

SLOVENE AND CROATIAN LANDS IN THE
SIXTEENTH CENTURY
(A GEOGRAPHICAL FRAMEWORK)*

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The end of the middle ages in Europe opened the horizons to a new world of far away lands and produced fundamental changes in European territorial perceptions by replacing the continental dominance of the middle ages with the global world interests of the new era.

The Slovene and Croatian lands were only marginally affected by these changes.¹ The pattern that had evolved throughout the first half of the second millenium persisted into the modern era. The expansion of the European domains of the Ottoman Empire, the growth and consolidation of the Habsburg territories, had greater impact upon these territories than the opening of the transatlantic ways to the new world.

The political and dynastic systems of Europe split the Slovene and Croatian lands into four major territorial units (Map I); by the end of the century a fifth emerged as somewhat separate:

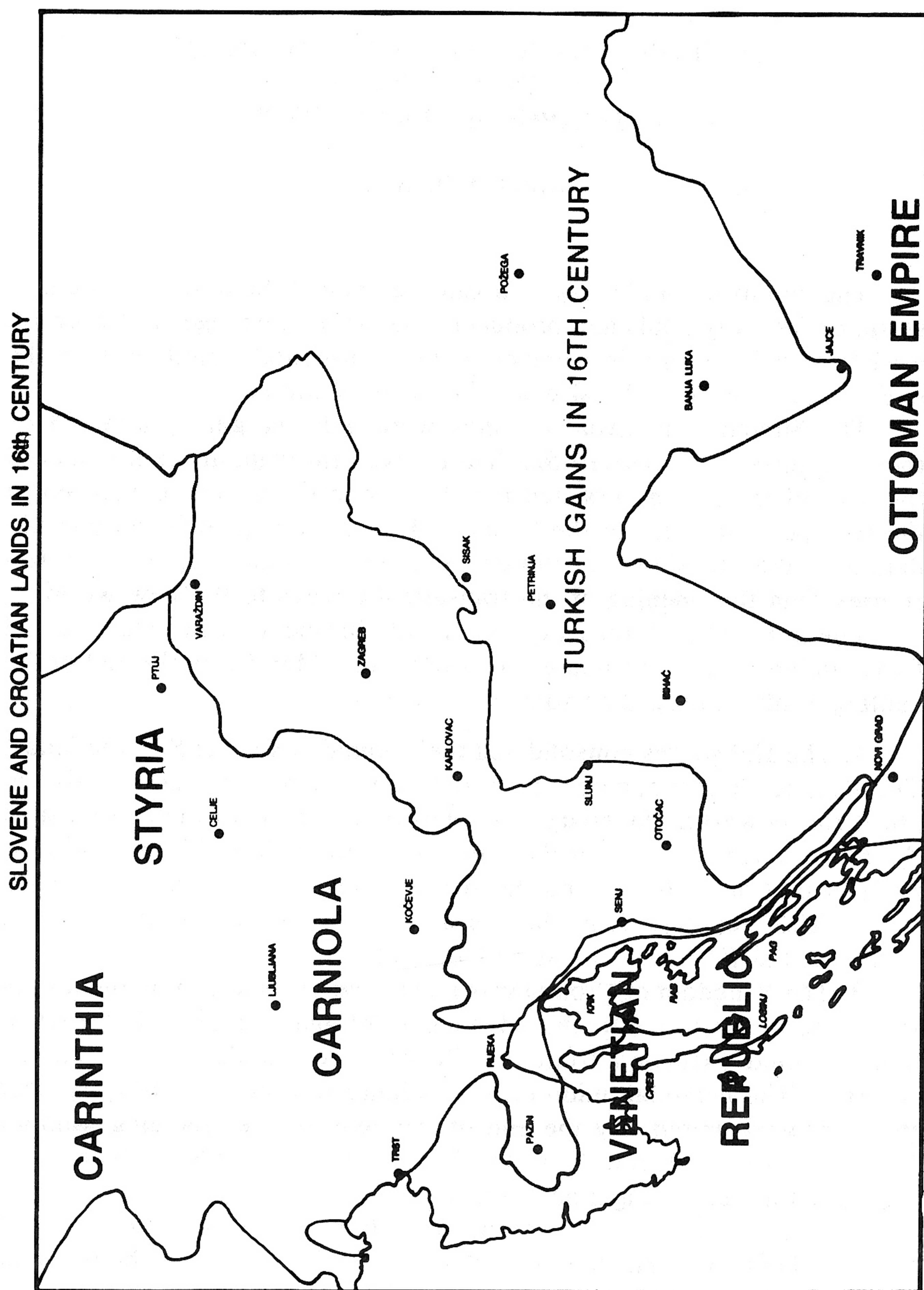
1. The Habsburgs consolidated their domain over the Slovene lands. The decline of autonomous territorial domains of the feudal lords enabled the powerful Habsburgs to solidify their hold to include most of the Slovene lands, which at the time consisted of Carinthia, Styria, Carniola, a portion of Istria, and the Adriatic coast in the Gulf of Trieste.

2. The Venetian Republic controlled most of Istria, the Slovene Benečija, the Kvarner Islands and Dalmatia.

3. The Kingdom of Croatia was most severely reduced by the loss of the Eastern territories to the advancing Ottoman Empire. The narrow band of land extended from the Drava River to Zagreb and to the Kvarner. The personal union or joint administration with Hungary kept the territories united. By the end of the century the emerging Military Frontier,² governed from Graz and Vienna, took sizeable lands from direct Croatian and Hungarian control.

4. The Ottoman Empire extended its domain over large segments of Croatian lands both north and south of the Sava River after the battle at Mohács in 1526.

*Maps accompanying this article were prepared by the Cartographic Laboratory, Department of Geography, University of Washington, Seattle.



Map I

Each controlling power: the Venetian Republic, the Habsburgs, the Kingdom of Croatia in union with Hungary, the Ottoman Empire and finally the Military Frontier (Vojna Krajina) imposed its own system of government, taxation, commerce, administration of justice and relationship with the Church. The implementation of these systems created different social and territorial patterns in the lands. Their contrasting infrastructures provided vastly different bases for the diffusion of the most revolutionary movement of the sixteenth century: the spread of Protestantism. The centers of decision making regarding the Slovene and Croatian lands were Vienna, Graz, Venice, Budapest, Rome and Istanbul rather than Zagreb, Ljubljana, Rijeka, Trieste or Klagenfurt. A vestige of sovereign decisionmaking was retained by the end of the sixteenth century in Zagreb, though the territorial extent of its domain shrank to about one third of historical Croatia. The unification of the Slovene lands under the Habsburgs led to a reduction of autonomous control of local dukes, bishops and principalities and provided a unifying though external framework for institutional operations. The geographical frame of the lands included the physical constraints imposed by the configuration of the land, the jurisdictional imposition of political and administrative control, and the technological stage of society.

Not much has changed in the physical configuration between the sixteenth century and modern times. Minor modifications of the landscape consist of the changes of coastline west of Devin and around Koper, the relocation of the Ljubljanica River through Barje, the connection of Klagenfurt with the Wörthersee, modification of the Sava River channel downstream from Krško and improved drainage of the Cerknjško jezero and the outlet from Čepičko jezero in Istria. These and other post-sixteenth century modifications had only a minimal impact upon the people and their activities.

It can be reasonably assumed that differences in the physical impact of geographical constraints between the sixteenth century and today are due to the advancement of technology, the reshaping of institutional organization, and the fundamental change in the modes of production in the subsequent centuries.

For the purpose of this essay, the Dalmatian Coast under the control of Venice or Dubrovnik will not be considered. It was physically and politically separated from the mainland and did not directly participate in the political, social and economic events of the inland population.

The physical separation of territories and the effective control exercised by domestic and foreign rulers contrast with the stationary settlement system of rural communities and urban centers. Weak linkages between the territorial units and their external centers had only a minor impact on the everyday life of most Slovene and Croat populations. It is, therefore, improper to consider the Slovene and Croat lands

of the period as an integrated and cohesive entity in spite of the preponderance of one major external power: the Habsburgs. Coastal areas under Venetian control retained weak links with the Croatian interior; most evident is the autonomy of Split³ and the independence of Dubrovnik.⁴ The lands under Turkish control were subjected to profound transformations and retained contacts across the border with the king. The boundaries appear more impressive on the map than they did in reality. They did not prevent Turkish raids deep across Croatia into the Habsburg-controlled Slovene lands. In the opposite direction, trade across the borders was often impeded but not prevented. The records indicate that the Turks even expanded their trade contact with cities under both Croatian and Venetian control by often finding good bargains or collecting lucrative taxes on transported merchandise. Political fragmentation did not impede trade contacts between merchants in Slovene lands with those in Italy, nor by Slovene and Croatian merchants that extended their operation into Italy, nor by the Italian, Venetian, Jewish, German and other merchants that established their stations in Slovene and Croatian cities: Ljubljana, Ptuj, Karlovac, Zagreb, Kranj and others.⁵

In the background of the sixteenth century are the people who inhabited the lands, their formal and informal organizations, modes of production and their territorial organization.

The sixteenth century forces us to consider this frame at two levels: (a) the people and the land of self-sufficient communities, organized in villages, towns and small regions; and (b) the frame of larger political units, which are imposed and impose the superstructure of administration, political allegiance and economic dependencies dictated by the external bodies and modified as a response to events occurring elsewhere within the domain of each power. If ever, the Slovene and Croatian lands were under severe stress by being on the border: between the solid European domain of the Habsburgs and their allies in Hungary, and the menacing thrust of the Ottomans, with weak and sporadic intrusions of the Venetians.

These two levels of inhabitation and activities operated almost independently from each other, often considering each other more a nuisance than an obstacle or stimulus.

The permanency of the territorial organization was affected by the continuity of Church organization, the location of bishoprics and the strict definition of their jurisdictional boundaries. The adjustment of the boundaries of the Zagreb diocese, as discussed by L. Hauptmann,⁶ established the Croatian-Slovene border of Carniola on the approximate present alignment. The creation of the Ljubljana diocese in 1461 confirmed the identity of the node and reduced the dependence of the Slovene lands on the diocesan jurisdictions of Brixen, Salzburg and the

interference of Aquileia.⁷ The reduced dependency also resulted in the discontinuation of colonization in the Slovene lands by this period, and the lack of subsequent colonization in which the late eighteenth century affected the Pannonian Plain.⁸

The Ottoman expansion triggered a sizable migration which affected primarily the Croatian lands and the Croatian-Slovene border areas. While the Slovene lands were the target of considerable colonization in previous centuries (Kočevje, Škofja Loka) the sixteenth century did not affect them except for the spillover in Gorjanci and along the Kupa River. The Croatian lands, however, were subjected to two major systems of migration: the refugees from Turkish occupied territories, especially from Serbia and Bosnia,⁹ and the settlement of peasant-soldiers in the newly established Military Frontier.¹⁰ The period had witnessed a decay of numerous centers exposed to Turkish raids, and had seen great expansion and colonization of new nodes.

The social classes in medieval Europe—the Slovene and Croatian lands included—consisted of three principal groups: the peasants, the urban dwellers (burghers) and the nobility.¹¹ The economic, social and territorial life patterns were different for each group. They were subjected to different institutional and territorial constraints and reacted differently to the events of the period.

The largest group consisted of peasants, over 90 percent of the total population. Free peasants and those under serfdom were settled predominantly in agglomerated villages on or adjacent to their farmland.¹² Their self-sufficiency consisted in a balanced production and consumption with very marginal participation in the market exchange system: a small part of their production was available for external markets and their small buying power kept their demand for externally produced commodities at a minimum. This system did not stimulate the peasants to travel from their home ground except for the annual market to the village or seasonal market to the nearby city. The peasants, be they Slovene or Croatian settlers or German colonists, retained their local ties and created a mosaic-like pattern of local peculiarities in speech, dress, customs, and folklore.

The increased obligations of servitude led to the peasant revolts of 1515 and 1573. Their failure placed the peasants in a confirmed position of dependency with slim chance for improvement. Their ultimate faith was total subjugation to the *status quo* which also meant *locus quo*: they were confined to the same location. Neither the relationship with the cities, technique of cultivation, crop rotation, nor market opportunities changed during the period. The Protestant movement did not offer any hope either. Trubar himself severely criticized the excessive exploitation of the peasants, but at the same time denied his support to the peasants' cause.¹³ The peasants' lives were further aggravated by continuous ex-

posure to the Turkish raids, epidemics, and natural disasters such as floods and droughts.

The land division, the formation of villages and fragmentation of land holdings achieved its peak during the period.¹⁴ The increased fragmentation contributed to the further impoverishment of free peasants as well as those in tenancy relations. The *kajžarji* or small farmers proliferated. This impoverished social class contributed to rural overpopulation and underemployment, which were finally relieved with the opening of industrialization and overseas migration in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

The cities and towns, either market towns or cities established by royal charter, differed from the villages by their internal structure, by their functions, and by their institutional frame and people.¹⁵

The cities as centers of exchange, be it marketable commodities that were produced by craftsmen or obtained by merchants from external suppliers, obtained the right to regulate their judicial administration, to hold markets regularly, collect duties, and to be represented in the regional assemblies. The social group of the city population consisted of craftsmen, merchants, and various levels of nobility. The nobility had further extension to the countryside, into the castles and fortified mansions. In the territorial sense the cities could exist only where and when their external ties could provide for the city livelihood: as a market on the caravan road, a river crossing, or defense establishment. The functions of the city served both the local hinterland through the marketing of goods and services, as well as the nodes of a larger exchange system, tied to merchants and producers from far away lands, which supplied the city dwellers and the people in the countryside with such exotic commodities as silk, spices, tobacco and jewelry.¹⁶

The rights and the institutional arrangements of cities were strictly regulated in the middle ages and remained so regulated throughout the period up to the reform of Joseph II. Zwitter correctly rejects the idea that villages grew to become cities.¹⁷

The cities in general remained small, not exceeding five thousand for Trieste, four thousand for Ljubljana, and smaller for other Slovene cities; Koper reached 10,000 but was reduced to 2,300 by the plague of 1553-1554.

Although the city residents (as F.W. Carter states)¹⁸ often owned some land outside the city walls, their basic livelihood depended on nonagricultural activities.

The nobility consisted of landed gentry and titled gentry, distinction for this review resting primarily in the derivation of their support: from land production for one, from entitlement for the other. Landed gentry often maintained two residences, one in the city and a second in the castle or estate in the countryside. The titled nobility obtained their rev-

enue from custom rights, market dues and entitlement payments. The peasant revolt of 1515 and the Slovene-Croatian peasant uprising of 1573 affected the landed gentry but had little impact on the cities.

The towns and cities depended more on external aspects than on site-available resources; their prosperity or decline depended more on what happened far away than on what happened in the countryside that surrounded them. By royal grant they extracted dues and fees, had the privilege to hold open markets and extracted fees for merchandise or craft. Their dependency on the surrounding countryside was for food, their dependency on merchandise and handicraft products passed beyond the limits of their immediate surrounding and embraced the lands far beyond the limit of Slovene and Croatian territories.

Through these external links the towns and cities prospered or faded, the links evident in travel routes, caravan lines, either contemporary modification of the old Roman linkages, or traced on the landscape by traveling caravans forced to pass through established gateways and paying the dues, or avoiding them.

The peasant world was becoming Slovene by virtue of Slovene dominance in the core area and for the isolation of earlier German colonization (Škofja Loka, Kočevje) now subjected to Slovenization, not yet completed by the time of Trubar.

The cities had their own life. The people of these cities were linguistically and socially separated from the people in the countryside, and as a consequence the principal cities, Ljubljana, Zagreb, Rijeka, Banja Luka, embraced residents of more than one nationality. The existing system, nevertheless, did not encourage the settlement of people of different religions. The bishop retained the dominant role in screening the new arrivals, by virtue of granted authority.

The traveling merchants had little need to be integrated into the residential community of the city or market town. It is, therefore, not unusual in the territories under discussion as well as elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe, that the merchants and travelers were not of the same ethnic strand as the peasants or even craftsmen city dwellers, but they were functionally tied into an integrated system. The residents in Slovene cities included both Slovene and non-Slovene population, Italian, German, Jewish merchants and craftsmen. Similarly the Croatian cities harbored ethnically cosmopolitan population of Hungarian, Bohemians, Italians, Germans and Jews.

These observations are helpful for the understanding of the spread of the Protestant movement in the Slovene and Croatian lands and provide an explanation for the success of Trubar and his associates among the city residents, Germans, Slovenes, or Croats and the very limited impact on the peasants.¹⁹

The population of the Slovene lands in the sixteenth century was

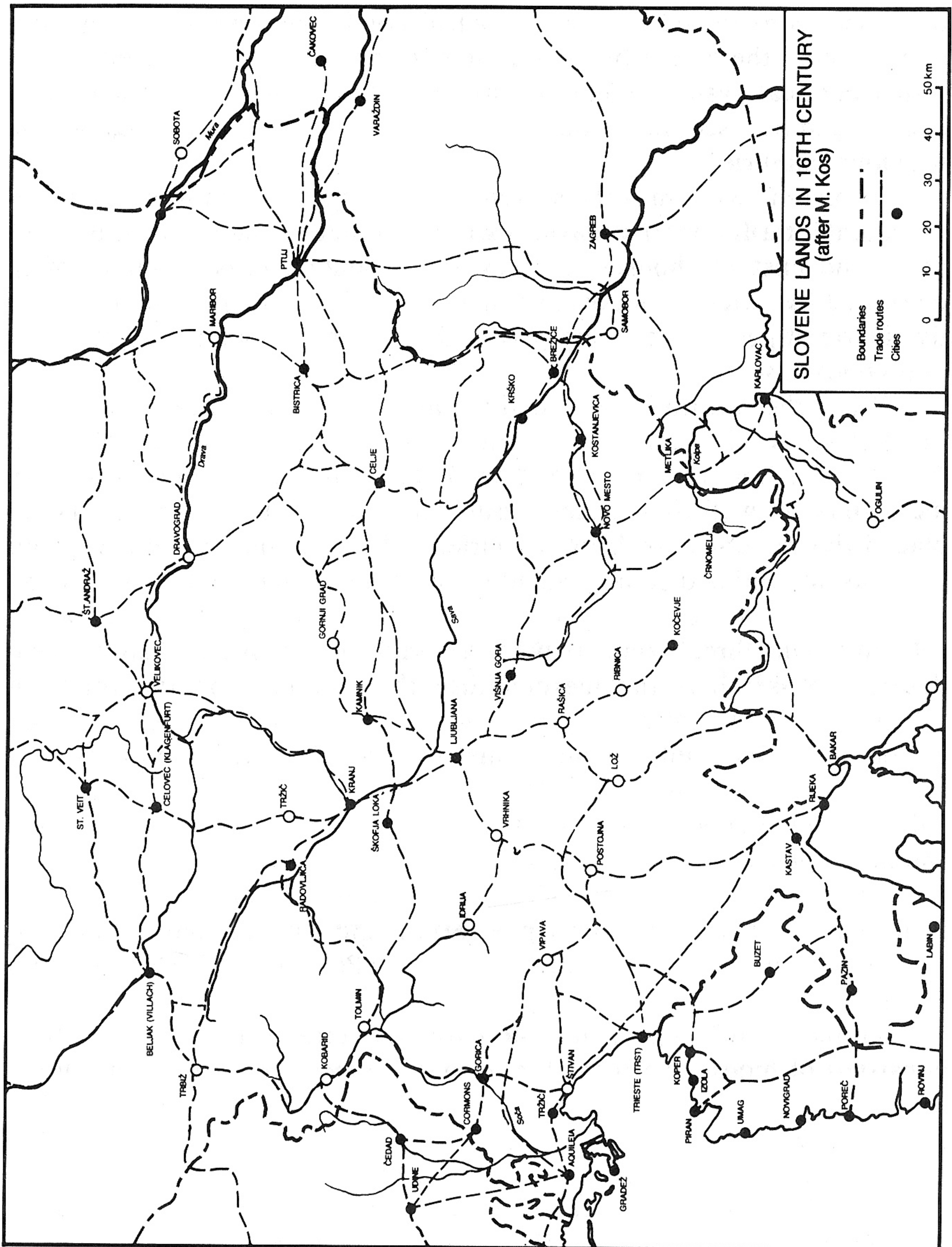
estimated to be around 400,000—which I consider to be excessive—with the dominance of illiteracy and small total number of people who were knowledgeable in German or Latin and even smaller those who had reading and writing ability in either or both. It is, therefore, understandable that early Slovene printing aimed to reach a wider market than the Slovene lands; the 1,500 copies of the Dalmatian Bible would more than saturate the existing potential Slovene market.

The territorial characteristics also reflected the technology of the period, both in technology of land cultivation, construction, transportation network, as well as technology of communication and information transfer. All of them affected directly the success and failure of Protestant expansion, which can be analyzed as a territorial diffusion process.

Primitive land cultivation with wooden tools—iron and later steel plows were not yet introduced—made cultivation exceedingly labor-intensive with no substitute for human labor. Animal power was used, consisting of oxen or cattle, less frequently horses. The land fragmentation did not negatively affect the cultivation itself, since due to hand cultivation the waste land was reduced to a minimum, and using day-units for operation, the movement between fields did not deter the cultivation itself. It was rather common that land cultivation was carried out by the family engaging members of both sexes and all ages.

The agricultural economy just began to consider market-oriented production as a potential. Up to this time, the marketable commodities consisted primarily of livestock which yielded cash return, and wood, which taken to the market produced returns. The times did not facilitate free trade or free movement. Not only the quality of road and vehicles, institutional impediments also hindered trade. In general, only high value products and essentials crossed the tariff barriers: salt, hides, textiles, both silk and cotton, flax, metals and metal products, much less wood and wood products, minerals and agricultural goods.²⁰ There was nevertheless significant difference between the daily market relationship between cities and their immediate surroundings, where the neighboring peasant farmers furnished the cities with their milk, butter, vegetables, or where they provided support services to the town population for payment in money or in kind.

The geographical system that existed therefore in the sixteenth century was a system of settlements and a system of networks, a static pattern of occupancy and a dynamic system of exchange, each governed by its own territorial constraints and each operating almost independently from the other. On the surface, they functioned in the same geographical space, but in reality they shared only a few points or areas of contact (Map II). The principal zones of contact were the cities, which served as the central places of markets and community services while at the same time being the nodes in the network system, which tied to-



Map II

gether the cities, the market exchanges with other cities, and services that engage more cities than the surrounding rural areas.

It is, therefore, imperative to consolidate the historical notions of the peasants' existence in the Slovene and Croat lands, their day by day activities, constrained by the ecological conditions imposed by nature, and consider the extent by which the external city-to-city system or external political system limited or stimulated the utilization of land, and encouraged or discouraged the life system that developed throughout the previous centuries.

Above this system is the system of exchanges, which were regulated by patents, tariffs, market days, restricted to determined routes, ports of entry and customs houses, bridges and mountain passes—more often disrupted by external impositions and granted advantages, affecting the livelihood of people who were part of the system and minimally affecting everybody else.

When the salt trade expanded to capitalize on the cheaper salt from the Adriatic Coast and replaced the more expensive rock salt obtained from the Salzburg region or Southern Poland, this had an impact on both merchants as well as peasants. But when Italian leather products replaced the merchandise from the Orient, this had minimal impact upon the peasant, and had equally small impact on the merchants of cities and market towns, since they were able to substitute one origin for another, seldom having direct contacts with the original area of merchandise production. Kos²¹ lists the merchandise that traveled on the roads in Slovene lands. Local products destined for Venice consisted of: iron, lumber, (for boatbuilding and construction); for Friuli: iron, honey, lumber, livestock, hides; for Hungary and Croatia: lumber, ores; for Rijeka: iron, lumber; for Carinthia, Salzburg and Upper Styria: wine. Imports consisted of: spices, precious metals, textiles, jewelry from Venice; cloth from Bohemia, Germany, England, France, Flanders; salt from Istria; mineral salt from Upper Styria and Austria; glass from Venice, fish, fruits, oil, figs from the coast (Primorje); dried fish from Germany.

Traffic from Hungary and the Croatian lands to the Alps and Italy consisted of hides, livestock, fur, wheat, cooper; in the opposite direction traveled spices, salt, sweet wines, fruits, precious metals, textiles and jewelry.

Gestrin's documentation and assessment, based on records of customs houses in the Slovene territories and coastal cities, confirm the composition of these trades.²² It is, therefore, evident that the bulk of trade consisted of merchandise which could not be produced locally, and which commanded high prices at the market for the lack of local alternatives.

Milko Kos, in his history of the Slovenes,²³ distinguishes between peasant-city relationships and city-to-city relationships. The two sys-

tems, though occupying the same space and in the cities engaging the same people, were nevertheless distinctly different, they were regulated by different rules and provisions. In geographical territorial terms, the countryside-city relationship was a symbiotic interdependency of small worlds, a mosaic of central places and their tributary territories. The city-to-city relationship, however, was part of a larger world, where the demands and supplies were only in part a result of local conditions and they were to a much greater extent exotic external aspects that supplemented the local supplies of commodities, functions and services, but whose dependencies lay outside the Slovene or Croat territories.

The dominance of caravans is identified in the records of commercial traffic of numerous customs stations, though Gestrin identifies also wagon loads as a measure with no record of actual wagon transportation.²⁴ Thus the merchandise that traveled short distances consisted of agricultural products supplied to the cities, and a less voluminous but equally valuable return movement of city generated commodities, either of local opinion or obtained in the city though originating in outside areas: knives, silk, leather products, clothing, salt, and similar.

Whatever small volume of trade exchange functioned between market towns and cities and their countryside, the principal mode used were caravans, loaded horses, mules, oxen and human carriers. The paths that were established in the middle ages continued to be the dominant routes far into the seventeenth century, when the expansion of cart traffic demanded major road constructions and route realignments. Since the exchange system between the countryside and the city embraced a small territorial hinterland, a return trip to the market and back was done within a day, and an overnight stay was not necessary. Many cities prohibited an overnight stay of peasants inside the city gates.

External trade and communications were carried out by the merchants, whether local or external. Their patterns of stays and movements were severely restricted to specified days, duties, type of merchandise, price regulations, etc. The market exchange function, therefore, was carried out by people who were not necessarily Slovene or Croat but nevertheless served the clientele of the Slovene and Croatian lands. They were few in number, but they performed the function of carrier (vectors), including merchandise, information, and influences. Eternal links were also generated by pilgrimages, directed to the traditional centers of Loreto, Rome, Compostela, Cologne, Prague, with local pilgrimage destinations associated with the seasonal or annual periodic markets.

The geography of the land required the ability to overcome the vertical barriers of the mountains and ingenuity to utilize the water courses. The pathways rather than roads led from the upper portions of the Bača over the mountains to Bohinj; the Kapela Mountains were crossed at

Fužine from Bakar and over Vratnik from Senj to Otočac. The mountain passes across the Karavanke (Podkoren, Ljubelj, Jezersko) were less an obstacle at the time of the caravans than later with the wagon trains.

Furthermore, the combination of land and water transport linked the Trieste-Vrhnika path with navigation on the Ljubljanica to Ljubljana, from where it proceeded either to Gorenjska or over Trojane toward Celje and further to Graz. Similarly, the Sava navigation reached Zagreb and Samobor; the Sotla road northward and Krka road westward represented their extensions. The crossing of passes, avoiding elevations or bypassing the river gorges, were all of little significance at the time. More relevant were obstacles created by people, whether institutional customs houses and the required dues, or the lack of safety along long stretches through the forest and generally uninhabited regions.

The infrastructure of the sixteenth century land witnessed the network through which preachers, missionaries, students, merchants, or distributors of "infidel" literature spread their wares. The spread of a new religion, therefore, used the established linkage system, the same one that had been used for the movement of merchandise, diffusion of innovative knowledge, skills or tools.

The consequence of this historical evolution is the compartmentalization of the total territory, the segregation of districts and regions one from the other while at the same time the superimposed political, cultural and exotic economic linkages operated as an independent linkage system, with little effort upon the largest portion of the population outside the cities. The dichotomy between cities and the countryside persisted. The compartmentalization is evident in the slow and generally unsuccessful consolidation of peasants' revolts and the relative ease with which the landlords were able to suppress them by dealing with each group separately. Whatever spontaneity existed, the lack of adequate communication prevented the mobilization of large masses which could have overwhelmed the landlords.

The increasing volume of trade and increasing weight of commodities to be transported soon imposed the need to use wagons and for that purpose to build roads to replace the previous trails. In general, the new roads built mostly after the sixteenth century, followed the same pathways with occasional detours where the elevation, slope or narrowness of passageway discouraged continuous use. Such a decline is evident in the Bača passage between Cerknó and Bohinj, the Lož-Rijeka line, the crossing from the upper Soča to the Upper Sava Valley, when the increase of traffic generated both the need for improved roadways and the establishment of more regulated support systems: inns at the top and the bottom of the inclines to obtain additional horses and oxen to pull the wagon uphill (Razdrto-Št. Vid, Vrhnika-Logatec, Trojane, Črnivec-Gornji grad). The need for additional assistance gave rise to

enlarged inns on one hand, on the other hand to the new profession of transporters (*vózarji*) that crisscrossed the territories with their wagons; they were replaced by the railroads in the middle of the nineteenth century.

The (geographical) basis, therefore, that had an impact on the Protestant movements consisted of:

- a) territorial spread of the Slovene population in village, dispersed rural settlements as well as cities,
- b) transportation linkage system consisting of caravan roads, navigable rivers and coach connections functioning on two levels:
 - 1) a city's relationship with the countryside;
 - 2) city-to-city relationships.
- c) The class structure (vertical mosaic) was also reflected in the territorial (horizontal mosaic) with minimal contact between cities and countryside, between city dwellers and peasant farmers.

It has to be recognized that at the level of technology of the time, the trade routes over land and trade routes over water, be it the Adriatic or the rivers, were of a different nature and produced different considerations than evident in subsequent centuries. Wherever possible, the water routes were preferable, whether for the bulk that the water mode of transportation was capable of carrying, or for fewer customs gates on the route-dues were paid both at loading and unloading locations as well as in transit points not considering the cost of storage and greater safety. The land routes were essentially caravan routes which amazingly survived up to the present days, where the smaller payload, numerous payments of dues required at crossing points (bridges, boat transfers, city gates, market places), greater exposure to robberies, and slow movement hindered the transport and limited the commonities that were transferable to most need (salt, knives, silk, wax) or profitable for high value (spices, cloth, etc.). Food products or industrial good did not travel over land. Short distance movements were transporting firewood, charcoal, logs for construction and metals. The examination of the network is more difficult than it would appear at the first glance for the lack of comprehensive evidence, be it in maps or travel accounts, be it for the scarcity of records regarding the magnitude, origin and direction of movement of people and merchandise. The equivalent of the Dubrovnik records is not at hand.

It is imperative to identify the routes that were utilized either for delivery of Protestant material to the Slovenes and Croats from the first places of publication, and subsequent distribution routes within these lands. It is intriguing to verify if the distribution system had one or many foci, if the system was hierarchical, or primate, which means if the system followed the hierarchical organization either of Church organization,

or administrative lines of political divisions, or adjusted to the existing hierarchy of central places and their linkages.

It is evident that in spite of the mutually supporting attitude of Slovenes and Croats, their relationship was not functionally active. We are dealing with more than one center. Ljubljana was more central for the Croats than Zagreb was for the Slovenes. We, therefore, recognize the individuality of the two territories, without entering into an examination of the external form of their relationship.

The general observation that the Protestants were more successful in cities and towns and did not succeed in attracting a large following among the peasants except in Prekmurje, reflects on the social and organizational conditions of the Slovene and Croatian lands at the period.

The geographical nature of cities and towns is not comparable to twentieth century conditions. The cities and towns provided central functions either as markets or as providers of centralized services. The market function consisted of two sectors: agricultural exchange function and city-to-city exchange function.

The agricultural exchange function is evident in scheduled market days and the right to hold markets in the cities, accompanied by the rights of peasants to bring their produce to the market and exchange it for city-generated products. The exchange mechanism required minimum interaction and did not even require complementarity of languages: a German-speaking merchant facing a Slovene- or Croatian-speaking peasant.

The second sector is the city-to-city exchange mechanism. This involved primarily the merchandise which originated abroad, outside the Slovene and Croatian lands and was sold or exchanged for locally produced merchandise. The city charters and regulations rigidly controlled the rights of merchants and merchandise. This exchange had only indirect impact on the peasant outside the cities.²⁵

It is, therefore, evident that the city society, engaged directly or indirectly in urban functions, was by its activities, its aspirations, its rights and obligations better linked with similar societies in other cities and market towns than it was with the peasant countryside. By this time the extension of city society was visible in the nobility of the castles and landed gentry, which maintained feudal work relations with the peasants though it frowned on social interaction with them.

Not surprising, therefore, that the spread of the new religion proceeded along the lines of communication, from city to city, from city society to city society and eventually reached the land nobility in the castles, but had minimal impact upon the peasantry, except in the regions where the new religion was imposed by the landlords over their peasants.

This framework is valid for the understanding of the spread of Protestantism in the Slovene and Croatian lands. Only by carefully considering the conditions, it becomes clear why the success of the new religion is restricted to selected cities and to those areas of the countryside where the landlord, owner and controller of the land and the people, embraced the new religion and by virtue of existing practices "made" his area Protestant.

The new religion found its roots in the cities. It is not very clear to what extent it was even recognized in the countryside. Among the population, mostly uneducated and illiterate, the reading of the Bible and observance of written rules and prescribed rituals remained unknown, unless advocated by "people in power", be they secular or religious.

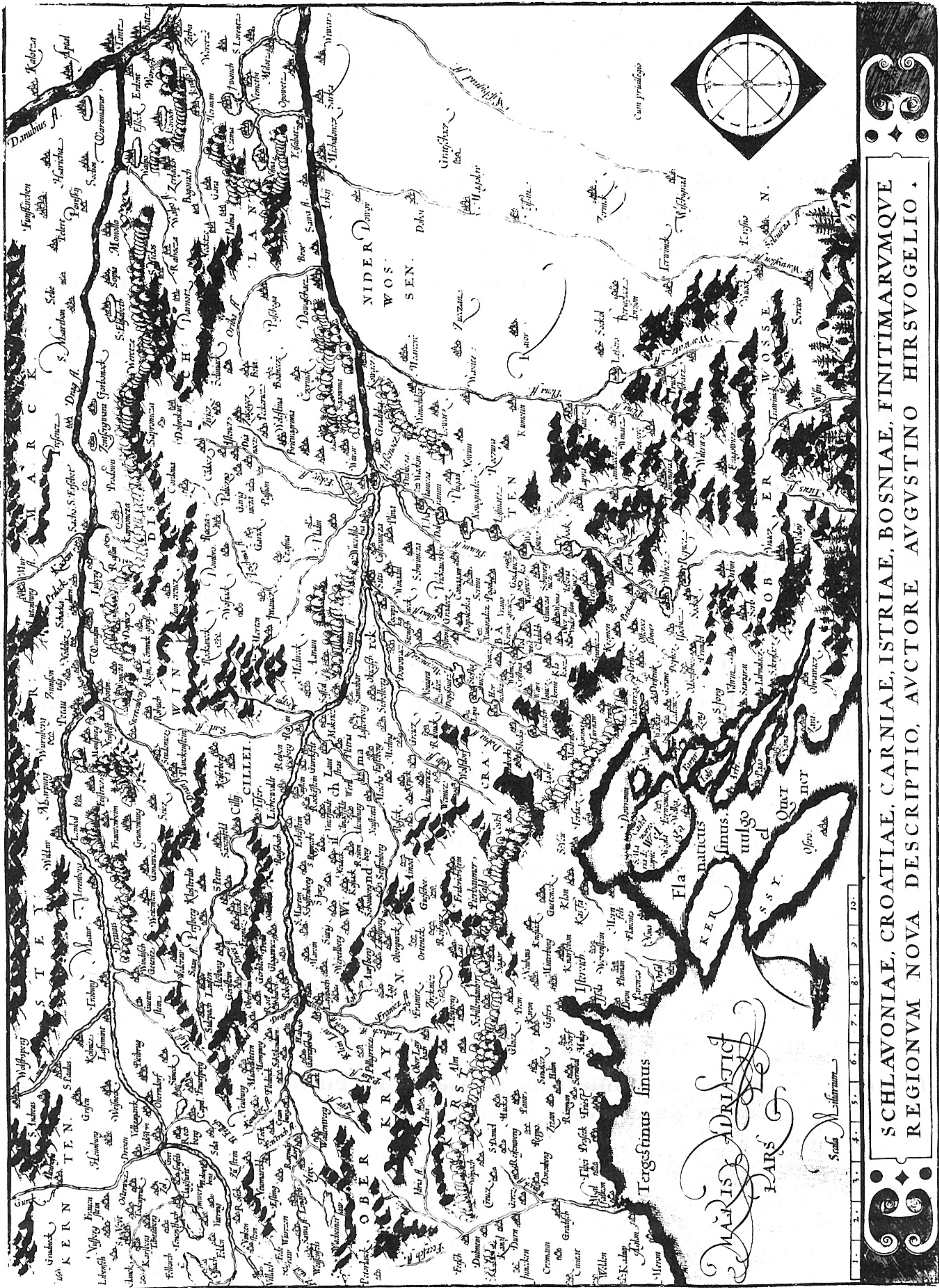
The spread of the Protestant faith is, therefore, evident in the spreading from nucleus to nucleus through the interlinked system of towns and cities, and some castles and domains of independent nobility. It did not spread among the peasants even in the areas where its success was recognized within the city walls.

The cities were even able to take advantage of the Protestant movement by extracting from the Dukes and king advantages that were previously denied to them, with the promise to support the struggle against the new religion and at the same time support the defense against the increasing Turkish menace. The policy of tolerance that was evident in the latter part of the sixteenth century is less an evidence of tolerance per se, it reflects more the preoccupations of the rulers and an attempt to gain support for the defense of their territories.

The Croatian lands were more directly affected by these political maneuvers since they were more exposed to the Turkish penetration.

The cartographic evidence of the territory in the sixteenth century consists of a large number of maps that came out of the Ortelius production and are contained in atlases issued under his name.²⁶ The archival holdings in Ljubljana, Zagreb, Vienna, Trieste and Venice are rich with copies of maps, most of them produced and published between 1569 and 1600. The map of Augustin Hierssfogel (Augustine Hirsvogelio), from the 1570 atlas of Abraham Ortelius *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* has been partially modified in numerous subsequent editions (Map III). Neither the German or Italian mapmakers, nor the Hungarian Lazarus Secretarius,²⁷ who in his early maps of Hungary covered also the Croatian and Slovene territories, include any routes. The first map of roads is the 1570 *Itinerarium Orbis Christiani*²⁸ attributed to Joannes Metellus (Jean Matal), which covers the most travelled roads in the Christian Europe and touches the Slovene territory only with the road from Bruck to Villach and along the Kanal Valley toward Venice.

This documentation implies little need for maps with roads. A traveler or traveling merchant passed from station to station often



Map III

confined to a prescribed path by the restriction imposed by the dues collecting customs houses; and through experience he learned the time it took, the dangers that were present, and the major obstacles to be faced. The peasant, on the other hand, did not need the map to find his way to the neighboring market or city.

The maps of the period seldom include firm political and administrative boundaries. The sovereignty over cities and market places are more significant than the sovereignty over the peasant land.

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