

NEW PUBLICATIONS IN SLOVENE STUDIES

LITERATURE AND LITERARY CRITICISM

Last report:

Slovene Studies 8/1 (1986) 83-86. Abbreviations: K = Koper; L = Ljubljana; M = Maribor; T = Trst/Trieste; CZ = Cankarjeva založba; DZ = Državna založba Slovenije; L = Lipa; MK = Mladinska knjiga; O = Obzorja; SM = Slovenska matica; ZTT = Založništvo tržaškega tiska.

The largest undertaking in the publishing field in Slovenia—a project whose first results appeared at the end of 1987—is the *Enciklopedija Slovenije* (L: MK). Of this national encyclopedia, planned for twelve volumes of approximately 5,600 pages with 8,000 subject and 6,000 biographic entries and almost 10,000 illustrations, the first volume has appeared. Even this volume makes evident the serious nature of the undertaking: its information is quite condensed and, to the extent that this is possible, wherever additional information is necessary bibliographic references are also provided. The encyclopedia encompasses the entire Slovene cultural universe, without regard to state boundaries, neglecting neither émigrés nor people of other nations who in one way or another, culturally or through scholarship, have enriched Slovene history. One volume per year is planned for this major lexicographic undertaking, which joins other projects of this sort which have either already been realized (*Slovenski biografski leksikon*) or are in progress (*Slovar slovenskega knjižnega jezika*).

The *Literarni leksikon* is a project of the Research Center of the Slovene Academy of Arts and Sciences / Institute for Slovene Literature and Literary Science (*Znanstveno-raziskovalni center SAZU / Inštitut za slovensko literaturo in literarne vede*) and has been under way for a full ten years. In 1987 two issues appeared (both L: DZ): Janko Kos, *Predromantika* (= vol. 31, 96 pp.) and Marko Tersegav, *Ljudsko pesništvo* (= vol. 32, 170 pp.). Not only the number of volumes (32 to date) but, even more so, the details and treatment of each literary term examined, are most praiseworthy. The editorial board (Darko Dolinar, Janko Kos, Majda Stanovnik, Drago Šega) continues to select and, with the help of a team of Slovene specialists treat, terms and concepts that have until now been somewhat shunted to the side, or at least insufficiently elaborated, in studies of Slovene literature. The term 'preromanticism', for example, has been used for a long time—at least from the beginning of the twentieth century—as the designation of a stylistic and intellectual trend in European literature. In Slovene historiography, however, it has either been not used at all, or (in the opinion of Janko Kos) has been mistakenly connected with the period 1780-1810. Of a true preromanticism among Slovene cultural figures Kos speaks only with reference to the period 1810-1830, or even later. The young scholar Marko Tersegav has examined the concept of folk poetry in a manner which takes into account the newest insights from folklore studies both abroad and in Yugoslavia. One should also mention that the volumes published in 1986 are also most worthy of attention: Janko Kos, *Razsvetljenje*; Andrej Inkret, *Drama in gledališče*; and Lado Kralj, *Ekspressionizem*.

The interwar period, especially the epoch of the so-called historical avant-garde, is attracting the attention of Slovene authors. Most recently this period has been treated not only encyclopedically (in the above-cited work by Janko Kralj), but in two other ways as well: through reprinting, by the re-publication of the 1927 journal *Tank* (L: MK), issued with extensive commentary and notes from the pens of Peter Krečič and Denis Poniž, with

résumés in German; and by the publication (edited by Vida Golubović) of the correspondence among Černigoj, Micić and Delak, concerning the journals and other activities of the avant-gardists. There is also a study, developed from his dissertation, by Janez Vrečko, *Srečko Kosovel, slovenska zgodovinska avantgarda in zenitizem* (M: O, Edicija Znamenja, 1986, 261 pp.) The value of Vrečko's contribution can be seen, above all, in his realization of the very close linkage between the Croato-Serbian avant-garde movement known as *zenitizam* (after the journal *Zenit*, Zagreb/Beograd 1922-26) and the Slovene movement, with Kosovel and his circle. Here too we find the thesis that Kosovel's constructivist phase was quite marginal: Vrečko considers that this experiment in form was only a passing phase for Kosovel and merely a preparation for a poetry truly revolutionary in content. Vrečko thus insists—not always convincingly—on displacing the usual picture of Kosovel as a poet who had evolved from impressionism to constructivism and extreme avantgardism. He considers Kosovel's goal to have been a poetry with a revolutionary and a social content. A second study of Kosovel is Franc Zadavec's *Srečko Kosovel, 1904-1926* (K: L, 1986, 488 pp.): this is a synthesis of existing studies of the writer; in the strictest sense it is a literary-historical monograph which does not set about uncovering new developmental lines in the poet, but places the poet's well-known personality in the context of his place and time.

The same can be said of the extensive study by France Bernik entitled *Ivan Cankar* (L: DZ, 1987, 282 pp.) Bernik has had a long involvement with Cankar's work: in his books *Cankarjeva zgodnja proza* (1976) and *Tipologija Cankarjeve proze* (1983), and in the critical edition of the collected work, *Zbrana dela*, which numbers thirty volumes of which Bernik edited and annotated seven. Bernik's latest book on Cankar also treats this very prolific writer's entire corpus. He approaches the writer through an analysis of the various literary genres and forms in which Cankar wrote: poems, sketches, novels, dramas, essays; and through a thematic analysis of the content and meaning of his works. Thus he is interested in the changes in style and in thought in Cankar's writings. He places Cankar's opus in the context of European literary currents of the times. The book is above all a synthesis of the insights which 'Cankarology' has arrived at thus far. It contains a summary in English.

The series *Zbrana dela slovenskih pesnikov in pisateljev* (L: DZ) has been in existence since 1946, and about 140 volumes have appeared in this time. Currently under way are critical editions of the poets Anton Aškerc, Alojz Gradnik and the prose and drama writer Alojz Kraigher. Also appearing are *sui generis* additions to so-called editions of complete works which, it turns out, have been in reality more selected than complete. For example, in the period 1946-52 in the *Zbrana dela* series, twelve of Janez Trdina's works were issued. But last year the youthful publishing house KRT in Ljubljana (youthful both in terms of its own founding and of the age of the people who work for it) issued three volumes entitled *Zapiski Janeza Trdine—Podoba prednikov*: essentially notes taken by this freedom-loving, nationally aware and prematurely-pensioned professor and writer during the periods 1870-72 and 1877-78. At that time he was living in Novo Mesto, and his notes refer to the people there, and to his personal emotions and experiences, but there are also factual accounts of dress, food, the politics of the time, the relationships of people to the church, the government, migrants and gypsies—all in all, very interesting material. These volumes were prepared for publication by Igor Kramberger and Snežana Štabi.

Irena Gantar Godina has written a book dedicated to the study of the political, social and cultural past, entitled *Masaryk in Masarykovstvo pri Slovencih* (L: SM, 1987, 176 pp.) We learn here a fair amount about the period from 1895 to the First World War, and in an

especially lively way we see the democratically-oriented students of Prague and their later activity in Slovenia and beyond, among the Southern Slavs of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. What we learn, for example, about Ivan Žmavec, Dragotin Lončar, Anton Dermot, and Henrik Tuma comprises part of the extensive Slovene historiography about these interesting politicians and thinkers. Here too is published the debate in 1907 between Masaryk and J.E. Krek about "freedom of knowledge and convictions at the university," as well as considerable material about the Slovenes' struggle for a university of their own.

In the abundant harvest of literary and socio-political essays we should mention two recent 'bestsellers': Matjaž Kmecl's *Slovenska postna premišljevanja* (L: CZ, 170 pp.), and Ciril Zlobec's *Slovenska samobitnost in pisatelj* (T: ZTT, 1987, 286 pp.) The university professor Kmecl and the poet Zlobec, both of whom are involved in contemporary Slovene politics and have important political and social responsibilities (Zlobec, for example, has been nominated as a potential candidate for the presidency of the Slovene Parliament), have released their thoughts about the peculiarities of the Slovenes, and have tried to determine the place and importance of their awareness of their own national allegiance in the cultural and social development of Slovenia. At a time when Slovene national individuality is being accented, books such as these are indispensable. They are written in an easy, popular style, readily accessible to the average reader.

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