

The author divides her subject, "Miniature Painting in Hungary," into four chronological categories—the beginnings, the Anjou period of the Hungarian Tercento, the age of Sigismund and the late Gothic, and Renaissance miniature art. The examples shown and analyzed represent those fertile and vigorous periods of the art of Hungarian illumination, for which only a few examples survive. The author discusses the artists and schools active during these periods and provides a brilliant treatment, both pictorially and textually, of the Renaissance manuscripts that have been attributed to the workshops of Matthias Corvinus and King Władysław II.

Dezső Dercsényi is deputy head of the National Inspectorate of Historical Monuments in Hungary. This English translation of his book is divided into two approximately equal sections: "A Historical Survey," dealing with restoration in style (1863–1934), a prologue to the modern era (1934–49), and historical monuments after World War II, and "Restoration Projects in the Present," which discusses the preservation of various kinds of ruins. There are ten pages of notes that refer to 123 articles and monographs by recognized authorities in several countries. Almost all of the plates are excellent reproductions printed on glossy paper, with only a few minor defects. There are three plans in the text: one is of Visegrád with its royal palace, fortress, and Solomon's Tower; another shows a section of the royal chapel at Esztergom after the restoration; and the third shows the portal of the Benedictine Abbey Church at Ják before the restoration. Included is a helpful map giving the locations of the fifty-eight sites of historical monuments in Hungary.

This reviewer found the description and plates on Esztergom of special interest, but the details relating to Pannonhalma, Ják, Visegrád, and some of the better-known historical monuments are equally important and revealing. All in all, this publication, initiated by UNESCO and produced with its material support, will help bring some of the current Hungarian achievements to an interested and wider public. The theory and practice of the protection of ancient monuments in Hungary, though delayed for many obvious reasons, are certainly of as high a standard as in any other area in the world today.

Both of the books briefly reviewed here are a credit to the publishers, especially in a period when the rising cost of illustrated art books discourages many collectors and librarians from purchasing all but the most necessary volumes. These two contributions are remarkably good buys for anyone seriously interested in authoritative studies on these subjects.

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LETTERS

TO THE EDITOR:

Professor Paul Craig Roberts's article, "'War Communism': A Re-examination," which appeared in the June 1970 issue of the *Slavic Review*, was a provocative and thoughtful contribution. However, I should like to comment briefly upon one weakness in Professor Roberts's interpretation: his failure to analyze adequately the evolution of Lenin's often contradictory attitudes toward socialism.

Roberts uses Lenin's comments on the nature of the socialist state to determine the relationship of Bolshevik economic policies to Marxian socialism. Lenin's views are, of course, vital, but he demonstrated in such writings as the "April Theses" and *State and Revolution* that he was more an imaginative artificer of Marxism than its orthodox disciple. For example, Roberts observes correctly (pp. 245-46) that Lenin had announced, in the fall of 1917, Bolshevik intentions to organize immediately the entire national economy along the lines of the postal service and had spoken confidently about the prospects for the creation of a socialist state. But he fails to note that Lenin had also said earlier in 1917 that "by no means can the party of the proletariat resolve 'to introduce' socialism in a country of small peasantry so long as the overwhelming majority of the population has not recognized the necessity of the socialist revolution" (*Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, 5th ed., 31:168). Lenin had also discussed the absence of the necessary capitalist foundations for the immediate introduction of socialism. Why then did he change his mind? Certainly the Russian people had not realized any such "necessity," and the appropriate foundations had not suddenly appeared in 1918. Up to July 1917 Lenin had called the soviets, which were being organized throughout Russia, the first step toward socialism. When the Bolsheviks were driven underground in July, he declared (just as he had in April) that a new revolutionary epoch had arrived and the soviets were no longer to be considered the centers of socialist power. Although he again supported the soviets in September after the Bolsheviks had gained heavily in elections to them, the soviets never fulfilled the roles as the centers of sovereignty in the socialist state promised them by Marxian socialism. Lenin had stated, in December 1917, that workers' control was a necessary step toward the higher stage of workers' regulation of production (36:185). One month later, however, the Bolsheviks curtailed workers' control and endorsed the relatively moderate trade unions, which they had rejected as nonsocialist in 1917, on the inconsistent grounds that the proletariat was now "face to face with the socialist revolution, with the actual realization of a number of the most important socialist projects" (*Pervyi vserossiiskii s'ezd professional'nykh soiuзов* [Moscow, 1918], pp. 119-20). Thus the role the socialists promised the proletariat in the management and regulation of production decreased during War Communism. In 1917 Lenin had equated state capitalism with the transition to socialism; in 1921 he concluded that state capitalism was not necessarily the best form of organization during the transition. It is difficult to see how such Bolshevik policies could all be, as Roberts suggests (p. 245), "implicit in the doctrine of revolutionary Marxian socialism." The policies may have been compatible with such broad socialist principles as surplus appropriation, but they also violated certain doctrinal promises to the proletariat which were no less important.

Roberts refers to some of the revisions in Lenin's thought but suggests initially (p. 238) that "the neglect of the original aspirations of Marxian socialism" is largely responsible for misrepresentations of War Communism. Later, however, he says (p. 252) that Lenin no longer sympathized with those who still espoused the *original socialist goals* and that (p. 249) "it is clear from his writings during that period that *he either sincerely thought or was forced to pretend that he thought that the policies of 'war communism' were an effort to establish socialism*" (my italics). Roberts seems unsure; but it makes little sense, especially if one is searching for motives and goals, to discuss original aspirations if Lenin only pretended to introduce socialism or to emphasize prerevolutionary ideas if Lenin's views changed

so significantly after 1917. Professor Roberts has updated and improved our understanding of War Communism, but his treatment of such issues as the contradictory principles which underlay certain policies, the evolution of Lenin's concept of socialism, and Lenin's sincerity leaves one not completely satisfied.

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PROFESSOR ROBERTS REPLIES:

I would point out that Lenin did not have "contradictory attitudes" about the organizational nature of the ultimate socialism that was the goal. He understood clearly that it would be an organizational system in which production would be for direct use by the community and in which products would not enter into use through purchase. The contradictory attitudes Burch mentions have to do with the transition to socialism—the nature and duration of the transitional period and whether there would be a direct transition. They also have to do with the vagaries of propaganda necessities and with attaining and maintaining effective power. Lenin may have experienced difficulty in making up his mind about what to do, but he frankly admits that "war communism" represented an effort at transition to socialism. The effort at transition was made, whatever the probability Lenin might have assigned to its success.

The noncommodity character of socialism was understood by many. There were different ideas about how to achieve the noncommodity economy, and various specifics were not resolved a priori. But many of those differing over, for example, workers' control versus control by central planning authority, and transitional period versus direct transition, understood the noncommodity character of socialism.

It is plausible that the Bolsheviks, once in power, would attempt a transition to socialism. According to Marx's materialist conception of history, the mode of production determines the social, political, and legal institutions and the consciousness of men. Unless the mode of production were socialist, historical materialism precluded the Bolsheviks remaining in power. Yet in 1921 they realized that their efforts to achieve a socialist mode of production also precluded their remaining in power. Herein was their real dilemma. The requirements of theory and of reality contradicted each other.

Burch should not interpret my speculations, concerning whether Lenin came to realize his predicament and to have any prescience that was ineffective, as doubts on my (or Lenin's) part that the policies were socialist policies. Neither should the fact that in 1921 Lenin definitely realized the costs (if only in political terms) of the policies be misconstrued by Burch to mean that "it makes little sense" to explain the policies in terms of socialist aspirations.

Apparently my statement that Lenin "either sincerely thought or was forced to pretend that he thought that the policies of 'war communism' were an effort to establish socialism" is misleading. I do not mean that Lenin might not have regarded the policies as socialist ones, but that as early as 1918 the suspicion might have dawned on Lenin that the socialist program was one of economic disaster. Prior to the definite realization (1921) that a continuation of the socialist program would result in the Bolsheviks' loss of power, any skepticism Lenin may have had about the *success* of a transition to socialism would have been restrained by avoid-