Still, Mr. Bisztray ascribes momentous significance to the debate, because "Marxist aesthetics has made the most consistent and unabrupted [*sic*] efforts to establish an epistemological foundation for literature" (p. 208). But ultimately one comes away with a sense of the sterility of a logomachy forced by the power of the dogma that *only* Realism is good literature, and that all literature is "Widerspiegelung der Wirklichkeit"—the obsessive phrase which Lukács repeats no less than 1,036 times in the first volume of his *Aesthetik* alone. The spectacle of men trying to reconcile this dogma with the overwhelming contrary evidence of history and, often, with their own taste is pathetic rather than illuminating.

Mr. Bisztray is shrewd and knowledgeable. I doubt, however, whether one can dismiss Lucien Goldmann and Galvano della Volpe as spreading "pure nonsense" (pp. 158 and 160) and whether Lukács's theories are really similar to those of Otto Ludwig (p. 209) or have anything in common with those of Charles Sanders Peirce (pp. 198 and 209) as the author claims.

I cannot help commenting on a passage (p. 53) where I appear in the mixed company of "Zhdanov, Gorky, Radek, Bukharin and [Harry] Levin" as regarding Socialist Realism as something radically new. Mr. Bisztray instructs Gorky and me that the older novel was often as didactic as Socialist Realism. It surprises me that anybody could think that I am not aware of the didactic novel. I criticize, for example, Erich Auerbach for excluding the didactic novel and specifically George Eliot and Tolstoy from his concept of Realism (*Concepts of Criticism*, New Haven, 1963, p. 243) and I expressly define the novelty of Socialist Realism as the obligation "to spread socialism: that is, communism, the party spirit, and the party line" (p. 346). The older didactic novel had no such task, voluntary or imposed.

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SOUL AND FORM. By *Georg Lukács*. Translated by *Anna Bostock*. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1978 [1971, 1974]. vi, 176 pp. $4.95, paper.

The essays in this volume are seventy-year-old witnesses of the intellectual milieu which nutured the young Georg Lukács. Neo-Kantianism and existentialistic *Lebensphilosophie* were his first two great European experiences. The ten essays are distinct variations on the same theme, and the sources of inspiration were, recognizably, Kierkegaard, Dostoevsky, Nietzsche, and Richard Wagner.

The theme is stated in the introductory paper, in which Lukács equates critique with essay and finds the critic's great moment in the instant "at which things become forms," and "the union between the outer and inner, between soul and form" is completed. Ordinary life experiences are chaotic, and matter is unrefined. It is the transformation of raw experience in the poetic soul, its reshaping into artistic form—in short, the subjective genesis of a work of art—whose reflection Lukács expects from the essay. The recurring theme is the birth of form, that is, order.

Most of the writers Lukács discusses—Novalis, Kierkegaard, Kassner, George—are lonely and suffering men. Their bittersweet raison d'être is the forging of their experiences into literary master forms. An aesthetician is one who not only gives form to his experience but also realizes the paradoxes of existence. Lukács analyzes the various shapes of the eternal confrontation with existence through different models which compose the chapters (except the first one) of his volume. There is a feeling of repetition, yet also an impression of unity, but nothing of history or any pattern of development in the essays. The metaphysical dominates the dialectical, Kant overshadows Hegel. Compared with *Theory of the Novel*, a major document of the next phase in Lukács's intellectual development, Kantianism and the lack of a historical perspective, both evident in *Soul and Form*, appear in striking contrast to the follow-

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ing period. Yet there is also a continuity extending into Lukács's later writings. Creative consciousness, the organization of fragmented experiences into patterns, and the overcoming of bourgeois reality through art are tenets of Hegelian and Marxist aesthetics as well, and they characterize the author's whole *oeuvre*.

The translation of *Soul and Form* was rendered by one of the few skilled translators of Marxist critics writing in German. Giving new, albeit more explicit, titles to the essays seems questionable, however. In "Sources and References," there are some unfortunate, crude misspellings of Hungarian titles. Lukács's essay on Charles-Louis Philippe appeared first in Hungarian, a year before the German translation listed in this book. It was a laudable idea to provide relevant references to Lukács's later essays on some of the writers he discusses in this volume.

This publication definitely fills a gap, and anyone interested in Lukács's works will welcome it. Readers of English may now decide for themselves to what extent the continuity and discontinuity of ideas characterizes Lukács's huge *oeuvre*.

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ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE AND PENULTIMATE WORDS AND OTHER ESSAYS. By *Lev Shestov.* Introduction by *Bernard Martin.* Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1977. xiv, 239 pp. $11.00.

Lev Shestov (1866–1938) is one of the most talented and creative thinkers to have emerged from the Russian milieu. He is also one of the most enigmatic and least understood. Renowned as a brilliant literary critic, an excellent stylist, and a profound thinker, Shestov is usually pictured by his Western commentators as an adamant foe of morality and scientism and as a champion of faith over reason. However, this widespread interpretation ignores the crucial dimension of philosophical anarchism always present in Shestov's thought. In fact, Shestov is an immensely irritating and disturbing thinker, which is precisely what he intended to be. Nowhere in Shestov's twelve published volumes does the author seem closer to nihilism, skepticism, and pessimism than in volume 4 (published in Russian in 1905 and in English in 1920) and volume 5 (Russian, 1908 and English, 1916), the original English translations of which make up the subject of this review.

Translated by S. S. Koteliansky, Shestov's fourth volume appears under the English title, *All Things are Possible.* It consists of one hundred sixty-eight *pensées.* Like Nietzsche, Shestov felt that the use of aphorisms was the best way to escape the limitations that logic and reason threatened to impose on his thought. Shestov hurls these carefully fashioned thought grenades with uncanny accuracy at the cornerstones of many of the West's most cherished ideals. Man, contends Shestov, has proven unable to resolve the question of his own death and the problem of natural evil in the world. "Nearly every life can be summed up in a few words: man was shown heaven—and thrown into the mud. . . . Here on earth dreams and hopes are only awakened, not fulfilled" (p. 94). One of man's dreams has always been that no matter how indifferent nature is to his fate, man at least can gain consolation from his own system of justice and morality. But Shestov denies this. He asserts that there is a close correlation between morality and vengeance and that "psychology . . . leads us to conclude that the most generous human impulses spring from a root of egoism" (p. 64). Well, one might say, at least man is capable of acquiring knowledge and truth. Not so, declares Shestov: "Everything we see is mysterious and incomprehensible" (p. 52) and "each philosopher invents his own truths" (p. 34). Man is no nearer to solving the ultimate questions of life now than at any time in the past. What then is left to the man deprived of the traditional tools of logic, reason, and moral feeling to find or communicate truth? According to Shestov, man will simply

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