

tion Kemény will have completed a formidable labor. Great credit is due the Historical Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences for sponsoring the publication of so thorough a work on a subject once universally neglected in Hungarian historiography. One's only regret is that at present this incomparable set of source materials is accessible only to those who read Magyar. A one-volume selection of scarce or otherwise valuable documents, in their original language or translated into one of the major languages, would add immeasurably to the resources available to all other students of the nationalities of dualist Hungary.

RICHARD E. ALLEN

Institute on East Central Europe, Columbia University

POLITICHESKAIA BOR'BA V VENGRII NAKANUNE PEROVI MIROVOI VOINY, 1906–14. By T. M. Islamov. Akademiia nauk SSSR, Institut slavianovedeniia i balkanistiki. Moscow: "Nauka," 1972. 392 pp. 1.76 rubles.

It is a welcome sign that a growing number of non-Magyar historians are writing on Hungarian history. Their sincere interest in the subject is emphatically proved by their mastery of what must have impressed them as a strange and difficult language. T. M. Islamov, a young Soviet historian, chose one of the most complex periods as the subject of his study, the decade before the outbreak of World War I. The scope of his research is extensive, and it is matched by his well-informed account of events in prewar Hungary. What he fails to do is unravel the complex issues behind these events. Any approximation of such a task would call for keeping the social and political components in proportion. Conversely, to inflate any of these components leads to distortion.

In Islamov's book the story of the working class and the Social Democratic Party towers over everything else to such a degree that all other parties and movements pale in comparison. This overwhelming presence lends itself to oversimplifications and predictable solutions to complex questions. According to Islamov the Hungarian bourgeoisie was driven to accept feudal rule because of its fear of the proletariat (p. 215), an apparent omission of several other factors, notably the psychological one which prompted the bourgeoisie in Hungary to identify with the gentry rather than fight against them. Count István Tisza, prime minister of Hungary from October 1903, and leader of the Liberal Party, had intricate tactical reasons for pursuing a relatively cautious policy toward the opposition parties, which led to the acceptance of the Thaly compromise in March 1904, and came to an end only with his brief of Ugra in October 1904. Consequently his concessions, during that one year, were not "accomplished under the immediate influence of strike movements which were reaching threatening dimensions" (p. 98).

Although the Social Democratic Party in Hungary during the prewar years was a force to be reckoned with, it remained a movement of peripheral significance, not merely because of governmental hostility but also because of its isolation in a predominantly agrarian country and its concentration only among certain segments of the working class. Islamov seems to believe that the more pages one devotes to the discussion of the working class and the Social Democratic Party, the more complete one's book becomes from a Marxist point of view. However, what may hold true for Germany during the same period cannot automatically be

applied to Hungary—not in a book which purports to deal with Hungarian history in general rather than the history of Hungarian socialism in particular. Marxist analysis has a legitimate place along with other methods of historical inquiry, but its practitioners diminish rather than enhance the value of their work if they stress not what was significant but rather what appears to be so from the vantage point of the present.

GABOR VERMES
Rutgers University

BUDAPEST 1956: A HISTORY OF THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION.

By *Miklós Molnár*. Translated by *Jennetta Ford*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1968. 303 pp. £4.25.

The French original of this work was published in 1968 before the Prague Spring had been crushed. It provokes the question: what new is there to be written about this most extensively and intensively analyzed episode in modern Hungarian history? Can anything be added to the systematic and scholarly treatments of Ferenc A. Váli, Paul E. Zinner, and Paul Kecskeméti; with the publication of *Imre Nagy on Communism* what more is there to say; does anything remain to complement the accounts of the intellectuals who actually made the revolution, such as Tibor Méray and Tamás Aczél? The author, who is himself a member of this distinguished group, has shown that the lode is not exhausted.

Imre Nagy towers over the men and events of the time. He is shown to have been a moral giant but a lonely man whose solitude was greatest in October 1956, when his popularity was higher than any Hungarian's since Lajos Kossuth. The author's masterly, objective, and, one might say, honest portrayal of Nagy is of the same quality as his biography of him, which has already been published in several languages. His warmth for Nagy, however, does not prevent him from dealing with János Kádár and his system of government clearly, comprehensively, and correctly. It is this latter section of the book and the international framework in which Molnár sets the events in Hungary that are particularly interesting and original. Since the publication of Molnár's book an even fuller view of the international aspects of the revolution has been given by János Radványi in *Hungary and the Superpowers: The 1956 Revolution and Realpolitik*.

Nevertheless, Molnár's work establishes the complete interdependence of events in the people's democracies and their dependence on the will of the USSR. The logic of the Hungarian revolution and the rhythm of its development are part of an indissolubly interlinked chain of events: the ferment in the Soviet Union after Stalin's death, Imre Nagy's "new course" of 1953–55, the fall of Malenkov, the fall of Imre Nagy, the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Poznań, the new Hungarian movement of defiance, inflexible neo-Stalinism, revolution in Hungary, ferment in Czechoslovakia, Rumania's own peculiar foreign policy.

The present book is an excellent, systematic, and scholarly treatment written with insight by a distinguished participant who is both a political scientist of eminence and an artist of the pen.

BÉLA K. KIRÁLY
Brooklyn College of the City University of New York