

had cultural traditions dating back several centuries as Transylvania had always been an important home of, and a significant contributor to Hungarian national culture. Soon the institutions of minority literature came into being: journals, publishing houses and literary societies; the development of the minority literature started and it enriched Hungarian national literature with several valuable works. The history of Hungarian literature in Rumania, now more than six decades old has produced some excellent writers and literary works. It is the treatment of these sixty years and also of the earlier regional traditions that is undertaken by the *Romániai Magyar Irodalmi Lexikon* the first volume of which (covering the letters A to F) introduces the institutions and creative personalities of the minority literary culture.

Work on this encyclopaedia has been going on for more than ten years, under the editorship of Edgár Balogh, a journalist and writer living in Kolozsvár (Cluj), who has been engaged in fostering Hungarian intellectual life in Rumania since the mid-1930s. The encyclopaedia is prepared by a wide circle of collaborators including literary, cultural, journalistic and art-historians, ethnographers, historians of philosophy, and natural scientists. Obviously, the encyclopaedia planned to consist of four volumes, will not only cover Hungarian literature in Rumania; it will also summarize the whole body of Hungarian intellectual achievement in Rumania. Its field of interest has an extremely wide range and its method of treatment is truly thorough. Besides the institutions and creative writers of national literature, it covers the past and present of Hungarian journalism, theatrical culture, philosophical and religious literature, scientific life, and even the natural sciences. It also provides glimpses of the regional, cultural-historical and folk traditions of Hungarians in Rumania. The summarizing articles and biographies of writers are supplemented by extensive literature, preparing the ground for further studies.

In the professional standard of this reference book, the editors and collaborators of the encyclopaedia have created a valuable piece of work which will, we hope, prove in itself an effective literary institution: when complete, it will not only be a large scale summary of Hungarian intellectual achievement in Rumania but also foster and maintain the national consciousness, acquainting the reader with the values and traditions of the culture of a people that number two million in Rumania.

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Magyar irodalmi hagyományok szlovákiai lexikona

Bratislava, Madách, 1981. 147 pp.

The *Magyar Irodalmi Lexikon* in three volumes, edited by the late Professor Marcell Benedek, was published in Budapest between 1963 and 1965 and even today is the "valid" Hungarian literary handbook. It was too bulky and of too high requirements to be enjoyable to the widest circle of readers. Besides, it was completed almost two decades ago and since then not only a new generation of writers has grown up, but Hungarian literary history and literary theory have also made significant advances. All this made it necessary for different new Hungarian literary encyclopaedias with specific fields to be prepared.

Among these the first to appear was a one-volume, small-sized Slovakian-Hungarian literary encyclopaedia. It was produced by a working team formed at the Hungarian Department of the Faculty of Arts at Komenský University in Bratislava. The work of the three chief collaborators (László Benkő, Lajos Garaj and Lajos Turczel), and of five co-workers (Bertalan Révész, Zoltán Seberényi, Árpád Tózsér, Erzsébet Varga and Tibor Zsilka) was directed by Professor Sándor

Csanda, who was also the chief editor of the book and its most important contributor. The compilation of the manuscript was finished by the spring of 1978, in comparison to which the actual publication did not take very long. For practical reasons the volume only contains data up to the end of World War I. Hungarian literature as has evolved since the foundation of Czechoslovakia will be discussed in the coming volume of the Slovakian Hungarian Literary Encyclopaedia under preparation.

The volume contains approximately 700 entries almost without exception dealing with individuals. Featured are not only the writers of present-day Slovakia (one time Upper Northern Hungary), but also all those like Petőfi and Zsigmond Móricz, whose life or oeuvre is somehow connected with this region. As is the case with similar encyclopaedias, not only are there entries on writers and editors, but we also have a complete small encyclopaedia of a specific cultural history. There are for example entries on Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály, Miklós Bercsényi and Ferenc Rákóczi II, Farkas Kempelen, Ottó Herman, the officers of 1848, and others. This is in fact the right approach as it would be impossible to prepare a separate Hungarian encyclopaedia of every specific field in, say, Slovakia. The volume focuses on regional history and literature-museology, and this is understandable within the framework of Slovakian culture, highly conscious in these respects. The glossary of the Hungarian-Slovakian place names indicates who among those whose names appear in the encyclopaedia visited or worked there.

The work contains excellent illustrations and references from specialist literature. The first printing ran to 1,600 copies, 500 of which were sent to Budapest at once, as laid down within the framework of cooperation between the Madách Publishing House in Bratislava and the Gondolat Publishing House in Budapest. This number of copies cannot in itself be considered low, but if we keep in mind that this volume is a necessary supplement to every Hungarian literary encyclopaedia and that the first printing of the three-volume *Magyar Irodalmi Lexikon* already ran to 40,000 copies at that time, then the pessimism of the Hungarian Gondolat Publishing House concerning the number of copies seems unjustified.

As for critical comment, a few supplements could, of course, be recommended, and the attention of the reader could be called to some more exact data and more recent specialist literature as well. Instead, however, we consider it important to enumerate three other recent publications which are worth knowing for those interested in the Slovakian encyclopaedias of Hungarian cultural history.

It was in 1977 that a small encyclopaedia of literary theory by Tibor Zsilka was published: *Poétikai Szótár* (Bratislava: Slovenské Pedagogické Nakladateľstvo. 1977. 243 pp.) which appeared only in 850 copies and was not available abroad; however it is used in Slovakia. This offers orientation on the topics of poetry, genre theory, stylistics, the entries on which are lacking in the encyclopaedia of Hungarian literary tradition.

Perhaps it is not generally known that the biographical material of the *Magyar Néprajzi Lexikon* (Akadémiai Kiadó, vols I-V, 1977-1982) also contains entries (e.g. on Mátyás Bél, Gergely Berzeviczy, Fábíán Szeder, et al.) which can be found in the Slovakian encyclopaedia of Hungarian literary traditions.

Furthermore there is the three-volume excellent—and widely known—publication which contains data on all the villages and towns of Slovakia, with rich historical, demographical and onomastic material, and with indices in which Hungarian names can be looked up easily: *Vlastivedný slovník obcí na Slovensku*. I-III. (Bratislava: Veda, Vydavateľstvo Slovenskej Akadémie vied. 1977-1978.) Although this encyclopaedia on the whole takes the present as a starting point and considers history and cultural history mostly only as a background, it does contain indispendable information and its publication in 20,000 copies has made it available everywhere.

In the given circumstances we appreciate even more highly the literary encyclopaedia which has now been published and we eagerly await the promised new volume on this century.

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