

MAGYAR IRODALOM—MAGYAR KULTÚRA. By György Lukács. Edited by Ferenc Fehér and Zoltán Kenyeres. Budapest: Gondolat, 1970. 695 pp. 72 Ft.

Despite the recent marked interest in the late György (Georg) Lukács, very little or nothing is known of the veteran Marxist's writings on Hungarian literature. The situation was hardly better in his native Hungary before the present book was published as volume 3 of the Hungarian edition of his selected works, for irrespective of his occasional pronouncements on topical issues of Hungarian literature, most of the material presented here had to be dug out of various periodicals. This is not surprising. Lukács wrote on Hungarian literature for nearly seventy years.

Most of the articles are short and were originally book reviews, and almost all of them are devoted to contemporary authors (i.e., of the *Nyugat* generation). On the whole they are disappointing. Lukács's frequent incursions into the domain of Hungarian literature were either of passing interest or heavily padded with political instruction, and in no case yielded major studies of Hungarian authors or literary movements. His foreword to the volume illustrates this point rather well: "This volume has no pretensions to present the main characteristics of Hungarian literature with adequate scholarship." It would be grossly unjust, however, to examine Lukács's writings on their merits as literary criticism, for they are rather the by-products of the mind of a theoretician par excellence whose writing has always aimed at the essence of phenomena—literature was there only to illustrate attitudes or ideas.

The selections fall into three major groups. The first contains those articles written before Lukács went into emigration after the fall of the Hungarian Soviet Republic in 1919. They form an important part of the development of the young upper middle-class *Lipótváros* snob, very much discontented with the antiquated social system of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and bored with the conservative tendencies of Hungarian literature at the turn of the century. With a keen eye he picks out the most representative of the new poets, Endre Ady, whose poetry was not only surprisingly new in form but who emerged as a thoroughgoing revolutionary demanding instant social revolution. Ady's poetry was a major source of inspiration for Lukács, and his esteem for the poet did not decline as the years passed. Ady was in the center of controversy for almost a generation, and the view Lukács held prevailed. This is not true of his friend Béla Balázs, who, though an excellent film theoretician, was not a poetic genius comparable to Ady. He is mainly remembered now as producing librettos for Bartók.

In his second period—before his return to Hungary in 1945—Lukács, writing chiefly in the Moscow Hungarian periodical *Új Hang*, applied his theories to contemporary problems of Hungarian literature, pointing to the *népies* trend as the only progressive tendency and tradition. The author of *The Blum Theses*, much preoccupied with the importance of the Popular Front, excluded those authors from the "mainstream" of Hungarian literature who were not in open opposition to the current Hungarian regime. Mihály Babits was the chief victim. Lukács had a strong dislike for the great poet, which is apparent in his long essay, "Babits Mihály vallomásai."

The beginning of his third period is characterized by a change of roles: Lukács the theoretician became Lukács the commissar. The theoretical writings were put into practice by the Rákosi regime. The "bourgeois" periodicals, including the *Újhold* of the Babits followers, were abolished, and the flourishing studies of comparative literature were stopped, because Lukács called the works of the comparatists "philo-

logical muddlings" in his presidential address at the inaugural meeting of the re-organized Society of Historians of Literature. It would be futile to wonder how far Lukács or the other theoreticians, Révai and Rudas, were responsible for the suppression of the natural growth of Hungarian literature between 1949 and 1953. I would be inclined to think that Lukács was not the main culprit, for his criticism always contained at least a grain of truth, which is admitted even by non-Marxist critics of literature. That he did not approve the cultural repressions of the Rákosi regime is evident from his role in the 1956 revolution. This collection of writings also bears witness to Lukács's silence after 1956. The last essays were all written in the past few years. Some of them are reminiscences of the sole survivor of that group of young Budapest intellectuals which included Karl Mannheim, Arnold Hauser, Frederick Antal, and Charles de Tolnay, who all left Hungary permanently, except Lukács.

This book is a welcome present to the Lukács addicts, and an English translation would be very useful, because the book is indispensable for anybody interested in the young Lukács. For scholars in the field of Hungarian literature it is thought-provoking to say the least, but is in no way an easy book to read.

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THE CROATIAN-SLAVONIAN KINGDOM, 1526–1792. By *Stanko Guldescu*.

Studies in European History, 21. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1970.
318 pp.

In this volume Professor Guldescu continues his work on the history of the ancient Triune Kingdom. His previous study, *History of Medieval Croatia* (The Hague, 1964), covered developments up to the fall of the Hungarian-Croatian state at Mohács. In the present volume he carries the story to 1792, when, in the wake of the Hungarian feudal revolt against Habsburg centralism, the Croatian magnates entered into a closer relationship with Hungary. As in his previous work, the author has tried to cover not only the political and military developments but also the economic, cultural, and social life of the country. Happily, although Guldescu maintains a staunch pro-Croat point of view, he has wisely avoided the nationalist polemics which mar so many publications on this subject. In keeping with this moderate approach his treatment concentrates on Habsburg Croatia-Slavonia and excludes Bosnia and Dalmatia, then under Turkish and Venetian rule. And because there is so little in English on the subject, the author has performed a useful service to students of this area and this period in history.

Unfortunately, however, the study also has shortcomings. It is primarily based on older published works and sources, above all the great collection *Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum meridionalium*, issued from the 1860s to the First World War in Zagreb. This series, and similar publications which appeared at that time, constitute valuable sources, but they are now largely outdated and must be supplemented by fresh archival research. They also deal principally with the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and Guldescu perhaps reflects his sources in his rather skimpy text and annotations for the eighteenth century. This is especially true of the period after 1750, for nothing at all is said about the great reforms of Maria Theresa which completely changed the structure of the Military Borders in Croatia and which also had considerable influence on Civil Croatia. And the reader will get no information concerning the reasons for the rather