

Slovene conflict: one that had no bearing on events in the rest of the world, because they never fought outside their immediate territory, nor against any Western ally.

The argument may not be fully persuasive, but Mlakar nevertheless offers enough clues and theories to start the reader on the way to exploring countless explanations, arguments, pleas, accusations, and statements. His main virtue, however, is his calm narrative: his “antiheroes” are not blood-spitting criminals, forcing themselves on hapless Slovenes. They are simple peasants protecting their families against a foreign, alien philosophy. Their actions, misguided though they may have appeared even in Mlakar’s own judgment, were not malicious maneuvers, but open, if desperate, decisions in a desperate time. Mlakar manages to analyze their motives, their methods, and their expectations, and he tells it all at a level that will allow a compassionate, realistic, professional, and balanced debate to begin taking place, leading to a final verdict.

The communists, on the other hand, insist to this day on the idea of a “national liberation war,” denying that a social revolution ever took place in Yugoslavia (and Slovenia). A short glimpse at the statistics—which show that their “national liberation war” killed four Slovenes for every single member of the occupying forces—tells another story.

*Paul Borstnik, Voice of America, Retired*

**Michael Reichmayr.** *Ardigata! Krucinal! Ein slowenisches Schimpfwörterbuch, basierend auf Arbeiten von Josef Matl (1897–1974) zum deutsch-slawischen Sprach- und Kulturkontakt.* Mit einem Vorwort von Paul Parin. Graz & Bad Radkersburg: Artikel-VII-Kultur-Verein für Steiermark & Pavelhaus/Pavlova hiša, 2003. [= *Wissenschaftliche Schriftenreihe des Pavelhauses, Band 1 / Znanstvena zbirka Pavlove hiše, 1 knjiga.*], 423 pp., 25.00 euros [= \$30.25] (paper). ISBN: 3-9501-5673-9.

This is a revised version of Michael Reichmayr’s 2003 University of Vienna dissertation, based in part on his research on the posthumous works of Josef Matl written between 1939 and 1947. These works focus



on issues of Slavic-German contact—appropriately enough, given that Matl was born in an historically very bilingual and bicultural area, namely in Mahovci/Machersdorf, a village just two kilometers south of the Mura/Mur River situated in the Apaško polje/Abstaller Feld between Mureck/Cmurek and Bad Radkersburg/Radgona.<sup>1</sup> Matl's origins and the topic of the book make Paul Parin's foreword very apposite, since he comes from a similarly bicultural background.

Reichmayr's book comprises three sections: the first (18–104) surveys the life and works of Josef Matl; the second (106–46) is titled “Deutsch-slawische Diglossie”; and the third and longest (148–318) presents Reichmayr's glossary of “affective” Slovene vocabulary, the collecting and cataloging of which were frequently encouraged by Matl. The glossary itself comprises pages 183 to 306 and is printed on beige paper (the rest of the book is on white paper). There are also lengthy appendices. The first (318–47) consists of transcriptions of conversations between Reichmayr and two of Matl's former students, one of his former colleagues, and his son. The second (348–56) lists all of Matl's seminars at the Universities of Graz (1928–69) and Salzburg (1970–71). This is followed by a list (358–63) of the fifty-three doctoral dissertations with which Matl was involved (twenty-one as chief supervisor) and a bibliography (364–67) of writings about Matl. The Slovene summary is lengthy (368–98), and the last item is a bibliography (401–24), including thirty writings by Matl himself.

I shall not review all of these separate sections in detail; in passing, let it be noted that in the first section there is also much information for Slovenists that are not interested in either “diglossia” or the “affective” aspect of Slovene vocabulary. The history of Matl's home region (what I have seen of this section, 19–39, is interesting, but my review copy of the book is missing some pages);<sup>2</sup> a biography of Matl, with details not only of his academic work in Graz (1928–39, 1948–68) but also of his service both in World War One (the Eastern Front,

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<sup>1</sup> On the significance of this region for German-Slavic contacts, see Donald F. Reindl, “The Effects of Historical German-Slovene Language Contact on the Slovene Language” diss., Indiana U., 2005, 13.

<sup>2</sup> My copy is missing pages 23–30. Also, pages 151–58 were bound in reverse order. Moreover, the binding is poor: pages tend to fall out. On the other hand, the typeface is very clear and the format is attractively varied for the different kinds of subject matter.



wounded) and in World War Two (the Balkan Front), his two years in a British POW camp and even some of the poetry he wrote while there, and a thorough history of Slavic Studies in Austria including references to Jernej Kopitar, Fran Miklosich, Vatroslav Oblak, Karel Štrekelj, Matija Murko, Rajko Nahtigal and many other Slovenes. The description of Matl as teacher and mentor is excellent: I personally note his having supervised well-known scholars of the Slovene language and luminaries of the Carinthian Slovene intellectual scene, from Valentin Inzko (1948) through Harald Jaksche, France Verbinc, and Paul Zablatnik, to Erich Prunč (1967). Reichmayr shows how Matl developed from a classical Slavic philologist to a scholar with wide-ranging interests including literature, culture, and several branches of (especially former Serbo-Croatian and Slovene) linguistics. There is also a useful description of his unpublished work. All in all, this section is a worthwhile account of one of the worthiest of Austrian Slavists.

The second section, despite its title, treats only a few aspects of German-Slavic diglossia (i.e., the co-existent use, each in different functions, of two languages in a community). There are two subsections. The first, “Windisch und Slowenisch,” reviews the history of the term *Windisch* through the time that Matl became involved. When he did so—with a crisp and objective criticism of the sociopolitical misuse of the term in the late 1950s—he found himself sharply criticized. I find Reichmayr to be somewhat less than complete in this section (and also when *vindišar* is treated in the glossary, 298);<sup>3</sup> on the other hand, in my own work on the subject I would have profited from Matl’s writings, had they been available. The second subsection is concerned with German-Slavic, and specifically German-Slovene, linguistic contact phenomena. Twenty-five pages on this subject (on which Reindl writes 278 pages)<sup>4</sup> can only skim the surface, but it is a skilful skim and makes a good introduction to the major, third section of Reichmayr’s book. There are useful terminological clarifications (for both German and Slovene) and discussions both of linguistic and cultural borrowing, and of borrowing vs. purism. Matl’s own important contributions to this subject are sketched out, and finally we read about the specific impact of language

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Tom Priestly “On the etymology of the ethnic slur *Tschusch*,” *Journal of Slavic Linguistics* 4.1 (1996): 109–32; and “On the development of the ‘Windischentheorie’,” *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 124 (1997): 75–98 (special issue: Sociolinguistics of Slovene).

<sup>4</sup> Reindl 2005.



contact on '“affective” vocabulary—the fact that official language functions reveal less about linguistic influences than do more private functions—and swear-words, pejoration, and other “affective” words belong much, much more to the latter (a point made by Matl himself, see 167–69).

The core of this work is found in the “beige pages”—the glossary of “Schimpfwörter,” or obscene and other pejorative words used by speakers of Slovene (standard and dialect) for their fellow-humans. There are also a few expletives, or interjections, including the two words *ardigata!* and *krucinal!* The words are thus all nouns. The restriction to words for human beings was presumably necessary to make the corpus manageable; to extend the scope to other parts of speech and other referents would have made for many times the 730 entries presented here. Still, the lack of reference to (for example) verbs does make the survey less complete: the entry for *pəzdətc* (257), for instance, would have been usefully extended by citing the verb *pezdeti* from which it presumably derives. (Incidentally, why is *pezdeť*, a noun used specifically as a pejorative term for ‘omahljiv človek’<sup>5</sup> not listed?) Extensions to non-humans would have made the entry even more interesting, given (for this example) *pezdičevka* (the marsh tit, *Parus palustris*), *pezdir* (hemp splinter), *pezdec* (the giant puffball, *Calvatia gigantea*), and *pezdirek* (the bitterling, *Rhodeus amarus*)—are these all related and, if so, how? This is only a quibble, because Reichmayr’s list is extensive enough as it is; but this quibble shows how wide a subject this is.

I can personally comment on only one of the entries. Before doing so, I note with pleasure many of the pejorative terms I myself have heard during fieldwork in Carinthia. However, I would have liked some more information about word-origins: thus *barába*, a word I have heard in the two meanings mentioned (188–89), ‘road-mender’ and ‘good-for-nothing’, does not rate a mention of Italian *barabba* or its ultimate origin, via Greek, the NT character *Barabbas*.<sup>6</sup> Of course, neither of these etymological points involve specific German-Slovene contact, but that contact cannot be properly appreciated without its wider context. As for my one major criticism: the entries for *čúš* and *čúž* (202–03) are far too

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<sup>5</sup> Anton Bajec et al. (ed.), *Slovar slovenskega knjižnega jezika* (Ljubljana: DZS, 2000) 839.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Marko Snoj, *Slovenski etimološki slovar* (Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 1997) 25.



brief and superficial. This (probably single) root has had many more origins suggested for it than the three given by Reichmayr, and its historical origin (or, more likely, origins!) are extremely complex — cf. my own work on the topic,<sup>7</sup> which Reichmayr cites in his bibliography but does not apparently use, because several of the purported origins are Germanic (and note that Reichmayr allows himself to cite a Friulian word here, so he is not restricting himself consistently to Germanic-Slovene contact). Nevertheless, my overall assessment of the glossary is far from negative, and I find the pages preceding and succeeding it very useful and informative—for example, when Reichmayr discusses (171–76) what could be called the “whiter than snow” attitude to swear-words in Slovenia; that is, the argument that they are non-native, an attitude best known in the writing of Anton Trstenjak, and also when he typologizes and summarizes specific categories of the words he has listed (308–15).

This book is clearly the result of a great deal of conscientious work. It is however an amalgam of two very disparate things: the glossary of pejorative words, and the sections that could be termed “Homage — Josef Matl.” Each of these deserved a separate book, and from reading Michael Reichmayr’s amalgam I have no doubt that he is capable of having done justice to each, had he dealt with them separately and had he given both the attention they deserve (not, of course, something to be attempted in a single doctoral dissertation). Also, the eye- and ear-catching main title, *Ardigata! Krucinal!*, may be misleading, given that interjections play such a minor role in the glossary. Nevertheless, this is a very entertaining and informative book.

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<sup>7</sup> Tom Priestly, “Denial of ethnic identity: The political manipulation of beliefs about language in Slovene minority areas of Austria and Hungary,” *Slavic Review* 55.2 (1996): 364–98.