

# Sinfo 10

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The latest from Slovenia

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ŽIVANJE POD  
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**IN FOCUS:** Slovene 450 years old - Cerkovna Ordninga

**IN FOCUS INTERVIEW:** Professor Dr Janez Dular - Protecting Slovene language

**CULTURE:** 2014 Slovenia's first musical - Blossom in the Fall

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**The treasured work of Primož Trubar returns to home soil**

Photo: Nebojša Tejić/STA



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**The first Slovenian musical – inspired by Ivan Tavčar’s novel**

Photo: Mediaspeed/Ljubljana Film Festival

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Photo: Bruno Toič

Tanja Glogovčan, Executive Editor

**An endangered language?**

Autumn and winter days are approaching. And as the temperature cools and the days grow shorter, more and more of us will prefer to stay indoors. So this is also the best time of the year for reading books! Slovenians can take pride in the many beautiful and interesting books written in their language, and much of the credit for this must go to Primož Trubar, the author of the first printed books in Slovene. In September, the National and University Library put on display Trubar's Cerkovna ordninga (Church Order).

Recently, moreover, a revised edition of the Dictionary of Standard Slovene has been published. It confirms – through different words and phrases, their meanings and examples thereof – the existence of the Slovene language and the Slovenian nation, it describes the reality around us and presents our conceptual world. Language is most certainly the most direct expression of the culture of a nation or national community, so any view that seeks to deny language its priority role in the development of cultural and national identity is simply not valid. This is a fact which Slovenians in the United States are also well aware of. Their magazine Zarja (The Dawn), for example, has been published for as many as 85 years.

Experts estimate that approximately half of the 5,000 languages currently spoken around the world will disappear by the end of the 21st century. What impact will the disappearance of languages have on the human species? Will we really turn into a one-language planet and does this actually matter? Surely not, and Slovene, too, has an important role to play in the great family of the world's languages. The interview with Dr Janez Dular will reveal how important the attitude towards our language is, while Prof. Marko Stabej will speak about the Slovene language and the "liking" of it.

Culture, as driving force of creative spirit, has transformed the Slovenians from a people into a nation and then into a nation state. The independent Slovenian state must thus be and remain a reliable guarantee for the preservation of the Slovenian language. Our language is rich, and we must not allow it to go extinct, not today and not tomorrow. It must not, in short, become an endangered language!



Photo: Staniko Gruden/STA

## Slovene – Among the most widely spoken languages on Earth!

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No, this is not just an overstatement designed to grab your attention! Not at all: Slovene, spoken by more than two million people, really is among the most widely spoken languages on the planet. So before you put down the magazine, please allow me a little time to explain.

There are about 6,900 languages being spoken in the world today. UNESCO data show that half of these languages are in danger of disappearing, 90% of them are not present on the net and that a language becomes extinct every two weeks. But that's not all: only 5% of all languages have more than two million native speakers – and Slovene is one of them! Today less than one-fourth of the world's languages are taught in schools or used in cyberspace. Thousands of languages that are used as the only means of communication in everyday life by their speakers are not represented in educational systems, the media or publications, or indeed in public life in general. Most of the world's languages, some 96% of them in fact, are spoken by a mere only 4% of the world's population. On the other hand, with more than two million speakers, Slovene is ranked 179th among that 5% of the most widely spoken languages.

Of course, a language is much more than a set of dry statistical data. Language, to put it rather emotionally, is the soul of a nation. This is particularly true for us Slovenians, who have only had our independent state for a little over two decades. Before that, we existed only as a cultural entity. Thus we had been shaped as a nation by our language. And long before we managed to establish an independent state, we did extraordinary things in our language, for example the translation of the Bible into Slovene way back in 1575 (the official year of publication is 1584), a result of the labours of Protestant writers Primož Trubar and Jurij Dalmatin. Slovene was only the 11<sup>th</sup> language in the world to get a complete translation of the Bible; the tiny Slovenian nation, without its own state and without basic national structures thus "overtook" many greater and more powerful nation. But let us not look for proof of the vitality of the Slovene language only in the

past; let us consider some current examples. The Windows operating system, for instance, which is a sui generis indicator of the technological and cultural evolution of a nation, was translated into Slovene as the 30<sup>th</sup> among all languages.

Even a better example is Wikipedia, the most far-reaching example of literacy today – a modern web encyclopaedia reflecting the development of civilization. The quality of the articles in a given language on Wiki could thus be said to represent one of the criteria for assessing its vitality and ability to survive. Wikipedia exists in 286 languages. There are, therefore, 286 national Wikipedias, and the Slovenian one is ranked 39<sup>th</sup> in terms of the number of articles featured and of the quality of its articles. An enviable success! In particular if we consider that Wikipedia has few employees, does not receive state funding and that editors work without payment, driven by an ethical motive to give and not only take.

However, the inexorable process of globalisation is also bringing about communication simplifications and the ever-greater preponderance of a single language in global communication. The history of our nation makes us Slovenians particularly aware of how important it is to respect and develop one's own language while also enabling and encouraging linguistic pluralism. Intercultural dialogue and mutual respect are basic elements of our existence and of the vision of our future.

This beautiful and special language may be learnt in many countries around the world – there are currently 57 universities in 24 countries offering Slovene courses. Slovene is among the very few languages to have retained the dual, and it has almost 50 different dialects spoken in various parts of the national territory. And in this, the most occidental of the Slavonic languages, more than five thousand new titles are published annually. So now you know: Slovene really is among the most widely spoken languages on Earth!

## Who clicks “Like” for Slovene?

Photo: Daniel Novakovič/STA



How alive and animated a language is can be measured by the number of people who are prepared to learn it as a foreign language. Slovene is doing quite well in this respect. The number of foreigners speaking Slovene has been increasing, particularly since Slovenia gained independence. Some learn it because they are required to do so, some because they choose to. And why would a person choose to learn Slovene, a language that cannot possibly compete with other languages on the global level? In Slovenia, one can get by fairly well with English, not only in the cities but also in rural areas. On various web forums about tourism, Slovenians are frequently praised for their relatively good knowledge of English. Why then? Anyone who speaks Slovene acquires a broadband access to life-related content available in it, which is, at least for now, very rich and diverse and has many special features that make it interesting. Of course, there are some international managers employed by Slovenian state-owned enterprises who never “stoop so low” as to learn Slovene. There are even some Slovenian tourist service providers (for example

a camp in the Savinja Valley) that only use English in written communications with customers, including Slovenians. I hope that this is only a momentary lapse of judgement, as it paints them in a bad light not only with Slovenian customers but also with the culturally aware foreign visitors.

Many people still wonder whether it is possible for a foreigner to learn Slovene, considering all its grammatical

peculiarities, such as the dual, the many cases, verb aspects, unpredictable accent and numerous dialects? Is then Slovene one of the most difficult languages to learn? It certainly can be learned, just like any other language. Two things are important in this respect: good motivation for learning and an appropriate teaching approach. The best motivation is a wish to communicate in Slovene. With a good teaching approach, even poor motivation can be improved considerably. The Centre for Slovene as a Second/Foreign Language at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana has a fifty-year tradition of teaching Slovene to foreign speakers, both in Slovenia and abroad. The Centre is good at this, as it has acquired a lot of experience and helped a great number of people to start speaking Slovene.

However, it is a bit slow in raising awareness among Slovenians. Many still cannot believe that foreigners are able to learn and wish to speak Slovene and insist on speaking in foreign languages with them. I sincerely hope that there will be fewer such people in the future. In the meantime – let’s click the Like button for Slovene!

Many still cannot believe that foreigners are able to learn and wish to speak Slovenian and insist on speaking in foreign languages with them. I sincerely hope that there will be fewer such people in the future. In the meantime – let’s click the Like button for Slovenian!



Photo: Mostphotos

## How did they learn Slovene...

... when the challenges of their occupations are hard enough? We posed this question to a few of the foreigners who live in Slovenia and can proudly say they speak Slovene and enjoy it. The foreigners who have built their lives in Slovenia are a proof that it is possible for a foreigner to learn Slovene. We asked a former athlete (now a translator), a reporter, an actress and a biathlete about their experience in learning and using Slovene.

Photo: Miha Fras



### **Britta Bilač**

Former athlete, now translator, Germany

Britta moved to Slovenia after marriage in 1991. She learned Slovene in record time and continued her successful career in athletics. In 1994 she won the European Championships and the World Cup in high jump wearing Slovenian team kit, was awarded the title of the Slovenian athlete of the year and received the Bloudek Prize. Later she also placed second at the World Indoor Championships and successfully competed at two Olympic Games. After retiring from athletics, she continued her studies at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana and graduated in translation.

#### **How was your first encounter with Slovene?**

On my first visit to Slovenia in 1990, I just listened to others speaking Slovene – everybody spoke English with me! I found it interesting that it didn't have as many affricates as I had expected.

#### **Was it difficult to learn? Could you describe your learning process?**

No, I did not find it difficult. I'd studied Russian for eight years in school, so the grammar was not completely alien to me. I did attend an intensive course in Slovene for foreigners at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana for one year, where I acquired the necessary basic knowledge.

#### **What was the hardest for you to learn?**

Even today I have difficulties with word order. I still like to put the verb at the end, like in German.

#### **Is there any emotion/feeling/impression that is easier or harder for you to express in Slovene than in your native tongue?**

When one is really, I mean really, angry, the German swear words or those "imported" non-Slovene word combinations about various sexual organs fit well.

#### **Do you know any interesting dialect words?**

I like the word *tünka* (a Prekmurian culinary term) or words coined from German, such as *šraufenciger*, *puter* or *nahtkasele*.

#### **The most pleasant experience related to Slovene?**

At a press conference in Poland, reporters didn't believe that I spoke Slovene and asked me to say something about the injury Borut (Bilač, former athlete trainer) had sustained at that time. They understood everything I said, so they praised my knowledge and expressed their astonishment.

#### **The most peculiar Slovene word?**

At the beginning I was bewildered by words without (or almost without) vowels, as there are no such words in German. For example *Črni vrh*, *smrt* or *prt*. I also found it strange how loaned words were written in Slovene and I laughed at *sendvič* as I had only known "sandwich" until then.

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### **Michael Manske**

A reporter and show host (e.g. of a show How to become a Slovene) at Radio Slovenia International, USA

He moved to Slovenia about ten years ago, because of his partner who is Slovenian. Thus he traded New York for Maribor. Although his friends did not understand why he was moving to Slovenia or indeed where exactly the country was, he has settled quite well here. His radio show is very popular. In it he looks at the things he's learned (or tried to learn) while settling down in his new home. From language to culture to everything else, it's a light-hearted look at what it means to live in Slovenia and how to become a proud Slovenian.

#### **How was your first encounter with Slovene?**

The first sentence I ever sat down and learned was Jaz jem slive (I'm eating plums). Unfortunately, in more than a decade of living here, I've never come close to using it. If someone sees me eating a plum, they never seem to ask me what I'm eating. But maybe one day I'll get my chance!

#### **Was it difficult to learn? Could you describe your learning process?**

All I can say is that I'm glad I didn't know how hard it was before I started learning it. Once I realized how brain-bustingly impossible it was, I had already committed so much time and effort to it that I couldn't just walk away. But, yeah, the grammar is devastating. I felt like a toddler in an Iron Man competition. Totally out of my league. As for how: I basically learned it by brute-forcing myself to speak it, even in cases where I knew the other person understood English. It's the only way to do it, I think.

#### **What was the hardest for you to learn?**

Noun declension. It gives me heart palpitations. In English, you learn the word "bicycle" and you've made progress. In Slovene, it's never that simple. You see the word *kolesa* and have to reverse engineer it to discover that it's actually *kolo* and that *kolo* is bicycle. And every word is a struggle like that.

#### **Is there any emotion/feeling/impression that is easier or harder for you to express in Slovene than in your native tongue?**

I actually have a huge problem with English words in Slovene. I never know if I should say Washington or Vašington and that causes all kinds of problems. As for feelings: it's definitely more fun to curse in Slovene. If someone yells *K\*\*\* te gleda!* I laugh every time, because I imagine it in my head. And it's a very funny image. Oddly enough, I'm also a huge fan of the infamous "dual case" -- in spite of its legendary difficulty. It's such a beautiful, romantic and special feature of the language that it makes it worth the pain of trying to learn it.

#### **Do you know any interesting dialect words?**

I always loved *picajzl*. It's a funny word and fun to say.

#### **The most pleasant experience related to Slovene?**

I remember the first time I saw Tolkien's book *The Two Towers* in a bookstore here and the cover was just *Stolpa* and I was just blown away. It's amazing that a single, six-letter word in Slovene can precisely communicate three English ones. It's just impressive.

#### **The most peculiar Slovene word?**

*Ful*. As in *ful dobro*. It's so odd because it presumably comes from the English word *full* but is used in a totally different way. No one would ever say "full good". It sounds like something out of 1984. It's a really odd word that I hear every day but still sounds weird.

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It's amazing that a single, six-letter word in Slovene can precisely communicate three English ones. It's just impressive.

Photo: Jože Sijhacolinik



**Jette Ostan Vejrup**  
Actress, Denmark

Jette’s career is impressive – she’s acted in various theatres in the USA, Great Britain and Denmark. She also collaborated with the British theatre company Théâtre de Complicité. She’s also acted in several Slovenian serials, and at present she is employed by Mestno Gledališče Ljubljansko. She proficiently plays her parts in Slovene, even though her mother tongue is Danish. The renowned thespian says that she is having most trouble with šumniki (special ch, sh and zh sounds), but one does not notice this at all listening to her when she is on stage.

**How was your first encounter with Slovene?**

My first encounter with Slovene was wonderful. It was when I was 23, I was living in Paris and attending the Jacques Lecoq international theatre school. My future husband, a Slovene, was also there doing postgraduate studies. And thus, exploring different languages of the world, from him I first heard Slovene, which I didn’t know before.

**Was it difficult to learn? Could you describe your learning process?**

I would lie if I said that it was easy. Learning Slovene is a lifelong project for me. It is still in progress. I do not only learn speaking the language. The language influences the way we think, live, feel. At first, I learned with a private teacher, Prof. Ljubica Črnivec, who taught me the basics. But all I need in my profession, was taught to me by the late Prof. Ana Mlakar, to whom I am very grateful. Another very important teacher, although silent, is love.

**What was the hardest for you to learn?**

Most difficult for me are šumniki and sičniki, the special ch, sh, zh and c, s, z sounds, as some of them are absent from my native tongue.

**Is there any emotion/feeling/impression that is easier or harder for you to express in Slovene than in your native tongue?**

Danish doesn’t have a vocabulary differentiating among various elevations. Our highest “mountain”, named the “Heavenly Mountain”, is a little less than two hundred metres high. There are no words for hillocks, hills, mountains, gorges, ravines, etc. So it is easier for me to use Slovene words for them.

**Do you know any interesting dialect words?**

Yes, čompe (potatoes). I love them, especially with sheep curd cheese.

**The most pleasant experience related to Slovene?**

When the language was no longer a barrier in the theatre and I got parts regardless of the length of the text.

**The most peculiar Slovene word?**

For me – čmrlj.

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Learning Slovene is a lifelong project for me. It is still in progress. I do not only learn speaking the language. The language influences the way we think, live, feel.





**Jakov Fak**  
Biathlete, Croatia

Popular Jakov has also won the hearts of Slovenians because of his excellent knowledge of Slovene. At the Biathlon World Championships 2012 in Ruhpolding, he won the gold medal in the 20 km individual and the silver medal in the mixed relay. With him in Slovenia's relay team were Andreja Mali, Teja Gregorin in Klemen Bauer. He also represented Slovenia in this year's Olympic Games in Sochi. He did not win any medals but he performed very well. In the 15-km mass start he finished in the fourth place.

**How was your first encounter with Slovene?**

A bit strange at first, but very interesting. I decided to try to adjust to the fellow members of the Slovenian team as much as possible, so I started to learn. Word by word.

**Was it difficult to learn? Could you describe your learning process?**

As a matter of fact, the process is not yet finished. I am still learning. I am a good listener and I learn the most by listening. I have learned by a combination of listening and imitation. My teammate Vasja Rupnik lent me a dictionary, but I don't recall ever really using it.

**What was the hardest for you to learn?**

The most difficult for me was that during every conversation. I had to concentrate very hard to hear where the stress was put in a word to know how to pronounce it correctly myself. Sometimes I talked to myself. It is easier to talk than to write Slovene. I still need a lot of help with writing.

**Is there any emotion/feeling/impression that is easier or harder for you to express in Slovene than in your native tongue?**

Hmm ... anger and rage are probably feelings that are still easier for me to express in my mother tongue.

**Do you know any interesting dialect words?**

Yes, Janez Marič (fellow member of the national team) taught me some words from Gorenjska dialect, which I adopted and use in my speech. Janez has most often used them unconsciously and they have little in common with the literary Slovene, so my Slovene sounded more like Gorenjska dialect at first. But since Pokljuka is in the Gorenjska region, I fared quite well.

**The most pleasant experience related to Slovene?**

They were generally all pleasant, or sometimes funny.

**The most peculiar Slovene word?**

It is hard for me to think of any really strange words, as most are familiar to me now. With time, I have even got used to *kozica* for a milk pot or *nabojnik* for a biathlon gun magazine!

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I had to concentrate very hard to hear where the stress was put in a word to know how to pronounce it correctly myself. Sometimes I talked to myself. It is easier to talk than to write Slovene.





Slovene was the 11<sup>th</sup> language in the world to get a translation of the Bible, in 1584? The Bible was translated into Slovene by Jurij Dalmatin.

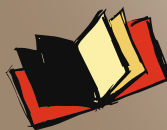
The first book in Slovene, the Catechism, was published in 1550? It was written during the Reformation period by the Protestant parson Primož Trubar, who is considered as the father of the Slovene literary language. He chose to write in the language then spoken in the city of Ljubljana, with elements of Dolenjska and Gorenjska provinces' dialects, creating thus the standard Slovene.

Slovene is the language of lovers? I and you ... we two are in love ... is a song to one's ears. Slovene is one of the rare Indo-European languages to have retained a special form – dual – for referring to two people, objects, and concepts.


Slovene language is one of the most archaic languages in Europe and in general?

The first printed books in Slovene were brought home in barrels? Their journey to the Slovene reader was long and tortuous, often by boat. This method of delivery was the best to conceal the true contents of the shipment. In 1551, Primož Trubar had to smuggle his Catechism from the Tübingen (Germany) printing house, to avoid their confiscation. German printers continued to ship books for Slovenian readers in barrels until the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.


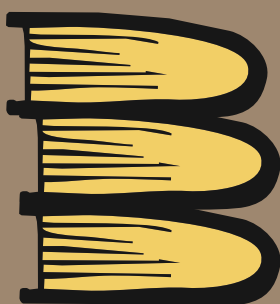


Slovene evolved from the Proto-Slavic, and the characteristic features of the Slovene language are already seen in the Freising Manuscripts, the oldest surviving writings in Slovene. They were written in the Latin script in Carinthia more than a thousand years ago. The texts they contain, however, were created earlier, most probably in the 8<sup>th</sup> century.



Slovene has funny and quite innocent swear words? They often reflect our love for animals... Do not be surprised hearing someone say "Tristo kosmatih medvedov! (Three hundred hairy ones!)", or "Krščen matiček! (Baptised Matthew!)" and "Naj te koklja brcne! (A hen should kick you)". "Pismo rosno (Dewey letter)", "Jebelacesta" (A white road), "Križana gora" (Crucified hill), "Prmejduš (Upon my soul)", "Pejt se solit" (Go salt yourself – meaning Get lost!), are some Slovene pearls. There are also two nice expressions children use: "Marička potička (Little Mary Pie)" and "Pišuka (Whistle)". Learn them quickly!

Slovenians who come from opposite parts of our country may have enormous difficulties to understand each other? Slovene is a language with around fifty dialects in seven dialect groups: Dolenjska, Gorenjska, Koroška, Primorska, Štajerska, Panonska and Rovtarska. Such great language variety is the result of geographical, political, historical, social and other reasons.

Source: Pocket Slovene

## Cerkovna Ordninga

# The treasured work of Primož Trubar returns to home soil

Cerkovna Ordninga (Church Order), written by Primož Trubar, a Slovenian Protestant writer, translator and priest, was published in 1564 in the German town of Tübingen and is considered to be one of his most important cultural works. On the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its publication, the original version of this work was put on display at the National and University Library in Ljubljana. It was discovered by chance in the City Archives of the German town of Memmingen in October last year.



Photo: Daniel Novakovič/STA

This copy of the Cerkovna Ordninga was presented to the Slovenian public on 30 October 2013 at ZRC SAZU in Ljubljana.

It is considered to be the first work written in Slovene, intended exclusively for educated elite readership, yet it was the first work to establish Slovene as the language for all church rites.

In Cerkovna Ordninga, Primož Trubar, the founder of Slovenian literature, presented his vision of legal, organisational and spiritual foundations for the Slovenian church. It is considered to be the first work written in Slovene, intended exclusively for educated elite readership, yet it was the first work to establish Slovene as the language for all church rites. It is also an important theological text, which is a testimony to Trubar's complete dedication to Christian teachings and his strong disapproval of all those who did not accept Christian teachings or did not abide by them properly.

The Cerkovna Ordninga con-

sists of three parts. The first part, which has 131 pages, explains Protestant Christian teachings in detail. The second part consists of 30 pages and explains the work of preachers and priests and discusses their upbringing, education, appointments, as well as the elections and appointments of bishops. The third part, with 185 pages, is focused exclusively on religious rites. The Church Order was some kind of compilation of translations of German church orders, supplemented by original contributions (about fifteen percent) by Trubar. He added shorter appendices, clarifications and border titles, as well as longer additions with en-

tirely original text. The result of his efforts and work was the new Cerkovna Ordninga, a text which functions as an entirely new work.

### ONLY TWO COPIES HAVE SURVIVED

Primož Trubar published the Cerkovna Ordninga illegally, without first receiving official approval from the provincial prince. It was published in 1564 in Tübingen with a circulation of 300-400 copies, the majority of which were confiscated or destroyed soon after publication. The only undamaged copy, which had been kept at the Dresden Saxon State Library,

was lost during World War II. In 1971, another copy was discovered at the Vatican Apostolic Library in Rome, but its final pages are badly damaged along the edges. In 2013, at the city archives in Memmingen, Germany, Ulrich D. Oppitz discovered a copy of this important work in perfect condition by accident. This copy is of particular importance also because it is currently the only one which is completely undamaged. Both the Vatican and Memmingen copies contain their owner's mark, since at the time owners always signed their books. The Memmingen copy was signed by Bernard Steiner, who was born in Ljubljana but worked mostly in Germany. He lived in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. As well as being very well preserved, the Memmingen copy also has very interesting handwritten additions. An unknown author from the 16<sup>th</sup> or early 17<sup>th</sup> century corrected a few prayers intended for women, so that they were now written in the singular instead of the plural. At the National and University Library, they say that this is one of the first texts written in Slovene intended for women. Perhaps someone in Germany spoke Slovene, or perhaps he courted a Slovenian woman and wanted to express respect or love with his additions?

#### CHURCH OF THE SLOVENE LANGUAGE

At the "Church of the Slovene Language" exhibition, the original copy of the *Cerkovna Ordninga* had the place of honour. Displayed under glass and protected from touch, it attracted the most visitors. The yellowed pages, leather covers with bookmark ribbons, traces of the past ... the precious 450-year-



The *Cerkovna Ordninga* is considered to be one of Primož Trubar's most important works.

old work of a Protestant writer, back in Slovenia again.

In addition to the *Cerkovna Ordninga*, the exhibition also presented a few other works of Trubar, such as the First, Second and Final Parts of the New Testament (1557, 1560, 1577), Register of 156), *Postilo* (1562) and Catechism with two interpretations (1575). Facsimiles of the first two Slovenian books, *Katekizem* and *Abecednik* (Abecedary), were available for perusal. Visitors could also see a few other books and archive documents connected to the *Cerkovna Ordninga* in some way. These included Archduke Carl's order to confiscate the *Cerkovna Ordninga* and send Trubar into exile on 15 December 1564. The attitude towards the Protestant writer and his works sharpened considerably

in the decades to follow, which is also felt in his *Ta Celi Nov Testament* (The Whole New Testament). On the page with his picture, someone had symbolically removed Trubar's mouth. Perhaps in the old medieval way, to make sure he "remains silent".

Until the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, the Slovene language lived only in the form of highly fragmented dialects and rare manuscripts. As the father of the Slovene literary language, Primož Trubar gave Slovenians their first printed book. The writer, translator, and author of the first printed books in Slovene ... In those times, it was rare for people to know as much as he did about the world and we can be grateful for all the knowledge he transmitted to us and for our own Slovene literary language.

The *Cerkovna Ordninga* consists of three parts. The first part, which has 131 pages, explains Protestant Christian teachings in detail. The second part consists of 30 pages and explains the work of preachers and priests and discusses their upbringing, education, appointments, as well as the elections and appointments of bishops.

#### First Slovene translation of the Islamic holy text from the original Arabic published in the autumn

In September this year, Slovenians obtained the first Slovene translation of the Quran from the Arabic original. Previously Slovene was the only European language without a translation directly from the original text. Translating the Quran into Slovene took more than a decade and was the work of the Yemeni-Slovene translation team Mohsen Alhady and Margit P. Alhady. The translators strove to translate the holy book as faithfully as possible, while also coping with the task of transferring the stylistic and semantic levels of the original Arabic.

## Professor Dr Janez Dular

# Protecting the Slovene language: it is up to us Slovenians

Language is the condition *sine qua non* of any culture. The Slovene language is the basis for the personal, ethnic and national identity of Slovenians. The Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia stipulates that the official language in Slovenia is Slovene. The public use of Slovene is regulated in the framework act on the use of Slovene, as well as in different sector-specific acts.



Photo: Staniko Gruden/STVA

Today, Slovene is under a great deal of pressure in the spheres of science and higher education. Within certain academic circles in Slovenia it is argued that higher education institutions should be completely free in deciding what should be lectured in English and what in Slovene, and at what level.

We discussed the fate of the Slovene language and issues concerning the use of Slovene with Professor Dr Janez Dular. He was the Minister responsible for Slovenians living abroad and of Slovenian national minorities from 1990 to 1992, and the Minister of Culture in 1996 and 1997. He has also been the Managing Editor of the newspaper *Slovenec*, the Editor-in-chief of the publishing house *Mohorjeva družba* in Celje, and the Director of the Government Office for the Slovene Language.

**You are particularly attentive to the use of Slovene in public, in particular in higher education.**

That is true. Today, Slovene is under a great deal of pressure in the spheres of science and higher education. Within certain academic circles in Slovenia it is argued that higher education institutions should be completely free in deciding what should be lectured in English and what in Slovene, and at what level. There is no legal basis for such an arrangement; however, in practice we see various, quite illegal,

solutions. I believe that in doing so the university faculties are not only pursuing so-called internationalisation as a stepping stone to higher quality, but that their real interest is to find ways to solve their financial situation; due to the demographic downward trend - as the number of higher education graduates is expected to fall - they are keen to attract more foreign students, and to provide them lectures in English. Certainly, we all agree with the saying "the more languages you know, the more you

are worth”; however, it should be understood when and where the use of a foreign language is sensible and justified – in addition to Slovene, and not instead of Slovene. It is unacceptable to have a Slovene professor lecture to Slovene students in English, except during English classes, of course. Openness towards foreign students is necessary; however, it is legitimate to expect from them, as well as from foreign lecturers, that they adequately adapt to the Slovene language environment, and that we do not immediately adopt a servile attitude by using only English.

**Slovenia has adopted the Public Use of Slovene Language Act. Do you consider it is necessary?**

Of course it is necessary, but unfortunately it is not sufficiently detailed, not sufficiently binding. One of the matters that is regulated too vaguely is, for instance, the use of languages in higher education.

**Many people deem that constitutional protection suffices. Yet, France, for example, protected the public use of the French language with a very strict law.**

The French were rather radical, while the Slovene language policy is more lax; this is evident, for instance, in advertising. Also, French has a different status than Slovene, so a direct comparison of the French law and the Slovenian law would not be sensible. Our first concern must not be repression; our concern should rather be to encourage people to speak and learn Slovene, and to provide for effective language teaching and language infrastructure (language guides, translation tools, and so on). However, some degree of repression is necessary. I do not understand how a language inspector can walk along Cankarjeva, Čopova, or Trubarjeva streets in the centre of Ljubljana without noticing signs in practically every language but Slovene, or past the billboards in foreign languages put up almost everywhere.

**The Resolution on the National Programme for Language Policy 2014–2018 was adopted last year. Are you satisfied with it?**

Needless to say, this Resolution adopted by the National Assembly does not cover every aspect of the linguistic situation that needs to be addressed in the long term. It focuses on tasks that should be brought to the fore in the next five years. It highlights not only the role of Slovene as a mean of communication, but also its symbolic and identification roles. Increased funding is planned for education, the preparation of language guides, and the development of language technologies. It also defines a series of very important measures to be undertaken, such as fostering the language from nursery school on, the improvement of the language skills of public employees and officials, politicians, teachers, advertisers, and providing encouragement and support to immigrants in Slovenia and Slovenians living abroad. The Resolution is a framework document, thus implementing regulations will also need to be adopted. I hope that they will not be long in coming.

**Descendants of Slovenian emigrants do not speak Slovene.**

In the second and the third generations this is a “natural” process, in particular where there are no new waves of emigration to revive language skills.

**Why is that?**

The majority of Slovenians emigrated to America, Belgium and Germany in around 1900. Subsequently, there was a strong wave of political emigration at the end of the Second World War. These emigrants managed to bring about a strong linguistic revival, as they were nationally conscious Slovenians who went to great lengths to preserve their language. Presently we are witnessing another wave of emigration, a brain drain. I wonder how this generation will transmit their mother tongue to their offspring, and whether they will be able or willing to make a distinction between “integration” and “assimilation” in a foreign-language environment. It should be in the interest of our country to put the brakes on this emigration, by providing adequate jobs to these educated young people. This is, indirectly, an element of

the overall fostering of the preservation and development of Slovene language and culture.

**In terms of the international reputation of Slovene, did we gain or lose when we joined the European Union?**

We have certainly gained, in particular on the official, that is, symbolic level, and somewhat less in terms of Slovene as a working language, although I understand that Slovenian Members of the European Parliament speak in Slovene, which is only proper. In other institutions of the European Union the situation is less rosy, as it is impossible to ignore the fact that there are only three “official working languages” in Brussels, and Slovene is certainly not one of them. I remain convinced that the centre for the promotion of Slovene cannot be Brussels, but Ljubljana. The fate of Slovene is being decided here, it is being decided by us, Slovenians, through the everyday use of our language in all areas of communication, and not by stressing how important and beautiful Slovene is with its dual and so on.

**Do you think Slovene is an endangered language?**

I do not think there is an imminent risk of extinction; however, I am afraid of this unbearably casual attitude regarding the use of Slovene in public. That is the path to stagnation and withdrawing into a folklore reservation.

**The new Dictionary of Standard Slovene has just been published. Would you like to comment?**

First a joke: it was printed in Hong Kong, so this is a Chinese, globalised Slovene. I have already leafed through it, but have not yet found the time for a more thorough examination. I know that it features numerous new words and new definitions of existing words, and that certain information on the style and usage of such words has been changed (new usages, noting obsolete, technical terms, and so on). This is certainly inspiring, as it means that Slovene is alive and well and evolving. We only need to get used to respecting it a little bit more.

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## Slovene language debuted at the Street of Languages in Bratislava

The European Day of Languages is an autumn event which animates the cultural life of Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia.



Photo: Soňa Ostrovská

Visitors on the Street of languages

This is the day when Hviezdoslav Square, the largest square in the centre of Bratislava, named after a Slovak poet Pavel Orzságh Hviezdoslav, gathers people who love languages and want to spend a couple of hours on improving their knowledge of a foreign language they already know or just to deal successfully with the communication patterns of a language they come across for the first time at the Street of Languages.

The institutes of culture from different countries take part in this event which receives positive response every year. This is why all who love the Slovene language wanted to actively participate in this event. This year's Street of Languages, which took place on 26 September 2014, was a special event for Slovene as it was presented there for the first time. The presentation of Slovenia and the Slovene language on all three venues was organised by the Slovenian Embassy in Bratislava and the Slovene language and culture section at the Faculty of Philosophy of Comenius University in Bratislava which successfully cooperate for a number of years.

A short film by Maja Weiss *Otrok v času* was shown in the cinema, while the main stage was taken by students Dominika Uhlárová, Andrea Kapralíková and Miha Kragelj who presented a legend about the origins of Slovenia and the Slovene language. The Slovenian stand was definitely the most vibrant venue. Its green colours and interesting posters were inviting the visitors to stop and test their knowledge of Slovene. The illustrations *Slika jezika*, gathered at the Centre for Slovene as a Second/Foreign Language of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana were used to make a booklet on basic vocabulary offering the learners a glimpse of topics such as family, school, the city and streets, colours, nature, and animals. It was prepared with the help of students Dominika Uhlárová, Andrea Kapralíková, Karin Némethová, Katarína Lalíková, Dominika Hozlárová, Viktorija Vičanová in Miha Kralj who attend the Slovenian language course in Bratislava. Much to their surprise, the learners found out that Slovene and Slovak resemble in many ways, but at the same time, their Slovene teachers warned them of pit

falls between the two languages. They were surprised that the word *otrok* (a child in Slovene) does not have the same meaning as the Slovak word *otrok* which means a slave. The word *drevo* (a tree in Slovene) exists in both languages, but it has a different meaning, as it means wood in Slovak. The visitors also found out that the expression *slovenski jezik*, which they learned at the Street of Languages, does not denote the Slovak language in Slovene, but the Slovene language. They also learned that the word *Slovenka* does not denote an inhabitant of Slovakia as it does in the Slovak language, but a female inhabitant of Slovenia.

The visitors found out that Slovenian and Slovak have more than 1100 words which are similar in form but much different in meaning. Despite the so-called false friends in the language, Slovene became a close friend to many visitors of the Street of Languages. We hope that we will be able to teach the visitors some more words and get them to know Slovenia and its culture even more during the next European Day of Languages in Bratislava.

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Slovenian and Slovak have more than 1100 words which are similar in form but much different in meaning.



## I fell in love with Slovenia

Grant Lundberg is an Associate Professor of Slavic Languages at Brigham Young University in Utah, USA. He is a specialist in Slovene dialectology. He developed an interest in the Slovene language already as a university student. Today he visits Slovenia once or twice a year to discover the attitude of Slovenians toward their numerous dialects.

Photo: Personal archives



Grant Lundberg

**Can you tell us about the results of Slovene dialects and broadly about the Slovene language you teach?**

I have been studying Slovene dialects since the late 1990s, when I began my dissertation. I spent 1997 and 1998 in Slovenia studying the dialect area of Haloze. Since then, I have returned to Slovenia nearly every year to work on projects and research. I have written about dialect developments along the Slovenian-Croatian border, in Slovene-speaking villages in Austria and on attitudes and dialect usage across Slovenia. For a linguist and dialectologist, this is a fascinating place. On top of that, it is beautiful and welcoming. The natural resources are amazing. The food is good. People are kind. You could say that I fell in love with Slovenia. I now co-edit a Slovene linguistics journal, *Slovenski jezik/Slovene Linguistic Studies*, published by the Slovene Academy of Sciences, with my colleague Kozma Ahačič.

**There still remains much to dis-**

**cover about the dialect situation in Slovenia.**

Changes in education policies, the spread of the standard language through the mass media and the mobility of the population have altered the dialect situation even in the remotest parts of the country. There are now several different kinds of dialect speakers. The oldest speakers, often the least educated and most isolated, may only have the local dialect. There are very few of these speakers left. Middle-aged speakers are better educated in the standard language and more exposed to other forms of the language. They may be married to someone from outside of the dialect area. They likely work outside of the local dialect area as well. In their speech they do not use some of the most distinctive features when compared to the usage of their parents. They are exposed to multiple variants of the language and, therefore, may adapt their speech to the regional dialect or the colloquial standard. The younger generation generally has some schooling outside

of the local dialect.

**What did you discover when you were studying the Haloze dialects?**

In Haloze, children attend school in the village up to the eighth or ninth grade, then they go to Ptuj for at least two or three more years. They may also go to Maribor. For post-secondary education, and likely for work, they will leave the dialect area all together. As a result of this mobility, intermediate varieties, regional dialects, have developed. These regional dialects, which often develop around large towns, are based on dialect forms but may not faithfully preserve the forms of the basic dialects.

Another development that often arises from the mobility of dialect speakers is local dialect levelling. As local dialect speakers have more intense contact with other dialects or regional dialects, the most characteristic dialect features can be lost due to cross-dialect levelling. Only some speakers maintain the

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Changes in education policies, the spread of the standard language through the mass media and the mobility of the population have altered the dialect situation even in the remotest parts of the country.

most distinctive features. Many dialect speakers still use the basic pronunciation, but they often abandon exclusive lexical items and some grammatical structures as well as the most salient pronunciation features. Local pronunciation differences still exist, but the dialect is a less and less distinct variant of the language. The dialect becomes more like a local accent that has much in common with the regional dialect. You can find more details in a forthcoming article on the subject:

“Dialect Levelling and Local Identity in Slovenia”, published by Peter Lang, *New Insights into Slavic Linguistics*, ed. Jacek Witkoś and Sylwester Jaworski, 2014.

**In your opinion, what is the attitude Slovenians have towards their own dialects?**

Slovenians value their local dialects. They see them as an important part of their local identity, and they want to pass them on to their children. If we take the local dialect area of Haloze, a region along Slovenia’s north-eastern border with Croatia, as an example, there is significant variation in contemporary rural dialect usage in Slovenia. In Haloze the oldest living generation speak a quite archaic form of the dialect. Many young people, as well as speakers of other generations, also continue to speak a local variant of the language. This version of the dialect clearly differs from the standard language, yet it also differs from that spoken by the oldest generation. Despite the obvious generational variation in modern dialect usage, almost all of these people consider themselves to be dialect speakers.

**Which is not only true in Haloze.**

The overwhelming majority of Slovenians from all regions of the country claim to speak a dialect. In a recent study including over 500 respondents from all across the country, 84% of Slovenians claimed to speak a dialect at home, and over 80% claimed to be fluent dialect speakers. An

even higher percentage in Haloze claim to be dialect speakers. In a survey conducted in Haloze in 2009, 97% of the respondents claimed to speak a dialect at home, and 92% claimed to be fluent in the local dialect, meaning they could understand and express themselves without difficulty. When asked if the dialect was important to their identity, 81% said that it was very important, 17% said it was somewhat important, and only 2% said the dialect was not important to their identity.

You can find more about this in a recent book and an article on this topic:

Dialect Levelling in Haloze, Slovenia, Maribor: Zora, 2013; “Dialect Usage in Slovenia”, *Slovene Studies* 32/1-2 (2010): 43-66.

**How fluent are you in the Slovene language?**

I love the Slovene language. I can use it well in my dialect research to interview informants and in most everyday situations. Slovene is a difficult language, but it is worth the effort. It opens insights into a very interesting people and place.

**Can you describe the programme of Slovene language at the University where you teach?**

Unfortunately, there is not a programme at my university. I teach Russian because there are students in that field. Slovene is only taught at a few universities in the US, the University of Kansas being one of them. If more people knew about the beauty of Slovenia and its rich culture and history, there would be more interest in studying the language.

**Do people in the USA show any interest in Slavic languages?**

There is a great deal of interest in the Russian language as “the national security language”. The Government supports students undertaking Russian language studies, because Russian is an important language for the international relations of the United States. Some individuals also study other Slavic languages,

but usually within post-graduate study programmes, where students and academicians use these languages for research purposes.

**Which Slovene dialect do you consider the most difficult and which is, in your opinion, the most beautiful?**

I think that for someone whose mother tongue is not Slovene, all the dialects are difficult. The dialects in the border areas are definitely extremely interesting, mostly because of their interaction with other languages and language variants. This is one of the reasons why I am so fond of Haloze. The Koroška and Prekmurje dialects are difficult and interesting too.

**How do Slovenians differ from Russians? Do we have a different attitude toward the language?**

The two environments are very different. Russians and Russia have many positive characteristics, however, the political, demographic, and economic environments they need to cope with are far more complicated than those in Slovenia. This also changes the way they interact.

**Slovenians (or more precisely Slovene purists) are pretty paranoid that their language might “drown” and disappear in all the words of foreign origin adopted into Slovene, ranging from words of German origin and words of Serbo-Croatian origin, to words of English origin. In your experience, is this fear rational?**

I can give you a short answer. New vocabulary enriches the language, in particular if original Slovene or Slavic words do not get lost in this process. Words of foreign origin can add nuances and subtlety when a certain language has more than one word with the same basic meaning but with a slightly different variation or connotation. Slovene is a very robust and dynamic language with strong social roots. It will continue to change, but it will definitely not become extinct.

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## Karstology began in the Slovenian Karst

Geography abounds with examples of particular landscape types taking their names from particular natural phenomena. Various branches of science owe their names to a specific phenomenon or form – volcanology, for example, being named after the volcano, itself derived from Vulcanus (the Roman god of fire). However, there is only one such case where the name of a branch of science is entirely based on a landscape – karstology. The Slovenian limestone plateau known as Kras – the Karst in English – gave its name to a typical landscape formed on carbonate rock, and it is here in Slovenia that karstology began to develop.

Photo: Jakše-Jeršič



The first exploration and research of karstic phenomena started on the limestone plateau of the Karst, situated between the Gulf of Trieste and the Vipava Valley. The name of the region soon began to be used by researchers as an internationally recognised term for this type of limestone landscape. As a result, the Karst has become important both as a reference type of limestone landscape for other karst areas around the world and

historically as the main source of ideas and notions about karstic phenomena and their designation.

### THE CONTRIBUTION OF SLOVENE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF KARST TERMINOLOGY

Towards the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, the Romans conquered the Kingdom of the Histri, which included the Karst. The plateau's name then became

known through its Latinised form, Carsus. The base of the name was karus, with its root "kar", which meant a stone or rock. The Slovenian form arose in the 9<sup>th</sup> century at the latest, that is at a time when any proto-Slovene "r" or "l" placed between a vowel and a consonant changed its place to precede a vowel: Kars(u) was thus transformed into Kras.

The Škocjan caves



Lake Cerknica

The name Kras started to appear more often in written documents in the Middle Ages. Professional research, particularly by geologists and geographers, which included description of the Karst and other limestone regions, began in the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century. In this period,

the name Karst was slowly assumed as a general concept and became a technical term; along with the exploration of specific karst formations, relevant notions and terms were expressed in Slovene to designate typical karst formations. An example of this is Rosthorn's notes from

1847 concerning his geological tour in Istria, where he claims to have himself explored 1,000 Karst dolines (sinkholes). The term "doline" has thus become an internationally recognised term for a specific karstic surface formation.

Other examples of Slovene words used in international terminology related to the study of karstic landscapes:

**Doline:** A basin or funnel-shaped hollow in limestone, ranging in diameter from a few metres up to a kilometre and in depth from a few to several hundred metres. Some dolines are gentle grassy hollows; others are rocky, cliff-edged basins.

**Jama:** A vertical or steeply inclined shaft in limestone, known as an abime or aven in French and as a pothole in English. Also used for any cave.

**Ponor:** A hole or opening in the bottom or side of a depression where a surface stream or lake flows either partially or completely underground into the karst groundwater system.

**Polje:** A large, flat-bedded depression in karst limestone, whose long axis is developed parallel to major structural trends and can reach tens of kilometres in length. Superficial deposits tend to accumulate on the bed. Drainage may be by either surface watercourses (when the polje is said to be open) or swallow holes (a "closed" polje). The Dinaric Karst has many poljes; the Livansko polje is around 60 km long and 7 km wide. The word is Slovene for "field", reflecting the agricultural value of the alluvial polje bed soils.

Photo: www.slovenia.info



The name of the Karst plateau has not only given rise to the international term “karst” but resulted, via derivatives or directly, in many popular expressions, which more or less faithfully follow the original. Thus speaking about the Karst and its international dimension, this involves not only the natural heritage but also the cultural, including the use of a term which has spread throughout the world.

#### THE KARST AS “REFERENTIAL” KARST

The Karst is a landscape formed from the dissolution of soluble rocks including limestone, dolomite and gypsum. It is characterised by sinkholes, caves and underground drainage systems. Nearly all surface karst features are formed by internal drainage, subsidence and collapse triggered by the development of underlying caves.

Research into karst phenomena actually began in Slovenia, where it has also achieved the highest level of development. In 1689, Johann Weikhard von Valvasor, a pioneer of the study of karst phenomena in Slovenia and a fellow of London’s Royal Society for Improving Natural Knowledge, introduced the word “karst” to European scholars, describing the phenomenon of underground flows of rivers in his account of Lake Cerknica.

Planinsko polje

Flooded Planinsko polje

Photo: Klemen Kunaver/www.slovenia.info





Photo: www.slovenia.info

Ponor in Postojna cave

After the discovery of the inner part of the Postojna Cave in 1818, the district engineer Schaffenrath and his colleague Hohenwart prepared a guide to the cave. The introduction to the guide contains a statement – the first ever – that “karst is not only in the Karst region, but this is a strip of land that stretches from the Udine district up to the Greek island of Cephalonia”. Today we know that almost half of Slovenia’s territory lies on karst terrain, while the largest karst area in Europe is

the Dinaric karst region in the Balkan Peninsula. The largest karst areas in the world are in China (600,000 km<sup>2</sup>) and Australia (500,000 km<sup>2</sup>). Due to the aforementioned beginnings of karst research in Slovenia, the Slovenian Karst has been established as the basic karst type, i.e. the reference landscape for other karst areas around the world.

Slovenia has the world’s largest risk of sinkholes. The world’s largest limestone karst area is Australia’s Nullarbor Plain.

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF KARSTOLOGY**

The largest karstic research institute in the world is the Karst Research Institute in Postojna, Slovenia. The carefully selected research team, consisting of experts in the fields of geography, geology, biology, chemistry and physics, cover the most important areas of karstology. The institute is firmly integrated in the international karstology network and publishes the internationally renowned collection of scientific papers Acta carsologica.

## The Slovenian Writers Trail

Slovenia is scattered with numerous writer's houses, connected by the Slovenian Writers Trail. It leads from Miško Kranjec's birthplace in Velika Polana in Prekmurje across the entire country to the birthplace of Oton Župančič in Vinica in Bela krajina. The trail winds its way across our country and reminds us of a human journey through life. The Slovenian Writers Trail consists of and invites you to take part in the journey through a variety of initiatives: to partake in curiosity and knowledge and in reading, thinking and telling the unforgettable.

Photo: Tinkara Župan/STA



The Slovenian Writers Trail is a project of the Slovenian Writers' Association, which revives and represents our literary heritage. Its purpose is visiting and learning about Slovenian literary landscapes. The guide's common thread is a route which connects the homes and houses of birth of Slovenian poets and writers, thus the places where they once lived and created. It presents in words and pictures many Slovenian writers, including their involvement in the literary and cultural heritage of Slovenian regions.

It is a kind of "spiritual home" of our literary heritage for future generations. If one were to calculate the road distance between the 104 writers' stations, this would make a total of a stunning 700 kilometres. In Slovenia, a land of transversal hiking trails, where there are some 1,128 mountain trails, no path exceeds the length of the Slovenian Writers Trail. The hiking route leads from Prekmurje over Podravje to Koroška, from where it turns back to Savinjska, Celje and the Obsočje region, descends into Posavje and Zasavje,

heads out for Gorenjska, then swings toward Primorska and the Karst, turns eastwards to Notranjska and arrives again at the heart of Slovenia, including the capital city of Ljubljana, of course, and finally ends in Dolenjska and Bela Krajina. Ljubljana is covered with a network of writers homes, not only places of birth, but also places of most different changes of residence and homes that are central in the creation of individual writers.

The Slovenian Writers Trail is a monument to Slovenianhood and an opportunity for associating on several levels. Among other things, it also connects together those public institutes that are authorised for participation in other areas. The project includes 67 municipalities. In addition, the Žirovnica Cultural Heritage Trail, which last year was chosen as the most beautiful thematic trail in Slovenia, is part of the Slovenian Writers Trail.

Slovenia has about 700 thematic routes with awareness-raising and educational aims; they also constitute a tourism product which raises self-esteem among Slovenians. The Slovenian Writers Trail is a multi-faceted project which revives tradition using modern tools and connects regions and settlements through literature, tourism and education.

In the 1980s, Slovenian writers made a crucial contribution to the opening of political space and laying the foundations for an independent Slovenia. A good book and well-developed reading culture secure the development and strengthening of the Slovene language. They are the most powerful means to overcome the non-culture of hate speech, intolerance and chauvinism.

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## Drago Jančar nominated for Femina French literary prize

The Slovenian writer Drago Jančar is one of 14 candidates for the prestigious Femina French literary prize that has been awarded since 1904. Jančar is nominated in the foreign novel category for his work, *To noč sem jo videl* (That Night I Saw Her). The winners will be announced on 3 November.



Photo: Nebojša Tajić/STA

Drago Jančar

In his novel, *That Night I Saw Her*, Drago Jančar, one of the most translated, award-winning and respected contemporary Slovenian writers, goes back as he has many times in his rich literary oeuvre into history, into the cruel and relentless period of World War II. Jančar's novel, which was published in France under the title *Cette nuit je l'ai vue* by the French publishing house Phebus, unveils the story of the main heroine, Veronika Zarnik, who the reader gets

to know in five chapters through direct participants in the events. Five narrators – her lover, mother, doctor, husband and worker at the Strmol Castle – draw the image of the protagonist, and of the wartime and post-war eras in Slovenia.

**Drago Jančar:** "This is a novel about a few years in the life and mysterious disappearance of Veronika Zarnik, a young bourgeois woman from Ljubljana, sucked into the whirlwind of

a turbulent period in history. Five different characters, who also talk about themselves and the troubled times in Slovenia before and during World War II, tell the story of Veronika. They tell about the times that swallowed like Moloch, not only the people of various beliefs involved in historical events, but also those who lived on the fringes of tumultuous events that they did not even fully comprehend; those who only wanted to live. But "only" to live was an illusion; it was a time, when, even under the seemingly safe and idyllic



*shelter of some manor house in Upper Carniola, it was impossible to avoid the rushing train of violence.*

*Veronica's story is told by her former lover, an officer in the Royal Yugoslav Army, who, in 1945, ended up in a prison camp in Palmanova. The second part is recounted by her mother, who, in that same year, is awaiting her daughter's return in an apartment on the outskirts of Ljubljana, lost in her memories and frantic from uncertain hope. Narrators also include a doctor from the occupying German army, the family housekeeper and, finally, a former partisan, who, on an unclear personal impulse, full of misunderstandings, sets off a train that speeds off into the night over the country and its people."*

For this novel, Jančar received the Kresnik Award for the best novel of the year in 2010. The writer won the Kresnik Award for the third time. This is an award presented by the daily newspaper Delo, which he already received in 1998 for *Zvenenje v glavi* (Ringing in the Head) and in 2000 for *Katarina, pav in jezuit* (Catherine, the Peacock and the Jesuit). The Femina literary prize is intended for both male and female authors, and has been awarded for decades. In addition to the main category, prize for the best French novel, there are two other categories: for best foreign novel (for works translated into French) and best essay.

This year's nominees in the French novel category include Yves Biche for the novel *L'homme qui marche*, Gerard de Cortanze for *L'an prochain a Grenade* and Julia Deck for the work *Le Triangle d'hiver*.

In addition to Jančar, nominees in the foreign novel category include the Irish writers John Banville for *La lumière des étoiles mortes* and Sebastian Barry for *L'homme provisoire*, the Australian writer Lily Brett for the novel *Lola Benski* and the American writer Jennifer Clement for the work *Prière pour celles qui furent volées*, as reported by MMC online portal.

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Jančar's novel, which was published in France under the title *Cette nuit je l'ai vue* by the French publishing house Phebus, unveils the story of the main heroine, Veronika Zarnik, who the reader gets to know in five chapters through direct participants in the events.

### **Drago Jančar – Slovenian writer, playwright and essayist, 1948**

Drago Jančar, born in Maribor, is one of the most prolific and most frequently translated Slovenian writer. He is a regular member of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

In addition to short stories, plays, essays and screenplays for film and television plays, he has written the following novels *Petintrideset stopinj* (Thirty-Five Degrees) (1974), *Galjot* (The Galley Slave) (1978), *Severni sij* (Northern Lights) (1984), *Posmehljivo poželenje* (Mocking Desire) (1993), *Zvenenje v glavi* (Ringing in the Head) (1998), *Katarina, pav in jezuit* (Catherine, the Peacock and the Jesuit) (2000), *Graditelj* (The Builder) (2006), *Drevo brez imena* (The Tree with No Name) (2008), *To noč sem jo videl* (That Night I Saw Her) (2010). He has won numerous national awards: the Prešeren Award in 1979, the Prešeren Award in 1993, the Kresnik Award three times, the last time in 2011, for the novel *That Night I Saw Her*, the Rožanc Award three times and the Grum Award four times; and the following international awards: the European Short Story Award (Augsburg, 1994), the Herder Prize for Literature (2003), the Jean Améry Literature Award (2007), the Hemingway-Sparkasse Award (Lignano, 2009), the Award for Mediterranean Culture (Cosenza, 2009) and the ACEL Literary Prize (2011).

The central theme of Jančar's prose is people who are suffocating in an overcrowded world, human beings who long to be alone, to exist in their own way, but are repeatedly pressed by the crowd. It certainly is a conflict between the individual and the totalitarian system, the struggle between individual human existence and the chaos of the world. Despite its topicality, Jančar's literature never slips into explanation or political agitation. What remains is art: complex, psychologically acute and formally perfect.

## Slovenia bids to be Honorary Guest at Frankfurt Book Fair

Slovenia is applying to be chosen as guest of honour at the 2018 Frankfurt International Book Fair. The “Slovenia – Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt International Book Fair” project is one of the central literary goals in the National Culture Programme 2014–2017. It aims to increase Slovenia’s international visibility.



Photo: Tamino Pelejšek/STA

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The project aims to make Slovenia’s creativity more recognisable and to integrate it into the German environment. It will moreover help boost economic ties with Germany, Slovenia’s top trade partner.

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The project is designed to bring together cultural, economic and tourism sectors. Its goals are boosting trade with authors’ rights, increasing the number of translations of Slovenian literature into German and English, enhancing the visibility of Slovenian culture abroad, making Slovenia more recognisable as a tourist destination, connecting companies from the field of printing, and improv-

ing the trade in Slovenian design products.

The government will earmark EUR 2.5 million for the project, while the Slovenian Book Agency (Javna agencija za knjigo RS – JAK), which will oversee the project, will endeavour to obtain funds from extra-budgetary sources. Slovenia will use these funds to carry out the programme, to participate in and implement projects by means of Slovenian economic diplomacy, to link books with tourism, and to prepare the translation support programme, while JAK will open an information office in cooperation with the Slovenian Embassy in Germany approximately a

year before the presentation. The Frankfurt Book Fair, which takes place every year in the middle of October, is the largest book fair in the world, in terms of both the number of publishing houses represented and number of visitors. Last year, 7,300 exhibitors attracted 275,342 visitors.

The presentation of the Guest of Honour attracts interest of the professional and general public, and represents one of the highlights of the fair’s media coverage. Until 2013, 26 countries and regions presented themselves as Guests of Honour, the last one was Brazil, while this year the honour will be given to Finland.



### SLOVENIAN LITERATURE IS KNOWN AROUND THE WORLD

There are several institutions that promote Slovenian literature, primarily in Slovenia the Ministry of Culture and the Slovenian Book Agency, while in other countries Slovenian representations and lectureships. Informally, the network of institutions endeavouring to present Slovenian writers abroad is large and complex. The Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs together with diplomatic missions and consulates abroad co-decide on the co-financing of projects from the culture fund. From January

to end of April, they co-finance 30 areas of culture, six of which are book-related and allocated EUR 3,800 from the total of EUR 26,000. Moreover, representations and Slovene lectureships abroad are the largest organisers of literary readings. Last year, for example, embassies in Paris, Cordoba, Buenos Aires, Guadalajara, Ottawa, Toronto, and Vancouver co-organised impressive presentations of the writer Boris Pahor on the occasion of his 100th birthday. Every year, the Ministry of Culture launches a call for tender for art production at art residencies in Berlin, London, New York, and Vienna. 13 writers were suc-

cessful in this year's call for tender. With numerous projects and calls for tender, JAK is one of the main institutions seeing to the promotion of Slovenian books in the world. Last year, JAK organised four national presentations at major book fairs in Leipzig, Bologna, Frankfurt, and Moscow. It cooperates with similar institutions abroad.

Last year, a seminar was prepared once again for foreign translators of Slovenian literature, attended by 15 translators into 12 different languages, while seven Slovenian authors received JAK's fellowship and visited seven centres abroad.

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### Ljubljana Book Fair to host Scotland, remember Kekec

The organisers of this year's Book Fair Frankfurt after Frankfurt, to be held in Ljubljana's Cankarjev dom from 26 to 30 November, announced a number of new features for the 30th edition of the fair. These will include a first step towards internationalisation, as Scotland and selected foreign publishers will be hosted at the fair.

Other new approaches will include a special section dedicated to cookbooks and gastronomy, which will feature live cooking, interviews with experts and more. The central theme of this year's fair will meanwhile be Kekec, a legendary icon in Slovenian literature and film, as 130 years are passing in 2014 since the birth of his creator Josip Vandot (1884-1944).

Each evening at the fair will close with a literary and musical event, which will also be international in nature, offering Scottish, Russian, Croatian and Slovenian performances.

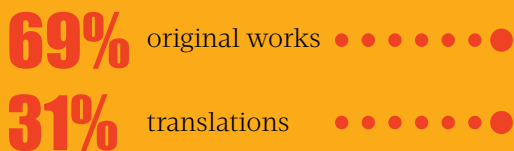
## A nation of readers

# Slovenians: the biggest borrowers of books in Europe

Slovenians like to read. For the past decade, Slovenia has held the record in Europe for the number of new titles published per capita. The average Slovenian buys one to two books per year. Latest figures show Slovenians also come top in terms of borrowing books.

In 2013, 5,084 titles of books and brochures were published.

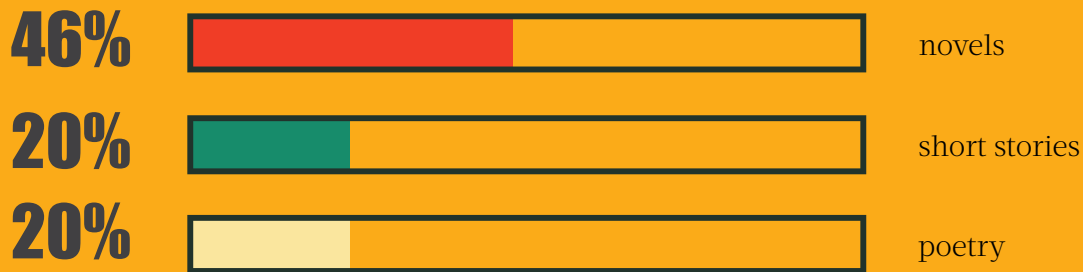
### As regards the source



### As regards the type of edition



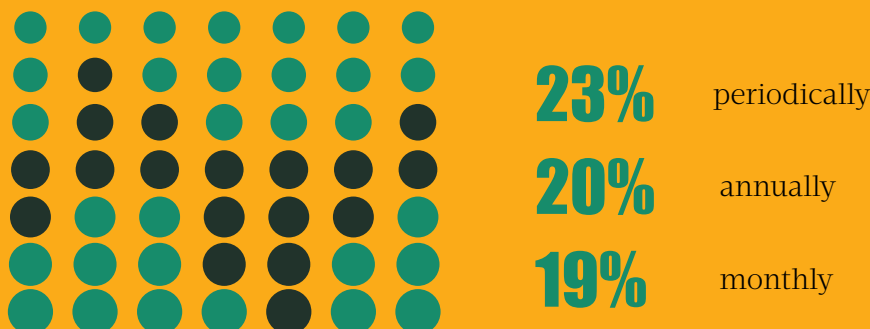
### As regards literary genres in fiction



The region with the largest number of readers and with most regular readers is Central Slovenia.

In 2013, 1,802 printed newspapers and other serial publications were published.

### As regards the frequency of publishing



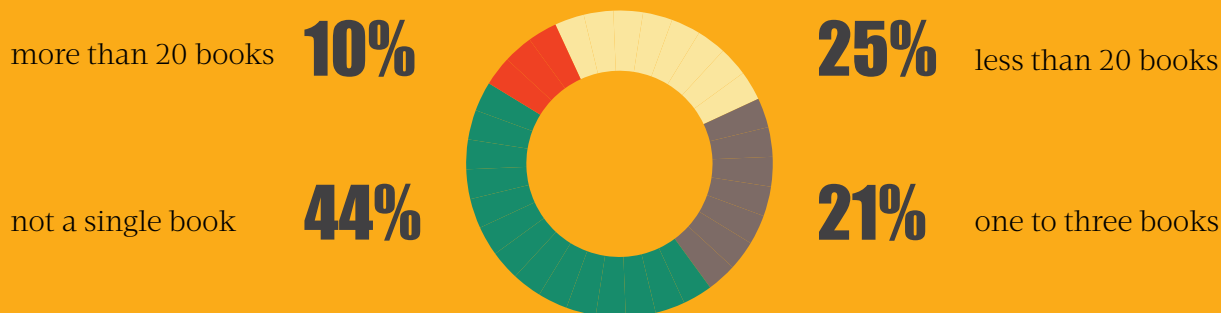
**72%**  
 of primary school students read regularly



If each primary school student reads at least three books a year, that sums up to almost half a million books read.

Students account for the largest share of regular readers.

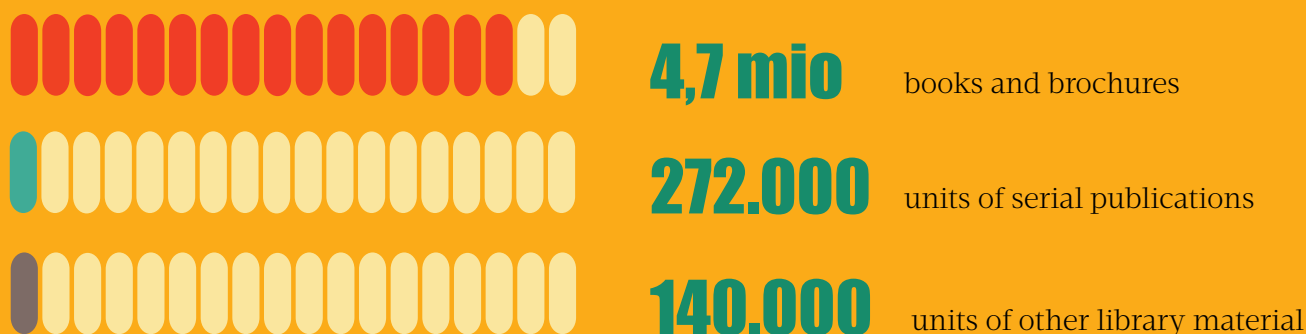
How much have we read in the past year?



There are 58 public libraries in Slovenia, ten of which also assume the role of central regional libraries.

The number of books read increases with the level of education and income.

In 2013, more than 5 million units of library material were borrowed from school libraries.



In Slovenia, youth books, world and Slovenian classics, and translated romance novels are most borrowed.



In Slovenia, women read more than men.

## Zarja – The Dawn

# A pen writing Slovenian melodies

Back in 1929, Marie Prisland and a couple of other Slovenian women, who felt lost in a foreign country, believed that they needed to organise to preserve their womanhood and homeland identity in America. They decided to found the Slovenian Women's Union of America. This is a story of brave and creative women and the magazine they created called Zarja (The Dawn).

Zarja is a magazine written by the Slovenian Americans. It was first published 85 years ago. Its first editor was Julia Gottlieb. The current editor of the magazine is Debbie Pohar.

Home office – a photograph of Albina and Corinne, August 1954. The current editor of the magazine is Debbie Pohar and the National President of SUA is Bonnie Pohar Prokup.



Photo: Archive of magazine Zarja

They are a true inspiration to everyone holding Zarja's pen today. Even though this pen today only writes English words, the words reflect a Slovenian melody. We hope that this pen would soon write Slovene words again

and not only reflect a Slovenian melody.

Zarja is a magazine written by the Slovenian Americans. It was first published 85 years ago. Its first editor was Julia Gottlieb.

The creators of the magazine celebrated this high anniversary in the National and University Library in Ljubljana. The current editor of the magazine is Debbie Pohar. The magazine is her hobby and not a job. But just

Photo: Personal archive



Albina Novak, the heart of the magazine between 1933 and 1952.

### Editors of Zarja

Julia Gottlieb (1929–1930)  
Josephine Racic (1930–1933)  
Albina Novak (1933–1952)  
Corinne Leskovar (1952–2006)  
Debbie Pohar (2006–)

like her predecessors, she takes her job seriously. What matters the most is that she is not alone. Just like her predecessors, she is surrounded by a team which she can rely on. A 85-year-old Corrine Leskovar also joined the creators of the magazine at the celebration in Ljubljana. She was the editor of Zarja from 1952 to 2006 when Debbie Pohar took over her work.

#### ZARJA WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1929

The women who joined Marie Prisland decided that they will publish an informative and interesting magazine which will provide help to women who had moved to this foreign country. The first issues of Zarja were written only in Slovene. Later on, the issues already included some articles in English at the end of the magazine. Following a change in 1956, Zarja had eight pages in Slovene and eight pages in English. Zarja published articles on everyday life, health, family, education, cooking, understanding of the American culture and religion. The writers also wrote about very personal experience. Zarja was an educational tool for everyone who had moved to America. The magazine helped people to easily and quickly understand the American society. Slovenians wanted to become true American citizens as soon as possible, but at the same time they wanted to

retain their Slovenian identity. Unfortunately, their descendants no longer speak Slovene or they speak it very poorly, but the children of the first immigrants want to return to their roots. Unfortunately, Zarja is no longer written in Slovene. The pen is only writing English words.

Today, the magazine is not published by the Slovenian Women's Union. As men and children also wanted to feel closer to their homeland, the union was renamed the Slovenian Union of America (SUA). It preserves the Slovenian culture in America through different activities. Its members like to socialize. Many friendships are formed. All Slovenians and friends of Slovenia are always welcome among them. Zarja is 85 years old but it kept its freshness and youth. The same goes for Corinne Leskovar. She has a sparkle in her eyes. Where does this glow come from?

#### CORINNE LESKOVAR

Corinne Leskovar begins the story with her mother who was the editor of the magazine before her. In her opinion, Albina Novak was a great woman, full of talents. She was very busy with her large family and active in the parish and the community. She was surrounded by Slovenians and was brought up to love her family and the broader commu-

nity. Therefore, it is no surprise that she was working for the community with all her heart.

Corinne says: "At that time, the world of immigration was different than it is now. Slovenians who immigrated had to accept the hardest jobs. They were living in harmony with nature, they were modest and happy, and fulfilled as human beings, even though they sacrificed and gave up many things to start a better life in America. They were brave and sensitive, and they regarded the community as an important value." They were living in different parts of America. The majority were situated in Cleveland where they found jobs and set up a family life. They were very closely connected. One of them was Marie Prisland who especially cherished this friendship. To connect the community she wrote letters and she was quickly followed by a number of other women and girls. At the beginning, an issue of Zarja cost only 25 cents, a small sum that these women could easily afford. They sent the money by mail or gave it to volunteers who collected it door-to-door. "One of them was also Mary Otoničar who collected the contributions personally. Thanks to her, 1500 new members joined the Union. The other person who responded to this call and was very successful in this was my mother," says Corinne.

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Corinne Leskovar (left) and Debbie Pohar (right).

**SLOVENIAN GOSSIP GIRLS**

Even though they were living in different parts of America, the distance did not stop them to attend the meetings organised by the Union. Corinne remembers that her mother made her very pretty for that occasion. “I had to look pretty, it was a holiday,” she said. They met in the parish, at home or in halls of a community house when they came in large numbers. These meetings were very long as the ladies had many things to say. They spoke Slovene. They were happy to meet as they respected the sense of belonging.

**IT WAS A MISSION, NOT A CAREER**

Corinne’s childhood was all about the Women’s union and Zarja. Her mother had been the editor for 19 years. When Corinne came home from school, the family room was often covered in papers: articles for Zarja, cuttings from other newspapers, cultural programmes, invitations etc. Zarja was typed manually at that time. Corinne was of great

help to her mother. They spent hours on editing articles, writing addresses on the envelopes and updating the list of addresses. The first printing house that printed Zarja was American Publishing Co. from Cleveland. When Corinne was in high school, her mother owned a small office on the second floor of a building where many Slovenian newspapers and other publications were printed for the Slovenian community. “At that time, boys were delivering the newspaper. We also sent it by train. Many of those boys grew up and became important and successful men in the field of economy, politics and society,” said Corinne. In 1952, her mother became the president of the Union. A question who will replace her as editor was raised and Corinne was the obvious choice as she was her mother’s intern during all her childhood. She remained the editor even when she moved to Chicago with her husband, who was a Slovenian, as she likes to point out.

**THE LOVE OF GIVING REMAINS**

Corinne praises the new editor. “Debbie is working very hard. We have a great magazine.” Her love of Zarja is still alive even if she is no longer writing for it. She says: “I cannot get rid of the feeling that I must not throw away any piece of information, article, newspaper, magazine, programme or contact as I never know when it might come in handy when writing a certain issue of the magazine.” Corinne knows practically all the Slovenian communities in America and has many friends. Even during the meeting in Ljubljana, she did not sit alone. She spoke highly of her mother and all brave women who fought for a better life: “These women were brilliant article writers and photographers. Many of them did a lot for the Slovenian community in America. They were volunteers who worked for Zarja with love and supported each other. This is also my legacy. I want Debbie and the girls to work together for the community with love and carry their homeland in their hearts.”

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## Blossom in the Fall

# The first Slovenian musical – inspired by Ivan Tavčar's novel

*Blossom in the Fall* is a novel by the Slovenian author Ivan Tavčar. It talks about thwarted love and pays tribute to the simple and proud spirit of people living in the Slovenian countryside. This love story, which is a part of the Slovenian literature heritage, was adapted this year to music. The musical was presented at the official conclusion of the 62<sup>nd</sup> Ljubljana Festival. And so Slovenia got its first very own musical.

Photo: Slovenian Film Centre archive



The script is based on the original love story written by Ivan Tavčar, but it does not skip the opportunity to connect to present reality. The musical - theatre adaptation of Tavčar's literary work was directed by Vojko Anzeljc, music was written by Matjaž Vlašič, the author of libretto and dramatic text is Janez Usenik, the orchestrator is Anže Rozman, and the choreographer Miha Krušič. The lead role of Janez is played by Matjaž Robavs, opera soloist, music teacher and member of the Eroika trio, shared by Domen Križaj, student of solo singing, while the character of Meta is performed by a singer Nina Pušlar and actress Maja Martina Merljak. Other roles are performed by Jure Ivanušič (Danijel), Alenka Kozolc

Gregurič and Ana Grasselli (Liza), Marjan Bunič and Damijan Perne (Boštjan), Lucija Grm (Barbara) and others.

### FOCUS ON LOVE FOR THE MOTHERLAND

The Musical Blossom in the Fall is focused on love of all that is Slovenian. At the same time it should be noted that this Ivan Tavčar's literary work does not only represent an idealisation of the rural population as the protector of Slovene language and tradition, and praise to an unspoiled nature, but it can also be considered as a kind of a call to raise the national consciousness, a call to reconciliation and integration of Slovenians. In 1917,

when the story was published, the future of the Slovenian territory was very uncertain due to the World War I and the decline of the centuries long rule of the Habsburgs. At that period, Slovenians probably had their first big chance to become united in their own country. In this regard, Ivan Tavčar was a visionary and a great dreamer, whose dream came true much later.

The novel Blossom in the Fall is also important from an ethnological point of view. The novel, and the musical as well, provide a detailed description of the farm chores, courting, dancing and singing, as well as Slovenian national identification. Besides being a writer, Ivan Tavčar was

Blossom in the Fall (*Cvetje v jeseni*), a Slovenian feature film written and directed by Matjaž Klopčič, which was premiered on 21 June 1973. The lead roles were played by Polde Bibič and Milena Zupančič.

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Blossom in the Fall is the first Slovenian musical. The first performance as well as subsequent performances, which were all sold out, prove that Ivan Tavčar's story directed by Vojko Anzeljc is an excellent cultural experience.



Photo: Mediaspeed/Ljubljana Film Festival

Part of the cast: Jure Ivanušič (Danijel), Domen Križaj (Janez), Nina Pušlar (Meta), Maja Martina Merljak (Meta), Ana Grasselli (maid Liza), Matjaž Robavs (Janez), Marjan Bunič (Boštjan, Meta's father).

The Musical Blossom in the Fall is focused on love of all that is Slovenian. At the same time it should be noted that this Ivan Tavčar's literary work does not only represent an idealisation of the rural population as the protector of Slovene language and tradition, and praise to an unspoiled nature, but it can also be considered as a kind of a call to raise the national consciousness, a call to reconciliation and integration of Slovenians.

also the mayor of Ljubljana and a politician. He loved Slovene language. As a member of the Provincial Assembly of Carniola, he was known to be a clear and confident speaker. As a provincial deputy, he promoted the public use of the Slovene language. Already in 1893, when he was a deputy, he raised the question on the public use of Slovene language. He prepared a proposal on the Slovene inscriptions on provincial institutions and offices. He believed that German inscriptions were not necessary. He supported the use of the Slovene language in schools, courts and in literature.

#### LOVE IS AN INSPIRATION TO ALL OF US

The musical begins with a mid-autumn waltz. The first scene of the musical starts with three ladies standing in front of the city council, by the Dragon Bridge and the Ljubljana Castle in the background, and an elderly man sitting in front of them on a bench. "Look at the doctor, he is waddling around all alone again. He is sitting on the money, unwilling to share it with any-

body" sings a choir of young ladies who are strutting over the old man. Everybody who knows the story, can recognize Janez in the old man. Before Janez begins telling his story, he asks the ladies: "Would you really love your husbands if they didn't have any money?" Then the story begins. Janez talks about how his doctor advised him to withdraw to the countryside for a while due to his poor health. He decides to visit his cousin Boštjan, a farmer from Jelovo brdo under Blegoš. Once there, he falls in love with Meta, whom he last saw when she was just a young child and who grew up into a beautiful young woman. They fall in love with each other but they both deny it. They are forced apart due to his profession as a lawyer, but they can't stop thinking of each other. The cousin's servant Daniel has a solution to the problem. He advises Janez to buy the Mlačan farm in Jelovo brdo and move there. Janez buys it and communicates the news to the landlords. When Janez tells Meta that he wants to marry her, her weak heart cannot bear such happiness and she passes away. Janez ends up never getting married, and Meta

remains the love of his life. The story ends with the old man talking to the city ladies and with an emotional call upon everybody to love the Slovenian land.

A new feature, introduced in the musical in contrast to the film version, is the circularity of the story. We meet the character of Janez again at the end of the show when he talks with the city ladies and emotionally calls upon everybody to love the Slovenian land. When the ladies ask him if he might be idealising Meta, Janez sharply interrupts them that he does not want to talk about that, because he does not want to spoil his memory of Meta.

The character of Meta in the musical is a shy, but nevertheless cheerful and genuine young woman with a beautiful heart, capable of pure love. She was so overwhelmed by love that she died of it. Janez respects her and he himself is shown as a generous man who thinks that in a woman hard work and honesty are more important than education, popularity or status. He is willing to change his way of life for Meta and after her death he

Photo: Mediaspeed/Ljubljana Film festival



keeps her in loving memory, as someone who is irreplaceable.

#### THE ORIGINAL SONGS, CHOREOGRAPHY AND COSTUME DESIGN

The musical consists of more than 20 songs, of which the majority are copyright, brand new songs, while some were taken from the treasury of Slovenian folk music by the creative team. 18 artists performed these songs accompanied by the symphony

orchestra under the baton of Simon Dvoršak. These songs include the following: *What is love, Danijel's world, The farmer is the king, The fox and his wife, The most beautiful farm, She did not pass away* and others. Costumes were designed by Vesna Mirtelj. She added a modern touch to the traditional clothing from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Miha Krušič, the choreographer, connected the Slovenian folk dances with today's time. One of the most

beautiful dances in the show is the one that represents the reapers and the power of love.

Blossom in the Fall is the first Slovenian musical. The first performance as well as subsequent performances, which were all sold out, prove that Ivan Tavčar's story directed by Vojko Anzeljc is an excellent cultural experience. Blossom in the Fall is a show that is not to be missed.

Janez, sitting on the bench, sings: "The power to be able to look into someone else's eyes and spend clear and stormy days with them, the power to forgive, and dare to love all people again. This is the power of love."

The show is very dynamic and builds on different genres, from the classical music, playful chansons, national rhythms, and folk songs to Sinatra's New York inspired songs and balladic lyricism.

Photo: Mediaspeed/Ljubljana Film festival



## BIO 50 – “a laboratory for design”

# Experimenting in international design

Since the 1960s, BIO has been one of the most important design events in Europe and the first biennial of its kind in the world. In former Yugoslavia, the main objective of the exhibition staged in Slovenia was to bring designers and industry closer together. This year’s biennial was conceived as an open process of cooperation, participation and experimentation.



Labelling of the BIO 50 exhibition.

In the forefront is the design process that develops alternatives to the existent options through questioning, criticism and experiments. The exhibition shows these alternatives rather than final products. It is composed of three periods: the past, the present and the possible future.

In the forefront is the design process that develops alternatives to the existent options through questioning, criticism and experiments. The exhibition shows these alternatives rather than final products. It is composed of three periods: the past, the present and the possible future. The exhibition analyses the selected award-winning works from previous biennials held over five decades and the social contextualisation through three thematic areas. Basically, it analyses the history of the biennial.

The main show 3, 2, 1 TEST presents the results of a six months of collaboration between designers, experts, institutions and companies, which worked in 11 groups. The curator of this year’s biennial, the Belgian critic and curator Jan Boelen, conceived BIO 50 as a production space, turning

the biennial from a traditional display of objects to a laboratory for design. Groups started their work after the BIO 50 introductory conference in February that attracted more than 120 participants to Ljubljana. The work consisted of both field work and online activities. The 3, 2, 1 TEST exhibition shows prototypes, preliminary ideas and results of various tests – all that is at the heart of the design process. The process that takes place at BIO 50 reveals a rich and underexploited potential of creative group work. Physical objects presented at the exhibition of this year’s biennial raise provocative questions for the design process in the future.

### ELEVEN THEMES

Participants from various fields coming from 20 countries this year were divided into groups,

tackling the themes of Affordable Living, Knowing Food, Public Water – Public Space, Walking the City, Hidden Crafts, The Fashion System, Hacking Households, Nanotourism, Engine Blocks, Observing Space and Designing Life. International and Slovenian mentors prepared project guidelines for each group and led and monitored their progress. Group members developed one or several projects that are presented at the biennial. The exhibition is accompanied by a programme of side events that was entitled BIO 50: NOW. It includes exhibitions and guided tours, presentations, lectures, creative workshops for children, talks and workshops.

### MAIN AWARD BESTOWED UPON THE NANOTOURISM GROUP

The main award, Best Collabo-



ration Award, was given to the Nanotourism group led by mentors Tina Gregorič and Aljoša Dekleva. Honourable Mentions were received by the Designing Life, Engine Blocks and The Fashion System groups.

Nanotourism is an outstanding example of design ingenuity being used to reinvent and reinvigorate an important area of the Slovenian and other economies. The quality of the individual projects is exceptionally high. The jury report states that “they are original, appealing and

so pragmatic that they promise to endure”.

According to the jury, the group is ambitious and complex and has dealt with a range of local communities with sensitivity and charm, while demonstrating the ever more eclectic nature of design and its potential to improve the quality of everyday life. The Designing Life group received Honourable Mention for its witty, provocative and controversial presentation of design.

According to the jury, “a simple idea, playfully executed, Engine

Blocks makes an intriguing contribution to the emerging culture community of D.I.Y. makers and fixers”.

In the jury’s opinion The Fashion System designed an intelligent and engaging approach to raising awareness of a neglected Slovenian resource. The international jury comprised design commentator Alice Rawsthorn, industrial designer Konstantin Grcic, and designer and professor Saša J. Mächtig.

The installation of the BIO 50 exhibition, Hacking Households.

### The Best Collaboration Award at BIO 50: Nanotourism

Nanotourism is an outstanding example of design ingenuity being used to reinvent and reinvigorate an important area of the Slovenian and other economies. The quality of the individual projects is exceptionally high. They are original, appealing and so pragmatic that they promise to endure. From a collaborative perspective, Nanotourism is both ambitious and highly complex and has dealt with a range of local communities with sensitivity and charm, while demonstrating the ever more eclectic nature of design and its potential to improve the quality of everyday life.

The main award, Best Collaboration Award, was given to the Nanotourism group led by mentors Tina Gregorič and Aljoša Dekleva.



The Biennial of (Industrial) Design over Fifty Years, Jakopič Gallery.

Participants from various fields coming from 20 countries this year were divided into groups, tackling the themes of Affordable Living, Knowing Food, Public Water – Public Space, Walking the City, Hidden Crafts, The Fashion System, Hacking Households, Nanotourism, Engine Blocks, Observing Space and Designing Life.

**Emphasised on the side:**

**Design commentator Alice Rawsthorn – international jury member:** “The selection of topics was very deliberate, reflecting the key issues in modern society. BIO 50 offers a valuable lesson in collaboration.”

**Industrial designer Saša J. Mächtig – jury member:** “Design is not present in final products, but in the act of creating them; the main purpose is not the result, but the process. It is good that suggestions can be transformed from an experiment into application; that will help them gain strategically important allies”.

**Chief curator Jan Boelen:** “Other than the presentation of the team’s process and projects which offer insights into possible futures for the design discipline, there is a strong focus on creating connections with the city at all levels. From a series of debates aiming to create a local design policy to events happening all over the city.”

**Jury statement:** “We were tremendously impressed by the quality, dynamism and originality of the projects in BIO 50, especially as they address so many important and contentious issues facing contemporary design. In an intensely turbulent era when we face radical, potentially destructive changes on so many fronts, BIO 50 plays an indispensable role in suggesting possible solutions thanks to the diligence, determination and vision of Jan Boelen and his gifted collaborators.”

## Unique sounds from Slovenia

# Let's sing in a dialect

The Slovene language has about fifty different dialects. They are a real treasure, enriching our language and making it more colourful. Singing in a dialect? It is something so beautiful and so pure ... you feel your Slovenian roots and realise how rich our language is.

Photo: Miha Fras



The particularities of different Slovenian regions, with their culture and their linguistic and ethnographic heritage, are expressed through dialects. Dialect vocabulary sounds and flows better and is more melodic and alive than Slovene literary language. This is also clear to the Slovenian musicians who sing in their native dialect or language. In Slovenia, singing in a dialect is quite popular and very appreciated by audiences.

### **DIALECTAL SONG FESTIVAL**

The Dialectal Song Festival was the first musical festival in Slovenia, preceding even the Slovene

Song Festival. Performers sang in various Slovenian dialects. The first festival winner was the popular song "Moja mala tiha sreča" ("My little secret joy"), sung by the wonderful Lidija Kodrič. At that time the festival was called "Vesela jesen" ("Merry autumn") and took place in Maribor in 1962. Alfi Nipič and Karli Arhar – the festival's biggest star singers, Irena Kohont, Alenka Pinterič, Ditka Haberl, Ivo Mojzer, Edvin Fliser and Neca Falk are among the many musicians who became famous at the Maribor festival. The Dialectal Song Festival would never have succeeded were it not for the exceptional lyricists who drew

their inspiration and knowledge from the treasures of the Slovene language and created beautiful lyrics. The most important and award-winning names are Miroslav Slana, Metka Ravnjak Jauk and Feri Lainšček. The oldest Slovenian music festival, which contributed more than 600 songs to Slovenian music's legacy, celebrated its 50th anniversary two years ago, inviting 150 musicians on stage. Most of the programme featured original performers who had had the most success at the dialectal festival, and they were accompanied by RTV Slovenia Big Band. Unfortunately, this festival is no longer organized in Slovenia.

Vlado Kreslin and the Beltinška Banda band caused a true rebirth of ethno music in Slovenia.



The wonderful singer-songwriter Iztok Mlakar sings most songs in the Littoral (more precisely, the Goriška) dialect, and some songs in the Cerklje dialect.

#### **DAJ MI MICKA, PEJNEZE NAZAJ OR SAN SE ŠETAU OR SPOMINČICE**

Who has not yet heard of the Slovenian Bob Dylan? Vlado Kreslin, from Beltinci in Prekmurje, is one of the most successful Slovenian singer-songwriters, with a rich musical career both at home and abroad. Collaborating in the early 1990s with the popular cult band Beltinška Banda, he dedicated himself to folk music and triggered a true rebirth of ethno music in Slovenia. They sang in Prekmurian, their home dialect. Vlado Kreslin once said that the old Prekmurian songs are true blues songs. However, he knew that these blues songs and the melancholy of the Prekmurian plains had to be invigorated with rock 'n' roll. His songs reflect Prekmurian places, the fog over the Mura river, the familiar environment, friends ... even those who aren't from Prekmurje feel his magic.

#### **EN GLAŽ VINA MI DEJ**

Have you been to a concert of the singer-songwriter Iztok Mlakar? If so, congratulations on having managed to get a ticket. Most of Iztok Mlakar's public performances are limited to small audiences. Also, they are rare and we usually find about them after they are already sold out. He is the composer and singer of many chanson-style songs. Most of the songs are sung in the Littoral (or, more precisely the Goriška) dialect, while some are sung in the Cerklje dialect. The dialect gives his songs a special charm, and his lyrics and music became popular all over Slovenia. Despite singing in the Littoral dialect, the Slovenian national character in general is reflected in Mlakar's songs. In his lyrics, he likes to touch on eternal themes such as love, time and death, as well as the joys of life, for he likes to sing about wine and good home-made food

too. And he also touches on ordinary people's fight for justice. The intimate and local atmosphere at his performances makes his music feel even more pure.

#### **DA GÖRA TA ŠKARBININA**

In Bela Krajina and especially in Resia, two-part *bordun* (drone) singing can still be found, where the lower voice maintains a flat tone (*bordun*), while the higher voice sings the song melody. The Resian culture is also known for throat singing. The Slovenian band Katalena demonstrates both elements in their song "Da göra ta Škarbinin" ("Mount Škrbina"). The wonderful lead singer of the band, Vesna Zornik, sings the song in the Resian dialect, which is spoken by just over a thousand people. Katalena is one of the Slovenian bands which brought Slovenian folk songs closer to the new generation by recasting them in





the form of art rock, funk, jazz or blues. They also added their own personal touch and started by winning over and charming audiences with their stage performances. It is clear from their songs that Katalena's members have a great love and respect for Slovenian folk traditions and that they are always looking for new ways through which to present traditional Slovenian music in an entirely new light. Katalena believes in the timelessness of folk music.

#### SEN ZNALA JES

This year, at the 34th Festival Melodije Morja in Sonca (Melodies of the Sea and the Sun), the winner was the musician Rudi Bučar with his song "Sen znala jes" (I knew). It was the first time that a dialect song was the winner at the festival. He took the risk of singing in the Istrian dialect and sent the audience into

rapture. Bučar was accompanied on stage by the female vocal folk group Frčafele. Six young women, who charmed the audience with their beautiful singing and appearance. "Our victory means a lot to me, not just for our sake, but also for all those who creatively produce folk music. It is an opportunity for others to sing in dialect too." By winning at the festival, he also showed others who write their lyrics in a dialect that they can succeed.

Bučar, who comes from Izola, says that singing in dialect takes him back to his roots, since songs in dialect had always been sung at home. In 2003, his first independent album, "Kapot", brought the Slovenian public closer to Istrian folk songs through the language of modern music. "It's about discovering our cultural heritage and reproducing professionally written compositions," says Bučar. He

is also the author and composer of the "Kantajmo" album of the Quartet 7 Plus from Izola, a vocal project for male singers focused on Istrian folk contents. His next album will also feature the colours of Istria. He will present both Istrian folk songs and his own original compositions. The revival of Istrian music in his compositions brings back its almost forgotten flavour, while his successful performance at the festival really showed that the Slovenians value their legacy.

Rudi Bučar's song in the Istrian dialect was the winner at the Festival Melodies of the Sea and the Sun.

#### Translation:

Daj mi Micka, pejnaze nazaj (Micka, give me my money back) or San se šetau (I was walking) or Spominčice (Forget-me-nots)

En glaž vina mi dej (Give me a glass of wine)

Da göra ta Škarbinina (Mount Škrbina)

Sen znala jes (I knew)

## From Cookbook to a Gastronomic Strategy

# God bless our finger-licking-good “Kranjska klobasa”

People need an identity, even more so today because we live in a globalised world. We Slovenians have always been creating it through our cuisine. How can food, which is sometimes perceived as merely a material means of survival, also serve to validate an identity?

Photo: Tamino Petelinšek/STA



Valentin Vodnik had a strong desire to standardise the language and raise the national awareness through the language.

Let's start with the language we use to communicate, and then proceed to the tongue we use to taste our food. When discussing the culinary vocabulary, we must mention a Slovenian priest, translator, journalist, and especially enlightened man, Valentin Vodnik (1758–1819), who wrote a cookbook with the title of “Kuharske bukve” (Cookbook). Vodnik translated parts of the text from German, but he also manifested a clear concern for the genuine Slovene language. He knew that Germanisms had to be replaced with Slovene expressions in order to boost the development of Slovene (cooking) terminology. He relied on the peasant language as a genuine source of Slovene words. Vodnik was aware that housewives in

different parts of the Slovenian territory used different words for the same cooking utensils and dishes. He suggested that cooks derive new words from the root of other Slovene words or to adapt them as much as possible to loanwords. Instead of the Germanism “šefla”, he suggested the term “zajemalka” (scoop), instead of the word “fila”, he suggested the term “nadev” (stuffing), etc.

He also explained which words to use for the units of measurement. He clarified the concepts of frying, burning, baking, sieving, whipping, and mixing. Vodnik always tried to find a suitable Slovene expression for a word borrowed from a foreign language. The fact that Vodnik largely managed to find synonyms for the methods of food preparation, utensils, and dishes proves that the Slovene language could compete on an equal basis with other languages, including German and French, in terms of culinary terminology.

Valentin Vodnik had a strong desire to standardise the language and raise the national awareness through the language. The book “Kuharske bukve” is full of practical advice; the author paid great attention to preserving fruit and vegetables and to innovative methods of preservation (for a long time, Slovenians had only known wind drying and smoking). However, he also invited his readers to test new food preparation procedures on their own. He said: “Experience is a great teacher.” Prof Dr Janez Bogataj, an ethnologist who prepared a facsimile of Vodnik's book “Kuharske bukve”, says: “The historical development of the culinary arts in Slovenia indicates that our ancestors had always welcomed new dishes from other parts of the world, but that they

also knew how to adapt them to their needs, lifestyle, culture, economic and social aspirations, and spiritual creativity.”

So-called Slovenian cuisine is not yet found in the work of Vodnik. The essence of his enlightenment endeavours lies primarily in education. In his instructions to housewives, he points out that eating too much fat is not good for you, that cooking oil should not be reused, and that it is not advisable to cook food in certain types of kitchenware as it is harmful to one's health. In the opinion of Dr Bogataj, Vodnik's book has a very modern approach to cooking, precisely because it advocates the preparation of healthy food. At the same time, foods such as frog legs or turtle meat indicate that as early as in Vodnik's times, the food in Slovenia was on an equal footing with the food consumed by foreigners.

### DISHES IN SLOVENIAN COOKBOOKS

In exploring the Slovene culinary terminology, we should not omit the question of the kind of dishes that appear in cookery books throughout Slovenian culinary history. The main feature of 19th century cookbook writing is the effort to publish books that addressed housewives in the Slovene language. These cookbooks are designed to teach and increase the diversity of food preparation. Their contents include mostly recipes for the preparation of dishes originating in a foreign environment, which testifies to the fact that during that period there was not yet a tendency to record the national cuisine. Vodnik already used expressions such as “potica” (a nut roll cake) and “žganci” (corn or buckwheat mush), but instead of noting how to prepare these dishes, he used them to describe

Photo: Tomo Jeseničnik/www.slovenia.info



other, new dishes. The selection of dishes such as soufflés, puddings, roasted meat, etc., shows that these cookbooks were intended mostly for the nobility and the upper bourgeois class, which could afford to prepare more sophisticated dishes.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, the contents of cookbooks expanded to include some simple dishes prepared by the bulk of the population. “Žganci”, “kaša” (mush), “močniki” (paps), etc., thus became a traditional part of cookbooks. Mainly the dishes of the rural population that prevailed as late as the 1950s were considered to be traditional dishes, and therefore to be “authentic Slovenian” food. It was characteristic of the cookbooks of that time that they attempted to stick to the

originally recorded dish preparation as closely as possible. The titles of the books from this period (“Good Old Cooking”, “Let’s Cook the Traditional Way”, “Slovenian National Dishes”) hint at nostalgia, but among them there was not yet a title containing the phrase “Slovenian Cuisine”.

#### **DIALECT WORDS HAVE BECOME LITERARY WORDS**

The formation of an independent Slovenian state brought with it the need to create a representative identity of the national cuisine. Cookbooks now showcase the wealth of Slovenian cuisine, therefore the choice of dishes and their presentation have become more sophisticated. It is common now to talk about the national culinary diversity. The



Photo: Tomo Jeseničnik/www.slovenia.info

respective stories are also becoming increasingly important. “Frtalja” (omelette), “zlevanka” (flat cakes), “kvasenica” (cottage cheese and sour cream pastry), “bobiči” (corn minestrone), etc. are increasingly used to refer to dishes instead of reaching for their literary counterparts. Similarly, what used to simply be minestrone and artichokes is now becoming “minestrone and artichokes à la littoral”. At the same time, the creation of the identity of Slovenian cuisine has in recent years boosted the publication of a number of cookbooks describing regional cuisines in Slovenia. Thus, we have gained cookbooks on the traditional cuisine of Goriška Brda, the Karst, Bela krajina, Gorenjska, Štajerska, etc. History shows that no food is forever part of the

Left: Žganci (Corn or Buckwheat mush)

Right: Kranjska klobasa (Carniolan sausage)

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The formation of an independent Slovenian state brought with it the need to create a representative identity of the national cuisine.

Photo: Jani Peternelj/www.slovenia.info



Žlikrofi (Idrija dumplings)



Slovenian *potica* (Nut roll cake)

Slovenian cuisine was mainly created by collecting various festive and regional dishes prepared by the majority population, which were then published in cookbooks.

identity of Slovenian cuisine, but rather that the dishes distinguished as national dishes are always the result of their popularisation at a certain time. Such an example is certainly “prekmurska gibanica” (Prekmurje layer cake), which had for a long time been only one among the many dishes prepared in Slovenia, until it was finally established as one of the most well-known Slovenian desserts.

**SLOVENIA'S CUISINES**

So far, the best-known dishes are “Idrijski žlikrofi” (Idrija dumplings), “jota” (a type of sauerkraut or turnip thick soup), “prekmurski bograč” (Prekmurje stew), and “štajerska kislja juha” (Styrian sour soup), as well as “Prekmurska gibanica” (Prekmurje layer cake), “Slovenian potica” (Nut roll cake), and “Kranjska klobasa” (Carniolan sausage). Dr Bogataj prefers the term ‘Slovenia’s cuisines’ over the term ‘Slovenian cuisine’, because it better covers the breadth of culinary

varieties that exist in Slovenia.

The characteristics of the Slovenian nutritional and gastronomic-culinary identity are based on Slovenia’s exceptional cultural and developmental position at the crossroads between the European Alpine, Mediterranean, and Pannonian areas. The varied social structure of the population has also contributed its share to this diversified identity. Important tourist centres such as Rogaška Slatina, Dobrna, Portorož, and Bled (the latter has been successfully promoting the potičnica brook trout on Bled Island) have contributed significantly to the development of Slovenian culinary arts. What is appreciated today is primarily that which makes our hearts beat faster. Thankfully, we can still appreciate a well-prepared dish.

In 2006, the Development Strategy of Slovenian Gastronomy was elaborated. The basis of the Strategy is a gastronomic pyramid that identifies 24 gastronomic

regions of Slovenia featuring 140 representative dishes. Dr Janez Bogataj believes that this strategy has already been implemented to a certain extent, but that nevertheless many challenges still lie ahead of us.

We cannot speak about Slovenian cuisine or Slovenia’s cuisines as a style of cooking, as is typical for France. Slovenian cuisine was mainly created by collecting various festive and regional dishes prepared by the majority population, which were then published in cookbooks. “In Slovenia, we have always known how to best adapt the new dishes introduced into our culinary world,” says Dr Bogataj. Valentin Vodnik certainly contributed his share to this process. He also deserves credit for making our cooking so good that we must still lick our fingers today. Our cuisine is excellent and it is as rich in language as it is culinarily diverse. So God bless and enjoy your “Kranjska klobasa”, followed by some walnut “potica” for dessert!



Prekmurska *gibanica* (Prekmurje layer cake)

## The coolest girl wears the coolest shoes

# Change the colour of your shoes with a click!

Based on a design by Ingrid Logar and the University of Maribor, this futuristic footwear allows you to change the colour of your shoes to match the colour of your dress using a smartphone app.



Ingrid Logar started her footwear design and production a year ago. Her speciality is hand-made footwear tailored to the customer's wishes, footwear which is not to be found on the shop shelves. She has even created interactive footwear that allows its wearer to change the colour of the heel using a smartphone app. With this she offers women the opportunity to match the colour of their shoes to the colour of their dresses and accessories without the need to buy new shoes for every occasion. The heel is made of a transparent material and is lit by LED. The colour of the light is controlled using a smartphone app. Ingrid Logar is developing her idea in cooperation with the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science of the University of Maribor.

### MOBILE APP FOR COLOUR CHANGE

The app is located in the shoe. The purchaser only has to touch it with her smartphone and the app is downloaded. Then she can scan the colour of her dress or bag or other accessory and the app will light the shoes' heels to match. The selected colour is transmitted to the shoe through a Near-Field Communication; the device in the heel then does the colour change. The technology employed has been developed to be used primarily in the banking sector. Currently 25% of smartphones support this technology, but this percentage is expected to rise to 90 by 2017.

The shoes have to be charged on a special base. An overnight charge will suffice for a day's use.

The heel is lit up during walking; it turns itself off during longer periods of rest and resumes its colour when the wearer resumes movement. The app allows one to choose the duration of "lights-on" during rest and can record the distance travelled and the time the shoe is worn.

### FROM COLOUR-CHANGING HEELS TO COOLING AND HEATING FOOTWEAR?

In the future it will also be possible to design cooling and heating systems for shoes, though for the time being such a system for hand-made women's shoes is still in the development stage. In fact, the energy needed for such a system largely exceeds the energy necessary for the charging of the heel colour alone.

The heel colour of this interactive footwear changes as the wearer chooses.

## Whaling in Slovenia

Slovenia's coast is a mere 43 km long and would hardly provide enough space for a group of blue whales to turn around without hitting the shore! Nevertheless, the seaside resort of Portorož provided a picturesque and spacious venue for the 65<sup>th</sup> meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) between 11 and 18 September. The event was attended by more than 450 participants from member countries of that organisation, NGOs and the media.



65th meeting of the International Whaling Commission in Portorož

### THE CATCH

The experts and other participants at the meeting commented that negotiations are always complex at the IWC. There are basically two polarised groups: pro-hunting and pro-conservation. In 1946, when the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling was signed, the intention of the signatories was to guarantee the conservation of whales and at the same time enable the development of the whaling industry. So the basic objective of the convention was to regulate whaling, but in 1982, when the IWC adopted a moratorium on commercial whaling, the scope shifted to protecting endangered whale populations. The polarisation then sharpened and reached its peak some 25 years later. Today the two groups are negotiating and trying to bring their positions closer.

Professor Lee White from Gabon described the opposing arguments concisely: “Some countries feel that whales can be used to solve our food security problem; we would argue that a crisis was caused by whale hunting a century ago, while the human population has increased significantly since then, and our technological capacity has also increased. Whales will never be a solution to food security. A healthy whale population can contribute to better fisheries, but the secret of food security actually lies in the management of fisheries, rather than in improved whale hunting.”

The IWC meeting in Slovenia was the first since the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling on Japanese scientific whaling. The ICJ was very clear about the meaning of “the purposes of science”, and according to

the ruling Japan's JARPA II scientific whaling programme did not serve such purposes. Japan is planning to continue such whaling for scientific purposes after 2015 as part of the JARPA III programme, so a decision had to be adopted in Slovenia.

Japan has actually agreed to comply with the ICJ ruling. And a general feeling among the participants was that some progress had been made. Russell Smith, Head of the US Delegation, judged that “the meeting benefited from the nice location, which makes it easier to work. It makes people happier. There remained sharp difference of opinion, but generally, people worked to overcome them and groups started to talk to each other.”

An amendment to the Schedule (annex to the Convention) was adopted, providing for quotas for aboriginal subsistence whaling in Greenland (a Danish territory). In this regard, the EU Member States adopted a resolution on aboriginal whaling, specifying the principles to be taken into account when setting such quotas.

A proposal to establish a whale sanctuary in the south Atlantic was rejected due to opposition from pro-whaling countries.

The Resolution on Civil Society Participation and Transparency at the IWC, the Resolution on the Scientific Committee, and the Resolution regarding Highly Migratory Species were approved.

### THE SLOVENIAN POSITION

Slovenia supported the EU position. With nature conservation at a high level, the country has been supporting activities to help improve the situation of endangered species for several years.

The Slovenian coast is one of the spots in the Adriatic with the highest biodiversity and Slovenia is an example of good practice as regards the conservation of nature. Roberto Brandão Cavalcanti from Brazil's Ministry of the Environment commented that it is unusual in Europe to

have a country with so much unique biodiversity. He believes Slovenia has every opportunity to be a leader in ecosystem restoration.

We human beings depend on the natural environment, and our commodities come from natural resources. Therefore conserving biodiversity and managing natural resources are of strategic importance, and as a human society we need to start rethinking our attitude to the use of such resources.

*From the address by State Secretary Tanja Strniša, Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment*



INTERNATIONAL  
WHALING COMMISSION

Most of the participants were in Slovenia for the first time. And if they could not all agree on the items on the agenda, at least they shared positive impressions of Slovenia:

“I never realised Slovenia was so wonderful – Portorož, the people, the conference facilities, all of it is magnificent. You have really done a great job. You should advertise Portorož more in the Americas; we know nothing about you!”

*Leticia Saenz, Costa Rica*

“You have provided an excellent meeting venue. I also attended a scientific committee in Bled, and both venues are excellent. I have heard from others that we can come back again next year or the year after, so that is a general feeling shared by all of us.”

*Japanese Commissioner to the IWC Joji Morishita*

“Slovenia is a beautiful country and its people are very friendly. The organisation of the meeting has been splendid. The Chair was great; she was very successful in handling the various parts. In that sense, it has been the best meeting I have ever been to.”

*Nammco, Norway; Charlotte Winssnes, Deputy Secretary*

“It is beautiful. I have never been to Slovenia before, and it has been a wonderful surprise, a wonderful chance to see a little bit of your country. The people are very friendly and this is a great facility. I hope that some day I can come back on vacation.”

*Head of the US Delegation Russell Smith*



## Running – living life to the fullest

Marathons are mass recreational events that show how connected society is. If you run, it matters not how much money you make, but how fully you live your life, explain Urban and Jasmina Praprotnik Kozina. For many years they have been leading the running club “Urbani tekači” (Urban Runners), which is attracting more and more enthusiasts.



During her last pregnancy Jasmina ran even a few days after her expected due date. She also ran 21 kilometres at the Ljubljana Marathon.

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Running has a very positive impact on our general well-being, mood, positive emotions, health, concentration, sleep, and more. Running lets us test how strong our will is. Sometimes we come across a hill that we just want to avoid.

### Why is running so good? What are the benefits of running?

**Urban:** In his entire history, man has been running. It is believed that our ancestors in the Palaeolithic Era, which lasted about 190,000 years, walked and ran between 8 and 15 km each day, adding up to about 60 km per week. An interesting parallel that can be drawn is that for most experienced recreational runners, running is the safest when they don't significantly exceed this weekly amount. It's clear that running makes us feel better. It has made us what we are today. We could say that it represents the primal and integral part of a fully lived life. It repairs what sitting down destroys: an upright posture, a vibrant heart rate, increased muscle work and their natural dynamic stretching. Running also helps the bones stay strong. Astronauts, for example, run on a special treadmill for one hour a day to keep their bones and muscles strong.

**Jasmina:** Running is a very practical form of exercise, as it doesn't take a lot of time and you can do it anywhere. You can run alone or with other people. It's very environment-friendly; you just put on your running shoes, step outside, and take off. There's nothing else you need. Running has a very positive impact on our general well-being, mood, positive emotions, health, concentration, sleep, and more. Running lets us test how strong our will is. Sometimes we come across a hill that we just want to avoid. But then we decide to run it anyway and when we reach the top, our reward is a feeling of willpower that we can apply to other areas of life. This way, running gives us the chance to be proud of our ourselves. If we put effort into running, it's very possible that we'll do the same in other challenges in life and be more successful as a result. Running teaches us that we have to try hard no matter what we do, but

we will be rewarded in the end.

### The whole philosophy of life is contained in running.

**Urban:** I agree completely. If this philosophy is to be articulated in one sentence, I would say: we run so life doesn't run us by. I think running helps us feel our body and mind more strongly, and it makes us more aware of our environment.

**Jasmina:** Exercising daily has such great benefits that it could be seen as basic care. There are many different forms of exercise, but since people are so busy, I recommend the most economical of them, which is running. One hour every other day, together with some walking or cycling, can make a big difference in our lives. The main difference here is that we can feel ourselves and as a result we can feel the world around us more strongly. So, I would recommend running in all periods of life.



**Most people consider themselves unfit for running, believing that their bodies are not prepared enough. What would be your reply to those people? Up to what age is running advisable?**

**Urban:** I love talking to people who think that running isn't right for them, as there are quite a few myths about running. People who don't run often think that running is too strenuous and that they aren't in shape for it. This is even somewhat true. Of course, someone who hasn't run for years won't be able to just start off running long distances. But if that person has no difficulties in walking, they will most likely be also able to run for 10 to 15 seconds. Running such short distances in combination with our regular walks is actually the best way to start running. It's nice to be part of the world of running; its very rejuvenating. Our oldest marathon runner, Helena Žigon, can be everyone's role model. At her 86 years of age she still runs and she will, as she says, keep running until she gets old.

**Jasmina:** We can also read about how important running is in a biographical novel about our oldest runner, Helena Žigon, which I wrote and which has just been released by Umco. This is a book about Helena, who for her 86th birthday is treating herself to the Istrian half marathon. The reader accompanies her when she falls and breaks two ribs a few days before the marathon, and when only 19 days before a running event her husband passes away after 60 years of a happy marriage. Helena is devastated, but nevertheless decides to try to run. As she starts running, the reader can accompany her through all 21 chapters – kilometres. While running, Helena describes the half marathon track and her feelings, places her dynamic life in a historical context and tells us how she experiences constant changes, among which running and the liberating feeling it causes stand out. During the marathon, Helena analyses her relationship with her loved ones, especially her mother who left her when she was only 2 months old and

whom she first met in her twenties, when she managed to get a passport and cross the then "Iron Curtain", the border between Yugoslavia and Austria, to visit her in a small town near Salzburg. She also analyses her relationship with her father whom she visited in jail, where he was serving time as a political suspect. During running she reflects on the poverty she experienced, strange relationships between people in power during socialism, and about life in occupied Ljubljana during World War II; but also love, dance, work, disease, children, and other events on her life's path. The more difficult the running becomes, the more the reader wants her to succeed. In the end, when she reaches the finish line and journalists invite her on stage, she comes to a conclusion that it was running that saved her and that this was not her last marathon, as she had thought at the start, but that she would keep on running "until she gets old".

**A heroic story worthy of being followed and admired. Participation in marathons has also shown that more and more people are running. The Ljubljana Marathon is approaching. What does that mean for the visibility of the city and the country, and for runners in general?**

**Urban:** It means a lot. But what's important is how we see each other, not how we are seen by others. This event is important as it attracts more and more people every year. First, they come to watch the sea of runners, but then many of them ask why they aren't on the other side of the fence running themselves? Such mass recreational events show how connected is the society. It doesn't matter how much money you make, but how fully you live your life.

**Jasmina:** The Ljubljana marathon is a really big running event, but Urban and I would advise everyone to keep in shape the whole year, not just before a certain event. Our group of Urban Runners continue with training during the whole year. After the Ljubljana Marathon, we're planning to run in Palmanova, Crikvenica,

and Istria. Of course, the Ljubljana Marathon is our favourite, since it's in our home country. Each year at least 200 Urban Runners participate in the Ljubljana Marathon. Runners from all over Slovenia will attend, so that whole weekend will be something special.

**Urban, as a running coach you are leading your own group of runners and organising running workshops, but you are also smiling most of the time, a quality difficult to find these days. What is the cause for such good mood: running or the simple decision to smile?**

**Urban:** There are many reasons to smile and it's important that we are able to recognize them. I start each day with gratitude to be alive, to be able to spend time with people, getting to know them. Running is definitely very important in this aspect. It deepens social relationships in my everyday life, makes me more aware of my body, and helps me keep in touch with nature, while also giving me opportunities for a different stream of thought.

**Besides running, your family is also committed to a meatless diet and to developing your own recipes, which you share with others. Jasmina, can you describe your family's diet and why it is better than the standard diet – the one chosen by most people?**

**Jasmina:** The decision to become vegans was actually very simple. I just do not understand why we should eat meat, milk and eggs, when there is so much food of plant origin that satisfies all our needs. A lot of people still think that food of animal origin is necessary, especially if you are physically more active. Our experience is different. Urban and I have been vegans for almost four years now. We try to have diverse, wholesome vegan food, and I have to say we feel great. Urban stopped snoring in just a few weeks after becoming vegan. I would definitely recommend it to others. For example, every day for breakfast I prepare a mixture of different seasonal and, if possible, home-grown

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The Ljubljana marathon is a really big running event, but Urban and I would advise everyone to keep in shape the whole year, not just before a certain event. Our group of Urban Runners continue with training during the whole year. After the Ljubljana Marathon, we're planning to run in Palmanova, Crikvenica, and Istria.



"If we put effort into running, it is most probable that we'll do the same in other challenges in life and be more successful as a result. Jasmina says running teaches us that we have to try hard in every aspect of life, but in the end we will be rewarded. Urban explains: "We run so life doesn't run us by. I think running helps us feel our body and mind more strongly, and it makes us more aware of our environment."

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I believe that besides being active, living a creative life, and keeping up a good social life, food also contributes significantly to my well-being.

fruit for the whole family. If it's doable, I add linseed and sesame seeds, whole grain millet, hemp ... I also add coconut, poppy seeds, cinnamon, sunflower, pumpkin seeds, saffron, maca, fenugreek or sprouts ... We also eat oatmeal or other porridges, and we drink almond milk that I make myself. Our snacks consist of nuts and fruit. For lunch we have a range of vegetables and cereals. We always also have a large bowl of salad with various ingredients. I use herbs, home-made vinegar, olive oil and hemp olive, and from time to time also linseed oil and pumpkin seed oil. I also add various spreads and pastes I make to food, for example using avocado, seeds, or wild garlic. We love mushrooms, and I also use garlic and onion a lot. I prefer seasonal ingredients, so at the moment I am often preparing some kind of pumpkin, like summer pumpkins and orange pumpkins, as well as other vegetables. Currently we are also eating a lot of plums, peaches, pears, grapes, and the last figs of the season. We are fortunate that the fruits and vegetables on our table are home-grown and organic. My mother, mother-in-law, and grandmother provide us with home-made products, which I realize is a really precious gift that we enjoy every single day. Again for dinner we

eat different raw or cooked vegetables, legumes, and cereals. We drink home-made herbal and hibiscus tea.

**Jasmina, most people were surprised by the fact that you kept running during your pregnancy. What would you like to say to them?**

**Jasmina:** Yes, even during pregnancies I was able to do a lot of things, but, of course, a bit differently and more slowly. But the fact is that everything was possible and that I was able to enjoy everything I did. Swimming is a great exercise during pregnancy, because the water takes the pressure off of a pregnant woman, so she can actually swim almost as fast as before her pregnancy. I also rode my bike throughout my pregnancy, although I was extremely careful. And I ran until the day before I gave birth. Each time I ran I was surprised by how good running did me – it was refreshing and pleasant. During the last pregnancy I ran even a few days after my expected due date, and I also ran 21 kilometres at the Ljubljana Marathon. Before the marathon, I consulted two doctors, who, to my great surprise, supported my plans. They just warned me to go to the hospital immediately if I went into labour. I was prepared for that scenario. I gave

birth to my third child three days after the half marathon. The baby weighed 4 kg. I was perfectly able to run during pregnancy, and if people ask me why, I say: Why not? I am healthy, the baby is healthy, and slow running is good for both of us. Research regarding pregnancy and exercise confirms that circulation to the placenta is better and that the baby gets more oxygen and food, both of which increase the chance that the baby will be healthy. I wish more pregnant women felt good. Pregnancy is such a beautiful period and it is a shame if we spend it worrying about health issues which are unfortunately quite common.

I believe that besides being active, living a creative life, and keeping up a good social life, food also contributes significantly to my well-being. Even during pregnancy I only ate vegan food, lots of vegetables, nuts, seeds, fruits, legumes, various cereals ... and a lot of raw food. But for now I have no intention of switching to a completely raw diet. I very much like to eat cooked green beans or eggplants, zucchinis, buckwheat porridge, quinoa, and other similar foods, but I also include more and more raw, fresh ingredients into my diet. They make me feel fresh, too.

## **World Days of the Slovene Language** ***Pocket Slovene***

From 1 to 5 December an extensive cultural and promotional project entitled World Days of the Slovene Language will be held at more than 50 universities offering Slovene language courses and Slovene studies.

The project – now the sixth in succession – is organised under the umbrella name World Days as part of the Slovene at Foreign Universities Programme, which links Slovene studies departments all over the world. The programme is organised within the Centre for Slovene as a Second/Foreign Language established at the Department of Slovene Studies of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana

In the first week of December various events will take place at universities around the world with the aim of introducing Slovene to foreign universities and the general public. They will be organised by Slovene teachers and their students at these universities in cooperation with the diplomatic missions of the Republic of Slovenia abroad.

The central event will be the presentation of the booklet *Pocket Slovene* which was translated in the past academic year into as many as 22 languages by Slovene teachers and their students at foreign universities with the assistance of established foreign translators. The booklets will be edited and printed at the Centre for Slovene as a Second/Foreign Language. The project involves over 45 teachers, 220 translators and 43 language editors.

The 130-page *Pocket Slovene* will be printed in the following languages: English, Argentinian Spanish, Bulgarian, Czech, French, Croatian, Italian, Japanese, Chinese, Lithuanian, Hungarian, Macedonian, German, Dutch, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Slovak, Serbian, Spanish and Ukrainian.

*Pocket Slovene* is intended for the first encounter of foreigners with Slovenia, the Slovene language and culture and it contains useful themes and links. The content was compiled by staff members of the Centre for Slovene as a Second/Foreign Language, the central Slovene institution which comprehensively provides for the development and infrastructure of Slovene as a second and foreign language. Its activities include teaching, examining and certifying knowledge, research, professional training of teachers and examiners and consulting. *Pocket Slovene* is therefore a highly professional and didactic publication which also manages to present the Slovene language and cultural characteristics with a humorous twist. Every chapter ends with a set of interesting facts, in places offering comparisons with other languages and countries.

*Pocket Slovene* signals a completely different and new concept of presenting the Slovene language in the many different foreign languages. It will definitely contribute to the global identity not just of Slovene but also Slovenia and its culture.

# SVETOVNI DNEVI SLOVENSKEGA JEZIKA WORLD FESTIVAL OF SLOVENE LANGUAGE

1–5 December 2014



CENTER ZA SLOVENŠČINO  
KOT DRUGI/TUJI JEZIK



Univerza v Ljubljani  
FILOZOFSKA  
FAKULTETA  
Oddelék za slovenščino

## POCKET SLOVENE

Žepna slovenščina