

## PREFACE\*

In December 1990, in a plebiscite convened by the new democratically elected parliament, Slovenes in Slovenia, one of the six socialist republics of Yugoslavia, decided that they wanted a sovereign and independent republic. Six months later, on 25 June 1991, the new state of the Republic of Slovenia was proclaimed. In January 1992, Slovenia was recognized by the European Community, and on 7 April 1992, by the United States of America. On 22 May 1992, the Republic of Slovenia was formally elected as a full member of the Organization of United Nations.

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Largely mountainous and wooded, the Republic of Slovenia has a very diverse topography, ranging from the Julian Alps—its highest point is Mt. Triglav at 9,369 feet (2,864 m.)—to the Karst, with its portion of the Mediterranean Adriatic coast, and to the Lower Pannonian plain. The main rivers are the Sava, Drava and Mura, which flow into the Danube, and the Soča, which empties into the Adriatic. There are no lakes of great size in Slovenia, the largest being Bohinj and Bled, two of the most beautiful lakes in the Eastern Alps.

Slovenia belongs to Central Europe. For centuries it was part of the Habsburg Empire which left indelible traces in the personality and psychology of Slovenes. Two main factors shaped their character: the historical openness of their lands to the west, and Western cultural traditions and dedication to freedom. The cities of Slovenia include its capital, Ljubljana, 130 miles from Vienna and 100 miles from Venice; Maribor, the center of northeastern Slovenia; Koper, a seaport on the Adriatic within reach of Trieste; and Celje and Kranj—each and every one markedly Central European in character, sharing with Central Europe a common standard of living, educational level and general cultural orientation. Part of the Slovene nation lives outside the Republic: in adjoining areas in Austrian Carinthia, in the areas of Trieste and the Friuli-Venezia Giulia provinces in Italy, and in the Porabje region, along the river Raba (Raab) in Hungary. The predominant religion of Slovenes is Roman Catholicism with a slight Protestant minority in the northeastern area of Slovene ethnic territory.

The republic of Slovenia has two universities (one in Ljubljana, and one in Maribor), a Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts in Ljubljana, three academies of the arts, a number of prominent scientific research institutes (among the most notable is the Jožef Stefan Nuclear Research Institute with a reactor center in Ljubljana), and a modern system of general education,

with virtually no illiteracy. Nearly 6% of the population has attained higher education, and almost 33% of all university graduates are in the field of technical sciences and engineering. The most widely taught foreign languages starting in primary school are English and German, the languages of international discourse for the educated, for scholars, and in commerce and trade in the world today.

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By the end of the sixth century, Slavic tribes had penetrated through the Roman provinces of Pannonia and Noricum as far as Carinthia and eastern Tyrol. They settled the Eastern Alpine valleys of the Raba (Raab), Mura (Mur), Drava (Drau), Zilja (Gail), and the Sava river as far as its sources and the sources of its tributaries, to the upper stream of the Enns river; along the Bela river (Fella) in Kanalska dolina (Val Canale), the Nadiža (Natisone), and the upper and middle Soča river (Isonzo) up to the “*limes Langobardorum*,” at the entrance to the fertile plain between the Carnic Alps and the Gulf of Venice. By the seventh century the ancestors of today’s Slovenes had formed the Principality of Karantania which is said to have been part of a Slavic tribal union between the river Elbe and the Adriatic Sea, ruled by Samo, a former Frankish merchant (623-658 A.D.). After his death, Karantania remained a free principality until 820 A.D. By that time, its Slovene population was converted and became part of the Latin Christian civilization. The early ninth century Carolingian practice of allowing “*nationes*” of the Empire to use basic liturgical and homiletic texts in the vernacular, fostered the creation of the Slovenes’ oldest written texts, the Old Slovene Freising fragments, their first linguistic records (by A.D. 1000). At the turn of the millennium, new Marches were created in what subsequently would come to be known as Carniola (Kranjsko), Styria (Štajersko), and the adjoining coastline of Istria and Trieste, still later the county of Gorizia and Gradisca (Gorica in Gradiščansko), which soon represented the backbone of the Habsburg holdings in the expanding Austrian Empire.

The earliest printed texts in Slovene, from the very first Catechismus and Abecedarium of 1550 (Primož Trubar, 1508-1586), to a complete translation of the Bible (Jurij Dalmatin, 1547-1589), and the first Grammar of the new language (Adam Bohorič, *Arcticae horulae*) in 1584, marked a revolutionary turn in the cultural tradition of Eastern Alpine Slavs. With the concept of a native mother tongue in place, the first vernacular translations and compositions began to appear in print, and the collective historical experience of a new language community in the making began putting out roots. The idea of belonging had been activated. From now on, a stable, historically evolving community of Slavic speakers—with its common

territory, economic life, distinctive culture, and with a shared language in common—gradually developed throughout the centuries into a national community.

Thus, one would be inclined to suggest that by the turn of the eighteenth century, Johann Gottfried von Herder's ideas of native national cultures and cultural self-determinism, as argued in his *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (1784-1791), only confirmed and corroborated the historical, linguistic and cultural arguments with which the first generation of a new breed of Slovene intellectuals, Tomaž Linhart (1756-1795), Baron Žiga Zois (1747-1819), Valentin Vodnik (1758-1819), Jernej Kopitar (1780-1844), defined and interpreted, as it were, the scope, bounds and limits of the program of the Slovene national awakening.

The very next generation of Slovene men of letters, Matija Cop (1799-1836), France Prešeren (1800-1849), were already part of a new Slovene middle-class that subscribed to the Romantic Schlegelian vision of the variety and pluralism of national societies and the polyphony of their languages, literatures and cultures for a world of tomorrow:

*Every free and independent nation should claim the right to a native literature; that is, an idiomatic literary development of language. Without a native literature, the national genius will never be self-possessed, or enjoy an immunity from barbaric associations...*

and, again:

*The guardianship of the language of a country is, as it were, confided to the care of the upper classes of society—let them not abuse that trust. It should be the earnest endeavour of every educated person to maintain inviolate the purity of his native language by precept and practice.* (Schlegel, 1815).

A new voice marching independently alongside the Slovene men of letters was a new generation of intellectual-realists of the time: Janez Bleiweis (1818-1881), Matija Majar Ziljski (1809-1892), Anton Martin Slomšek (1800-1862), and younger Slovene intellectuals in Graz and Vienna, e.g., Franc Miklosich (1813-1891), Matej Cigale (1819-1889), and Peter Kozler (1824-1879), who in April 1848 formulated the Slovene political program of a United Slovenia (*Zedinjena Slovenija*). This program defined the coordinates of an ethnic Slovenia in the framework of the Habsburg monarchy, and was premised on the spatial axis of the speech

community of the Slovene language at that time.

It is astonishing how well France Prešeren, and the progeny of the Slovene men of letters who followed him, understood Friedrich Schlegel's challenge. Their leaders, Franc Levstik (1831-1887), Josip Stritar (1836-1923), Ivan Tavčar (1851-1923) Ivan Cankar (1876-1918), Oton Župančič (1878-1949), Srečko Kosovel (1904-1926), Edvard Kocbek (1904-1981); and their successors, our contemporaries, Ivan Minatti (\*1924), Tone Pavček (\*1928), Janez Menart (\*1929), Dane Zajc (\*1929), Venko Taufer (\*1933), Tomaž Šalamun (\*1941), and Dimitrij Rupel (\*1946), assumed a charismatic intellectual leadership of the new nation with a strong sense of personal identity and collective responsibility for the community of their cultural and linguistic order. The essence of their mission, now, is to continue to build cultural advance at home and national prestige abroad, as well as to promote intellectual alliances and the course of nonaggressive nationalism in the world.

We cannot but concur with Raymond B. Cattell, that in addition to the greatest of literary figures—the Shakespeares, Goethes and Tolstoys—every society that would eventually survive has to develop and possess a group of realists in government and among the intellectual elite, who are sufficiently self-disciplined to face the inexorable demands of the physical and economic world, and are prepared to stand up against the perennial weedy growth of the instant pleasure principle in humanity (Cattell, 1987:133).

In the prelude to the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy the grandsons of those Slovene intellectuals who had created the first political program for a Unified Slovenia (1848) were suddenly faced with a historical existential dilemma: to stand by the pragmatism of their own national program, or to accept the phantom of Yugoslavism, conceding an ultimate self-sacrifice of Slovene linguistic and national identity. The crucial question of the day, how can a small nation, wedged between Germanic and Romance speaking Europe, survive and remain independent? helped to resolve the decision. In 1918, a truncated Slovenia entered the “Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes,” in 1929, renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and in 1945, the Federal Peoples' Republic of Yugoslavia.

Three generations later, the realism of a small nation prevailed once again. Indeed, one of the most obvious causes for understanding changes, so easily ignored and forgotten by historians is the fact that human beings are mortal and are inevitably replaced by new individuals and new generations (Kristeller, 1979:108). And it is these new generations who in the long run decide how much of what they have received from their predecessors will be

preserved or changed, abandoned or destroyed.

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*The Voices from the Slovene Nation, 1990-1992*, offers the first representative international collection of essays on Slovenia by a cross-section of intellectual leaders of the new nation. Ivan Gams' paper gives an overview of the geographic space of the Republic of Slovenia. The first section of the volume is addressed to the contemporary setting of the Slovene nation. Eight papers here are devoted to the contemporary intellectual and political scene of the new republic, some of them by prominent political leaders in the government: Francè Bučar ("Slovenia in Europe"), Dimitrij Rupel ("Slovenia in Post-Modern Europe"), and Jože Mencinger ("The Slovene Economy"). Others are by a number of leading intellectuals of Slovenia today: Valentin Hribar ("Slovene Statehood"), Niko Toš ("Democratization Processes in Slovenia, 1980-1990"), Zdenko Roter ("The Church and Contemporary Slovene History"), and Drago Jančar ("Slovene Exile").

In the second part of the volume, five papers speak about several historical and modern cultural aspects of Slovenia: Jože Pirjevec (University of Trieste), "Yugoslavia, 1918-1991"; Janko Kos (University of Ljubljana), "Slovene Literature"; Ivan Urbančič (University of Ljubljana), "Slovene Philosophy"; Tomaž Brejc (Ljubljana), "Slovene Images"; and Lojže Lebič (Ljubljana), "Slovene Music."

The third part of the volume is set apart—symbolically, as it were—to the theme of the survival of a small nation, Slovenes, on the crossroad of Central Europe. The essay "Slovenes in the Hapsburg Empire or Monarchy" by Peter Vodopivec (University of Ljubljana), is dedicated to this underlying motif of the *Voices from the Slovene Nation, 1990-1992*.

The Appendices bring a "Chronology of Events (1990-1992)" by Dušan Nečak (University of Ljubljana), a portrayal of "Slovene Political Parties" by Bojan Balkovec (Ljubljana), and a "Provisional Chronological List of States Which Have Recognized the Independence and the Sovereignty of the Republic of Slovenia."

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\* The "country on the sunny side of the Alps," the REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA (Slovene SLOVENIJA) lies between Italy to the West, Austria to the North, Hungary to the northeast, and Croatia to the southeast.

AREA: 7,819 sq. mi. (20,251 sq. km.)

POPULATION (1991): 1,989,000, most of whom are Slovenes (94%)

CAPITAL AND LARGEST CITY Ljubljana (estimated 1991 population: 300,000)

LANGUAGE: Slovene, a South Slavic Language

CURRENCY: Tolar

HEAD OF STATE: Milan Kučan.

GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT (1990, at market prices, in millions of dollars): 11,414.5

FOREIGN TRADE (1991) Imports, of goods: \$4,125 million; of services: 496 million dollars. Import sources: West Germany 23.2%, Italy 15.8%, France 11.7%, Austria 9.0%, Soviet Union 6.4%, USA 4.0%. Exports, of goods: 3,885, of services: 1,092 millions dollars. Export destinations: West Germany 22.2%, Italy 18.2%, Soviet Union 13.3%, France 9.5%, East Germany 5.4%, USA 4.6%. Main exports (1991): textile products 12.0%, transportation equipment 11.6%, machinery and equipment 11.2%, electrical machinery and appliances 10.0%, furniture 6.10%, pharmaceutical products 3.6%.

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Washington, DC