LITUANUS
LITHUANIAN QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Volume 22, No.2 - Summer 1976
Editors of this issue: Bronius Vaškelis
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Pranas Naujokaitis, *Lietuvių Literatūros Istorija,* Vol. 1, From Mažvydas to Maironis. Published by Foundation for Advancement of Lithuanian Culture. 1973, 456 pp.

Lithuanian literature, from the very first religious writings to the latest literary achievements, has been analyzed by a number of authors. Many of them have been guided by educational principles and requirements. The most complete work of academic stature appeared in the Soviet Lithuania *Lietuvių Literatūros Istorija* (History of Lithuanian Literature), 4 volumes (in 5 books), written by a group of literary historians, edited by K. Korsakas. All authors of this study have one thing in common: they consider Lithuanian literature and culture so closely tied together that they evaluated both as one and the same.

Lietuvių Literatūros Istorija (History of Lithuanian Literature), vol. 1, by Pranas Naujokaitis also makes no attempt to separate culture and literature. In this respect, Naujokaitis' interpretation is traditional. It also seems that Naujokaitis' primary motive in writing his book was as a reaction of a political nature to the former study by K. Korsakas. This is what Naujokaitis says in his introduction with respect to this particular work: "It is a work of high academic stature; however, there are significant weaknesses; first, it does not cover the entire area of Lithuanian literature; that is, it ignores literary works written in exile, and if authors of such works are mentioned, they are criticized with a biased opinion. Second, Marxist methodology makes it necessary for literature to tie in with the Marxist historical concept and therefore a history of Lithuanian literature is forced into an artificial framework... For these reasons, the five volumes cannot be considered a complete and unbiased history of Lithuanian literature."

Having made these observations, Naujokaitis tries to summarize his intentions in these words: "To fill in gaps of earlier-mentioned works, to correct biased interpretations, to include all literary works — those written in the free world and those in occupied Lithuania."

Since Naujokaitis' study deals only with the literature and culture of the 19th century, and the Lithuanian literature of exile belongs to the 20th century, Naujokaitis, it seems, deals only with biased interpretations. It should be noted that in the study edited by Korsakas, the interpretation and presentation of the historical writings, except for the so-called Soviet packing,[1] basically does not suffer from Marxist methodology. With respect to the old Lithuanian literature, one can admire authors of this study for their conscientious and professional accomplishment.

In his introduction, Naujokaitis states that the classification of literary facts will be based on "literary movements and generations." However, these intentions are not quite substantiated in the published volume. For example, in discussing the first periodical *Aušra* in the light of the national movement, Naujokaitis classifies the contributors of it as a group. However, contributors of periodicals such as *Varpas, Tėvynės Sargas,* and *Apžvalga* are classified individually with respect to their literary accomplishment.

In discussing old religious writings, Naujokaitis uses almost the same material as that used in the study edited by Korsakas. The difference is only in approach. In Korsakas' work there is a noticeable effort to emphasize the importance of a writer to the Lithuanian culture and literature. Naujokaitis instead tends to deal with generalities: "The importance of B. Vilentas is immense," "The *Postilla* by Bretkūnas is a great and beautiful piece of religious literature," *The Lithuanian Language Grammar by* D. Kleinas is a work of "epochal importance."

Naujokaitis' analysis of literature is analogous to a stone skimming the surface of a body of water: it touches the water only at certain intervals. In the area of creativity, Naujokaitis seems to lean heavily on opinions of other literary historians.

As a historian of literature, Naujokaitis is apparently not familiar with the requirements of academic methodology. There are many inconsistencies in the writing of proper names and titles. Primary information is not distinguished from secondary orthographically. The text itself is heavily opinionated, with references to the present, argumentations with Soviet Lithuanian historians, and a noticeable amount of moralization. These flaws strongly discolor the academic stature of such

publication. It is a pity that the history of Lithuanian literature, regardless of where it has been written, in exile or in Soviet Lithuania, has to suffer from biased journalism, ideological disputes, and unsupported opinions.

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1 Includes quotation from Marxist theoreticians and present-day political leaders, discussion with "capitalist" or "bourgeois" historians, and evaluative remarks such as "progressive" or "reactionary."