

neither he nor Josef Dobrovský (the Czech who fathered the opposing point of view, that Old Church Slavic was of Macedo-Bulgarian, not Pannonian, origin) were absolutely certain of their ideas, but that Kopitar was the better defender and propagator of his theories, which led to their initial acceptance by serious scholars and increased their impact on the development of the modern Slovene language.

Matjaž Kmecl contrasts Kopitar's understanding of the cultural and linguistic maturation of a nation with Čop's (and by extension, Prešeren's). In Kopitar's view, development is the result of a natural, collective, spontaneous process originating among the peasants (who alone had preserved a true Slovene) and leading to a genuinely popular culture. Čop and Prešeren felt, on the other hand, that Slovene peasant culture offered nothing of the magnitude of Serbian folk literature, and that therefore cultural norms would have to be adopted from the very best that the élite cultures of Europe had to offer. It lay with future generations, says Kmecl, to reconcile and fructify these very divergent points of views.

Finally, Janez Rotar speaks of Kopitar's indefatigable sponsorship of Vuk Karadžić and his work, and Boža Krakar-Vogel of the perception of Kopitar conveyed in Slovene school texts. The volume is rounded out with several photographs, a chronology of Kopitar's life and a bibliography. It may be noted in conclusion that the editor and some of the authors write with enthusiasm about the work that American scholars have done in promoting the re-evaluation of Jernej Kopitar's reputation.

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Janko Kos, *Primerjalna zgodovina slovenske literature*. Ljubljana: Znanstveni inštitut Filozofske fakultete; Partizanska knjiga, 1987. 265 pp.

Had Janko Kos written his comparative history of Slovene literature in English, he might well have entitled it "Slovene Literature in its European Context." Each of his thirty-nine chapters casts its net far and wide, from Scandinavia to Iberia, from Russia to America, so that the reader catches in each period, movement or development of Slovene literature, the literary models from which Slovene texts at least in part derived. Kos's erudition is impressive. Clearly a whole lifetime has gone into assembling the data, drawing the parallels, elucidating the connections, clarifying the definitions and establishing the termini a quo and ad quem within his study. The result is a cogent, unambiguous statement of the relationships between Slovene and European writers from the advent of modern Slovene literature in 1770 up to about 1970.

The reader should be warned, however, that this is not a book for neophytes. No mercy is shown to those who may not be familiar with any of the hundreds of works (poems, plays, novels, short stories) cited within. No plot summaries are offered, no lists of characters or indeed any details beyond what is absolutely necessary in order to make the connection between texts and context. As a matter of fact—though it is a small point—even first names are consistently omitted throughout the book (and in the index as well). The style, adequate as it is to the task at hand, does begin to get a bit dry after a while, despite a "hydrophilic" bent in the terminology, which constantly refers (probably of necessity) to "currents," "streams," "fluidity," "drying up," and the like. Still it must be said in the book's defense that it was assembled from many of Kos's previous studies of comparative issues in Slovene literature (hence the occasional repetitiveness in the style), and that it is certainly not meant to be read like a monograph, from cover to cover, but rather consulted



for individual insights as needed. In this respect it should serve admirably.

I will leave it to literary scholars in Slovenia (almost every one of whom is cited generously in this study, along with a few foreign Slovenists) to critique the substance of Kos's work. And I am certain that they will oblige, for there are many daring assertions and new understandings concerning Slovene literary history contained in these pages. Particularly striking is the overarching importance Kos assigns to romanticism: as pre-romanticism (or "enlightenment sentimentalism," as he prefers to call it), romanticism proper (in Prešeren's case, however, a romantic classicism), post-romanticism, neo-romanticism (the Slovene Moderna) and perhaps (though Kos does not use the term himself) even a "post-neo-romanticism." This trend may be said to run from the very beginnings of Slovene literature, in the 1770s, up to about 1930. Only then, with the advent of social realism, is the hold of romanticism on Slovene letters broken, though again and again elements of it seem to surface, even in the struggle between the existentialists and the modernists which characterizes the era since 1950. Also of fundamental importance in Kos's view are Slovene literature's organic ties to European literatures other than Yugoslav: from the Balkan or South Slavic realm only Miroslav Krleža and Vasko Popa are mentioned by name (the latter very briefly indeed) in the course of the entire book.

These points notwithstanding, Kos's survey succeeds in making a grand synthesis. With a breadth and depth few if any could match, he has unfolded for his readers the whole panoply of European letters as they have influenced Slovene literature over the last two hundred years. In and of itself therefore this study is a remarkable and very valuable achievement. It will be plumbed by students and scholars for generations to come.

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Marjan Dolgan, comp. & ed. *Slovenska muza pred prestolom: Antologija slovenske slavilne državniške poezije*. Ljubljana: Univerzitetna konferenca ZSMS: Knjižnica revolucionarne teorije, 1989. [= Knjižna zbirka Krt, 57]. 272 pp.

Encomia and odes—hymns of praise to earthly leaders—rank among the oldest of literary forms, and are probably to be found in the literature of every language. Yet for reasons that are fairly obvious if given any thought, they are rarely studied and even less frequently anthologized. By and large such works are usually embarrassing after the object of their praise has left the scene or lost his power; or they are dreadfully pedestrian even as they strain to reach rhetorical heights or plumb bathetic depths; for any mature person they are invariably insulting in their implication that rulers are parents and the rest of us storm-tossed children. Sealed forever as hyperbole's own with the mark of exclamation—one wonders what sycophants used before the "!" was invented—encomiastic verse makes for slow reading even in small doses. Imagine then a whole book of such poetry!

Fortunately the editor of the anthology entitled "The Slovene Muse before the Throne" brings a hefty sense of humor to his task, as well as scholarly care and wide-ranging erudition. Dividing his prey into three parts—emperors, kings and presidents; Holy Fathers; and the "discreet charm of internationalism," i.e., newsmakers, as we would say—Dolgan dissects each specimen with all the sharp tools of the literary analyst: footnotes, indexes, translations where necessary, a foreword and a lengthy afterword, a bibliography and a range of annotations to satisfy even the most demanding reader. He starts with the earliest text by a Slovene litterateur (though not in the Slovene language):