

Party, in his speech at the VIII Congress of the Communist Party in December 1965.

Hočevár's work will be welcomed by any historian, sociologist, or political scientist interested in studying the impact of traditional historical factors upon a new communist society. We eagerly await Hočevár's new book with its more detailed treatment of the Slovenian and Yugoslav economy, and hope he will bring his study up to the present by discussing the important changes which have occurred in the last two years.

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George Seferis, *Poems*. Translated by Rex Warner. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960. Pp. 127.

Rex Warner's translation is one of the happiest things that could have happened to George Seferis' poetry and to modern Greek poetry in general. In fact, Seferis has been fortunate in all his English translators: Bernard Spencer, Nanos Valaoritis and Lawrence Durrell (*The King of Asine*, 1948); and Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard (*Six Poets of Modern Greece*, 1960). There is no doubt, however, that Warner's translation is much closer to Seferis' spirit and form than are those of other translators. It is lucid, simple, and faithful to the original, yet free enough to avoid either awkwardness or banality. Seferis' precise, almost bare language, his unaffected, free, and serene rhythm, and his condensed, allusive, and haunting content are satisfactorily recreated in Warner's translation. A work of love and labor, it is also a landmark in the spread of modern Greek literature among English-speaking people. For Seferis crystallizes much that is worth-while in modern Greek poetry. And although he is deeply rooted in Greek soil, he is not alien to that which is universal.

Seferis is the first Greek poet to have received the Nobel Prize in Literature. In a sense his way to this prize was eased by the previous candidature of such modern Greek poets as Palamas, Kavafis, Sikelianos, and Kazantzakis. However, both Palamas and Sikelianos were too Hellenic, whereas Kavafis' horizons were rather limited and Kazantzakis' too wide — although both poets remained genuinely Greek. Seferis, on the other hand, manages to blend almost unobtrusively what is singularly Greek with that which is universal, and thus is able to relate the feelings and agonies of contemporary man in a language and a rhythm that are most appropriate for the modern ear. Greek elements make up

the body of his poetry, primarily as memories seen through the actual reality of our time — bitter and uplifting memories of a world both past and everlasting. Universal elements make up the spirit, design, and form of his poetry and constitute the experience and feelings of a sensitive and thoughtful contemporary man caught between the incongruities of modern life and his own good intentions. And being a consummate artist, Seferis presents these elements in a style embodying an almost unperceivable rhythm and a potent language of essentials. Thus he became one of the main poetical spokesmen of our era, and his receipt of the Nobel Prize was but official recognition of his supreme talents.

Many critics have spoken of an "affinity" between Seferis and T.S. Eliot, contending that the latter has decidedly influenced the former. Perhaps they are right. Perhaps Eliot's poetry served as a catalyst for Seferis in his struggle to find new forms and new aims. However, I suspect that even without Eliot's poetry Seferis would have taken the same or a similar path. For, even before becoming acquainted with Eliot's poetry, Seferis was clearly moving in a new direction in his first book of poems, *Turning Point* (1931), as well as in some of his earlier poems (1928) (later republished in 1940 in *An Exercise Book*). Unfortunately his English translators have neglected those works which appeared before *Mythistorema*, in 1935. Above all, Seferis is a poet in his own right, a poet expressing his own painful and rich experience in his own manner. In any case, Seferis and Eliot are entirely different in temperament and conscience. Seferis has none of Eliot's religious mysticism. His disappointment and sorrow differ fundamentally from Eliot's disenchantment and disappointment with the modern world. As for the poetical forms, I suspect that both Eliot and Seferis drew from a common source: the French symbolists who long before had introduced innovations in form, rhythm, subject-matter, and attitude. These "innovations" became a common currency, an international medium for poetical expression, a common language for the living poets. And both Eliot and Seferis (as well as many others) adapted symbolist techniques to their own styles.

Seferis, although steeped in modern Greek poetry, has nothing of the rhetoric, descriptiveness, and ornamentation of such poets as Palamas, Sikelianos and Kazantzakis. He sticks to the essentials, to what is *κύριον* and *καίριον*, to the quintessence of things, thoughts, feelings and words. His plain, unadorned style, his involvement with his homeland, his participation in the problems of the present, are distinct characteristics of his poetry.

Of these characteristics, his constant awareness of the Greek pre-

sence is extremely important as a redeeming factor among the manifold destructive elements of life today. Hence I think that Seferis is not a poet of despair but rather one of hope: not, to be sure, of the easy hope of dreamers or of transcendentalists, but of the hard-earned hope gained after conscientious and harsh striving. Although history has passed with a heavy and destructive hand over the Greek land and people, Greece is not a wasteland. Even its rocks, bare and harsh as they are, live with their long history, vibrating and shining under the Greek sun. Life in its full meaning is not an easy matter, but Greece and its people confront it valiantly and tenaciously. The real Greek does not despair. This, I think, is what Seferis' robust poetry tells us.

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Ante Kadić, *Contemporary Serbian Literature*. The Hague: Mouton Co., 1964. Pp. 104.

As a result of the centuries of political and cultural separation preceding their union in 1918, Croats and Serbs, though speaking what is basically the same language, developed two distinct and separate literatures. The past half century of political amalgamation has done little to change the traditional Serbo-Croat cultural *apartheid*. Jovan Skerlić's comment in 1914 (*Istorija nove srpske književnosti*) that "one of the main features of Serbo-Croatian literature is that it does not present a uniform whole, but rather is composed of separate literatures, weakly linked or with no mutual ties at all," was echoed in 1964 by Milos Crnjansky, who told Nikola Drenovac (*Pisci govore*, p. 56) that "right up to the present time our literature is mainly regional."

Ante Kadić, a Croat by birth, preceeded this book on Serbian literature with one on that of Croatia (1960). His present work opens with a nine-page Introduction, plus three separate sections of nearly equal length: "Western Trends in Serbian Literature (1903-1918)"; "Between the Two Wars (1918-1941)"; and "Present-Day Serbian Literature (1941-1961)." It concludes with an Epilogue and an Index.

Kadić's chronological grouping of Twentieth Century Serbian writers parallels that used by Antun Barac in his *History of Yugoslav Literature*. The inconsistencies of this approach can be seen from the fact that Kadić places Milan Dedinac (born 1902), Dušan Matić (born 1898), Aleksandar Vučo (born 1897), and Oskar Davičo (born 1909) in the latest group