

## YORDAN RADICHKOV

Yordan Radichkov is one of the most vivid and colourful personalities in contemporary Bulgarian literature. Born in 1929, within the short period of only ten years he evolved an original idiom and style of his own which is at the same time typically Bulgarian and highly modern. He continued and further developed the tradition of the Bulgarian provincial writing chiefly concerned with peasant life, but whereas such authors as Elin Pelin and Yovkov, Karaslavov, Iliya Volen and Daskalov began writing or worked wholly within the period that ended with the war, Radichkov entered our literature in the years when socialism was transforming life in our country. This process of radical change was perhaps most complex and curious in the countryside, where the bulk of the Bulgarian population lived until recently. The patriarchal values bred in the Bulgarian peasants of those days were quickly disintegrating, as the picture and way of life changed swiftly before their own, often incredulous eyes. Ways of life dear to their hearts slipped away and became a thing of the past, giving way to new and strange things. Huge masses of people moved from the village into the towns coming face to face with new forms of life. Old values were breaking down or being reappraised and new ones were emerging. The pace of social development was more than accelerated: it progressed at truly dynamic rates. Those were unique days in our history, times in which it revealed its profound meaning and inevitable contradictions in vivid contrasts. This process of rapid change and dynamic reconstruction was at first perceived by Radichkov in the light of a brilliantly-coloured folk carnival in the best traditions of the national popular art and folklore. The way of life and old customs of the Bulgarian village had apparently cracked from within, new things were coming to the fore, and the author of *Hot Noon*, *Last Summer* and *Confusion* succeeded in evolving an idiom capable of reflecting the intricate inner mechanism of this great change, that involved the birth of a new way of life, and the dying out of the old ways. This evolution was gradual, marked by high artistic qualities of expression, an inimitable sense of humour and a purely Bulgarian imagination, as earthly as it was inspired by highly spiritual values. He depicted things that happened in the Bulgarian post-war village