

Building National Theaters

From Tallinn in the North (where the popular German playwright August von Kotzebue stimulated German theater activity) to Ljubljana, Zagreb and beyond in the South, German language theater dominated the region around 1800. Theaters in the native language had to struggle for money and audience. In the course of the nineteenth century, however, theaters in the vernacular proliferated, and new National Theaters became important conduits of the national sentiments, though they could be built and formally named so only in nations that had a degree of political independence. Warsaw’s *Teatr Narodowy*, which was based on a company established by king Stanisław Poniatowski as early as 1765, was chronologically the oldest in the region, though it was inaugurated in 1833, not as the National but only as the “Grand” Theater, due objections from the Russian occupiers. The Hungarian National Theater was inaugurated in 1837 and received its final title in 1841 (see Imre’s article pp. 149–53 below). The Romanian National Theater in Bucharest was completed in 1852 but was accorded the status of a national stage only in 1864, through a decree introduced by Prime Minister, historian, and writer Mihail Kogălniceanu. The Czech National Theater (*Národní divadlo*) opened in 1881 with Smetana’s national opera *Libuše*. The National Theater of Belgrade opened in 1869 with half of the company that Jovan Đorđević, founder of the Serbian National Theater in Novi Sad, brought with him. Indeed, the Novi Sad Serbian National Theater (the *Srpsko narodno pozorište* in the Dual Monarchy) had been founded already in 1861, and was as such the oldest, not only in Serbia but in the whole South Slav region. Tartu’s Vanemuine Theater opened in 1870 with Lydia Koidula’s *Saaremaa onupoeg* (The Saaremaa Cousin). Its new building, inaugurated in 1906 after fire had destroyed the old one in 1903, functioned as a national theater though it did not have that title. The building of the future Latvian National Theater in Riga was inaugurated in 1902, but until World War I it housed a Russian company. It was Ādolf Alunāns, the first Latvian professional actor, director, and playwright, who started in 1868 Riga’s first Latvian theater; it was later run by Hermann Rode-Ebeling, a German who spoke no Latvian. The *Nacionālais teātris* was founded in 1919; its director 1921–25 was the poet Jānis Rainis, founder of the Dailes Theater (Riga Art Theater) in 1920. The Croatian National Theater was inaugurated in 1895 in the presence of Emperor Franz Joseph. Sofia’s *Nationalen Teatr* started to function in 1883, but its building was inaugurated only in 1907 (its director for just one year became in 1908 the famous poet Penčo Slaveikov). Ljubljana’s theater was inaugurated in 1892 with a Slovenian drama; Slovenian and German performances were to alternate, but the Slovenians boycotted the German productions and the Austrian community was forced to build its own theater in 1913. The latter became Ljubljana’s drama theater and the former the Ljubljana

opera. The building of the Slovak National Theater in Bratislava was inaugurated in 1886 as *Königliches Freistädtisches Theater* but with Ferenc Erkel's Hungarian opera *Bánk Bán*; it became *Slovenské Národné Divadlo* in 1920, after Czechoslovakia became independent. For a number of years, however, German performances also took place in the building.

The foregoing thumbnail sketch already indicates that the history of national theater buildings gives an outline of the region's complex cultural-political history: many buildings were erected as German/Austrian, Hungarian, or Russian theaters and later converted (sometimes twice) by the emerging nation. This is true also of a great many other theaters that came to be called "national." Thus Prague's present *Státní Opera*, inaugurated in 1888 as *Neues Deutsches Theater*, was built for Prague's German community, since the German troupe, which formerly used to alternate with a Czech one, had been squeezed out of the *Národní divadlo*. Brunn's *Stadttheater* (inaugurated in 1883) became in 1918 Brno's *Národní Divadlo*, which could boast the world premier of Leoš Janáček's most important operas. Fiume's *Stadttheater* (inaugurated in 1885) became Rijeka's *Hrvatsko Narodno Kazaliste*. Nagyvárad's *Szigligeti Színház* (inaugurated in 1900) became Oradea's *Teatrul de Stat*, and Kolozsvár's *Nemzeti Színház* (inaugurated in 1906) Cluj's *Teatrul Național* after 1918. The inauguration of Temesvár's Franz Joseph Theater in 1875 led to bitter quarrels about language; according to the compromise, performances during the winter were in German, for the rest of the season in Hungarian. As of 1898 only Hungarian performances were allowed, whereas today it functions as Timișoara's *Teatrul Național*, with performances in Romanian. Today Timișoara also boasts, however, a *Deutsches Staatstheater* and a Hungarian *Álami Csiki Gergely Színház*, both started in their present form in 1953.

Thorn's German *Stadttheater* (inaugurated in 1904) became Torun's Polish theater in 1918. Of Posen/Poznań's two theaters, the present *Teatr Wielki* is used for opera and ballet, but was inaugurated in 1879 as Posen's principal German theater, in which playing in Polish was prohibited. The present *Teatr Polski*, built with Polish funds, opened in 1875 to serve Polish national interests. Until the 1890s, it was the only theater in German Poland to perform in Polish. The *Städtisches Theater/Teatr miejski* of Lemberg (inaugurated in 1900), which performed Polish plays and Polish-Italian operas, became the theater of Polish Lwów in 1919, and Lvov's Soviet-Ukrainian opera and ballet theater in 1939; today it fulfills the same function in the L'viv of independent Ukraine. Chernowitz's *Stadttheater* (inaugurated in 1905) became the Romanian Cernăuți's *Teatrul Național* in 1922 and the *Teatr im. Olgi Kobyljanskoy* of the Ukrainian Chernivtsi in 1945.

Such institutional transformations represent but an episode in the intricate history of ethnic theater in East-Central Europe, which has been ignored (if not suppressed) by theater historians focusing exclusively on the evolution of national traditions. To be sure, similar national interests have recently led Hungarian, German/Austrian, and Russian scholars to study the theater of their respective languages in areas that now belong to independent countries, from Estonia to Romania, Croatia, and Slovenia, but such studies seldom link the formerly dominant traditions to the now dominant national ones. The historical approach of our project attempts to move towards a more synoptic view — for instance by including the Jewish, Russian, and Lithuanian theater in Polish Wilno (see *ECE* 2: 25) or the German and Hungarian theaters in the Romanian Cluj. A full account would need more multilingual experts and a more radical departure from national perspectives.

Several of the provincial theaters mentioned above, as well as Zagreb's and Sofia's National Theaters (and a host of Western European theaters) were designed and built by the famous

Viennese architect duo of Ferdinand Fellner and Hermann Helmer, in a monumental classical style that had no relation to the local national culture (see, for instance, the photos in Charles Osborne's *Opera House Album*). Two forces seem to have brought this about. The first was the prestige of the "metropolitan," i.e., hegemonic cultural model, which manifested itself not only in the plethora of monumental buildings by Fellner and Helmer, but also in theater buildings that local architects erected in the nineteenth century, such as Bucharest's Teatrul Național, Belgrade's National Theater, or Miklós Ybl's Hungarian National Opera House, inaugurated in 1884 and modeled after the Paris opera. The second force behind the classical style of Central and Eastern Europe's vernacular theaters was the common aspiration of all these nations to become "classic," or, more specifically, to become the legitimate successors of the classic cultures. Whatever the original motivation, the classicist style facilitated the transfer of buildings from one nation to another (though the Romanians did have to remove some elements of the façades that allegedly expressed Hungarian nationalism). The national architectural styles that did develop after 1900 were inspired by a romantic nationalism that made inroads into East-Central Europe's Modernism.

(Re)constructing the Vernacular

The idea that language defines a nation emerged around 1800 and soon became the driving force behind the language revivals that represented everywhere the first phase of the national awakening. The resultant conflicts were of three major types: (1) wrestling with a hegemonic language that had its center outside the region (German and Russian), (2) struggle against languages, for instance Hungarian and Polish, that were politically dominant in some areas where the majority of the local population spoke a different language, and (3) tensions between the various dialects of the same language.

East-Central European language revivals primarily opposed German, Latin (most pervasive in Hungary), Russian (powerful in Poland and the Baltic countries), and Old Church Slavonic (among the South Slavic people; see Wilson 101–105, 386–89). In Hungary, Latin was dominant in the schools, Latin and German in government. In 1791 and 1792, the Parliament voted laws that declared Hungarian to be the official language in public offices, but the traditional multi-faceted practice proved to be resilient. Many subsequent laws intended to enforce the use of Hungarian in schools and in public offices, but even the law of 1844 could not fully succeed in establishing the universal use of Hungarian in schools. In Prague, German replaced Latin as the language of instruction at the Charles University in 1784, whereas the government decreed in 1816 that Czech was the official language in secondary education. The Polish language was treated differently in the three partitions. In the Russian-ruled Kingdom of Poland, Polish was strictly forbidden in schools and public offices in the latter part of the century, whereas in Austrian-governed Galicia Polish was in the 1870s permitted in the schools and at the University of Cracow. In the Baltic countries, the vernacular was suppressed by German as well as Russian authorities, though only the latter adopted explicit laws against the use of the vernacular in public. The Latvian nationalists appealed to Alexander II for help fighting the German language, but the Russian government decreed in 1885 that Russian was the official language, outlawing the use of both German and Latvian. In Lithuania, the public use of the vernacular was forbidden by the Russian authorities in 1864; books had to be smuggled into the country until 1904.

The imposition of German in the Habsburg Empire under Joseph II had reverse effects in Slovenia, the Czech lands, Hungary, and Austro-Serbia. For instance, Austria's attempt to replace the Cyrillic script with the Latin one (decreed in 1799 but soon rescinded) and the Austrian preference for the vernacular at the cost of Church Slavonic (designed also to weaken ties with Russia) were bitterly fought by the Orthodox Church. As we shall see, adoption of the quotidian vernacular was also the aim of Vuk Stefanović Karadžić and the other language reformers: the battle against Old Church Slavonic shows that language renewal had both internal and external opponents.

For the second category, the marginalization of a local ethnic group by a “revived” major East-European language, we may cite not only Transylvania and Slovakia, but also the cultural marginalization of Greek in Plovdiv and Rumelia at the end of the nineteenth century (*ECE* 2: 142–44) and the depreciation of Lithuanian and Belorussian as “peasant languages” in the eighteenth. Written Lithuanian had a Baltic grammar and an all but Polish vocabulary. In the end, Simonas Daukantas and the other language reformers succeeded in “upgrading” Lithuanian by using it consistently (*ECE* 2: 18, 20).

Finally, partisans of various dialects fought among themselves to gain a dominant position in standardizing the language. In Croatia, as we shall see, there were three contending dialects, while mountainous Albania had no less than ten different alphabets (*ECE* 2: 283). In Latvia, the vernacular and its literature emerged in the 1850s, once the language was standardized according to the Central Latvian dialect, mainly through the work of Krišjānis Valdemārs and Krišjānis Barons.

Language reform was, curiously, often advocated and studied in another tongue. The early case of Mikalojus Daukša may serve as a paradigm: he wrote a beautiful Polish preface to his *Postilla catholica* (Catholic Postilla; 1599), a collection of sermons translated into Lithuanian, in order to plead for the use of Lithuanian. Several centuries later, Atis Kronvalds, a leader of the Latvian national awakening, urged his countrymen to use their vernacular, but his most important pamphlet, the *Nationale Bestrebungen* (1872), was written in German and published, by necessity, in Estonia. Marko Pohlin's Slovenian grammar was entitled *Kraynska grammatika* (1768), but the subtitle reveals that it was written in German: *Das ist: Die crainerische Grammatik, oder Kunst die crainerische Sprach regelrichtig zu Reden, und zu Schreiben* (that is, Carnolian Grammar, or the Art to Speak and Write Correctly the Carnolian Language). Pohlin presumably wrote primarily for Austrians and not for the indigenous Slovenian population. The next important Slovenian grammar in German, *Grammatik der Slavischen Sprache in Krain, Kaernten, und Steyermark* (Grammar of the Slavic Language in Carnolia, Carinthia, and Styria; 1808), was written by Jernej [Bartholomäus] Kopitar, a Slovenenian working in Vienna as Imperial censor (!) for Slavonic texts and, later, as Professor and Director of the Library at the University. In 1836, Kopitar published the *Glagolita Clozianus* (Glagolitic Glossary), a study claiming that the Slovene language was the old church language of all Slavs.

Political conditions, academic opportunities, and other factors often forced the philologists of language revival to live abroad. Samuel Gottlieb [Bogumił] Linde, compiler of the first great, six-volume Polish dictionary (1807–14) studied in Leipzig and worked for a while in Vienna. The first two Bulgarian grammars, those of Neofit Rilski (1835) and Ivan Bogorov (1844), were published in Kragujevac and Bucharest respectively. Sami Frashëri, a leader of the Albanian renewal, lived mostly in Istanbul, and became known as a writer in Albanian as well as the author of a series of Turkish dictionaries. His political manifesto *Shqipëria — Ç'ka genë, ç'është dhe ç'do*

tě bēhetě (Albania — What Was It, What Is It and What Will Become of It; 1899) was published anonymously in Bucharest. Jan Kollár, the bitterest opponent of Ľudovít Štúr's separation of Slovak and Czech, lived most of his life in Pest. Like Šafárik, he studied at the University of Jena (1817–19), and it was there that he became a pan-Slavist, inspired by the German youth festival in Wartburg and by a passage in Herder's *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* that recommended the collection of Slavic songs and legends in order to reconstitute the lost culture and history of the peaceful Slavs (*Sämtliche* 14: 279–80). Kollár discovered traces of a lost Slavic population around Jena and in much of North-East Germany. In his *Slávy dcera* (Slava's Daughter), which consisted of 645 sonnets in the final edition of 1852, Slava, symbol of those erased and bewailed Slavic inhabitants of Germany, merges with the image of Mina Schmidt, daughter of a German minister near Jena, whom Kollár thought dead but rediscovered and married in 1835. She never learned Slovak or Hungarian.

The most important East-Central European “ex-pat” philologist was Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, who fled to Vienna during the Serbian-Turkish war in November 1813 and remained in residence there throughout the creative period of his life. In Vienna, he found Kopitar, his great mentor, who not only stimulated him to engage in folklore collecting and linguistic studies but also publicized his work in the world, especially among German scholars and writers. Karadžić produced within a year his *Pismenica serbskoga jezika* (Orthography of the Serbian Language), which advocated the principle, “speak as you write; and read as it is written” (Preface to *Pismenica*; qtd. in Wilson 105). The Orthodox Church insisted on retaining Old Slavonic spelling, and advancement of the language reform in Miloš Obrenović's Serbia was hampered by Karadžić's problematic and fluctuating relation to the Serbian potentate. But his grammar (as well as his folk-poetry collections) was received warmly in Germany: Jacob Grimm himself participated in translating and editing the second version of his grammar, which appeared under the title *Wuk's Stephanowitsch kleine Serbische Grammatik* (1924). Grimm thought it was a “strange misconception (*Wahn*)” that Serb churchmen and scholars regarded the vernacular (which they themselves used daily) as a corruption of the Cyrillic Church language fit only for herders and peasants (*Wuk's Stephanowitsch* xii f). Accordingly, Grimm praised Vuk for reestablishing the prestige of the vernacular, and for advocating an orthography that was close to the spoken language (xxii).

The Croats, 75% Catholic, did not have to contend with the Orthodox Church but they had to choose among the Štokavski, the Čakavski, and the Kajkavski dialects. This became a particularly vexing problem for the Illyrians, who adopted a Napoleonic designation for their Croatian national movement (1832–48) that was initially supported even by Metternich. Ljudevit Gaj, leader of the Illyrians, first chose the Kajkavski dialect but switched in 1830 to the Štokavski, which was closest to Vuk's Serbian. Karadžić himself sympathized with the Illyrians and became signatory of the 1850 Vienna *Književni dogovor* (Literary Agreement) on bringing together the two languages. Hence the title of Tomo Maretić's grammar half a century later: *Grammatika i stilistika hrvatskoga ili srpskoga književnog jezika* (Grammar and Stylistics of the Croatian or Serbian Literary Language; 1899). But Serbo-Croatian has come under heavy fire after Croatia's separation from Yugoslavia in 1991 and the Croatian language is now moving away from its parental matrix.

Similar problems dogged the revival of the Czech and Slovak languages. František Martin Pelzel laid the groundwork for the Czech revival with his *Grundsätze der böhmischen Grammatik* (Principles of the Czech Grammar; 1795), but Josef Dobrovský, the “patriarch” of Slavic

philology, introduced later the pan-Slav view that all Slavic languages descended from a single original one. For Dobrovský, patriotic and popular Czech literature was not to be confounded with the science of linguistics. This made him unpopular with the upcoming romantic philologists, among them Josef Jakub Jungmann, who was a translator as well as a linguist: much of his life he translated foreign literature into Czech and compiled a Czech literary history (1825 and 1845), whereas his major linguistic achievement, the five-volume *Slownik česko-německý* (Czech-German Dictionary), appeared only in 1834–39.

Dobrovský's conception of an original single Slavic language found sympathy with Kopitar and the pan-Slavists but ran against particularistic currents in Slovakia. Anton Bernolák, a Jesuit from Bratislava, established in 1817 Slovak norms to make Slovak literature widely accessible, but his attempt was opposed by those who wanted to keep the unity with the Czech language, and by those who opposed a codification based on the dialect of Catholic Eastern Slovakia around Bratislava.

Facing a choice between adopting the language of a strong Slavic neighbor or creating a standard based on a Slovak dialect, the Slovaks, unlike the Croats, opted for the latter: Ľudovít Štúr selected the Central-Slovak dialect as the standard, and he managed to reach in 1843 an agreement with the Catholic Ján Hollý, a representative of Bernolák's view. In 1845, Štúr was permitted to start a Slovak-language journal, the *Slovenskije narodňje novini* (Slovak National News) and its literary supplement *Orol tatránski* (The Tatra Eagle). He hoped to make Slovak more palatable to the Hungarians by regarding Czech as corrupted by German, though he turned against the Hungarians after 1848 and came to believe in Russian pan-Slavism. A modified version of his codification was adopted in 1851, and in 1860 Jozef Karol Viktorin published (in Pest!) a corresponding *Grammatik der slowakischen Sprache*. Main opposition to Štúrist Slovak came from the Czech historian František Palacký and the two above-mentioned pan-Slavist Slovaks living abroad: Šafárik and Kollár. The former published his studies on the common Slavic traditions in Prague (hence the frequent Czech orthography of his name: Šafařik), while Kollár, a Lutheran minister of the Slovak community in Pest, published in 1836 an essay on the "reciprocity" (*vzájemnost*) between the Slavic languages and literatures. For Kollár, the schism was a "sin against civilization": the Slovak language was for pigs, coachmen, and kitchen personnel. In 1846, Šafárik, Kollár, and others protested against Štúr's "secession" by publishing the *Hlasové o potřebě jednoty spisovného jazyka pro Čechy, Moravany a Slováky* (Voices on the Need for a United Literary Language for Czechs, Moravians, and Slovaks).

The Slovenian language awakening, which had started in the eighteenth century with Pohlin's grammar and other publications, led in the early nineteenth century to a "War of the Alphabets" that pitted traditionalists in matters of spelling and characters against the innovators, who wanted to simplify spelling and get away from the "Bohoric" spelling introduced by Adam Bohorič back in the sixteenth century. Kopitar, following Vuk, wanted to simplify that spelling, and Franc Metelko proposed in 1825 the "metelčica," a "phonetically worthy but graphically bizarre concoction, which supplemented the standard Latin alphabet with new variants and Cyrillic characters" (Henry Leeming in Pynsent, *Companion* 547). It was forbidden in 1833. A second spelling, the "dajńčica" that Peter Dajńko developed in 1824, avoided Cyrillic characters but employed some strange graphic marks. It was used in the northeastern part of Slovenia and in about 50,000 copies of religious books before it was prohibited in 1838. With the exception of Stanko Vraz, who

moved to Zagreb, the Slovenes were less than enthusiastic about the Croat Illyrian movement, but since they had to fend off the overbearing Austrians they started to adopt Gaj's spelling in the mid-1840s, and accepted the "gajica" as their standard in 1848.

The linguistic reforms of the region's non-Slavic languages — the Baltic ones, Hungarian, and Romanian — ran along somewhat different lines. Hungarian and Romanian language reformers also had to battle defenders of the tradition (the Hungarian "orthologists" and the Romanians who favored the Cyrillic script), but no schisms came about. Romanian language reform was furthered by the Transylvanian School (see *ECE* 2: 255–56). The first edition of Samuil Micu-Klein's and Gheorghe Șincai's Romanian grammar, the *Elementa* (1780), was followed by Micu-Klein's and Petru Maior's *Lexicon românescu-latinescu-ungurescu-nemțescu* (Romanian-Latin-Hungarian-German Dictionary; 1825). Miklós Révai published his two-volume *Elaboratio grammatica hungarica* in 1803–1806.

Last but not least, we have to consider two unique revivals, of Yiddish and Hebrew, which were intimately linked to the general trends in the region (see *ECE* 2: 326–28). Like the other East-Central European linguistic and cultural reforms, the revivals of Yiddish and Hebrew responded to Enlightenment ideals, in this case specifically to the Haskala, assimilationist theories emanating from Moses Mendelssohn and his circle in Germany. Due to Haskala's initial success, the Yiddish and Hebrew revivals emerged only towards the end of the nineteenth century, in connection with the birth and growth of Zionism, a special nationalist revival. The first Yiddish Language Conference, organized by Nathan Birnbaum, took place in 1908 in Czernowitz, "ostensibly to regularize the grammar, syntax, and orthography of the Yiddish language. But Khayim Zhitlovski, a leading ideologue of Yiddish language and culture, sought to present Yiddish as the sole language of contemporary Jewish experience" (Wolitz, *ECE* 2: 326). The rivalry was unique even on a purely linguistic level, for unlike Croatian and Serbian or Czech and Slovak, Hebrew and Yiddish represented two radically different languages and cultures, both of which lived embedded in other linguistic environments (Russian, Polish etc.) that had reached already more advanced stages in their own awakening. Esperanto was invented by an Ashkenazi Jew, Ludwik Lazarus Zamenhof, as an attempt to overcome this Babel.

Vernacular Literatures and Cultures

Language reform was in East-Central Europe as much a concern of poets as of lexicographers, grammarians, and linguists. The Hungarian poet György Bessenyei championed Hungarian (rather than Latin) poetry as early as the 1770s, not for its own sake but mainly as a way to develop a rich and supple scholarly language. Living as a guardsman at the court in Vienna, Bessenyei knew German and French, envied their richness, and urged that works from these languages be translated. He also advocated the establishment of a learned society that would control language use by preparing a grammar, a dictionary, and a Hungarian theater for the cultivation of the language. The real language battle started under the leadership of Ferenc Kazinczy around 1811. Like Bessenyei, Kazinczy advocated the use of translations, but now in order to refine Hungarian literature rather than to advance learning. The Hungarian language would be best furthered by appropriating the finest works that luckier nations had produced; creating original works, however beautiful, should not be the primary aim (*Levelek* 3: 41). As a "neologus" seeking variety and color, Kazinczy was

ready to adopt foreign words, expressions, and sometimes even syntax, to enrich the Hungarian language. For the “orthologists,” who clung to the heritage in order to protect the alleged unity of the language, this was language corruption (Kazinczy, “Orthologus és Neologus”; 1819). As Kazinczy wrote in his poetic epistle “Vitkovics Mihály barátomhoz” (To My Friend Mihály Vitkovics; 1811), the orthologists admire speakers whose “beautiful language is unmixed with others [...] who speak as they write — in a word who came from us, grew up with us, stayed with us.” Unlike Vuk, Kazinczy did not admire those “who speak as they write,” for he wanted to elevate rather than lower everyday language.

The Czech Jungmann wanted, like Kazinczy, to open a window to the world by means of translations and adaptations: he translated works by Milton, Chateaubriand, Goethe, and many other Western authors in order to refine the Czech language. He was especially eager to translate and adapt words from the Slavic languages, as a step towards reuniting them. Most of his neologisms did catch on. Although Dobrovský had established already in 1798 (in a postscript to Pelzel’s mentioned grammar) that Czech prosody was accentual (syllabotonic), Jungmann followed Palacký’s and Šafárik’s *Počátkové Českého básnětj, obzvlásstě prozodye* (The Beginnings of Czech Poetry, Especially of Prosody; 1818) by claiming — surely, in part to distinguish Czech prosody from the accentual German one — that Czech prosody was quantitative. Štúr’s standard of Slovak received a literary “ratification” a year after the 1843 agreement, when Jozef Miloslav Hurban published the second volume of the almanac *Nitra* as the first book in Štúrist Slovak. The new language was then popularized by Janko Král and most of the Slovak poets.

At the end of eighteenth century, Ienăchiță Văcărescu and his sons Alecu and Nicolae fitted the Romanian language to the needs of lyrical poetry by writing compositions that mixed classical themes with folk rhythms and motifs; however, it was Mihai Eminescu almost a century later who turned the Romanian vernacular into a sophisticated modern poetic language, one that reflected both national experience and European modes of expression.

The language reform of the Croat Illyrian movement was reconfirmed above all by Petar Preradović, who started to write poetry in German but became a leader in using the newly codified language for poetic purposes. Vuk’s reform of the Serbian language received a literary confirmation when Branko Radičević demonstrated with his *Pjesme* (Poems; 1847) that Karadžić’s nativist conception of language was suitable for writing non-folkloric poetry. The Slovene language was reinforced after the War of Alphabets by the poetry of France Prešeren.

In Bulgaria, the long Ottoman occupation delayed the emergence of a literary culture in the vernacular. In the 1840s and 50s, the nation’s intelligentsia was mostly educated in the Russian schools and universities of Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kiev, and Odessa, although some Bulgarians attended Romanian educational institutions and Czech, French, or Austrian universities; quite a few of them studied in the Ottoman Empire (see Genčev). Many returning foreign graduates committed themselves to the modernization of the Bulgarian schools according to models they came to know abroad. The Russian trained Naiden Gerov and Botyo Petkov founded the first Bulgarian “class” schools (secondary school between elementary and high schools), in which the teaching of Bulgarian history was introduced in 1851–52 and soon became obligatory everywhere. It is worth noting that a Czech historian, Josef Jireček, became Bulgaria’s Minister of Education in 1881. He was subsequently Director of the National Library.

In Bulgaria, too, translations made an important contribution to the development of a literary language, but the first popular translations of foreign fiction were made from already translated versions (e.g., from Defoe in French translation) rather than from the original. They readily departed from their source by changing the foreign names, the setting, and other cultural details (Aretov; Lekov, *Pisatel* 197–209). Most popular were Fénelon's *Telemachus*, Defoe's *Robinson*, Karamzin's *Bednaya Liza* (Poor Liza) and *Natalia* (both of 1792), an adaptation of Dositej Obradović's *Dve prikazki za slavnite ženi i za Aza čelovekomrazetsa* (Two Tales of Famous Women and Aza, the Misanthrope; 1853), Benjamin Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac*, and the anonymous *Istoriya na velikii Aleksandra Makedontsa* (The Story of the Great Macedonian Alexander).

The first important figure of original Bulgarian literature was Naiden Gerov, who wrote the first Bulgarian fictional travel story, and the first Bulgarian narrative poem, "Stoyan i Rada" (1845). The latter made pioneering use of the hitherto artistically depreciated folklore. Gerov tells a traditional story about a mother who rejects her son's beloved, so that the lovers can only be one in death, but he legitimizes the son's sentimental excesses in a culture that permits only timid expressions of sensuality. "Stoyan i Rada" was in this sense new. Gerov published also a good number of non-poetic texts but left many of his poems unpublished for he considered "dabbling" in poetry as unworthy of the high positions he came occupy as the Russian vice-consul in Plovdiv (1857–) and the governor of Svištov after Liberation (1879).

By the end of the 1850s, Bulgarian writers started to write original lyric poetry in the vernacular. Konstantin Miladinov, for instance, used a simple language in "Želanie" (Desire) to express emotional fluctuations; he conveyed homesickness in "Taga za yug" (Grief for the South) and other moving poems; whereas he injected humor into the rather somber nationalist poetry of his age in "Gark i bălgarin" (A Greek and a Bulgarian) and "Egyptin Delia," (Topalov 271–89). Dobri Čintulov (Topalov 292–98) published only three poems — "Stara majka se proštava sas sina si" (An Old Mother Bidding Farewell to Her Son), "Izprovodjak na ednogo bălgarina iz Odesa" (At Parting with a Bulgarian from Odessa), and "Kitka iz Balkana" (A Nosegay from the Balkan) — the rest circulated in manuscripts and was sung. The revolutionary and patriotic "Stani, stani, yunak balkanski" (Get up, Get up Balkan Hero), and "Kade si, vjarna ti ljubov narodna" (Where Are You, Faithful Love of the People) are still included in the school curricula.

In Estonia, Lydia Koidula transposed German language, style, and prosody to establish poetic models for the still diffuse Estonian language. In Latvia, Juris Alunāns's *Dziesmiņas* (Songs; 1856) had an important role in shaping the Latvian language. The first genuine Latvian novel, Reinis and Matīss Kaudzīte's *Mēnieku laiki* (The Times of the Land Surveyors), appeared only in 1879.

Cultural and Literary Societies

From the end of the eighteenth century onward, both language and cultural renewal were stimulated by the formation of clubs and societies. Leaving aside the various smaller and ephemeral scientific, technological, and scholarly societies (for the Slavic ones see Kimball), we mention the Estonian Learned Society (Gelehrte Estnische Gesellschaft), founded at Tartu university in 1838 by Friedrich Robert Faehmann and Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald, the "authors" of the folk epos *Kalevipoeg*. In the 1870s, chapters of that epic were declaimed in evening gatherings, which led to the foundation of the student society *Vironia* (1873–81). Kollár's *Spolok milovníkov*

reči a literatúry slovenskej (Society of the Friends of the Slovak Language and Literature; 1834) published the almanac *Zora* (Dawn; 1835–36, 1939, 1840); the *Tatrin* Society (1844–47), also Slovak but with a different agenda, was founded by Štúr, Michal Miroslav Hodža, and others. The seminal Romanian society *Junimea* (Youth) was founded in 1864 by the critic Titu Maiorescu and four other young writers, journalists, and politicians; this core group soon rallied distinguished representatives in literature, philosophy, history, linguistics, law, and science.

The reading clubs that emerged in various parts of East-Central Europe were modeled after the French *cabinets de lecture*, the British Reading Rooms, and the German *Lesevereine* and *Lesegesellschaften*, but went beyond book lending by accommodating a variety of cultural activities with a national agenda (see Kimball). A reading society (*čtenařský spolek*) was founded in the Bohemian town of Radnice already in 1818; Kollár's and Martin Hamuljak's Slovak Reading Club (*Slovenský čitateľský spolok*; 1826) was established in Pest. Reading rooms were especially numerous and strong in Croatia. The first one in Varaždin (1837) was followed by the Karlovac *čitanoica* and the Illyrian Reading Room of Zagreb, both in 1838. The latter was presided over by Count Janko Drašković, a key public figure in the Illyrian movement. A Serbian reading room was established in Novi Sad in 1842. Slovenian reading rooms started in Trieste (1861), Maribor (1862), and Ljubljana (National Reading Room, 1865), and numbered seventy-seven by 1900. Bulgaria's first *čitališta*, founded in 1856 in Šumen, Svištov, and Lom, were patterned after the Greek *sylogoses*, the Serb *čitališta*, and the cultural organizations of Hungarian and Polish emigrants who settled in Bulgaria after 1848–49.

Forging National Canons

National identity was forged by means of collected, reworked, cultivated, and canonized texts, which became founding documents and symbols of the nation. As Friedrich Schlegel envisaged, each self-respecting nation had to recuperate the myths, legends, folk songs, and founding narratives of its (presumed) pre-historic past (*ECE* 1: 8). Constructing a distant past involved recording an oral tradition (Karadžić and his followers), forging founding documents (Václav Hanka and others), assembling national epics from collected songs (Elias Lönnrot, Faehlmann, etc.), or writing new national epics (Arany, *Buda halála*; Bolintineanu, *Traianida*). The former three approaches were delegated to the philologists, the latter one to the poets — though it must be added, as we shall show in greater detail in the introduction to Part III below, that the philologists often surreptitiously arrogated themselves creative tasks by either reshaping what they found or just forging documents of the past. The philologists further contributed to the national program by, (1) canonizing national poets (an issue treated in the fourth volume of our *History*), (2) writing histories of the national literatures (see Part IV below), (3) training the future teachers and scholars of the vernacular language and literature, and (4) (re)editing older texts in the vernacular.

The creative writers of East-Central Europe participated in the cultural politics of the national awakening by writing historical novels and dramas. As discussed in a section of our first volume (*ECE* 1: 463–511), the East-Central European historical novelists reacted to Walter Scott but developed their own themes, usually with material from their own national history. Only few of them (e.g., Henryk Sienkiewicz in *Quo vadis?* or Dezső Kosztolányi in *Nero*) chose settings outside the region. Historical dramas were far less numerous, though many national operas were based

on events in the history of the nation. The emerging professional historians accused the writers of national histories and dramas of being subjective and cavalier with the facts, but the fiction writers, who often reached a larger public, were irritatingly popular rivals to them. In retrospect, the historians who claimed objectivity tended to be as swayed by national ideologies as the writers of historical fiction.

Scholars and historians usually selected national poets from previous ages or generations. Few national poets were canonized during their lifetime. The preference of the Poles shifted only slowly from the Renaissance poet Jan Kochanowski to the exiled romantic Mickiewicz — in part because the works of the latter could not be published at home. The Czechs, especially the populists, had for some time difficulty in accepting the highly individual voice of Karel Hynek Mácha. The Hungarians preferred for quite a while Mihály Vörösmarty to Sándor Petőfi. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, all peoples of East-Central Europe possessed national poet-heroes, who were chosen for their national engagement as much as for the brilliance of their writing. Next to the mentioned ones we find the Serb/Montenegrin Petar Petrović Njegoš, the Romanian Mihai Eminescu, the Bulgarian Khristo Botev, and the Slovene France Prešeren. The philologists erected national monuments for them, but some of these monuments started to corrode in the new political and aesthetic climate of the twentieth-century.

Ferenc Kölcsey and István Széchenyi: What Are National Traditions?

The Hungarian generation after Kazinczy went beyond his premises by reflecting on the contribution of language to national identity. Kölcsey, the author the poem “Hymnusz” (1823), which became the national anthem when Ferenc Erkel set it to music (1844), had a major role in creating a self-image for the Hungarians. Four of his other works also have exerted a decisive influence on the interpretation of Hungarian identity: “Zrínyi éneke” (Zrínyi’s Song; 1830) and “Zrínyi második éneke” (Zrínyi’s Second Song; 1838), two visionary poems that predicted the death of the nation; and two longer essays published in 1826: “Mohács,” a meditation on the disastrous battle of 1526, and “Nemzeti hagyományok” (National Traditions), a defense of folklore that constitutes Kölcsey’s most important reflection on Hungarian national identity.

Kölcsey believed that culture was based on collective memory, and he assumed that the highest form of poetry was “deeply rooted in national traditions” and stood “close to the nation” (*Összes művei* 1: 505–506). Hence, national character emerged from early history; orality was superior to writing. Yet Kölcsey also believed that the past is rewritten by an ever-changing present, and that, accordingly, “the disappearance of tradition makes it impossible for us to develop an authentic interpretation of the characteristics of the past” (513), for “in a late phase of culture the ancient is given the features of the present age” (514). Nevertheless, the opening words of his essay describe the lives of nations in terms of human life cycles: “Nations have the same phases in their life as individuals. Their childhood is followed first by the promises of youth, and later by the strength of maturity, which, in turn, is replaced by the decline of old age” (490). How does this teleology, which gave structure to so many national histories, square with the notion of a continually rewritten history?

The fundamental question for Kölcsey was whether the legacy of the early Hungarian people was sufficient for the survival of Hungarian culture. No culture could do without foreign influence,

yet imitation indicated a weak native tradition. Kölcsey's notion of language reform confirmed the vernacular, yet aimed at creating a standardized and "polished" idiom, purged of local dialect. "Nemzeti hagyományok" marked a shift away from the view that traditional rural culture was a barbarity that had to be forgotten for the primary task of the nation was to absorb the culture of Europe. Kölcsey believed that borrowings and translations could offer only a faint support for native poetry. A national poetry had to be inspired by simple epic and lyric folk poetry that would be intimately tied to the national tradition inherited from heroic times. Kölcsey noted with regret (as did later János Arany) that Hungarian folk poetry was not very ancient; yet, in contrast to Kazinczy, he believed that "Hungarians can achieve originality by the use of their language" (508). He regretted that Janus Pannonius "used a Roman lute when singing fine yet foreign songs" during the Renaissance, when poetry in the vernacular was on the rise (515). For Kölcsey, Hungarian literature was the legacy of Hungary's historical memory, belief system, and way of life. This language-based conception of a nation's imagined community was for him the most obvious manifestation of the role that texts played in shaping national identity.

Kölcsey's words encouraged artists and writers to claim that Hungary represented a unique cultural entity that emerged from a distinctive landscape. For Petőfi and others in the 1840s, the *puszta* became an icon of national identity, whereas the long epic poems *Zalán futása* (Zalán's Flight; 1825) by Vörösmarty and *Buda halála* (Buda's Death; 1863) by Arany expressed a deep sense of belonging to one's own land and folk. Partly due to Kölcsey's influence, some nineteenth-century Hungarian writers came to regard literature as a means of preserving a national tradition threatened by cosmopolitanism. In "Magyar irodalom" (Hungarian Literature; 1913), and its counterpart, *Az európai irodalom története* (History of European Literature; 1934–35), Mihály Babits outlined in the twentieth century a different interpretation of Kölcsey's essay: the development of a culture depends not only on its originality and unity but also on the multiplicity of the tasks it can handle in order to reach a nation's main goal, namely dialogue with other cultures. In this reading, the preservation of one's identity is linked to tolerance towards others, which is a precondition of culture for it allows us to look at our own community from outside.

In contrast to Kölcsey, István Széchenyi wanted to imagine and create a nation, and he often entertained the idea that national characters are created by means of writing. The closing sentence of his most influential book, *Hitel* (Credit; 1830), became a slogan: "Many think that Hungary *has been*; I like to believe that she *will be*" (492). In Széchenyi's view, national character "may be influenced both by the will and the climate, but is not the effect of either. Government and education are the grand and efficient causes in the formation of character both public and private" (*Naplói* 1: 577; April 7, 1819). A diary entry a month later reveals that Széchenyi was more skeptical about national traditions than Kölcsey:

A nation emerges just as a child is born; it goes through the years of adolescence, youth, manhood, and old age and finally dies off completely. The only difference between the afterlife of a nation and a human being is that the corpse of a human being is eaten by worms and completely ceases to exist, whereas the dead body of a nation may vegetate for many more years. Whether a nation is going to be great or remain insubstantial depends as much on accident as on the education that it received in its childhood years. (*Naplói* 1: 629)

Széchenyi's view on Hungary's national traditions oscillated. He could devastatingly remark: "We have no national habits; our existence and knowledge depend on imitation. Unlike other nations, we stick to the old and are superficial in imitating others" (*Világ* 72). In the same work he considered Hungary "an old fortress that needs restoration"; yet a page later he wrote: "The Hungarian is but a child. He has not achieved anything yet but the psychic and physical energy hidden in his young soul may enable him to do great things" (*Világ* 101–102, 103). Ultimately, Széchenyi believed that his identity was defined by language: "I have received my language from God and I will return it to Him upon my death" (Speech in the Upper House, November 30, 1835; *Művei* 1: 692).

For Széchenyi, national character was a product of literature. In *Por és sár* (Dust and Mud), he wrote on June 13, 1858 that unless a nation has figures like Schiller, Alfieri, Moore, Berzsenyi, and Vörösmarty it will "sink to the level of a machine and may achieve material but no spiritual prosperity" (*Hagyatéka* 862–63). Széchenyi must have believed then that a Hungary that produced Berzsenyi and Vörösmarty could achieve "spiritual prosperity"; yet the pessimistic vision he expressed in the Upper House on October 2, 1844 contradicts this, perhaps only for rhetorical purposes: "It may be possible that those who will replace us will be more honest and intelligent, but I am certain that they will not be Hungarians" (*Beszédei* 358).

Such beliefs and doubts about national traditions surfaced in all national renewals during the nineteenth century, for all calls for renewal assumed that the present was corrupt and decadent by contrast to the glorious past conjured up by literature. Modernism, to be discussed in what follows, drastically changed the parameters of this vision.

II Modernism

By the end of nineteenth century, East-Central Europe's literature and philology had acquired intense national colors. But its full range of national institutions emerged only after World War I, when the Baltic countries and Czechoslovakia became independent for the first time, when Poland regained its independence, and when Croatia, the Voivodina, Transylvania, and other formerly Austro-Hungarian territories became part of greater Yugoslavia and Romania. The losers were Hungary, which also became fully independent but lost in the process much of its population, territory, and self-image, the Ukraine, which incorporated parts of Galicia, Bucovina, and the Carpatho-Ukraine but became after protracted fights part of the Russian-dominated Soviet Union, and Lithuania, which gained independence but without Vilnius, which became part of Poland. The new map of the region meant for most nations, except for the latter three, a culmination of their national renewal, and an opportunity to develop additional national literary institutions: German, Russian, and Hungarian theaters and universities were converted into Czechoslovakian, Baltic, and Romanian institutions, and virtually all "foreign" publishers, journals, and literary associations were curtailed or closed down. In the new countries, but also in truncated and irredentist Hungary, most literary institutions became more intensely nationalistic by furthering, praising, and glorifying a national literary culture that allegedly rose from indigenous roots in folk art. As we shall show in the introduction to Part III, this led to the growth of populist (or "agrarian nationalist"), literary, cultural, and political movements. They were perhaps strongest in Hungary and

Romania, the non-Slavic countries of the region that worried about losing their identity, but they were alive and kicking in Poland as well.

Yet this national, now official literary culture represented only one aspect of literary life in early-twentieth-century East-Central Europe. It was countered by new aesthetic and cosmopolitan literary currents that reached the region from the West in the decades before and after 1900. Symbolism, Decadence, Impressionism, Expressionism, Surrealism, and other currents that we designate here with the generic term Modernism came from the West and sometimes from Russia, but underwent radical modifications when encountering the nationalist, populist, and often still romantic local literary traditions. Some trends, like Dada, emerged simultaneously in East-Central Europe and the West; Western Surrealism itself was replenished and reoriented later by new East-Central European directions such as that promoted by the Czech avant-gardes and the Romanians Gherasim Luca and D[olfi] Trost. The resultant hybrid constellations became, for the better or worse, unique for the region.

Modernism and the Avant-garde were already discussed by Péter Krasztev and Endre Bojtár in our first volume (*ECE* 1: 332–48 and 364–73 respectively), we shall therefore focus now on those important movements and institutional changes they have not covered. In so doing, we shall leave publication and censorship for the introduction to Part I below.

As mentioned above, the national institutions emerged at different times for they depended on social or governmental support, which, in turn, was a function of the economic and political situation. By contrast, the modernist literary movements were primarily intra-cultural and intra-literary events that cropped up almost everywhere in a relatively short time, when waves of Western artistic innovations reached the region. They were also subject to economic and political factors but proved more flexible in coping with them.

The Polish positivists of the 1870s (see the introduction to Part I), the first in the region to break with the nationalist-romantic tradition, were more concerned with economics and social justice than literature. Literary Modernism emerged in East-Central Europe later, during the decades around 1900. Moving from North to South we note the *Noor-Eesti* (Young Estonia) movement that Gustav Suits started in 1905, and the Latvian *Jaunā Stravā* (New Trend) of Jānis Rainis, Aspazija and others, which started in the early 1890s and was dismantled in 1897, when the Tsarist authorities jailed some members and forced others into exile. The *Młoda Polska* started in 1897 in Cracow, involving there Stanisław Wyspiański and Stanisław Przybyszewski, who returned from Germany in 1898 and assumed the editorship of the journal *Życie* (Life; 1897–1900). Artur Górski published 1897–1900 in this journal a series of articles entitled “Młoda Polska.” In 1880, Alexandru Macedonski began publishing in Bucharest the magazine *Literatorul* (The Literary Worker), which launched a generation of young writers interested in replacing the dominant classicist and romantic trends of the nineteenth century with the emerging Symbolism. The Prague group *Hlas* (The Voice) with its eponymous periodical (1898 and 1904) criticized the pseudo-Romantic adoration of the peasantry and the political orientation towards Tsarist Russia; the Ukrainian *Moloda Muza* (Young Muse; 1906–) in L’viv turned from Realism to Western currents concerned with aesthetic value.

The Croatian “Moderna” (and several other modernist movements) was no radical rupture with the past, “but a logical continuation, reaction, and development from the realism and naturalism of the end of the nineteenth century” that has no corresponding movement in Serbian poetry

(Lord, “Nationalism” 278 and 285). The Albanian *Bashkimi* (Union) literary society was founded in 1899 by Gjergj Fishta and others. We may include here also the *Vesela Bălgariya* (Merry Bulgaria), a Bulgarian bohemian circle around Aleko Konstantinov, who mocked Bulgarian national characters in *Bay Ganyo* (1895).

The radical modernist theater innovations will be discussed in the second section of Part II below. Suffice to mention here, next to Przybyszewski and Wyspiański, the playwrights and directors Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz (Witkacy), Leon Schiller, Sándor Hevesi, Geo Milev, Jaroslav Kvapil, Jiří Voskovec and Jan Werich (V+W), Emil František Burian, Josef and Karel Čapek, Stjepan Miletić, Branko Gavella, Miroslav Krleža, and Camil Petrescu.

Cabarets and Literary Cafés

The most important new literary institutions, cabaret and literary café, were private rather than national, and nestled both at the center and the periphery of modernist culture. Of course, cafés had existed in Europe since the seventeenth century, and some of them played a historical role in the nineteenth. The Pilvax Café in Pest, for instance, was a gathering place of the young radical writers and intellectuals in 1848. The literary cafés that emerged during the decades around 1900



Figure 1. Frigyes Karinthy in a *kávéház*. Courtesy of the Országos Széchényi Könyvtár (National Széchényi Library), Budapest, Hungary.

fulfilled, however, different functions. They treated the literati not only to a great variety of domestic and international papers, but often also to game-, card-, and chess rooms. The literary cafés were sites for editorial gatherings, for discussions on the topics of the day, for solitary writing, for drinking, and occasionally for debauchery.

As such, they often served as alternatives to domestic life, and Ferenc Molnár could hold them, tongue in cheek, responsible for the decline of family life (see his “pesti társaság”). Indeed, these spaces of homosociability lured away the husbands and fathers from the family and were only reluctantly hospitable to women. Female writers, at least in Hungary, could infiltrate the cafés only slowly, though by 1930 Budapest’s Centrál kávéház became the gathering place of the Hungarian women writers as well.

Molnár accompanied his criticism with surely exaggerated praise. The availability of the latest oral and printed information, he claimed, made the literary cafés into something like the Roman agoras, sites where public opinion and judgment were instantaneously generated and disseminated (“pesti társaság”). For Kosztolányi, Budapest was “The Coffee-City” (see “kávéváros”), and everything beautiful and elevated, everything that was more than “this wretched life” would take off from its cafés (“Előkelő kávéház”). Arthur Koestler, in turn, called the cafés “Budapest’s literary ghettos” (*láthatatlan* 193) — perhaps also because so many of the guests were Jewish.

The literary café was not only a key institution of modernist literature but also the subject of innumerable anecdotes, humorous sketches, and slightly melancholy recollections, written mostly for newspapers. More than one text speaks of the cafés’ owner and personnel, or the passing away of a head-waiter. Ernő Szép remarked in a touching farewell piece for the head-waiter at Budapest’s New York Kávéház that Gyula Reisz paid the difference between the writer’s fate and illusion, meaning that he was often willing to pay for the coffee that a destitute writer could not afford (“Egy főúr halálára”); Emil Artur Longen remembered František Patera, the legendary but blunt head-waiter of Prague’s Café Union, as a national artist of sorts who always warned him when the police looked for him (Jähn 54). František Langer lovingly evoked the many small rooms, the special atmosphere, and the odd artists and writers of Prague’s Café Union (Jähn 7–30), while Zdeněk Kratochvíl made fun of its odd owner (Jähn 170–75). The “Narkav” (Národní kavárna = National Coffee House) was where the leftist group *Devětsil* (see ECE 2: 178–81 and below) usually gathered in 1923–24. Café Slavia across from the National Theater was the gathering place of actors as well as writers. Each literary café had its own physical complexion, its degree of luxury or nonchalant disorder, its own clientele with a particular political orientation. The political anarchists of the Narkav were not comparable to the rather bourgeois literati of Budapest’s New York Kávéház. Yet again different was the café *Pod Pikadorem* (Under the Sign of the Picador) that opened on November 29, 1918, right after Poland regained its independence, or the literary café *Cașa*, originally associated with the symbolist poet Ion Minulescu but later the site for literary disputes between different trends and their representatives.

The cabaret, which emerged in Paris in the 1880s and in Berlin with the *Überbrettl* in 1901, reached the Central European cities in the first decade of the new century. The first Polish cabaret, the *Zielony Balonik* (Green Balloon; 1905–12), was established as improvised entertainment by a close group of Cracow bohemian artists, which included the writers Tadeusz Żeleński-Boy and Adolf Nowaczyński, who usually met in the Jan Michalik café (see Fox, p. 203 below). In Warsaw, Arnold Szyfman founded the artistic and literary cabaret *Momus* (1908–12).



Figure 2. The First Budapest Cabaret: The *Bonnbonnière*.

Budapest's first genuine cabaret, the *Fővárosi Cabaret Bonnbonnière*, opened on March 1, 1907 with Endre Nagy as its key figure. It operated until 1910, but Nagy, the leading genius of the new genre, opened in 1908 his own Nagy Endre Kabaré. At the heart of his cabaret was the *konferanszié*, a kind of Master of Ceremony that commented with bitter but engaging irony on the events of the day while introducing the next number, which could be a slightly sentimental chanson, a *kuplé* (ironic-humorous ditty), or a short dialogue. Nagy had studied law and had worked as a journalist in Nagyvárad (Oradea), where he met Endre Ady and became one of his best, lifelong friends. Ady wrote texts for Nagy's cabaret, as did Babits, Kosztolányi, Molnár, Szép, and many other leading writers. Nagy, a great artist of the spoken word, also wrote novels, novellas, and plays, and he published at the end of his life an autobiographical history of the cabaret (*A kabaré regénye*; 1935). His tradition was carried on by Tamás Emőd (also from Nagyvárad), who wrote some 300 lyrics and 80 one-act plays besides being the artistic director of several cabarets. The third important writer for the early cabaret, Andor Gábor, fled after the collapse of the Hungarian Soviet Republic of 1919 and survived World War II as an exile in Moscow.

Czech cabaret turned from a popular entertainment into an intellectual genre after 1910, staging parodies of theater classics, political and satirical songs, and poetry recitation, involving thereby such important writers as Jaroslav Hašek and Egon Erwin Kisch, as well as actors, singers, and designers (Hučin, p. 179 below). The leading Prague cabarets included the *Lucerna* (The Lantern, 1910–23), the *Montmartre* (1911–22), and the *Kabaret U kuřáho oka* (Cabaret at the Chicken's Eye; 1913–15). We should not forget that the Cabaret Voltaire of Zurich launched the Dada revolution when the Romanians Tristan Tzara and Marcel Iancu joined there Hugo Ball, Hans Arp, and other Western artists.

The Interwar Years

World War I deeply ruptured modernist art and culture. The war (see *ECE* 1: 177–239) fundamentally changed the art and worldview of such leading writers as Liviu Rebreanu, Jaroslav Hašek, and Pavel Hviezdoslav. The subsequent Russian revolution, the demise of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the birth of new nations, and the redrawing of borders radically changed the institutional conditions of the region's literary culture. The ethnic tensions and minority conditions usually got worse rather than better. After the symbolist interlude of *l'art pour l'art*, national and social issues moved once more into the foreground of literature, and continued to vie for public attention: the new governments appealed to nationalism and even chauvinism as a means to bring about national unity and to divert attention from the social problems that deeply divided each country internally. Major metropolitan centers now became the seat of national cultures that suppressed and in some cases ejected what remained of German culture, severely curtailed minority cultures, and harbored rising anti-Semitism. Cities that used to be sites of cultural dispersion and diversification, cosmopolitan centers and magnets for foreigner writers and intellectuals, for German and Yiddish newspapers and theatres, for various minority associations, printing presses, and publishers — these cities now entered an apparently inexorable movement towards mono-culturalism.

The Writers' Unions, one of the new literary institutions that emerged during this period, were nominally independent but vulnerable to government intervention, especially if they received state subsidy. A Society of Romanian Writers (*Societatea Scriitorilor Români*) was established in 1909 around Mihail Sadoveanu; a Union of Bulgarian Writers was set up in 1913; a Union of Polish Writers in 1920, under the chairmanship of Stefan Żeromski. The Estonian Writers' Union was founded by Friedebert Tuglas in 1922. The authority of these official Unions was often challenged by rival political ones. Thus, Todor Pavlov founded a Union of Bulgarian Proletarian-Revolutionary Writers in 1932; an Estonian Union of Soviet Writers was founded in Moscow in 1943, whereas an Estonian Union of Exile Writers was established after the war in Stockholm upon the initiative of Gustav Suits. As we shall see, the official Unions came under strict state control during the communist regimes and were revamped several times.

Still, in spite of the political and economic pressures (and sometimes precisely as a result of them), unexpected new transnational contact and interactions came about, even in such unexpected places as in Polish-governed Lithuania and Romanian-governed Transylvania. As we shall briefly discuss in the following sections, émigrés from Russia stimulated new departures in linguistics (the Prague Linguistic Circle) and in the theater (e.g., Russian directors and actors in the Baltic countries), whereas, facing in the other direction, many of the powerful interwar avant-garde movements in East-Central Europe adopted Russian political and artistic ideas.

The East-Central European Avant-garde

The Avant-garde violently challenged all social and artistic conventions, and created a variety of its own institutions: loose circles and associations, usually ephemeral journals, revolutionary theater, cabaret, and public performances, as well as new genres and styles ranging from Dada poetry, through manifestoes, to experimental amalgamations of sounds, words, and images, and revolutionary typography.

The “historical” Avant-garde that flourished roughly from 1910 to 1930 (see Benson, Janeczek, and *ECE* 1: 364–73) was East-Central Europe’s first genuinely international literary and artistic movement. Symbolism, Decadence, Impressionism, and the other modern Western artistic styles and trends that had reached the region earlier fomented little genuine transnational interchange. The East-Central European Avant-garde contributed to the international movement Tristan Tzara, Benjamin Fundoianu, Lajos Kassák, Karel Teige, László Moholy-Nagy and others, who were on equal footing with the French, German, and Italian avant-gardes. More importantly, the East-Central European avant-gardes interacted among themselves and reacted to each other in these years of war and chauvinism. Kassák was in touch after 1920 with virtually all major avant-garde writers and artists from East-Central Europe, reporting about their activities and publishing their articles; the Croatian Dragan Aleksić became a Dadaist in 1920–21, during his studies in Prague; and the Romanian avant-garde journals published many articles by non-Romanians. As Kassák declared in 1916 in *A Tett* (The Deed): the new literature “cannot serve racial or national ends” (Benson 161); soon afterwards his journal was closed down by the authorities because it published in wartime an international issue with works by such “enemy” artists as Kandinsky, Duhamel, Verhaeren, and Shaw. The Romanian avant-gardists, many of whom were Jewish, categorically rejected in the 1920s and 1930s anti-Semitism and the Romanian Iron Guard; members of the Czech *Devětsil*, the Polish futurists, and other avant-gardes were committed internationalists, looking both westward to Paris (or Berlin) and eastward to Moscow. *Contimporanul*, the most important Romanian avant-garde journal of the 1920s, followed with interest the activities of Kassák’s exiled Hungarian group around *Ma* (Today), maintained contacts with Western artists, and collaborated with many foreign journals, among them *Stavba* and *Disk* in Prague, and *Zenit* in Zagreb and Belgrade. Ljubomir Micić and his Croatian and Serbian zenitists occasionally declared themselves “anti-European” Balkanists to protest Western domination, but never in the spirit of chauvinism. Unfortunately, the shift from nationalist to leftist and communist internationalism usually led to false hopes and tragic consequences.

Such a shared internationalism among the avant-gardes was remarkable since the various writers and groups had no common platform. During the interwar years, most of them tried but failed to reconcile two antithetical ideologies: a ludic and subversive ethos of individualism that belonged to the Dada heritage, and a Marxist ideology, inspired by the Bolshevik revolution and associated, for a while and not by everybody, with Constructivism. The ideological positions and aesthetic credos were usually announced in manifestoes, a typical avant-garde genre that hardly existed in the nineteenth century and died out by the time World War II broke out, with few exceptions such as Luca’s and Trost’s 1945 “Dialectique de la dialectique,” a manifesto addressed to the international Surrealist Movement. Some avant-garde texts were meant to exemplify in writing and/or in theater, cabaret, and avant-garde performances the ideologies and credos of the manifestoes. Other texts refused to exemplify anything and simply performed auditory and visual spectacles, usually to shock the philistines. The performance orientation of the literary avant-garde foregrounded poetry and theater while relatively neglecting prose fiction: apart from a handful anti-narrative fictions like Urmuz’s *Pagini bizare* (Weird Pages; 1908–1909) and Miloš Crnjanski’s *Dnevnik o Čarnojeviću* (Diary of Čarnojević; 1921), which we treated earlier (*ECE* 1: 409–14), avant-garde narrative innovations were less frequent and radical than in other genres. Witkiewicz, for instance, was revolutionary in the theater and in aesthetics, but his most important

novel, *Pożegnanie jesieni* (Autumn's Farewell; 1926) remains traditional in its narrative mode and portrayal of people.

Two East-Central European writers shaped the emergence of the Avant-garde in 1916, at the midpoint in the war: in February, Tzara co-founded the Zurich Cabaret Voltaire, thereby launching Dada; and in November, the Hungarian Kassák launched the magazine *Ma* after *A Tett* was, as we saw, closed down by the police. Tzara's *Dada* magazine and Kassák's *Ma*, as well as the two artist's later career, illustrate how political engagement and desire for artistic autonomy constantly defined and redefined the Avant-garde. Tzara's famous "Manifest Dada" from 1918 (Benson 313–17) declared: "There is a literature that does not reach the voracious mass. It is the work of creators, issued from a real necessity in the author, produced for himself. It expresses the knowledge of a supreme egoism, in which laws wither away" (314–15); it closed with the ecstatic words: "Freedom: Dada Dada Dada, a roaring of tense colors, and interlacing of opposites and of all contradictions, grotesques, inconsistencies: LIFE" (317). Kassák's "Programm," still in *A Tett*, also held that the new literature should not "swear allegiance to any one of the 'isms,'" but glorify artistic freedom only inasmuch as it furthered (as did the detested war) the "coming of a more Human Being" (Benson 160).

Tzara continued to insist that the individual's absolute liberty had priority even if it clashed with the interests of the community. In an interview of 1927, he still viewed historical materialism as a betrayal of the permanent revolution, namely "the revolution of the spirit," the only revolution for which he was willing to sacrifice his life. The Bolsheviks represented a "new bourgeois party," a "bourgeoisie of the revolution" (Tzara, "Tristan Tzara parle à *Integral*"). Yet, after many clashes with those who rejected his individualism, he joined the French Communist Party in 1936.

Kassák's political trajectory differed, partly because he did not emigrate permanently, partly because of his inability to submit, and partly because he was oriented more towards the German-speaking cultures than towards the French ones. An autodidact from a lower-class family, Kassák started with publications in *Nyugat* and other established journals, but took much greater liberty with language than his elders. When Babits, a modernist writer with classicist leanings, chastised in *Nyugat* (no. 17, 1916) the authors of *A Tett* for their fondness for free verse, Kassák answered politely but firmly in the next issue.

On February 20, 1919, during Mihály Károlyi's democratic revolution, Kassák gave a speech on "Activism," his new slogan; by the time "Aktivizmus" was printed in *Ma* on April 10, 1919, Károlyi's revolution had already been superseded by the Hungarian Commune. Kassák favored a "dictatorial class-revolution of the proletariat" over social democracy (Benson 225). Like Tzara, he sought an art-led "permanent revolution" (219) that would recognize "no form of government" (225) but require that the proletariat undergo a "psychic rebirth" (220). In Kassák's vision, a permanent revolution went "beyond Communism" (223). Indeed, Kassák and the Commune leader Béla Kun mutually distrusted each other, for the former was suspicious of politics and the latter of art. When Kun spoke of *Ma*'s "ecstatic convulsions" (Benson 230), Kassák angrily replied in his "Letter to Béla Kun in the Name of Art" (*Levél Kun Bélához a művészet nevében*) that Kun and his ilk were still in Russia when Kassák and his friends "were already agitating in spoken and printed words for Communism in Hungary" (230). Publishing poems by such foreign revolutionaries as the French Henri Guilbeaux, the German Ivan Goll, and the Czech Otokar Březina, *Ma* had demonstrated, in Kassák's view, its revolutionary spirit (231–32). But Kassák refused to be affiliated

with any party (231), and he told Kun that only artists were qualified to judge matters relating to their profession (233). His defiant words were rooted as much in his own hunger for power as in his avant-garde belief in creative freedom.

Though the Commune banned *Ma* in July 1919, Kassák was imprisoned after its fall. When he managed to get to Vienna in 1920, he was joined by his collaborators Sándor Barta and his wife Erzsi Ujvári (Kassák's sister), János Mácza, and such other distinguished Hungarian exiles as György Lukács, Béla Balázs, and László Moholy-Nagy. *Ma*, cut off in Viennese exile from its home audience, had to address now the Hungarian exile community on the one hand and the European avant-garde on the other (although Kassák never mastered any foreign language!). Accordingly, its first Vienna issue (May 1, 1920) carried Kassák's bilingual Hungarian/German manifesto, "An die Künstler aller Länder!" (To the Artists of All Nations!; Benson 418–20), which reaffirmed with fiery rhetoric his vision of a "permanent revolution," but carefully distinguished it from the communist proletarian one. Revolutionary artists had "humanity" as their motto, and refused to serve any class, even the proletariat (Benson 418). The dictatorship that Kassák sought was one of "ideas" (420). The critic Ernő Kállai and the artist Moholy-Nagy soon became representatives of *Ma* in Berlin.

In 1921, Kassák briefly flirted with Dada by writing picture-poems in the manner of Kurt Schwitters, and by publishing in *Ma* texts and images by Schwitters, Arp, Richard Huelsenbeck, and other Dadaists. He sympathized with Dada's radical challenge of authority and traditional artistic form, but his serious, emotion-laden rhetoric had no affinity with ludic irony and Dada's sense for the absurd. By 1922, Kassák's new manifesto, "*Képarchitektúra*" (Picture-Architecture), came to favor Constructivism (see Forgács, "Concepts"). The scientific-technological truth he found in constructivist geometric abstractions appealed to his own vision of the future. He thought that Kandinsky, Schwitters, and the other abstractionists were transforming something (e.g., emotions) into abstractions, whereas *Képarchitektúra*, following Constructivism, was to be a creation *ex nihilo*: it "does not 'represent' a powerful god, a fearful war or idyllic love: it is a power that demonstrates itself. *Képarchitektúra* does not resemble anything, tells no story, has no beginning and no end anywhere. It simply exists" (Benson 430). In the end, Kassák's new aesthetics and his personal differences with others led to the disintegration of the *Ma* circle: Barta, Ujvári and others stopped publishing in the journal, and Moholy-Nagy no longer regarded himself as its Berlin representative.

The early 1920s were the heydays of avant-garde manifestoes, and Dada, which arrived late in East-Central Europe, still generated a few. Among them was "Dadaizam" (Benson 348–51) by the Croatian Aleksić, published in April 1921 in *Zenit*, a journal that his compatriot Micić published between 1921 and 1926. Having become familiar with Dada in Prague, and having met there such local notables as Karel Teige and the actor and theater director Karel Noll, Aleksić held a conference and several dadaist séances in the city, and entered into correspondence with leading dadaists in Europe, especially Kassák, whom he visited in Vienna in 1921. *Zenit* published a number of Aleksić's Dada writings, but Micić, skeptical about Dada, had already published (with Goll and Boško Tokin) his own "Manifest Zenitizma" (Benson 284–93) in the very first issue of his journal; by the summer of 1922 the break between Aleksić and Micić was complete. In June 1922, Aleksić had to publish his *Dada-Tank* (with contributions, among others, by Tzara, Schwitters, and Huelsenbeck) and *Dada-Jazz* on his own. Branko Ve Poljanski, Micić's brother, published the anti-

Dada review *Dada-Jok* about the same time (Janecek 49–50). In late fall 1922, Aleksić terminated his Dada activities and moved to Belgrade. Before this, however, Dada matinées were held in several Yugoslav cities, among them Novi Sad and Subotica, where Aleksić's circle cooperated with Hungarian followers of Kassák to produce genuinely international programs (Janecek 53–55). Such events were exceptional in the chauvinist East-Central European atmosphere of the 1920s.

By 1921, the halcyon days of Dada were over but each new East-Central European movement, like Zenitism, was forced to define itself against its iconoclastic predecessor. The increasingly leftist avant-gardes concurred that Dada had been destructive and nihilistic without offering new perspectives. Of the many new avant-garde manifestoes we single out *Devětsil's* "Statement" about its founding on May 10, 1920 (Benson 240–41); Witkiewicz's parodist "Manifest [Fest-mani]" (1921); three Polish futurist manifestoes — Aleksander Wat's and Anatol Stern's *Gga. Pierwszy polski almanach poezji futurystycznej* (*Gga. First Polish Futurist Poetry Almanach*; 1920), and Bruno Jasiński's "Do narodu Polskiego: Mańifest w sprawie natyhmiastowej futuryzacji życia" (To the Polish Nation: A Manifesto Concerning the Immediate Futurization of Life; 1921), and "Mańifest w sprawie poezji futurystycznej" (Manifesto Concerning Futurist Poetry; 1921) — and the *Manifestum* (Benson 332–36) of Ödön Palasovszky and Iván Hevesy (1922).

Devětsil (see also *ECE* 1: 364–73 and 2: 176–82) was founded by Marxist and communist poets, artists, architects, and intellectuals who believed at that time in a new proletarian art. In 1924, Jaroslav Seifert, Vítězslav Nezval, and the theorist Karel Teige launched Poetism, an unstable blend of Dada, Constructivism, and Marxism, from the *Národní kavárna*. It survived until 1930.

A number of Polish avant-gardists, among them Jasiński, Stern, Wat, and Witold Wandurski, became communists — with tragic consequences. Jasiński came into contact with the Russian literary avant-garde while attending Polish schools in Moscow during the war. In 1919, he became a founder of the Cracow futurist club *Katarynka* (Barrel Organ), published futurist manifestoes, and organized scandalous poetry readings, first in Cracow and later in various Polish cities with Stern and Wat. Jasiński wanted to rid Poland of its messianic tradition and the dominance of reason. His "Immediate Futurization of Life" called upon artists to take to the streets in order to battle logic with a "deluge of wonders and surprises. Nonsense dancing along on streets" (Benson 188–89). His Manifesto on "Futurist Poetry" made clear that Polish Futurism did not want to repeat Marinetti (Benson 191). Indeed, Stern's and Wat's *Gga* manifesto echoed his anti-technological stance: "We demolish the city. All mechanisms — airplanes, streetcars, inventions, telephone. Instead — primordial means of communication" (see Janecek 111). Two years later, Jasiński admitted that mechanization doomed Futurism (Turowski in Janecek 115), and he announced the end of Polish Futurism in Tadeusz Peiper's journal *Zwrotnica* (Switch). Subsequently he joined the Polish communist movement and lectured on Marxism. Police harassment and lack of success forced him to go to Paris in 1925, from where he was again deported in 1929 because of his involvement in the French Communist Party. He resettled in the Soviet Union, became a Soviet citizen, and wrote in Russian his *Bal manekinów* (The Mannequins' Ball; 1931), a satirical play on capitalism. As a member of the Executive Board of the Writers' Union he was involved in organizing the famous 1934 Congress of Soviet Writers. He was arrested, however, in 1937 and died in Siberia two years later. During those years, Stalin's secret service systematically eliminated all Polish communists living in the Soviet Union.

Stern, Wat, and several others fled to Soviet-occupied Lwów, when the Nazis took Warsaw in 1939. They survived — but tattered. Wat, a friend of Mayakovsky and briefly a communist though never a Party member, founded in 1929 the *Miesięcznik Literacki* (Literary Monthly), “the only communist magazine that had a genuinely broad range and influence in Poland” (Miłosz, Wat xviii). The government, which banned the Communist Party, closed down the journal in 1932 and briefly jailed Wat; upon release he became until 1939 the literary editor of the publisher Gebethner & Wolff. Shortly before his death in 1967, he recounted in conversations with Czesław Miłosz his arrest in Soviet Lwów and his long “Odyssey” through Russian jails to exile in Kazakhstan. *My Century* is a moving and shocking document of the interlacing of literary and political institutions in the twentieth century, a memoir of an avant-gardist who turned communist and got painfully disillusioned by both, of a Jewish intellectual who converted to Catholicism, and of a poet, whose true poetry was born, as Miłosz writes, “of illness and old age.” It is “a meditation on life, time and death by a man who had been through too much,” a wise meditation in which the futurist of 1919 is nevertheless constantly present (Miłosz, Wat xviii).

Witkiewicz, like Jasiński, spent World War I in Russia (as a Czarist officer and then as a political commissar of his regiment), but he was among those few major East-Central European avant-gardists who did not sympathize with Communism. Like Jasiński, he died in 1939, but at his own hand, when Germany and the Soviet Union invaded Poland. Like Branko Ve Poljanski’s *Dada-Jok* and Sándor Barta’s “Az örültek első összejövetele a szemetesládában” (The First Gathering of the Mad in a Garbage Can) (1922), Witkacy’s “Manifest [Fest-mani]” (1921) parodies Dada and the flood of avant-garde manifestoes by setting up “hoaxing” as the highest value. In contrast to others, Witkiewicz regretted that artists wanted to abandon metaphysical aspirations (his theory of “pure form” was akin to Kandinsky’s metaphysics of abstraction), but for all his nostalgia he could ridicule what he loved. His *Bezimiennie dzieło* (The Anonymous Work; 1921) as well as his above-mentioned novel *Pożegnanie jesieni* represent a dying world on the eve of a corrupt dictatorial revolution that levels all spiritual and artistic aspirations. But whereas the novel is cast in traditional form and retains a certain pathos, the play abandons psychological and narrative realism (Witkacy disliked the Stanislavski method) by engaging in a parodic and often absurd play with the romantic stereotypes and hackneyed phrases of revolutionary and nationalist hero worship — and, indeed, of art itself. After a revolution, a subsequent coup d’état, and having slit the throat of his mistress, Plasmonick, a painter, declares that now “there are only two places for metaphysical individuals: prison or the insane asylum” (151). He returns to the former, whereas his father, the famous aesthete Blödestaug (“most idiotic eye” in German!), invites everybody “for coffee and nice fresh rolls” (152).

Bezimiennie dzieło, like Witkacy’s most other avant-garde plays, was neither published nor performed during his lifetime. The Hungarian theater avant-gardists were slightly more successful, though they could not realize the “great art for the masses” that Palasovszky’s and Hevesy’s “Manifestum” demanded (Benson 332). The *Zöld Szamár Színház* (Green Donkey Theater), launched by Hevesy and László Mittay on March 24, 1925, performed next to works by such Western avant-gardes as Jean Cocteau, Goll, and Ernst Toller, also Hungarian productions by Sándor Bortnyik (his “Green Donkey Pantomime” gave the theater its name), Palasovszky, and others. The company survived under different names until the 1930s, in spite of censorship and police harassment. East-Central Europe’s most successful avant-garde stage, the *Devétsil’s* Liberated Theater

(*Osvobozené divadlo*) in Prague, opened in 1926. Started by Jindřich Honzl and Jiří Frejka, it was associated from 1927 onward with the names of Jiří Voskovec and Jan Werich (“V+W”; see p. 181 below; also *ECE* 2: 180–82).

By the mid-twenties, the *Devětsil* became — with its associated Poetism, its various ephemeral journals, and its branch in Brno — East-Central Europe’s most active avant-garde movement. As Teige proclaimed in “Poetismus” (May 1924), one of the several poetist manifestoes, Poetism wanted to abolish the gap between the arts, as well as between art and life (see also *ECE* 2: 177–79). Life was to be converted into “an eccentric carnival, a harlequinade of feelings and representations, a drunken filmstrip, a miracle-kaleidoscope” (*Svět* 124), whereas literature and the arts had to become “as self-evident, delightful, and accessible as sport, love, wine, and all delicacies.” Since art, gift, and play could not be entrusted to highly serious professionals (121), modern artists were to become clowns, dancers, acrobats, and tourists rather than philosophers and teachers. They had to turn to film, flying, the radio, the newest optical and acoustic inventions, sport, dance, circus and the music hall — all spaces of invention and ceaseless improvisation (124–25). Seifert’s and Nezval’s writings from the 1920s exemplify some of these avant-garde ideas in poetic practice.

The poetists named Dada, Apollinaire, Marinetti, and Constructivism as their inspiration, but for all their critique of the romantic tradition they adopted a romantic desire to “poeticize” the world — and thereby liquidate art as a specific profession, as one of Teige’s titles, “Konstruktivismus a likvidace ‘umění’” (Constructivism and the Liquidation of ‘Art’; *Svět* 129–43), declares. Similarly, Teige followed the romantics in seeking a unification of the arts: he favored image poems and lyrical films (128) and he claimed in a note entitled “Malířství a poesie” (Painting and Poetry; *Svět* 534) that a poem had to be read as modern painting and the latter as a poem. More concretely, he believed that poetry, liberated by Marinetti from the shackles of syntax, had assumed a purely optical, graphical form in Apollinaire’s ideograms. Poems, which used to be sung, were now read, and poetic expression was now defined optically and typographically rather than phonetically and onomatopoeically.

In the early 1920s, such avant-garde ideas still seemed reconcilable with Teige’s somewhat naïve belief in a new proletarian art (“Nové umění proletářské”; *Svět* 33–63) and in the new Soviet system in general. But as ideological dogmatism and political repression intensified in the Soviet Union, and Constructivism (admired by the poetists for its reliance on science and technology) was finally banned, political differences started to divide members of the *Devětsil*. Nezval, like several Polish futurists, became a Party member in 1924 and remained one to the end of his life. Other members of *Devětsil* started to criticize propagandistic art. Teige renounced his earlier admiration of proletarian art in his 1928 “Manifest Poetismu” (Poetism Manifesto; *Svět* 324–25), and though he would still praise the perspectives of Marxist dialectical materialism in 1930, he now equated them with Nietzsche’s radical individualism. He now claimed, confronting Stalinism, that man truly begins where the state ends (*Svět* 499–500). Seifert took a position against Stalin’s increasing repression and was expelled from the Communist Party in 1929. When *Devětsil* dissolved in 1931, Nezval, Teige, Marie Toyen, Jindřich Štýrský and others turned to Surrealism. Prague’s Surrealist Group, founded in 1934, published with André Breton and Paul Eluard the *Bulletin international du surréalisme* (1935). The Slovak surrealists published their own almanac,

Áno a nie (Yes and No; 1938–). The Romanian Group of Surrealists was founded by Luca and Gellu Naum as late as 1940.

After the radically experimental Romanian avant-gardists Tzara, Constantin Brâncuși, Iancu, and Fundoianu had departed for France before or shortly after World War I, a second wave of Romanian Avant-gardism started to develop constructivist notions around 1924 (see Ion Pop).

Ion Vinea envisioned an “active, integral art” in his “Manifest activist către tinerime” (Activist Manifesto for the Young; *Contimporanul* May 1924) and Ilarie Voronca sought a “new poetic epistemology and syntax,” predicated on the “true-synthesis-word” (“Gramatică”; Mincu 556–58). Not all Romanian avant-gardists became communists in the 1920s and 30s. Vinea demanded in his above-mentioned manifesto to get rid of the “prostituted” art of capitalism, but intended to replace it with the “miracle of the new and self-reliant word; the strict and swift eloquent expression of Morse-code machines” (Mincu 548) — hardly a definition of proletarian art. Voronca, another leading avant-gardist, noted in “Poezie sau politică?” (Poetry or Politics?; 1934) that the suicides of Sergei Esenin and Mayakovsky showed the suppression of artistic freedom in the



Figure 3. Members of the Romanian Avant-garde; the Drawings are by M. H. Maxy. From *M. H. Maxy. Der integrale Künstler/Artist Integralist*. Ed. Michael Ilk. Berlin: Günter Linke, 2003, p. 37.

Soviet system. The most consistent communist, Gheorghe Dinu (who published poetry under the pseudonym Stephan Roll), attacked in “Sugestii înaintea unui proces” (Suggestions at the Threshold of a Trial; 1932) Breton, Eluard, Tzara, and Aragon, for being conservative, bourgeois, and obscure (Mincu 607, 609–10), but Sașa Pană, member of the *unu* circle and editor of its journal, sided in *Sadismul adevărului* (The Sadism of Truth; 1936) with “André Breton’s defense of Surrealism against leftist and rightist deviations” (135).

East-Central Europe’s avant-gardes lost their momentum and bearing in the 1930s, suffered suppression during the war, and those of them who survived faced new difficulties during the Stalinist years, when Avant-gardism became a taboo. Nezval, Dinu, Pană, and others embraced, at least for a while, Socialist Realism and even Stalinism. Luca, Trost, and others emigrated; Teige, Seifert, Naum, Kassák, and others fell out of grace and were silenced. The great exception was perhaps the Polish Konstanty Ildefons Gałczyński, who assumed in the years 1946–50 the role of a buffoon with the enormously popular short pieces performed in his *Teatrzyk Zielona Gęś* (Green Goose Theater).

The Thaw after 1953 allowed a slow but remarkable comeback of the Avant-garde. In 1956 Wat was rehabilitated while still alive, Wandurski and Jasiński only posthumously. Teige died in 1951, but the Czechoslovak reform movement leading to the Prague Spring worked towards his rehabilitation and the publication of his works in *Svět*. Kassák regained some recognition towards the end of his life before he died in 1967. Seifert continued to assume a leading oppositional role and received the Nobel Prize in 1984. Gellu Naum started publishing again in the 1970s, at a time when the historical avant-garde was rediscovered in Romania. Most remarkable was, perhaps, the fate of Witkacy’s work. *Bezimienne dzieło* was published in a collected edition of his plays in 1962 and first performed in 1967. The rediscovery of its author had a formative role in the art of Sławomir Mrożek and Tadeusz Różewicz, and the emergence of a Polish non-realist stage practice. Eugen Ionescu, Václav Havel, and the “theater of the absurd” all learned from Witkacy’s avant-garde experiments.

East-Central Europe as a Russian Refuge

As we have seen, Russian Futurism and Constructivism, as well Soviet Communism, were great attractions to progressive East-Central European writers, artists, and intellectuals, many of whom ended up as exiles in the Soviet Union. Much less attention has been devoted to the “counter current,” namely the flow of refugees from Russia and the other Soviet states. For many of these, East-Central Europe was just a point of transition to Western Europe or America, yet some stayed, and even those who departed left a mark on the region’s culture that neither the post-war communist regimes, nor, for different political reasons, the post-1989 governments would acknowledge. In the following sketch we focus on three phenomena: (1) The Prague Linguistic Circle, (2) Russian Writers in the independent Baltic countries, and (3) Russian artists in East-Central European, mainly Baltic, theater.

The internationalism of Prague’s interwar culture is perhaps most evident in the work of the Prague Linguistic Circle (Cercle Linguistique de Prague / Pražský lingvistický kroužek). While the surrealists were oriented towards Paris, the Circle fed on Russian sources and counted among its founding members in 1926 the Russian émigrés Roman Jakobson (earlier with the Russian

Formalists), Nikolay Trubetzkoy, and Sergei Karcevskiy, next to the Czechs Vilém Mathesius and Jan Mukařovský. In the first eight years, the Circle focused on the internal structure of poetic works, whereas in the second phase (1934–38) its orientation became more contextual. After the 1938 Munich treaty, Jakobson and others fled from Czechoslovakia. The Circle was disbanded after the communist takeover in 1948, though its ideas flourished elsewhere and were allowed to seep back to Prague in the 1960s.

Temira Pachmuss's 1988 survey of interwar Russian literature in the Baltic countries shows that Estonia had received the most émigré Russian writers, although Riga also had its share. Lithuania profited mostly from the influx of Russian theater people. Most of the immigrants were Russian aristocrats and officers, often with Baltic family ties or property. Many of them moved on to the West (Boris Dikoy became member of the French resistance and was shot by the Gestapo; Yuri Ivask, and Igor Chinnov became professors of Slavic literature in the USA). A handful of them moved back to the Soviet Union before the outbreak of World War II but, like Ivan Belyaev (Pachmuss 93–100), most of them disappeared in a camp, as did also those who did not depart with the German troops but remained in Soviet occupied Estonia or Latvia. Very few of them survived and managed to lead a normal life in the Soviet Baltic states after 1945. The most important and popular Russian-Estonian writer, Igor Severyanin (Pachmuss 60–85), began in the pre-revolutionary years as an “ego” and “cubo” futurist who wrote poetry to shock his audience, but he abandoned his avant-garde orientation during his Estonian émigré years.

An almost nomadic mobility helped the exile Russians to develop in East-Central Europe an impressive infrastructure of literary associations, publishing, and theater (see Pachmuss 13–47). Tallinn had a Russian literary circle and Tartu's “Tsekh poetov” (Guild of Poets) was active in 1929–31, when a talented group of Russian students attended the university. The Guild was revived in 1934–39 in Tallinn by the colorful Pavel Irtel (Freiherr von Brenndorff, a White Army officer of Hungarian descent). He was also editor and publisher of *Nov'* (Virgin Soil), the most important Russian literary publication, of which eight issues appeared in Tallinn during the period 1928–35. Irtel moved to Bromberg, Poland, became a Slavic interpreter for the German army, and settled after the war in Göttingen (Pachmuss 111–24).

Riga's association of Russian poets, “Na struge slov” (In the Boat of Words), had a limited membership, but Riga featured the most important Baltic Russian newspaper, *Segodna* (Today; 1919–40), which published two literary supplements and was widely distributed in the Baltic states as well as in the rest of Eastern and Western Europe (Pachmuss 29, 31–33). The Russian novelist Mikhail Petrovich Artsybashev, who reached European success with his novel *Sanin* in 1907, emigrated to Warsaw in 1923 and published there until his death in 1927, with Dimitrii Filosofov, the violently anti-Bolshevik journal *Za svobodu* (For Freedom).

The impact of Russian theater in East-Central Europe was more complex, because it involved not only the Baltic countries and not only refugees but also some regular exchanges and guest appearances. The Russian Nikolai Massalitinov founded in 1925 a Drama School in the Bulgarian National Theater and became there one of the most influential theater figures. Mikhail Chekhov, a leading Russian actor and director who was forced to leave the Soviet Union in 1928, became important in the 1930s in the Latvian and Lithuanian theater life. He staged in Kaunas (Lithuania's capital then) the first Lithuanian *Hamlet* (1932) and *Twelfth Night* (1933), as well as Gogol's *The Inspector General*. Lithuanian music theater greatly profited from the influx of Russian ballet

dancers. Tallinn and Riga continued to support during the interwar period Russian language theaters that performed daily; Riga's Theater of Russian Drama also performed in Tallinn.

We should note, finally, that the theater makers of the interwar period, especially the Slavic ones, interacted among themselves. The Bulgarian National Theater, for instance, started exchanges with its counterpart in Belgrade and established cultural links with Poland in the late 1930s. The outstanding Croatian theater director, Branko Gavella, produced operas in Brno, Bratislava, and Moravska Ostrava; he lived in Prague during much of World War II. The Slovak National Theater opened in Bratislava in 1920, but lacking a native tradition it had to begin with Czech plays and operas. It was built up with the help of Czech actors and the Czech directors Janko Borodáč and Ferdinand Hoffmann until Slovak directors were able to take over in the late 1930s.

Polish Interwar Literary Culture

Stefan Żółkiewski argues in *Kultura literacka 1918–1932* (Literary Culture 1918–1932) that the technological standards of Polish interwar literary culture approached those of a modern mass culture. Communication technology began to develop, new publishing houses emerged, broadcasting stimulated new literature, including the first radio novel (1938), and novels were adapted to films. In 1931, 7% of the adult population participated in Poland's literary life; newspapers and journals were read by about two-and-a-half million readers. Elite literature was beyond the means of most people, but reading was encouraged through schools, libraries, workers' reading rooms, and organized cultural activities in the provinces. The Polish state supported parish reading rooms and youth associations; the unions, particularly the Railway Trade Union, heavily promoted literature.

Poland's interwar political leaders believed that literature, especially elite literature, furthered national and social integration. Indeed, literature promoted the country's integration and the emancipation of the disadvantaged classes, while continuing in its traditional role as the nation's conscience. Writing had already started to become a professional matter in the nineteenth century, when landowners and bankrupt aristocrats became intellectuals working with their pen to earn a living. Most of the romantics had to work for a living in exile; Bolesław Prus, Henryk Sienkiewicz, Stefan Żeromski and others worked as journalists, teachers, or novelists when their family estates were confiscated or went bankrupt. After 1918, writers were subsidized by means of scholarships, allowances, awards, and travel grants. The National Culture Fund, established in 1928, supported creative work and the publication of the national classics.

The Union of Polish Writers managed to get the parliament to pass the copyright bill of 1926, and it obtained for its members medical insurance and pension. Still, according to a Union questionnaire from 1929, only 34% of the writers could live on writing alone; the others had to supplement their income by working in schools, at newspapers, the radio, or in the literary cabarets. Freedom of speech and press freedom were guaranteed by the Constitution, though a Censor's Office was set up in 1923. Żeromski's *Przedwiośnie* (Before the Spring), for instance, was prohibited; the communist *Miesięcznik Literacki* (Literary Monthly) was, as we saw, closed down, and Wat, together with his co-workers, was put in jail, though under relatively mild conditions. Informal campaigns were led against Żeromski; Tadeusz Żeleński-Boy was accused of violating religious and moral taboos, but he received Warsaw's literary award in 1933 and was admitted into the Academy of Literature.

During the interwar years, most Polish writers continued to function within the literary and ideological traditions, though they often questioned them or played with their conventions. They were activists in social movements, at times on the left at others in circles close to the government. Some writers turned to popular culture. Julian Tuwim and Antoni Słonimski wrote for the cabaret, others churned out popular spy- detective-, youth- and mystery novels. Devotional, didactic, and moralizing pamphlets, as well as abridged versions of nineteenth-century classics, were published by the Church or charity organizations and sold at markets and church fairs. Catholic publishing-houses, such as the *Księgarnia św. Wojciecha* (St. Wojciech's Bookshop), became modern enterprises producing monthlies with huge circulations, mainly for the peasants.

A stable reading public started to emerge by the end of the interwar period, bad economic conditions notwithstanding. The new readers bought mostly the national classics of nineteenth-century Realism; contemporary literature, which was not taught in the schools, reached the public via magazines, serialized novels in newspapers, literary cafés, clubs, poetry recitals, and theaters. Interwar Modernism was too elitist for commercialization, but popular culture did not yet threaten it because most people could not yet afford mass entertainment. The romantic tradition, with its political commitments and its belief that the written word had a spiritual mission, was still very much alive.

Catastrophism, a turn from positivist optimism to a sense of impending disasters, was widely held in Polish and Lithuanian interwar culture. It was especially prominent, as we saw, in the writings of Witkiewicz, but also in Miłosz's *Żagary* (Charred Wood) group in Wilno, and Krzysztof Baczyński. For the Yiddish culture in Kiev, Wilno, and Warsaw (see Wolitz in *ECE* 2: 182–212 and 314–32) catastrophe was indeed just around the corner. Following the Russian revolution of 1917, Kiev (then about 32% Jewish) became the center of European Yiddish writing and art. Dovid Bergelson formed here in 1918 *Di Kultur-Lige* (Culture League), a secular Yiddish educational and cultural institution with a publishing house that was at its inception supported by the first liberal Ukrainian government. The Bolsheviks allowed it to continue but exploited it for their own ideology. Its publishing house introduced the major Soviet Yiddish poets to the world during the NEP period of the 1920s. In Warsaw, the German writers Yankl Adler and Marek Shvarts injected Expressionism into the *Yung-Yiddish* movement of modernist Yiddish poetry. The *Yung Vilne* (Young Vilna), together with its Almanacs, became in the 1930s the last Yiddish literary movement of Ashkenaz.

Most countries of the region witnessed significant new literary movements in the interwar period. Estonia's *Siuru* group, which started in 1915 with a European orientation, involved August Gailit, Johannes Semper, Tuglas, Marie Under, and Henrik Visnapuu. As Artur Adson relates, the bohemian *Siuru* (taking its name from a magical bird in Estonian folklore) met during and immediately after World War I in Marie Under's salon in Tallinn, and staged public readings in Tallinn's Estonia Theater. They also frequented Tartu's cafés. *Siuru* was a nomadic group with makeshift and mobile accommodations, whereas the neoclassical poets of the *Arbujad* (Logomancers) remained anchored in Tartu during the 1930s. Heiti Talvik, Betti Alver, Bernard Kangro, and others belonged to the first generation of intellectuals to receive their university education in independent Estonia (see Kirss, *ECE* 2: 34).

In Bulgaria, Čavdar Mutafov led in 1926–27 the futurist literary circle *Strelets* (Sagittarius), whose technological orientation opposed Symbolism and aestheticism. In the Ukraine, the literary

groups *Hart* (Tempering), *Lanka* (Link), and VAPLITE (Free Academy of Proletarian Literature) sprang up in the 1920s but dissolved when Stalin consolidated his grip on culture. In Slovakia, the most innovative movement of the late 1930s was the Lyrical Prose School of Dobroslav Chrobák, Margita Figuli, and František Švantner. In Romania, Eugen Lovinescu promoted a wide-ranging Modernism through his literary circle and magazine *Sburătorul* (Winged Spirit; 1919–1927), and his critical syntheses.

III Re-Institutionalizing Literature under Communism

After a brief transition immediately following World War II, Stalinist style Communism assumed power in all East-Central European countries, except for Yugoslavia, where Tito went his own way (see *ECE* 1: 107–41). All countries of the region, several of which became part of the Soviet Union, radically and rapidly revamped their literary culture and its institutions. The pattern was rather uniform: (1) older writers' organizations, publishers, private theaters, modernist as well as right-wing movements and journals, were suppressed and disbanded; (2) new, Party-led Writers' Unions were set up (the Bulgarian one was already established in 1945; the Czechoslovak one after the communist coup d'état, in 1949; in Romania, the minority Unions were merged into an "all-Romanian" one in 1949; in Hungary, all politically undesirable writers were expelled after 1948); (3) state publishers assumed monopoly; (4) all theaters became nationalized and put under strict ideological control; (5) the doctrine of Socialist Realism was introduced and enforced; (6) strict censorship led to the silencing, jailing, and sometimes even execution of writers; (7) information from and contact with Western writers, intellectual, and publishers were strictly controlled and surveyed; (8) Western publications, especially contemporary ones, became scarce; Soviet literature inundated the bookshops; (9) ideologically "dangerous" literature was disposed of or put under lock; (10) literary scholarship was forced to adopt Stalinist ideological perspectives; (11) the teaching of literature in high schools and universities adopted "Marxist-Leninist" principles; (12) many non-communist high-school and university teachers were dismissed, whereas new appointments were made on ideological grounds.

Show trials took place in every country during the Stalinist years, and the accused included many writers. Závěš Kalandra, a Surrealist and old Communist, was tried in one of the first Czech political trials and executed in 1950; the Slovak Vladimír Clementis, who returned after the war from London, was executed in 1952. From the long list of those who were put on trial and got jailed or placed in a forced labor camp suffice to mention here the Hungarians György Faludy, and Győző Határ; the Slovaks Ladislav Novomeský, Iván Horváth, Daniel Okáli, and Ivan Stodola; the Romanian Sibiu Literary Circle and Ion Caraion (see *ECE* 1: 108, 149–150); the Czech Eduard Goldstücker, the Moravian poet Jan Zahradníček, editor-in-chief of the Catholic literary journal *Akord*, and Karel Pecka, who wrote an anti-Soviet review of a Russian film. The list could be extended, especially with the names of writers jailed after 1956 or 1968.

The new policy also had some benefits: illiteracy was, for all practical purposes, eradicated; theater and publishing were freed from commercialism and provided with ample funds in order to produce low-priced books and to make theater available to a wide audience. Writers who conformed ideologically were rewarded with money, awards, and other perks.

Yugoslavia was for a long time considered to be less brutal, but revelations about the camp on the Goli Otok island forced a revision of this view (see *ECE* 1: 124–32 and 541–48). The limits of the freedom under Tito's regime became evident also when Yugoslavia's Vice President Milovan Đilas was arrested and expelled from the Communist League in 1955. Two years later he published in the West *The New Class: An Analysis of the Communist System*. Nevertheless, Socialist Realism did not become the ideological doctrine in Yugoslavia, as our article on the Croatian *Krugovi* (Circles) group and its journal illustrates (pp. 84–86 below; see also *ECE* 2: 301–313).

The Post-Stalinist Thaw

After the death of Stalin on March 5 1953, and especially after Khrushchev's February 1956 revelations about Stalin's totalitarianism, a certain political Thaw came about in most communist countries, although with different timing and intensity. In several countries, the Writers' Union assumed a more critical role.

In Hungary, the Writers' Union, and the *Petőfi Kör* (Petőfi Circle) of the Democratic Youth Association, which was founded in 1953 by reform-communist writers and intellectuals, fomented changes by gradually intensifying open public debates in the spring, summer, and early fall of 1956 on the democratization of public life and on reforms of the system from within. Indeed, critical books and plays started to reach the public. On September 17, all Stalinist members of the Executive Committee of the Writers' Association were voted out of office; on October 23, the *Irodalmi Újság* (Literary News) published a letter expressing sympathy with the Polish writers. The suppression of the subsequent revolution had devastating effects on the literary institutions. The Writers' Association and the Journalists' Union were suspended on January 18, 1957, and the former reopened only after it was reorganized, in 1959. Many writers fled to the West; others who stayed were put in jail; some, like Gyula Illyés, just fell silent, or were silenced, for several years. The climate became less oppressive in the 1960s, but Lukács's followers, the "Budapest School" of philosophers (Ferenc Fehér, Ágnes Heller, János Kis, and others) were prevented from teaching and publishing, and some were forced to emigrate.

In Bulgaria, the 1956 plenary meeting of the Communist Party declared its intention to inaugurate a new, more liberal era, but not much happened, even though the official literary histories of the next thirty years praised the occasion as "April Breeze," "Life-giving Breath," and "Spring Renewal." In Slovakia, the new literary associations turned away from ideology, but the post-Stalinist changes were gradual rather than dramatic. In fiction, a "Generation '56" appeared on the scene in the late 1950s with stories about everyday issues and individual experiences rather than epic events and heroes. The "Concretist" poets rejected history and ideology by turning to sensuality. The "Osamelí běžci" (The Lonely Runners) attacked the political conformism of postwar poets and followed the Beat generation in search for authenticity. Of course they were disbanded after 1968.

In Prague, the ideologists gradually relaxed their grip in the 1960s. At the 1967 Congress of the Writers' Union censorship and party interference came under attack. On June 27, 1968, the weekly of the Writers' Union, the *Literární Listy*, published Ludvík Vaculík's "Dva tisíce slov" (Two Thousand Words), which called for a multi-party system and was signed by prominent figures of the Czechoslovak intelligentsia. The new chairman of the Writers' Union became

Eduard Goldstücker, who had been jailed for years. On July 26, 1968, Pavel Kohout published an unsigned appeal in the *Literární listy* that urged Alexander Dubček to continue the reforms and concluded with the call “We are with you, be with us!” (“Socialismus” 1). The subsequent petition was signed by more than a million people.

“Normalization” in post-1968 Czechoslovakia meant a new wave of repression under the new leader, Gustáv Husák. Vaculík, who was silenced, started to organize *samizdat* publications (see p. 60 below). The Charter 77 went beyond reform Communism and asked for a pluralism respectful of human rights. As an informal and open forum of divergent convictions, it became a blueprint for radically different political organizations that received support also from many Hungarians and Romanians. The old institutions started to crumble, but they collapsed only twelve years later.

Part I. Publishing and Censorship

Introduction

John Neubauer

(with Robert Pynsent on the *Malice česká*, Vilmos Voigt on the Censorship of Folk Poetry, and Marcel Cornis-Pope on Romanian Journals and Publishers)

I. National Awakenings

Printers and Publishers

Printing started relatively late in East-Central Europe, mostly because of its economic and technological lag and the slow growth of the reading public. Nevertheless, the region can boast a few pioneers. Jiří Melantrich of Aventinum started around 1547 the first Czech publishing house, whereas the Saxon Johannes Honterus established in 1538–39 a German press in the Transylvanian Kronstadt (Braşov), which had a decisive role in making the Lutheran Church dominant among the Saxons. Deacon Coresi, who worked in the press as of 1559, published a number of key religious texts and other translations in Romanian that helped shape a literary Romanian language. In Kolozsvár (Cluj), Gáspár Heltai started a Hungarian press in 1550, and the Dutch-trained Miklós Tótfalusy Kis set up a world-famous printing press in the last decade of the seventeenth century. The first Romanian presses, notably the one in Sebeş, were also established in those years.

Efforts to develop vernacular print cultures had to contend with the use of Latin in academia, and even in politics, as well as the imposition of German, Russian, and, by the nineteenth century, Hungarian. Finally, the spread of print culture was severely hampered by moral, religious, and political censorship that operated in the region for centuries, well before it assumed its extreme political form under the Nazi and communist regimes.

Nevertheless, by 1800 many vernacular texts were printed for middle- and upper class readers, and the national cultures of the following century enormously aided the spread of vernacular literacy. Progress in the technology of printing, the growth of the reading public, and the need to forge a national consciousness through print led to the emergence of many vernacular presses and publishing houses.

In the nineteenth century, important independent commercial printers and publishers began working in the Czech lands and Hungary. The first modern Czech publisher, the *Česká expedice* of Václav Matej Kramerius in Prague, was active in the period 1790–1849, but it has been claimed that the Pospíšil print shop in Hradec Králové produced more books in Czech during the 1830s and 40s than all the Prague ones together. Later in the century, Ignác Leopold Kober and Jan Otto became the most important publishers of Czech authors and encyclopedias.

In Hungary, the University Press of Buda rose to international eminence after it acquired a Cyrillic printing press in 1775 and received from Empress Maria Theresa the monopoly to publish textbooks. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, when it became involved in publishing literature, it published works by Benedek Virág, Ferenc Verseghy, Ferenc Kazinczy, Sándor Kisfaludy and his brother Károly. It published Károly Kisfaludy's journal *Aurora*, organ of the romantics, and the Academy's *Tudománytár* (Treasury of Scholarship). Last but not least, the Press took in commission printing assignments from book dealers, other publishers, private persons, and various associations. We shall discuss later its activities in foreign language publication.

Hungary's first private printers and publishers were all of German origin, but these family-owned businesses rapidly assimilated to the local culture. The Landerers started their printing shops in provincial cities but moved to Pest already in 1773. From 1840 onward, in partnership with Gusztáv Heckenast ("Landerer és Heckenast"), the printing shop produced Lajos Kossuth's famous newspaper *Pesti Hirlap*, and all the key publications of the March 15, 1848 revolution. Hungary's other leading German printing and publishing firm was established as a branch of the Trattner family's Viennese business, but became influential in Hungarian literary life when János Tamás Trattner became its director in 1813. He launched, for instance, the journal *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* (Scholarly Repertory; 1817–1841), which came to play a major role in the Hungarian reform period. In Transylvania, the most important pre-1848 publisher of German as well as Romanian journals was the liberal Johann Gött, an emigrant from Frankfurt to Kolozsvár and a supporter of the 1848 revolution.

The second half of the nineteenth century saw the emergence of great Hungarian printing presses and publishing houses. Landerer and Heckenast was turned in 1873 into the shareholding company *Franklin Társulat*; the provincial printing and publishing enterprise of the brothers Leó and Samu Révai moved to Pest in 1869 and became in 1895 the shareholding company *Révai Testvérek Irodalmi Intézet* (Literary Institute of the Révai Brothers), which published the nineteenth-century classics, the leading encyclopedia, and much more. The *Atheneum* specialized in newspapers and periodicals.

Remarkable was the emergence of Jewish printers and publishing houses. In Poland, Hoesick, Przeworski, Arct, and several other publishing houses were founded by Jews. Gyula Rózsavölgyi, son of a famous violinist, opened in Pest his distinguished and still functioning music publishing house in 1850; Izidor Kner started in 1882 a high-quality printing press and publishing enterprise in the provincial village of Gyoma; and József Wolfner launched in 1885 the house Singer and Wolfner, which published children's literature and an impressive list of leading writers. Simon Tolnai started his enterprise in 1895 with the illustrated weekly *Tolnai Világlapja* (Tolnai's World Paper).

Tolnai, as well as the descendants of the other founders of Hungarian Jewish publishing houses, died in the Holocaust. The Csongrád-born Austro-Hungarian Geca Kon, founder of the largest and most important Serbian publishing house during the interwar period, and Pavle Bihalji, founder of the leftist Serbian publisher *Nolit* (=Nova Literatura) were killed already in 1941. In Vilnius, the center of Ashkenazy culture, forty-three of the sixty-one publishing houses were Jewish in 1913, publishing not only in Hebrew and Yiddish but also in Russian, Polish, and Lithuanian. The most famous one, owned by the Romm family, moved in 1799 from Grodno to Vilnius and became there Russia's foremost Hebrew publishing concern. Boris Arkadyevitch Kletskin's