

Discussion:

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The organizer of our conference suggested in their letter¹ several very interesting topics for the workshop at the conference in Greifswald in September this year; I'd like to deliver here only some short and minor thoughts on some of the organizers questions. As for the "third way", I'm somewhat skeptical, whether this conception (which is also put into the title of some presentations) isn't emphasized a little bit too much. On the one hand, this "third way" certainly opens up a significant connection to Homi Bhabha's famous post-colonial "third space", where due to Bhabha culture is constituted in a definite non-essential way by means of a hybrid intersection of several influences. This conception in my opinion without any doubt is valid also for the specific constellation of Ukrainian culture as a mediator between East and West. On the other hand, the idea of the "third way" (albeit by means of negation) still is based on a binary way of thinking: "tertium datur" still keeps in mind the dual modus of "tertium non datur". The "third way", therefore, to some extent reminds me of a way out, an emergency exit to leave behind a binary way of thinking, which nevertheless doesn't fully correspond to a truly plural and polyphonic constellation, in which Ukrainian culture should

¹ The letter of the organisers (Giovanna Brogi, Alexander Kratochvil) with some „guidelines“ was sent to participants to the Workshop about Literature.

Here the text of the letter:

„Despite some interesting trends and achievements the contemporary discourse of literary studies and linguistics seems less developed as in the neighboring historical disciplines. This is mirrored in the quantity and diversity of the scholarly works originated in the last 15 years in Ukraine and especially outside Ukraine. Of course, there are new approaches of literary theory (inspired by the "western" discourse), and traditional (often with strong national elements) approaches, which are very productive as well, e.g. in rewriting the canon of Ukrainian literature. Yet this example shows the lack of communication in Ukrainian philology. Will be more communication between different methodological approaches and between linguistics and literary studies the missing "third way"? Could non-Ukrainian scholars play the role of a mediator? Can exchange of knowledge, human resources and technology help to promote the awareness of Ukrainian literature and language between a broader academic audience in European countries? What should be the role of literary critics and linguistics regarding mass media in Europe? How capable are European slavists (and 'opinion makers') to grasp the main results of research in Ukraine and the diaspora?

Are there possibilities of giving the non-Ukrainian reader better opportunities to be informed about Ukrainian literature? Which books and articles should be translated and published?

or should new books and articles be written and published by European, American or Australian scholars, in order to adapt them to the expectations of the scientific, cultural and socio-political background of each country? Many good books and collected or single essays circulate in journals or on internet outside Ukraine. Is there the possibility to coordinate a common action in order to give more synthetic, but essential and harmonious information about Ukraine? Are the needed human resources and financial support available? Which subjects may be considered as priorities in research and in spreading knowledge about Ukraine?"

be embedded and which next to the "third way" should be able to offer also a "fourth", a "fifth" and several other ways.

This is also valid for the organizers question, whether non-Ukrainian scholars could play the role of a mediator – this question again reflects a binary opposition between the "western" discourse and the traditional scientific approaches to Ukrainian culture mentioned by Kratochvil. Non-Ukrainian scholars certainly could play the role of a mediator, but the issue at stake in my opinion is, whether they should play this role at all, since I can't see anything wrong in scientific conflicts and different point of views, on the contrary – they reflect a genuine situation of methodological and epistemological plurality and are a sign of overcoming the form of strict monologue so typical for the former Soviet discourse. As a member of the university of Vienna (a city, which has been an important centre of Ukrainian culture for more than one century up the 1920-ies), I possibly would consider it more productive (at least for my own research work) to turn to a form of "local" Ukrainian studies, which would be able to enrich the international discussion by working on the vast amount of material in Viennese libraries and archives, which hitherto to a great extent remained unnoticed or unpublished (some major scientific contributions of my Viennese colleagues Michael Moser and Alois Woldan could serve as outstanding examples for this kind of essential research work). This notion certainly doesn't mean that Ukrainian studies at the University of Vienna should turn its back to the international academic discussion, quite on the contrary: They should be able to enrich the present polyphonic constellation of Ukrainian studies by means of their own specific contributions.

The question, in which way a non-Ukrainian broader public could be informed about Ukrainian literature, seems also essential to me. As for the German-speaking sphere, up the so-called "Orange Revolution" Ukrainian literature more or less has been totally ignored, and only thanks to the small printing house "Brodina" and Anna Halja-Horbatsch and her translations it didn't completely vanish from the public. After the political changes in the Ukraine this situation radically changed and Ukrainian literature, as for example the works of Oksana Zabuzhko, Serhyi Zhadan, Ljubko Deresh and, most of all, Juryi Andrukhovych, has become popular also among German readers. The novels and essays of Deresh and Andrukhovych are printed not only in hardcover, but also in pocket-books, some of them, as for example Deresh's *Cult*, already have been reprinted four or five times. So German and Austrian printing houses right for the moment are offering some major works of contemporary Ukrainian literature (certainly with some omissions, as for example the prose

of Taras Prokhas'ko) in translation; Ukrainian modernist literature from around 1900 up to the 30-ies, unfortunately, again with some exceptions, has not been systematically translated into German yet, although these modernist forerunners set the pace for contemporary postmodern Ukrainian literature. Consequently, the poems of a major modernist writer like Bohdan-Ihor Antonych currently are translated into German not for the sake of their own, but as a result of the overwhelming reader's response to Andrukhovych's novel *Twelve rings*. So maybe contemporary Ukrainian literature will turn the interest of a broader non-Ukrainian public also to the rich cultural heritage of Ukrainian modernism and in this roundabout way inspire new translations².

² A few weeks ago an very good translation of poems by P. Tychyna, M. Ryls'kyj and B.-I. Antonych has been published by the Pano-Verlag in Zürich. The translator is Adrian Wanner.