

capitalist relations. The analysis of the social composition of the immigrant groups, from the time of their arrival in southern Bessarabia on, is supported by abundant evidence. The author indicates in a convincing manner that these people did not form a socially and economically homogeneous mass and that among them there soon appeared an agrarian bourgeoisie ready to exploit the small free producers among the immigrant communities. The large landholdings of the upper class developed along capitalist lines. However, accumulated capital was not invested in industry, but went to expand the growth of agriculture, the most lucrative source of revenue in this region.

Meshcheriuk's book is a new, serious, and substantial study. He offers evidence to explain why and how southern Bessarabia was transformed, owing to the agricultural activity of the Bulgarian and Gagauz immigrants from the beginning of the nineteenth century up to the Crimean War, into one of the most advanced regions with respect to cattle-raising and agriculture dependent on the needs of the market.

The book would have greatly benefited if, besides explanatory notes, it had included a bibliography of the literature and documents examined as well as an index; these minor reference matters would have greatly facilitated reading.

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IVAN VAZOV: ZHIZNEN I TVORCHESKI PŪT. By *Velichko Vŭlchev*.
Sofia: Izdatelstvo na Bŭlgarskata akademiia na naukite, 1968. 574 pp. 3.50 lv.

Though this is a large book, there is little a reviewer can say about it in a brief piece. Vŭlchev offers an extensive and detailed literary biography of Bulgaria's national writer, Ivan Vazov (1850–1921). The book starts at the beginning and proceeds to the end, methodically and chronologically. At the appropriate places in his narrative the author displays a polite interest in Vazov's published works as literature and the contemporary critical reaction to them, but his attention is fixed primarily on the minutiae, trivial or otherwise, of a great man's life. Surely a scholar's judgment and taste are distorted when he is capable of giving a detailed description of Vazov's last moments including sentences so monumentally rapid as these (though it must be noted in extenuation that they are based upon memoirs by Vazov's sister): "Vŭla Vazova [the sister in question] was struck by the fact that during these days her brother enjoyed a good appetite. 'I'm hungry,' he announces even after his return from his last walk. But death, which has stalked him for so long, arrives to prevent him even from swallowing the first mouthful of the string beans prepared for him."

A book of this sort is not to be recommended to a person who knows nothing about Vazov, for he needs a more concise study. Nor can it be read straight through with great profit by somebody who knows quite a bit about Vazov and his period. It is probably most useful as a reference tool for the scholar seeking narrowly biographical material about Vazov: it will give him the information he needs or else point him toward sources of still further detail. Extensive as it is, however, the book still leaves untreated some interesting questions of Vazov's life and work because of its narrowness of focus.

Reverberations of the old quarrel among Communist critics and students over

Vazov's place in Bulgarian literature still resound through the pages of this study. Though Vŭlchev criticizes Vazov for his political lapses, he is wholly persuaded of Vazov's importance in the history of Bulgarian literature, and so rejects the opinions of several prominent Communist theoreticians and critics who wrote about him during Vazov's lifetime and later. At one point he even goes so far as to declare that the "party line" on Vazov in the early 1920s was incorrect. That "line" has now been considerably straightened through the contributions of such books as this one.

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STANOVLENIE MARKSISTSKOI ISTORIOGRAFIJ V BOLGARIJ (S KONTSA XIX V. DO SOTSIALISTICHESKOJ REVOLIUTSII 1944 G.): PROBLEMY BOLGARSKOGO VOZROZHDENIIA. By *A. S. Beilis*. L'vov: Izdatel'stvo L'vovskogo universiteta, 1970. 240 pp.

Two considerations make Beilis's study a useful contribution. First, it is somewhat of a pioneering effort, given the dearth of book-length studies on any aspect of Bulgarian historiography. Second, most of the issues discussed have continued to be controversial problems among Bulgarian historians.

In part 1 (on the establishment of a "Marxist" historiography on the Bulgarian Revival), Beilis analyzes the writings on historical topics of Dimitŭr Blagoev and such other "narrow socialist" activists as Todor Petrov, Gavril Georgiev, Georgi Kirkov, Georgi Dimitrov, Khristo Kabakchiev, and Vasil Kolarov. Part 2 (the "Marxist-Leninist" period) covers Georgi Bakalov, Todor Pavlov, Mikhail Dimitrov, and Zhak Natan. The author treats chiefly three issues: the penetration of capitalism into the Bulgarian economy, the class composition of nineteenth-century Bulgarian society, and the classification of the leaders of the national liberation movement. Beilis wants to show how historical materialism, "revolutionary objectivism," Leninist teachings on the revolutionary democrats, *partiinosť*, and so forth, have aided Bulgarian Marxists in unmasking "bourgeois-idealist" and "fascist-chauvinist" conceptions of Bulgarian history.

In terms of his own conceptualization of his task, Beilis does a competent job. His presentation of the views of his subjects is generally accurate, with one major exception: Blagoev did not consider Vasil Levski the revolutionary equal of Liuben Karavelov and Khristo Botev (p. 70). The author is careful in noting subsequent refinements and changes in the views of the writers he discusses.

There are shortcomings. The book is not well organized. Perhaps too much attention is given to general theory and to the political battles in which Beilis's subjects were involved. He is not bothered by the fact that only two or three of the writers he studies were historians, or by the failure of pre-1944 Bulgarian Marxist writers to contribute much new factual knowledge about the revival. The author does not mention the impact of a changing Comintern line on the Marxian treatment of the idea of a "Greater Bulgaria" in the nation's past.

Beilis's failure to draw general conclusions from his study is suggestive, especially in view of the manner in which problems of interpretation continued to bedevil Bulgarian Marxist historians after 1944.

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