

of the whole literature. Nevertheless, it is hard to understand why such important authors as Mihail Eminescu, Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, Tudor Arghezi, and Alexandru Philippide were not included. The romanticism of Eminescu's *Cezara* or *Sărmanul Dionis* (*Poor Dionis*), the analysis of the psyche in Papadat-Bengescu's short stories, the vigor of Arghezi's pamphlets, and the expressionistic trends of Philippide would have added some very distinctive aspects to the wide spectrum of Rumanian literature represented.

I doubt that the fragments of novels that are included suggest the true literary art of Mihail Sadoveanu, Ion Slavici, Camil Petrescu, and George Călinescu. All of them have written valuable short stories, which, considering the dimensions of an anthology, would have offered a more precise picture of their art. Sadoveanu's *Povestiri de război* (*Tales of War*), Slavici's *Popa Tanda*, Călinescu's *Iubita lui Bălcescu* (*Bălcescu's Beloved*) are only a few examples.

But as a first approach to Rumanian literature this volume of prose selections may fulfill its editor's intention of providing "a literary introduction to Rumania and its people." Some of the major prose works created by this people, "the passions and thoughts of these varied writings," are well worth the attention of American readers. From this point of view Steinberg's work is particularly successful.

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ROMANTIZMUT V BŪLGARSKATA LITERATURA. By *Krust'o Genov*.
Sofia: Izdatelstvo na bŭlgarskata akademiia na naukite, 1968. 565 pp. 4.19 lv.

This book undertakes a rehabilitation of romanticism in the history of Bulgarian literature. The first chapter, containing most of the theoretical discussion, is the least satisfactory, for the author moves entirely within the circle of Marxist literary theory, mostly as evolved in Bulgaria, the Soviet Union, or East Germany. As a result, he ends by distinguishing between only two kinds of romanticism: reactionary individualistic romanticism, which is bad; and progressive revolutionary romanticism, which is good. Genov's theoretical treatment is incapable of much more subtlety than this; moreover, he falls short in accurately defining the characteristics of the second type of romanticism. On the other hand, in the largest part of the book Genov does a valuable job of arguing that romanticism was the basic and quite legitimate literary method of a considerable amount of Bulgarian literature up to and beyond the liberation of Bulgaria from the Turks in 1877-78, that it permeates Bulgarian folklore as well as the work of such men as Paisii Khilendarsky, Sofronii Vrachansky, Dobri Chintulov, Petko Slaveikov, Georgi Rakovsky, Vasil Drumev, Liuben Karavelov, Khristo Botev, and to a lesser extent Ivan Vazov, and that it survives in "islands" even down to the present day. The Marxist Genov holds to the view that romanticism as a rule appeared in literature in the advanced Western countries only after their "bourgeois democratic revolutions," whereas in the backward countries under foreign domination it accompanied the struggle for national independence. Bulgaria, he says, furnishes one of the best examples of this "law" of historical development, and there is no reason to be ashamed of the fact. Genov thus takes clear issue with other Bulgarian scholars of the present day, who are in effect embarrassed when compelled to recognize the presence of nonrealistic elements in, say, the revolutionary Botev's poetry, but then try to play them down in order to classify him essentially as a

"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