

In the first part of his book Holden—occasionally with a certain dose of hyperbole—highlights the persistent contradictions of the Greek national character, the conflicting values which derive from the “Hellenic” and the “Christian” wellsprings of Greek culture, the effects of the country’s location at the crossroads of continents and civilizations, and the “welter of ambivalence” in which modern Greece was born. The second part covers the nation’s re-emergence in the early nineteenth century, the establishment of the Greek state and its march through the next sixteen decades until the military takeover in April 1967, and its immediate aftermath. His candid appraisal of the military regime was not critical enough in the eyes of the regime’s opponents, but neither was it laudatory enough for the regime’s stalwarts. Yet, in the opinion of this reviewer, among the dozens of books on recent Greek developments, Holden’s treatment of the military regime offers a most informed and valid picture.

Anyone interested in Greek politics cannot afford to miss this most readable introduction to what makes the Greeks tick. It is one of those books that a reviewer may wish he had written himself.

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MIKIS THEODORAKIS: MUSIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE. By *George Giannaris*. Foreword by *Mikis Theodorakis*. New York and Washington: Praeger Publishers, 1972. xix, 322 pp. \$8.95.

George Giannaris’s account of Theodorakis’s life (to age forty-eight) seems pure hagiography at first, a saint’s legend written for our edification by an enthusiastic disciple. This is not a criticism; indeed, it is a pleasure to see humanity still producing figures of such extraordinary accomplishment and integrity as Theodorakis: a composer, political leader, and social theorist/activist who has put all his ideas into practice despite enormous suffering. The tenacity, the vitality despite sickness and imprisonment, the miraculous escapes, the immovable allegiance to a cause: all appear legendary and superhuman at first, until the book begins to convince us that they are real, and furthermore that saintly virtues are bequeathed to rare individuals not by some divine agent on high, but by humanity itself, via culture.

This is Giannaris’s major point, and also Theodorakis’s major belief: the extraordinary, be it in art, heroism, or goodness, begins “among the people and the times,” is given intenser expression by the individual talent, and then must attain completion where it began, amidst the people once more. Consequently, what starts as a hagiographic account of one man’s accomplishment soon becomes a sociological investigation of the Greek people and their times, from Metaxas’s dictatorship (1936) to the present, with emphasis on culture and politics. Culturally, the focus is, of course, music—Theodorakis’s crusade to amalgamate (1) sophisticated European technique, (2) lyrics of true worth by Greece’s leading poets, (3) the folk tradition of the countryside, and (4) the popular instruments of the urban proletariat, in order to produce a revitalized musical expression that speaks to the masses. Politically, the focus is the Greek Left. We see the complicated role which communism has played in the lives of many Greek intellectuals, with Theodorakis as paradigm. He joined the party in 1943 as a way of fighting the Germans, entering Marxism “through the door of nationalism and patriotism.” He endured

Stalin's betrayal of the Resistance, then the increasing schism between those who followed Moscow and those who did not. Czechoslovakia decided him definitively against the former, but he has recently renounced all Communist ties, and now is determined to create a New Greek Left dedicated to reconciliation.

As in Theodorakis's career, so in this book, the three forces of art, politics, and individual talent are inseparable, yet never confused. Nor does the author's obvious adulation for his subject lead him either to sentimentalized excess or to rhetoric. What could have been an overemotional tract remains rational throughout.

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LITERATURA ROSYJSKA: PODRĘCZNIK. Edited by *Marian Jakóbiec*. Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe. Vol. 1: 1970. 631 pp. 80 zł. Vol. 2: 1971. 1,004 pp. 100 zł.

In the name of a team of collaborators, the director of this enterprise, Professor Marian Jakóbiec, for many years the chief editor of the *Kwartalnik Instytutu Polsko-Radzieckiego*, points out in the preface why a new voluminously detailed handbook of the history of Russian literature is an urgent desideratum. He hints at the comparative dearth of comprehensive Polish studies in Russian literature—citing, in guarded language, the historical reasons for this circumstance. It turns out that so far the only really authoritative presentation of Russian literary history, written in Polish as well as in German, came from the pen of the great Alexander Brückner, until 1924 professor of Slavic philology at the University of Berlin. The lapse of time, however, new viewpoints and insights, more advanced methodological approaches, and the total change in the political and social situation of Poland make it clear that the precept of the hour is a complete revision of older Polish views concerning Russian literature and society, even if they were expressed by such venerable authorities as Brückner.

The upshot is this recent ambitious presentation of Russian literature in two volumes, comprising the period from Kievan beginnings to the October Revolution of 1917. Faithful to the principle of collectivity, and also in view of the monumentality of the project, a team of Polish experts in the field of Russian literary studies was assembled to cope with this task, among them noted scholars such as Wiktor Jakubowski, Bohdan Galster, Antoni Semczuk, Zbigniew Barański, Andrzej Walicki, and Ryszard Przybylski. The book is subdivided into four parts dealing with Old Russian literature, the literature of the eighteenth century, Russian letters during the first half of the nineteenth century, and Russian literary developments in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Individual chapters treat aspects of Kievan and Muscovite literature, the seventeenth century, the baroque in Russia as well as the various facets and modes of expression of classicism and sentimentalism, romanticism, realism, symbolism, and futurism. Methodologically the work is determined by a "personalistic" approach, as the successive chapters are devoted to the life and work of individual authors from Derzhavin to Gorky and Alexander Blok. Special chapters introducing a group of authors belonging to a given period undertake to provide a general sociohistorical characterization of the times during which they lived, and are also concerned with literary problems such as poetics, stylistics, and literary genres in their specific Russian manifesta-