

century. The present work, however, does not achieve the authors' stated purposes. As a result, the earlier studies of John Reshetar and Jurij Borys, both of them distinguished for accuracy and objectivity, will continue to hold their places as the standard works in the field.

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SKOVORODA: DICHTER, DENKER, MYSTIKER. By *Dmitrij Tschizewskij*.
Harvard Series in Ukrainian Studies, vol. 18. Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag,
1974. 233 pp. DM 68, paper.

Scholarly attempts to interpret the work of the eighteenth-century philosopher Skovoroda have frequently been hampered by unfamiliarity with the intellectual currents from which he drew. In the present book the noted Slavist, Dmitrij Tschizewskij, skillfully explains the elements of Skovoroda's philosophy—his antithetic manner and symbolic method; his metaphysics (a "monodualism"); his teachings on man, focusing on the so-called inner man or heart; and his ethics, which, as the author correctly argues, dovetail with his mysticism. Tschizewskij also offers a few pages on Skovoroda's theory of pedagogy and on his poetry—drawing attention in the latter to Skovoroda's language, technical innovations, and firm grounding in tradition.

What is most valuable, however, is the book's delineation of Skovoroda's mysticism, previously overlooked, or at least minimized, by many scholars. Tschizewskij's demonstration of Skovoroda's affinity to the major traditions of neo-Platonic, patristic, and German mysticism is particularly interesting, and the author provides an abundance of quotations not only to support his analysis of Skovoroda's philosophy but also to illustrate what Skovoroda accepted from these traditions and what he rejected. Yet, Tschizewskij is careful to say, especially in regard to the Germans, that this is a question not so much of influence (although many Western writers may have been accessible to Skovoroda—there are remarkable parallels with Valentin Weigel and Angelus Silesius), but rather a question of an "inner relation," a spiritual commonality the symptom of which is external similarity of expression.

Though one may quibble with certain details of Tschizewskij's interpretation, there are more objective shortcomings to be noted. The book was actually written more than four decades ago, and although this fact does not impair Tschizewskij's analyses (based on textual comparisons), recent discoveries have rendered much of the biographical material obsolete. In addition, the author claims a popular audience for his book, and so has omitted the customary scholarly apparatus. Thus, readers will have to turn to Tschizewskij's other book on Skovoroda (*Filosofija H. S. Skovorody*, Warsaw, 1934) for scholarly documentation. (Although the two books are essentially one, the earlier work stresses Skovoroda's domestic aspects and contains a short discussion of Skovoroda's rhetorical-philosophical manner. The present book gives a fuller explanation of his philosophy, particularly in regard to anthropology and ethics, and includes a summary of Tschizewskij's writings on Skovoroda's poetry.) The scattered typographical errors are perhaps inevitable but still unfortunate.

Tschizewskij rightly claims that Skovoroda is worth studying not only for historical reasons, but also because he can aid us in understanding the achievements

of larger figures who have grappled with the plight of the human spirit at sea in a world of appearances and grief. This volume is to be valued for making Tschizewskij's masterful elucidation of Skovoroda's philosophy widely available.

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THE BALTIC STATES: THE YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE: ESTONIA, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, 1917–1940. By Georg von Rauch. Translated from the German by Gerald Onn. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974. xv, 265 pp. \$10.95.

The task of writing Baltic history is enormous. The sheer number of native languages and names, the scope of German and Russian involvement, the changing historical perspective and the clash of nationalisms have turned away many otherwise intrigued and competent historians. It took a scholar of von Rauch's background, interests, and experience to produce the first history of modern Baltic development in a generation. As a German historian, furthermore, von Rauch crosses the Rubicon by grouping Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania together. Traditionally, Germans have classified only Estonia and Latvia as "Baltic" countries. Because of Germany's own historical participation, reasons did exist for this classification, but in modern times it has become obsolete. Nevertheless, until recently it was still followed by West German scholars working on modern history of the Baltic region. Thus, von Rauch gives the English reader a comparative study of the independent states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The first such comparative survey was produced by the Royal Institute on International Affairs in 1938 (*The Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*), but it concentrated more on economic policies of the thirties and on the whole was less balanced in its appraisals than von Rauch's volume. It also should be added that this translation of von Rauch's book differs from the original 1970 German version by means of a welcome innovation—instead of the German place names, the native Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian toponymy are used in most instances. He also has supplemented the list of references.

The author displays an admirable open-mindedness in discussing the emergence of Baltic societies, their struggles with the dominant German or Polish minorities, and their frequently hostile relations with German and Soviet Russian neighbors. He does not hide Baltic problems or difficulties, but manages to keep his discussion of them almost entirely free of the ideological and cultural prejudices found not only in Soviet but, unfortunately, in some Western writing as well. This attitude allows von Rauch to see the Baltic nations not as mere "pawns" in the Russian-German chess game, but as self-directed entities, capable of and entitled to independent existence in the same manner as that of the Benelux countries (p. 241).

As might be expected, however, because of von Rauch's background and training, he is much stronger on Estonian and Latvian affairs than on Lithuanian. Although his profile of Lithuania is generally acceptable, his specific analysis is frequently erroneous because of errors and omissions concerning both people and events. The most controversial section is von Rauch's version of the declaration of Lithuanian independence (p. 42); the most dubious is his strong differentiation of Smetona's "presidential regime," from Pāts' and Ulmanis' "authoritarian democracies" (pp. 161–64). This raises further questions of interpretation—especially