



Habsburg Censorship and Literature in the Slovenian Lands

Habsburška cenzura in
literatura v slovenskih deželah

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This article surveys the censorship in the Slovenian lands during the long period when they were part of the Habsburg Monarchy. In the early modern age, from the Reformation to the rule of Maria Theresa, censorship was primarily related to religion and was exerted by the Catholic Church (*Index of Prohibited Books*). However, in the second half of the eighteenth century, it was gradually secularized, coming to serve as a central tool of state control over the printed word in the course of the long nineteenth century. At the end of the article, possibilities for further synthetic studies are discussed.

SLOVENIAN LANDS,
CENSORSHIP, LITERATURE,
ROME, VIENNA, CA. 1550–1918

Članek pregledno obravnava problematiko cenzure v slovenskih deželah v večstoletnem obdobju, ko so te spadale v habsburško monarhijo. V zgodnjem novem veku, od reformacije do vladavine Marije Terezije, je bila cenzura večinoma povezana z vero in v rokah Katoliške cerkve (*Indeks prepovedanih knjig*), v drugi polovici 18. stoletja pa je bila postopoma sekularizirana, tako da je v dolgem 19. stoletju delovala kot osrednje orodje državnega nadzora nad tiskom. V zaključku članka so obravnavane nekatere možnosti nadaljnjih sintetičnih raziskav.

SLOVENSKE DEŽELE,
CENZURA, LITERATURA,
RIM, DUNAJ, CCA. 1550–1918

Censorship practices tend to intensively shape society and the communication processes in it: they influence the authors, mediators, and readers of texts, and they also develop special relationships with the economy, law, science, and other social systems. Thus, scholarly interest in censorship remains at least steady and, with new technological developments and their manifold challenges, even tends to grow. Important new research is published every year: following early impulses of French theory and the rise in censorship studies after the fall of communist regimes, scholars have started to reexamine older periods as well, from early print cultures to the nineteenth century and beyond. General presentations have been supplemented by studies of individual periods, such as the Enlightenment, or empires and other geopolitical regions, as well as by comparative work.

Like elsewhere in Europe, censorship in the Habsburg Monarchy (in its various institutional forms) played a fundamental historical role in the regulation of public access to printed publications, and thus to the flow of knowledge, theories, and ideas. In German-speaking academia, older studies of censorship (Wiesner; Fournier; Marx) have recently been built upon by new work on Habsburg censorship (Bachleitner; Eisendle; Judson). This new research has achieved important breakthroughs, but it has yet to focus on individual cases such as that of the Slovenian lands. In supplementing this lack, one can build on those studies that have recently addressed Austrian literary censorship (Bachleitner) and censorship in the Czech lands (Wögerbauer et al). In Slovenian, apart from a few collective volumes (Dović 2008; Režek; Vidmar 2020), a number of individual studies on censorship have been published; however, we are still waiting for a more synthetic approach.

This article briefly surveys the historical development of censorship practices in the Slovenian lands during the long period when

these lands were part of the Habsburg Monarchy, beginning with the Protestant period, which produced the first printed books in Slovenian in 1550. Following Darnton's suggestion, we focus in particular on those practices connected with institutions (both state and Church), their power, and their capacity to sanction (Darnton: 230–235). At the end, we discuss possibilities for further research.

1550–1740: CENSORSHIP IN THE HANDS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

In the Habsburg hereditary lands, censorship was initially most closely linked to religion. The development of censorship in the Holy Roman Empire was accelerated by a religious conflict: in 1521, Holy Roman Emperor Charles V prohibited Luther's works, in 1524 the Imperial Diet of Nuremberg had all the authorities control the print shops in their areas, and 1529 saw the introduction of preventive censorship (Bachleitner, Eybl, Fischer: 26; Wilke: 28–30). Even though the Habsburgs as Holy Roman Emperors (except from 1742 to 1745) in principle regulated printing and bookselling in the entire empire, they were only able to effectively implement censorship as princes in their own hereditary (i.e., Austrian and Bohemian) lands (cf. Wolf: 309). Because of the pressing religious issues and the lack of suitably qualified clerks, just like other European rulers and governments, they relied heavily on domestic ecclesiastical authorities. These functioned as intermediaries between the secular authorities and the central censorship offices in Rome, especially the Congregation of the Inquisition and the Congregation of the Index, which produced the *Index librorum prohibitorum* (Index of Prohibited Books) under papal supervision. Hence, censorship in the Habsburg hereditary lands became a power mechanism of provincial princes, which, with their permission, was largely operated by the

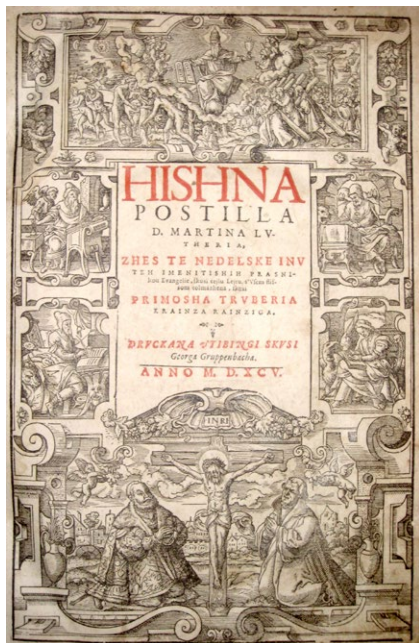
Catholic Church. When Ferdinand, King of Bohemia and Hungary, and Archduke of Austria, established a censorship office in Vienna in 1528, he appointed the bishop of Vienna as its head. The censorship office reviewed manuscripts before they were printed, supervised the import of books, and carried out visitations, and it primarily targeted non-Catholic or anti-Catholic printed works (Papenheim: 90).

However, in the following decades, the establishment of Habsburg censorship in Inner Austria, which included a great majority of the territories inhabited by Slovenians, was hindered by Lutheranism, which was adopted by most of the nobility and burghers, who, in addition to priests, were almost the only potential authors and readers in the society of that time. The 1555 Peace of Augsburg gave princes in the Holy Roman Empire the right to define the faith of their subjects and hence their own censorship policy. However, Ferdinand's son, Charles II, Archduke of Austria and the ruler of Inner Austria from 1564 to 1590, needed the (mostly Protestant) provincial estates' money to fight the Ottoman Empire, and so he granted them freedom of religion and consequently more or less open access to Protestant books (Vidmar 2018: 15) and even the possibility of financing them. These were the circumstances in which Slovenian (Protestant) literature emerged and flourished: from 1550 to 1595, around fifty Slovenian books—primarily catechisms, abecedaria, translations and interpretations of the gospels, postils, and hymns—were printed in German Protestant towns and Ljubljana. Even though the ruler was unable to fully control the situation, whenever he could, especially when his rights were threatened, he would strike at the Protestants with censorship. When the leading Slovenian reformer Primož Trubar had his *Cerkovna ordninga* (Church Order)—through which he sought to legally, organizationally, and spiritually regulate the Slovenian Lutheran community—printed

in Tübingen in 1564, the work was immediately banned due to its inadmissible interference with the provincial prince's authority; all the copies that could be found were confiscated, and the author was banished from Inner Austria (Žnidaršič Golec: 230–231, 234). The ruler responded in a similar way in 1581, after learning from Ljubljana Bishop Janez Tavčar that the Ljubljana Protestant printer Janž Mandelc planned to print Jurij Dalmatin's full Slovenian translation of the Bible: its printing in Ljubljana was strictly forbidden, the printer was banished, and copies of the translation that was then printed in Wittenberg by the end of 1583 had to be smuggled into Inner Austrian towns through various routes and intermediaries until 1585 (Kidrič: 149–161).

Full censorship in Inner Austria only began to be implemented by Archduke Ferdinand (later Ferdinand II, Holy Roman Emperor), who began a re-Catholicization campaign in 1598. He entrusted the task to religious committees, which, under the leadership of the local bishops (e.g., Seckau Bishop Martin Brenner in Styria), traveled from one place to another and also performed retroactive censorship. Especially in 1600 and 1601, they confiscated and publicly burned Protestant books in major towns, such as Maribor, Kranj, and Škofja Loka—usually (symbolically) at the site where offenders were punished (next to a pillory). Thus, under the leadership of Ljubljana Bishop Tomaž Hren, the committee for Carniola had several carts of Protestant books (mostly German and Latin) burned at the pillory before the Ljubljana town hall on December 29th, 1600 and January 9th, 1601. Trubar's books must have predominated among Slovenian books destroyed because he was listed among the most dangerous authors (*auctores primae classis*) on the Roman index (Vidmar 2013). After re-Catholicization, Protestant books were not necessarily burned any more, but more often, especially if they proved useful (e.g., translations of the Bible and philological

FIG. 1 →
Title page
of Trubar's *Hišna
postila* (House Postil),
a Slovenian translation
of Luther's *Hauspos-
tilla* (House Postil)
printed in Tübingen
in 1595. Ljubljana
Seminary Library.
Photo: Luka Vidmar.



works), they were included in Church libraries. When the authorities confiscated the Protestant library of the Carniolan provincial estates in 1604 and 1617, they handed it over to the Jesuits and Bishop Hren. These most likely destroyed the most problematic books and kept others (locked away) at the Ljubljana Jesuit College's library and the Gornji Grad episcopal library (Simoniti: 28).

Seventeenth-century Habsburg domestic and foreign policy was determined by the *Pietas Austriaca*, with religious works dominating the book market in the hereditary lands, and the ruler and Catholic Church continued their concerted efforts to preserve the true faith among the population, including through censorship. In 1623, Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II entrusted censorship to the University



◀ **FIG. 2**
 Frontispiece of *Index librorum prohibitorum* (Index of Prohibited Books) issued by Pope Benedict XIV in 1758: Ephesians burning superstitious books in public during Saint Paul's time. Ljubljana National and University Library. Photo: Luka Vidmar.

of Vienna, which, at that time, had been taken over by the Jesuit Order. From then onward, the Jesuits censored theological and philosophical works and took a strong stance against Protestant works (Wilke: 33, 34; Bachleitner: 43). Censorship in individual provinces was in the hands of local bishops (Papenheim: 88-89) and Jesuit colleges, which could call on the secular authorities to take action against the violations detected. The secular authorities were also in charge of preventing imports of banned books.

Preventive censorship was very effective because the authors usually knew where to expect problems and so they self-censored themselves, most publishers and printers were afraid to publish works without the required permits, and no underground press developed.

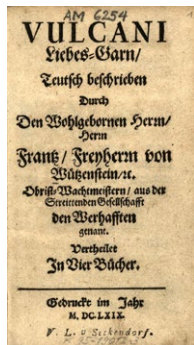


FIG. 3 ↑
 Title page of *Vulcani Liebes-Garn* (Vulcan's Love-Net), Wützenstein's German translation of Pallavicino's novel *La rete di Vulcano* (Vulcan's Net), printed in 1669 in Nuremberg. Zürich Central Library. Photo: Zürich Central Library.

Some authors took advantage of the complex religious and political structure of the Holy Roman Empire and published their works outside the Habsburg hereditary lands. The Carniolan officer Baron Franz von Wützenstein was aware that he would not obtain permission in Inner Austria to print his German translation of Pallavicino's erotic, mythological, and satirical novel *La rete di Vulcano* (Vulcan's Net), which was on the Roman index. In 1669, he published it under the title *Vulcani Liebes-Garn* (Vulcan's Love-Net) in the Free Imperial (and Protestant) City of Nuremberg, without providing the names of the author, publisher, printer, and the place of publication on the title page because that could have negatively affected the sale of the book in the Catholic lands and provoked a reaction from the Habsburg censorship (Vidmar 2019: 275–276).

However, after the Thirty Years' War, retroactive censorship relaxed: members of the social and intellectual elite purchased banned books abroad and brought them into the safe shelter of their homes without any great fear of being punished (Vidmar 2018: 16; cf. Bachleitner, Eybl, Fischer: 56). Janez Krstnik Prešeren, the cathedral provost and president of the Academy of the Industrious in Ljubljana, was an expert in Church history and international law, who, during his youthful travels and diplomatic missions to Italy, France, and Germany systematically purchased the works of the main protagonists of the Reformation, including Luther and Melancthon, problematic Catholic works that, for instance, advocated Gallicanism and attacked the Jesuit Order, as well as political works critical of the pope and Catholic monarchs, such as those authored by Boccacini and Leti. He even indulged in erotic novels by Pallavicino and French authors. He furnished all his books, including the banned ones, with an ex libris without reservation, inventoried them in 1701 (and handed over the list to the episcopal

archives), and donated them to the Ljubljana Public Library, which also had no reservations about accepting them after his death in 1704 (Vidmar 2018: 30, 33, 36, 49, 50; Vidmar 2019: 268–269).

This type of reception was of course limited to the private life of a privileged individual: if it trickled out into the surroundings and threatened the political and religious order, the censorship authorities reacted immediately. However, even then, the sanctions were not necessarily all that strict. In 1686 and then again in 1696, the Ljubljana bishop, Count Sigismund Christoph von Herberstein, reported Baron Ferdinand Ernst Apfaltrer, the owner of the castle at Brdo pri Lukovici, to the provincial authorities because he refused to turn over his Protestant books to him despite being reminded to do so several times. The bishop, who also owned quite a few banned books himself (Vidmar 2018: 36; Vidmar 2019: 271), did not decide to report him for having banned books, but because the baron sometimes read them to his family and servants instead of Sunday mass, and thus his domain was threatened by the spread of Lutheranism. In 1697, the authorities threatened Apfaltrer with a fine of 1,000 ducats, a hearing before the provincial government, and a report to the emperor should he obstruct the proceedings. However, because the baron turned over the books on both occasions, he received no sanctions at all (Vrhovnik: 40–42).

With the growing production of politically critical works, which were also read in the Habsburg hereditary lands (Vidmar 2018: 34), the early eighteenth century saw the first signs of separation between secular and Church bodies. During that time, Baron Franz Albrecht Pelzhoffer was developing his own political theory in Carniola. His works *Lacon politicus* (The Political Laconian; first edition published in 1706) and *Arcanorum status* (The State of Secret Matters; first edition published from 1709 to 1713) no longer upset the Church authorities,



FIG. 4 ↑
Janez Krstnik Prešeren's ex libris on the title page of the banned work *A gl' inquisitori che sono per l'Italia* (To the Inquisitors in Italy), a 1559 polemic by Pier Paolo Vergerio against the inquisition. Ljubljana Seminary Library. Photo: Luka Vidmar.

FIG. 5 ▶
Portrait of Baron
Franz Albrecht
Pelzhoffer in his work
Arcanorum status
(The State of Secret
Matters) published
from 1709 to 1713.
Ljubljana National and
University Library.
Photo: Luka Vidmar.



but they did alarm the secular ones. The Inner Austrian government first responded to them in 1711, when new volumes of *Arcanorum status* were not published in Ljubljana, but in Frankfurt without a prior review and permission (Polec).

In the following years, the secular authorities slowly reduced the competence of the University of Vienna. In 1725, Charles VI decreed that university censors must send their opinions on political works to the

court, which reserved the power to make the final decision on whether to ban or permit a specific work. Book censorship committees were established with the provincial governments; the one for Inner Austria was founded in Graz in 1732 (Olechowski: 59–61; Bachleitner: 47). Censorship was also performed by the Bohemian and Austrian Court Chancellery and the government of Lower Austria, so that, due to a lack of organization, loose guidelines, and unstandardized procedures, the system was inefficient (Hadamowsky: 289; Wolf: 309–310) and not prepared for the growing and thematically and linguistically increasingly diverse book market.

1740–1790: CENSORSHIP SECULARIZATION UNDER MARIA THERESA AND JOSEPH II

It was only Maria Theresa (1740–1780) that finally began to institutionalize, centralize, and bureaucratize censorship. She incorporated it into the state administrative apparatus and gradually drove the Church from it. Censorship partly preserved the Catholic ideology (it primarily supported its Enlightenment version: Reform Catholicism), but from then on it was also based on moderate Enlightenment principles, taking into account especially the interests of the emerging modern state.

The year 1751 saw the establishment of the Court Book Censorship Committee in Vienna, which assumed the powers of previous institutions. Subordinate to it were the committees in the provincial capitals, which carried out local censorship. Initially, the Jesuit professors at the University of Vienna were still included in the central committee, but they were completely driven out by 1764 and replaced by episcopal priests, who formed a minority in the committee. In 1772, the committee was conceived as a purely administrative (secular) body, which meant

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For more on this period, see Vidmar's article in this issue.

that the last remaining authority—that is, the censorship of theological and religious texts—was taken away from the Church (Klingenstein: 158, 161, 172; Bachleitner: 41, 49, 50, 54, 55). In the Slovenian lands, the secularization of the censorship took place more slowly and more mildly in relation to the Church, but under the same principles and with the same persistence. Priests held a majority in the Ljubljana book censorship committee even as late as 1771; it even included two Jesuits, and imprimaturs (printing permissions) for religious works were issued by the vicar general of the Ljubljana Diocese (who signed papers under this function and not as a member of the committee). After 1772, both Jesuits were excluded from the committee and permissions for printing everything, including religious works, were signed by its secular chair.¹

The influence of Theresian censorship on literature in the Slovenian lands was multilayered. An affinity for science, especially natural science, promoted the printing and reprinting of works such as *Gründliche Nachricht von dem in dem Inner-Crain gelegenen Czirknitzer-See* (A Thorough Account of Lake Cerknica in Inner Carniola; Ljubljana, 1758) by Franz Anton von Steinberg and *Flora Carniolica* (Flora of Carniola; Vienna, 1760) by the Idrija physician Giovanni Antonio Scopoli. Due to their obvious non-problematic character, such books initially did not even mention the imprimaturs. On the other hand, the strict control of political works and plays persisted or even grew stronger: even in 1776, the Theresian index *Catalogus librorum a commissione aulica prohibitorum* (Catalog of Books Prohibited by the Court Committee) prohibited several editions of Pelzhoffer's works (*Catalogus librorum*: 19, 237; Vidmar 2018: 37–38), and the Carniolan man of letters Anton Tomaž Linhart had his *Sturm und Drang* tragedy *Miss Jenny Love* printed in Augsburg in 1780, most likely to avoid preventive censorship.

The influence on Slovenian literature, largely composed of religious works for priests and the common folk, was ambivalent. Even though censorship restricted traditional Catholic genres that it considered outdated or even harmful (e.g., descriptions of the miracles of the saints), and thus at least made publication difficult for some authors (cf. Ogrin in this issue), religious books gained new impetus with other Theresian reforms, especially the school reform. Very successful during that time was the Ljubljana Discalced Augustinian Marko Pohlin, the pioneer of the Slovenian revival, who skillfully connected Catholicism with folk education (cf. Vidmar in this issue). Likewise, censorship did not hinder the publication of the first volumes of the poetry almanac *Pisanice od lepeh umetnost* (Belletristic Writings, 1779–1781) edited by Pohlin's colleague Anton Feliks Dev—the first Slovenian publication primarily intended for the aesthetic pleasure of the social and intellectual elite.

Theresian retroactive censorship did not significantly change people's reading habits in the Slovenian lands. On the one hand, it was successful at maintaining an unfavorable or at least reserved attitude in society toward ideas that openly attacked or posed a direct or indirect threat to the dynasty, monarchy, feudalism, Catholicism, and the Church. Thus, it prohibited a series of philosophical, political, and literary works by English, French, and German Enlightenment figures, and not only radical authors, such as advocates of atheism and materialism, but often also moderate ones. On the other hand, just like in the past, privileged readers were able to obtain controversial books if they wanted to—for example, during their youthful and study travels across Italy and Germany, or through personal and business connections. The main Slovenian representative of the Enlightenment, Baron Žiga Zois, a wealthy merchant, industrialist, and landlord, had many

works that were prohibited under Maria Theresa in his private library in Ljubljana, including those authored by Bayle, Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau (Vidmar 2018: 39, 41; Svoljšak: 106). It is true, however, that there were not yet many intellectuals in the Slovenian lands at that time that would be interested in the most controversial works of the Enlightenment. Such an interest was certainly not shown by Church libraries—and this was not because of the pressure from censorship.

Great changes in the literature, printing industry, and book trade of the Slovenian lands were ushered in by the censorship and other reforms introduced by Emperor Joseph II (1780–1790), who discontinued what he believed was an overly restrictive policy in this area. Hence, after the 1781 Patent of Toleration, the Protestant Wilhelm Heinrich Korn, a native of Maastricht, was able to settle down in Ljubljana, where he became one of the main publishers and booksellers in Carniola; among other things, he supplied books to Zois and published works produced by his circle (Dular: 194–199). Soon the effects of censorship relaxation after 1781 also became evident: Ljubljana obtained two new newspapers, the number of printers increased, and booksellers could sell most works that had been banned under Maria Theresa (cf. Pastar in this issue). Despite the liberalization, the primary aim of censorship was to cultivate good citizens, just like before 1780, and Joseph II disfavored any works that he believed failed to serve this purpose even more adamantly than his mother had (Sashegyi: 4–5, 12–13). Therefore, censorship hindered the printing of books with traditional Catholic topics even more than before. Thus in 1781, Ljubljana Bishop Johann Karl von Herberstein, one of the most important supporters of the emperor in the monarchy and the Church, refused to give the imprimatur to Pohlin's Slovenian translation of the Pentateuch and instead entrusted the translation of the Bible to the circle of priests

loyal to Josephinism and Jansenism, especially Jurij Japelj (cf. Vidmar in this issue). In the printing industry, publishing, and book trade, too, particularly those were successful that were good at adapting to the new ideological situation. In 1782, the Klagenfurt printer Ignaz Alois Kleinmayr, who was an adherent of the emperor's policy, also opened a printshop and bookstore in Ljubljana, in 1784 he became the exclusive printer of official princely regulations in Inner Austria, and in 1787 he was ennobled by the emperor (Dular: 174, 175). Reformed censorship not only had the expected beneficial economic and cultural impacts, but it also stimulated the development of public opinion, which was not always in favor of the emperor. Therefore, in the last years of his rule, which were marked by ever greater domestic and foreign-policy problems, Joseph II again began to step up censorship.

1790–1848: PRELIMINARY CENSORSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO REVOLUTIONS

After Joseph's death, censorship in the Habsburg Monarchy gradually established itself as a central instrument of secular state control over public communication processes. Against the threatening backdrop of the French Revolution, pressure increased further under Leopold II and Francis II. In 1792, the Book Censorship Office (*Bücher-Revisions Amt*) took over the censorship authority within the Court Office (*Hof-stelle*), which supervised the work of the censors in the subordinate provincial offices. The uniform order in the monarchy was established on February 22nd, 1795 by a renewed general censorship ordinance (*Erneuerte Zensur-Ordnung*, also known as the general censorship ordinance, *General-Zensur-Verordnung*), and in 1801 censorship formally passed into the domain of the police. By the mid-nineteenth century,



FIG. 6 ↑
Count Josef von Sedlnitzky, head of the Police and Censorship Office (1817–1848).

the 1795 decree had been supplemented by a series of additions that tightened censorship in the pre-March era (cf. Olechowski; Bachleitner; Cvirn; Pastar).

In broad terms, the censorship after Joseph II can be divided into two types: preventive (pre-publication) censorship, which was dominant before the 1848 March Revolution, and retroactive (post-publication) censorship after that. This is somewhat simplified because there were significant regulation and implementation differences in the three relatively autonomous areas (i.e., periodicals, book market, and theater), and even within each of these the practice was not completely uniform. Nonetheless, 1848 is an important dividing line: if nothing less, it swept away the two infamous but iconic figures of the oppressive pre-March censorship regime: the autocratic Chancellor Klemens von Metternich and Josef von Sedlnitzky, the supreme chief of the Vienna Police and Censorship Office (*Polizei- und Zensur-Hofstelle*).

The censorship regime in the Habsburg Monarchy from 1790 to 1848 was primarily characterized by centralized and comprehensive pre-publication censorship, which was further enhanced by restrictiveness (a system of granting concessions), economic constraints (i.e., taxes and deposits), and severe penalties (fines, imprisonment, and withdrawal of printing licenses were envisaged for printing publications without the *imprimatur* or for disseminating banned books categorized as *erga schedam* ‘with special permission’ or *damnatur* ‘prohibited’). All of the above is characteristic of repressive state control, in which the institution of censorship primarily serves as the guardian of the regime and its social and moral cohesion. Despite the shift from Enlightenment to repression that was characteristic of the period after French Revolution (cf. Bachleitner in this issue), censorship retained another function: it sought to ensure scientific and aesthetic quality.

Hence there was a proactive dimension of censorial work (improving texts) as well as greater tolerance towards scholarly works. From this perspective, the work of the pre-March censors, who as a rule were professional authorities in their fields, should not be understood in Manichean terms.

This is well exemplified by the experience of the historian and playwright Anton Tomaž Linhart, one of the first Slovenian authors to run up against the imperial censors. Linhart, himself involved in book censorship at the local level, came up against the Vienna offices with the second volume of his work *Versuch einer Geschichte von Krain und den übrigen Ländern der südlichen Slaven Oesterreichs* (An Essay on the History of Carniola and the Other South Slavic Lands of Austria, 1788, 1791): he was only allowed to print it after correcting the sections that the authorities thought were too pro-Slavic and anticlerical. During that same period, censorship also significantly affected the printing and performance of two plays by Linhart that mark the beginning of Slovenian secular drama: *Županova Micka* (Micka, the Mayor's Daughter, 1790) and *Matiček se ženi* (Matiček's Wedding, 1790).

Little is known about the relations of the first notable Slovenian poet, Valentin Vodnik, with censorship. Between 1795 and 1809, Vodnik published important works of poetry and journalism, in which he adapted to the pressure of censorship to a varying degree: his translation of the patriotic *Pesmi za brambovce* (Poems for Militiamen, 1809) was commissioned by the authorities, the content of his almanacs was not a problem, but he was compelled to make extensive adaptations for the newspaper *Lublanske novice* (Ljubljana News, 1797–1800), for which he had to base his articles on the censored *Wiener Zeitung* (Vienna News). Nonetheless, a comparison of the Ljubljana and Vienna newspapers shows that Vodnik retained a certain degree of freedom, especially when reporting

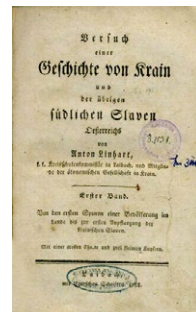


FIG. 7 ↑
Title page of Linhart's *Versuch einer Geschichte von Krain und den übrigen Ländern der südlichen Slaven Oesterreichs*, vol. 1.

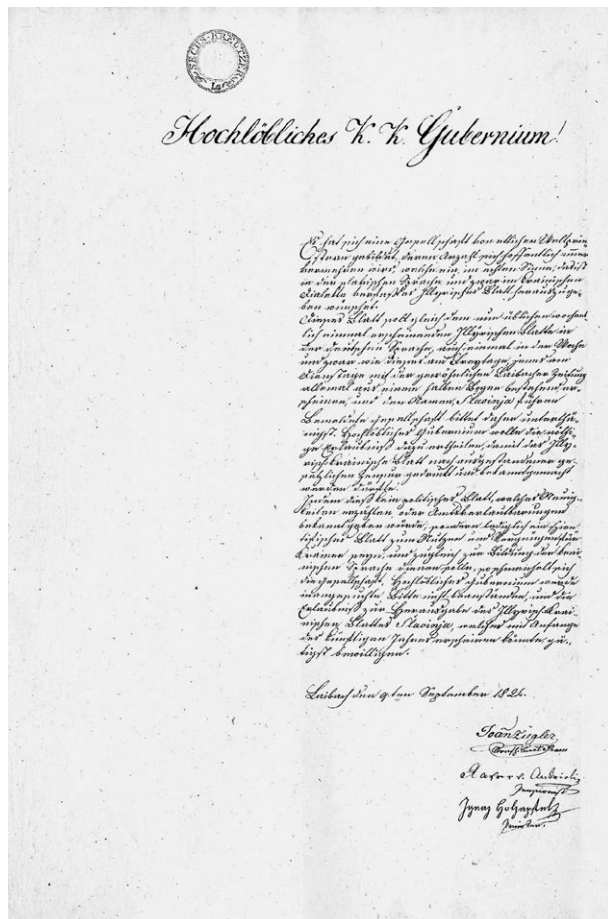
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On forbidden books in this period, cf. the article by Sonja Svobljak in this volume.

local news. It is interesting to note, however, that within the Zois circle (which both Linhart and Vodnik belonged to) censorship was not only perceived as a repressive threat—quite the contrary, it was also seen as a potential means of aesthetic and linguistic corrective.

When thinking of censorship in this period, one is accustomed to recalling a stern red pen demanding an *omissis deletis* ‘to be omitted’ or an ominous *damnatur* ‘prohibited’ written beside a (foreign) book strictly forbidding its distribution.² Far less visible remains another manifestation of the omnipotence of state censorship—namely, the administrative prevention of publication. Indeed, the obstruction of the (periodical) press through a system of concessions was one of the regime’s most powerful instruments of control. Alongside the pre-publication censorship of books in the first half of the nineteenth century, the power of imperial censorship was also manifested in a form that largely remains in the shadows. This can be illustrated by the unsuccessful attempt to launch the Slovenian cultural weekly *Slavinja* during the 1820s. *Slavinja*, as designed by Janez Cigler, Ignac Holzapfel, and Franc Ksaver Andrioli, was planned to be published as a supplement to the German-language *Laibacher Zeitung* (Ljubljana News), and the proposed name was intended to emphasize its Slavic identity.

The censorship system in Austria, developed under Metternich and Sedlnitzky after the Carlsbad Decrees of 1819, has traditionally been considered one of the most conservative in Europe—surpassed only by the one in the Russian Empire. The most emblematic pre-March clash of Slovenian literature with the preventive censorship is the one around *Krajnska čbelica* (The Carniolan Bee). It involves Matija Čop, the poet France Prešeren, and the linguist Jernej Kopitar, the Viennese censor for Slavic books. *Krajnska čbelica* (1830–1833) is rightfully considered the central Slovenian literary almanac of the period. Upon



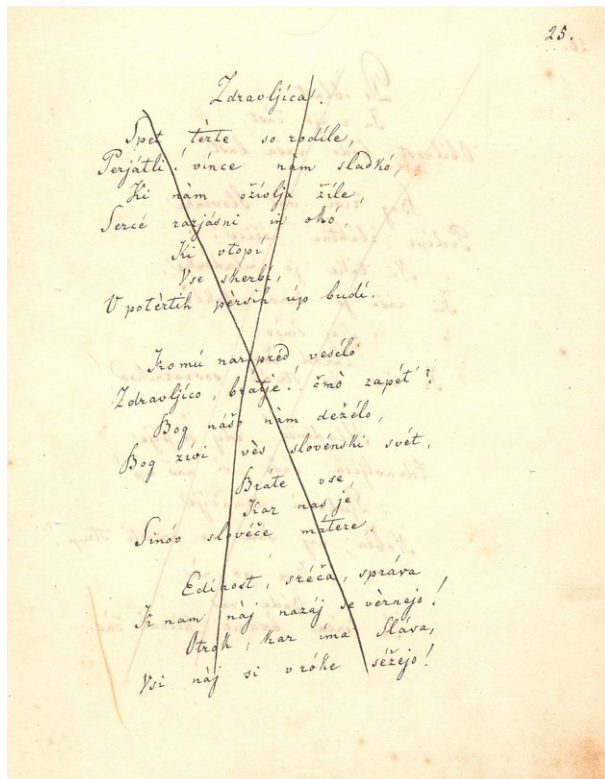
← **FIG. 8**
The unsuccessful application for the publication of the weekly *Slavinja* to the provincial government by Cigler, Andrioli, and Holzapfel, September 9th, 1824. Archives of the Republic of Slovenia.

its establishment, the main figures behind it demonstrated successful tactics, but they later had great problems with censorship. Confrontations with censorship and in particular with Kopitar, in which Čop and Prešeren showed great ingenuity (skillfully bending censorship rules between Ljubljana and Vienna), were only partly successful.³

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Cf. the article by Marko Juvan in this issue.

FIG. 9 ▶

The 1846 manuscript of France Prešeren's "Zdravljica" (A Toast) with Franc Miklošič's marking requesting the expurgation of the third strophe. Prešeren removed the entire poem from his collection *Poezije* (Poetry) and only published it—uncensored—in 1848.



Like this episode, the infamous censoring of "Zdravljica" (A Toast; Prešeren's poem that today serves as the Slovenian anthem) by Kopitar's successor Franc Miklošič, has been well researched. However, other interesting cases still await due attention. Among them, one can mention *Carniolia* (1838–1842 and 1844) with its editor Leopold Kordesch (and, more generally, other German-language newspapers in Carniola), Janez Bleiweis's *Kmetijske in rokodelske novice* (Farmers' and Craftsmen's News, 1843–1902), the leading newspaper of this early

period, and a number of cases outside Carniola, such as Anton Krempl's historiographical work *Dogodivščine Štajerske zemle* (Notable Events in Styria, 1844/45).

Certainly, the ramified apparatus of pre-March censorship remained, until its abolition in 1848, a mighty obstacle for Slovenian authors: it kept them on thin ice at all times, forcing them to maneuver creatively on the sharp edge that separates imprimatur from prohibition.⁴

⁴ For many cases mentioned above, cf. Dović (2020: 247–262).

1848–1918: RETROACTIVE CENSORSHIP FROM THE MARCH REVOLUTION TO THE FIRST WORLD WAR

The liberally and democratically charged March Revolution did away with preventive censorship in book publishing in principle; however, censorship was still in place. Like before, censorship legislation and practices continued to change. In the 1850s, newspapers were subjected to pre-publication censorship again. However, even after the liberalization in the constitutional period (after 1862) and later under dualism, the effectiveness of control was ensured by fear of severe sanctions and uncertain judicial interpretation of concepts such as “libel and slander” and “breach of the peace.” Surprisingly, in several respects such a regime was even more effective than preventive censorship.

Post-1848 censorship increasingly focused on political newspapers in an attempt to prevent the monarchy from disintegrating. As is known from the wider context (especially Bohemia, where confiscations and imprisonment had already become routine by the end of the century), oppression of national(ist) media remained a priority up until the monarchy's dissolution. Thus, censorship was losing its qualitative functions and only retained the repressive ones (trials and confiscations).



FIG. 10 †
Jakob Alešovec,
a Slovenian writer
and journalist, often
prosecuted for texts
and caricatures in his
satirical magazine
Brencelj (The Gadfly).

The severe fines intensified fear and facilitated meticulous self-censorship. In literature, the abolition of preventive censorship made the situation more relaxed, whereas in theater, which the authorities clearly perceived as potentially subversive, pre-censorship remained in force up until the collapse of the empire.

Because a more detailed analysis of certain cases is carried out later (cf. Dović in this issue), let us only point here to some exemplary clashes from Slovenian lands in this period. Among the first cases to be mentioned is certainly that by the Carinthian editor Andrej Einspieler with his *Stimmen aus Innerösterreich* (Voices from Inner Austria, 1861–1863) and *Slovenec* (The Slovenian, 1865–1867). In both cases, the power of the court was used to dampen his enterprises. In Carniola, however, one of the first notable censorship scandals was that of Fran Levstik, Miroslav Vilhar, and the nationalist newspaper *Naprej* (Forward, 1863). Under the hand of its fervent editor Levstik, *Naprej* became entangled in two lengthy lawsuits: the first one was connected with the radical demand for new language-based borders between provinces, and the second with the demand to use Slovenian in official correspondence. Levstik avoided the penalty, but Vilhar ended up in prison. Printing-related lawsuits became a commonplace: mainly editors (e.g., Einspieler, Vilhar, Tomšič, Grasselli, Alešovec, and Beg) ended up behind bars, but heavy fines and penalties also threatened others.

Obviously, the focus in this period shifted away from literature: rare cases like Janez Trdina's *Bajke in povesti o Gorjancih* (Tales and Stories of the Gorjanci Hills, 1882–1888) and even the burning of Ivan Cankar's *Erotika* (1899) by the Ljubljana bishop in fact do not involve censorship in the strict sense: they do, however, have at least the character of implicit censoring. Similar could be said for the harsh

criticism of *Misterij žene* (The Mystery of a Woman, 1900), the first truly feminist Slovenian short story collection by Zofka Kveder: certainly, it had nothing to do with the imperial administration.

Quite different, however, was the situation in theatre, which was still a sensitive area for the authorities. Based on Bach's *Theater Order* of 1850, it thoroughly steered the development of Slovenian drama in the second half of the nineteenth century and charted theatrical programs well into the twentieth century. Its practice was based on outdated legislation, which significantly restricted the development of Slovenian drama from the mid-nineteenth century (reading rooms and the Dramatic Society) to its gradual professionalization at the end of the century. As an emblematic case of this period, the banning of Ivan Cankar's play *Hlapci* (Servants, 1910) definitely stands out—revealing, among other things, the growing vigilance of the authorities to the threat of socialist ideas.⁵

Finally, the First World War (1914–1918) brought about a major shift, if only for a few years: censorship and censors became omnipresent, and even postcards received attention (cf. Svolfšak). After the war and the subsequent collapse of the long-lived empire, the rigid war censorship was abolished, only to be substituted by the censorship of the new Slavic state—which was, conveniently, able to lean upon the well-established Habsburg structures (cf. Gabrič).

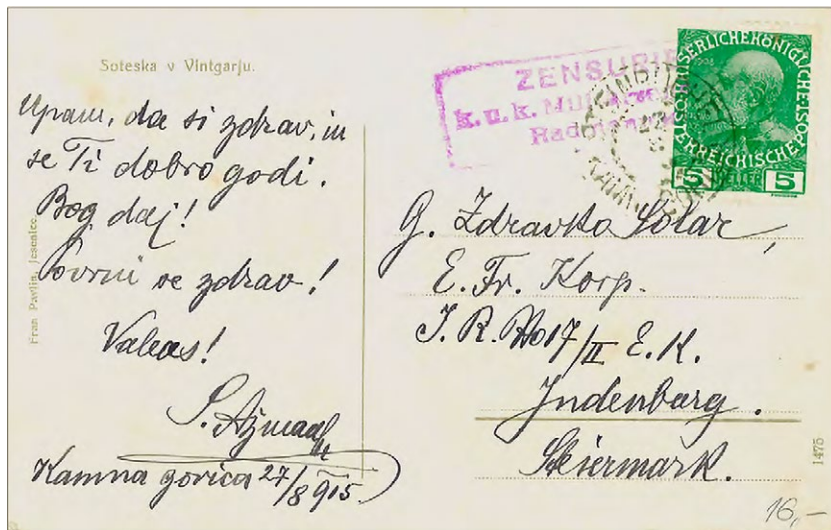
CONCLUSION

We have provided very rough outlines above. At least, they confirm that censorship was a factor of utmost importance throughout the entire period discussed—a factor whose role could hardly be underestimated. Much work, however, remains to be done. First, many censorship

5 The Archives of the Republic of Slovenia (AS 16: Provincial Presidency of Carniola; units 165, 166, 167, 168, 168a, 168b, 169) contain less well-known material documenting theater censorship in Carniola, circa 1891–1918 (cf. Ugrinovič and Perenič in this volume). On Cankar's play, cf. Dovič in this volume.

FIG. 11 →

A postcard sent to a Slovenian soldier during the World War I with the characteristic stamp *zensuriert* 'censored'.



cases from the Slovenian lands have not yet been researched in depth, although there are primary sources that would make such an undertaking possible. In the early modern period, for example, it would be very useful to systematically analyze the wording of printing permissions in published books. Furthermore, the period of preventive censorship could be illuminated using the sources on centrally directed Habsburg censorship available at the Austrian National Library and in the Austrian State Archives, especially at the General Administration Archive and in the Family, Court and State Archive (materials on Kopitar, Miklošič, etc.). Other cases could be elaborated with the help of material from the Provincial Assembly at the Carinthian Regional Archives in Klagenfurt. Some of the less well-known sources in Ljubljana also require re-examination, especially those in the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia

(for theater censorship), in the Manuscript Collection of the National and University Library (for Prešeren, Blaznik, *Slavinja*, *Krajnska čbelica*, etc.), and in the Historical Archives of Ljubljana (for Grasselli).

From a more general perspective—apart from the juridical aspects that have recently received due attention—further questions remain at the level of the practical functioning of the censorship apparatus: from the top of the Church to the top of the state to the local censors and revision offices, we lack analytical insight into the daily routines of the Habsburg censors. Such insight would finally help overcome the shortcomings of partial studies focusing on a single censorship segment (original/imported periodicals, original/imported books, libraries, and theatrical or opera performances) and allow us to advance toward a comparative and synthetic view of the role of censorship in this long period. ♡

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Povzetek

V 16. stoletju je bila cenzura v habsburških deželah vzpostavljena kot oblastni mehanizem vladarja, ker pa je bila najtesneje povezana z vero, jo je večinoma upravljala Katoliška cerkev. V Notranji Avstriji je sicer njeno uveljavitev upočasnili protestantizem. Vladar je bil prisiljen plemstvu dati versko svobodo, s tem pa tudi dostop do protestantskih knjig in celo možnost njihovega financiranja, npr. del P. Trubarja. Cenzuro je po letu 1598 dokončno uveljavila rekatolizacija. Naznanile so jo verske komisije, ki so v večjih krajih zasegale in sežigale protestantske knjige. V 17. stoletju je delovala učinkovita preventivna cenzura, zaradi katere so nekateri avtorji kot baron F. Wützenstein svoja dela objavili v nemških protestantskih mestih. Retroaktivna cenzura je po tridesetletni vojni popuščala, tako da so intelektualci brez strahu kupovali prepovedane knjige v tujini. Na začetku 18. stoletja je reakcija na politične spise barona F. A. Pelzhofferja nakazala ločevanje posvetnih in cerkvenih cenzurnih instanc. Sredi 18. stoletja je Marija Terezija cenzuro vključila v državni administrativni aparat, iz nje pa postopoma izrinila Cerkev. Nekoliko počasneje je sekularizacija potekala v slovenskih deželah. Cenzura je sicer delno ohranila katoliško ideologijo, vendar je bila po novem utemeljena tudi v zmernem razsvetljenstvu. Kljub temu je ostala precej restriktivna in včasih celo strožja, npr. do političnih in dramskih del. A. T. Linhart je dal žalogro *Miss Jenny Love*, za katero najbrž ne bi dobil dovoljenja, leta 1780 natisniti v Augsburgu. Cenzura je prav tako otežila objavo nekaterim slovenskim delom s tradicionalnimi katoliškimi vsebinami. Čeprav je prepovedovala vrsto del evropskega razsvetljenstva, so privilegirani bralci kot baron Ž. Zois lahko prišli do njih, če so si tega želeli. Omititev cenzure pod cesarjem Jožefom II. po letu 1781 se je med drugim

pokazala v rasti števila časopisov in tiskarjev in zmanjšanju števila prepovedanih del.

Cenzura se je znova zaostрила v zadnjih letih vladavine Jožefa II., še bolj pa pod njegovima naslednikoma. Do leta 1848 so jo zaznamovali predvsem predhodna cenzura, centraliziranost, restriktivnost in stroge kazni. Oblikovana je bila kot represiven organ, ki je ščitil oblast, elite, družbeni red in javno moralo, vendar skrbel tudi za strokovno in estetsko kvaliteto publikacij. Nekateri intelektualci so se v kolesju cenzure znašli v dvojni vlogi: tako je bil Linhart lokalni cenzor, ki pa je moral leta 1791 na zahtevo centralnega urada na Dunaju v drugem zvezku svojega poskusa zgodovine Kranjske popraviti preveč proticerkvena in proslovanska mesta. V predmarčni dobi je bilo eno najmočnejših nadzornih orodij oblasti oviranje (periodičnega) tiska s sistemom koncesij. Tako je oblast leta 1825 zavrnila prošnjo za izdajanje tednika *Slavinja*. Tudi izid sporov okrog četrte številke pesniškega almanaha *Krajnska čbelica* (1833) je pokazal, da je cenzura ostajala mogočna ovira za avtorje. Z marčno revolucijo je bila za tisk ukinjena preventivna cenzura, ki pa jo je nadomestila retroaktivna: vlogo cenzurnih uradov je prevzel sodni aparat, na mesto prepovedi pa so stopile zaplembe. Oblast je z namenom ohranitve monarhije nadzirala predvsem nacionalistične časopise. Cenzura je izgubljala funkcijo nadzora kakovosti in ostajala le še mehanizem represije. Leta 1863 je bil A. Einspieler prisiljen ustaviti izdajanje časopisa *Stimmen aus Innerösterreich*, ker ga je celovško sodišče ostro kaznovalo zaradi spodbujanja nacionalnega sovraštva. Tožbe in zaporne kazni so doletele tudi druge izdajatelje, urednike in avtorje, npr. M. Vilharja in J. Alešovca. Medtem ko je pritisk na leposlovje popustil, se je stroga preventivna cenzura gledaliških del ohranila vse do razpada monarhije, o čemer zgovorno priča prepoved uprizoritve Cankarjevih *Hlapcev* leta 1910.

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