

FROM ALBION'S SHORE: LORD BYRON'S POETRY IN SLOVENE
TRANSLATIONS UNTIL 1945

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The publication in 1830 of the early poems of the *doyen* of Slovene poetry — Dr France Prešeren¹ in *Kranjska Čbelica* (*The Carniola Bee*) — marks the beginning of Slovene Romanticism, which ends in 1848, with the last of his poems published in the fifth volume of the same literary magazine. The period from 1830 to the »revolutionary« year of 1848 is thus committed to Romanticism as the leading movement of Slovene literature, artfully embodied in Prešeren's fine lyrical poetry that aimed at and considerably contributed to national unification and identification, as well as in the Europe-oriented literary criticism of Matija Čop.² Comparing the trends of the English and Slovene Romantic Revival, we can readily establish that the emergence of Romantic tenets expressed in poetry was somewhat late on Slovene ground. In England, of course, the crucial years are 1789, when *Lyrical Ballads* were published by Wordsworth and Coleridge, and the year 1832, which marks the death of Sir Walter Scott.

It is further significant for our research to stress that between 1800

¹ France Prešeren (1800—1849) studied law in Vienna. In 1828 he returned to Ljubljana, but was never allowed to practise law independently in the then Habsburg empire, because of his liberal political ideas and strong national, Slovene orientation. Between the years 1828 and 1840 he reached the peak of his poetic creativity and is nowadays considered the first classic of Slovene poetry, language and culture. He fell under the influence of Matija Čop, who directed him into the contemporary Romantic movement and further encouraged him to imitate Romance forms in poetry, such as sonnets, terzinas, romances, ballads, gazellas, etc. Some of Prešeren's most significant works are: *Soneti nesreče* (*Sonnets of Unhappiness*), *Gazele* (*Ghazels*), *Sonetni venec* (*A Wreath of Sonnets*, 1834), *Krst pri Savici* (*Baptism at the Savica*, 1936), *Poezije dohtarja Franceta Prešernna* (*The Poems by Dr France Prešeren*, 1847, a selection of his verse). Prešeren's *chef d'oeuvre* »Zdravljica« (»A Toast«), published for the first time in 1844, represents the most important Slovene political poem, stressing the ideas of national liberation and democracy. An English selection of his poems was published in 1954 by W. K. Matthews and A. Slodnjak.

² Matija Čop (1797—1835) studied in Vienna and became a classical linguist, literary historian and critic. He (allegedly) spoke nineteen languages and was thought to be the most well-read, broad-minded, and from the aesthetic point-of-view the most modern Slovene literary critic and connoisseur of his time. He particularly appreciated Dante, Goethe, Scott, Byron and Manzoni. His critical credo is that of a Romantic, albeit modified by the classicism of the Enlightenment. Apart from the typical Romantic tenets, the form is of great importance to him, too. After 1828 he influenced and shaped many Slovene *literati*, among them France Prešeren.

and 1843 only newspapers and magazines in German were published in Slovenia, because it was the official language of the Habsburg monarchy. The year 1800 saw the end of the Slovene paper *Lublanske novice* (*The Ljubljana News*), edited by Valentin Vodnik, while Janez Bleiweiss' *Kmetijske in rokodelske novice* (*Peasant and Farmer News*) appeared almost four decades later in 1843. These facts have to be taken into account when assessing the presence of Lord Byron's poetry in Slovene translations. Moreover, *Illyrisches Blatt* (*The Illyrian Paper*), published in German, is of prime importance for this study, for many translations of Byron's poems into German can be found in it. This is especially true of Josef Hilscher, the translator of Lord Byron into German,³ who in turn decisively enhanced France Prešeren's interest in the translation of Byron's verse tale *Parisina* into Slovene.

Prešeren's relation to European Romanticism was described in some detail by Janko Kos,⁴ particularly his affinity with those German poets who toed the line of the Heidelberg School after the year 1810. Austrian literature most certainly had its share in defining the aspirations and *procédés* of France Prešeren as the translator of (German and English) Romantic poets. Here we have in mind the poetry of Hermann von Hermannsthal and above all that of the already mentioned Austrian author Josef Hilscher. Both of these poets were typical of the literary circle of German-writing artists in Ljubljana in the 1830's.⁵ Hilscher began to publish his German translations of Byron in *Illyrisches Blatt* in 1829 and in subsequent years, even after his death, until 1837. In view of the relationship between Prešeren and Hilscher, Kos guesses that Prešeren must have known Hilscher well.⁶ Indeed, we have discovered a written proof of their previously »alleged« acquaintance and friendship in an article by their contemporary Josip Cimperman.⁷ Hilscher was at the time considered the best translator of Lord Byron's poetry into German and Prešeren was consequently in close touch with the then »ideal« translator of poetry, who

³ Josef Hilscher was born in 1806 in Litoměřice in Bohemia; he came to Ljubljana in 1818 and in 1823 became a teacher in the local military school. He wrote some very successful dramas in German (e.g. *Kaiser Albrechts Hund*, [*The Dog of Kaiser Albrecht*], *Friedrich der Schöne*, [*Friedrich the Handsome*]). He was very much interested in Byron's poetry and translated many of his poems into German, which were all published in Ljubljana in the newspaper *Illyrisches Blatt* (1829—1832). In 1835 he published Byron's *Hebrew Melodies* (*Byrons hebräische Gesänge*), both in German translation and in the original, which can be considered the most direct influence on the first Slovene translation of this work in 1852 by Fran Jeriša. Hilscher then moved to Milan where he died of consumption. Apart from the shorter pieces he also translated some of Byron's »poems in prose«: *Manfred*, *Giaur*, *The Prisoner of Chillon*, *The Corsair* and *Tasso's Lament*. According to the foremost German translators and critics of Byron, Hilscher has up till the present day not yet been surpassed as an artistic translator of Byron. His huge apus as a translator had a significant influence on the then Slovene poets/translators (Jeriša, Prešeren), which has not yet been adequately researched.

⁴ Janko Kos, *Prešeren in evropska romantika* (*Prešeren and European Romanticism*). Ljubljana: DZS, 1970, p. 183.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 183—210. Cf. also the article about the extensive knowledge of Matija Čop in English literature, above all in poetry: Václav Burian, »Matija Čop kot Byronist« (»Matija Čop as a Byronist«), *SJ*, 1940, p. 108.

⁶ Janko Kos, *Prešeren in evropska romantika*. Ljubljana: DZS, 1970, p. 185.

⁷ Josip Cimperman, »O Preširnovem Senáni« (»About Prešeren's Senán«), *Ljubljanski zvon*, I (1881), 5, pp. 313—314.

most likely incited him to render Byron into Slovene after the year 1833. At this time Prešeren began to work on *Parisina*, first published in 1849 and afterwards reprinted several times.⁸

France Prešeren translated only twelve of the twenty sections of *Parisina*.⁹ (It is significant to establish that the number of verses of the translation is identical to the original.) The reasons for Prešeren's incomplete *oeuvre* on *Parisina* could be sought in his letter to Čelakovski (9th April, 1833), in which he hints that he is afraid of censorship, which might not let the translation to be published, although there seemed to be no direct hazard in terms of the political criticism of the Habsburg monarchy. The partly translated *Parisina* by Prešeren was also published in 1865¹⁰, 1903¹¹, and 1915.¹² To be sure, *Parisina* is not one of Byron's seminal works, but it should be pointed out that it directly influenced the writing of Pushkin and also shaped the Slavonic/Slovene poets. Thus it is from a literary-historical point-of-view the most concrete example of the relatively strong influence of »Byronism« in Slovenia in the second half of the 19th century. That is why it deserves special attention. The »verse tale« treats an incestuous love in the d'Este aristocratic family that formerly reigned in the Renaissance Ferrara. Byron performed certain changes with regard to the original historical source: he introduced in his poems Romantic attitudes, such as a more free conception of love, struggle against social norms and the belief in social equality of people.¹³ Prešeren's translation only emphasized these original Byronic ideas of the poem. There is no evidence of his sacrificing any of the themes for the sake of *translatio*.

In a separate study we researched Prešeren's pencilled corrections and remarks on the margins of his manuscript-translation of *Parisina*, which afforded us a revelatory insight into the translator's way of reasoning and his translating process.¹⁴ These also point to the fact that Prešeren proceeded to the translation of *Parisina* directly from the original English text and not from some German (for example Josef Hilscher's) translation of the same. We contend that after the initial »direct«, word-for-word translation, which seems deficient in some aspects of the semantic level, Prešeren then often moved on to the transposition of the metaphorical meanings of individual words or, better still, to the »partial« meanings that are of essential importance in a poetic translation. These changes result in a subtly poetic and sincere rendering of the poem into Slovene. The second, corrected variant of the translation is in addition more spontaneous, since Prešeren obviously wanted to get rid of his original

⁸ Lord Byron, *Parizina (Parizina)*, *Pravi Slovenec*, 1849, 38, p. 217, translated by France Prešeren.

⁹ A detailed comparative analysis of the Slovene translation of *Parisina* and the original can be found in the typewritten M. A. thesis: Igor Maver, »English and American Poetry in Slovenia until 1945«, Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Ljubljana, 1988.

¹⁰ Lord Byron, *Parizina*, translated by France Prešeren, *Koledarčik slovenski*, 1852, pp. 25—26; *Zlati klasi*, 1856, pp. 74—77; *Naše gore list*, 5 (1865), 33, p. 265; pp. 272—273.

¹¹ *Zbornik znanstvenih in poučnih spisov*, 5 (1903), pp. 128—131.

¹² *Slovan*, 3 (1915), pp. 348—351.

¹³ The theme of *Parisina* is taken from Gibbon's *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. III., p. 470.

¹⁴ France Prešeren, *Parizina*, a manuscript. Ljubljana, National and University Library, MS 471, n. 5.

conformity to certain existing conventions, such as the metrical scheme, rhyme scheme, the taste of the public, and the like. The translation of *Parisina* proves once again that France Prešeren decidedly represents a meticulous (e. g. rhymes and metre) and able translator. This fact, however, does not exert a negative influence on the transposed contents of the poem. It remains on an enviable artistic level, which we also find in Prešeren's original poems. The poet-translator therefore certainly knew how to combine the complementary notions of content vs. form in the sense of the Structuralist conception of the signifier and the signified.

A detailed comparison of the translation with the original poem reveals a greater richness of Lord Byron's text in many details, which are generally more limited to a sheer narrative of events. Prešeren's translation clearly drops minor descriptive details and dedicates itself rather to the visualisation of the action. The latter leads us to consider Prešeren's *Parisina* an artistic superposition and elaboration of Byron's original text.

Prešeren's exaggerated use of rhymes, even when they are in Byron's original merely visual and semantically void, can only be considered a drawback. We also discover important differences in the number of syllables of individual verses in the original and in the translation, which consequently modifies the melody (the pitch of sounds) of verse. This is perhaps understandable, because of the apparent phonetic contrasts between the English and the Slovene language. Slovene translations generally require more syllables for the description of an event. The reasons can be sought for in the fact that Slovene is an »analytical« language, which, in contradistinction with the »synthetic« English, always makes use of more words and paraphrases. That is why it is possibly not as terse and compact as English is.

Furthermore, France Prešeren in the translation of *Parisina* shows an extremely loose and free usage of punctuations in relation to the original text. He particularly seems to dislike the colon and semi-colon, in lieu of which a simple comma is to be found. However, a comma cannot fully replace the »turn of thought« or a »thought division« as expressed by the colon or full-stop. On the other hand, the equivalent transposition of English modal verbs and the idiomatic uses of the verb into Slovene proves that Prešeren's knowledge of English was generally rather good. The work of Prešeren as a translator of Romantic poetry has so far perhaps not been adequately recognized. Admittedly, despite some earlier attempts to translate Thomas Gray (»Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard«, 1843), France Prešeren's translation of *Parisina* into Slovene remains the first really artistic poetic translation from Anglo-American poetry into Slovene. As such it has an important place within the Slovene cultural/literary heritage.

The translation of Lord Byron's *Hebrew Melodies* in 1852 is the second biggest poetic translation project of Slovene Romanticism, the author of which was Fran Jeriša.¹⁵ Byron wrote this collection following the example of *Irish Melodies*, composed by his friend and biographer Thomas Moore

¹⁵ Lord Byron, *Hebrejske melodije (Hebrew Melodies)*, translated by Fran Jeriša, *Novice*, 1852/10—99, published in instalments. Fran Jeriša (1829—1855) studied law and philosophy in Vienna. He wrote patriotic lyrical poems under the influence of Jovan V. Koseski. He translated Byron, Herder and Niemcewicz. He died of cholera at the early age of twenty-six.

(1779—1852), although he specifically stressed in the »Advertisement« that he wrote these lines at the request of a friend, Reverend Douglas Kinnaird. It was published in 1815, together with music sheets provided by Messrs Braham and Nathan.¹⁶ If *Hebrew Melodies* were intended for the musical accompaniment, it is understandable that the metrical scheme of the poems is regular and exact. The translator had to take it well into account and he consequently succeeded in producing a smooth-flowing, rhythmical movement of verse.

A lengthy introduction by Jeriša is significant in revealing at least some of the problems he encountered during the process of translation. Jeriša writes that these »songs« were composed to be sung and that is why one should not look in them for »perfect rhymes, for only dashes can be found«.¹⁷ We observe that Jeriša in truth uses an iambic tetrameter, which at times includes a few spondees or pirahics. He is, on the other hand, less consistent as far as the rhyme scheme is concerned, where he often uses dashes in order to disguise the irregularities. Fran Jeriša goes on to say: »The poems are the feelings and individual sighs of the *unhappy nation* (stressed by I. M.) — the clear drops in which is reflected a pale dawn of happier times, ...«¹⁸ There is an intriguing comparison between the Jews, to whom Jeriša referred to as an »unhappy nation«, and the Slovenes, who were, after the revolutionary events of 1848 and the Renaissance of nations within the Austrian empire, perhaps really anticipating a kind of »dawn of happier times«. It seems that Jeriša's decision to translate Byron's *Hebrew Melodies* largely depended precisely on these common points and symbolical connotations.

The translation of Lord Byron's *Hebrew Melodies* by Fran Jeriša can therefore be considered, second to Prešeren's *Parisina*, one of the most demanding and artistically perfect poetic translations of Slovene Romanticism. Despite his difficult task, for the original Byron's content and form had to be observed, Jeriša performed an excellent job: Slovenes thus read Byron's poems in translation well before people living in larger European countries. The language of the translation is certainly slightly dated, although this does not diminish its artistic power to any significant extent. We can conclude that Jeriša had to sacrifice some of the metaphorical transference of meaning in order to achieve, according to him, a most important objective, namely the realization of an identical metrical and rhyme scheme in the original poem and its translation. Nonetheless, it should be pointed out that Jeriša's ambitious translation project, which was by the way published in many instalments, has so far been somehow overlooked and decidedly inadequately dealt with in Slovene literary history.

Apart from the translation of *Parisina* by the foremost Slovene Romantic poet, France Prešeren, the rendering of Lord Byron's verse tale *Mazeppa* into Slovene by Jovan Vesel Koseski in 1868¹⁹ is of equal impor-

¹⁶ Introduction to *Hebrew Melodies. Lord Byron: Poetical Works*, ed. F. Page. Oxford UP, 1964.

¹⁷ Fran Jeriša, Introduction to the translation of *Hebrew Melodies (Hebrejske melodije)*, *Novice*, 10 (1852), 63, p. 249.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

¹⁹ Lord Byron, *Mazeppa Jovan (Mazeppa)*, translated by Jovan Vesel Koseski, Ljubljana: Jožef Blaznik, 1868.

tance for Slovene literary history. Jovan Vesel Koseski was a sentimental poet, primarily a pre-romantic one, as well as the follower of the Enlightenment of the 18th century. As such he was in direct opposition with his contemporary, France Prešeren. Still, Koseski cannot really be considered his rival, for he is a far minor poet than Prešeren.²⁰

Koseski composed an original poem to preface the translation of *Mazeppa*. Its motto *Si parva licet componere magnis* («If the little may agree with the big») indicates Koseski's admiration of Lord Byron's poetic grandeur and at the same time discloses his »feigned modesty« as a poet. The poem speaks about an ancient Greek by the name of Epimenides, who lives as a recluse for a long time. Upon his return among the inhabitants of Athens he finds everything much changed. Reading between the lines, we would discover Koseski's nostalgia for the period of Slovene cultural/political history before the year 1848, i. e. before the March revolution that brought about several positive changes for the Slovene nation. This is altogether rather surprising, and moreover in direct contradistinction with the views of Koseski's younger contemporary and the first translator of Byron into Slovene, France Prešeren.

The Slovene literary critic of the second half of the 19th century Josip Stritar,²¹ who was also a poet, translator and novelist, fiercely attacked Koseski's translation of Byron's verse tale *Mazeppa* in 1868, therefore merely a few months after Koseski's translation was published in a book form. This rather long and analytical article is an important turning-point in Slovene literary criticism, for Koseski's fame began to decline after its publication, not merely as a translator but as a poet as well.²² Nevertheless, the critique of Koseski's translation of Byron's verse has never been examined in detail. We set out to amend this situation in a separate study.²³ Stritar primarily reproaches Koseski his deflection from the Byronic original's meter, rhythm and rhyme scheme, whereby the translator to a large extent changed the original text: Koseski namely used the Italian »ottava rima« (rhyme) in iambic pentameter. Stritar's article emphasizes the fact

²⁰ Jovan Vesel Koseski (1798—1884) was born in Trieste and became a clerk in finance, with working posts in Ljubljana, Gorica, Tolmin and Trieste. He was the most important poet that published in the paper *Novice (News)*, the voice of the Slovene circle of »older«, conservative authors, opposed to Prešeren and his followers. Josip Stritar's critique of Koseski's translation of *Mazeppa* caused the decline in his fame. He is a pre-Romantic poet, who is, however, important in strengthening Slovene national consciousness.

²¹ Josip Stritar (1836—1923) studied classical languages in Vienna. He was then a private tutor in various European towns and a teacher in several Slovene grammar-schools until his retirement. Stritar is the most important Slovene literary critic of the second half of the 19th century. He was among the first to show France Prešeren's true artistic merit and discredited Jovan Vesel Koseski's fake poetic fame. His own poetry reveals some parallels with the Parnassians and classical poetry, permeated with a strong feeling of *mal de siècle* (*Dunajski soneti, The Vienna Sonnets*, 1872). Rousseau and Schopenhauer certainly influenced him in this respect. Stritar also wrote novels. *Gospod Mirodolski (The Master of Mirodol)*, for example, is reminiscent of Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*.

²² Lord Byron, *Mazeppa (Mazeppa)*, translated by Josip Stritar, *Slovenski glasnik*, II (1868), XIV/6, pp. 230—233.

²³ See my M. A. thesis on the reception of English and American poetry in Slovenia, Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Ljubljana, 1988, typescript.

that the translation of *Mazepa* is in some places quite incomprehensible, while admitting to the real and acute difficulty of translating the »short and compact« English verse into Slovene. Stritar himself translated part of *Mazepa* in order to show the linguistic and metaphorical deficiencies of Koseski's attempt. He evidently knew English very well, since his translation lives up to all the requirements of a good poetic translation: a thematically compact verse, an identical metrical and rhyme scheme with the original, which in no way diminishes the poetic meaning that has to come across to the reader, no contractions, syncopes, apocopes, etc.

In conclusion one cannot but remark that Koseski was as bad a translator as he was a poet, a judgement that can be upheld by several examples: his poor knowledge of English, the »direct« translations of individual words and syntagms to the detriment of the meaning, the lack of literary taste, the avoidance of original poetic techniques and the major changes he performed in the translation. All said, we could even say that Jovan Vesel Koseski's translation of *Mazepa* is reduced to the level of a simple adaptation of the original Byron's text. In the second half of the translation he felt it necessary to underline Byron's verses »Justice for everyone!«²⁴ several times, which is very indicative. It seems that these verses had a great communicative value for the reading public at this crucial historical/political moment of the Habsburg monarchy (i. e. »justice« for the variety of its nations, including the Slovenes). Koseski very likely chose this verse tale by Lord Byron for translation because of its theme, which is taken from the Polish, that is by extension Slavonic history: he was led by some sort of »pan-Slavonic« spirit.

Jurij Varl, following the example of Josef Hilscher (as he pointed out in the Introduction) rendered into Slovene »Vision of Belshazzar« (»Ugled Belzacarjev«, translated from German by J. Varl, *Drobtinice*, 14/1859—60, pp. 267—268), which makes part of Byron's *Hebrew Melodies*. It represents an isolated case, albeit just another proof what a strong impact Hilscher's enthusiasm for the translation of Byron had on Slovene poets of the 19th century.

In surveying the rest of the translations of Lord Byron into Slovene until 1945, we must point out the translation of his »Adieu, adieu my native shore« from *Childe Harold* by Branko Flegerič.²⁵ It is a faithful transposition of the original, full of *mal de siècle* atmosphere, which holds true also for his translation of the poem »To Inez« from *Childe Harold*, too (1877).²⁶ The first two cantos of *Childe Harold* appeared in England in 1812, and the last two between 1816 and 1818. Still, the Slovenes got this *Weltschmerz* masterpiece in translation with a substantial time-lag only after World War Two.²⁷ It is hard to believe that despite Byron's paramount fame (especially

²⁴ Lord Byron, *Mazepa Jovan (Mazepa)*, translated by Jovan V. Koseski, Ljubljana: Jožef Blaznik, 1868, p. 51.

²⁵ Lord Byron, »Iz Byronove pesmi *Childe Harold*« (»From Byron's *Childe Harold*«), translated by Branko Flegerič, *Zora* (Maribor), 20 (1874), p. 21. Božidar (Branko) Flegerič (1841—1907) studied classical philology in Graz. For a short period of time he taught at the grammar-school in Osijek and then lived in his native Prekmurje. He wrote lyrical poems under various influences (Prešeren, Jenko, Stritar and particularly Vraz), and published two translations of poems from Byron's *Childe Harold*.

²⁷ Lord Byron, *Pesmi in pesnitve (Poems)*, translated by Janez Menart. Ljubljana: DZŠ, 1975.

on the Continent), there are just two more of his poems to be found in Slovene translation in the discussed period until 1945: »Vision of Belshazzar« and the »Introduction« to *The Bride of Abydos* by Griša Koritnik in his collection (the first one) of Anglo-American poetry.²⁸

In Griša Koritnik's collection *A Leaf from English Poetry* he again translated »Vision of Belshazzar« that had been translated into Slovene more than seventy years earlier very deftly by Fran Jeriša and Jurij Varl. Upon the comparison of the translations by Koritnik and Jeriša one could say that Koritnik's version is generally much shorter and more terse, from the linguistic and poetic aspect very pleasant and smooth-flowing. The consistent use of an iambic tetrameter enables just that. On the other hand, the much earlier variant of Jeriša is closer to the original, because it does not omit so many more or less important details as Koritnik's translation does. For one thing, Koritnik uses a lot more commas, full-stops and other punctuation marks. This, of course, to a large extent changed the content of the poems: we find new enjambements and inappropriate caesuras in the middle of verses that abruptly interrupt the original thought developments and patterns.

Griša Koritnik's Slovene translation of the first stanza (Canto I) of Byron's work *The Bride of Abydos* strikes us especially, because its metrical scheme is so much different from Byron's original poem where a dactyl is used. Koritnik's use of the rocking foot gives an additional, pleasant, »rocking« effect, inkeeping with the theme of the poem. The Slovene translation is also characterized by a smaller number of words which consist of more syllables, though. There are more words with less syllables in the original, which makes it richer than the translation, especially in view of the content.

Surprisingly enough, some of the best known *chefs d'oeuvre* of Lord Byron, *Don Juan*, for example, or any of his complex dramas such as *Cain* and *Marino Falieri*, published in England during 1820—1824, have up to the present day remained available to a Slovene reader only in the original. Still, as far as the thesis question is concerned, it need be said that Byron's Romantic poetry fairly quickly entered the Slovene cultural conscience: it was extensively translated and influential in the second half of the 19th century, albeit with short time-lags. As we have seen, the majority of the translations are of an enviable artistic value and represent a significant part of Slovene Romantic heritage in the poetry of the century. After 1833, when Prešeren began to work on the translation of *Parisina*, we had to wait for another 124 years to get the first collection of Byron's selected poems in Slovene translation in 1956.²⁹ Likewise, the influence of Lord Byron's poetry on the Slovene poets of the second half of the 19th century

²⁸ Griša Koritnik, *Listič iz angleške lirike (A Leaf from English Lyric Poetry)*. Ljubljana: a private edition, 1929.

Griša Koritnik (1886—1969) was a poet, novelist, journalist and translator. At the beginning of the 20th century he wrote verse under the influence of the Modern (Zupancič, Murn). Koritnik is undoubtedly the foremost and the most prolific Slovene translator of poetry from English and American literatures before the Second World War (Poe, Shelley, Kipling, Conrad, and many other authors). In 1932 he privately financed the publication of his selected translations from English and American lyrical poetry.

²⁹ Lord Byron, *Pesmi (Poems)*, Ljubljana: SKZ TLdp, 1956, Mala knjižnica 68, translated by Janez Menart.

has not been negligible, and, what is more, »Byronism« in literature was indeed very strong. In the first half of the 20th century, however, until 1945, Byron's work literally fell into oblivion, for the two short poems in Slovene translation can hardly be regarded as an achievement.