

thought, namely, how elective affinity from Goethe onwards is contrasted against any form of causality and causal thinking. Thus through the pages on Rembrandt we must understand how art as philosophy is comprehended within itself and thus cannot be reduced to anything else. In various chapters on the inner life, individualization and the general, and religious art, Simmel establishes the philosophical text(s) which are the essence of beauty, perfection, piety, and artistic creation.

It goes without saying that art historians, especially those who venerate the art, would not find comfort in what Simmel has brilliantly and skillfully developed. And yet Simmel's insights and reflections on Caravaggio and Rembrandt (141–42) would be most welcome now as we enter 400 years of exhibitionary comparison starting with the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam. *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*.

———Aram Yengoyan, University of California at Davis

Laada Bilaniuk, *Contested Tongues: Language Politics and Cultural Correction in Ukraine*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005, 256 pp.

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During the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine, the western press offered a vision of a sharply divided country—the “Ukrainian” west pitted against the “Russian” east. Ethnic identity and language use, and even religion became conflated in this rhetoric of a bifurcated country, a simplistic portrait with which many regional experts took issue. Although language politics have long played a key role in Ukraine's development as a nation-state, an in-depth, multi-dimensional academic study of language and its social meaning in contemporary Ukraine has not been available until now. In *Contested Tongues*, Laada Bilaniuk has chosen language as the pivot point for her study of Ukrainian identity politics. She combines historical, sociolinguistic, and ethnographic research to create a complex picture of how everyday language practices have contributed to conflicts and compromises in ideologies of linguistic, political, regional, and regional identities.

Throughout the book Bilaniuk explores how ideological battles over Ukrainian language have contributed to broader struggles for Ukrainian independence since the emergence of the modern nationalist movement in the nineteenth century. Offering historical perspectives on the shifting status of Ukrainian, seen by some as a variety of Russian, and by others as the hallmark of independent nationhood, the author discusses imperial bans on the use of Ukrainian in written materials. This was followed by the uncertainty of the Soviet period, when official attitudes toward Ukrainian language vacillated between tolerance, oppression, and promotion of a modified standard that

moved the language closer to Russian. Bilaniuk's primary focus is on the post-Soviet period, during which the restoration of Ukrainian as the state language has led to renewed debates over the correctness of regional varieties and the status of Ukrainian and Russian in the ethnically and linguistically mixed state. Throughout the book Bilaniuk explores how the act of speaking Ukrainian, or of identifying one's or another's speech as Ukrainian, have remained intensely socially symbolic acts, acts defined against a complex range of ideological judgments of language use. In particular, Bilaniuk pays overdue scholarly attention to *surzhyk*, a generally maligned form of speech that is considered an inferior hybrid of Ukrainian and Russian, yet is at the same time a rich linguistic resource for millions of Ukrainians.

In *Contested Tongues*, Bilaniuk's study strikes a delicate balance between theoretical analysis of the semiotics of language choices and ethnographic exploration of the lived reality of language use. One of key points at which these two approaches converge is in her examination of "correctness." Bilaniuk theorizes correctness as a rich intersection of competing ideologies of language, and incorporates a clear discussion of contemporary linguistic anthropological approaches to ideological and symbolic elements of language in social context. However, rather than focusing solely on how local or authoritative judgments of linguistic correctness are applied, Bilaniuk also considers social dimensions of linguistic performance and the narrowing or expanding of perceived linguistic choices for speakers in given contexts. Her close analysis of the politics of linguistic correctness in Ukraine highlights the ways in which social factors that contribute to evaluations of linguistic correctness as well as the range of linguistic choices have changed in the fifteen years since Ukraine became an independent country.

While *Contested Tongues* is particularly valuable for scholars focused on language and identity, or those seeking to better understand identity formation in post-Soviet contexts, it has a broader value to scholars working in other fields. Bilaniuk delivers a concise and well-argued case for investigating patterns of language use and language attitudes as part of contemporary (or historical) studies of ethnically and linguistically diverse social and political systems, with the goal of creating a more nuanced portrait of dynamic social interactions.

———J. A. Dickinson, Anthropology, University of Vermont

Marian H. Feldman. *Diplomacy by Design: Luxury Arts and an 'International Style' in the Ancient Near East, 1400–1200 BCE*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006, 278 pp.

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Marian Feldman's title is an apt play on the strategy of "design-by-diplomacy" adopted by the committee in charge of selecting the emblems that would mark