

says reveal is that holiday-making, like so much else in “sunny” Yugoslavia, was ultimately rife with contradiction.

PAULINA BREN
Vassar College

Bitie v prevoda: Bălgarska literatura na nemski ezik (XIX–XX v.). By Liubka Lipcheva-Prandzheva. Studies in Language and Culture in Central and Eastern Europe, no. 13. Munich: Verlag Otto Sagner, 2010. 326 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Tables. €38.00, paper.

When reading Liubka Lipcheva-Prandzheva’s book, one cannot help but recall the beginning of E. M. Forster’s *Howards End*, where the Schlegel sisters, fictional descendants of the famous German Shakespeare translators, are discussing the results of the restoration of the Cathedral of Speyer in Germany, regretting that the famous building has been absolutely ruined by restoration. A bit later a brilliant remark is coined regarding the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the Schlegel/Tieck Shakespeare translation when Margaret Schlegel comments on her German cousin despising English literature, “except Shakespeare, and he’s a German.”

Lipcheva-Prandzheva’s very informative survey of Bulgarian literature in German translation from the nineteenth century up to the first decade of the twenty-first century offers another interesting illustration of this tradition of translation that Forster alludes to with his bon mot about Shakespeare being a German. Foregoing historical and theoretical approaches to translation, the author shows us the “usual suspects” in the discourse on modern Bulgarian literature (“absent,” “delayed,” “didactic”) in the semantic context of the “culture of translation” (*kultura na prevoda*) and “culture as translation” (*kulturata kato prevod*) (10).

Chapter 1 explores the principles underlying the inclusion of modern Bulgarian literature in German anthologies from the beginnings to the 1990s, including in the famous anthologies by Ivan Vazov and Constantin Veličkov (*Bălgarska hristomatia*, 1884) and by P. R. Slaveikov (*Na ostrova na blaženite*, 1910). Both show modern Bulgarian literature emancipated from the grip of folklore and position it in comparison to world literature: “Only four years after the scientific authorities postulated the absence of Bulgarian literature . . . a school anthology shows gaps in only three genres of world literature” (23), argues Lipcheva-Prandzheva. She also analyzes aspects of Vazov and Veličkov’s and Slaveikov’s modes of discussing Bulgarian literature from the point of view of translators and seemingly foreign readers. Although these anthologies are not German, and in Slaveikov’s case only pretend to be translations from Bulgarian, they are an important starting point for exploring the reception and translation of Bulgarian literature in Germany. Yet Lipcheva-Prandzheva’s general explanation of very complex phenomena completely misses the point. Crucial aspects of the dispute between members of the modernist Misăl circle, which aimed to revolutionize Bulgarian literature through the inclusion of modern European ideas, and more traditional writers like Ivan Vazov are ignored here. A similar failure occurs when she tries to explain the different reception accorded contemporary Bulgarian writers in German translation. Rather mechanically, Lipcheva-Prandzheva applies commercial success to structures of narration and misreads Victor Paskov’s *Germania—mrăsna prikazca* (Germany—A Squalid Tale, 1989).

The heart of Lipcheva-Prandzheva’s book is the second part, “Politicheski praktiki i prevod” (Practical Politics and Translation). The two chapters in this part deal with the ideological manipulations in the field of Bulgarian nonfiction literature in German translation from the nineteenth century (for example, G. Rosen, *Die Balkanhaiduken*, 1878) and from the twentieth century (Bl. Dimitrova *Strashnijat săd. Roman—pătepis*, 1968). Rosen’s one-man war against the image of Bulgarian traditional culture, honoured with a reprint in 2009 (!), has found a decent reply on several levels in Lipcheva-Prandzheva’s brilliant piece of criticism. Her documentation of Bl. Dimitrova’s one-woman war against the mutilation of her Vietnam travelogue by her East German critics, which culminated in halting

its German translation—a real victory for Dimitrova (!), is an impressive illustration of the inferno of censorship in totalitarian regimes.

RUMJANA IVANOVA-KIEFER
University of Trier, Germany

Czech and Slovak Cinema: Theme and Tradition. By Peter Hames. Traditions in World Cinema. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010. Dist. Columbia University Press. viii, 264 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Filmography. Illustrations. \$35.00, paper.

Not many fields of academic inquiry are as strongly defined by the work of a single person as Czechoslovak cinema is by the scholarship of Peter Hames. His seminal book *Czechoslovak New Wave* (1985/2005), the edited collection on Jan Švankmajer, *The Cinema of Jan Švankmajer: Dark Alchemy* (1995/2008), and a scattered series of chapters and articles form the basis, in English at least, of our understanding of the film cultures of Czechoslovakia, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia. Hames's work is characterized by a primary aesthetic interest in film as film, a secondary interest in film as part of a political and historical discourse, and hardly at all by the vagaries of film theory. In this new work, Hames offers an overview of the development of Czechoslovak cinema since the 1930s organized around a series of broad themes rather than any strict chronology. This method allows a mapping of connections that could easily have been lost in a more linear approach.

Hames chooses a fascinating collection of chapter headings to frame his exploration: History, Comedy, Realism, Politics, The Holocaust, Lyricism, The Absurd, The Avant-Garde, Surrealism, Animation, and Slovak Directions. Only one, comedy, is related to a specific film genre. The history, realism, politics, and Holocaust chapters could broadly be classed as historical, while the remaining chapters are related to aesthetic style apart from, of course, the broad summary chapter on Slovak cinema at the very end of the book. In his introduction, Hames sets out the aims of his book: to situate Czech and Slovak cinema “within its overall context,” examining the “historical relations between Czechs and Slovaks” (1) and determining the relevance of this context to the cinema of the two countries. While he certainly achieves this, the main interest of the book is its generous and informative discussions of the films themselves, since, unless one is already acquainted with the material, it is unlikely that a general film enthusiast would have had the opportunity to see many of the films mentioned. Thus while the general thesis of the close relationship between the Czech and Slovak Republics informs Hames's analysis, in many ways the value of the book is in opening up access to a cinema that, apart from a handful of exceptions, does not travel much beyond the borders of these small nations. While some of the better-known films are now released in the United Kingdom and the United States via specialist distributors such as Second Run and Criterion, many of the other, less well known films are relatively easy to obtain on subtitled DVDs from the Czech Republic itself and Hames provides an important guide for any reader wishing to explore this terrain in more detail.

Hames begins with a concise but illuminating summary of the complex political background to the current national configuration of what is sometimes referred to as the heart of Europe and continues in the first chapter, “History,” to explore this geopolitical scene by looking at the way in which Czech films have both promoted “national and social cohesion” while also providing a “means of commentary on the present” (15). Hames favors what might be broadly termed an “auteurist” approach as he tends to discuss films associated through their director, although he is always attentive to the production context of the films and often highlights the importance of seemingly minor personnel such as the scriptwriter, costume designer, director in her own right, and general muse to the New Wave of the 1960s, Ester Krumbachová. Whether examining the filmmakers of the 1930s (Otokar Vávra), the 1960s (František Vlácil, Miloš Forman), or the contemporary cinema (Jan Svěrák, Jan Hřebejk), Hames's style is seemingly transparent, with his analyses and judgments (he is not afraid to comment on the achievement or otherwise of a particular work) arising naturally out of his careful descriptions of the films and their action. He also wields the technical terminology of visual film language with ease and never loses sight of