

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Historical and Cultural Perspectives on Slovenian Migration** by Drnovšek Marjan (ed.) (2007) Ljubljana: Institute for Slovenian Emigration Studies, 204 pp. (ISBN 978-961-254-043-2)

The reviewed publication was written by a team of authors researching diverse aspects of migration at the Institute for Slovenian Emigration Studies, a part of the Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Ljubljana. Despite its somewhat misleading title, the Institute employs personnel of various academic and educational profiles who engage in research on emigration as well as immigration. Over the past decades migration studies have attracted growing attention among the Slovenian scholar community. However, the majority of this knowledge has not been introduced to the non-Slovenian readership; the main reason for this should be ascribed to a substantial lack of appropriate publications in English and other foreign languages. With the publishing since 1990 of the partially bilingual international scientific journal *Dve domovini/Two homelands* by the Institute for Slovenian Emigration Studies, this deficit has to some extent been made up for. The reviewed book is aiming to offer – in particular to foreign scientific circles – an insight into certain specifics regarding migration in Slovenian society and thus attempts to supplement the colourful picture of world migrations.

The highly transitional territory of what is now the Republic of Slovenia witnessed a high mobility rate over its entire known history, albeit it was always small in absolute numbers due to the low population density. Included in general European migration patterns, yet rife with specifics, Slovenian migration is doubtlessly a rewarding subject for research. Each of the seven articles in the book addresses different aspects of Slovenian migration. Marjan Drnovšek analyses the changing attitudes of the Catholic Church and the State toward (Slovenian) emigration and compares them over the periods of the Habsburg Monarchy, Kingdom of Yugoslavia and socialist Yugoslavia. Focusing on Slovenian intellectuals in the Habsburg Monarchy, Irena Gantar Godina examines their atypical destinations within the Slavic world and highlights the impacts of this Slavic milieu upon their ideological frameworks, particularly the influence of Pan-Slavism, Austro-Slavism, Russophilism, and Anti-Semitism. Exploring both collective and indi-

## BOOK REVIEW: "SLOVENIAN MIGRATION"

vidual contours in Slovenian émigré literature, Janja Žitnik Serafin seeks answers to the question of what makes literary works by Slovenian emigrants and their offspring also a part of Slovenian literature. Drawing on the ideas of renowned theorists in the field, Kristina Toplak's study on the artistic production of Slovenians in Buenos Aires reveals the intertwinement of the local, national and transnational in their work and in reshaping artists' identities. Based on oral history interviews with Slovenian women and their female descendants in the United States, Mirjam Hladnik Milharčič analyses the role of women migrants in preserving ethnic identity and argues that there exists neither a unified ethnic identity nor an authentic ethnic voice. Marina Lukšič-Hacin discusses the complex issue of multiculturalism in Europe through the prism of past and present migration processes, reveals the pitfalls of the contradictions and multiple interpretations of multiculturalism(s), and presents her own vision of possible solutions. Through an analysis of mass media and other means of communication Jernej Mlekuž sheds light on "burek – the immigrant dish", an object of a number of discourses and ambivalent attitudes in Slovenian society, ranging from its firm integration in national dietary habits to an unwanted symbol of otherness.

The book presents an interesting, provocative and fresh anthology of essays on Slovenian migration that provides new perspectives and thus manages to overcome some of the existing simplifications and stereotypes in regard to this topic. Combining emigrant and immigrant perspectives, which are often unnaturally separated, the publication attempts to show that both processes are just two sides of the same coin. Despite the cover picture showing a group of people dressed in national costumes, the book reaches beyond the national by placing Slovenian migration within more general migration schemes. Although the methodological and epistemological starting-points of each of the contributors differ substantially, the publication succeeds in depicting the multilayered nature of migration.

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