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## *Saint Stanislaus Institute: The First Slovene Classical Gymnasium in the Pursuit of a National and Catholic Society*

Zavod svetega Stanislava: prva slovenska klasična gimnazija v prizadevanju za narodno in katoliško družbo<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

This article sheds light on an important chapter in the process of full implementation of Slovene as a language of instruction and Slovene national consciousness as a societal value in the educational system on the territory with a majority Slovene-speaking population at the end of the nineteenth and in the first decades of the twentieth century. The central focus is given on the foundation, the main figures and the initial period of operation of the Saint Stanislaus Institute, for a time the largest building in Carniola, a classical gymnasium boarding school in Šentvid above Ljubljana, which was founded in 1905 by the Bishop of Ljubljana, Anton Bonaventura Jeglič. The mentioned gymnasium was the first where instruction and administration were conducted entirely in Slovene. In 1913,

### Izvleček

Članek osvetljuje pomembno poglavje v sklopu procesa polnega uveljavljanja slovenščine kot učnega jezika in slovenske narodne zavesti kot družbene vrednote v izobraževalnem sistemu na ozemlju z večinsko slovensko govorčim prebivalstvom ob koncu 19. in v prvih desetletjih 20. stoletja. Središčna pozornost je namenjena ustanovitvi, glavnim osebnostim in začetnemu obdobju delovanja Zavoda svetega Stanislava, svoj čas največje stavbe na Kranjskem, klasične gimnazije s pridruženim internatom v Šentvidu nad Ljubljano, ki jo je leta 1905 ustanovil ljubljanski škof Anton Bonaventura Jeglič. Omenjena gimnazija je bila prva, kjer se je v celoti poučevalo in uradovalo v slovenščini, tam je leta 1913 potekala tudi prva matura v slovenskem jeziku, s katero je ta jezik prejel simbolno potrditev svoje

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<sup>1</sup> This text is an extension and elaboration of the following article published in the same journal: Simon Malmenvall, Kulturnozgodovinsko ozadje ustanovitve Zavoda svetega Stanislava in prve mature v slovenskem jeziku, Šolska kronika: revija za zgodovino šolstva in vzgoje, 34, 2025, No. 2-3.

*the first matura exam in Slovene was also held there, through which this language received symbolic confirmation of its scientific expressiveness. Bishop Jeglič designed the Institute as a central Slovene institution where talented young men would receive a high-quality and broad education supplemented by Catholic values and Slovene national consciousness. The “trinitarian” principle of the intertwining of knowledge, Catholicism and Sloveneness during the so-called culture war between the Catholic and liberal camps ought to enable the creation of new generations of socially active Catholic intellectuals from the priestly and lay ranks – regardless of changing state frameworks and social conditions.*

*znanstvene izraznosti. Škof Jeglič je Zavod zasnoval kot osrednjo slovensko ustanovo, na kateri bi nadarjeni mladenci pridobili kakovostno in široko izobrazbo, dopolnjeno s katoliškimi vrednotami in slovensko narodno zavestjo. »Troedino« načelo prepletene znanja, katolištva in slovenstva naj bi v času t. i. kulturnega boja med katoliškim in liberalnim taborom omogočilo oblikovanje novih generacij družbeno dejavnih katoliških intelektualcev iz duhovniških in laiških vrst – ne glede na spremenjanje državnih okvirov in družbenih razmer.*

**Keywords:** Saint Stanislaus Institute, Bishop Anton Bonaventura Jeglič, Slovene as language of instruction, Slovene national consciousness, culture war

**Ključne besede:** Zavod svetega Stanislava, škof Anton Bonaventura Jeglič, slovenščina kot učni jezik, slovenska narodna zavest, kulturni boj

## Introduction

The establishment of the Chair of Slavic Studies at the University of Vienna in 1848 marked a significant milestone in the gradual integration of Slovene into education and wider social life. One of its tasks was the study and teaching of Slovene as an independent Slavic language. Similar could be said of the opening of the real school, i. e., a lower secondary school of natural sciences in Idrija in 1901, which was the first such secondary school where instruction was entirely in Slovene. However, the first fully Slovene classical gymnasium where all official procedures were also conducted in Slovene was founded in 1905. It operated within the Prince-Bishopric Saint Stanislaus Institute in Šentvid above Ljubljana. This gymnasium, which had an attached student dormitory or boarding school for students, was privately owned, as it was founded by the Ljubljana diocese. The first and only state classical gymnasium with Slovene as the sole language of instruction in the Austro-Hungarian Empire opened in Gorizia in 1913. There, the local German state gymnasium was transformed into three independent institutions: a Slovene classical gymnasium and German and Italian real schools. In the year when the Slovene State Classical Gymnasium opened in Gorizia, the first matura exam in the Slovene language was held at the Saint Stanislaus Institute. This marked the symbolic and official confirmation of the status of Slovene as a scientific language. The professors and students of the Diocesan Gymnasi-

um in Šentvid had proven that the Slovene language was capable of covering a wide range of functional genres, including the terminology of various scientific disciplines. Preparation for the first matura exam in Slovene at the Gymnasium began from its inception, with professors themselves preparing textbooks and other literature in Slovene to teach the students.<sup>2</sup> It can generally be argued that at the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, the presence of secondary schools with Slovene as the language of instruction was one of the key factors in preserving or spreading Slovene national consciousness in areas with Slovene-speaking populations.<sup>3</sup>

### Expansion of the gymnasium network and the Slovene language

The beginnings of modern forms of gymnasium education in most of present-day Slovenia can be traced back to 1849, when the competent ministry of the central government in Vienna, officially known as the Ministry for Worship and Education (German: *Ministerium des Cultus und Unterrichts*), which covered the entire territory of the Austrian Empire, issued a document on the reform of the secondary school system. Attention to education was part of broader social processes of urbanization, industrialization and technological development. These led, among other things, to greater specialization of knowledge and diversification of educational institutions. This was intertwined with the gradual assertion of bourgeois-liberal views and land or vernacular languages in public life. The growing national consciousness of the individual linguistic communities resulted in demands for the strengthening of education and linguistic rights, which were expressed by many political groups that emerged in the preceding revolutionary year of 1848. The potentially dangerous consequences of this for the unity of the country forced the Austrian Empire to adopt a series of reforms in the economic, legal and cultural spheres.<sup>4</sup> The document outlining the reform of secondary education, entitled “Draft for the Organization of Gymnasiums and Real Schools in Austria” (German: *Entwurf zur Organisation der Gymnasien und Realschulen in*

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2 David Papež, *Prva matura v slovenskem jeziku 1913*, diploma thesis, Ljubljana: Oddelek za zgodovino, Filozofska fakulteta Univerze v Ljubljani, 2020, p. 6; Mateja Ribarič, Od mature do mature (Zgodovinski razvoj mature na Slovenskem 1849/50–1994/95), *Šolska kronika: revija za zgodovino šolstva in vzgoje*, 14, 2005, No. 2, p. 238.

3 Andrej Vovko, Slovensko šolstvo na prehodu iz 19. v 20. stoletje, *Zbornik simpozija ob stoletnici začetka gradnje prve slovenske gimnazije* (ed. Robert A. Jernejič), Ljubljana: Zavod sv. Stanislava, 2002, p. 77.

4 The interdependence between education, national consciousness and the state in the formation of modern societies from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century is addressed in two theoretically focused studies: Andy Green, Education and State Formation Revisited, *Historical Studies in Education*, 6, 1994, No. 3, pp. 1–17; Karin Almasy, An Unintended Consequence: How the Modern Austrian School System Helped Set Up the Slovene Nation, *Austrian History Yearbook*, 54, 2023, pp. 1–19.

*Österreich*), was conceived by the philosophers and educators Franz Exner (1802–1853) and Hermann Bönnitz (1814–1888). *The Draft* changed the gymnasium from a six-year to an eight-year general education secondary school, with the most significant change being the abolition of Latin as the main language of instruction and its replacement with German. The legislative text also introduced the matura exam, which students had to pass in all subjects except Religion and Propaedeutic Philosophy, i. e. Introduction to Philosophy. The matura exam consisted of written and oral components. The written part comprised a paper in the language of instruction (usually German), a translation from Latin and Greek into the language of instruction, a translation from the language of instruction into Latin and Greek, a mathematical problem and a paper in the land language. In areas with a Slovene population, Slovene gradually assumed a greater role as the land language, alongside German. The matura exam was both a compulsory requirement for completing gymnasium education and a prerequisite for university entry for individuals intending to further their knowledge at the highest level. Notably, Article 84 of *The Draft* emphasizes the ethical purpose of the matura exam, which was supposedly not so much to demonstrate detailed knowledge of individual subjects, but rather to achieve inner maturity and general knowledge for further professional and social life.<sup>5</sup>

The gymnasiums on the Slovene-speaking territories, i. e. in Ljubljana, Klagenfurt and Gorizia, also became eight-grade schools, introducing a new operating model in the 1849/50 school year. Changes soon followed in the field of matura exams, with the first Slovene-speaking graduates appearing on Slovene territory as early as 1850. Even then, Slovene was included among the subjects in the matura exam for the first time. It was compulsory for students who had chosen Slovene as one of their subjects in eight year. Although Slovene remained part of the written assignments for the matura exam in subsequent decades, it had the status of a second land language, which meant that students could pass the matura exam even if they failed the Slovene section. The Slovene language was not significantly important for further education in a university setting, as there were no higher education studies in Slovene at the time.<sup>6</sup> The scope of the matura curriculum was reduced when gymnasiums were reformed in 1908. The written part no longer included translations from Latin and Greek into the language of instruction, the mathematical problem was eliminated, and physics was dropped from the oral part. Following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the gymnasium curriculum underwent two significant changes that also affected the orientation of the matura exam: in the Slovene part of the newly formed Yu-

5 Papež, *Prva matura*, pp. 7–8; Ribarič, *Od mature do mature*, pp. 234–236; Vovko, *Slovensko šolstvo*, pp. 82–83; Matej Hriberšek, *Klasični jeziki v slovenskem šolstvu 1848–1945*, Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, 2005, pp. 89–90; *Entwurf der Organisation der Gymnasien und Realschulen in Österreich*, Wien: Ministerium des Cultus und Unterrichts, 1849, p. 71.

6 Papež, *Prva matura*, p. 8; Ribarič, *Od mature do mature*, p. 236.

goslav state, Slovene was introduced as the language of instruction everywhere; along with this, science subjects and living languages, particularly French and Serbo-Croatian, were given a greater prominence at the expense of Latin and Greek. One of the most significant differences between primary schools and gymnasiums, which applied in both the Austrian and Yugoslav periods, was that the financing and organization of primary schools, including the choice of the language of instruction, was handled by the land and local authorities, i. e. the land school boards and municipal councils, whereas gymnasiums were administered by the state ministry of education. The “national” status of gymnasiums brought, among other things, relatively high incomes and social prestige to their professors, while at the same time requiring them to have a university education.<sup>7</sup>

When discussing the expansion of the gymnasium network and the Slovenization of the education system, it is worth highlighting the real schools that emerged in the mid-nineteenth century. These were primarily institutions for the upper-middle classes of the bourgeois population, particularly those with a technical or commercial education. As their curriculum favored mathematics and science subjects, students who passed the matura exam from real schools were eligible to enroll in technical colleges and, with additional or differential exams in Latin, Greek and Propaedeutic Philosophy, also at universities. Real schools lasted six years, while their more advanced versions, known as real gymnasiums or higher real schools, lasted eight. The first real school on Slovene territory, where classes were taught in German, opened its doors in Ljubljana in 1851. The real school in Idrija, founded in 1901, was one such example, being the first real school with an entirely Slovene language of instruction. Following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, real schools – officially abolished by the 1929 school reform – were gradually transformed into eight-year real gymnasiums, which became the dominant type of gymnasium in the Slovene part of the first Yugoslav state. There were three real gymnasiums in Ljubljana, and one each in Maribor, Celje, Kranj, Murska Sobota and Kočevje. From 1869, the matura exam also marked the end of the educational process at teacher training colleges, where the education lasted for four years. Students who received matura certificates there could not continue their studies at university but instead were trained to teach children in primary schools. At the beginning of the twentieth century, there were four teacher training colleges on Slovene territory: one each in Ljubljana, Klagenfurt, Maribor and Koper, the latter being moved to Gorizia in 1909.<sup>8</sup>

In 1870, the lower secondary school in Kranj was granted a parallel department in which lessons were taught in Slovene, making it the first utraquist or bilingual German-Slovene secondary school in the Slovene-speaking area. In

7 Papež, *Prva matura*, p. 12; Ribarič, *Od mature do mature*, p. 235, 241; Vovko, *Slovensko šolstvo*, p. 85.

8 Ribarič, *Od mature do mature*, pp. 240–241; Vovko, *Slovensko šolstvo*, p. 79; Hriberšek, *Klasični jeziki*, p. 90.

1894, it was transformed into a full gymnasium, finally coming to life with all eight grades in the 1900/01 school year. The first 23 senior students passed their exams in 1901.<sup>9</sup> At the time, Slovene was better represented in the lower grades of gymnasiums and other secondary schools, but less so in the upper grades. The resistance to the gradual Slovenization of gymnasiums in German nationalist circles of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy of the time was so strong that the budget item voted for in June 1895 to introduce parallel Slovene classes at the German-Slovene lower gymnasium in Celje led to the fall of the Austrian national government of Prince Alfred Windisch-Grätz (1851–1927) after barely two years in power. Before World War I, there were state gymnasiums on the Slovene-speaking territory in Ljubljana, Maribor, Trieste, Gorizia and Celje, while other gymnasiums were private: in Šentvid above Ljubljana under the diocese, in Novo Mesto under the Franciscans, in Klagenfurt under the Benedictines, and in Koper under the municipality. During this period, the number of secondary school graduates in Slovenia grew slowly but steadily. From 1850 to 1900, 4,513 people passed the matura exam, from 1900 to 1920, this figure increased to 7,493, of whom 91 (1.2%) were girls, and just before World War II, the number of secondary school graduates exceeded 13,000.<sup>10</sup>

### The linguistic and organizational foundations of the Diocesan Gymnasium

In 1905, a gymnasium began operating which, at the request of its founder, the Prince-Bishop of Ljubljana Anton Bonaventura Jeglič (1850–1937, in office: 1898–1930), used Slovene as the language of instruction for all subjects for the first time in history. Furthermore, all its administrative matters were conducted entirely in Slovene.<sup>11</sup> Officially called the Prince-Bishopric Private Gymnasium at

9 Papež, *Prva matura*, pp. 9, 11; Ribarič, *Od mature do mature*, p. 238, 240; Vovko, *Slovensko šolstvo*, p. 83.

10 Papež, *Prva matura*, p. 12; Ribarič, *Od mature do mature*, pp. 238, 242; Vovko, *Slovensko šolstvo*, pp. 83–84; Peter Štih, Vasko Simoniti and Peter Vodopivec, *Slovenska zgodovina: od prazgodovinskih kultur do začetka 21. stoletja*, Ljubljana: Modrijan, 2016, pp. 311–312. The first female gymnasium graduate on Slovene territory was Medea Norsa (1877–1952), born in Trieste in 1877, who graduated from the gymnasium in Koper in 1900. After earning a doctorate in literature from the University of Florence, she taught Italian at the girls' lyceum in her hometown from 1907 to 1912. Her teaching and research career peaked between 1935 and 1949, when she headed the Papyrological Institute at the University of Florence. See: Antonio Carlini, *Medea Norsa e Vittorio Bartoletti alla Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, Ricordo di Vittorio Bartoletti a Cinquant'Anni dalla Scomparsa (1967–2017)*. *Atti della Giornata di Studio (Florence, December 5, 2017)* (ed. Diletta Minutoli), Firenze: Accademia Fiorentina di Papirologia e di Studi sul Mondo Antico, pp. 21–34.

11 Robert A. Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava: ob stoletnici začetka gradnje (1901–2001)*, Ljubljana: Zavod Sv. Stanislava, 2001, p. 21.

the Saint Stanislaus Institute in Šentvid above Ljubljana (Slovene: *Knezoškofjska privatna gimnazija v Zavodu svetega Stanislava v Šentvidu nad Ljubljano*), the institution became better known as the Diocesan Classical Gymnasium (Slovene: *Škofjska klasična gimnazija*). The term “Bishop’s Institutes” (Slovene: *Škofovi zavodi*) also became commonplace. This referred to the original idea of a single gymnasium with two boarding schools attached to it, which was not realized for the sake of easier and cheaper management. The first would be a minor seminary intended for future priestly candidates, and the second for other students with lay vocations in mind. The original idea was retained in the architectural design of the building, consisting of a central part and two side parts.<sup>12</sup> One of the Institute’s most important achievements was setting an example in the Slovenization of the entire educational system within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy before World War I and within the new Yugoslav state afterwards.<sup>13</sup> In 1919, the Higher Education Council of the National Government in Ljubljana made an interesting statement: “Without the Bishop’s Institutes with the Slovene gymnasium, the complete lack of textbooks in the current economic and printing crisis would make the immediate Slovenization of state gymnasiums virtually impossible.”<sup>14</sup>

A more noticeable difference between the diocesan and the state gymnasiums manifested itself already when the third year was introduced at the former in 1907, with Slovene being used for the first time also in the teaching of Ancient Greek. The first generation of students consolidated their knowledge with the help of an unpublished grammar book and a textbook<sup>15</sup> by Josip Tominšek (1872–1954), a professor of classical languages at the Ljubljana State Classical Gymnasium at the time, as they were gradually being published in parts.<sup>16</sup> At the end of the 1912/13 school year, the first matura exam was held at the Diocesan Gymnasium and was conducted entirely in Slovene. The written part of the exam took place between June 9 and 12, 1913, followed by oral examinations from July 5 to 9.<sup>17</sup> Evidence of the quality of the gymnasium and the preparation for the

<sup>12</sup> Bogdan Kolar, Namen zavoda in šole v Šentvidu and Ljubljano, *Sto let Zavoda sv. Stanislava* (ed. France M. Dolinar), Ljubljana: Družina, 2005, pp. 375–376; Anton B. Jeglič, O naših zavodih, *Ljubljanski škofjski list* 1899, No. 7, p. 93; Roman Globokar, Duhovna opredelitev Zavoda sv. Stanislava, *Sto let Zavoda sv. Stanislava* (ed. France M. Dolinar), Ljubljana: Družina, 2005, pp. 379–380.

<sup>13</sup> Kolar, Namen zavoda, p. 374.

<sup>14</sup> Anton Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju Škofjskega zavoda sv. Stanislava in Škofjske gimnazije*, Št. Vid nad Ljubljano: Zavod Sv. Stanislava, 1930, p. 56.

<sup>15</sup> Josip Tominšek, *Grška slovnica*, Ljubljana: Katoliška bukvarna, 1908; Josip Tominšek, *Grška vadnica*, Ljubljana: Katoliška bukvarna, 1908.

<sup>16</sup> Tominšek’s grammar and exercise book, officially published in 1908 and designed for lower gymnasium grades with Slovene as the language of instruction, represented a breakthrough in the field of classical philology in the Slovene-speaking area. The textbook and exercise book were a prerequisite for teaching Greek in Slovene. See: Hriberšek, *Klasični jeziki*, pp. 190–192.

<sup>17</sup> *VIII. izvestje knezoškofjske privatne gimnazije v zavodu sv. Stanislava*, Št. Vid nad Ljubljano: Knezoškofjski zavod sv. Stanislava, 1913, p. 50; Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju*, p. 48; Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava*, p. 18.

matura exam is seen in the fact that half of the 30 students passed the exam with distinction, while the other half were recognized as mature by the unanimous decision of all the members of the committee.<sup>18</sup> The students' success and the groundbreaking nature of the first Slovene-language matura exam contributed to the external recognition of the Diocesan Classical Gymnasium. On January 8, 1914, the State Ministry of Education in Vienna finally granted the school public validity or "permanent public right", giving it the right to conduct matura exams and issue officially recognized certificates. Prior to this (from 1905 to 1913), the "public right" was granted separately each year.<sup>19</sup> From the first matura exam in 1913 until its closure in 1945, 742 students successfully graduated from the gymnasium.<sup>20</sup> At the time of the first matura exam, there were eighteen professors at the institution in total. Most of the first generation of teaching staff were referred to educational institutions by Bishop Jeglič himself, who sent six of them to study in Vienna, where they acquired the best knowledge available at the time, which they then passed on to Slovene students to the best of their ability.<sup>21</sup>

When the written matura examination was held at the Diocesan Gymnasium in June 1913, the exams had to be taken for the subject of the language of instruction, i. e. Slovene, and for three other subjects – German, Latin, and Greek. In the written test in the language of instruction, which involved submitting an essay, students could choose between three topics. Similar to the written tests, the oral part of the matura exam also included Slovene as the language of instruction and German. Unlike the written part, the oral part also consisted of mathematics, which was joined by a classical language, i. e. Latin or Greek. The oral exam also included local studies, a subject dedicated to history and geography.<sup>22</sup> At this gymnasium, the selection of subjects and the procedure for taking the matura exam remained almost unchanged until the 1929/30 school year. At that time, the Belgrade Ministry of Education and Religion issued rules on the matura exam, adapting them to the new law on secondary schools.<sup>23</sup> This also coincided with nationwide reforms in the administrative, judicial, and cultural spheres following the proclamation of the royal dictatorship, and the law on primary schools was also passed in the same year, followed a year later by a law on universities.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Stane Okoliš, *Od zamisli do uresničitve škofovih zavodov; Sto let Zavoda sv. Stanislava* (ed. France M. Dolinar), Ljubljana: Družina, 2005, p. 87.

<sup>19</sup> Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju*, p. 51.

<sup>20</sup> Stane Gabrovec, *Škofjska klasična gimnazija v doživetju in presoji nekdanjega študenta, Zbornik simpozija ob stoletnici začetka gradnje prve slovenske gimnazije* (ed. Robert A. Jernejčič), Ljubljana: Zavod sv. Stanislava, 2002, p. 124.

<sup>21</sup> Papež, *Prva matura*, p. 17.

<sup>22</sup> Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju*, p. 107.

<sup>23</sup> The wording of the law is provided by the publication: *Zakon o srednjim školama: od 31. avgusta, 1929. god. sa izmenama i dopunama od 20. jula, 1931. god.*, Beograd: Državna štamparija Kraljevine Jugoslavije, 1931.

<sup>24</sup> Ervin Dolenc, Država, Cerkev in šolstvo v prvi Jugoslaviji, *Sto let Zavoda sv. Stanislava* (ed. France M. Dolinar), Ljubljana: Družina, 2005, pp. 171–172.

The first major innovation was that the written and oral mathematics exams were abolished in classical gymnasiums, and the second was that Slovene gymnasiums no longer held exams in the subject dedicated to Serbo-Croatian language. As with the first matura exam, the Diocesan Gymnasium continued to demonstrate a high level of acquired knowledge among its students in the following years. Thus, in the first quarter of a century of the Saint Stanislaus Institute existence, only two students (in 1929 and 1930 respectively) had to repeat the matura exam the following year, whereas a large proportion of students – as many as 31% of all matura graduates – completed the matura exam with an excellent grade.<sup>25</sup>

The first school year at the Diocesan Classical Gymnasium began on September 17, 1905, with a Holy Mass celebrated by Bishop Jeglič, followed by the inauguration on September 21, which was also attended by the Bishop of Ljubljana. Diocesan priest and linguist Janez Francišek Gnidovec (1873–1939, in office: 1905–1919),<sup>26</sup> who was later a member of the Lazarist missionary congregation and Bishop of Skopje and Prizren (in office: 1924–1939) in the south-west of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, was appointed as the principal. At the opening, the students were divided into two, or rather three groups – 69 students attended two regular first-year classes, which merged into one in January 1906, and 27 were enrolled in a preparatory class. As the total number of students increased with each new year and financial constraints did not allow for the employment of additional professors, the preparatory class was discontinued in 1908. Of the 86 students accepted, 45 came from Gorenjska (Upper Carniola), 26 from Dolenjska (Lower Carniola), 20 from Notranjska (Inner Carniola), three from Ljubljana, and two from outside the Ljubljana diocese territory. The preparatory class curriculum included two hours of religious education, four hours of Slovene, four hours of mathematics, then called arithmetic, two hours of calligraphy, and as many as twelve hours of German per week.<sup>27</sup> The high proportion of German lessons probably reflects the fact that most eleven- or twelve-year-old young boys, who predominantly used Slovene in their home environment, were not accustomed to using German to the extent required for a smooth transition to gymnasium-level education, where German was taught at a more demanding level.

Prior to the start of the fifth year in the 1909/10 school year, the Diocesan Gymnasium was faced with serious issues. As lessons in the higher grades of state gymnasiums were taught in German at the time, no Slovene textbooks or similar manuals were available for these grades. To prevent this obstacle from halting the

<sup>25</sup> Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju*, pp. 108–110; Robert A. Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava v letih 1918–1941, Sto let Zavoda sv. Stanislava* (ed. France M. Dolinar), Ljubljana: Družina, 2005, pp. 187–188.

<sup>26</sup> Gnidovec's achievements in the field of education are highlighted in the following articles: Justin Stanovnik, Dr. Janez F. Gnidovec – učitelj in vzgojitelj, *Gnidovčev simpozij v Rimu* (ed. Edo Škulj), Celje: Mohorjeva družba, 1989, pp. 59–82; Alojz Pirnat, Gnidovec – ravnatelj vzgojnega zavoda, *Gnidovčev simpozij v Rimu* (ed. Edo Škulj), Celje: Mohorjeva družba, 1989, pp. 83–88.

<sup>27</sup> Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju*, pp. 47–49; Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava*, p. 10.

development of the first entirely Slovene gymnasium, Principal Gnidovec took the initiative to have the missing textbooks written in Slovene. The organization of this undertaking was taken over by the secular and partly liberal-oriented Association of Slovene Professors in Ljubljana, founded in 1906, and the publishing was entrusted to the Institute. The Association enthusiastically supported this endeavor through the efforts of its president, Jakob Žmavc (1867–1950). A Doctor of History and at the time a professor at the Ljubljana State Classical Gymnasium, Žmavc sought to develop Slovene scientific and pedagogical terminology and to generally establish Slovene as the language of instruction in all gymnasiums in the Slovene-speaking area. The connection between the Association and the local Church was further consolidated by Bishop Jeglič, who was one of its main benefactors.<sup>28</sup> However, due to the lack of Slovene teaching materials, the land school board for Carniola initially rejected the Diocesan Gymnasium's request in 1909 to teach entirely in Slovene in the fifth and all subsequent senior years of the gymnasium. The unfavorable decision prompted Bishop Jeglič to travel to Vienna and personally intervene with the Minister of Education and future Prime Minister Karl von Stürgkh (1859–1916). On September 20, 1909, Bishop Jeglič informed Principal Gnidovec by telegram of the successful outcome of events and wrote the meaningful words: "Start everything in Slovene!" The very next day, the land school board sent a decision to the gymnasium, allowing all lessons to be taught in Slovene, in accordance with instructions from the Vienna ministry.<sup>29</sup>

The curriculum for the eighth year at the Diocesan Gymnasium in the 1912/13 school year reflected the desire to provide a broad education in the humanities and natural sciences, which was characteristic of gymnasium education as a whole. Compared to previous years, however, the range of subjects was narrower and more targeted towards the matura exam. Eighth grade students had two religious education classes per week, during which they studied church history. Three hours per week were dedicated to Slovene language classes, covering the history of Slovene literature from the poet France Prešeren (1800–1849) to the present day, alongside content from the literature of other Slavic nations. The third subject in the curriculum was German, which comprised four hours per week.<sup>30</sup> The next subject was Latin, with five hours per week. Greek had the same number of hours. "Earth studies" (Slovene: *zemljepis*), a subject combining content from the fields of history and geography, covered four hours per week in the first semester and three in the second. Only two school hours per week were devoted to mathematics, during which time students revised material from previous years with an emphasis on equations and geometry, rather than learning

<sup>28</sup> Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju*, p. 49; Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava*, p. 17; Hriberšek, *Klasični jeziki*, pp. 214, 216–218.

<sup>29</sup> Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju*, p. 50.

<sup>30</sup> Papež, *Prva matura*, p. 23; VIII. izvestje, Št. Vid nad Ljubljano: Knezoškofjski zavod sv. Stanislava, 1913, pp. 19, 30.

new material. Meanwhile, more time was devoted to physics: three hours per week in the first semester and four in the second.<sup>31</sup> The relatively high proportion of physics classes in the final year can be explained by the fact that at the Diocesan Gymnasium, which had a classical-humanistic focus, physics was only taught in the final two years. Furthermore, physics was combined with chemistry in the seventh year, whereas it was taught separately only in the final year.<sup>32</sup> However, to ensure the public validity of certificates, the Diocesan Gymnasium followed a similar curriculum to state classical gymnasiums. One significant difference was the greater number of hours devoted to German – because instruction was given in Slovene, knowledge of German, which was essential for the scientific, cultural and political life in the country at that time, was reinforced by a greater number of hours devoted to the subject. Following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, German was retained, albeit with fewer hours. Within the framework of the new Yugoslav state, the subject of Serbo-Croatian was introduced. This language was taught in the upper grades from late 1918, and, from the 1921/22 school year, in the lower grades too.<sup>33</sup>

### The conceptual background to establishing the Institute

The Saint Stanislaus Institute was founded by Anton Bonaventura Jeglič, the Prince-Bishop of Ljubljana. Construction of the Institute began in 1901, with most of the building completed by 1905, when the first generation of students began classes there. However, construction work was fully completed in 1910. Upon completion, the Institute building became the largest in the land of Carniola. The intention to establish the Institute sparked bitter political controversy at the time, further exacerbating the divide between the Catholic and liberal camps on the Slovene territory.<sup>34</sup> Many former students who attended the Institute during its first forty years of existence (1905–1945), 271 of whom were ordained as priests, left a significant mark on the Slovene ecclesiastical and cultural space. Notable figures among them include: Archbishops of Ljubljana Anton Vovk (1900–1963; in office: 1945–1963) and Alojzij Šuštar (1920–2007; in office: 1980–1997); Bishop of Koper Janez Jenko (1910–1994; in office: 1977–1987), who worked as an educational prefect at the Institute between 1934 and 1940; Auxiliary Bishop of Ljubljana Stanislav Lenič (1911–1991; in office: 1967–1988); Valentin Meršol, a doctor and politician (1894–1981); Janez Janež, a doctor and mission-

<sup>31</sup> Papež, *Prva matura*, pp. 24–25.

<sup>32</sup> Papež, *Prva matura*, p. 26.

<sup>33</sup> Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju*, pp. 59–61.

<sup>34</sup> For more details on the negative perception of Bishop Jeglič in the Slovene liberal political camp, see: Jurij Perovšek, *Pogledi slovenskega liberalizma na poslanstvo in delo knezoškofa Antonia Bonaventure Jegliča, jegličev simpozij v Rimu* (ed. Edo Škulj), Celje: Mohorjeva družba, 1991, pp. 357–385.

ary (1913–1990); Stane Kregar, a painter (1905–1973); Janko Moder, a translator (1914–2006); Kajetan Gantar, a classical philologist (1930–2022); Stane Gabrovec, an archaeologist (1920–2015); Maks Peterlin, a lawyer and athlete, first head of the Yugoslav Orel Association (1894–1982); Blaž Svetelj, a geographer and founder of the Slovene Stenographic Society (1893–1944); and France Bučar, a lawyer and president of the first parliament in the independent Slovene state (1923–2015; in office: 1990–1992).<sup>35</sup>

From the outset, the idea behind establishing the Institute was to educate future scholars defined by their Slovene national consciousness and their public affiliation with the Catholic faith. The Bishop of Ljubljana at the time wanted to found a secondary school that would be entirely Slovene in language and spirit, educating young people according to Catholic standards. To him, loyalty to the faith meant loyalty to the nation. He envisaged an institution where future priests and lay intellectuals would be educated to reduce the influence of liberal views among the Slovene people and revive their traditional Catholic identity.<sup>36</sup> During the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, most Slovene liberal intellectuals and politicians still privately professed the Catholic faith but rejected the influence of the Catholic Church on social life. The value center of the liberals of the time was national consciousness, combined with free economic initiative and secular state education. In contrast, Catholic politics advocated national consciousness against the backdrop of socially oriented economic policy, as well as religious elements in education and public life in general.<sup>37</sup> It was precisely in the field of education, with which the Catholic Church had been involved with for centuries, that the conflict between the liberal and Catholic camps was the strongest and longest-lasting – it recurred

35 Papež, *Prva matura*, pp. 14–15, 33–34; Tone Česen, *Vzgojitelji – prefekti v Zavodu, Sto let Zavoda sv. Stanislava* (ed. France M. Dolinar), Ljubljana: Družina, 2005, pp. 476–477, 486–487; Stane Gabrovec, *Ustanovitev Zavoda sv. Stanislava in prve popolne slovenske gimnazije, Jegličev simpozij v Rimu* (ed. Edo Škulj), Celje: Mohorjeva družba, 1991, p. 414.

36 Papež, *Prva matura*, p. 15; Jakob Šolar, *Vzgojiteljska osebnost nadškofa Jegliča, Vestnik Društva Jeglič*, 4, 1937, No. 10/12, pp. 34–35. The beginnings of the cultural struggle on Slovene territory, which at the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century was closely intertwined with the political assertion of Slovene national consciousness and with the personality of Anton Mahnič (1850–1920), are discussed in a monographic study by historian Egon Pelikan: *Akomodacija politične ideologije katolicizma na Slovenskem*, Maribor: Obzorja, 1997. Pelikan's research is complemented by a comprehensive monograph by Slovene theologian Jožko Pirc: *Aleš Ušeničnik in znamenja časov: katoliško gibanje na Slovenskem od konca 19. do srede 20. stoletja*, Ljubljana: Družina, 1986. It is dedicated to the Catholic socio-political movement at the turn of the century considering the views of Aleš Ušeničnik (1868–1952), professor of philosophy at the Faculty of Theology in Ljubljana, as well as the ideological leader of Catholic social engagement in Slovenia before World War II. Philosopher Bojan Žalec presents contemporary approaches to the phenomenon of cultural struggle in the Slovene and Central European spaces in the article: *Ušeničnikova vizija družbene prenove, Bogoslovni vestnik*, 2022, 82 p. 4, pp. 955–973.

37 Jurij Perovšek, *Politične in narodnostne razmere na Kranjskem v začetku 20. stoletja, Sto let Zavoda sv. Stanislava* (ed. France M. Dolinar), Ljubljana: Družina, 2005, pp. 11–12.

in various forms in both the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (after 1929 named Kingdom of Yugoslavia).<sup>38</sup> Both sides claimed the exclusive right to regulate this important social building block and tried to allow the other as little influence as possible.<sup>39</sup>

Jeglič's views were significantly influenced by the fact that he rose to the position of Bishop of Ljubljana shortly after serving for a total of sixteen years as a canon of the cathedral chapter (1882–1890), a vicar general (1890–1897), and an auxiliary bishop (1897–1898) in Sarajevo.<sup>40</sup> The local Archbishop, Josip Stadler (1843–1918, in office: 1881–1918), focused most of his plans on Catholic education, including establishing a theological seminary in 1893, with Jeglič directly involved in organizing it and obtaining financial resources from other Austro-Hungarian dioceses.<sup>41</sup> This experience led the Bishop of Ljubljana to develop ambitious ideas for his own diocese, the key element of which was providing moral and financial support for educational activities. In this area, he strove for harmony between three ideals: high levels of expertise; a Christian way of life; and Slovene national consciousness. He identified one of the implementers of this idea in Janez Frančišek Gnidovec, the first principal of the gymnasium and later also the rector of the Institute, who ensured the mutual complementarity of education and the educational spiritual order.<sup>42</sup> Bishop Jeglič summarized his thoughts in a speech on July 16, 1901, at the laying of the foundation stone to mark the beginning of construction of the gymnasium: "Our Institutes should first serve science in the light of eternal truths as revealed by God; our Institutes should serve true Christian life according to the God's will; our Institutes should serve our Slovene nation, so that it may more surely achieve its temporal and eternal purpose, as

<sup>38</sup> The following fact testifies to the strong social influence of the Catholic Church in the Yugoslav state, which differed from the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, among other things, in that it was not officially confessional: at the end of the 1930s, forty-eight different educational institutions of all levels – from preschool to vocational and higher education – were administered by dioceses or religious orders in the Slovene part of Yugoslavia (Dolenc, Država, pp. 175–176).

<sup>39</sup> For more details about the conflict between the liberal and Catholic camps regarding the issue of education before and after World War I, see: Ervin Dolenc, *Kulturni boj: slovenska kulturna politika v Kraljevini SHS 1918–1929*, Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1996, pp. 118–128.

<sup>40</sup> In many of his writings, Jeglič explicitly addressed pedagogical and ethical issues, considering various segments of the population, including parents, teachers, priests, and young people. He published his most important professional work entitled *Uzgojeslovje*, intended for teachers and teacher candidates, in the Croatian language as a self-publisher in Sarajevo in 1887. At that time, he also served as principal of the St. Josip Institute, a teacher training college under the auspices of the Daughters of Divine Charity, a female religious community. See: Šolar, *Vzgojiteljska osebnost*, pp. 31–32; Alojzij S. Snoj, Jegličevi vzgojni spisi, *Jegličev simpozij v Rimu* (ed. Edo Škulj), Celje: Mohorjeva družba, 1991, pp. 177, 180–182; Antun Jeglič, *Uzgojoslovje za učitelje i učiteljske pripravnike*, Sarajevo: self-published, 1887.

<sup>41</sup> On Jeglič's time in Sarajevo: Mato Zovkić, Anton Jeglič kao kanonik i pomoćni biskup u Sarajevu, *Jegličev simpozij v Rimu* (ed. Edo Škulj), Celje: Mohorjeva družba, 1991, pp. 37–62.

<sup>42</sup> Kolar, Namen zavoda, p. 365; Okoliš, Od zamisli do uresničitve, pp. 71–72.

ordained by God.”<sup>43</sup>

The Institute’s planning and operations partly continued and mostly supplemented the tasks of the educational institution in central Ljubljana, known as the *Collegium Aloysianum* (Slovene: *Alojzijevišče*) after its founder, Anton Alojzij Wolf (1782–1859), the Prince-Bishop of Ljubljana (in office: 1824–1859).<sup>44</sup> This boarding school or minor seminary existed between 1846 and 1910, after which its premises were taken over in 1919 by the Faculty of Theology of the University of Ljubljana, which is still located there today.<sup>45</sup> The *Collegium Aloysianum* was abolished just as the first matura exam was approaching at the new institute in Šentvid, as Bishop Jeglič believed that its mission had been fulfilled. Before that, in line with Wolf’s vision, the institution was intended primarily for young men from poorer peasant families who attended a state gymnasium where German was the language of instruction, while staying in the aforementioned ecclesiastical residence hall. At the *Collegium Aloysianum*, educators helped students to master school subjects, taught them the rules of polite behavior in a bourgeois-educated environment, inspired Slovene national consciousness in them, and prescribed a regular prayer life and reading of theological literature. The main purpose of the *Collegium Aloysianum* was to educate well-informed candidates with a national consciousness and a Catholic mindset who, having completed the gymnasium, would then choose to study theology and be ordained as priests in the service of the Ljubljana diocese, or to pursue secular professions and bring a national and Catholic spirit to Slovene society. Living and being educated in an institution where students were protected from the “harmful” influences of the liberal bourgeoisie was intended to provide favorable conditions for considering the possibility of a priestly vocation. However, of all the students who attended the institution over more than sixty years, no more than 40 percent decided to pursue a career in the priesthood. Interestingly, one of the most prominent students to have lived in the aforementioned institution was Anton Bonaventura Jeglič, who was formed there between 1862 and 1869.<sup>46</sup>

The idea of establishing a Catholic classical gymnasium as a boarding school arose at a gathering of “Slovene high schoolers”, i. e. university students, which took place at the Narodni Dom Hall in Ljubljana from 21 to 23 August 1898. All attendees supported the fundamental demand for a university to be established

43 *Naši zavodi: Kn.-šk. zavod sv. Stanislava*, Ljubljana: Katoliška tiskarna, 1905, pp. 26–27.

44 An overview of much of the history of *Collegium Aloysianum* is provided in the monograph: Jožef Lesar, *Doneski za zgodovino Alojzijevišča*, Ljubljana: Alojzijevišče, 1896. An in-depth study of the lives of the students and the pedagogical approach of this institution is offered in the dissertation by Andrej Rupnik de Maiti: *Collegium Aloysianum – zgodovina Alojzijevišča s posebnim poudarkom na pedagoškem delu in učni uspešnosti gojencev (1846–1910)*, doctoral thesis, Ljubljana: Teološka fakulteta Univerze v Ljubljani, 2003.

45 Kolar, *Namen zavoda*, p. 366.

46 Kolar, *Namen zavoda*, pp. 367–368; Okoliš, *Od zamisli do uresničitve*, pp. 69–70.

on Slovene territory with Slovene as the language of instruction. However, the Catholic minority of high schoolers informed the bishop that the liberal majority had rejected the unification of student groups and organizations on religious grounds for the greater good of Sloveneness. They believed that Catholicism, due to its “backwardness,” would not pave the way for the future.<sup>47</sup> Against this backdrop, Bishop Jeglič observed a pronounced anti-Catholic sentiment among Slovene youth, which led him to conceive of an exclusively Slovene ecclesiastical gymnasium with an associated residence hall for prospective priests and lay intellectuals. He surmised that Slovene secondary school and university students were exposed to liberal ideas and moral confusion, primarily due to German gymnasiums and universities, which hindered both the political and cultural development of Slovenes, as well as the preservation of the Catholic faith. However, Jeglič’s concerns were not limited to Germanization and the spread of liberal views, as he also wanted to use the gymnasium to provide better educational opportunities for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and to demonstrate that the Catholic Church did not impede scientific progress.<sup>48</sup>

The organizers of the first and second Catholic congresses, the central events of political Catholicism at the time, held under the auspices of the Catholic National Party in 1892 and 1900, respectively, also expressed desires similar to those of the bishop.<sup>49</sup> Thus, at the first congress, six years before Jeglič took up the office of bishop, the priest Jožef Lesar (1858–1931), professor of the New Testament at the Ljubljana Theological College, gave a meaningful speech. As one of the organizers of the rally and a representative of its committee for secondary and higher education, he emphasized: “A significant percentage of our younger intelligentsia are, if not irreligious, then lukewarm. Therefore, we should not wait, but rather act as follows: Help yourself, and God will help you.”<sup>50</sup> Bishop Jeglič expressed almost the same thought in his speech at the laying of the foundation stone of the institute on July 16, 1901: “It is therefore necessary that we prepare ourselves now for the dangers that lie ahead, so that we can ward off the

47 Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava*, p. 4; Perovšek, *Politične in narodnostne razmere*, pp. 33–34. A comprehensive assessment of this event from a Catholic perspective is given by priest and philosopher Aleš Ušeničnik: Po shodu slovenskih visokošolcev, *Katoliški obzornik*, 2, 1898, No. 4, pp. 345–353. In this article, he directly states a position that was also internalized by Bishop Jeglič: “If we want our nation to be a nation, and not a languishing crowd without hope and purpose, we must give it Christian intelligence. And intelligence is acquired in schools. Therefore, Christian schools must be our first and constant postulate! ... Of course, the modern state is a stepmother, and Christian nations are the true stepchildren. ... If nations do not help themselves, the state will certainly not help them for a long, long time. Therefore, the second postulate is that we establish Christian schools ourselves. Christian university, Catholic gymnasium, this shall be our ideals!” See: *Ibid.*, p. 350.

48 Papež, *Prva matura*, p. 15; Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava*, p. 4; Kolar, *Namen zavoda*, p. 370.

49 Kolar, *Namen zavoda*, pp. 368–369; Okoliš, *Od zamisli do uresničitve*, p. 74.

50 Ivan Janežič, *Poročilo pripravljalnega odbora o I. slovenskem katoliškem shodu, kateri se je vršil 1892. leta v Ljubljani*, Ljubljana: Pripravljalni odbor, 1893, p. 57.

dangers from our people. We must therefore do everything we can to educate not only good priests but also Catholic laypeople of firm character.”<sup>51</sup> At the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, such views were also advocated by the Catholic National Party (Slovene: *Katoliška narodna stranka*), renamed the Slovene People’s Party (Slovene: *Slovenska ljudska stranka*) in 1905, which at that time became the leading political force in Carniola. The party strove for a Catholic spiritual and moral foundation, the establishment of the Slovene language in state education, the smooth operation of the Slovene Catholic gymnasium, and the foundation of a Slovene university.<sup>52</sup>

### Preparations for operation and teaching staff

When the bishop made his idea public by explaining it in the *Ljubljana Diocesan Gazette* (Slovene: *Ljubljanski škofijski list*) on St. Nicholas Day (December 6) in 1898,<sup>53</sup> the liberal camp reacted vehemently. Representatives of the Carniolan liberals organized protest rallies, and their opposition was even more evident in newspaper articles.<sup>54</sup> In February 1899, a delegation from the city of Ljubljana visited the bishop and asked him to abandon the idea of building the Institute. The reasons they gave him were deliberately exaggerated, as they mentioned that a private Slovene gymnasium could harm the state gymnasium with Slovene as the language of instruction, which did not yet exist. They claimed that such gymnasiums were useful abroad, but that Slovenes were still sufficiently devoted to the Catholic faith not to need two types of gymnasiums, as this could further deepen ideological differences among the intelligentsia. Contrary to this accusations, Bishop Jeglič stated in his speech at the Institute’s opening that it was intended for all Slovenes, thereby expressing his desire not to divide Slovene national affiliation. At the urging of some Slavic-oriented priests, he chose the young Polish Jesuit Stanislaus Kostka (1550–1568) as the patron saint of the educational institution, thereby emphasizing the Slovene and wider Slavic character of the gymnasium.<sup>55</sup> The decision of the Ljubljana Ordinary to establish the Institute was part of the Catholic Church’s broader efforts at the time to pro-

<sup>51</sup> *Naši zavodi*, p. 25.

<sup>52</sup> Perovšek, *Politične in narodnostne razmere*, pp. 11, 22. In light of Jeglič’s interference in political affairs, it is significant that the Bishop of Ljubljana (although officially anonymously) published a booklet in 1902 in which he clearly explained the reasons for the Catholic Church’s opposition to liberalism: *Naši liberalci*, Vol. 1: *Liberalna »vera«*, Ljubljana: Obrambno društvo, 1902.

<sup>53</sup> Anton B. Jeglič, *Vsem duhovnikom ljubljanske škofije*, *Ljubljanski škofijski list* 1898, No. 10, pp. 146–147.

<sup>54</sup> Janko Prunk, *Škof Jeglič in ustavitev Zavoda sv. Stanislava*, *Zbornik simpozija ob stoletnici začetka gradnje prve slovenske gimnazije* (ed. Robert A. Jernejčič), Ljubljana: Zavod sv. Stanislava, 2002, pp. 88.

<sup>55</sup> Papež, *Prva matura*, p. 15; Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava*, p. 10; Kolar, *Namen zavoda*, pp. 373, 375.

mote education and social impact. In November 1898, he visited the Lourdes pilgrimage site in France, entrusting his idea to the protection of the Virgin Mary. Later, in Rome, he personally met with Pope Leo XIII (reigned: 1878–1903), who expressed his support. In January of the following year, he traveled to Vienna, where his intention was confirmed by Cardinal Anton Gruscha, Archbishop of Vienna (in office: 1890–1911), and Emperor Franz Joseph I (reigned: 1848–1916).<sup>56</sup>

The initial plan for the gymnasium boarding school was to construct the building on the diocesan property near St. Peter's Church, east of the center of Ljubljana. However, representatives of liberal politics, united in the National Progressive Party (Slovene: *Narodno napredna stranka*) with a majority in the Ljubljana City Council, threatened not to approve the building permit. Bishop Jeglič then reconsidered and chose a new site in the neighboring municipality of Šentvid above Ljubljana, which was owned by the local parish. It turned out that the Šentvid municipal councilors supported the bishop's idea. There, the construction and maintenance costs would be lower than in Ljubljana, and at the same time, the new location would still be close enough to the capital of Carniola and the cultural center of Sloveneness. Thus, the Ljubljana Diocese purchased a sixteen-acre meadow from the Šentvid parish priest Gregor Malovrh. On May 21, 1901, Malovrh broke ground and blessed the land, while on July 16 of the same year, Bishop Jeglič blessed the foundation stone. The plans for the new building were drawn up by architect Josip Vančaš (1859–1932) from Sarajevo, who in later years designed several prestigious buildings in nearby Ljubljana, such as the Municipal Savings Bank and the Union Hotel.<sup>57</sup>

The construction and furnishing of the new educational institution incurred enormous costs for the Diocese of Ljubljana, which by 1909 had risen to two million Austrian crowns, bringing the local Church to the brink of financial collapse. Since these costs could not be covered by parish collections, personal donations, and bequests from priests and other individuals, Anton Bonaventura Jeglič resorted to selling wood from the diocesan forests in the Gornji Grad area, taking out bank loans, and requesting financial assistance from Croatian, Hungarian and Polish bishops, and also those from the United States of America. Due to financial burdens, the gymnasium building was incomplete at the time of its official opening and the start of classes. Only the central and right wings were finished, while the construction of the left wing continued until 1909. The financial difficulties and the associated extension of the construction period also delayed the planned start of classes in the fall of 1904. However, in September of the following year, it was determined that there was sufficient space for students, educators, and professors, enabling classes to begin.<sup>58</sup> Once completed, the building had a total of 294 rooms, 1,181 windows, and 481 doors, with the

56 Kolar, *Namen zavoda*, p. 372; Okoliš, *Od zamisli do uresničitve*, pp. 74–75.

57 Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava*, pp. 5–6; Okoliš, *Od zamisli do uresničitve*, pp. 78–80, 86–87.

58 Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava*, pp. 8–10; Okoliš, *Od zamisli do uresničitve*, pp. 67–68, 75, 90.

longest corridors measuring 126 meters each. The total area of all rooms, excluding corridors and atriums, was 3,000 square meters, whereas the total built-up area, including courtyards, was just over 10,000 square meters. The gymnasium became the largest and most modern building in the land of Carniola at the time. It was designed to accommodate up to 400 students for boarding and schooling.<sup>59</sup>

To realize his idea of a classical gymnasium with Slovene as the language of instruction as soon as possible and to provide it with teaching staff who were both scientifically qualified and rooted in the Catholic faith, the Ljubljana Ordinary sent several young diocesan priests, who had demonstrated the ability and interest, to study at various Austrian universities, especially in Vienna, as early as 1899. There, they expanded their previous theological education by earning degrees or doctorates in secular sciences necessary for teaching at the new gymnasium and for the educational process at the residence hall. While studying, they also became accustomed to the communal living that awaited them at the Institute and strengthened their national consciousness and general knowledge by joining the Slovene Catholic student society Danica. There, they met, among others, Slovene deputies of the Austrian State Assembly from the Catholic National Party, Josip Pogačnik (1866–1932) and Janez Evangelist Krek (1865–1917). After World War I, when the University of Ljubljana was already operating, most of the future professors graduated from or obtained doctorates from its Faculty of Arts or Faculty of Theology. Eighteen professors graduated from this university and five obtained their doctorates. Thus, Bishop Jeglič's approach differed from that of most previous bishops, who usually entrusted the care of Catholic education to one or more religious orders or communities primarily focused on science and education, which at that time was particularly true of the Dominicans, Jesuits, and Piarists.<sup>60</sup>

Most of the first-generation teaching staff candidates completed their studies in 1904. Then they gained experience at state gymnasiums, where they acquired their professorship certification, before the Diocesan Gymnasium opened. Bishop Jeglič modeled the educational concept, organization of classes and selection of teaching staff on diocesan secondary schools that existed in Austria at the time, such as those in Graz, Lienz and Brixen, which he also visited personally. Diocesan priests with teaching qualifications taught there, whereas students, during their schooling, lived in a residence hall attached to the gymnasium, where they had educators – also from the ranks of the diocesan clergy. When the Institute opened, six professors worked there, but by the 1910/11 school year, their number had grown to 14. In the school year after the first Slovene matura exam, i. e., 1913/14, the teaching staff consisted of 18 members. The number of professors, which fluctuated around 20, remained largely unchanged until the beginning of

59 Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava*, p. 1; Okoliš, *Od zamisli do uresničitve*, pp. 88–90.

60 Matjaž Ambrožič, *Profesorski zbor, Sto let Zavoda sv. Stanislava* (ed. France M. Dolinar), Ljubljana: Družina, 2005, pp. 423–424, 461–462.

World War II. With the exception of the physical education professor, the entire teaching staff during the Institute's first twenty-five years consisted of priests from the Ljubljana diocese. Seventy-nine percent of all the professors who ever taught at this institution during its forty years of existence from 1905 to the end of World War II, were priests.<sup>61</sup> During the gymnasium's inauguration ceremony on September 21, 1905, Bishop Jeglič expressed pride in the fact that his professors had a dual higher education – in theology and secular studies. This would allow them to convey to their students an awareness of the harmony between faith and science and protect them from the one-sided exaltation of “temporal” categories that is characteristic of liberal-minded intellectuals. “The curriculum is the same as it must be in all Austrian gymnasiums. This is possible because our men of God have exactly the same education as secular gymnasium professor: a gymnasium education and a university education. But, no, they also have theological studies, where they have been thoroughly trained in all theological sciences, as well as philosophy. This makes them particularly suited to gymnasium classes, where they will be better able to distinguish between true science from false science. They can easily avoid the various fatal fallacies in historical subjects, and especially in natural sciences, and protect the young people entrusted to their care from them.”<sup>62</sup> In this context, it is also significant from the point of view of imparting quality knowledge that 40 percent of all individuals who ever taught at the Institute had a doctorate.<sup>63</sup>

### **Spiritual and moral orientation of the gymnasium**

The Institute's religious identity was reflected in the ideational and organizational complementarity of its two units within the same building: the gymnasium and the residence hall, in which all students were required to live. The inscription on the institution's facade indicated that it was dedicated to “Christ, the Savior of the World.” There, young men were to be formed into “deeply religious and practical Christians” who would spend the rest of their lives working for “the glory of God,” that is, placing the Catholic faith at the center of their personal and social endeavors. To achieve this, during the crucial years of their intellectual and moral growth, they required a protected environment, such as a boarding school, where they would be shielded from “harmful” external influences, including growing liberal views, and at the same time, receive appropriate encouragement and examples to inspire them to embrace “Christian ideals.” The primary purpose of this environment was to form priests who were broadly educated and nationally

61 Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju*, pp. 77–78; Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava*, pp. 11–12; Kolar, *Namen zavoda*, p. 376.

62 *Naši zavodi*, pp. 47–48.

63 Ambrožič, *Profesorski zbor*, p. 461.

conscious, and the secondary purpose was to nurture a Catholic lay intelligentsia who would assume responsible positions in society.<sup>64</sup> The cultivation of religious life was the starting point for realizing both purposes, as discussed in detail by Janez Jenko, the educational prefect of the institute at the time and later Bishop of Koper, in his paper of August 27, 1936. "Religious life encompasses the whole person, including all his relationships with himself, God, and his fellow man. Therefore, religious education must strive to develop all aspects of the person, release all spiritual forces, and bring them together into a harmonious whole, so that one will not feel within himself a divide between faith and life. This can be achieved mentally through appropriate instruction. Boys need to be introduced to the inner world of Christian truths in a vivid way, showing them their beauty, importance, and validity, and giving them a central place."<sup>65</sup>

The creators of the Institute's educational principles believed that a strong spiritual foundation was established through compulsory daily morning and evening prayers, daily attendance at Holy Mass, attending two Masses on Sundays, and receiving confession and communion at least once a month. Annual silent spiritual retreats, which were held separately for younger and older students, also played an important role. Equally important were the Sunday evening talks given by the boarding school's educational prefects, who provided practical guidance on polite behavior in the Institute community as well as guidelines for future public life. Another incentive was the recommended membership in the Institute's Marian Congregation, an association with its own chapel that cultivated devotion to the Mother of God. In the period between the two world wars, most senior students were involved in it. The diligent and persistent fulfillment of intellectual school obligations, monitored by the boarding school prefects according to a precise schedule, was also presented within the Institute as a path to holiness and a way to follow "God's will," appropriate to the status of (future) Catholic intellectuals. Students were expected to study in order to promote high-quality education, national consciousness, and life according to church teachings among Slovenes.<sup>66</sup> In the spirit of the public mission of acquired knowledge, the following words from the anthology published for the Institute's twenty-fifth anniversary are significant: "Only those who learn to work at a young age will later become hard-working men in public life, honoring their professions and bringing happiness to human society. Indeed, many of our students diligently study various languages, shorthand, music, drawing, and so on, in addition to

64 *I. izvestje knezoškofijske privatne gimnazije v zavodu sv. Stanislava, Št. Vid nad Ljubljano: Knezoškofijski zavod sv. Stanislava, 1906*, pp. 3-4; Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju*, pp. 162-163.

65 Archdiocesan Archives of Ljubljana, Diocesan Archives of Ljubljana (ŠAL), Institute Št. Vid, File 2, Minutes, 27 Aug 1936.

66 Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju*, pp. 163-164, 166-167; Globokar, *Duhovna opredelitev*, pp. 383-385; *I. izvestje*, p. 4.

their compulsory school subjects. They are now gathering knowledge like bees so that they can share it with those in need later on.”<sup>67</sup>

In the *Rules for Students of the Diocesan Institute of St Stanislaus*, Bishop Jeglič wrote in 1924 that students should strive for two things – “education of the mind” and “education of the heart.”<sup>68</sup> Similarly, Anton Čepon (1895–1995), the Institute’s professor of Latin and Greek, stressed the primary role of character formation in an article published in the *Jeglič Society Newsletter* (Slovene: *Vestnik društva Jeglič*) in 1933: “The Institute places the greatest importance on character education, and only then on intellectual education. For one can be great in the realm of science and yet be an unprincipled person.”<sup>69</sup> Among the subjects that transcended the confines of the traditional school curriculum since the Gymnasiu’s inception, the cultivation of literary creativity stands out as particularly noteworthy. The main vehicle for this activity was the *Mentor* magazine, founded in 1908 by Anton Breznik (1881–1944), a professor of Slovene at the Gymnasium and a versatile linguist. Students and professors published prose compositions, poetry, philosophical reflections and scientific texts in the magazine. Prominent representatives of Slovene literature of the time were also among the external contributors, most notably the writers Fran Saleški Finžgar (1871–1962), Franc Ksaver Meško (1874–1964) and Ivan Pregelj (1883–1960). Starting in the 1910/11 school year, the Institute also began publishing the *Domače vaje* (“Home Exercises”) literary magazine, which was transferred from *Collegium Aloysianum*, where it had been published since 1868. Many Slovene humanist intellectuals were formed through this magazine over the decades, including the priest and poet Anton Medved (1869–1910) and the priest and philosopher Aleš Ušeničnik (1868–1952). Among the publications in both journals, literary historical studies were particularly valuable, while works in the Expressionist style dominated artistically after World War I.<sup>70</sup>

Similarly, one could argue that the Diocesan Gymnasium not only strengthened the intellectual and spiritual aspects of student life but also recognized the importance of healthy physical development. It was the first gymnasium on Slovene territory to introduce compulsory physical education classes. To this end, a gym measuring 6 meters high, 21 meters long, and 6 meters wide was constructed in the left wing of the building. It became one of the largest and best-equipped school sports facilities in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Students were also involved in the Orel Gymnastic Society, which demonstrated gymnastic exercis-

<sup>67</sup> Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju*, p. 164.

<sup>68</sup> Anton B. Jeglič, *Pravila za gojence škofjskega zavoda sv. Stanislava v Št. Vidu nad Ljubljano*, Ljubljana: Zavod sv. Stanislava, 1924, p. 4.

<sup>69</sup> Anton Čepon, Poslanstvo našega zavoda, *Vestnik društva Jeglič*, 1, 1933, p. 5.

<sup>70</sup> Jože Kurinčič, Besedno ustvarjanje in dramska dejavnost v Zavodu sv. Stanislava, *Sto let Zavoda sv. Stanislava* (ed. France M. Dolinar), Ljubljana: Družina, 2005, pp. 555, 557–558.

es at various occasions and were received with great enthusiasm.<sup>71</sup> Illustrative in that regard is the text entitled “How the physical development of the youth was promoted” in the report on the gymnasium’s activities in the 1913/14 school year, which followed the first matura exam in the Slovene language. The text states that students mostly used the sports ground “three times a day”, went for walks “regularly three times a week”, while in winter “sledging was also cultivated.”<sup>72</sup>

However, efforts to comprehensively shape students’ lives were not always well received. Between the two world wars, some of the Ljubljana diocese’s clergy wanted to transform the Institute into a minor seminary and reproached the Institute’s management for having produced too few candidates for the priesthood. This criticism intensified in the second half of the 1930s, when the costs of running the institution were rising due to the declining number of enrolled students. The economic crisis at that time also resulted in a decrease in the proportion of students from rural backgrounds and a consequent increase in the proportion of those from bourgeois backgrounds, of whom even fewer chose the priestly vocation.<sup>73</sup> Conversely, some of the Institute’s professors doubted the rationality of a hierarchically based and minutely prescribed educational order, which they saw as stifling students’ personal initiative and responsibility on their path of preparation for adult life in society. The most prominent example of this was the case of Jakob Šolar (1896–1968), a specialist in Slovene and French languages, which came to light during the so-called educational crisis of 1929. This occurred at the end of principal Anton Koritnik’s second term, when the differences between the majority conservative or “German” and the minority or “French” educational and moral orientation became more apparent. Bishop Jeglič himself became involved in this matter, as he sided with the conservative-hierarchical tendency, without hindering the activities of professor Šolar and his associates. He merely forbade Šolar to receive students in his institutional apartment, where they would discuss philosophical and life issues for hours at the students’ request.<sup>74</sup> This dispute signaled the emergence of deeper divisions within the Slovene Catholic camp, which became more evident in the second half of the 1930s. On one side were the adherents of the youth organization of students committed to official Church doctrine and clear discipline, led by Ernest Tomec (1885–1942), a professor of Latin at the Ljubljana State Classical Gymnasium. On the other side were the supporters of the “crusader” movement, which favored literary creation and the

<sup>71</sup> Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava*, p. 14.

<sup>72</sup> *IX. izvestje knezoškofijske privatne gimnazije v zavodu sv. Stanislava*, Št. Vid nad Ljubljano: Knezoškofijski zavod sv. Stanislava, 1914, p. 57.

<sup>73</sup> Globokar, *Duhovna opredelitev*, p. 390; Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava*, p. 184.

<sup>74</sup> Globokar, *Duhovna opredelitev*, pp. 386–388; Kurinčič, *Besedno ustvarjanje*, p. 554; Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava v letih*, pp. 182–183.

integration of socialist views.<sup>75</sup> As in the case of the so-called educational crisis, Bishop Jeglič smoothed over these and similar differences by calming passions and seeking compromises. In doing so, Bishop Jeglič acted in the same way as in the case of the so-called educational crisis: his approach was to calm passions and seek compromises in favor of an apparent harmony within the already divided Catholic camp.<sup>76</sup>

It is worth pointing out that, at the very beginning of its operations, the Institute faced issues in the field of education and interpersonal relationships, but in the opposite direction. When Janez Frančišek Gnidovec, a reserved person, held the positions of principal and rector, the faculty repeatedly disobeyed his authority and lived somewhat arbitrarily. The professors' lax attitude was evident, among other things, in their refusal to participate in communal meals, their purchase of wine and other alcoholic beverages for personal use, and their frequent visits to nearby taverns for socializing and drinking.<sup>77</sup> In contrast, a movement for total abstinence from alcohol was spreading among the students, and at the request of Gnidovec, himself a teetotaler, all celebrations and outings were alcohol-free.<sup>78</sup> This also applied to the trip to Carinthia to support the local Slovenes in their efforts to join Yugoslavia. On this trip, which took place on June 10, 1920, half a year after Gnidovec's departure from the Institute, students and professors "quenched their thirst with cold spring water".<sup>79</sup> Similar problems also occurred in later decades. Jeglič's successor, Bishop Gregorij Rožman of Ljubljana (1883–1959, in office: 1930–1945), did not follow the Institute's activities with as much interest as his predecessor. Since he had no personal attachment to the institution,<sup>80</sup> he was able to address two pressing educational issues with greater critical distance in 1938: he ordered improvements to the quality and serving of student meals and restricted educators from opening students' letters.<sup>81</sup>

Educational ideals were realized with the help of the supervisory work of prefects, who organized students into divisions or departments. Each of the pre-

<sup>75</sup> The circle of "crusaders" included Edvard Kocbek (1904–1981), one of the central Slovene writers and politicians of the twentieth century, a member of the partisan movement during World War II and a critic of Yugoslav communism in the post-war period. Kocbek's influence on the pre-war student "crusader" movement is summarized in the study: Albin Kralj, *Katoliško mladinsko gibanje in Kocbek*, master's thesis, Ljubljana: Faculty of Theology, University of Ljubljana, 1998. A comprehensive monograph provides a complete biography of Kocbek: Andrej Inkret, *In stoletje bo zardelo: Kocbek, življenje in delo*, Ljubljana: Modrijan, 2011.

<sup>76</sup> Globokar, Duhovna opredelitev, p. 380; Jernejčič, Zavod sv. Stanislava v letih, pp. 193–194.

<sup>77</sup> Ambrožič, Profesorski zbor, pp. 425–426.

<sup>78</sup> XV. in XVI. izvestje knezoškofiske privatne gimnazije v zavodu sv. Stanislava, Št. Vid nad Ljubljano: Knezoškofiski zavod sv. Stanislava, 1921, p. 10.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., pp. 29–30.

<sup>80</sup> Jeglič's personal attachment to the school – which he himself founded, diligently raised funds for and spread good opinion about – is confirmed, among other things, by the fact that on May 30, 1919, he solemnly celebrated his seventieth birthday at the Institute. (XV. in XVI. izvestje, pp. 12–21).

<sup>81</sup> Jernejčič, Zavod sv. Stanislava v letih, pp. 185–186.

fects – who were all diocesan priests – was in charge of a division of around 40 or up to a maximum of 60 students. The prefects accompanied the students at all times when they were not in the classroom, where professors provided instruction. The prefects supervised the students' afternoon studies and helped the younger ones in particular with additional explanations of learning material, accompanied them at meals in the canteen, and were also present during their physical recreation on the sports field or during their walks. The prefects' responsibilities included “supporting the hesitant, consoling the depressed, encouraging the sluggish” and “punishing mischief” if necessary. This job was said to require “great attention and strong nerves” and “much prudence and patience” from the prefects.<sup>82</sup> Since the Institute's founding, the prefects had their own superior called the rector or the head of the educational council. The first rector was Janez Evangelist Zore (1875–1944), who held the position from 1905 to 1909. He later established himself as a professor of ecclesiastical history at the Ljubljana Theological College and the Faculty of Theology. His successor was Janez Frančišek Gnidovec, who, from 1909 to 1919, held the position of rector in addition to his position as principal of the gymnasium, also. From 1919 to 1922, Andrej Karlin (1857–1933) took over the position. He was the last principal of the *Collegium Aloysianum*, as well as former Bishop of Trieste (1910–1910) and later Bishop of Maribor (1923–1933). He was followed by Martin Štular (1877–1964).<sup>83</sup> By 1930, fifty-one prefects had served at the Institute.<sup>84</sup>

### Socio-cultural impact

Among the publicly visible members of the assembly of professors and educators who shaped the work of the diocesan classical gymnasium and residence hall during and immediately after the first matura exam in Slovene, it is worth mentioning at least six individuals: Janez Frančišek Gnidovec, Anton Koritnik (1875–1951), Anton Breznik, Frančišek Jere (1881–1958) and Franc Kulovec (1884–1941). Gnidovec left his mark on the history of the Institute as a Doctor of Philosophy and the gymnasium's first principal. After 1924, he became known as a great supporter of charity and an example of an ascetic lifestyle as Bishop of Skopje and Prizren. Koritnik, a classical philologist, was a long-time principal of the gymnasium (1919–1937) at the peak of its social visibility between the two world wars. Breznik, a Doctor of Philosophy and Slavic studies, was considered one of the most influential experts on the Slovene language and authors of linguistic manuals already in his time. He also served as principal from 1937 to 1944. Arh, a versatile linguist, taught Slovene, German and Latin at the gymnasium,

<sup>82</sup> Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju*, pp. 166–167.

<sup>83</sup> Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju*, p. 169; Česen, *Vzgojitelji*, pp. 467, 469.

<sup>84</sup> Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju*, pp. 173–174; Ambrožič, *Profesorski zbor*, pp. 460–461.

and initiated aesthetic education and literary creativity within the *Mentor* student magazine, which was later edited by Breznik. Jere, a classical philologist and Doctor of Philosophy, taught Greek, Latin and Slovene at the Diocesan Gymnasium from 1910 to 1941. From 1933 on, he worked as a lecturer of ancient Greek and from 1946 on, as a librarian at the Faculty of Theology in Ljubljana, where he distinguished himself by translating biblical books from Greek. Kulovec taught religious education at the gymnasium from 1911 to 1918. After World War I, he had a rich political career in ministerial and parliamentary positions being a part of the central authorities in Belgrade and one of the leaders of the Slovene People's Party, which had been victorious among the Slovenes.<sup>85</sup>

The Institute's professors played a very important role in publishing textbooks and related study materials in Slovene, particularly in classical philology. Even during the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, they published textbooks in Slovene for their subjects, making the literature from the Institute indispensable for developing Slovene secondary and higher education after World War I. For instance, Anton Dokler (1871–1943), a professor at the Ljubljana State Classical Gymnasium, published the renowned *Greek-Slovene Dictionary*<sup>86</sup> in the Institute's publishing house in 1915, which remains unsurpassed. The dictionary was a fundamental resource for learning Greek until classical gymnasiums were abolished in Slovenia in 1958.<sup>87</sup> Another groundbreaking work was the *Slovene Grammar for Secondary Schools*,<sup>88</sup> written in 1916 by Anton Breznik, a professor of Slovene at the Institute. Another notable manual is the groundbreaking *Slovene Orthography*, which was in force for many decades and which was published in 1935 by Breznik and Fran Ramovš (1890–1952), a professor of Slovene at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana.<sup>89</sup> It is also worth mentioning two members of the Šentvid teaching staff: Frančišek Jere (1881–1951), who translated the New Testament into Slovene, and Franc Omerza (1885–1940), who was one of the first Slovenes to translate the major part of Homer's ancient Greek epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, as well as the entire Aeschylus's tragedy, the *Oresteia*, into Slovene. Omerza was also among the first to translate the works of early Christian writers into Slovene, notable among them the editions<sup>90</sup> of the writings of the Apostolic Fathers and the Patriarch of Constantinople, John Chrysostom (c. 347–407, in of-

<sup>85</sup> Ambrožič, Profesorski zbor, pp. 428, 431–432, 436 443–444; Koritnik, *Ob srebrnem jubileju*, pp. 79–83; Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava*, p. 12.

<sup>86</sup> Anton Dokler, *Grško-slovenski slovar*, Ljubljana: Knezoškofijski zavod sv. Stanislava, 1915; Hriberšek, *Klasični jeziki*, p. 210.

<sup>87</sup> Hriberšek, *Klasični jeziki*, p. 213.

<sup>88</sup> Anton Breznik, *Slovenska slovnica za srednje šole*, Celovec: Družba sv. Mohorja, 1916.

<sup>89</sup> Papež, *Prva matura*, p. 16; Prunk, Škof Jeglič, p. 93; Kolar, *Namen zavoda*, p. 373; Ambrožič, Profesorski zbor, p. 432.

<sup>90</sup> *Spisi apostolskih očetov*, transl. by Franc P. Omerza, Celje: Mohorjeva družba, 1939; *Svetega Janeza Krizostoma Izbrani spisi*, Vol. 1, transl. by Franc K. Lukman and Frančišek P. Omerza, Celje: Mohorjeva družba, 1942.

fice: 397–403).<sup>91</sup> In the field of art, it is impossible to overlook the aforementioned art education professor, Stane Kregar, a pioneer of surrealism in Slovene painting and one of the first abstract painters in Yugoslavia.<sup>92</sup>

The attention paid to classical languages and ancient culture was evident not only in the official name of the gymnasium but also in its modernly fitted theater hall and the regular staging of plays and concerts. A golden age of theatrical creativity can be said to have occurred between 1919 and 1921, when students, under the mentorship of Franc Omerza, a professor of Latin, Greek, and Slovene, staged the extensive and demanding tragedy for the actors, *Oresteia* by the ancient Greek author Aeschylus, first performed on June 24 and 27, 1920. Partly because it was staged for both internal audiences and external visitors, it received praise throughout the wider Slovene cultural sphere. The students made the scenery for the performance themselves, as well as some of the costumes, while they borrowed the rest from the Slovene National Theatre Drama in Ljubljana.<sup>93</sup> The importance of drama as an extracurricular activity at the Institute is evidenced by the large number of other theatrical performances. Between 1908 and 1930 alone, there were 58 at the Institute.<sup>94</sup>

## Conclusion

The establishment of the Department of Slavic Studies at the University of Vienna in 1848 and the opening of the first real school with Slovene as the language of instruction in Idrija in 1901 were milestones in the process of Slovenizing the education system on a territory with a predominantly Slovene-speaking population. A key event in this process was the opening of the first classical gymnasium boarding school in Šentvid above Ljubljana in 1905, where all teaching and administration were conducted in Slovene. At this institution, officially named the Prince-Bishop's Private Gymnasium at the Saint Stanislaus Institute, the first matura exam in Slovene was held in 1913. Thus, the Slovene language achieved symbolic confirmation of its expressiveness in various scientific fields.

The opening of the Saint Stanislaus Institute, where 742 students completed their education from the first matura exam to its closure in 1945, brought an important innovation to Slovene education and wider social life. Bishop Jeglič, the founder of the Institute, wanted it to provide a high-quality education and a

<sup>91</sup> A comprehensive overview of his translation work is provided in the article: Benjamin Bevc, *Portret Franca Omerze, Keria*, 7, 2005, No. 2, pp. 107–123.

<sup>92</sup> Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava*, pp. 12–13; Kurinčič, *Besedno ustvarjanje*, p. 554.

<sup>93</sup> Jernejčič, *Zavod sv. Stanislava*, p. 16; Kurinčič, *Besedno ustvarjanje*, pp. 555, 560–561; Bevc, *Portret*, p. 119.

<sup>94</sup> Kurinčič, *Besedno ustvarjanje*, p. 561; XV. in XVI. *izvestje*, p. 25.

spiritual and moral foundation for future priests and lay intellectuals who would appear in public as nationally conscious and Catholic-oriented Slovenes. Among its students were some renowned individuals, including the Ljubljana archbishops Anton Vovk and Alojzij Šuštar, the painter Stane Kregar, the translator Janko Moder, and the archaeologist Stane Gabrovec. The gymnasium and its associated residence hall were committed to a comprehensive educational program, promoting the intellectual, spiritual, moral, and physical progress of its students. The success of the approach taken by the school's professors and educators was reflected, among other things, in the students' high grades on their matura exams and their rich literary output, particularly their theatrical performances. The school's quality was confirmed at the first matura exam, which half of the thirty students passed with distinction. The Institute also delivered its mission by publishing the first textbooks and related materials for upper gymnasium level in Slovene, thereby facilitating the adoption of Slovene in secondary and higher education after World War I.

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