

be hard, however, to find in ancient literature (not necessarily of the philosophers) examples of men whose outlook and spiritual temper resembled that of the gifted modern imitator of Homer. Lucian might perhaps do.

It is to be hoped that before long Cavarnos will produce a bigger treatise on the same subject. In the meantime his little guide will be found very useful, very readable and in some ways somewhat provocative.

Queen Mary College,
University of London.

REX WITT

Pandelis Prevelakis, *Tà Ποιήματα* [The Poems] (1933-45). Athens, 1969. Pp. 184.

In his theatrical works, but primarily in his novels (see *The Sun of Death*, Simon and Schuster, 1964), Pandelis Prevelakis has written with epic sweep and tragic depth of death and resurrection in his native island of Crete, of the growth to maturity of the creative temperament as it struggles with ideologies and craft. But poetry has always been for Prevelakis sudden explosions of inspiration during long periods of silence, "like a burning thread which now and then flashes with fire". He has repudiated his first book of early verse, *Soldiers* (1928), and in this volume has gathered his only other books of poetry, *The Nude Poetry* (1939) and *The Nudest Poetry* (1941), together with an unpublished poem, "Hours on a Greek Island" (1945).

Poetry, for Prevelakis, was the lyrical ecstasy of his youth. Although he wrote masterfully in metrics, most of his poems were written in free verse, for he felt that any technical form or construction of artifice would falsify and distort the sincerity, the clarity, the impetuous onrush of true inspiration which the poet must channel as though he were moulding fire in his hands and not chiseling into shape an objective block of marble. He wished instinctive wisdom and inspiration to take the place of professional consciousness and skill. Love and the heat of poetic energy would find the necessary inner expression and place a word with absolute confidence, make a sentence pulsate with the appropriate rhythm, and leave the verse free, unguarded, and bare. In short, he wished to write a "nude poetry", a phrase he took from a poem by Jiménez. Simplicity with passion, integrity with clarity, a flaming nakedness of spirit, "the sincerity of the innate word", in which every word

is like knife in a wound were the criteria the young poet set for himself.

Prevelakis divided life into dead and living time, and all his work has been a "struggle against dead time". Consequently, creativity, and poetry itself, have been one of his main themes, a dead Lazarus who when resurrected sings like "a sun ensnared in an entanglement of stars". The poet climbs in maturity to an Upper Jerusalem, an ideal realm, where poetry is to receive, as though the soul were a mirror, "Clouds, birds of passage, air-channeled roads of migration, falling stars, comets, their glittering trains, and the dust of burning systems". But the theme of his inspiration lay in the Greek land as well as in the absolute heavens, and like buffaloes beating the barren earth with their hooves, Prevelakis, like Moses, struck the bare earth of his native land to release wellsprings that water "the roaring and many-leaved plane tree of poetry". And the lover in his poetry is the romantic youth in love with virtue, sharing and celebrating with the beloved until love becomes "a green wild olive wreath", "the white rose of kindness and valor".

Athens

KIMON FRIAR

- A. Xyngopoulos, *The Mosaics of the Church of St. Demetrius at Thessaloniki*. Institute for Balkan Studies, No. 111, Thessaloniki, 1969. Pp. 31 + Plates 38.
- Ch. J. Makaronas, *The Arch of Galerius at Thessaloniki*. Institute for Balkan Studies, No. 113, Thessaloniki, 1970. Pp. 52 + Plates 48.

These two little paperbound books mark the beginning of a series which will eventually present all the monuments of Northern Greece. The material, treated briefly but adequately, is directed mainly at the general public, although archaeological problems are touched upon. Each is amply illustrated with black and white plates, including full and detailed shots. In both books the English is virtually without mistakes.

The Mosaics of the Church of St. Demetrius presents a study of the monument's surviving mosaics, including however some photographs of panels destroyed in the fire of 1917. Since one of the destroyed mosaics found in the north colonade included an inscription, A. Xyngopoulos mentions the problem of dating this panel and concludes to a pre-iconoclastic date.

Before discussing individual mosaics the author stresses the unusual