

DRŽAVU NE MOŽEŠ OPLJAČKATI. By *Miloš Tasić* and *Branislav Lovrenski*. Belgrade: Nova Knjiga, 1973. 204 pp. 40 dinars, paper.

ZAŠTO SMO SE BORILI. By *Bora Ćosić*. Belgrade: Srpska Književna Zadruga, 1972. 138 pp. 40 dinars, paper.

LICE I NALIČJE: MISLI I MAKSIME. By *Dragan M. Jeremić*. Novi Sad: Radnički Univerzitet "Radivoj Ćirpanov," 1972. 125 pp. 30 dinars, paper.

These three books are among the last products of the golden decade of literary freedom in Yugoslavia, when free expression, decentralization, and critical Marxist humanism thrived. Since 1972 more rigid and centralized "guidance" has been prescribed by the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. Scores of disobedient authors and editors have been dismissed, and already the barbed satire that characterizes these three books has all but disappeared from the Yugoslav scene. The style and esoteric content of these books are similar to the books that appeared during the shorter periods of liberalization in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia and which tend to appear wherever the political climate permits, for even the worst conditions seem more bearable if they can be ridiculed.

The Tasić and Lovrenski novel is a satire on workers' self-management. In order to increase the income of the enterprise, and thus of its workers, the firm decides to participate in the international division of labor. It does so by selling opium. By mistake, however, the opium is sold to an agricultural cooperative. The worried members of the workers' council, sensing the wrath of the international drug traffickers, seek the aid of the local police and, as a last resort, the assistance of the highest government ideological body—The Institute for Social Hypnosis. Pages 46 through 48 of this book were awarded the Bulgarian prize for the best satire of 1972. Whether this award represented gratitude to the authors for providing a detailed plan of how to establish undercover police squads specializing in gambling, alcohol and drugs, or whether it was to point out that Yugoslav self-managed society, because of its total inefficiency and corruption, is a travesty of socialism, remains unclear. The Bulgarian literary jury showed understandable disinterest in the section the Western reader will find most humorous—describing The Institute for Social Hypnosis (pp. 107–10). Its adaptable director could, on a moment's notice, dictate thirty pages about "supermarket, super-production, super-productivity, or super-profits . . . or anything else that was at that instant on the agenda." He published a book every six months. The same material was used four times: first vertically, then horizontally, then diagonally, and finally in a spiral.

Ćosić's novel elaborates the theme presented in his play, "The Role of My Family in the World Revolution," written in 1969 and presented in Belgrade in 1971 (subsequent presentations were often cancelled). In his stories Ćosić describes, tongue in cheek, how his bourgeois decadent family survived first the German occupation (1943–44) and then the liberation (1945). As in the postwar Yugoslav government when each party leader had specific duties, so each member of the family had a special role: the author to write poetry, the mother to work, the father to be an alcoholic, the grandfather to philosophize, the uncle to chase women. Being apolitical, the family survived the occupation and managed to acclimate itself to the new order. The book ends with a song whose refrain is that Yugoslavia will, in the end, be Russian.

Jeremić's book of aphorisms provides a few selections that can both conclude this review and serve as a requiem for the period of liberal socialism in Yugoslavia: 45.—“The dogmatist has precise answers for all questions; for him there is no future knowledge, and therefore all people who think are superfluous. . . .” 228.—“Even those who seek to make others happy by force are oppressors. . . .” 269.—“Bureaucracy rules wherever functions are more important than men. . . .” 282.—“Dictatorship frequently caters to man's stomach in order better to enslave his spirit. . . .” 287.—“In democracy criticism is esteemed, and in autocracy, flattery. . . .” 300.—“A man who lives primarily in the past is unhappy; one who lives primarily in the future is eccentric; and one who lives only in the present is foolish. Only the wise live in all three dimensions. . . .”

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ION LUCA CARAGIALE. By *Eric D. Tappe*. Twayne's World Authors Series, no. 276. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1974. xii, 117 pp. \$5.95.

The author, who teaches at the University of London, is intimately familiar with Rumanian culture, Anglo-Rumanian relations, and the classical Rumanian writers. His anthologies, *Romanian Prose and Verse* (1956) and *Fantastic Tales* (1969), amply prove his knowledge of Rumanian literature. His most recent work, dedicated to one of the most important Rumanian writers, I. L. Caragiale (1852–1912), is characterized by the limited aims of critical interpretation and emphasis on information that are generally found in this series of biographies. Tappe's work is a dense monographical sketch, useful for the foreign reader's rapid initiation into the subject. The biography and discussion of the works (the first writings, the comedies *A Stormy Night*, *A Lost Letter*, and *Carnival Doings*, the drama *False Witness*, the short stories, sketches, and minor works) are accompanied by many translated texts, which enliven the summaries and are fairly representative of the writer's art. The author rightly considers some vivid “moments” and short stories such as “Minjoală's Inn” and “Kir Ianulea” to be among Caragiale's masterpieces; unfortunately, the modernity of this prose is not sufficiently revealed. It is also a pity that no comment is made on the exceptional art of Caragiale the columnist.

The final chapters consist of a portrait of Caragiale the man, drawing on the memoirs of his contemporaries, and Caragiale the artist, which is rather sketchy. Well informed and accurate in its essential data, the book owes much—as its author acknowledges—to Șerban Cioculescu's *Viața lui I. L. Caragiale* (1940, 1969), a fact which limits Tappe's sources and approach. Cioculescu himself has changed some of his views since the publication of his book (see *Caragialiana*, 1974); others have been made obsolete by the discovery of new documents (for example, Tappe's assertions on page 8 concerning the project of the play *Titircă, Sotirescu et Cie* are rendered void by the publication of Caragiale's drafts in *Manuscriptum*, vol. 2, 1971, no. 2). Rumanian criticism has made great progress toward a modern reinterpretation of Caragiale's texts (*False Witness*, the comedies, the absurd sketches to which Ionesco is heavily indebted), showing that