



Ion Lihaciu. *Czernowitz 1848–1918: Das kulturelle Leben einer Provinzmetropole.* Mehlingen: Parthenon Verlag, 2012. 258 S. ISBN 978-3-942994-00-2.

Reviewed by Markian Prokopovych

Published on H-Soz-u-Kult (April, 2014)

I. Lihaciu: Czernowitz 1848–1918

Ion Lihaciu's book is an introductory study to the history of the city's literature, its press and its main cultural institutions in the second half of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century. Following the line of argument characteristic of many recent German-language studies of Bukovina, and relying on published sources in German and Romanian, the author argues for the comparative success of the "Austrian cultural mission" in the Monarchy's East. Employing Bourdieu's theory and terminology, he suggests that, as a result of this mission that provoked a number of decisive local developments, an all-inclusive German cultural/literary field emerged in Czernowitz due to peculiar local conditions.

In terms of structure, "Czernowitz 1848–1918" consists of an introduction, followed by eleven loosely connected chapters on the first literary undertakings in Bukovina, early German-language newspaper journalism, literary journalism, the founding of the provincial library and the first literary anthology, individual literary careers (among them many that are unknown or forgotten); the first German literary anthologies, the literary journal "Im Buchwald", the development of the German-language press, theatre, and music. The book's final chapter "Versuch einer Periodisierung" (An attempt at periodization) is not a conclusion in the strictest sense of the word, as it only partly incorporates the research findings of the last chapters on theatre and music. Several chapters are followed by useful indexes (tables of contents of specific journals, authors included in specific anthologies, selections of literary articles by issue, lists

of German-language periodicals and the theatre directors), which would have arguably better belonged in an appendix. The bibliography lists German-language periodicals as primary sources, and German and Romanian texts as secondary literature. The bibliography does not provide general literature on the history of Bukovina and specifically Czernowitz and is largely limited to the history of the German-language press, literature and culture in Bukovina, Austrian and German-language literature in East Central Europe and theoretical works on Bourdieu. While such a list is justified for the book's purposes, a number of recent works in English and other languages would have made the bibliography more comprehensive: for example, Marianne Hirsch / Leo Spitzer, *Ghosts of Home. The Afterlife of Czernowitz in Jewish Memory*, Berkeley 2009; David Rechter, *Geography is Destiny. Region, Nation and Empire in Habsburg Jewish Bukovina*, in: *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 7 (2008) 3, pp. 325–37; idem, *A Jewish El Dorado? Myth and Politics in Habsburg Czernowitz*, in: Richard I. Cohen / Jonathan Frankel / Stefani Hoffman (eds.), *Insiders and Outsiders. Dilemmas of East European Jewry*, London 2010, pp. 207–20; Fred Stambrook, *National and Other Identities in Bukovina in Late Austrian Times*, in: *Austrian History Yearbook* (2004), pp. 185–203. See also general works on the Austrian "frontier", especially Pieter Judson, *Guardians of the Nation. Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria*, Cambridge, Mass. 2006; Sander Gilman / Milton Shain (eds.), *Jewries at the Frontier. Accommodation, Identity, Conflict, Urbana* 1999. The absence of a comprehensive index of concepts

as well as names and places is unfortunate, since it makes selective reading practically impossible.

Following a brief excursus into the work of Bourdieu in the introduction, Lihaciu addresses the issues of the condition of the German language in Bukowina, the institutional developments, the most important cultural actors in the field and their generational frictions. Critically evaluating the functioning of the German-speaking cultural field, he comes to the conclusion that, by the beginning of the twentieth century and despite its successful functioning in Czernowitz for a number of decades, this field was also conservative and patriarchal enough to leave no room for the younger generation corresponding to that of Jung Wien in Vienna and was therefore doomed to an eminent collapse.

The following chapters provide a variety of interesting details and will surely serve the next generation of historians and literary scholars as an important reference: in several instances, for example, Lihaciu's work makes the classic study by the Viennese historian Erich Prokopowitsch redundant, and even proves him clearly wrong. It is impossible to enumerate all the names and personalities who, as the author demonstrates, made their contribution to the development of literature, culture and the press in Czernowicz in the second half of the nineteenth century. Clearly, this city produced many more writers and cultural figures than the ones whose names immediately come to mind and that have been the subject of recent studies, notably, Karl Emil Franzos, Mihai Eminescu, Josef Fedkowicz (Osyp / Yuri Fedkovych in Ukrainian spelling), Olha Kobylanska or Paul Celan. The writers Ernst Rudolf Neubauer, Ludwig Adolf Stauffe-Simiginowicz, Johann Capistan Klemsch, Anna Pawlitschek, the feminist journalist Wilhelmine Mohr, the composer and writer Isidor Worobkiewicz (Sydir Vorobkevych), the politician and university rector Constantin Tomaszczuk, along with many other less familiar names, feature prominently in the pages of Lihaciu's book. As early as 1862, the index of authors of the *Sonntagsblatt der Bukowina*, a literary Sunday supplement of the regular local German-language newspaper *Bukowina*, shows a remarkable array of literary talent in which the colourful Czernowitz literary crowd mixes with surprising authors from outside of Bukowina, among them, for example, the Hungarian revolutionary and statesman József Eötvös (pp. 41-44). Important visits to the city that gave stimulus to further cultural initiatives, such as those of the Viennese satirical journalist Moritz Gottlieb Saphir in 1842, the Hungarian composer Franz Liszt in 1847, and the Viennese comic actor Karl

Blaser in 1860, along with later guest performances of theatre and opera stars of the day are also given their due attention.

Another phenomenon that Lihaciu's book makes clear is the multiplicity of urban cultural centres in the Habsburg lands and their interconnectedness. The centrality of Vienna in terms of cultural dominance over local affairs in the Bukovinian capital is compromised by the influence of the Galician capital Lemberg. This is evident when direct cultural transfers from Lemberg to Czernowicz, ranging from literature to music and theatre, take place in the second half of the nineteenth century. Many of Lihaciu's main protagonists, especially the first generation, made attempts to establish themselves in Lemberg as well as in Vienna in the 1860s due to the many opportunities offered by these larger cities that were also more open to modernism and its radical literary movements. Furthermore, the importance of Lemberg journalism was such that it was often the case that the content of Viennese newspaper articles about Bukovina was directly borrowed from earlier ones published in the Lemberg press (p. 47). Moreover, the importance of Bohemian, Moravian, Hungarian and Romanian centres as exporters of knowledge and talent to Bukovina is decisive for the literary, journalistic and cultural developments in Czernowicz throughout the long nineteenth century. Additionally, other German cities, especially Leipzig, Munich and Heidelberg, played an important role as centres of education.

Some might find the title of Lihaciu's book misleading in a number of respects. First, many of the histories and the lines of arguments do not finish with the collapse of Austria-Hungary but extend further into the interwar years. More importantly, the reader is faced with what predominantly is a work on literary development in the Bukovinian capital from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century, the last two chapters on theatre and music being only loosely connected to the main theme. It is unfortunate that a book on a major city in a Habsburg Crownland does not engage with the urban and cultural development of Czernowitz during the Habsburg rule or relate the research findings to general urban historical literature. Thus those who expect to learn about the wide-ranging developments in the light of a broader definition of culture or from political culture to the culture of everyday life, let alone specifically urban cultural characteristics of Czernowitz will have to look for answers elsewhere. Thirdly, Lihaciu's focus consistently remains within German-language literary and press developments, thus rendering separate

trajectories of cultural development of the city's major ethno-national groups marginal. How does the development of this German-language literary field relate to the emergence of parallel national (Ukrainian, Romanian and Jewish) fields in Czernowitz in the early twentieth century? Was, for example, Wilhelmine Mohr in touch with the Ukrainian feminist writer Olha Kobylanska, who was equally active in Czernowitz at the time but who largely did not partake in its German-language initiatives, and, if so, did their encounter fit the author's definition of the German literary field? How did the representatives of German-language literature and culture, a numerous but clearly a comparatively small group of activists, coexist and interact with the rest of urban and rural society, which, as recent research has shown, was a far cry from the myth of unproblematic and harmonious co-existence? For more on this recent literature, the readers of this list are advised to consult an excellent PhD dissertation by Hieronymus Franciscus van Drunen, *A sanguine bunch. Regional identification in Habsburg Bukovina, 1774-1919*, University of Amster-

dam 2013, available online, URL: (11.04.2014). Finally, how precisely did the provincial status of the Bukovinian capital impact on its cultural developments, and how meaningful, in the light of the book's argument, is it to see it as a mere Viennese suburb or conversely as a birthplace of national traditions, as was often the case in the past, especially in Ukrainian historiography? These questions are neither posed, nor answered in this predominantly literary historical study.

Czernowitz 1848-1918 will greatly benefit literary scholars and the general audience interested in the history of the city under Habsburg rule. Cultural and urban historians expecting a reflection on cultural developments in the light of the cultural and spatial turn in historiography will read it with interest, too, but are likely to be a little disappointed. Nevertheless, the book is a welcome addition to the existing literature on Bukovina and will no doubt be used in the German-speaking academia in introductory undergraduate courses on the history of literature and culture in Eastern Europe.

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Citation: Markian Prokopovych. Review of Lihaciu, Ion, *Czernowitz 1848-1918: Das kulturelle Leben einer Provinzmetropole*. H-Soz-u-Kult, H-Net Reviews. April, 2014.

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