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Elements of Slovenian National Consciousness in Relation to the Mother Country and the Latin American Culture in Narrative Materials Documented among Slovenians in Argentina

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The article is based on a month-long field research conducted on three locations among Slovenians in Argentina in 2019, with the aim of documenting their (folk) narrative material. Most of the Slovenians cooperating as informants in this research are emigrants who settled in Argentina after the Second World War as political refugees, or their descendants. Immediately after arrival, this Slovene community established Slovenian centres called "Slovenian Homes", which took care of the education and cultivation of the Slovenian language and culture (and thus identity), a role they have preserved to this day. The analysis determines which Slovenian elements most often appear in the narrative material at the level of language and "traditional" culture in relation to the native homeland of Slovenia and to Latin American culture, and which distinctions between cultures are most emphasized.

Keywords: Slovenian emigrants, Argentina, Slovenes, narratives, culture, folklore, identity, diaspora.

Introduction

This contribution on the elements of the Slovenian national consciousness in relation to the mother country and to the Latin American culture of Slovenians in Argentina, as it manifests through folk narrative there, is based on narrative materials documented as part of field research among members of Slovenian communities in Argentina in 2019.¹ The notion of "narrative ma-

¹ The research was partially supported by the Slovenian Research Agency, the research program "Cultural Spaces and Practices: Ethnology and Folklore Studies", 1 January 2015 – 31 December 2021 (P6-0088) and the project "Promocija slovenske znanosti v tujini

terial” here comprises storytelling or the oration of stories (requiring, among other, at least a minimal story arc and aesthetic function), as well as conversation taking place on the level of daily verbal interaction, e.g. memories, narratives of work and way of life etc. (Ivančič Kutin 2017: 66).² In terms of content these are folklore genres (legends, anecdotes, comical stories, counting rhymes, prayers, proverbs...), but also narrations of personal memories, experiences, perspectives and customs. The narrative units differ in length – from brief statements to fragmentary accounts and longer stories.

The purpose of the research was to gather materials for two sequential goals: 1) collecting folklore and ethnographical materials for the repository of the narrative tradition of Slovenians across the world, being compiled by the archive of the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology of the Research Centre of Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (RC SASA); 2) In the next step, selecting from the documented material in particular folklore (partly also memory) narratives to be published in a book issued as part of the *Glasovi* [Voices] book collection. This collection represents the biggest published body of Slovenian folklore narrative material, encompassing some 22,000 narrative units within the 57 books published to date. The project of this collection, under the management of its initiator and editor prof. dr. Marija Stanonik, has been running continuously since the year 1988 (Ivančič Kutin 2020a). Since its inception, the collection has maintained a unified methodological concept: it is organized according to a geographical scheme, with each book covering its respective part of the territory of the Slovenian ethnic space. The books encompass narratives from “present day”, meaning those recorded among the people in contemporary day or up to 50 years ago at the most. The narratives are published in regional dialect, most often using simplified phonetic transcription which involves the cooperation of dialectologists. In terms of genre, the books comprise fairy tales and legends of all types (historical, mythological religious, etiological, social, humorous...), anecdotes and memorates. Each narrative in the book incorporates all the available metadata (on the narrator, researcher, place and date of the record), a list of appearing dialect words, some also have an enclosed CD with sound recordings of selected narratives. Approximately 3/5 of the Slovenian ethnic space in the Republic of Slovenia and living abroad (minorities in Austria, Italy, Hungary, and Croatia) already has its dedicated book, while activities to record the rest continue (Stanonik 2020). The collection also plans to publish books of the narrative folklore of Slovenians across the world, to this purpose

2019” [Promotion of Slovenian science abroad 2019], and partially by Urad za Slovence po svetu in zamejstvu Republike Slovenije [Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Slovenians Abroad].

² For detailed differences between daily spoken transmission and storytelling see Ivančič Kutin 2004.

some materials were in the past decade documented among Slovenians in the USA (2011), Serbia (2014), Germany (2015), and Argentina (2019). In all these countries, documenting was conducted according to the fundamental criteria of the collection *Glasovi* (Ivančič Kutin 2020a).

In addition to both the above stated goals, the narrative material collected from Slovenians in Argentina and its analyses will also be included into the Argentinean research on immigrant narrative folklore in Argentina, led by prof. dr. Maria Ines Palleiro at the University of Buenos Aires (see Palleiro 2020: 40; 2021).

The Slovenian Community in Argentina (Concise Overview)

By the unofficial assessment of the Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Slovenians Abroad, over 30,000 Slovenians or their descendants live in South America, a decisive majority of these in Argentina.³ The first Slovenian expatriates began emigrating to Argentina in the second half of the 19th century, populating the Entre Rios province as farmers based on an international agreement between Argentina and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. These were economic migrants. In the period between the two world wars, they were joined by political migrants as well.⁴ At that time, the first Slovenian associations were being formed in Argentina, under the auspices of various political camps with different cultural education programs, political activity and press (Žigon 1998; Žitnik Serafin 2020). A characteristic of migrant waves up to the Second World War was that they had not cultivated the Slovenian identity in a manner as organized and continuous as was the case with post-war political refugees (Žigon 2001).⁵ Their descendants began searching for their roots and the rediscovery of the Slovenian ethno-national identity only after the independence of Slovenia, in 1991.⁶ The cause for this “forgetting” were circumstances in Argentina – the state was then in need of Argentinean citizens, of Argentine identity no matter their origin, and so the stressing of any other national belonging was undesirable, even dangerous. Concealment of distinct ethnic properties like the language facilitated integration into a new environment. The use of Slovenian language was thus limited to communication among relatives and acquaintances.

³ See: <https://www.gov.si teme/slovinci-v-juzni-ameriki/> (15.06.2021).

⁴ Political emigration is linked to the fascist occupation of the Primorska region of Slovenia during the two wars.

⁵ Political emigration after World War II due to the communist regime in Yugoslavia.

⁶ Some of their descendants learn Slovenian language at Slovenian language courses within the National University of Buenos Aires, La Plata and Cordoba, and at the Slovenian Catholic University in Cordoba (cf. Lorbek 2019; Kračun 2019).

Quite the contrary holds true for the political refugees who emigrated to Argentina after the Second World War, with the so-called third migration current. To these, their national, meaning Slovenian identity, was among their most important values and they consequently nurtured it and systematically transferred it to their descendants, especially rigorously in the linguistic (use of Slovenian language) and religious aspects, as well as in other domains of Slovenian culture. Thus, Slovenian dishes (e.g. the *potica* cake or the *kranjska klobasa* – Carniolan sausage), symbols (Mount Triglav, the Slovenian flag), and music (choir singing of folk and original songs, festivities with the so-called Slovenian popular-folk music) were to the political refugees powerful ethnic identification attributes. The post-war immigrants to Argentina created a Slovenian community that is far more interconnected and organized compared to those of the preceding two migration waves (Molek 2019). The foundations of the social cohesion of these Slovenians trace back to times before emigration: from the end of the Second World War in 1945 all the way up to the approval of their migration to Argentina, the political refugees namely lived in refugee camps in Italy⁷ and Austria, where they had fled in the wake of the Second World War from the communist regime ideology in Yugoslavia. Since these refugees included many priests and other intellectuals, they organized a school alongside religious and cultural activities in their first weeks of life in the camps (Švent 2007; Jaklitsch 2018; Repič 2006). In the course of several years of camp stay, strong ties were formed between those sharing a common refugee fate, catalyzing the formation of the “Slovenian Homes” immediately upon their arrival to Argentina. Initially, their main mission was assistance to new Slovenian immigrants, while later they focused on the connecting role of Slovenians in the care for the preservation of Slovenian values held as the community’s own: language, Catholic faith, protection and transmission of Slovenian consciousness – the Slovenian (national) identity, goals eventually streamlined into a focus on the preservation and transmission of identity (Repič 2006:144–150; Molek 2019: 132).

Members of this Slovenian community have since 1991 (or since Slovenia’s independence) maintained close contacts with Slovenia, meeting in Argentina at religious rites and holidays, actively cooperating in cultural activities, events and ceremonies, and socializing. Regular extracurricular classes of Slovenian language and culture are being held on Saturdays (Molek 2019). Upon successful conclusion of the Slovenian Saturday School (attended throughout primary and secondary education, some 12 years in total), graduates visit Slovenia and attend a summer school of Slovenian language in Ljubljana. Among the younger generation, there are observable trends of departure from the traditional patterns of Slovenian identity, reflected for example in increasing rates of mixed marriages, which influences active Slove-

⁷ The first left in 1947, while the final group departed only in 1954 (Žigon 1998: 53).

nian language skills, or tendencies to gravitate towards different, more modern forms of socialization, entertainment, creativity (e.g. rock music) etc. The Slovenian community has been increasingly tolerant of these changes as it does not wish to turn youth away from participation through overly rigorous demands and expectations (Molek n. d.). Slovenians in Argentina have since 1948 been publishing, once or twice monthly, the gazette *Svobodna Slovenija – glasilo Slovencev v Argentini*⁸ [*Free Slovenia – the Bulletin of Slovenians in Argentina*] featuring notices and reports, news from the events and activities of the Slovenian Homes in Argentina, interviews and articles featuring various Slovenian content, and summaries of curated political, sports, cultural and other current news from Slovenia. For over 3 decades running, Slovenians in Argentina can listen to a weekly live radio broadcast *Okence v Slovenijo*⁹ [*Window into Slovenia*], hosted and produced since its beginnings by radio host Mirko Vasle; the show presents events in Slovenia and among Slovenians in Argentina, featuring live Slovenian guests and telephone interviews. The show is bilingual, in Slovenian and in Spanish, so that it also reaches listeners who do not speak Slovenian (OS 8: 4. 5. 2020).

Field Research in Argentina: Methodology

The subject of Slovenian migrations into South America throughout history, and of the life, associations, activities, engagement and other aspects of the diasporas there, especially in Argentina, is illuminated by numerous publications in the field of migrations in the context of (political) and cultural history, social and cultural anthropology, ethnology, sociology, historiography, including several comprehensive and from various perspectives elaborate science monographs (e.g. Žigon 1998 and 2001; Repič 2006; Molek 2019; dedicated chapters also in Kalc, Hladnik Milharčič and Lukšič 2020); as well as science monographs addressing fine arts (Toplak 2008) and literary creativity (Žitnik and Glušič 1999). The Slovenian language (transmission, modern use, identity element) in Slovenians in South America, especially in Argentina, was examined closely by Zvone Žigon (1998), and in Brazil by Manca Klun (2021). Verbal folklore, such as folk prose, short folk forms and folk song, has not been treated with particular focus until now.¹⁰ Yet the narrative materials that might be classified as folklore¹¹ may be identified among

⁸ See: <http://svobodnaslovenija.com.ar/>. Next to the printed edition, a web edition has recently been made available. The website of the publication also provides a complete archive of all printed editions. The first one was published on 01.01.1948.

⁹ See: <http://www.okenceslo.com.ar/>.

¹⁰ Likewise, no dedicated studies on other types of folklore (dance, music) were conducted, with the exception of mentions in certain articles (e.g. Kunej and Kunej 2016).

¹¹ Folklore materials in principle include stories the informant is narrating “from second

the many published research cases leaning on narration techniques (among them auto/biographical story),¹² and so folklore materials are found in many diverse publications issued by the emigrants themselves within the framework of the Slovenian Homes, the Slovenian Cultural Action and other organizations, as well as individually. Among other, the *Svobodna Slovenija* bulletin keeps a regular column titled *Za razmislek in nasmeh* [*Contemplations and Humour*] presenting aphorisms, quotes, proverbs, jokes...

Field documenting of narrative materials among Slovenians in Argentina, forming the basis of the present contribution, was conducted in October 2019 in Slovenian communities in the cities Buenos Aires, San Carlos de Bariloche, and Mendoza. In total 95 informants agreed to participate. Members of the Slovenian community are descendants of immigrants arriving after the Second World War (some were also born in Slovenia), among them a greatest share of second-generation immigrants, some third-generation, with smaller numbers of individuals of the fourth generation. Participating informants, with a few exceptions, spoke fluent Slovenian language, though most of them were born in Argentina; most of them first visited Slovenia as adults, while some have not been there yet. The descendants of the so-called Old Slovenians from the first and second migration wave were not reached by the research, with the exception of several individuals. I encountered some at the lectureship of Slovenian language at the University of Buenos Aires where they are learning Slovene; of these, two informants participated in English or Spanish. In the vicinity of Mendoza, I conducted an interview with a descendant of Slovenes in Italy from Veneto, communicating in Italian.¹³ I reached informants for the research through individuals engaged with relevant social happenings,¹⁴ or at public lectures (at the faculty and in the Slovenian communities), where I explained the purpose of collecting the materials, outlining my work and playing recordings that gave potential informants an idea of the type of content I was looking for.

The collection of materials continues sporadically, at meetings with individual Argentinean Slovenians as they visit or return; the informants also send additional materials at times through the WhatsApp application or by e-mail.

hand", or from tradition that was present, or still is present, in the family and other social and interest groups (stories of all kinds, prayers, counting rhymes, riddles, other folk genres), in broader context also personal narratives and memorata on various practices of the transmission of knowledge and behavioural patterns, manifestation of culture etc. (Stanonik 2001).

¹² Regarding the biographical method on the example of Slovenian emigrants to Australia, see Čebulj-Sajko 2001.

¹³ Slovenian emigrants arriving from the territories of the Slovenian minority in Italy were in the official registers listed as Italian immigrants (see Valentinčič 2017).

¹⁴ Many individuals assisted me greatly in my search for informants, and I owe them all a sincere debt of gratitude.

The research was conducted using ethnographical methods of direct participatory observation, and the method of the semi-structured guided narrative interview (guided conversation). In circumstances of understanding it will perhaps be impossible to encounter the informant again, this method has proven itself as the most suitable (Russel 1991: 203, 204, 2015, cf. also Žigon 2001: 16, 17). In this, the biographical method was utilized in particular. Interviews were done as informally as possible, where most attention was directed at those materials closest to the informant, more familiar, which became evident on the spot and as conversation progressed. The main characteristic of all the interviews was thus improvisation within the broadly set goal of acquiring oral narrative, in particular folklore materials. Informants were guided into the narration of memories and verbal folklore, especially short folklore forms and narrative folklore. Interviews were documented in audio technique, with photographs taken during or afterwards, field notes recorded of current observations, lists of content, and metadata of informant meetings (location and time of the record, data about the informants). Interviews or conversations with informants were conducted individually, in small groups within families, and several times in a group (e.g., after a lecture), which proved to be especially productive. Meetings, both group and individual, were generally longer than one hour. Some of the participating informants contributed only a short counting rhyme or joke, while others shared several longer stories (cf. Ivančič Kutin 2020b).

Based on the personal experience of direct participation in the storytelling, on the graphic field records that were produced simultaneously, and on the materials that have already been transcribed from the voice records, it is possible to approximately assess the most widely represented content and genres of the documented materials: among the stories most frequent are memorates and personal narratives, often containing social themes connected to the historical context (refugee existence), and stories about the Slovenian customs and habits, both “from back home”, meaning in Slovenia, as well as in the new homeland of the expatriates. A distinct segment appears in the form of funny stories on language interference/misunderstanding, which arise e.g., due to insufficient knowledge of the majority language. Some of these are first-person experiential accounts, but the vast majority of them are narratives familiar to the broader Slovenian community in various interpretations and thus in the domain of verbal folklore.¹⁵ While some recorded memory narratives are longer, the folklore narratives are mostly short, often fragmentary. Long, complex folklore narratives appear rarely (though sev-

¹⁵ These type of stories were also shaped into a drama text titled *Gringo, šaljiv prizor* [*Gringo, a Funny Scene*], authored by Marjan Willenpart, typescript, without date), performed multiple times across the various stages of the Slovenian Homes in Argentina.

eral do!), since it is difficult, given the time constraints, to develop a relation and atmosphere suitable for the narration of folk tales like legends and fairy tales during the first (and often single) meeting with the informant. On the other hand, the amount of short folklore forms collected is quite extensive as counting and children's rhymes, jokes, proverbs or sayings, even old prayers, are easiest to recall during brief interviews. A more precise evaluation of the contents, type and volume of material will naturally only be possible following its full transcription and analysis, encompassing some 50 hours of (unedited, rough) sound recordings (Ivančič Kutin 2020b).

Views on Individual and Majority Culture as Reflected in the Narrative Material

The cultural identity of Slovenians in Argentina consists of multiple elements (unconscious behavioural patterns, food, music, social life, language), that are strongly intertwined and cannot be properly examined independently (Žigon 1998: 106). The main identity symbol of the Slovenian national consciousness among Slovenians in Argentina, specifically those involved with the research, is certainly the active knowledge of Slovenian language, which also tends to be the first and primary language they learned as children. In contemporary day the Slovenian language thus remains, as it was observed also in the 90s of the 20th century by Zvone Žigon (1998), the most visible and essential component of national identity, being the means of communication between the individual and the external world, of the expression of personal experiences and the messaging of thinking to other members of the community (Žigon 1998: 112). The language is a "tool" for the expression of many aspects of identity connected to verbal communication, such as various segments of artistic (re)creation, e.g. the singing of Slovenian songs, theatre activities, literary engagement and, not least, (folklore) storytelling.

Žigon (1998) in his research treats the language of the Argentinean Slovenians according to the immigrant generation:

Vsi pripadniki prve generacije političnih izseljencev so ohranili svoj jezik v popolnosti. Po večini so sicer opazne narečne značilnosti, predvsem dolenjskih, deloma gorenjskih in centralnih narečij pa tudi rahla arhaičnost jezika, ki je predvsem posledica izoliranosti od vplivov (srbščine, hrvaščine, italijanščine, nemščine, predvsem pa angleščine), kakršnim je bila v zadnjih 5 desetletjih izpostavljena Slovenija (Žigon 1998: 67).

[All representatives of the first generation of political emigrants preserved their language to its full extent. Observable are

dialect characteristics, in particular of the Dolenjska dialect, partly also Gorenjska and Central Slovenian, as well as a certain archaic language, attributed in greatest part to the consequences of isolation from the influences (of Serbian, Croatian, Italian, German, but especially English language) to which Slovenia has been exposed to in the past five decades (Žigon 1998: 67).]

In second-generation immigrants, Žigon establishes the characteristic phenomenon of a “double” personal and national identity. Primary socialization in this generation was Slovenian in character, since most of their childhood was spent in a primarily Slovenian environment, with many only becoming familiar with Spanish language upon entry to pre-school or primary school. The double nature of their national identity manifests upon the visit of their parents’ homeland, which reveals that there is yet an Argentine component to their identity (because of the language, among other). In the second generation namely, one sees a highly characteristic “dialect”, which due to the influence of Spanish sounds markedly melodious, with certain different accents in specific words so as to resemble Primorska (littoral) dialects of Slovenian with some additions of the Gorenjska and Dolenjska dialects, while Slovenian syntax also presents specific issues for this population (Žigon 1998: 68, 69). Third-generation immigrants, although still speaking fluent Slovenian among themselves, frequently use Spanish in their personal communication within the immigrant community as well, especially during sports activities and casual socialising; a switch to the Slovenian language in communication happens when people are approached by a Slovenian educator, teacher, priest or the like, or in conversation with older members of the community. The Slovenian vocabulary range of this generation depends on the amount of attention directed towards Slovenian socialization by their parents. In the preceding generation, this process was considered self-evident, whereas in those parents who were themselves born in Argentina, it requires considerably greater conscious effort (Žigon 1998: 70).

The current state of Slovenian spoken language among the Argentinean Slovenians, as I can infer from my field materials of 2019, is quite similar to that described by Zvone Žigon (1988) over 20 years ago; though it should be added that most of the informants of the present research are representatives of second-generation immigrants (generally born after the Second World War in Argentina to two ethnic Slovenian parents). Besides the markedly Romanic melodic of their enunciation, their Slovenian language is not particularly strongly marked by dialect; it does include vernacular characteristic also of the domestic colloquial versions of Slovenian language, whereas there are noticeably fewer slangisms and anglicisms as currently preponderant in modern colloquial Slovenian language in Slovenia or abroad. Spanish

vocabulary is common for the denomination of objects unfamiliar to Slovenian language (e.g. *mate*, *asado*), or those unfamiliar to the initial Slovenian immigrants like *colectivo* (city bus), *heladera* (refrigerator), freezer, *lavarropa* (washer). So-called “proper” Slovenian is consciously nurtured in all forms of public communication, which is understandable as it is only in this way that language, a small memetic island within a great majority culture thousands of kilometres away from the homeland, can act as a cohesive phenomenon.

In addition to language, an important component of Slovenian identity or consciousness is the preservation of customs and habits – both in terms of the liturgical year as well as life cycle, cuisine etc. In coexistence with other nations and the use of Spanish language in all interactions outside of the Slovenian community, the culture of Slovenians in Argentina is intertwined with Latin American cultural elements. Through the immigrant narratives, though, more or less sharp delineations between the Slovenian and another, the culture of Argentina, can be observed. The latter is embraced in certain segments yet at times declaratively distanced from by the interviewees, though considered familiar (e.g., various local habits, superstitions etc.). Even though ethnic Slovenians represent only a small share of the Argentinean population,¹⁶ traces of their presence, activity and culture are also found in the broader society – among the “other Argentineans”, and also in physical space (e.g., buildings designed by Slovenian architects, names of streets, mountains, high-profile individuals in Argentinean team and individual sports...).

Materials: Narratives Told by Informants

Views concerning the individual and majority culture and identity of the Slovenians in Argentina, as revealed through their narrative materials, are in the following part illustrated with concrete narratives.¹⁷ Classifying these into independent content groups is practically impossible, as several types of content tend to appear in a single narrative unit.

On Slovenian Identity and the Slovenian Language

Škof Trobec, tudi naša družina izhaja iz njegovega rodu, je znan po enem stavku, ki ga je izrekel v Ljubljani. On je peljal eno skupino Slovencev

¹⁶ Estimates for 2019: population of 44,938,712 of which 86.4 % are European (mostly Italian and Spanish), 8 % are Mestizo, 4 % are Arab, Jewish or East Asian, 1.6 % are Amerindian (WS: Wikipedia).

¹⁷ With the exceptions of the stories of sisters Ivanka and Francka Trobec and Jernej Tomazin, published in the journal *Domači kraji*, the compendium of Občine – Dobrova – Polhov Gradec (see Ivančič Kutin 2021), the remaining narrative units have not been published thus far.

iz Amerike v Slovenijo na katoliški shod, ki je bil pred prvo vojno. In je rekel: »Slovenija je naša mati, Amerika pa naša nevesta.« To so njegove besede. S tem je povedal, da imamo izseljenci dve ljubezni. Tudi naši otroci imajo dve domovini. Tukaj so se rodili, vsa dediščina je pa iz Slovenije (UV 6; UV 7).

[Bishop Trobec,¹⁸ an ancestor of our family line, he's famous for a sentence uttered in Ljubljana. He was taking a group of Slovenians from America to Slovenia to a Catholic convention, it was before the First World War, and he told them: "Slovenia is our mother, and America is our bride." Those were his words. By this he expressed how us expatriates have two intimate identifications. Our children, too, have two homelands. They were born here but all their heritage is Slovenian (OS 6; OS 7).]

* * *

Ko smo prišli mi v šolo, nismo znali čisto nič po špansko. Pa je učiteljica poklicala očeta v šolo in naročila, da naj z otroki govori špansko. Pa je rekel: »Jaz ne znam, se bodo že v šoli naučili« (UV 2).

[Coming to school we didn't know a word of Spanish. The teacher called my dad over, and she told him to speak Spanish to us kids. He replied: "I can't speak properly myself; they'll have to learn in school" (OS 2).]

* * *

Jaz sem največ dobil največ izobrazbe v slovenščini v zavodu, to je bil nekakšen slovenski internat, ki so ga vodili slovenski duhovniki. Dva taka zavoda sta delovala do 70. let 20. stoletja, v okrožju Lanus in Adroque. V slednjem sem bival celotno srednji šolo, le vsak teden ali na dva tedna sem šel domov. Zavod je imel veliko knjižnico in tam sem bral in študiral in se sam učil. Prej, v osnovni šoli, sem hodil v sobotne šole v slovenskem domu, ampak le 2 leti. Tam učijo slovenščino, zgodovino, zemljepis, tudi literature nekaj. Smo bili še majhni, smo videli razliko: drugi otroci so imeli *fraj* dan, mi Slovenci pa v šoli. Nisem vedel, zakaj to. Ampak danes sem zelo hvaležen staršem in vzgojiteljem. To mi je omogočalo, da vodim slovensko radijsko oddajo. Veš kaj je to zame? To je moja velika ljubezen. Poleg družine, je to moja velika ljubezen. Jaz ne vem, kaj bi delal, če ne bi tega imel. Razumeš? In jaz se trudim, kljub temu, da je to amatersko – to se pravi, kot amater sem profesionalac (*smeh*). Hočem narediti vtis, da je to resna stvar. Da mi ne bi Slovenije osmešili, osramotili. Nasprotno. Da poskušamo pokazati pravo sliko Slovenije. In to vidijo tudi tam (op. a. v Sloveniji). Zaradi tega nam pomagajo, mene povsod lepo sprejmejo

¹⁸ Jakob Trobec (1838–1921), born in Log near Polhov Gradec, missionary and bishop in Minnesota, USA.

- od predsednikov do premierov, kulturnikov, športnikov, znanstvenikov... Z vsemi sem že imel intervju na našem radiu (UV 8).

[Most of my Slovenian language education came from the institute, something like a Slovenian boarding school led by Slovenian priests. Two such institutes operated up to the 70s of the 20th century, in the districts Lanus and Adroque. At the latter I stayed for the duration of my entire secondary schooling, only going home weekly or every couple of weeks. The institute had a big library and I'd be reading there, studying and learning. Before that, in primary school, I had attended Saturday school in the Slovenian Home but only for two years. There they teach Slovenian, history, geography, some literature, too. We were kids but we noticed the difference: the other children had a day off yet us Slovenians were in school. I couldn't quite understand why. Now, I'm grateful to my parents and teachers. It allowed me to host a Slovenian radio show. Can you imagine? It's my greatest love. Next to my family, my greatest love. I don't know what I'd do with myself if it weren't for this, you know? And I'm doing my best, as an amateur no less – call me a professional amateur (*laughter*). I want to make an impression that this is a serious thing. So we don't bring shame or ridicule upon Slovenia. To the contrary, we want to show a faithful image of Slovenia. Our folks see it, too (in Slovenia, author's note). That's why they help us out, always treating us nice – from the presidents to the prime ministers, the artists, sportspeople, scientists... I've interviewed them all (OS 8).]

* * *

Poglejte, mi smo Slovenci, hrepenimo po Sloveniji. Vsaj jaz, in kot jaz, tudi mnogi drugi (...). Ko sem prišel prvič v Slovenijo, nisem prišel v tujo deželo, prišel sem v mojo deželo! Sem se *hecal*, pravim: »Dragi moji, a tu vsi znate po slovensko? Čestitam!« sem rekel. Ker tukaj je tako: kdor v Argentini zna slovensko in da je še bolj mlad, je za nas *fešta* (praznik). (...) Ko pridem v Slovenijo, gledam televizijo, madona, pa vse po slovensko! Berem časopise – v slovenščini, ne. In to se je meni zares čudno zdelo takrat, leta 1972, ko sem bil prvič v Sloveniji. Mi smo... je zelo težko povedati, kaj smo. Znamo slovensko, mi nismo zares ne tukaj ne tam (UV 8).

[Look, we're Slovenians, we yearn for Slovenia. At least I do, and there's many others, too (...). When I first visited Slovenia, it wasn't a foreign country, it was my country! I made this joke, saying: "Dear everyone, you all speak Slovenian? Congratulations!" Since over here it's like that: if you can find folks in Argentina speaking Slovenian and they're on the younger side, you're being

very lucky (...). Coming to Slovenia, looking at the TV and all, mother of God, it's all in Slovenian! I read the papers – Slovenian! Everything's Slovenian and it confuses us. I found it unusual, yes, back then in 1972 when I first visited. We are... it's difficult to say what we are. We speak Slovenian, we're neither here nor there to be honest (OS 8).]

* * *

Mladina, ko gre prvič v Slovenijo, jih kar preseneti to, da lahko tam povsod slovensko govorijo, da lahko vse razumejo. Vsi pravijo: »Lepše je, kot ste nam govorili.« V osnovni šoli se učijo slovenščine 7 let, 8 let, pa potem 6 let ali pa 5 let v srednji šoli. Jih učijo o zemljepisni Slovenije, kažejo jim slike, vse. Marsikdo je rekel ob povratku: »Pa kaj ste vi mislili, da ste zapustili Slovenijo?!« Ampak to je bilo po sili razmer. Veliko, zelo veliko jih gre nazaj. Že drugi, tretji rod. Skupina študentov gre vsako leto tja v Slovenijo in ko se vračajo, mnogi rečejo: »Se vidimo, nasvidenje.« In grejo potem nazaj v Slovenijo. Študirat pa dobijo službe. Pa še kakšna ljubezen se zgodi vmes (UV 7).

[Young people, when they first travel to Slovenia, they're surprised by the fact they can understand everyone, that Slovenian is being spoken everywhere. They all say: "It's even better than you told us!" In primary school they learn Slovenian for 7, 8 years, and then 6 years or 5 during secondary education. They teach them the geography of Slovenia, they show them pictures, all of it. Upon return quite a few might say: "Why ever leave Slovenia in the first place?!" But it had to be done... Many, very many go back. The second, third generation. A group of students will go visit Slovenia every year and when they come back, each time, a few of them just say: "Goodbye, we're off." And they go back to Slovenia. To study or get a job. Or they fall in love (OS 7)].

* * *

Se spreminja raba in pomen besed, recimo beseda žiher ali *ziher*. Mi smo rekli: »Mami, a žiher grem drsat, ne?« Zdaj pa otroci uporabljajo besedo *zihr*, na primer, če ti rečeš: »A bomo šli?« »Ja zihr.« To pomeni zagotovo. Besedo *zihr* uporabljajo namesto besede *sigurno* ali pa *gotovo*. Ko popravim otroke, naj pravilno govorijo, rečejo: »Mami, ne bodi no tako tečna!« (UV 3).

[The use and meaning of some words are changing, like the word žiher or *ziher*. We used to say, for example, "Mom, žiher I go skating, right?" as in "can I, may I". Now the kids say *zihr* as an adverb of assurance, for example if you were to ask me: "Are we going?", I'd reply "Yes, *zihr*." Meaning "definitely".

They use this word to replace the Slovenian *sigurno* or *gotovo*. When I tell my kids to speak properly, they say: "Mom, don't be so grumpy!" (OS 3).]

* * *

Tukaj so ljudje zelo verni. In če je kdo rekel pred jedjo namesto »Bog požegnaj« »dober tek«, so dodali: »Imajo zajci« (UV 8).

[People here are mighty religious. If someone were to say *dober tek* (bon appétit) at lunch rather than "God bless", they'd be poking fun at them – "that's for rabbits!"¹⁹ (OS 8).]

Slovenians in a Majority Latin American Linguistic Environment

Interno se za Argentinec uporablja beseda »domačini«. To pomeni zelo splošno Neslovenci, v natančnejšem pomenu pa je to človek temnejše polti, potomec Indijancev, Špancev ali Italijanov (UV 8).

[Internally we talk about the Argentines as the "locals". This is pretty general, any people who aren't Slovenian, and in a more specific context it'll typically denote a darker-skinned person, a descendant of Native, Spanish, or Italian ethnicity (OS 8).]

* * *

Ko smo prišli v Argentino smo takoj začeli delati. Nismo pa takoj znali špansko. Vse sorte heci so bili zaradi tega (*smeh*). Kočarjev Ivan je rekel, da je šel kupit v trgovino budilko, pa ni vedel, kako bi rekel. »Je rekel: „*Mañana brrrrr*« (*smeh*). *Mañana* pomeni jutri (*smeh*). Zjutraj, je hotel reči, da te pokliče, in pravi, da je prodajalka razumela. Zanimiv je ta narod tukaj, ti radi pomagajo. Ja, so zelo prijazni in se trudijo razumeti te. Ti grejo na roko pa ti radi pomagajo. Radi prodajajo (*smeh*). Radi razumejo, tudi, če je narobe (UV 7).

[When we came to Argentina we started working right away. But we couldn't speak Spanish so it was all sorts of funny (*laughter*). Kočarjev Ivan said he'd gone to buy an alarm clock, and he didn't know how to call one. So he told them: "*Mañana brrrrr*" (*laughter*). *Mañana* means tomorrow, you see (*laughter*). He meant in the morning of course, and some kind of noise, but the lady still understood anyway. It's an interesting folks here, they'll go out of their way to assist you. They're very kind, they try to talk. Or help out. They like to sell you stuff (*laughter*). So, they tend to understand, even when you're speaking gibberish (OS 7).]

¹⁹ Besides 'appetite', the word *tek* also means 'running' in Slovenian.

* * *

Isti, Kočarjev Ivan, je pravil, da je šel kupit *querosen* – petrolej. Petrolej so rabil za kurjavo Pa je rekel *corazón*, namesto *querosen*: »Señorita, me da corazón«. Gospodična, mi date srce? »Que te pasa!? – Kaj ti je!?« Nerodno ji je bilo... (*smeh*). Se je oženil potem, ja, ampak ne s tisto prodajalko. Za poroko je poiskal Slovenko (*smeh*) (UV 7).

[The same fellow, Kočarjev Ivan, he said he went to buy *querosen* – petroleum. They needed petroleum for heating, and he said *corazón*, instead of *querosen*: “*Señorita, me da corazón*”. “Miss, can I have your heart?” “*Que te pasa!?* – What’s wrong with you!?” she yelled back. It was awkward... (*laughter*). He got married though, yeah, but not with that saleslady. He went and got himself a Slovenian girl (*laughter*) (OS 7).]

* * *

Ta je tudi dobra. So v Sloveniji dobili paket in pismo iz Argentine. V pisumu je pisalo: »Sem dal notri v paket to pa to in *nada más*«. *Nada más* pomeni nič drugega. Pa pišejo nazaj: »Vse smo dobili v paketu, samo *nada más* ni bilo nikjer« (*smeh*) (UV 7).

[That one’s good too. Back in Slovenia, they got a letter and package from Argentina. Inside it was written: “I put in this, and that, and *nada más*”. *Nada más* means “nothing else”. Those people wrote back, though: “Hey, we got it all, but the *nada más* we couldn’t find” (*laughter*) (OS 7).]

* * *

So slovenske besede, ki v pomenijo španščini kaj drugega, kaj grdega. Zato v Argentini veter vedno *vleče* in ne *piha*. Na to moraš zelo paziti. Ker *piha* je prostaško rečeno moški spolni organ (UV 2).

[There are some Slovenian words that mean entirely different, inappropriate things in Spanish. That’s why in Argentina we always say the wind is *vleče* (dragging) and not *piha* (blowing). You have to be careful around stuff like that. *Piha* is vulgar slang for the penis here (OS 2)].

* * *

Teta so pa ženske prsi, joške. Da rečeš: »Teta, veter *piha*!« to je povsem neprimeren stavek, če te Argentinci poslušajo (UV 8).

[And *teta*, our 'aunt', here it's female breast. Tits. So, if you were to say "Auntie, the wind is blowing!" in Slovenian, that's a terribly inappropriate thing to say when there's Argentinians around (OS 8).]

* * *

Ko so prišli predniki v Argentino, so nekateri znali po italijansko. In so rekli v trgovini, da hočejo *burro*, kot je po italijansko maslo. V španščini pa je *burro* osel (UV 8).

[When our ancestors came to Argentina, some spoke Italian. They went to the grocery store and asked for *burro*, like butter is called in Italian. But in Spanish, *burro* is a donkey (OS 8)].

* * *

Tudi so besede, ki se jih je dobro izogniti v Urugvaju ali pa v Čilah ali pa v Kolumbiji. Taka je besed *bunda*, v portugalsščini je to prostaška beseda za ženski spolni organ. To se je meni zgodilo, v Sao Paulo, ko sem obiskal teto. Bila sva v mestu, veliko ljudi je bilo okoli. Jaz pa v slovenščini rečem, dovolj naglas, da so se ljudje ozrli: »Teta, *bundo* sem pozabil doma!« Teta ni vedela kam pogledati, tako jo je bilo sram. In potem mi je razložila (UV 8).

[There are other words you'd best avoid in Uruguay, Chile or in Colombia. One of these is *bunda* (winter jacket), in Portuguese it's a rude term for the female private parts. It occurred to me when I was in Sao Paulo, visiting my aunt there. We were in the city, there was a crowd, and I hollered at her in Slovenian, in a loud enough voice for the people to stare: "*Teta*, I left my *bunda* at home!" Auntie was hiding her face in embarrassment. And then she told me about it (OS 8)].

* * *

Neka starejša ženska, ki ni znala špansko, je imela kokoši na dvorišču. Pa jih je klicala: »Puta, puta, puta!« Sosedje pa so mislili, da njih ozmerja s *puta* – pocestnico (prostaško, kurba). (Več različnih informatorjev)

[An older woman who couldn't speak Spanish, she had chickens in the yard. And she called them: "*Puta, puta, puta!*" The neighbours thought she was calling them *putas* – prostitutes (whores). (Several informants)]

* * *

Neka Slovenka je bila na *kolektivu* (avtobusu), pa šofer rekel: »*Boletos!*« – to je vozovnica. Ona pa : »Ja, seveda, že naslednji mesec!« (UV 2).

[A Slovenian woman was on the *colectivo* (bus), and the driver said: "*Boletos!*" – meaning 'ticket'. (*Bo letos?* also meaning 'this year?' in Slovenian.) And she said: "Oh, I'll be done in a month!" (OS 2).]

Slovenian Habits

Slovenske hrane ne pogrešamo, ker doma naredimo vse, kar smo *doma* jedli. Od zelja do kislega zelja, golaža, praženega krompirja, svaljkov, sirovih štrukljev, klobas in tako dalje. (...) Zelje tukaj delajo Slovenci. Imamo tudi mesarja Slovenca – Franci Miklavc dela klobase, krvavice in druge dobrote. Upravlja bar ali restavracijo v Slomškovem domu in prodaja za vse Slovenske domove – ponuja krvavice, pečenice, kranjske klobase. Zdaj pripravlja še *lomo* – to je svinjsko stegno prekajeno, nekakšen pršut. Zdaj je začel. Prašiče pa kupi na drobno. Klobase dela, ko je še zima. Potem jih pa v *frizer* (zamrzovalnik), v skrinjo da na led in se še poleti dobijo. Ni treba prej naročiti, ima zmeraj na razpolago, da kupimo. On že ve, kaj je treba pripraviti, kakšne stvari ljudje kupujejo. »Vilim« pa je mesarsko podjetje, ki dela na veliko tudi za slovenske odjemalce (UV 7).

[We don't miss Slovenian food much since we prepare everything our folks eat back home.²⁰ From cabbage to sauerkraut, goulash, roast potato, gnocchi, cottage cheese dumplings, sausage and so on. (...) The cabbage here is made by Slovenians. We've got our own butcher, too – Franci Miklavc makes our sausages, blood sausages and other meats. He's managing the bar or restaurant in the Slomšek Home, and selling to all the Slovenian Homes – blood sausage, grill sausage, Carniolan sausage, the lot. Now he's even making *lomo* – it's pig's leg, smoked, a type of prosciutto. He's started that now, buying the pigs retail. He makes the sausages when it's still winter. He puts them on ice in the freezer, so we can have them in the summer. It's always on stock for us. He knows what types of cuts, what products the people like to buy. The Vilim, then, is a butcher's shop that also works with Slovenian buyers' wholesale (OS 7).]

* * *

²⁰ Both the informants moved to Argentina after their primary schooling, in 1954. They still use the word 'home' when speaking of Slovenia.

Od starih navad pa imamo tudi tukaj še kaj. Jaz imam tukaj ohranjene navade o božiču. Na primer, da kropimo notri vse po stanovanju pa okrog hiše. Ja, pokropimo in pokadimo. Vse prostore. Zraven molimo Rožni venec. Pri jaslicah pa končamo ta Rožni venec. In vsi člani družine sodelujejo v procesiji (UV 6).

[From the old habits there's a couple left. Myself, I keep the old Christmas custom. Like sprinkling (blessing) inside the home and around the house. Yes, we sprinkle and we burn incense. In all the rooms. And we pray, we say the Rosary. We finish praying at the nativity scene. And all the family members join in (OS 6).]

* * *

Skupina Slovencev je živela v Churuki, bilo je okoli 20 slovenskih družin in smo imeli slovenske navade, na primer Marijo smo za devetdnevnicu pred Božičem nosili od hiše do hiše. In imam pesmi, ki smo peli, ko smo sprejemali v hišo Marijo. Lepa navada je bila, dokler je bilo več družin, zdaj so samo še kake tri ali štiri družine (UV 5).

[A group of Slovenians lived in Churruca, there were about 20 Slovenian families and we kept Slovenian habits, like carrying the Virgin Mary from house to house for the novena²¹ before Christmas. There were songs we sang as we received Mary into our homes. It was a beautiful custom while many families participated, but nowadays there's just three or four left (OS 5).]

Slovenian Views on Argentine Culture

Pijete *mate*? – Ga pijemo, če gremo recimo h hčerki, naredi *mate* in ga pijemo, ampak naša navada ni. Kakšni Slovenci ga pijejo. Tudi mi, če ga ponudijo, doma zase pa nikoli ne kuhamo. Ni to naša navada. Ko prvič vidiš, kako tu pijejo *mate*, si začuden, gledaš pa se jim smejiš, potem se pa tudi sam navadiš. Slovenci so se veliko navadili *mate* piti. Meni se nikoli ni zdel zlo privlačna pijača. Je pa to zelo družabno. Skodelica je narejena iz bučke, zraven je slamica *bombilla* in to gre naokoli od ust do ust – brez, da bi se kaj obrisalo. Krop sam uniči bacile. To je družabna zadeva, *mate* povezuje družbo. Papež pije *mate*. Mladina, ko se zbere skupaj ali gre na izlet, se usedejo v krog in si podajajo *mate*. Zdaj majo nekateri že termovke, da *mate* kar s sabo nosijo. V Urugvaju še bolj kot v Argentini (UV 7).

²¹ Once a highly customary popular piety in Slovenians; people carrying statues or images of the Virgin Mary between the houses for nine days before Christmas, praying and singing.

[You drink *mate*? – We do, if we visit with our daughter for example, she makes *mate* and we drink it, but it's not really a habit for us. Some Slovenians like to drink it. I'll have some when it's served, but we never prepare it back home. It's not our thing. When you see locals constantly drinking *mate* you're amazed, it looks funny, and then eventually it gets under your skin. Slovenians drink *mate*, too, they've developed a taste for it. Personally, I never found it too appealing, but it is very sociable. You drink it from a gourd, there's a special straw called *bombilla*, and it travels from mouth to mouth – without being wiped or anything. The boiling water takes care of the germs. It's a social, communal thing, drinking *mate* brings people together. The Pope²² drinks *mate*, too. Youth, when they gather or go for a trip, they sit in a circle and pass the *mate* around. Some now carry thermos bottles so they have their *mate* at hand. In Uruguay even more so than in Argentina (OS 7).]

* * *

Asado, to je pečenje mesa po argentinsko, to pa smo sprejeli. Tudi ženske se tega lotijo, ne le moški. Eni pravijo, da ni najbolj zdravo. Dobro pa je. Ne sme biti zažgan. Nekateri trdijo, da pečenje na oglju škoduje zdravju. Ampak narod tukaj že stoletja tako dela. Mi pa ne prav pogosto. Samo, kadar se nas več zbere, družine, prijatelji. Imamo več receptov in se kar dobro speče. Naredimo tudi čevapčiče. Te poznajo tudi domačini, ampak malo drugače (UV7; UV6).

[*Asado*, that's the Argentinean way of barbecuing meat, we've adopted that, yes. The women do it too, not just the men. Some say it's not the healthiest, but it sure tastes great. You're not supposed to burn it. Some say charcoal grilling is bad for you. But the local folks have been cooking like this for centuries. We don't do it too often, when there's a gathering of friends and family. We have our recipes and it turns out good. We also make čevapčiči [a grilled ground meat dish, kebab]. The locals know them, too, but theirs are a little bit different (OS 7; OS 6).]

* * *

Tukaj imajo to vražo: na 29. v mesecu moraš pod krožnik njokov dati denar, da ti prinese srečo, pravijo. Mirtha Legrand, zelo fina gospa, znana voditeljica na televiziji, to vedno pravi. Ima že 93 let, pa ima še vedno dvakrat na teden program na televiziji. Ima nekaj gostov v oddaji, vse lepo fino, vse lepo postreženo, ko jejo. In pravi: »Denar pa dejte pod krožnik, da vam

²² Here meaning the current Pope Francis, who is from Argentina.

prinese srečo!« Je pa tako, da 29. je že konec mesca, zato denarja primanjkuje, pa mora biti poceni hrana, ne meso... (UV 7).

[They have this superstition: on the 29th they make gnocchi. You're supposed to put some money under the gnocchi plate and it'll bring you luck, they say. Mirtha Legrand, a very nice lady, a well-known TV host, she always says it. She's 93 and she's still hosting a television show twice weekly. She has guests on her show, the table is always nicely set. And she says: "Put some money under the plates, it'll bring you luck!" You see, the 29th is the end of the month so it has to be a budget dish, not meat... (OS 7).]

* * *

Tu v Argentini in tudi v Braziliji na križišča večkrat prinesejo kakšne škatle ali pladnje, na njih pa dve čaši, steklenica pa kakšna sveča, kdaj tudi hrana, piščanec. Pravijo, da to so *makumbas*. To postavijo vedno na križišče, kraj, kjer se ceste križajo. Vem, ker mi mamu hišo na križišču in večkrat vidim tako stvar. Ampak tega ne počnejo ne Slovenci, samo Argentinci (UV 4).

[Here in Argentina, and in Brazil, too, they'll often bring these boxes or trays to the intersections, carrying glasses, a bottle or candles, sometimes there's even food, chicken. They call it the *makumbas*. They put these things always at the intersection, any place where roads cross. I know because our house stands at a crossroads, and so I see it on many occasions. Slovenians don't do that, though, just the Argentineans (OS 4).]

* * *

Difunta Correa je pa kot nekakšna svetnica. To je bilo ne vem točno v katerem stoletju, tisoč osemsto mogoče. Mož je bil v vojski, ona pa je z dojenčkom bežala v provinci San Juan, kjer je zelo puščavsko, pa je ženska od lakote in žeje umrla. Ko so jo našli, je bil otrok še živ, je pil mleko od mrtve matere nekaj dni. In to so ljudje meli za čudež, in to imajo kot za nekakšno svetnico. In vse tiste plastenke z vodo so zanjo, da ne bi bila žejna. To je popularna religioznost. Kjer ob cesti vidiš kupe plastenk, je sigurno za Difunto Correo (UV 1).

[*Difunta Correa* is like a saint of sorts. I'm not sure what century exactly, it was the eighteen hundreds, maybe. Her husband was a soldier, and she was running from violence in the San Juan province with her infant. It's a desert terrain, and so the poor woman died from thirst and exhaustion. When they found her, the baby was still alive, it'd been drinking its dead mother's milk for

several days. The people believed it a miracle, and this lady is now considered a saint of sorts. That's why they put out all those water bottles so she's not thirsty. Her spirit, I mean. It's popular religiosity. When you see a bunch of plastic water bottles by the road, they're for *Difunta Correa* for sure (OS 1).]

The Visibility of Slovenians and the Mark of Their Presence in Argentina

Kaj je slovenskega med Argentinci? Žene mnogih Slovencev, ki so domačinke [Neslovenke], znajo speči potico pa tudi kakšno drugo slovensko jed pripravijo. Pred leti sem pel pri slovenskem zboru Karantania, kjer smo peli večinoma slovenske pesmi. Spomnim se, da je nek argentinski zbor pel znano slovensko pesem. Slišali so, da smo jo mi zapeli in jim je bila všeč, pa so vodjo zbora prosil za note. Potem so jo tudi oni dolgo prepevali. Pesem se imenuje *Mlatiči* (UV 8, 1. 5. 2020).

[What's Slovenian among the Argentineans? The wives of many Slovenian folks who are native [non-Slovenian], but they'll bake you a great *potica* walnut cake or some other Slovenian dish. Some years ago, I sang with the Slovenian choir Karantania, which mostly performed Slovenian songs. I remember that an Argentinean choir also sang a well-known Slovenian song. They heard us perform it, they liked it and they asked for sheet music. Then, they kept singing it for a long while. It's called *Mlatiči* (The Threshers) (OS 8, 1. 5. 2020).]

* * *

Profesionalni argentinski kvartet Opus4 ima na koncertih pesem *Pleničke je prala*. Bili so celo v Sloveniji, z mojim bratom na turneji (UV 8).

[The professional Argentinean quartet Opus4 performs the song *Pleničke je prala* (She was Washing Diapers). They were even in Slovenia, with my brother on tour²³ (UV 8).]

* * *

Slovenci veljajo za športno velesilo. Veliko je člankov v argentinskem časopisju o uspehih slovenskih športnikov. Pred kratkim kje bilo o plezalki Janji Garnbret, kolesarstvu – Primož Roglič, Tadej Pogačar sta znana tudi med Argentinci. Pa Lučka Bregar, argentinska Slovenka, je trenerka ženske odboj-karske ekipe Barcelona. Barcelona je klub, ki v športu ogromno pomeni, Argentinci se zelo zanimajo za šport (UV 8).

²³Juan Vasle (*1954), opera and concert singer, bass-baritone and journalist.

[Slovenians are considered a sporting nation. There's lots of articles in the Argentine press about the famous success of Slovenian athletes. A while ago they wrote about the climber Janja Garnbret, about the cycling tours – Primož Roglič, Tadej Pogačar, they're also familiar to the Argentineans. Lučka Bregar, Slovenian in Argentina, is the coach of the Barcelona female volleyball squad. It's a club with a terrific name in sports here. Argentineans are very passionate about sports in general (OS 8).]

* * *

Tukaj je rokometaš Andrej Kogovšek, ki je še aktiven, ima 43 let. To je bil eden največjih argentinskih rokometašev. Po njem se imenuje rokometni turnir v provinci Santa Fe: *Torneo Andres Kogovšek* (UV 8).

[Handball player Andrej Kogovšek is still active, he's 43. He used to be one of the greatest handball players in Argentina. A handball tournament in the Santa Fe province is named after him: the *Torneo Andres Kogovšek* (OS 8).]

* * *

V Bariloche je *Lago Tonček*, jezero z imenom Tonček. Spomin na Tončka Pangerca, ki se je ubil tam v hribih. Tudi Tomaž Kralj pa Božo Vivod sta ostala za vedno v hribih, ko sta leta 1967 ali 1968 plezala na Tronador, to je najvišji vrh v okolici mesta Bariloche. Tam je tudi ena špica, ki se imenuje *Campanile Esloveno* (*Slovenski zvonik*). Koča pa se imenuje *Podskalca*. V Buenos Airesu je cesta, ki se imenuje *Slovenija* – Eslovenia, prav tu v mestu Buenos Aires. V predelu Castelar pa je ulica, ki se imenuje *Slovenija* – Eslovenia. Pa tudi v provinci Entre Rios, v glavnem mestu Parana je ulica Villa Eslovena (UV 8).

[In Bariloche you'll find the *Lago Tonček*, a lake named after Tonček. In memory of Tonček Pangerc,²⁴ who perished up in those hills. Tomaž Kralj and Božo Vivod, likewise, stayed in the mountains for good, while climbing in 1967 or 1968 the Tronador, the highest peak in the vicinity of Bariloche city. There's also a summit named the *Campanile Esloveno* (Slovenian Belfry). And a mountain lodge called *Podskalca*. In Buenos Aires there's a road called *Slovenija* – *Eslovenia*, right here in Buenos Aires city. In the Castelar district there's an alley called *Slovenija* – *Eslovenia*, too. And in the province Entre Rios, in the capital Parana there's a street called Villa Eslovena (OS 8).]

²⁴ Tonček Pangerc (1925—1954), alpinist, born in Bled, emigrated to Argentina after the Second World War.



Photo 1: Meeting with informants in Buenos Aires. Slovenian traditional wall decoration and *potica* cake on the table. Photo: B. Ivančič Kutin, October 2019.



Photo 2: Water in plastic bottle for *Difunta Correa* on the road to Ands from Mendoza. Photo B. Ivančič Kutin, October 2019.

Conclusion

Language plays several roles in the life of the individual and of particular social groups. It is a factor of identification, expressing the individual's personal cultural, ethnic, social and any other identity (Šabec 2002: 7), and a means of communication, interpersonal interaction and influence (Gomezal Mikolič 2000: 180; Žigon 1998). Spoken language is the primary "tool" for the transfer of oral folklore and other storytelling matter transmitted through verbal communication (Stanonik 2001). In folkloristics, the narrative can be a result of the folk event transpiring in real time, composed of three intertwining and equally impactful components: text (vocalization), context (circumstances relating to the narrator, audience, text...), and texture (manner of storytelling) (Dundes 1980: 20–32). Stories being narrated (or sung) are thus never autonomous but always depend on the cultural aspect of the narrative in interaction with culture and narration; the story constantly absorbs and transmits new cultural meanings, since no matter what moves the people of a particular culture, whatever they might have hated, allowed, feared or imagined, all this is reflected within their narrative matter. (Folk) narratives thus aren't just stories, and so folklorists also engage with the cultural aspects of storytelling, the mutual interaction between culture and storytelling. (Rieuwerts 2017: 69, 70).

Despite different research interests and specific respective methodologies of documenting and analysing materials, the disciplines addressing spoken discourse and its content (folkloristics, ethnology, cultural and social anthropology, linguistics, especially dialectology and sociolinguistics, and many other humanities), exhibit a vital meeting point – field materials from the oral storytelling of informants.²⁵ In the research of minority cultures, especially remote communities to which access is limited already due to logistic and financial demands, the publication of materials and consequent accessibility of information, and cooperation between the expert communities and individual researchers is even more important.

In this fieldwork a lot of material was obtained for the analysis of immigrant folklore in Argentina, of which Slovenian folklore is also a part, and for the book edition of folklore and memory stories of Slovenians in South America, which is planned for the *Glasovi* collection. However, in order to have as complete an overview as possible, the availability of material from other researchers and from the community itself is also welcome.

This especially holds true for longer folklore text such as fairy tales, fables and legends of all kinds, since these are very difficult to document

²⁵ For examples of the practical usefulness of narrative field materials for folkloristics and dialectology despite different research focuses, see e.g. Bošković-Stulli (1959: 118) and Ivančič Kutin (2016).

within the time limitations of short cross-oceanic field trips and the resulting amount of contact with individual informants and groups.

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OS 4: Mirjam Oblak, 08.10.2019, Buenos Aires

OS 5: Mojca Obržan Jarc, 06.10.2019, Buenos Aires

OS 6: Jernej Tomazin, 08.10.2019, Buenos Aires (born in Logatec, Slovenia)

OS 7: Ivanka Trobec Tomazin in Francka Trobec Javoršek, 08.10.2019, Buenos Aires (born in Polhov Gradec).

OS 8: Vasle, Mirko, 05.10.2019, Buenos Aires; by phone, 01.05.2021, 04.05.2021, 14.06.2021.

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Elementos de la conciencia nacional eslovena en relación con la madre patria y con la cultura latinoamericana en materiales narrativos documentados entre eslovenos en Argentina

Barbara Ivančič Kutin

Resumen

Este artículo tiene como base un mes de investigación de campo entre eslovenos en Argentina, llevada a cabo en 2019 en tres localidades, cuyo objeto fue documentar material narrativo folklórico. La mayor parte de los eslovenos que colaboraron como informantes en esta investigación fueron emigrantes establecidos en Argentina luego de la Segunda Guerra Mundial como refugiados políticos, y sus descendientes. Inmediatamente después de su arribo, esta comunidad eslovena fundó centros llamados "Hogares eslovenos", que tuvieron a su cargo la educación y el cultivo de la lengua y cultura eslovenas (y, en consecuencia, de su identidad), función que mantuvieron hasta el día de hoy. El análisis estuvo orientado a dilucidar qué elementos eslovenos aparecen con mayor regularidad en el material narrativo en el nivel del lenguaje y la cultura tradicionales, en relación con la patria nativa eslovena y con la cultura latinoamericana, y qué distinciones pueden establecerse entre ambas culturas.

Palabras-clave: emigrantes eslovenos, Argentina, narrativa folklórica, identidad, diáspora.

Елементи словеначке националне свести у односу на отаџбину и латиноамеричка култура у приповедној грађи документованој међу Словенцима у Аргентини

Барбара Иванчич Кутин

Резиме

Рад се базира на једномесечном теренском истраживању које је вођено 2019. године, на три локације, међу Словенцима у Аргентини, с намером да се документује њихова (народна) приповедна грађа. Већина Словенаца који су сарађивали као саговорници у овом истраживању јесу исељеници; они су у Аргентину стигли после Другог светског рата као политичке избеглице, или је реч о њиховим потомцима. Одмах по доласку ова словеначка заједница успоставила је словеначке културне центре назване „Словеначке куће“, чија је улога била да брину о образовању и неговању словеначког језика и културе (па самим тим и идентитета), што је улога коју су очували до данас. Анализом се одређује који се словеначки елементи најчешће појављују у наративном материјалу на нивоу језика и „традиционалне“ културе у односу на матичну домовину Словенију, као и у односу на латиноамеричку културу, при чему се нагласак ставља управо на ту разлику међу културама.

Кључне речи: словеначки исељеници, Аргентина, Словенци, наративи, култура, фолклор, идентитет, дијаспора.

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