

instead a partnership with both” (50). The second chapter also gives an in-depth portrayal of the rise of the Ukrainian right, especially the ultranationalist Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), which “was fighting for Ukraine’s freedom to be part of the Third Reich” and “as the Reich began to collapse, they altered this civilizational choice to that of becoming part of the anticommunist West” (63).

Ukraine’s communist past comes out as a complicated, but not entirely negative, experience. Although Stalin would reverse indigenization, later Soviet leaders of the Ukrainian SSR would bring some of its elements back. Ukrainian party boss Petro Shelest (in office 1963–72) “encouraged the elaborate commemoration of Ukrainian literary figures . . . and established national museums for Ukrainian folklore and architecture” (66–67). His successor Vladimir Shcherbitsky (1972–89) “introduced even stricter language quotas in mass media and shifted almost all local television to the Ukrainian language” (67). With multiple Soviet leaders, such as “Brezhnev, Podgorny, Khrushchev, Chernenko” (68) hailing from Ukraine, its population at an all-time high of 52 million, and its industrial base one of the most powerful in the USSR, it is no surprise that “71.5 percent” of Ukrainians voted to remain in a renegotiated USSR when Gorbachev initiated the famous referendum in March 1991 (71). But the August 1991 putsch against Gorbachev made all this moot.

Petro focuses on the “Orange Revolution of 2004” as “an instructive story” about “one of the most persistent tragic patterns in Ukrainian history” of insisting that only “Galician identity [is] legitimate” (79). The Maidan revolution of 2014, which overthrew the democratically elected President Victor Yanukovich “became a watershed moment . . . when national politics shifted from the pursuit of consensus, to the pursuit of explicit Galician political and cultural dominance” (88). During times of political crisis, such as 2004 and 2014, nationalism has “allowed civil society to unite briefly, muster enough support to oppose existing oligarchic arrangements, and reshuffle the political deck” (112). But failing to find a compromise between the western and eastern visions for Ukraine ensured a repetition of the struggle for state capture. The Kyiv-imposed economic blockade on the Donbass contributed to the decline of public support to rejoin Ukraine from “a majority” in 2019 to “only 12 percent” by 2021 (230). Worse, the (Oleksiy) Reznikov Plan for the reintegration of the Donbas would reimpose Ukrainian “as the sole language in all official and public discourse,” lustrate all public servants, offer “no general amnesty or special status,” and abrogate “Crimea’s autonomous status” (244). Approved by the Cabinet of Ministers in August 2021, the plan essentially treated “the Ukrainians in Donbass and Crimea as conquered people” (245).

Petro recommends that Ukraine moves towards reconciliation via dialogue “with a center, not sides” (250) and emulate reconciliation commissions of the South African type in pursuit of “restorative justice” (262) and “cultural security” for all sides (264).

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Poetik der Grenzverschiebung: Kinderliterarische Muster, Crosswriting und kulturelles Selbstverständnis der polnischen Literatur nach 1989. By Karoline Thaidigsmann. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2022. xii, 418 pp. Bibliography. Index. Plates. €59.00, hard bound.
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In her study, Karoline Thaidigsmann explores the role of crossover fiction in Polish literature after 1989. She emphasizes the crucial function of writing that blurs the

borderline between traditionally separate readerships—children and adults—in the reassessment of self-conceptions of Polish culture after the breakdown of communism. In consequence, cross writing and, accordingly, cross reading are interpreted in the context of negotiations and renegotiations of national identity. The first chapter explains the theoretical framework and examines the potentials of crossover literature in its combination of child and adult discourses (esp. 39–48). The second chapter outlines the context of crossover fiction with regard to debates on infantilism or childishness (in German: *Kindlichkeit*) in Poland. Based on the writings of Bolesław Prus, Stanisław Brzozowski, and Witold Gombrowicz, Thaidigsmann discusses the idea that immaturity is a salient feature of Polish culture and, thus, Polish self-descriptions. In addition, this chapter sheds light on the profound changes in Polish discourses on cultural immaturity after the establishment of communist rule and highlights the complex development of these discourses after 1989, when a new political, social, and cultural reality emerged. Thaidigsmann's conclusion that crossover fiction plays a major role in the reshaping of Polish identity after the end of communism is convincing. One might object, however, that the study focuses on infantilism or rather childishness and does not take into consideration adolescence as a separate aspect prevalent in Polish self-descriptions of cultural immaturity.

Another chapter deals with concrete examples of cross writing, covering the period from 1989 to 2017. Thaidigsmann deals with different areas where crossover fiction, based on varying amalgamations of genres and traditions, comes into its own as a way of rearranging Polish cultural identity. She discusses Andrzej Czcibor-Piotrowski's trilogy *Rzeczy nienasycone* (1999), *Cud w Esfahanie* (2002), *Nigdy dość. Mirakle* (2011) as a striking example of crossover fiction that combines different genres such as childhood literature, adventure tales, documentary prose, and deportation literature. In this perspective, cross writing is truly transgressive as it brings together, at first glance, mutually exclusive subjects like adventure and childhood on the one hand and Stalinist terror on the other. Crossover literature is furthermore discussed as a thought-provoking challenge to established discourses after 1989, among others with reference to Jacek Dukaj's *Wroniec* (2009). Thaidigsmann explains in detail, how—framed as a fairy tale for children—this novel about martial law in Poland tells a fantasy-like adventure of a young boy during December 1981. The study demonstrates, with further examples of crossover fiction, how the reality of Polish history and discourses of Polish identity are defamiliarized within the framework of children's literature. Among the topics discussed are works of Dorota Terakowska: *Córka czarownicy* (1991), *Samotność Bogów* (1998), and *Poczwarka* (2001); Tomek Trzyzna: *Panna Nikt* (1993); Kinga Dunin: *Tabu* (1998), *Obciach* (1999); Tomasz Piątek: *Podręcznik dla klasy pierwszej* (2011); and Natalia Osińska: *Fanfik* (2016) and *Slash* (2017). Thaidigsmann shows how cross writing creates a third space of communication where children's literature and adult literature are inseparably intertwined in a new and challenging rearrangement of identity discourses. The illustrations at the end of the study (343–65, in color) show book covers and demonstrate to what extent crossover literature entails a special approach to book design; although aimed at an adult public the use of graphics familiar from children's literature is common practice.

Thaidigsmann's study is a remarkable achievement and provides deep insight into the forms and strategies of crossover fiction in Poland after 1989. With its focus on crossover writing this book stands out in the field of Slavic Studies. One misses, however, a broader contextualization, especially in due consideration of comparable international tendencies. Suffice it to say that in his famous essay *Cross the border—Close the gap* (1969), one of the essential programmatic texts of postmodern theory, Leslie Fiedler called for a new kind of literature that should close the gap between high and popular culture—hence cross the line between hitherto mutually exclusive

realms of communication—and create new forms that would integrate different genres (Science Fiction, Pornography, and Westerns) into the literary discourse. Unfortunately, Thaidigsmann’s study lacks any discussion of such related phenomena and, hence, a broader contextualization of cross writing. That said, her book is nevertheless a profound and pioneering study on crossover fiction in Polish literature and will surely instigate further research.

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Postkommunistische Schreibweisen: Formen der Darstellung des Kommunismus in Romanen zu Beginn des 21. Jahrhunderts. By Alena Heinritz. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2021. 391 pp. Bibliography. €54.00, hard bound. doi: 10.1017/slr.2023.312

Alena Heinritz’s book is a modified version of her PhD thesis at the University of Graz. She analyzes different modes of the representation of communism in postcommunist novels at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Her choice of texts is rather heterogeneous and surprising. She deals with Ol’ga Slavnikova’s *2017*, Sergei Lebedev’s *Predel zabveniia*, Jáchim Topol’s *Kloktat dehet*, Svetlana Aleksievich’s *Vremia sekund khend*, Ilja Trojanow’s *Macht und Widerstand*, Paul Greveillac’s *Les âmes rouges* and finally with Viktor Erofeev’s *Khoroshii Stalin*. It seems that maximal difference in genre, language, and cultural context was the most important criterion of selection for Heinritz. Such a methodological procedure may have its merits, but in Heinritz’s case, the material just seems to be too different in terms of genre, literary style, and political situation. The cultural contexts in Russia, Belarus, the Czech Republic, Germany, and France are very diverse. Moreover, the communist past has quite different intensities of presence in all these cultures. To complicate things further, Ilja Trojanow is of Bulgarian descent, grew up in Kenya, attended German language schools, and writes in German. Heinritz cares little about the political, social, and cultural framework of her source material. She focuses exclusively on the literary level of the texts. That would have been justified if she had only scrutinized novels from one single cultural context. The comparability of the mentioned novels, however, needs to take into account the general framework. For Heinritz’s topic, especially the very different debates about lustration in these countries, should have been addressed.

Heinritz begins her book with a good presentation of theoretical approaches. She highlights the notion of the “postcommunist situation” that defines the conceptualization of communism in a given national context. In the next step, she gives an apt description of three modes of literary representation: the grotesque, the documentary, and the satirical. In all three cases, she displays a sound command of the existing research literature and successfully embeds her own approach into the state of the art.

The main part of the book, which constitutes almost half of the written text, is dedicated to the seven case studies. Heinritz classifies Slavnikova’s *2017* as a mixture of the grotesque and the satirical. She convincingly argues that the genre of utopia (Slavnikova’s book was written in 2006) may lead to this amalgam of non-realistic scripts. The main topic of the novel is the “strong state” that holds a strong grip on Russian society.

Heinritz’ second example is Sergei Lebedev’s *Predel zabveniia*. She points to the central role of the narrator, who serves as a kind of a linchpin between present and past. The clash between these two levels of time creates a grotesque situation. She characterizes Topol’s novel *Kloktat dehet* as a piqueresque novel. The main hero is a