

socialism). A lot of space is devoted to the translations of some of Blake's poems into Bulgarian. The authors dwell on both the aesthetic qualities of the translations and the ideological biases of the scholarship and criticism on Blake particularly under state socialism. What distinguishes the chapter on Blake's Bulgarian reception from most of the other chapters in the collection is the critical assessment of recent publications on the Internet as well as a commentary on the uses of Blake in secondary schools and academic education.

In closing, Kostova and Terziev remark that Blake's Bulgarian reception may seem rather modest at first glance: after all, no Bulgarian writer or artist has so far engaged with his work creatively. In addition, he is decidedly underrepresented in Bulgarian art criticism. However, a closer look reveals that representations of his life and work have been part of important Bulgarian intellectual projects.

In my own conclusion, I would like to add that the researchers whose texts are included in these volumes – those “mental travellers” across numerous languages and cultures – have indeed made a most valuable contribution to the field of reception studies by presenting a multiplicity of different perspectives on Blake's life and work. Their dedication and efforts to pick up and put together the particles of the author's “afterlife” into meaningful wholes and to invest his work with a new significance is sufficient testimony that Blake still “lives.”

**Department of English and American Studies
University of Veliko Tarnovo**

Yarmila Daskalova

CORRESPONDENCE: Assoc. Prof. Yarmila Daskalova, PhD, Department of English and American Studies, University of Veliko Tarnovo, 2 Teodosi Tarnovski St., Veliko Tarnovo 5003, Bulgaria.
@ daskalova@ts.uni-vt.bg



**Wiesław Krajka, editor. *Studies of Anglophone Literatures in Central Europe*.
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Studies of Anglophone Literatures in Central Europe is comprised of six chapters written by university teachers of literatures in English from Poland, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, and Ukraine. As the volume's editor states in his Introduction, the book is “an outgrowth” of an earlier conference panel on a similar topic (9). Research focusing on different aspects of the development of the interdisciplinary field of English Studies in non-Anglophone contexts is not a novelty: an ESSE-sponsored collection of essays entitled *European English Studies: Contributions Towards the History of a Discipline*, edited by Balz Engler and Renate Haas, came out in 2000, and was followed by a spate of other similar books. What distinguishes *Studies of Anglophone Literatures in Central Europe* from most of its predecessors is the contributors' attempt to shed light on latter-day changes in the teaching of Anglophone literatures against the background of their countries' common historical denominator: their past under communism. In fact, the six countries represented in the volume may be said to form a representative sample of the former Communist Bloc.

The volume's first chapter is by Jacek Wiśniewski of the University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Warsaw. It sketches the two-phase reform process that Polish academic institutions underwent between 1989 and 2016 and considers the development of teaching and research at sixteen state and several private universities in Poland. All of them offer programmes in Anglophone literary studies.

In the second chapter, Zdeněk Beran (Charles University, Prague) records recent developments in Anglophone literary studies in the Czech Republic, “comparing it with the conditions in the preceding decades, especially with the situation at Czech universities after the suppression of the politically liberal ‘Prague Spring’ of 1968” (47).

In the third chapter, Olha Bandrovskva (Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Ukraine) surveys the institutional forms of English and American studies in post-Independence Ukraine. Bandrovskva briefly discusses the historical development of the former ideology-ridden Soviet educational system and particularly focuses on what may be called its practice of *politicized canonization* as illustrated by the privileging of certain English and American writers while censoring, or completely banning, others.

Soňa Šnircová (Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice, Slovakia) employs a somewhat different approach to the volume’s problematics. In the first part of her text, she presents a comprehensive report on the entire scope of Anglophone literary studies in Slovakia. In the second part of her chapter, she lists and briefly evaluates some of the most prominent publications by Slovak Anglicists, highlighting their impact on international discussions of literary studies.

These first four chapters examine the contents and structures of programmes, courses, and strategies of teaching literatures in English at all academic levels: BA, MA, and PhD. They especially “emphasize the opposition of autonomy and freedom v. centrally planned curricula, and structuring and development of the framework of academic teaching in EU countries within the Bologna process” (Krajka 12).

Madalina Nicolaescu (University of Bucharest, Romania) adopts a less optimistic perspective on post-communist developments in Romanian academia. She examines critically “the internal and external, transnational factors shaping university studies in Romania” and argues that “one of their consequences has been the erosion in scope and importance attached to English literature” (97). Nicolaescu uses her own experience in teaching Shakespeare as a case study. In his commentary on this chapter, Krajka remarks that “through illuminating some universal mechanisms of teaching literatures in English in contemporary times Nicolaescu’s insights and diagnoses apply to other Central European countries, as well as to many countries outside this geopolitical area” (13).

The volume’s final chapter deals with Shakespeare, whose name recurs throughout the book, thus demonstrating the continuing presence of the Bard in pedagogic activities and academic research at universities in non-Anglophone countries in Europe and elsewhere. Igor Maver of the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, presents an edited version of Mirko Jurak’s study of the Slovenian reception of Shakespeare’s plays in the first half of the twentieth century. Thus, this volume on Anglophone literary studies is neatly wrapped up with a chapter on English literature’s most potent symbol: The Bard of Avon.

Department of English and American Studies
University of Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria

Vakrilen Kilyovski

CORRESPONDENCE: Dr Vakrilen Kilyovski, Department of English and American Studies, University of Veliko Tarnovo, 2 Teodosi Tarnovski St., Veliko Tarnovo 5003, Bulgaria. @ v.kilyovski@ts.uni-vt.bg

