

Niko Kuret, *Maske slovenskih pokrajin*. Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba in Znanstveno raziskovalni center SAZU, Inštitut za slovensko narodopisje, 1984. 543 pp.

Academician Kuret's latest examination of Slovene culture is quite simply the most complete treatment of its kind. Presenting the results of his forty-year study of Slovene ritual masks and calendar processions, this work is one of the most thorough studies of masks in any language. His one-hundred page Introduction to the archeological and historical evidence for the ritual use of masks in the Mediterranean areas and central Europe not only provides an excellent summary of this topic but fully prepares the reader for detailed examination of these phenomena in Slovenia. The remaining three hundred-fifty pages are devoted to a brief discussion of previous research in this field, which is followed by specific details for Slovenia. Individual sections treat: (1) Pehtra baba, Lucije, and Miklavž processions, (2) Carnival parades, their *dramatis personae*, and the composition of the ritual actions, as found in forty-six different regions of Slovenia, (3) Zeleni Jurij, (4) masks associated with specific aspects of work (e.g., ritual ploughing, and the harvest), (5) wedding processions, and (6) Trije kralji. His concluding chapter discusses the typology of the masks and their functions and their place within the whole of European folk culture.

Kuret explains that masks are used primarily in winter and carnival processions, and that there are three prominent categories: (1) zoomorphic, (2) ornithomorphic, and (3) anthropomorphic forms. The most popular of the first category are the hind (*košuta*) found throughout Slovenia (and Europe); the horse in eastern Štajersko and Slovene Carinthia; bovine forms in western Slovenia; and the bear, which is found in many regions but not all of Slovenia. Among the ornithomorphic forms, the most frequent are the cockerel (*kokotič*, or "*amerikanski*" *kokot*), then the goose, and the duck. First among the third category are the old man and old woman (*ta star, ta stara*), found in most regions of Slovenia (but not all), and sometimes substituted for by the beggar (*berač*) and beggar-woman (*beraška*). These are said to point back to the ancient ancestor cult. As symbols of fertility, the groom (*ženin*) and bride (*nevesta*) and their wedding party (*svati*) stem from the agrarian cult. Other members of the anthropomorphic category are of course Carnival himself (Fašnik/Kurent/Pust), the fat man, the devil, the gipsy, and more recently, the chimney sweep. Certain masks do not seem to fit into any typological category, e.g., *otepovci*, *šeme* or *koledniki* (Bohinj), *blumari* (Venetian Slovenia), *lavfarji* ("runners"; Cerklje), and the *škopit*, who frightens girls with his huge pliers, and several others.

Kuret's latest contribution to the study of Slovene folklore is a monumental work. The amount of information provided is massive; sources are cited in side-notes; and the scholarly discussion is supplemented by one hundred forty-eight photographs (of which, alas, only twenty-seven are in color), identified in both Slovene and English, plus nineteen maps (also supplied with an English translation) indicating where given types of masks were known, and/or may still be used today. There are fifteen pages of sources, and a sixteen-page index of subjects, regions, and names. Of importance to scholars unable to read Slovene is an eleven-page summary in English (translated by Anne Ceh) which is an excellent condensation of the book as a whole. Finally, it should be (regrettably) noted that the obvious and immediate value of this *magnum opus* notwithstanding, the Cankarjeva založba printed only 2000 copies.

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Marija Makarovič, *Strojna in Strojanci. Narodopisna podoba koroške hribovske vasi*. Ljubljana: Založba Mladinske knjige, 1982. 557 pp.

Makarovič spent the years 1976-1980 conducting field research in Strojna (near the Austro-Yugoslav border), and presents a fascinating picture of the maintenance of traditional patterns of life and their transformation since the beginning of the present century. She first gives a brief survey of previously published sources concerning the region, and then she proceeds to describe the villagers' social structure, family relationships, their dwellings, work habits, foods, personal hygiene, outlook on life, religious views and other beliefs.

Her study contains a wealth of detail, yet is quite readable. Many of her findings in Strojna parallel developments elsewhere in Slovenia; thus the book will have a broader appeal than it would if it were simply a narrow ethnographic examination of one village. For example, she treats family celebrations (engagements, weddings, births and funerals); village social life (dances, *veselice*, games, etc.); practices such as *vedeževanje* (fortune-telling); and the use of "magic" in everyday agricultural occupations.

The material presented is well-documented, and it is supplemented by numerous photographs illustrating labor, e.g., ploughing, sowing, and harvesting; architecture, with accompanying diagrams of houses and other buildings to show space utilization; and views of the landscape. There are also abundant statistics concerning the individual families, their interpersonal relationships, and their beliefs. In addition, there is a 110 item bibliography which should provide sources for those especially interested in this region and/or the continuation and alteration of traditional practices in other rural Slovenian communities. To summarize, this book is a welcome contribution to the study of both traditional and present-day Slovene life and culture in Carinthia and elsewhere.

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Rado Radešček, *Slovenske ljudske vraže*. Izdalo in založilo CZP Kmečki glas. Ljubljana 1984. Ilustracije in naslovnica: Marko Derganc. Predgovor: Ingrid Slavec. 367 pp.

Radešček, a working journalist, admits in his Introduction that he has made no attempt at a scientific treatment of Slovene popular superstition; nevertheless, he has compiled a generous portion of examples of folk belief: lucky and unlucky days of the week, the month, and the year; holidays (all the major church holidays, including saints' days); superstitions concerning human phenomena: physical sensations, pregnancy, children, marriage and funeral customs; interpretations of dreams; beliefs about animals, the "heavenly bodies," the weather, and farming; and magic divination (*vedeževanje*), village healers (*čarovnice*), effects of the evil eye (*urok*) and how to cure them by magic charming (*čaranje*), plus many more interesting tidbits. In each case, examples and discussions are fully adequate to illustrate the particular phenomenon. The organization is logical and the subject matter is entertaining, so that the book is one which is both educational and enjoyable.