

## NOTE

### AT THE ROOTS OF THE SLOVENE INTELLECTUAL DISASSOCIATION FROM THE ILLYRIAN MOVEMENT

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Anton Linhart, *Poskus zgodovine Kranjske in ostalih dežel južnih Slovanov Avstrije*, 1 in 2. Ed. Bogo Grafenauer. Commentaries: Bogo Grafenauer, Jaro Šašel, Franc Zwitter. Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 1981. 400 pp. 4 maps.

#### I

It is known that Anton Tomaž Linhart's two volume *Versuch einer Geschichte von Krain und den übrigen Ländern der südlichen Slaven Österreichs* (An Attempt at a History of Carniola and the Other Lands of the South Slavs of Austria) (Laibach: W. H. Korn, 1788-1791), represents one of the most significant fountainheads of the concept of the modern Slovene nation. It was Linhart (1756-1795) who first defined the ethnogenetic unity of the "Slaven in Innerösterreich": the Carniolans, Winds (Vinds) and Slovenes in Carinthia and Lower Styria of the time; their common Slavic roots; their oldest historical polity in a pre-Frankish Karantania; the territorial and linguistic individuality of what was later conceived as a Slovene nation. Written and published at the height of the Central European Enlightenment movement, it had a powerful impact on the generation of men whom Slovene history credits with the rise of Slovene Romantic nationalism: the philologists Blaž Kumerdej and Jurij Japelj, the ethnographer and naturalist Baltazar Hacquet, the poet and historian Valentin Vodnik, and of course, the Slavist Jernej Kopitar (Zwitter 1939; Petrovich 1963). It is also recognized that Linhart's *Versuch* might never have been realized without Baron Sigismund Zois' help; and that it was his own, Baron Zois', vision of the Slovenes as a nation with a historical personality which generated the basic thread of Slovene cultural evolution of the entire nineteenth century. Hence the significance of Linhart's *Versuch* in Slovene historiography.

The recent publication of a somewhat abridged translation of Linhart's *Versuch* in Slovene has been prepared by a team of Slovene historians: Bogo Grafenauer, Jaro Šašel, and Franc Zwitter. What has been omitted in the edition are Linhart's dedications of his volumes addressed to the authorities of the Inner Austrian and Carniolan administration; a part of Linhart's scholarly "apparatus" consisting in quotations from Greek and Latin primary sources (these citations have been replaced with references to the same passages in the more readily available *Gradivo za zgodovino Slovencev v srednjem veku*, by Franc Kos (Ljubljana, 1902-1928); and the table "Das slavische Alphabet," originally part of the second volume of *Versuch*. Linhart's four maps of the original edition: a section of the Ptolemy's chart showing Slovene lands; *Tabula antiquae Regionis inter Dravum fluvium et Mare Adriaticum*; *Conspectus Karantaniae*; and a map of the old Emona-Ljubljana of Roman times; are also reprinted and appended to this edition.

The scholarly apparatus of the Slovene version of Linhart's *Versuch* makes its publication very close to what one understands as a "critical edition" of the text. There is Zwitter's essay "*Linhartova doba, misel in delo*" (pp. 303-350) in the volume, defining Linhart's time, conceptual world and work; and there are annotations and commentaries to Linhart's text from the point of view of recent scholarship in archeology, ethnogenesis and history. The authors of these commentaries are: Jaro Šašel for the first, and Bogo Grafenauer for the second book. These commentaries, concise, critical and packed with up-to-date references to modern scholarship, are most informative and worthy of the names of their authors. They will serve as a most useful orientation in reading this very first text of Slovene historiography.

The publication of Linhart's *Versuch* in a Slovene translation is certainly more than a token "of Slovene culture's piety and respect for its author," as formulated in the introduction to the volume. As a serious attempt at a first *critical* edition of this work, it is also a silent reminder to the historian of the South Slavic national revival that Linhart's work belongs among the most important primary sources of Slavic linguistic Romanticism. It is therefore timely and important to call our readers' attention to at least one nexus of ideas in Linhart's *Versuch* which has been little known so far among historians and which for some reason has not been sufficiently elucidated even in the present Slovene edition. The nexus we have in mind contains a cluster of ideas, novel and weighty, which much later became part and parcel of Jernej Kopitar's seminal "Patriotic Visions of a Slav" (1811) (Miklosich 1857:61-70), and of the all-Slavic culturological programs of P. J. Šafárik and Jan Kollár.

## II

We are referring, of course, to Linhart's Introduction to the second volume of his *Versuch*, written in January 1791 (pp. XIV-XXIV), containing the first known formulation of the idea of a cultural *Austro-Slavism*, and the first known critical refutation of the application of the name *Illyrian* to the South Slavic peoples.

Linhart's concept of Austro-Slavism as taken up by Kopitar, is sufficiently known from Kopitar's *Grammar* (Kopitar 1808), where he wrote: ". . . the Slavic subjects of the Emperor of Austria are entitled to a warming and salubrious ray of sunlight from their government: from the twenty millions who live under this scepter, thirteen millions are pure and simple Slavs, and only the remaining seven—Germans, Hungarians, Jews and others" (Kopitar 1808:XIX). A few years later this idea was shaped into a linguistic and scholarly program in Kopitar's "Patriotic Visions of a Slav" (1811). Speaking about things needed and desired in the Monarchy, Kopitar repeated: "Austria rules over Slavs of all dialects. . . . It would therefore be fair to also provide for all of them. And all of them . . . would be provided for if at the University of Vienna in addition to the Chair for Bohemian and other languages, one would also be established for the Old Slavic language, to which all present-day dialects come increasingly closer, the further one follows them back to the source. For that very reason, Old Slavic has a common interest for all Slavists; but for the Austrian Slavist it has a special interest, for this language is properly at home here. . ." (Miklosich 1857:70). It is also known that fifteen years later Kopitar's words were almost verbatim repeated in Šafárik's *Geschichte der slawischen Sprache und Literatur nach allen Mundarten* (1826), and still later in Jan Kollár's *Über die literarische Wechselseitigkeit der verschiedenen Stämmen und Mundarten der slawischen Nation* (1837). In order to stress that his *Wechselseitigkeit* is but a literary culturological concept, not aimed at changing the existing order in the Monarchy, Jan Kollár even appealed to Linhart's position by citing from his *Versuch* 2, XV: ". . . too little attention has been paid even today to the fact that among the peoples of the Austrian monarchy the Slavs dominate in number and strength; that, were it customary in political science to name the sum of the united forces upon which the greatness of this state reposes according to its greatest homogenous power, Austria would have to be called a Slavic state every bit as much as Russia. . . ."

Linhart's criticism of the application of the Illyrian name to Slavs, suggested before him by two contemporary German historians, J. Thumann (1774) and F. V. von Taube (1777), on the other hand,

reads as an entirely rationalistic statement, in total resignation and dissonance with the tradition of the "baroque Slavism" of the time: "As a historian of the Slavs, let me be permitted to express on this occasion the wish that scholars at least would not encourage the use of names which, after once having been critically elucidated, have lost their sense in Slavic literature. I am referring to such terms as: *Illyrian nation, Illyrian language, Illyrian Court Chancery*. Illyria no longer exists. Illyrians no longer live anywhere. . ." (*Versuch 2*, XVI).

Linhart's refutation of the Illyrian name, scholarly and valid as it was, could not and did not change the direction of the march of historical events linked with this name: in 1791 Leopold reconstituted the *Illyrian Court Chancery* which had been dissolved in 1771; in 1809 Napoleon annexed a large part of the Austrian South Slavic lands to the French empire as the "*Illyrian provinces*" with its capital in Ljubljana (1809-1815); in 1816 a short-lived Austrian "*Kingdom of Illyria*" was created in the Monarchy (1816-1849); and early in the 1830's the "*Illyrian Movement*" of a Croatian national revival, growing out of the centuries-long Dalmatian Humanistic tradition, started in Croatian lands, and began to rally a South Slavic version of pan-Slavism.

It would, however, be inconceivable to think that Linhart's judgment, his distrust and refutation of the usage of the Illyrian name for Slavic peoples did not have an influence on the generation of educated men of the Slovene Revival (1768-1818). Their rationalism and loyalty to the non-educated masses prepared the ground for a rejection of the invitation to join the Illyrian Movement, and a subsequent consistent disassociation with any attempt to participate in repeated efforts for South Slavic linguistic integration. For some unknown reason this aspect of the history of the Illyrian question among Slovenes is very little known among Western scholars (see, e.g., Kohn 1953, Despalatović 1975, Rogel 1977, Behschnitt 1980), and would certainly deserve to be registered.

### III

In hopes that the dissemination of Linhart's text might lead to a better understanding of the evolution of the Illyrian language question among Slovenes, we offer here the critical passages of his Introduction to the second volume of the *Attempt at a History of Carniola and the Other Lands of the South Slavs of Austria* (1791) in English translation (the asterisked references are from Linhart's text, the references with Arabic numerals are mine):

“ . . . The thread which I was following so painfully through the first part of this essay<sup>1</sup> leads me finally to the Slavs in the South of Germany.<sup>2</sup> I have dedicated my efforts in particular to this race of glorious people.

The learned world has long agreed that the Slavs, though hardly noticed in the gray dawn of time, have expanded as have no other people; that they stood in all their powerful and vast expanse, ready to destroy and raise kingdoms, before Rome and Byzantium knew their names; that they even now dominate or inhabit nearly half of Europe and Asia; that no people merit as they the attention of the historian, the philosopher, and the statesman.<sup>3</sup>

It seems to me, however, that too little attention has been paid even today to the fact that among the peoples of the Austrian monarchy the Slavs dominate in number and strength; that, were it customary in political science to name the sum of the united forces upon which the greatness of this state reposes according to its greatest homogeneous power, Austria would have to be called a Slavic state every bit as much as Russia. If we wish to convince ourselves of this, let us glance over the lands from the Adriatic Sea moving up across Inner Austria, Hungary and the adjoining Kingdoms, with a look down toward the east across Galicia and Lodomeria, across Silesia, Moravia and Bohemia; let us count the millions of Slavs and judge who they are in Austria and what they mean for Austria.<sup>4</sup>

It seems that the Illyrian Court Chancery (*Illyrische Hofkanzlei*) introduced an interesting era for the Hungarian Slavs, for whom it was established.<sup>5</sup> As a historian of the Slavs, however, let me be permitted to express on this occasion the wish that scholars at least would not encourage the use of names which, after once having been critically elucidated, have lost their sense in Slavic literature. I am referring to such terms as: *Illyrian nation*, *Illyrian language*, *Illyrian Court Chancery*. Illyria no longer exists. Illyrians no longer live anywhere in the spacious Austrian lands, but for a small group of *Clementini* who came from Albania in 1737 and now live in five villages in Srem along the Sava River.\* The Slavonians, Croatians, Dalmatians, and their brothers in the Banat, in Hungary and in Siebenbuergen<sup>6</sup> are not Illyrians but Slavs who in the sixth and seventh centuries occupied the former Illyrian lands and participated in pushing the old settlers into the Albanian mountains. There, between the Ionian Sea and Macedonia, between Montenegro and Neokastro,<sup>7</sup> the old Illyrians still live. They call themselves Skipatar<sup>8</sup>

\*Cf. the report on this people in the *Historische und geographische Beschreibung des Königreiches Slavonien und des Herzogthums Syrmien*, by the State Councillor, Mr. F. W. von Taube. Leipzig 1777.

and their language is not Slavic. This people represent a distinct ethnic group and we should not mix it either with the Slavs or with any other European people.\*\*

The descendants of the old Illyrians are therefore the Shqipetars and not the Slavs in Slavonia, Croatia, Dalmatia, etc. Misunderstanding, vain patriotism or desire for esteem has led Slavic historians to misuse the history of the Illyrians and to spread the fictitious idea that the Slavs are descended from them in order to provide the Slavic nation (whose ancient history they do not know) with a past honorable in deed and fate of this once so glorious Illyrian people. Regrettable is the fact that this mistake was repeated in the immortal work of Catherine the Great: *Linguarum totius orbis vocabularia comparativa Augustissimae cura collecta. Pars prior.* Petropoli 1786.<sup>9</sup> Among two hundred European and Asiatic languages listed here, the *Illiriskij* is labelled a Slavic dialect, while the real *Illiriskij*, which is not Slavic, appears again under the name *Albanskij*.

My readers will notice that I am not trying in any way to do any wrong to the Shqipetars in Albania. When I speak of Illyrian Slavs, I have in mind not the Illyrians, but the Slavs living in old Illyria. In a similar way, we also usually speak of the German Slavs as if they were Hungarian Slavs. . . .”

[From: A. T. Linhart, *Versuch einer Geschichte von Krain und den übrigen Ländern der südlichen Slaven Österreichs.* Zweiter Band (Laibach, 1791), XIV-XVIII.]

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\*\*Cf. J. Thumann, *Untersuchungen über die Geschichte der östlichen europäischen Völker*, Part I. Leipzig 1774.

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## NOTES

1. Viz., *Versuch einer Geschichte von Krain und den übrigen Ländern der südlichen Slaven Österreichs*, I (1788).

2. I.e., to the Slavic population of Inner Austria, genetically Slovenes.

3. All basic tenets of the ideology of "baroque Slavism," which still dominated Slavic intellectual life of the time. See, Rudo Brtáň, *Barokový slavizmus. Porovnávačia štúdia z dejín slovanskej slovesnosti*. Liptovský Sv. Mikuláš, 1939.

4. The allusion to the territorial spread and the "millions" of Slavs is based on August L. Schlözer's favorite assessment of Slavic peoples; cf. his *Nordische Geschichte* (Halle, 1777), 222. It is known as a "baroque Slavism" topos. Kopitar used it to quantify the millions of Slavs in his *Grammar* (1808) and repeated it again and again in his works.

5. Formed by Maria Theresa in 1745, as the "*Hofkommission in Banaticis, Transylvanicis, et Illyricis*," since 1747 known as "*the Illyrian Court Deputation*"; it was abolished in 1777. In 1791 Leopold reconstituted it as the "*Transylvanian-Illyrian Court Chancery*."

6. I.e., Transylvania.

7. I.e., modern Albanian Gjinokastër.

8. Shqipetars, i.e. Albanians.

9. This survey of more than two hundred languages in Europe and Asia was edited by the famous German traveller and natural scientist P. S. Pallas; it appeared in 1786-87.