

BOOK REVIEWS

Jean-Albert Bédé and William B. Edgerton, General Editors. *Columbia Dictionary of Modern European Literature*. Second edition, fully revised and enlarged. New York: Columbia University Press, 1980.

This is the second edition of the Columbia Dictionary of Modern European Literature, a fully revised and enlarged version of the work that was first published in 1947. Its scope is still the same: to serve a serious reader of European literatures, the scholarly specialist in any literature of modern European literatures, and the student and scholar in the ever growing field of comparative literature. Its range is the same as well, though better defined: the new edition of the Dictionary covers the period begun with French symbolism and includes older authors on the basis of their relevance to twentieth century literatures. Thus the number of authors treated in the Dictionary has almost doubled (from 1,167 to 1,853), with each article providing basic biographical information about the writer, a critical discussion of the writer's principal works, and a brief bibliography; and the number of survey articles on national literatures has been increased, with a number of new entries. Among these last is "Slovene Literature," which appears on pages 752-53, separately from other Yugoslav literatures. In fact the opaque "Yugoslav Literature" entry of the first edition (written by N. Strelsky), has now been replaced by separate articles covering the individual national literatures of Yugoslavia, firmly entrenched in the sociolinguistic and cultural realities of the South Slavic world.

All in all, Slovene literature is in the second edition of the Dictionary represented by the following entries: Ivan Cankar (69 lines), Alojz Gradnik (33 lines), Edvard Kocbek (38 lines), Srečko Kosovel (39 lines), Ivan Pregelj (39 lines), Prežihov Voranc (43 lines), Oton Župančič (73 lines), and by the survey article "Slovene Literature." Statistically, this means: two authors of the first edition: Ivan Cankar (153 lines) and Oton Župančič (130 lines); versus seven authors now, plus a compact survey in the present edition (150 lines), which places Slovene letters in the framework of modern European literatures. At all events, this represents a considerable increase of information on a literature which some fifty years ago was practically unknown in the English-speaking world.

There were only two contributors on Slovene in the first edition of the Dictionary: Izidor Cankar (Quebec, Canada), and Louis Adamic (Milford, N.J.); their notes were about Ivan Cankar and Oton Župančič respectively. The second edition of the Dictionary (1980) has the following contributors: Jože Pogačnik (Novi Sad), with the entries on Alojz Gradnik, Edvard Kocbek, and Ivan Pregelj; Alojz Rebula (Trieste), who wrote the survey article; and Ante Kadić (Indiana University) and William B. Edgerton (Indiana University), who revised Izidor Cankar's and Louis Adamic's contributions from the first edition, and authored a joint article on Prežihov Voranc.

The articles dedicated to individual authors in the volume are concise; the information in them objective and the bibliographic references (except for Prežihov Voranc) representative and up-to-date. The articles are written in crisp and clear English. Of course, one would wish that a number of additional names of modern Slovene poets and writers representing Slovene literature of the post-1945 period had been added to the individual entries in the volume. The writer of this note has in mind specifically the poets Cene Vipotnik and Lojze Krakar, and the prose writers Ciril Kosmač and Andrej Hieng, in whose works audiences outside the linguistic boundaries of Slovene will ultimately discover the values equal to the outstanding achievements of European creators.

The central piece on Slovene letters in the volume is represented by Alojz Rebula's panoramic view of "Slovene Literature." The survey is short but comprehensive; it includes the authors of the Slovene minority in Italy (Rebula himself, Boris Pahor, Vinko Beličič), but no names from Slovene Carinthia in Austria. It does include the representatives of the postwar political emigration, such as K. V. Truhlar, Vladimir Kos, Tine Debeljak, and Zorko Simčič. A reader less familiar with Rebula's philosophy of life would be inclined to question his assumptions about the "spiritual identity of Slovenes," "Slovene national sensibility" in the article, and about the "eschatological visions" in Ivan Cankar and Srečko Kosovel. A minor point: Franc S. Finžgar and France Bevk did not write "folk narratives"; ljudska povest has no equivalent in English poetic terminology; it may be rendered simply as "short story" or still better "popular prose narrative," as it has been recently introduced in Slovene (cf. the Slovene "popularna pripovedna proza" in Slovenska književnost 1945-1965, Part I [eds., B. Paternu and others][Ljubljana, 1967], 358). A number of typographical errors in Rebula's article should be corrected. Prešeren's

collection Poezija should read Poezije (752), Slavko Grun is S. Grum (753), Bratko Kraft is B. Kreft (753), Danet Zajc is Dane Zajc (753).

The acting editor-in-chief of the volume, William B. Edgerton, a Slavic literary historian himself, had on his editorial committee for Slavic literatures Ante Kadić, a specialist for the South Slavic field, to whom goes a great deal of credit for the exemplary representation of Slovene literature in this volume.

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Pavle Merku, ed. *Slovenska plemiška pisma (družin Marenzi-Coraduzzi s konca 17. stoletja)*. Trieste: Založba tržaškega tiska, 1980. 198 pp.

The letters contained in this book were discovered in Trieste in the early seventies. Since then the Slovene public has become well aware of their significance: three letters from the bundle were first published in the Trieste review Zaliv (May, 1972), a fragment was included in the best-selling book Zakladi Slovenije (Ljubljana, 1979), and references to the find have been made elsewhere. The letters would not have aroused such interest were it not for the fact that the correspondents were two baronesses and their use of Slovene contradicted the accepted notion that the nobility in Slovene lands spoke German. Following the discovery of the Trieste letters, this notion, which derived its authority from statements by the literary historian France Kidrič and others, could no longer be unequivocally accepted. One hopes that the Trieste letters will give impetus to additional research from which a clearer view of the historical position of Slovene might emerge.

The book contains the entire correspondence in facsimile as well as a literal and a phonetic transcription, the latter with punctuation added to the original text. There is also an introduction, a commentary on the text, and an index of names and places, all done by Pavle Merku. Because of inconsistencies in spelling, the absence of punctuation, and the rather difficult handwriting of the older baroness, the deciphering of the letters must have been an arduous task. There are omissions attributable to the physical damage of the original, to illegible words or to words the meaning of which escaped the editor. However, such lacunae are not very