

The very substantial introduction is a major strong point of this book, and the translations are very readable. We should be glad that this book is on the market and we should hope for more work by Wade. Perhaps this volume will enable more Slovene plays to be considered for production in the Anglophone world.

Slovene literature seems to be riding something of a wave of translations at the moment. This is cause for rejoicing. The year 2009 has seen the publication of Jančar's *The Prophecy and Other Stories* (Northwestern University Press), translated and edited by Andrew Wachtel, as well as *Martin Kačur* by Ivan Cankar (Central European University Press), translated by this reviewer. The Slovene Writers' Association/Društvo slovenskih pisateljev (www.drustvo-dsp.si) has also considerably stepped up its English-language publishing and is bringing out several translated works of poetry and prose per year, and there are new books by Potočnjak and Evald Flisar. We also have recent studies of Ivan Cankar by Irena Avsenik Nabergoj and Louis Adamič by Dan Shiffman.

Thematic similarities among these powerful plays make this collection into strong medicine. The differences in form and style provide excellent fodder for literary investigation. Although no scene is more moving than the torturous death of the boy Amir, and no precept more chilling than "Der Mord macht frei," the mission statement of the Boozski Clinic, it is left to Jančar to put the salient question into the clinical language of the historian (by means of an unwittingly honest functionary of the ideological machine):

Look at all the things that people have cut off. Or have cut out. The Aztecs, for example, they cut the heart out of a living person and put it on an altar . . . Ransom for the gods. What's one human heart compared with the spiritual healing of a human community? (71)

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Janja Žitnik Serafin. *Večkulturna Slovenija*. (= *Migracije* 15). Ljubljana: Inštitut za slovensko izseljenstvo ZRC SAZU. 314 pp., €14.00 [= \$19.60] (paper). ISBN 978-961-254-074-6.

Večkulturna Slovenija presents its multidisciplinary scholarly audience with fundamental challenges and questions about the history and future of Slovene literature published in Slovenia and beyond its borders by people writing not only in Slovene. Žitnik Serafin extends her own comprehensive research on Slovene émigré literature, most notably her contributions to *Slovenska izseljenska književnost I-III* (1999), and duly acknowledges

others' work throughout the book and in an extensive bibliography (283–307). She writes lucidly, with the assuredness of a scholar intimately familiar with her subject matter. Yet, while being very informative about Slovene émigré and immigrant (to Slovenia) literature, the book's subject is broader; it is an argument for a culturally pluralistic society.

Part 1 treats the availability of Slovene émigré literature in Slovenia. Part 2, co-authored with Lidija Dimkowska, briefly reviews immigrant writers in Slovenia (75–110). Part 3 considers immigrants' cultural conditions. The fourth part describes immigrants' prospects for integration into society on an equal basis. Theoretical reliance on Itamar Even-Zohar's concept of a literary system and Meta Grosman's ideas on literature in a multicultural context unite the parts. Although Even-Zohar's comprehensive view of literary infrastructure works well for this study, some might doubt it constitutes a theory of literature as much as it does a description of its institutional and commercial underpinnings. Its strength is in its application to Slovene émigré literary life around the world and in immigrant groups' cultural life in Slovenia. The book presents information on both subjects very clearly. One example: Table 1 illustrates the number of literary works by Slovene émigrés published in book form in eight Slovene cities from 1950 to 1998. The data are taken from *Slovenska izseljenska književnost* and supplemented for this study.

Grosman's theory comes into play in part 4, in particular in the eloquent chapter entitled "Meje nacionalne književnosti, meje naroda" (236–50), in which Žitnik Serafin challenges the traditional, strict definition of Slovene literature as that which is written in Slovene. Her conclusion, that

svojega večinskega jezika ne moremo v nobenem pogledu ogroziti s tem, da—podobno kot mnogi drugi narodi—svoje pojmovanje slovenstva (in z njim pogojeno pojmovanje narodne kulture in književnosti) tudi mi ustrezno razširimo in ga uskladimo s polivalentnimi jezikovnimi in kulturnimi razmerji v sodobni slovenski družbi, ki so posledica odhajanja njenih pripadnikov v tujino in prihajanja novih pripadnikov iz tujine. (249)

Because she statistically substantiates what a significant portion of Slovene writers have been emigrants—many of them bilingual—it is difficult to contest the point on quantitative grounds. The author dispenses with esthetic considerations at the outset because she is primarily examining literature's function in communities (21). Even those that prioritize Slovene language learning in émigré communities abroad might find her arguments against linguistic exclusivity persuasive.

The case of immigrant communities' cultural experiences offers much new information. The author examined twenty-eight Internet forums and did in-depth analyses of sixteen to gauge contemporary Slovene attitudes towards immigrants (21). Immigrants' points of view were obtained from over 240 immigrants and their descendants of various ages and professions. The respondents' hometowns, ethnicities, and educational levels are cross-referenced with data from the 2002 census (112–19). The picture of majority-minority relations is not pretty, as many of the direct quotes from anonymous respondents emphasize. After a discussion of immigrants' linguistic relations with Slovenes and their cultural life (e.g., reading habits), the author offers a frank discussion of immigrants' experiences as compared with national integration policies (in the chapter "Priseljenska izkušnja v Sloveniji v luči integracijskih načel," 162–87), concluding that the conditions for a full cultural life are still lacking, something for which the state bears at least partial responsibility, in her view.

Here the reader can make comparisons for him or herself with the author's observations earlier in the book on Slovene émigrés' publishing and organizational successes on the one hand, and potential problems with government multiculturalism policy in, for example, Canada on the other (a long quote from Cvetka Kocjančič provides certain evidence, 227–28). Informing the discussion of immigrants' cultural life is the assumption—made explicit in the first chapter of part 4, "Dinamika kulturnega življenja priseljske skupnosti" (189–209)—that immigrants' cultural life is a group project. Here is where the author draws the Slovene émigré and immigrant (to Slovenia) experiences together. As she states in the summary,

...drawing on the experience of Slovenian emigrant communities in other European countries, Australia, Canada, the United States, Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, and the experience of the largest immigrant communities in Slovenia, the most evident sets of factors that have been found relevant in terms of shaping those conditions in the case of the abovementioned communities are summarized. (279)

The conditions—from size and location of a group to religious affiliation, organizations, and so forth—are familiar to students of Slovene immigration studies. However, this inventive move, which is central to the book, may deserve even more exploration. While admitting that the contexts of the receiving cultures are quite different, the author distills certain common factors influencing the Slovene émigrés' and immigrants' situations. It is startling to learn that familiar Slovene émigré experiences in North America, Argentina, and elsewhere, may be, in a sort of turning of the tables, recreated for other ethnicities in Slovenia.

Žitnik Serafin includes as many individual authors of various literary genres and kindred forms of writing as possible in the 271 pages of text. Her regular citations of other sources point to more detailed individual listings. In general, the study is concerned with the phenomena of emigration and immigration and how literature functions within them and not individual artists. It nonetheless might have been worthwhile to consider the exception—an accomplished artist like Cvetka Lipuš, for instance, who resides in the U.S., was a nominee for Slovenia's top poetry prize (the *Veronikina nagrada*) in 2008, and yet is relatively less involved in émigré life than some of her counterparts. Such a case challenges the group-oriented approach in the study.

In some instances the extent of the study (until about 2005) may prevent inclusion of recent developments, especially in Internet publishing. Thus the Canadian-Slovene Tom Ložar is credited with articles on Louis Adamic in the 1970s (66) and as an essayist in the 1990s (229), but his more recent essays in Slovene newspapers and then online (<http://tomazhlozhar.blogspot.com/>) are absent, even though bilingualism is a major theme of his. My point, of course, is not what should be included in limited space, but that consideration of the Internet's importance for émigré literature and to immigrants might be expanded.

Examples of individual artists returns us to Žitnik Serafin's recommendations that literature promotes inter-ethnic understanding and that the state must therefore play a role in encouraging the development of minority cultures. The first is somewhat surprising when one recalls the major source of plumbing popular Slovene attitudes towards minorities—Internet forums. It is hard to imagine visitors to 24ur.com or even bicikel.com as potential readers of immigrant literary works, although I may be wrong. Perhaps by conceiving of writing more broadly the potential appears.

The second recommendation is essentially an assertion of a positive civil right. Slovenia's EU obligations and, indeed, popular opinion may justify national financial support for minority cultural activities, including publishing literature. If immigrant literature fosters inter-ethnic understanding, especially if it is included in school curricula as the author urges, then this is logical. Only the necessary condition argument seems to me questionable:

In a multiethnic country, "national culture" (in the sense of the cultural-artistic treasury of a nation) exists on several levels, but basically on two: the level of individual authentic ethnic cultures and the level of the complex common culture. The latter cannot exist if cultural policy does not guarantee all kinds of passage—including linguistic—among the co-cultures that constitute it. State organizational and financial

incentives for the translation of literary works from minority languages into the language(s) of shared communication . . . are therefore an essential condition for the existence of an integral common culture. (280)

Political points of view aside, *Večkulturna Slovenija* is a refreshing study, superbly grounded in empirical research, that successfully operates between literary and migration studies. Readers can be thankful that Žitnik Serafin took her research on Slovene émigré literature in this direction, returning it to examination of its impact on a redefined Slovene culture.

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Works Cited

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Ivan Cankar. *Martin Kačur: The Biography of an Idealist*. Translated and with an introduction by John K. Cox. Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 2009. xxxvi + 205 pp., \$17.95. ISBN: 978-963-9776-41-8 (paper).

A bit more than 100 years after the most important Slovene writer of the twentieth century, Ivan Cankar, published his novel *Martin Kačur: Življenjepis idealista* (1907), the English-speaking world has finally received a full and competent translation of it. John Cox, a professor of history at North Dakota State University, is to be congratulated for undertaking this task, and for doing a yeoman's job of it. And CEU Press should be thanked for producing a handsome volume, the eleventh in its series, CEU Press Classics.

Cox prefaces his translation with a twenty-five page introduction entitled "Reading Ivan Cankar: Socialism, Nationalism, Esthetics, and Religion after One Hundred Years," with subsections containing a brief biography of the author, a survey of his literary works, and an insightful short essay on the novel itself. Cox's own literary acumen is impressive, as he makes telling comparisons between Cankar's novel and many others in a wide range of European literatures. While establishing Cankar's literary and historical context, he also attempts to make his novel relevant to a twenty-first century audience. But context is one thing, relevance another: I think a reading of Cox's translation itself bears out the historical worth of *Martin Kačur*, but makes moot its application to contemporary issues and concerns. We certainly pity the poor protagonist, but it is difficult to empathize with him. That being said, Cox's essay is a worthy addition to the rather scant