

"realist." Genov points up the illogicalities of these efforts and the methodological confusion underlying them as he argues that Botev's fundamental literary method was romanticism. The practical part of Genov's book is thus a welcome contribution to a reinterpretation of Bulgarian literary history moving away from the oversimplified view of literary history as a development toward realism only, from the reluctance to grant the historical validity of any nonrealistic method. Even though Genov's interpretation of romanticism is still a bit rudimentary, it represents a step in the direction of recognizing the complexity of the historical development of literature. It is but a step, though.

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THE ACHIEVEMENT OF ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER. Edited by *Marcia Allentuck*. Preface by *Harry T. Moore*. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press. London and Amsterdam: Feffer & Simons, 1969. xix, 177 pp. \$4.95.

POEMS OF THE GHETTO: A TESTAMENT OF LOST MEN. Edited by *Adam Gillon*. Illustrated by *Si Lewen*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1969. 96 pp. \$5.00.

Among the more damaging incongruities of Slavic literary studies in this country is the tendency of graduate students to invest their time and energies (with, we might add, the blessings of their advisers) in such unproductive pursuits as the writing of dissertations on minor conventional nineteenth-century Russian poets or selected stylistic devices of well-known novelists. All too often the results are uninspiring because our students are severely handicapped by the limited accessibility of Soviet archives and a degree of linguistic facility that can perhaps be described as "fluent intermediate." On the other hand, little effort is made to steer budding Slavists in the directions where they would enjoy some obvious advantages over their opposite numbers in the USSR and other Slavic countries, such as the field of émigré literature—which frequently requires a good command of more than one West European language and for which the archives are to be found in Paris and New York—or politically controversial authors past and present.

Isaac Bashevis Singer is one of the truly great writers of our age, his enormous popularity with the reading public notwithstanding (far too many scholars believe these two to be mutually exclusive). He writes in Yiddish (although most of his readers know him from translations), but although he has been living in this country for nearly forty years, most of his works are set in Eastern Europe. Furthermore, his novels and short stories are populated with a rich gallery of vividly drawn East European social types, ranging from Polish aristocrats to Ukrainian peasants, not to speak, of course, of the various strata of Jews. Singer's works span a vast period of East European history (which he knows well), and his prose bears much resemblance to the work of a number of Slavic writers, ranging from Gogol to Sienkiewicz and Prus.

It is, therefore, a pity that not a single Slavist is to be found among the twelve contributors to the volume edited by Professor Marcia Allentuck. With the exception of Eli Katz, a specialist in medieval Yiddish, not one among them was equipped to view Singer against the background of his spiritual and physical

world, which is primarily Hebraic and Slavic. There is no denying the merit of some of the aesthetic analyses in the volume, but even these are marred by their authors' inability to recognize the literary references as well as the associations of place names and proper names. An ordinary reader who wishes to enjoy such a book need not have all this specialized knowledge, but a critic wishing to explain it should.

Adam Gillon's *Poems of the Ghetto*, a collection of verse written by Jewish inmates of Poland's wartime ghettos as well as by Poles on the other side of the barbed wire, appeared, through a macabre coincidence, just as the remaining survivors of these ghettos were being expelled from Poland by the country's Communist government. One cannot apply normal criteria in passing judgment on this type of poetry; suffice it to say that some of the poems are shattering human documents. Professor Gillon's translations are, for the most part, good, although there is an occasional tendency to multiply the understandably tragic grandiloquence of the Polish. It is a pity that because of the small size of the volume much important material had to be omitted. Even Julian Tuwim's *We, Polish Jews* (now known to millions through the memoirs of Ilya Ehrenburg) appears here only in excerpts.

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COMMUNISM IN THE UNITED STATES—A BIBLIOGRAPHY. Compiled and edited by Joel Seidman. Assisted by Olive Golden and Yaffa Draznin. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1969. xii, 526 pp. \$17.50.

In 1955 the Fund for the Republic sponsored the publication of the *Bibliography on the Communist Problem in the United States*, compiled under the direction of Professor Charles Corker. The book subsequently came under attack for having devoted too much space to writings by Communists and too little to works critical of communism. Accepting this criticism as valid, the Fund commissioned Professor Joel Seidman of the University of Chicago to undertake a major revision, the result of which is the volume under review.

This book is not only a fundamental reworking but also a considerable updating of Corker's volume. Approximately one-fifth of the five thousand items in the original version have been dropped, and about three thousand new entries have been added, bringing the new total to almost seven thousand items. The number of writings by well-known opponents of communism has been considerably increased. For example, the entries by J. Edgar Hoover have been upped from three to eleven, those by Norman Thomas from two to six, and so on. Whether the one thousand items dropped from the first edition were less worthy of inclusion cannot be determined without undertaking the impossible task of comparing the two editions page by page and entry by entry.

The annotations which this reviewer checked seem to be models of objectivity, neither pro-Communist nor anti-Communist, and supply just the necessary amount of information. Spot checking also indicates that the volume is remarkably free of typographical and factual errors—a horrendous problem for bibliographers. All in all, the book appears to have been put together with great care, and undoubtedly represents an enormous amount of boring drudgery.

There is one major defect in the new edition's organization. The entries, instead of being arranged by subject, are arranged alphabetically by author. This