

because of its listing of the literature on Molnár published outside Hungary—will probably remain a major source for a long time.

It would be uncalled for to enter into a debate with the author about the system of values on which her judgements are based. I am compelled to remark, however—without arguing about the presence of autobiographical elements—that I find it a gross exaggeration to call Molnár an “autobiographical artist” (in the preface) and to try to prove this in his life’s work. On the contrary: Molnár was an artist trying to conceal his feelings—perhaps that is why he found his real genre in the drama—who *did* make use of the raw material of his own life and emotions but almost never directly, “autobiographically”, in the cases he did so, like in *The Companion* (Hungarian title: *Utítárs a száműzetésben*) his performance was far below his usual standard.

I would also query the “central role” played by *Liliom* if we look at his whole life’s work. It is probable that it was his most successful play; it is more than probable that both its ruthlessness and sentimentalism are close to his real-life experiences, but I doubt that it is the peak of the career of Ferenc Molnár either from the point of view of the artist or from that of the craftsman.

In several places Clara Györgyey makes passing hints at parallels and coincidences between characters in the works of Molnár and in the great works of world literature. She makes an important intimation that Schnitzler had possibly the greatest impact of any writer on him. It would be a good idea for her to support this and similar notions with a more thorough documentation—perhaps in a separate study. Having made such suggestions, she, however, reiterates her assertions (p. 64, 172) that Molnár did not have any contact with the literary movements of his age and that his reading did not have a significant influence on him either. I think Györgyey could prove the opposite of this on the basis of her own material—without being afraid that it would undermine the significance of Ferenc Molnár as a writer.

Finally, special credit is due to the careful and attractive printing, including the correct spelling of Hungarian names and titles. I found only one disturbing mistake, the criticism of Osvát (his first name is Ernő, who wrote about Molnár several times) is not equivalent to the criticism of Osváth (his first name is Béla: p. 141) mentioned by Györgyey. My other remark is that the excellent sketch by Ady on Molnár is, unfortunately, not even mentioned in the book.

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Romániai magyar irodalmi lexikon, I

Bukarest, Kriterion Kiadó, 1980. 650 pp.

Hungarian literature in Rumania came into existence in the twenties after the provisions of the Peace Treaty of Trianon had awarded the greater part of historical Hungary to the neighbouring countries, and historical Transylvania as well as the adjacent territories had come under Rumanian jurisdiction. In these territories, besides the Rumanian majority, there lived two nationalities of sizeable population: Hungarian and German. (Of the population that came under Rumanian jurisdiction 53.8% proclaimed themselves to be of Rumanian nationality, 31.7% Hungarian and 10.6% German.) Hungarians became a minority group and their ethnical and cultural survival was strongly threatened by the assimilative endeavours of the Rumanian policy that aimed at establishing a uniform national state.

Under such circumstances a very important role was allotted to the majority culture, especially literature, which considered it its primary role to maintain the national and historical consciousness of the minority Hungarian population and to foster the intellectual connections of the Transylvanian peoples: Hungarians, Rumanians and Germans. Hungarian literature in Rumania

had cultural traditions dating back several centuries as Transylvania had always been an important home of, and a significant contributor to Hungarian national culture. Soon the institutions of minority literature came into being: journals, publishing houses and literary societies; the development of the minority literature started and it enriched Hungarian national literature with several valuable works. The history of Hungarian literature in Rumania, now more than six decades old has produced some excellent writers and literary works. It is the treatment of these sixty years and also of the earlier regional traditions that is undertaken by the *Romániai Magyar Irodalmi Lexikon* the first volume of which (covering the letters A to F) introduces the institutions and creative personalities of the minority literary culture.

Work on this encyclopaedia has been going on for more than ten years, under the editorship of Edgár Balogh, a journalist and writer living in Kolozsvár (Cluj), who has been engaged in fostering Hungarian intellectual life in Rumania since the mid-1930s. The encyclopaedia is prepared by a wide circle of collaborators including literary, cultural, journalistic and art-historians, ethnographers, historians of philosophy, and natural scientists. Obviously, the encyclopaedia planned to consist of four volumes, will not only cover Hungarian literature in Rumania; it will also summarize the whole body of Hungarian intellectual achievement in Rumania. Its field of interest has an extremely wide range and its method of treatment is truly thorough. Besides the institutions and creative writers of national literature, it covers the past and present of Hungarian journalism, theatrical culture, philosophical and religious literature, scientific life, and even the natural sciences. It also provides glimpses of the regional, cultural-historical and folk traditions of Hungarians in Rumania. The summarizing articles and biographies of writers are supplemented by extensive literature, preparing the ground for further studies.

In the professional standard of this reference book, the editors and collaborators of the encyclopaedia have created a valuable piece of work which will, we hope, prove in itself an effective literary institution: when complete, it will not only be a large scale summary of Hungarian intellectual achievement in Rumania but also foster and maintain the national consciousness, acquainting the reader with the values and traditions of the culture of a people that number two million in Rumania.

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Béla Pomogáts

Magyar irodalmi hagyományok szlovákiai lexikona

Bratislava, Madách, 1981. 147 pp.

The *Magyar Irodalmi Lexikon* in three volumes, edited by the late Professor Marcell Benedek, was published in Budapest between 1963 and 1965 and even today is the "valid" Hungarian literary handbook. It was too bulky and of too high requirements to be enjoyable to the widest circle of readers. Besides, it was completed almost two decades ago and since then not only a new generation of writers has grown up, but Hungarian literary history and literary theory have also made significant advances. All this made it necessary for different new Hungarian literary encyclopaedias with specific fields to be prepared.

Among these the first to appear was a one-volume, small-sized Slovakian-Hungarian literary encyclopaedia. It was produced by a working team formed at the Hungarian Department of the Faculty of Arts at Komenský University in Bratislava. The work of the three chief collaborators (László Benkő, Lajos Garaj and Lajos Turczel), and of five co-workers (Bertalan Révész, Zoltán Seberényi, Árpád Tózsér, Erzsébet Varga and Tibor Zsilka) was directed by Professor Sándor