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The ways of Czech literary reportage : summary

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SUMMARY

The Ways of Czech Literary Reportage

In the introductory part of *The Ways of Czech Literary Reportage*, the author applies the methods of literary studies originally conceived for analysing fictional narratives to reportage texts, with the aim of establishing whether (and to what degree) the genre of reportage fits the criteria concerned; particular attention is paid to the relationship between the fictional world and the actual world within reportage, the narrator in reportage as a literary character and the narrator's legitimization strategies.

Using world literature examples, the author aspires to capture the gradual crystallization of reportage's approach to reality up to the emergence of a separate genre in the 1920s and 1930s; he also takes into consideration the discussions that accompanied the formation of reportage (E. E. Kisch, G. Lukács).

Further on, the book contains profiles of key figures and phenomena in the evolution of Czech-language reportage from its 19th century antecedence to the peak of its development in the 1930s and early 1940s.

While antecedents to reportage are found in the works of Milota Zdirad Polák, Josef Kajetán Tyl, Božena Němcová and Jan Neruda, the war reportage of Emanuel Škatula is positioned beyond the genre's antecedence and on the verge of classic 20th century reportage writing. The book notes the disruption in the logic of the genre's development caused by the efforts to satisfy imported requirements in the 1950s and its difficult recovery in the 1960s.

The core of the book, however, lies in the analysis of reportage writing by authors whose main body of work consists of fiction but reportage nevertheless forms an important component of their legacy: Jarmila Glazarová (*Chudá*

přadlena; Leningrad), Ivan Olbracht (*Hory a staletí*) and Adolf Branald (*Ztráty a nálezy*); the book is also concerned with the reportage writings popular at their time, by S. K. Neumann, G. Včelička, K. Čapek, J. Fučík, L. Aškenazy and others. Travel-related reportage writings are only considered if they constitute an important phenomenon within literary history or from a social point of view (J. Hanzelka a M. Zikmund, V. Šťovíčková).

The book endeavours to illustrate both the inspirational and the constricting influences of the literary and social developments in Czech environment on the genre of reportage; it aims to demonstrate the manner in which its key literary figures – all considerably diverse as artistic types – reacted in their writing to both the progress and the constricted possibilities of creating reportage, while emphasizing the variety and diversity of creative approaches to reportage which resulted from these circumstances.