

On the other hand, an obvious difficulty arises with Layton's interpretation: if Nicholas's flaws are meant to implicate others, why stop with Russian aristocrats? There is adultery among the peasantry (Avdeev's wife) and adulterous leanings—more obvious in the drafts but detectable in the canonical text—between Khadzhi-Murat and Mariia Dmitrievna; nor are Nicholas's willingness to use violence and his will to power entirely alien to the hero; and so on. This deliberate ambiguity works to stymie traditional moralistic readings and to force us to focus elsewhere. Layton's approach does us the disservice of losing sight of the uniqueness of *Khadzhi-Murat*; a more familiar Tolstoi emerges, the one we have come to expect from other texts, but that may be exactly what we least need. The limitation of Layton's interpretation flows from its exclusive reliance on the portion of the novella least relevant to the fate of the hero, whose astounding tenacity and unforgettable death are the *raison d'être* of each of the highly various eleven drafts the work passes through. After a lifetime of writing fiction nothing like *Khadzhi-Murat*, surely Tolstoi's backsliding should not be made too much of, especially if he noticed and planned to correct the slip. If the author allows himself to violate his principle of silence and restraint here (and he does) it may be because this chapter has no Khadzhi-Murat in it, no one who knows or meets the hero, and no essential connection to his story at all.

Perhaps most to the point, in a time and place where strife, hostility, and harrowing violence are constants, there are no grounds to believe, as Layton suggests, that Khadzhi-Murat's life "might have been very different" if only the tsar had ceased his sinning ways. Readers who have not looked recently at the text may forget that Khadzhi-Murat wants only one thing from the Russian tsar: permission to fight against his enemy Shamil—and Nicholas *grants* that permission. But like the Napoleon of *War and Peace*, Nicholas is so far removed from the scene that his words have no discernible effect; his decision is never translated into action by subordinates. Khadzhi-Murat's death fascinated Tolstoi against his will and despite his avowed morals because it touched on something vital the writer had never fully come to terms with: the potential dignity of an individual battling the harshest adversity alone and unbowed even as he fails and succumbs completely. Not for nothing is this tale Tolstoi could not resist drenched in blood from start to finish: Khadzhi-Murat's father nearly kills his mother in an argument over the baby; as a youth, Khadzhi-Murat assassinates the imam Gamzat and is nearly slain by his guards; when he does finally die, it is not at the hands of the Russians, but of his countrymen; if he escaped death there, he would still have faced execution by Shamil; if he defeated Shamil, he would have continued to face others. These life-threatening challenges have little to do with the presence of the Russians, however much Tolstoi surely deplored that presence, and *this*, it seems to me, is where we should begin thinking about what *Khadzhi-Murat* is trying to catch a clear view of for the first time.

DAVID HERMAN
University of Virginia

To the Editor:

It was gratifying to read Larry Wolff's article, "Inventing Galicia: Messianic Josephinism and the Recasting of Partitioned Poland" (*Slavic Review* 63, no. 4), in which he makes Wojciech Bogusławski's *Cud mniemany albo Krakowiacy i Górale* a focus of his analysis. The article, however, may have left some readers with a misapprehension as to the production history and textual variants of Bogusławski's musical drama.

Professor Wolff notes that the original stage production of *Cud mniemany* opened "in Warsaw in 1794, at the moment of the Kościuszko insurrection" (836). However, Zbigniew Raszewski's archival research has established that Bogusławski's play was first performed in Warsaw on 1 March 1794, that is, more than three weeks before the start of the Kościuszko insurrection on 24 March.

To make his point about Josephine ideology, Professor Wolff cites the 1949 publication of *Cud mniemany*. This seems to suggest that this is the text that was performed in L'viv in 1796. It is not. While the text of the Warsaw production of *Cud mniemany* has not survived, a manuscript of the version that was used in L'viv—possibly as a production script or a prompt book—is available in the Mieczysław Rulikowski archives at the Instytut Sztuki Polskiej Akademii Nauk in Warsaw.

It is not likely that we will ever be able to reconstruct the actual text of *Cud mniemany* as it was spoken and sung by the actors in L'viv in 1796. However, a comparison of the Rulikowski manuscript with a manuscript that was discovered in the late 1970s by Zbigniew Jędrzychowski in the Stanisław Moniuszko archives at the Warszawskie Towarzystwo Muzyczne is helpful. It would be too optimistic to say that one can explain all the contradictions in the Rulikowski version by reading it against the musical numbers and spoken lines in the Moniuszko manuscript, but to do so begins to account for the ironies that underlie Bogusławski's seemingly simple and straightforward text. For example, despite the play's setting near Kraków and despite all the attendant implications, *Cud mniemany* looked to France and the French Revolution for inspiration. And it remained firmly rooted in the eighteenth-century enterprise of European Enlightenment, exemplified in *Cud mniemany* by Alessandro Volta's invention of the electric battery (i.e., the eponymous alleged miracle).

HALINA FILIPOWICZ
University of Wisconsin, Madison

Professor Wolff replies:

I am grateful to Professor Filipowicz for her erudition and insight, and fully agree with her on the importance of the complex literary and cultural history of Bogusławski's drama. Interested scholars might also want to consult Jerzy Got, *Na Wyspie Guaxary: Wojciech Bogusławski i teatr lwowski 1789–1799* (Kraków, 1971).

LARRY WOLFF
Boston College