

# Myroslava M. Mudrak. Nova generatsiia i mystets'kyi modernizm v Ukraini [The New Generation and Artistic Modernism in Ukraine]

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**Myroslava M. Mudrak.** *Nova generatsiia i mystets'kyi modernizm v Ukraini* [*The New Generation and Artistic Modernism in Ukraine*]. Translated by Hanna Ianovs'ka, foreword by Heorhii Kovalenko, Lidiia Lykhach, project manager, Rodovid, 2018. 352 pp. Illustrations, List and Sources of Illustrations. Selected Bibliography. Index. Appendices. ₴550.00, cloth.

**I**n 1986, UMI Research Press published Myroslava M. Mudrak's *The New Generation and Artistic Modernism in the [sic] Ukraine*. At that time, information about Ukrainian futurism was practically non-existent both in Ukraine and in the West, and thus, the book's appearance was a welcome and truly pioneering event. Unfortunately (as I pointed out then in a review in *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* [Edmonton]), this important milestone was marred by sloppy editing, errors, and stylistic infelicities, which seriously detracted from the overall result.

The volume under review here, *Nova generatsiia i mystets'kyi modernizm v Ukraini*, is a Ukrainian translation from the English original by Hanna Ianovs'ka, who has created an elegant and highly readable text. Given the evident corrections and updates, this second iteration of Mudrak's monograph is clearly the one that most readers will want to turn to from now on. This is especially the case because unlike the first edition, which has rather poor black and white illustrations (largely owing to a scarcity of sources), the Ukrainian version—attractively designed by Sasha Bychenko—is a treat for the eyes as well. It shows off to very good effect an array of high-quality covers, paintings, and visual poetry, and it does so mostly in colour. While Mudrak's work is no longer the most current or complete work on the topic of Ukrainian futurism and the avant-garde, it remains informative and useful in very many respects.

The structure and content of this edition remains largely unchanged from the English original. There are three parts—"Panfuturyzm" ("Panfuturism" [22–93]), "Khudozhnii obraz" ("The Painted Image" [94–211]), and "Drukovanyi arkush" ("The Printed Page" [212–97])—each consisting of two chapters. An appendix section (328–50) contains reprints of four articles—one more than in the 1986 edition—that had initially appeared in the futurist periodic press. The foreword by Heorhii Kovalenko is new (see 9–11), as is the author's preface (see 13–15). Mudrak's title invokes the "new generation" both literally and figuratively. First, this refers to the Ukrainian futurist journal *Nova generatsiia* (*New Generation* [Kharkiv], 1927–30), which was edited by the founder of the movement, Mykhail' Semenko. Second, the term embraces broader manifestations of the 1910s to the early 1930s, with emphasis on visual and painterly issues. In this way, the reader gets a good sense of both the literary and the artistic history of the Ukrainian

avant-garde. Furthermore, inside the book, Mudrak explores a range of personalities and organizations in a genuinely encyclopedic fashion.

The appearance of this translated edition is a testament to the growing popularity of the avant-garde in Ukraine, both within scholarly circles and among the general public. What used to be obscure and persecuted is now a source of national pride for many. This comes across in the foreword by Kovalenko, who enthusiastically writes that “[f]uturism in Ukrainian culture . . . [was] surprisingly natural and organic” (my trans.; 9); he glosses over the fact that when futurism first appeared and for decades after that, scholars called it “unnatural” and “inorganic” (Ilnytzkyj, *Ukrainian Futurism*, xiii–xiv, xiv n4). All in all, the book’s publisher, Rodovid—renowned for its many informative and attractive publications—should be congratulated for producing yet another excellent publication and for promoting the Ukrainian avant-garde.

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