

Sándor Gál have been considered in one chapter; a further chapter being devoted to the cultivators of literary science (Lajos Turczel, Sándor Csanda, Péter Rákos, László Koncsol, Tibor Zsilka, Zsigmond Zalabai). And finally, two memorable anthologies, *Egyszemű éjszaka* (The one-eyed night) and *Fekete szél* (Black wind), treat the lyrical works of László Tóth, Imre Varga, Ferenc Kulcsár, Anikó Mikola and the prose works of József Bereck, Magda Kovács and János Kövesdi. Those who do not agree with the author on the question of the selection of names should bear in mind that they do not necessarily imply a judgement of value but rather represent proportions of "presence": their choice may be individual in Görömbei's book (just as in the works of others) but not personal, and not unverifiably subjective. In our view, it all depends on the approval of experts. One might, of course, add the names of those who have been "present", even if not by virtue of their prolificity, but because of their depth, thoroughness, and unobtrusive but effective contribution to the literary process (here I have in mind teachers, editors, etc.). It might also be the case that some would entertain doubts as to the importance attached to other names in the book; while still further names have gained significance in the period of time between the book's completion and its publication. But it is not names with which we are concerned here.* András Görömbei has written a good book and has managed to do by applying his thorough knowledge, wide intellectual horizon, erudition, susceptibility to subtleties and, last but not least, his clear style trained in other areas onto this field as "a well-tested warrior". His book serves as methodological proof that minority literatures can be successfully approached not from the angle of the minority, but from that of literature itself. "The responsibility of the nation", "the claim to national self-knowledge", emphasized by András Görömbei in his dynamic epilogue, may, in all probability, not be blamed, but nor can the true hope the author also mentions elsewhere in the book, for "the aesthetic spaciousness" which "equally embraces the up-to-date continuity of traditions and the experimenting intentions". For the former—and this the book makes quite clear—may linger on for a long time without the latter; while the latter, of its very nature, comprises the former.

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Pomogáts, Béla
Az újabb magyar irodalom 1945–1981
 (Contemporary Hungarian Literature from 1945 to 1981)
 Budapest, Gondolat, 1982. 664 pp. 64,— Ft

Hungarian literary science has a long standing tradition of literary histories written by one person, and these, even if unable to compete with literary histories compiled by an institution or at least by several people in terms of precision and disinterestedness, always have the advantage of possessing a personal character. If the author is sufficiently objective or well-informed, he may touch upon connections which will lead to the formulation of a concept of literary or even social history, over and above a mere discussion of the relevant material. The discussion of contemporary, or almost contemporary literature is particularly likely to produce such results, in that the literary works and phenomena it is to consider will be continuous with the writing of the critical study itself, thus implicating the literary historian as a participant in the processes he describes. For this reason, apart from their activity in the realm of literary 'historical' science in the stricter

* Since then appeared the first volume of the selected bibliography of Czechoslovakian Hungarian literature: József Szőke: *A csehszlovákiai magyar irodalom válogatott bibliográfiája*. Vol. I., 1945–1960. Bratislava, Madách, 1982. pp. 393. The second volume will comprise the years 1961–1970, the third one the years 1971–1980. (Editorial remark.)

sense of the term, we may observe the attempts of Hungarian literary historians from the 19th century onwards to introduce, appreciate, criticize and classify the works of contemporary or almost contemporary writers. As regards contemporary literature, a firm stand was taken by Ferenc Toldy, Pál Gyulai, to a certain extent by János Horváth, and definitely by László Németh and Géza Féja, and among our contemporaries, by Miklós Szabolcsi, István Király, Tibor Klaniczay, Pál Pándi, István Sötér and Péter Nagy (that is to say by a whole range of Hungarian literary historian-academicians). In spite of this, however, they have failed to offer a survey of "contemporary" Hungarian literature. It is an obvious fact that contemporary Hungarian literature begins in 1945. Although the comprehensive literary history in six volumes—*A magyar irodalom története*—compiled by the Institute of Literary Science (than Institute of Literary History) of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (edited by academician István Sötér and published between 1964 and 1966) does contain the words "up to the present", it deals somewhat concisely with the past decades. The sixth volume, dealing with less than half a century from 1919 to the time of writing, devotes about 70 pages (!) to literature after 1945 while the previous period is discussed on about 1000 pages. This sixth volume also offers three surveys of Hungarian literature outside Hungary. Hungarian literature in Czechoslovakia (obviously after 1918) is presented by Sándor Csanda from Bratislava; Hungarian literature in Yugoslavia is introduced by Imre Bori and István Szeli from Novi Sad. The history of Hungarian literature in Romania is surveyed by literary historians from Budapest (including, by that time Béla Pomogáts too). In these chapters we find articles about the years after 1945 which are not so much miniature as microscope is magnitude. What is missing, furthermore is a survey of the people contributing to Hungarian literature outside Hungary, besides the three countries mentioned above.

The recent book under review by Pomogáts published in 1982 was prepared under circumstances which had changed in several respects, and this can be felt when reading the book itself. Nearly 40 years have passed since 1945 (a period longer than that between the beginning of World War I and the end of World War II). Furthermore, in terms of volume, as a result of the greatly increased number of publications, this period will soon make up the greater part of the literature of our century. While prior to 1966 there were only one or two generations to be discussed which had begun their career after 1945, by now the majority of "contemporary" Hungarian writers (in spite of the fortunate presence of some of the "great and sacred old men") had started their career in this era.

The perception and interpretation of Hungarian literature outside Hungary has also changed favourably. Although even in Pomogáts's book the chapters dealing with this question bear the title "Side-glances", and this material altogether makes up but one tenth of the volume (while it is not true that nine out of ten authors writing in Hungarian live in Hungary!), it also contains two new subchapters entitled "Hungarian literature in the Carpathian Ukraine" and "Hungarian literature in the West" (covering 3 and 9 pages, respectively).

For all this the author has had few surveys to make use of apart from direct and dispersed sources. Imre Bori's book, *A jugoszláviai magyar irodalom története 1918-tól 1945-ig* (The history of Hungarian literature in Yugoslavia from 1918 to 1945) Novi Sad, 1968 does not actually offer a picture of this era. His other valuable surveys cannot make up for a detailed "contemporary" Hungarian literary history or literary encyclopaedia of Yugoslavia, in the preparation of which they will be of great assistance. The book by Lajos Kántor and Gusztáv Láng about Romania which has been published twice: *Romániai magyar irodalom. 1944–1970*. (Hungarian Literature in Romania. 1940–1970, Bukarest 1973 = first published in 1971) was able to offer some basic insights into the first quarter of the century at least. The first volume of the Hungarian literary encyclopaedia of Romania* was already published too late to be of use to Pomogáts in his book. The work of András Görömbei on Hungarian literature in Czechoslovakia also appeared in print later.** The Hungarian literary encyclopaedia of Slovakia does not deal with this era. As far as I know no survey has been made of Hungarian literature in the Carpathian Ukraine. On the topic of "Hungarian

* See the review by Béla Pomogáts in *Hungarian Studies* Vol. I., Number 1. 1985. pp. 146–147.

** See the review by Péter Rákos in this issue of *Hungarian Studies* 301–304.

literature in the West" Pomogáts had altogether five studies to quote as sources (two of these he had written himself, and the third was by Miklós Béládi, the editor of this part of Pomogáts's book). And this does not amount to very much. Irrespective of who might prepare it and from what political, sociological, ethnic or aesthetic point of view, it is in any case imperative to publish a scientific literary history of this literature, as soon as possible. For this literature, which has no name or universally accepted definition, is a literary phenomenon of unparalleled interest, and—on account of the real isolation of the Hungarian language and culture—a phenomenon more specific and captivating than, say, similar Polish, Russian or Italian exile literatures.

It was not in competition—although this might seem to be the case—that two volumes of the planned four-volume modern Hungarian literary history were published recently (*A magyar irodalom története 1945–1975*. Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, I. kötet 1981: *Irodalmi élet és irodalomkritika*, IV. kötet, 1982: *A határon túli magyar irodalom*). The editor of these volumes, the fruit of several years' hard work in the Institute of Literary Science of the Academy, was Miklós Béládi. The first volume ('Literary life and literary criticism') appeared in 1981 evoking a spirited echo within the country, which is no wonder considering that contemporaries, acquaintances, and friends (along with enemies and rivals) are discussed in the articles—peoples about whom everybody has their own (often personal) opinion. All four volumes deal with the three decades between 1945–1975 (the first has a thematic structure) within a chronological framework. Volume 4 (Hungarian literature outside Hungary) was published in 1982, its length worthy of its content (464 pages). Here Czechoslovakia is presented by Sándor Csanda, Yugoslavia by Imre Bori and István Szeli (i.e. they continue the picture they had previously introduced up to 1945). The two authors of the brief chapter on the Carpathian Ukraine (András S. Benedek and Vilmos Kovács) are first class experts on the literature in this territory. The chapter on Romania was, quite understandably, written by Lajos Kántor and Gusztáv Láng. This chapter is somewhat longer than the one on Yugoslavia and more than twice as long as the chapter on Czechoslovakia. The chapter on "Hungarian literature in the West" again has a length worthy of its content (even longer than the chapter on Romania) but is still given the careful subtitle "sketch" by its authors, Miklós Béládi, Béla Pomogáts and László Rónay. It is of truly informative character, as a fact assisted by the short list of literature containing about 80 entries, including works and even manuscripts of cultural and institutional history. Although the material is certainly not complete, it is nevertheless reassuring as a first step.

The layout of Pomogáts's book is simple and logical. Following a foreword which is somewhat unnecessarily apologetic and which, quite justifiably, clears up a few points, it gives a "historical survey" (or as its subtitle says: "vertical section") in which separate chapters are devoted to literary life, poetry, epic literature, drama and even literary science. This is the usual lay-out in Hungarian literary criticism where—if the literary history of the present day is given—a similar classification according to genres is used. At first sight this is the most obvious solution, since in this way works of similar character are placed side by side and the institutional frameworks can be seen especially well. Nonetheless, two remarks should be made here. According to the lay-out, "literary life" covers 45 pages, poetry and epic literature are somewhat longer while the chapter on drama is much shorter, and the part on literary science is again almost 40 pages long. The first place awarded to poetry is obvious to the consciousness of the Hungarian literary public, although prose literature is of larger scope not only in the number of items, but also in volume. Clearly, a well-organized bibliography should advisably be presented in a chapter on "literary life". It is, furthermore, understandable that Pomogáts, as a literary historian, keeps a serious account of the works of aestheticians, critics and experts on literary theory, and calls the reader's attention to important connections (sometimes this survey takes the form of reading out a list of names, i.e. from Mihály Vitéz Csokonai to László Földényi or Tamás Terestyéni.)

Since the index of names to be found at the end of the volume does not include the list of works to be found at the same place, it is sometimes difficult to identify which works the author is speaking about. In a word, this introduction seems to be too thoroughgoing.

Part II ("cross section") presents the lifework of individual writers. A given writer is discussed only once, and therefore authors are classified into groups by virtue of age, etc. Biographies are hardly given at all; the more important works, however, are listed, at places even without evaluation, which makes the book encyclopaedic, but useful. If I have counted correctly, Jenő Heltai born in 1871 is the oldest and János Sebeők born in 1958 the youngest of the writers considered. In the volume more than fifteen hundred(!) Hungarian men of letters are mentioned over five hundred pages, which in itself results in crowdedness and raises the question of completeness. The section on Hungarian literature outside Hungary was made in just the same way, and here there is no breakdown of material. Interestingly enough, it seems that the presentation here offers somewhat more perspective, perhaps because the author did not aim at completeness.

Mention is made of the various writers who have produced works adapted for film and even television, yet the newer types of mass communication are not allotted enough space in the volume, despite the fact that here we may speak of real success from the point of view of both our writers and the public. One might further consider whether this topic could be dealt with separately.

The thematic bibliography of "Literary information" containing more than 300 entries is equally important for readers both in Hungary and abroad. The writers are presented in alphabetic order (which is difficult to notice). The list of those who have received literary awards is also useful. It is unbelievable but true that more than 600 such awards were distributed in the period under discussion. Nonetheless, not everybody received one. . . .

It would be advisable to publish this useful book in a foreign language (in English or German) in an adapted form. Then too, it would need to be updated just as now, when we consider that while the book was published in 1982 its material really closes with 1981. The book's material makes highly informative reading, offering good orientation to the reader.

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**Hunyadi Brunauer, Dalma—Brunauer, Stephen
Dezső Kosztolányi**

München, 1983. 250 pp. (Veröffentlichungen des Finnisch-Ugrischen Seminars an der Universität München. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Ganschow. Serie C, Miscellanea. Band 15.)

If we share Gottfried Benn's view that "keiner der Großen Romanciers der letzten hundert Jahre war auch ein Lyriker", we may regard Dezső Kosztolányi (1885–1936) as a writer of exceptional significance and should be glad to have the first full-length study to appear in English on his work.

The chief merit of this book consists in its wide scope: all the works of Kosztolányi are taken into consideration. For lack of space we wish to concentrate on the two longest chapters dealing with lyric poetry and narrative fiction, and shall not comment upon the much shorter sections devoted to the biography, plays, essays, and translations of the Hungarian writer.

The first thing that strikes the reader in the Brunauers' appraisal of Kosztolányi's poetry is how often they reject statements made by other critics (from Hungary). In principle, there is nothing objectionable in this, for scholars living far from Hungary may have a different perspective and a wider horizon. The trouble is that the originality of their interpretations is often due to misunderstanding. A case in point is Kosztolányi's polemic essay on Endre Ady. D. H. and Stephen Brunauer believe that Kosztolányi's first volume of poetry,