

GEORG LUKÁCS' MARXISM: ALIENATION, DIALECTICS, REVOLUTION: A STUDY IN UTOPIA AND IDEOLOGY. By *Victor Zitta*. Introduction by *Harold D. Lasswell*. The Hague: Nijhoff, 1964. xv, 305 pp. 28.75 Dutch guilders.

MARXISMUS UND KULTUR: MANNHEIM UND LUKÁCS IN DEN UNGARISCHEN REVOLUTIONEN, 1918/19. By *David Kettler*. Neuwied and Berlin: Luchterhand Verlag, 1967. 70 pp. DM 6.80.

GEORG LUKÁCS: THE MAN, HIS WORK AND HIS IDEAS. Edited by *G. H. R. Parkinson*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson. New York: Random House, 1970. 254 pp. \$7.95, cloth. \$1.95, paper.

GEORGES LUKÁCS, OU LE FRONT POPULAIRE EN LITTÉRATURE. By *Henri Arvon*. *Philosophes de tous les temps*, no. 41. Paris: Editions Seghers, 1968. 189 pp. 8.40 F.

György Lukács, Hungarian philosopher and sociologist of literature, is today an almost legendary figure among European Marxist and even non-Marxist intellectuals. His work of more than sixty years of scholarship is gradually being made accessible to the English-speaking public by means of a growing number of translations. The increasing awareness of Lukács's significance calls for a thorough assessment of his work, which consists now of some thirty books and hundreds of articles and which is still proceeding at an impressive pace.

The evaluation of Lukács is often distorted and contradictory in both the East and the West. It ranges from Thomas Mann's acclamation, "The most significant literary critic," to Lenin's damning statement that Lukács's Marxism is "very left wing and very poor," a verdict which was held against Lukács by Stalinists for almost five decades. He has been called a Stalinist by many Western critics, even by the late Isaac Deutscher.

The task of writing a definitive intellectual biography of Lukács is made difficult by the fact that many of his early writings are available only in Hungarian—for example, the two-volume *Evolution of the Modern Drama* (1909)—and by his encyclopedic scholarship ranging from sociology of literature to ethics, epistemology, ontology, philosophy of history, history of philosophy, and ideology. The author of a comprehensive intellectual biography must have a thorough grasp of both European and Hungarian intellectual, political, and social history.

Of the books reviewed here, two deal with the early Lukács, and two are of a more comprehensive nature. The first, written by Victor Zitta, aims at an analysis of "the interaction between Lukács' personality, his environment and his views and commitments." The work covers Lukács's literary and political activity from 1908 to 1923.

Part 1 deals with the pre-Marxist writings and the genesis of the dialectical nature of Lukács's thought. Zitta's thesis is that Lukács acquired an ambivalent personality and was "unable to liberate himself from himself." Both Marx and Lukács experienced alienation with such an intensity that "redemption from it became mandatory." They discovered the dialectic as a way of salvation from alienation. Lukács embraced the dialectic as a result of his frustrated efforts to become a poet in Hungary and a philosopher in Germany. Part 2 is an attempted psychological explanation for Lukács's conversion to communism and his activities during the 1919 Hungarian revolution. According to Zitta, Lukács was compelled, again by his

alienation, to renounce any attempt to understand or accept his environment and to accept Marx's dictum that "the philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it." Part 3 analyzes *History and Class Consciousness*, and concludes that Lukács's theory of alienation is "a projection of his own nausea and intolerance of a 'split personality' into a vision of an environment seen as being responsible for this condition."

The book relies heavily on a confusing conglomeration of philosophical terms: alienation, objectification, reification, self-estrangement, and distortion or neglect of elementary sociohistorical facts. This confusion is partly due to the author's heavy reliance on secondary source material, some of which was written by official historians of the semi-Fascist interwar Horthy regime of Hungary. Based on these dubious sources Zitta accuses Lukács of a murder which he allegedly ordered during the 1919 Kun regime. One can contrast this charge with the decision of the West German city of Frankfurt to award Lukács the 1970 Goethe Prize for his "humanistic attitude as expressed in his literary scholarship." The chief merit of this book is a forty-page bibliography of works on and by Lukács, the most comprehensive one to date in English.

David Kettler's little book is part of his forthcoming study of Karl Mannheim, the noted sociologist of Hungarian origin. Chapter 1 analyzes Hungarian society after the turn of the century and its major social classes with emphasis on the (predominantly Jewish) industrial and financial bourgeoisie. This stratum was eager to be assimilated into the existing social structure, but its sons, educated at West European universities, had a keen eye for social maladies and a vision of social change. They combined East European collectivistic and messianic ethics with the best of West European learning and classical heritage. Chapter 2 discusses the small circle of intellectuals around Lukács in 1917 and 1918, a group that was to play a significant role during the 1919 revolution. They took a romantic anticapitalist political stand and a philosophical orientation that went beyond nineteenth-century positivism and embraced metaphysical idealism. They tried to identify the causes of the cultural crisis of their time and declared their intention to fight for a cultural renewal. Chapter 3 analyzes the connection between the *Weltanschauung* of the Lukács group as intellectuals of the *geisteswissenschaftliche* school and of the leading functionaries of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. Kettler stresses the ethical stand of the Lukács group, which facilitated their participation in the Béla Kun regime, regarded by some of them as a tragic but historically necessary sacrifice for the envisaged cultural renewal. The activity of Lukács as deputy commissar for culture and education is discussed in some detail. It was summed up in a Lukács speech in which he stated that "the reorganization of production shall make it the servant of man. The dictatorship of the proletariat places the human standpoint above the economic one and shall assure the hegemony of culture over the economy."

In sum, Kettler's well-documented book, using contemporary material, interviews, correspondence with surviving participants in the Hungarian revolution of 1919, including Lukács, is an invaluable contribution to Lukács scholarship.

The volume edited by Professor Parkinson is the most comprehensive attempt to date to examine Lukács's lifework. It is the outcome of a lecture series given at the University of Reading in 1968. Seven scholars in eight essays address themselves to various aspects of Lukács's contribution to philosophy and literary scholarship.

The editor's introduction presents Lukács's major works and the political and intellectual background of their genesis. He also contributes an excellent essay on

Lukács's aesthetics. H. A. Hodges, a Dilthey scholar, assesses Lukács's *Zerstörung der Vernunft*, a historicosociological analysis of German irrationalist philosophy, which according to Lukács's arguments led in a straight-line development from Schelling to Heidegger and the Nazi *Weltanschauung*. The other essays discuss Lukács's literary scholarship, his notion and use of the Hegelian category of totality, and his concept of "the beautiful." For this reviewer, the most outstanding and authentic writing of the volume is "Lukács' Concept of Dialectic." It is taken from a forthcoming book on Lukács by István Mészáros, who was Lukács's assistant at the University of Budapest in the late 1940s. He presents a critical and thorough analysis of the broader sociopolitical and historical context of Lukács's theories.

On the whole the book is an adequate reflection of the growing Lukács scholarship in England and must be considered the best English-language introduction and guide to many facets of Lukács's thinking.

Henri Arvon's book is neither an interpretation nor a criticism, but a short and lucid presentation of Lukács that is intended to be an introduction. Considering how complex Lukács's intellectual and political career has been, Arvon's work is a remarkable accomplishment. The book consists of two parts: one hundred pages of exposition of Lukács's work and seventy-four pages of excerpts from his writings.

Chapter 1 is a discussion of totality, a fundamental category in Lukács's thinking, as developed by him in his *Theory of the Novel*. In Chapter 2, subtitled "subjectivity," and based on *History and Class Consciousness*, Arvon contrasts Lukács's creative and imaginative Marxism with that of dogmatic Soviet text interpretations and presents Lukács's critique of Engels's dialectics of nature. Chapter 3 discusses Lukács the theorist of a *tertium datur*, fighting on two fronts against both "decadent-bourgeois" ultramodern literary trends and Stalinist naturalistic revolutionary romanticism, because, in his view, both reflect a distorted reality. His idea of great critical realism à la Balzac is the model of literary creation. This point of view led Lukács to his high esteem for Thomas Mann, who in turn was influenced by the early Lukács and flattered by the older Lukács's esteem. This relationship of mutual respect, despite the differences in world view, is discussed at some length. The selection of texts is arranged under four headings: political philosophy, general philosophy, aesthetics, and critical realism.

In sum, Professor Arvon, a scholar of anarchism and Marxism, has written a lucid and reliable work which will attract many readers interested in a primer on Lukács.

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SOVIET PUBLIC INTERNATIONAL LAW: DOCTRINES AND DIPLOMATIC PRACTICE. By *Kazimierz Grzybowski*. Leiden: A. W. Sijthoff. Durham, N.C.: Rule of Law Press, 1970. xx, 544 pp. Dfl. 66. \$18.50.

In a magisterial chronicle of a half century of development of Soviet doctrine and practice in public international law, Dr. Grzybowski has brought together an incredible amount of information in a small space. Some would have thought the task overwhelming, for much has happened since T. A. Taracouzio attempted the same thing in 1935. The Soviet Union has grown from the position of an insignificant actor upon the world stage to one of the two mightiest powers; its leaders have moved from a denial of the utility of international law to a role as