GO GIRLS!

When Slovenian Women Left Home

edited by

Marina Lukšič-Hacin
& Jernej Mlekuž

migrantke

MIGRACIJE

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Inštitut za slovensko izseljenstvo in migracije ZRC SAZU
Slovenian Migration Institute at SRC SASA

CIP - Kataložni zapis o publikaciji
Narodna in univerzitetna knjižnica, Ljubljana

314.151.3-054.72-055.2(497.4)

GO girls! : when Slovenian women left home / edited by Marina Lukšič-Hacin, Jernej Mlekuž ; [English translation Peter Altshul, Barbara Skubic, Mojca Vah Jevšnik]. - Ljubljana : Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU, 2009. - (Migracije / Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU ; 19. Migrantke ; 2)

ISBN 978-961-254-170-5
1. Lukšič-Hacin, Marina
248905728

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INTRODUCTION

GO-GO GIRLS & GO, GO GIRLS!?

Jernej Mlekuž

GO-GO GIRLS?

No, no. The girls who have left the area of present-day Slovenia for centuries have not, at least in large numbers, worked as go-go dancers. Well, at any rate, to researchers of "Slovenian emigration", as this nationally constitutive subject, dedicated to "Slovenian manners and matters", is unfortunately labelled, Slovenian emigrant go-go girls are unknown.

We probably wouldn't find many of them in other unsavoury professions which Slovenian emigrant women (and of course also men) were warned about by church *men*. Three such men, discussed among other matters by Marjan Drnovšek in the chapter entitled "History and Concealment" – in a sort of kaleidoscopic exploration of the history of the emigration of women from the territory of present-day Slovenia and the history of Slovenian emigrant women – issued a warning in a booklet entitled *Če greš na tuje* (If You Go Abroad), published in 1934, in a special chapter entitled "For Slovenian Girls": "Slovenian girls, stay at home! But if you do leave, do not bring shame to your homeland and your nation." And how were "Slovenian girls" supposed to avoid this shame? How else but through faith, church attendance, reading religious periodicals, staying in contact with their parents, and avoiding contact with men. In short, by avoiding immoral acts which would infect their soul and their blood: "Protect yourself against immorality! […] Think of the terrible diseases with which you can poison your blood as the consequence of such a life."[1]

1 It was and is not only the Catholic Church that alluded to and continues to allude to such "immoral acts". Marjan Tomšič, a modern Slovenian writer, in his novel *Grenko morje. Roman o aleksandrinkah* (The Bitter Sea. A Novel about Alexandrian Women) (2002), and particularly in his collection of short stories *Južni veter. Zgodbe slovenskih Egipčank* (Southern Wind. Stories of Slovenian Egyptian Women) (2006), in which he describes the lives of Slovenian nannies, maids, servants, and nursemaids in Egypt (these emigrant women from Primorska in the second half of the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries were eventually referred to as *aleksandrinke*, or Alexandrian Women), shows these women as morally fall-

The Catholic Church undoubtedly took the emigration of Slovenian women very seriously, and the inverse would likely hold to a great degree: (too) many Slovenian emigrant women took the church sermons and teachings very seriously. Too seriously! As Marina Lukšič-Hacin writes in the chapter entitled "Concealment and Patriarchy" – in a kind of critical theory of gender dichotomy – in the new, emigrant environment, many emigrant women remained faithful to the Catholic teachings of their original environment, in which men and women were assigned clear and unmistakable roles: "Man is an idea, woman is matter; man is a head, woman is a heart." Divisions into biological and social, nature and culture, private and public, emotional and rational, body and mind, which defined and restricted women to the "home", often remained unshaken in the "wider world".

Furthermore, catchphrases like "housewife, wife, and mother" sometimes came to their fullest expression only in the "wider world". In the chapter entitled "Patriarchy and Representation", a study of how the stereotypical patriarchal view of women can be taken to extremes, Jernej Mlekuž writes about how the Slovenian political emigrant community in Argentina, in their struggle against the communist regime in the homeland, zealously and haughtily flaunted the ideologised image of woman as "housewife, wife, and mother". In the primary print medium of the Slovenian political emigrant community, *Svobodna Slovenija* (Free Slovenia), the following words are brandished in an article entitled "To Our Mothers": "We, who are not and do not want to be communists, have totally different views of women and mothers. We see women as mothers within the circle of the family and with a child in her lap. Housewife, wife, and mother. Three roles that the Creator ensconced in women's hearts."

But let's not create the wrong impression. *Go Girls!* is in no way (just) a book about the attitude of the "central moral authority" – the Catholic Church – towards the emigration of Slovenian women and its influence on the lives of those women in their new, emigrant environment. So what is the book about? It speaks about that "half of humankind" without which history, according to Gisela Bock (2002: 13) "is less than half of history". But this, continues Bock, "would have to deal with not half but all" of the people who left

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en, (sometimes) ending up in prostitution, i.e. the "trade in white goods". Several accounts and researches of this phenomenon of course indicate exactly the opposite: devout women who were highly prized for their work owing to their diligence, dedication, and "morality". Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik ("Representation and Self-Representation") writes more on this subject in this volume, as does Marjan Drnovšek ("History and Concealment").

the territory of present-day Slovenia and also with those who have spoken, thought, and pontificated about the phenomenon.

Speak, think, and pontificate about the phenomenon they did, and continue to do, including the women emigrants themselves. We thus finish the book with stories of Slovenian emigrant women in the U.S., with "Representation and Self-Representation", by Mirjam Milharčič-Hladnik, who through problematising biographical methodology also raises epistemological questions; this methodology allows a sort of democratisation of the social sciences and humanities. Instead of "major" events and "great" political and military figures, biographical methods focus their attention on "everywoman" and what she can say about those events, and/or what they mean to her. Thus it is not surprising that biographical methodology has become important to the development of women's studies and gender studies: it has given voice to that "half of humanity" which academia has for the most part completely ignored.

And when all is said and done, without this emancipatory conclusion, the title *Go Girls!* would sound like a joke. But there is another reason why we conclude the volume with stories of women, which are not (necessarily) stories that give a nod of assent to official, i.e., male, scholarship. Showing women merely as helpless victims – loyal, silent, and subservient attendants to male activities and male history – also means denying their ability to oppose and resist. But let us introduce this topic with a new title:

GO, GO GIRLS!?

Putting Miss SNPJ[2] (Slovenska narodna podporna jednota (Slovene National Benefit Society)) on the cover and giving the book the title *Go Girls!* is perhaps good marketing, but in the exacting world of scientific study it is probably not the nicest move. Why is the exclamation '*Go girls!*?' used? To whom or what is it addressed? This exclamation is among other things – and we (in the spirit of marketing) leave all other interpretations completely up to the reader – also a shout to Slovenian migration studies. A shout of enthusiasm and joy about the changes in this field in recent times and also a shout of encouragement to someone, or more rarely something, who has a great deal of unfinished business before them; we hope to give them the necessary motivation and drive. Let us therefore take a moment to look at the shouts of enthusiasm (for what has been done) and shouts of encouragement (for what has not yet been accomplished).

2 The photo shows Gail Nachtingal, Miss SNPJ 1962.

For a long time, researchers of "Slovenian emigration" – as is probably true of the majority of European national migration studies – understood migration as a single-gender occurrence. Women were most often invisible, absent; they were *merely* passive attendants to male activities and movement. Influential female figures are nowhere to be found. Of course there were exceptions, but those exceptions were for the most part blind to the gendered aspects of migration; female emigrants were treated as beings to whom gender was foreign, i.e., as beings with very little, if any, gender at all.

Various noticeable changes have occurred in the new millennium. Here we will list only a few, which will, we hope, shed some light on history and the context of this volume. From 2001 to 2004, the Institute for Slovene Emigration Studies at SRC SASA[3] (today the Slovenian Migration Institute at SRC SASA) coordinated a project entitled "Women's Role in the Preservation of the Cultural Tradition among Emigrants". During this time several papers were written on the subject, which readers will find cited in various places in this book.[4] As part of this project, a conference was held in 2002 called "Women in Minority Communities: The Significance and Role of Women in Preserving Cultural Tradition", which was participated in by numerous Slovenian researchers whom you will also find cited in various places in this volume.[5] At first glance, the film *100% Slovenian* (with the Slovenian title *Američanke,* literally, "American women", but formerly, it indicated Slovenian emigrants to the U.S.), which was produced by the Slovenian national television company in 2005, does not seem to belong in this list of "scientific products". However, the fact that the script was written on the basis of many years' research into Slovenian emigrant women and their female descendants in the U.S. puts this probing account of female emigrants and their female descendants in a new light.[6] A course entitled "The Role of Women in Slovenian Society and Culture", which has been taught in Slovene since 2004 as part of a graduate programme called "Intercultural Studies – Comparative Studies of Ideas and Cultures" and in English since 2006 as part of an interna-

3 Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

4 Readers can find three (!) such texts in a single place – in the journal *Dve domovini / Two Homelands*, no. 17 (see Drnovšek 2003c; Milharčič Hladnik 2002; Milanič 2003).

5 Their papers were published in Slovene in the journal *Dve domovini / Two Homelands* (see Lukšič-Hacin 2002). The conference was organised by Marina Lukšič-Hacin and Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik.

6 The script for the film was written by Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik. The film, which was received very positively by critics and professionals alike, can be seen on the web site of the Slovenian Migration Institute (http://isi.zrc-sazu.si/index.php?q=en/node/259).

tional master's programme called "Migration and Intercultural Relations",[7] was undoubtedly a significant institutional step (and other kinds as well) towards the thematisation of the gender aspects of migration processes and the thematisation of relations between the sexes in general. We can also add to this list of studies of relations between the sexes within Slovenian migration studies (and academic knowledge in general) a new subcollection by the Slovenian Migration Institute called Migrantke (Migrant Women) in the Migracije (Migrations) collection, which was inaugurated in 2009 with the book *Krila migracij. Po meri življenjskih zgodb* (Dressed to Go. Women's Stories on Migration).[8] This book is also published as part of that collection, as you can see from the polished fingernails in the logo on the cover.

The neglect of women in Slovenian migration studies, which has been pointed out by increasing numbers of authors in recent years, has therefore been at least partially recompensed. But what shall we say about the shout of encouragement, or to be more concrete: what remains to be done in this field? We do not wish to and will not offer concrete (task-assigning) answers to this question. It is better to understand the programme than to assign particular topics – a programme which, like the title of this book, we will call *Go Girls!* And what is this programme in fact about?

The programme, and of course the book as well, is not about researching and writing *only* about female emigration, a kind of "women's migration", but is among other things focused on understanding the complexity, multi-facet-

7 Offered by the University of Nova Gorica in cooperation with the Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts. The courses are taught by Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik.

8 Eds. Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik and Jernej Mlekuž. The book includes stories of both Slovenian emigrants and immigrants to Slovenia. We mention this in order to avoid creating the false impression that migration studies in Slovenia deal solely with "Slovenian emigration", the unfortunate and nationally-charged syntagm which has developed to denote the emigration of Slovenes and associated phenomena. For many years, migration studies in Slovenia focused almost exclusively on studying "Slovenian emigration", since this was the only way for them to fulfil their nationally constitutive task: "researching the national body" or the "national organ", as was often (and is still) said about Slovenian emigrants in national-consciousness parlance. Researching immigrants or emigrants from other ethnic groups from Slovenia was thus left for rare, occasional projects, without any form of the institutional support that the research of "Slovenian emigration" enjoyed from 1963 on at the Study Centre for the History of Slovene Emigration at the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, which was succeeded in 1982 by the Institute for Slovenian Emigration Studies, which in 2009 (not without difficulty!) was renamed the Slovenian Migration Institute. The Institute has for quite some time no longer dealt exclusively with researching Slovenian emigrants and their descendants, but now also includes immigrants and other ethnic groups in Slovenia and other comparative studies.

edness and of course the multi-gendered aspect of migrations. This of course cannot be done except by focusing on a missing but constitutive part of migration processes: the migration of women. Therefore, to "make visible" that which was, as the title of one of the most famous feminist books says, "hidden from history", or in the words of the best-known Slovenian researcher of "women's history" Marta Verginella (2006: 21), to "write women" into the body of knowledge on migration and into knowledge in general. This "writing of women", to follow Verginella, must not be just a matter of supplementing and placing into context previously overlooked events, phenomena, and occurrences, but in fact must be a project of critically sifting through the entire body of migration studies and thereby reproducing gender-determined knowledge. And thus we respond to the question 'Go-go girls?' (as we must in this programme), how else but with a new question: Go, go girls!?

HISTORY AND CONCEALMENT

SLOVENIAN GIRLS, STAY AT HOME!

Marjan Drnovšek

The views of women from some authors of the past – male and female – have been left hanging somewhere between myth and reality, and even the most documentary among them have not been able to make women's history a part of general history, wrote historian Marta Verginella (2004: 7).[1] This is undoubtedly true. Ten years earlier, Peter Vodopivec, also a historian, stated that the history of the Slovenes is overwhelmingly male. He was referring to the monograph *Zgodovina Slovencev* (The History of the Slovenes) (Čepič and Nećak 1979), which covers the time from pre-history up to the 1970s; only three women appear in its index: Countess Hemma von Friesach-Zeltschacht, also known as Hemma of Gurk (ca. 980–1045), who distributed her property among various churches in the Salzburg and Aquilea dioceses; the Empress Maria Theresa (1717–1780), ruler of the Holy Roman Empire, who had 16 children; and Vida Tomšič (1913–1998), a communist, partisan, and politician.[2] The subject index reveals only three topics clearly relating to women: the matriarchy and premarital sexual freedom of women among the Illyrian Librun in Roman times, and two others that relate more to the political organisation of women after World War II (Vodopivec 1994: 30). Looking through the index of names in the *Slovenska novejša zgodovina* (Modern Slovenian History) (Čepič et al. 2005), which covers the period between 1848 and 1992, we find a greater number of female names, belonging to both his-

1 Something similar occurs with the history of migrations, which Slovene historiography excludes from the general history of the Slovenes. Two volumes present a partial exception to this rule: the monography *Slovenska novejša zgodovina* (Modern Slovenian History) (Čepič et al. 2005) and, aimed at a more general readership, the five-volume project *Slovenska kronika 19. in 20 stoletja* (The Slovenian Chronicle of the 19th and 20th Centuries), published between 1995 and 2005. Similarly, European and international general overviews of the history of migration do not include Slovenian migrations (for example, Bade 2003; Hoerder 2002; Bade et al. 2007).

2 As a politician, she was actively involved in the shaping of the migration policies in Slovenia after World War II.

tory makers and the authors of the articles in the book. However, the list of male names is much longer. I need to emphasise that the period covered in the *Slovenska novejša zgodovina* somewhat coincides with the growing presence of Slovenian women in historic events, especially since the beginning of the 20th century. In recent years in particular, more has been written about them from the point of view of history and humanities.[3] While drawing a historical picture of the migration of Slovenes and other ethnic groups in the territory that is today a part of the Republic of Slovenia, I would like to present a couple of fragments about the migrations of women through the past in a longer period of time, mostly with the help of archival materials, newspapers, and academic literature. Fragmentation is inevitable, since a synthetic study of history for a longer period is not yet available for Slovenia and its territory. At the same time it allows me to touch on individual stories that are often more narrative, or at least point in the direction of the questions that have remained unanswered. I am aware of how difficult it is to single out women in many historical contexts, but I believe that it is essential to emphasise their presence as migrants in all cases and to notice them behind the men, especially if they are operating independently or adversely against male domination. Gisela Bock's (2002: X) introductory thought holds true not only for the general history of women, but also for the history of migrants:

> A history ignoring half of humankind is less than half of history, for without women, a history would not do justice to men either, and vice versa.

FRAGMENTS ON FEMALE MIGRANTS FROM THE MEDIAEVAL AND EARLY MODERN PERIOD

Emigration is as old as humanity. The Old Testament tells us a story that provides a metaphysical notion of emigration: following the original sin, Adam and Eve became emigrants. How far back in the past should we go to find the earliest female emigrants who took their first baby steps in the territories that are now Slovenia? From antiquity onwards women were socially and politically dependent on men. Limiting myself to the mediaeval and early modern periods, aristocratic and bourgeois women were much more

3 For the historiographic aspect of this issue, see the recent anthology *Ženske skozi zgodovino* (Women through History) (Žižek 2004), the work *Splošno žensko društvo 1901–1945: od dobrih deklet do feministk* (General Women's Association 1901–1945: From Good Girls to Feminists) (Budna Kodrič and Serše 2003), and one of the first papers to deal with this issue "Kako so ženske na Slovenskem v 19. stoletju stopale v javno življenje" ("How Women in the Slovenian Territory in the 19th Century Entered Public Life") (Vodopivec 1994).

mobile than peasant women. Peasant women were limited in their personal freedom, even more so than men. Marriage and place of residence defined their status and more or less determined their life in that place. If aristocratic women learnt about the world, for example, through life in convent schools, then city women, and women who gravitated towards the city did so because of the trade they were a part of, for example, food vendors and peddlers, public prostitutes, procuresses, nuns, maids, fisherwomen in Piran, etc. (Mihelič 2004: 23–30). There is an interesting memoir connected to the story of the Counts of Celje: notes written by Helena Kottanner (ca. 1400–1470), which is quite different from the biographies of powerful men of the 15th century. Kottanner's record is the first known memoir written by a woman in the German speaking part of Europe, and it is a source that speaks favourably of the ambitious Counts of Celje. Helena Kottanner was a lady-in-waiting and a confidante of the Hungarian Queen Elizabeth, who was the daughter of Barbara of Celje and Sigismund of Luxemburg and the wife of Albrecht II of Habsburg. Three events are central to Kottaner's memoir: the stealing of the crown of St. Stephen; the birth of Ladislav the Posthumous; and his crowning as the King of Hungary. During the crowning, Kottanner held baby Ladislav in her lap. The memoirs focus on the years 1439 and 1440 and are connected to her travels through the Danube river basin (Grdina and Štih: 1999).

If we come down from the heights of the aristocracy to the hard and harsh ground of the peasant and city folk, where the primary goal of both sexes is survival, I would point out the migration tendencies from the Balkans across the Adriatic Sea to the Italian peninsula; these trends are observed extensively throughout the 15th and the 16th centuries. The newcomers from the territories of present-day Slovenia arrived in the Patriarchate of Aquileia[4] as early as the second half of the 13th century, and to Le Marche[5] from the end of the 14th century onwards. The Adriatic Sea, as the link between the Balkans and the Apennines (Balkan and Apennine space), allowed for the relatively rapid movement of people in both directions. The inhabitants from the territories that are Slovenian today participated on a smaller scale, women among them. They travelled to cities and the countryside, alone or with families. Between the 14th and the 16th centuries more than one hundred thousand Slavic immigrants from all social strata moved to the Italian Peninsula (Gestrin 1998: 74–75). The pool of emigration covered the area from

4 Aquileia (Oglej). A territory, secular until 1420 then under the authority of the Church until 1751. In Slovenia it extended to the Drava River in the north, and in the east and south to the Sotla and Kolpa rivers and the Adriatic Sea.

5 Le Marche is an Italian region on the western Adriatic coast.

the mouth of the Soča River all the way to that of the Bojana River; from the cities of Tržič and Štivan to Ulcinj and Skadar, and inland to the Mura, the Drava, and the Danube rivers in the north. Migrants have been travelling through this area from the High Middle Ages onward. Among them was a Katarina from the Karst region, who married a Spanish immigrant in 1497 in Fano on the western Adriatic coast (Gestrin 1998: 94). Before 1339 there is the alleged arrival of a certain Gvido Janez the Slav to Fano. His son owned two townhouses, three fields, and three vineyards, and paid 50 pounds (*libras*) in taxes. His daughter Lucija had her own property. For the house, a vineyard, three plots of arable land, and some olive trees she paid 25 pounds (*libras*) in taxes (Gestrin 1998: 45). The archives in Pesaro from 1477 record two citizens of Ljubljana (*de Lubigliana de partibus Sclavonie*): Peter, the son of Simon, who worked as a steward, and Margareta, the daughter of Jacob, a prostitute (Gestrin 1998: 105). A number of women became respected city dwellers because of their property and management skills. Nikolaj, a master baker and the son of Bernard from Fano, had a wife named Agata. The master died in 1477 and Agata managed his estate on behalf of their children and heirs, Julijan, Jakob, and Vincenc, as their guardian and trustee. The family lived in its own house on San Pietro in Valle and had the bakery there as well. The late Nikolaj also left real property, which Agata leased out. The sources state that she acted prudently and to her benefit. In 1483 she was running a bakery out of her own home. Four years later Agata's favourite son, Julijan, took over, but that didn't stop her from running the business and keeping the accounts. In 1489 the second son, Jakob, became independent. Agata lived to an old age and as late as 1522 a court case was open for her and her late husband's legacy (Gestrin 1998: 107–108). In short, the majority of the immigrants from present-day Slovenia were craftsmen and tradesmen, and they were indeed mostly men. In addition to servants, bondsmen, vagabonds, sailors, gallery slaves, mercenary soldiers, day labourers, and hard labourers, there was mention of maids and prostitutes (Gestrin 1998: 111–112). The people of Ljubljana are familiar with the story of the musician Andrej, son of Peter from Ljubljana, who is mentioned in Fano where he had, by 1472, made a home and a name for himself. He got a job as the city piper, a member of the orchestra of the noble priors of the city of Fano. At that time, he'd have already married Barbara, the widow of the master shoemaker Benedikt, the son of Mihael, who was originally from Slovenian lands. As the heiress to her late husband's estate, Barbara gave him a townhouse as a dowry. Three years later, the couple were living in Cesena (Gestrin 1998: 192). Most people moved to Italy intending to remain there for a long period of time or even permanently.

Work in the country was less visible than work in the cities. In *Cosmographia* by Sebastian Münster (1488–1552) there is a drawing of two peasant women carrying hay (Gestrin 1998: 174).

Of course we cannot imagine an agrarian economy without a female labour force. In the cities, there was a wide spectrum of professions. I've already mentioned a bakery owner. A woman might also be an innkeeper (Gestrin 1998: 193). Women were also servants, seamstresses, maids, housekeepers, cooks, and prostitutes. Maids or servants had one- or two-year contracts, and in rare cases, four-year ones. They pledged to work diligently and not to steal or run away. The contract was firmer if a girl was recommended by a relative or if she had no one in town with whom to take refuge. They had guaranteed food and lodging, and sometimes some clothing and monetary payment. It was similar with bondsmen and housekeepers (Gestrin 1998: 207). A higher position was held – as was the case with male servants – by female servants who were adult women and even married. Some of them were only responsible for a part of the household, for example, washing and ironing. Wet-nurses were not rare, either. In 1437, Liza, daughter of Peter from Sclavonia, breastfed a daughter from the rich family of Kalisto Banincaso from Ancona. Her payment was higher than a servant would have received. For a year of breastfeeding, Liza received an amount equal to 18 ducats, paid in silver. There were also some cases in which families forced new mothers to become wet-nurses to other people's children (Gestrin 1998: 211). Bondsman, maid, or other servant were presumably the most common professions in the countryside and in the towns. At the bottom of the social ladder, it was difficult for people in these positions to better their positions. Even day labourers and hard labourers had more freedom to choose their situation; unlike bondsmen or maids, who were contractually bound, labourers could choose their work freely, for example, in ports. For a bondsman or a maid to climb the social ladder he or she would have to save up or marry someone who had property.

Child labour for children of both sexes was commonplace and they were often subjected to immoral treatment. That is the only explanation for why, in the first half of the 15th century, a ten-year old boy could be paid food and lodging plus the equivalent of 30 ducats cash (Gestrin 1998: 210). Underage girls were employed as servants and chambermaids. As a consequence, runaways to Italy – mostly girls who were still children or very young teenagers – became increasingly common. The trend was strengthened by girls from immigrant families. Parents, relatives, or representatives signed work contracts that were more or less the same throughout Italy: she would serve loyally until she became of age, when the mistress or the master would select a husband for

her; she would not try to run away; and she would not steal. Such a contract was signed with citizen Ugolino de Palation in 1477 by Štefan, a craftsman living in Fano, the son of Konrad from Novo mesto, for his minor daughter Ana. She was to serve him until she was eighteen years of age. On his daughter's behalf, Štefan promised to the employer that she would not break off the contract and that she would not run away. The master, on the other hand, promised the father that he would keep her in the house until the age of 18, then find her a husband and pay her dowry at the end of her contract. The contract was confirmed with the guarantee of all their property, with a fine of 50 ducats for breach of contract by either party (Gestrin 1998: 212). According to historian Ferdo Gestrin, about 80 % of female Slavic servants married other Slavs. Some women servants were an object of trade and sometimes used as the family concubines, treated like slaves, etc.; others were given a tolerable life and even benefits (Gestrin 1998: 213). Faced with the difficulties of migration, many immigrants turned to prostitution to survive. Gestrin offers an interesting hypothesis that some of their compatriots contacted them not only for sexual gratification, but also for the chance to speak their own language in their company, thus relieving homesickness and loneliness. From the end of the 14th century onwards, there were private and institutionalised prostitutes operating side by side in Italy; not only Slavic girls, but also others from German countries, France, Flanders, and Spain. The owners, procurers, and prostitutes in a brothel were usually all foreigners to the town, but locals were not excluded. Margareta from Ljubljana (1477), mentioned above, had been working in Pesaro for many years, because as early as 1462 she had had an argument with Beltram the builder regarding the four ducats she had demanded for her services. In Ancona they worked freely, rented workplaces, and signed contracts for the rent (Gestrin 1998: 214–216). Their lives had both bright and dark sides, and many details of their life stories were retained in notary books and other archival materials in coastal towns along the west coast of the Adriatic.

Undoubtedly the migrations were a phenomenon deeply rooted in the past. Gestrin discussed them as Slavic migrations, because only concrete archival sources tell us where an individual was from. Because today's Slovenian territory was a part of the then-German state, they were often labelled with nicknames like *teutonicus*, *teutonico, Tedesco, de Alemania*, etc. For our purposes, the more important detail is the place of departure, which is not always clear in the sources. The majority of migrants were people without property and of rural origin (serfs), and a minority were craftsmen, traders, and persons with other professions. The majority remained and assimilated

into their new environment. The percentage of women is difficult to determine, because few of them climbed the social ladder, thus leaving minimal traces in archival sources. Women were also present in cases of short-term migrations, for example, pilgrimages to the distant pilgrimage centres of Europe. Until the mid-18th century, the reasons for escaping one's home environment included infectious diseases such as the black plague; bad harvests and the resulting famines; natural catastrophes, earthquakes, and wars. Especially in the 15th and 16th centuries, Turkish lootings were another reason, including the forced removal of young men and women who were sent to Bosnia or sold to remote parts of Turkey. Very few managed to buy themselves off or escape and thus save themselves from captivity. Among these was Ana, the daughter of Andreja, a slave in Sarajevo in 1556. The source says that she was of medium build, had light blue eyes, separate eyebrows, and was of Slovenian origin (*işloveniyyet ül-aşl*) (Boškov and Šamić 1979: 11).

The greatest number were wives. Dr. Gregor Voglar Karbonarij (Gregorius Carbonarius Carniolus) (1651–1717), a physician from Naklo in Carniola, decided to travel to Moscow. He arrived there in 1689 or 1690 and practiced near the Tzar's court. He was recommended to Tzar Peter I the Great (1672–1725) by Emperor Leopold I of Habsburg (1640–1705) himself. Whether he took his wife with him immediately or she joined him later is unclear from the sources. There is a letter by Karbonarij's wife Marija Rotin, dated 15 September 1690, in which she pleads with him to send her money and invite her to Moscow. It seems that she lived in Vienna with her children, in great need (Dolgova 2001: 85). In March 1698, the Austrian ambassador Ignac Krištof Guarient-Rallo and his stepdaughter Jakoba Sabina Rebeka arrived in Moscow, though Russian sources claim the girl was Voglar's daughter Marija Antonija. The coat of arms on his Certificate of Ennoblement (1694) shows, among other images, a female nude holding a long scarf, one foot on a blue orb. It is either a dancer or a representation of Fortuna, since the latter was very partial to Voglar's family. The inventory of his legacy shows that he was a man of property; he donated 5000 *florenos* to his hometown of Naklo to build a waterworks system (Drnovšek 2002).

In past centuries the migration of students and intelligentsia abroad was nothing unusual. However, we cannot expect to find many women among them: the doors of universities open to them only at the beginning of the 20th century.

FIRST SLOVENIAN PIONEERS IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Probably the first Slovenian woman to have moved to the United States was the sister of the missionary Friderik Baraga[6], Antonija Höffern. A polyglot and the widow of financier Feliks Höffern-Saalfeld, she arrived in the United States to lead her brother's household amongst the Chippewa in La Pointe, Michigan. She only lasted a year among the Chippewa, later dedicating herself to educating girls in Philadelphia. In 1854 she returned to Europe and established an institution for girls in Rome. She lived with modest means after her return to Ljubljana, where she died alone in 1871. As far as we know, Polona (Apolonija) Noč was the first Slovenian woman to have immigrated to the United States with her husband and children, including their three daughters and the boyfriend of her daughter Marija. The departure of the Noč farming family from Podbrezje in the Gorenjska region to the U.S. in July 1855, led by no less than the wife and mother Polona, provoked a reaction from Janez Bleiweis (1808–1881), the editor of *Novice* (The News), at that time the most influential newspaper for economic, trade, and national issues in the Slovenian territory. Bleiweis predicted a dark future for the Noč family, a prediction which never really came true, if the media reports about the family on both sides of the Atlantic are any indication (Drnovšek 1998: 144–146). The editor commented on their departure with astonishment and sarcasm. He blamed Polona Noč, sister of the missionary Franc Pirc (Franz Pierz),[7] for having no peace in her own homeland, therefore causing the head of the family to have to hastily sell the estate, making only enough money from the sale to pay for the journey to New York. Furthermore, he was astonished that the boy next door, Janez Pogačnik joined the family out of love for Polona's eldest daughter Marija, and emphasised: "Verily must the flame of love burn strong in the bridegroom, if he is willing to follow his sweetheart all the way to America!" (Anon. 1855: 224). Polona Noč and her brother Franc Pirc had written to each other before the Noč family's departure. Upon her arrival in the U.S., Polona wrote a letter to *Novice,* dated 7 September 1855, describing the crossing of the Atlantic, her first impressions, and the wonders

6 Friderick Irenaeus Baraga (1797–1868) immigrated to the United States in 1830.

7 Franc (Francis) Pirc (1785–1880), priest and fruit-growing educator in Slovenia. At fifty, he decided to leave for the United States where he did evangelical work among the Ojibwa Indians, worked as a state commissioner for land distribution in Minnesota, and was a homeopathic healer. He also invited German and later Slovenian immigrants to settle in Minnesota, which he hoped would become the most Catholic state in the United States of America (Furlan 1952).

of the country she had arrived in. Later, when people from the Gorenjska and Bela krajina regions in Carniola[8] migrated to the United States in large numbers, more articles addressing this issue were published in *Novice*, but the lists of emigrants named only the "master of the house" so we can only guess about the number of spouses, single young women, and male and female children who travelled with the father. This was also a time when the letters from missionaries and other emigrants brimmed with comparisons between American women and the *Kranjice* (women from Carniola), stating that "the Americans" could only rarely be seen working in the fields; that they were inclined to obsess over their own beauty; passed time by going for walks, playing the piano, riding horses, and maybe also doing some knitting and washing; while all the other house chores were done by men. Janez Pogačnik, the would-be husband of Polona Noč's daughter, also wrote that there were almost no women in the fields, because almost everything was done by farming machines (Pogačnik 1857). An American bishop of Slovenian origin, Jakob (James) Trobec, claimed that not all Europeans imitated lazy "Americans" and hoped that the *Gorenjke*[9] would not follow their example (Trobec 1864a). He lauded the excellent schools for women in the United States that were open to all women, young and old, rich and poor (Trobec 1864b). His colleague, Janez Tomaževič, also accused the American women of only rocking in rocking chairs and reading newspapers, and had this to say about the *Gorenjke*: women sigh of boredom, allegedly because they are too lonely and do not have the opportunity to gossip as is the time honoured Carniolan habit (Tomaževič 1865).

We must be aware that when – if at all – women were written about, it was by the few men who were farmers. The best sources of data are the letters of Slovenian and German missionaries, theologians, and later, parish priests. So it comes as no surprise that *Novice* in 1878 took (from an unidentified American newspaper) instructions on how parents should bring up daughters. The instructions were as follows: the daughters were to learn to cook, wash, sew, darn, knit, economise when spending money, and dress modestly. They recommended the natural look, as the "full and round face is worth more than 50 consumptive beauties". In life they were to use common sense, be diligent, and remain pious. Furthermore, if you can afford it, have them

8 Carniola, one of the lands in the southern parts of the Habsburg monarchy in which mostly Slovenes lived.

9 *Gorenjke*, the women of the Gorenjska region in the north-western Carniola. The city of Kranj was its capital, and Bled its best known resort.

study music, painting, and sciences, but don't forget to tell them that these are only unimportant things for women (Anon. 1878).

In Slovenia, the first warnings about the consequences of female migration abroad, namely to the United States, appeared. There was a shortage of maids on Slovenian farms, although they were paid 40 guldens or more per year. Around 1855, a maid or a cook in the U.S. earned between 10 and 15 dollars a month, which meant an annual salary of 120 to 180 dollars (Pirc 1855). On the other hand, the emigrating husbands were deeding their estates over to their wives, who, according to some, couldn't cope with the hard farm work (Anon. 1872).

The first immigrants from Gorenjska settled in Minnesota, in areas German Catholic immigrants had already settled. True Slovenian settlements and parishes, St. Stephen and St. Anthony in Stearns County, were founded in the 1860s and 1870s (Kodrič 2003: 53–62). Slovenian women were mentioned by men in the relatively sparsely settled and weak American-Slovenian communities as mothers, housewives, and excellent interpreters of Slovenian secular, religious, and other songs (Trobec 1866). Trobec's sister Marija was an accomplished organ player (Trobec 1873a). They were most likely members of the German Catholic Church Society at St. Joseph's, intended for girls and women (Trobec 1873b). Later, they were described as nuns, school sisters, and other professions, especially in connection to religious life in their new environment (Friš 1992: 371–389). Among the Benedictine sisters in St. Joseph's convent in 1884 there were seven Slovenian nuns: five in the missions and two in the convent (B., Fr.-c. 1884).

From this early American period, the only letters from women that the Slovenian newspaper *Novice* and the strongly Catholic *Zgodnja danica* (Early Dawn) published were the ones written by Polona Noč and Marija Trobec, Jakob Trobec's sister. Polona's letter was published with the editor's title "A Carniolan Woman's Letter from America" ("Pismo Kranjice iz Amerike"), but this time without Bleiweis's critical editorial comment, except for the emphasis that "she wrote it herself" (Anon. 1856). The *Zgodnja danica* published a letter that Trobec's sister Marija addressed to the mother superior of the Ursuline convent in Ljubljana in six instalments, emphasising religious issues (Trobec 1870 and Trobec 1872). Polona only touches upon the so-called women's question in her new environment, writing:

> The women here are held in high regard, so high that a full cart must avoid her. And should anyone ever hit her he would be put away for a long time; a husband cannot even bully his wife. (Noč 1856)

And she continues that anyone who hits a woman will be punished; likewise, bullying of one's wife was forbidden. She linked these thoughts with her idealised image of America as a country in which no one takes anything from anybody else and where everyone is friends with everybody. Of course, the dark side of the New World was well known at that time, mostly in connection to the economic status of the immigrants. Anyone coming to the U.S. with pockets full of money was likely to succeed, as were those who had the help of already settled migrants, such as Polona Noč, whose brother Franc Pirc, not only a missionary but also a commissioner for land distribution in Minnesota, was of great help to her.

In short, the letters from women migrants published in Slovenia were rare, because there were so few to choose from in the first place. Editorial politics also played a role. For example, at *Novice* and *Zgodnja danica,* few articles by women contributors were published at all. Content played an important role in determining what was published, and that went for men and women alike: it had to emphasise deep piety and adherence to the Church, something that can be best seen in the letters of Marija Trobec. Polona Noč and Marija Trobec, after all, found their place in the media of the day because they were sisters of missionaries. Baraga's sister Antonija Höffern, who did not conform to the conventional image of a missionary, sister-housekeeper, and teacher of indigenous peoples, went her own way and is even today somewhat shunned and suppressed. Her life story shows that independent thinking by a woman was incompatible with the social norms of the day. Because she did not fit the prevalent stereotypical image of a Slovenian woman, she was pushed aside, and after she returned to Ljubljana she was relegated to the margins of the closed Carniolan social dynamics.

The sisters of missionaries were soon followed by secular emigrants. They were a part of the family migrations from Gorenjska to Minnesota in the 1860s and 1870s. Often several families would travel together. Among them was the Gogala family: Anton Sr., age 51 upon departure to America, and his wife Agnes, née Marat, and their five children – Anton Jr., age 22, Johana, Marija, Terezija, and Agnes. Father and son were blacksmiths; the father was also the local mayor, so he had managed to save some money for the journey to America. They left in 1865 and settled in central Minnesota. We have quite a bit of information about them, for example, that they helped the church great deal, although men performed most of the tasks. The women stayed in the background, keeping house and raising the children.

There is a picture of the Gogala family from Minnesota that still exists. The family is older, posing in front a typical Minnesota house. Eight pairs

of eyes gaze into the camera, only the little one, still wearing a skirt, in his mother's lap, turned away. Besides two grown men, a young boy, and a baby in a skirt, there were five women (Brinkman and Morgan 1987: 5).

"WHEN OUR SLOVENIAN GIRLS START BREATHING THE FREE AMERICAN AIR, THEY CHANGE AS WELL"

The quote above is taken from the first women's magazine, *Slovenka* (Slovenian Woman),[10] which was only published for a short time (1897–1902) (Anon. 1900). The period of mass emigration to the U.S. occurred as women in the Slovenian territories began more publicly to stand up for women's rights. It was also the time when the first women's associations were established and women's magazines published. The women of the 19th century did participate in the political turmoil of 1848, take part in the *taborsko gibanje* (national mass meetings movement), and appear in public to participate in the so-called manifestations in support of the national cause. But nothing more. Speaking only of emigration, I can safely state that the general interest papers never gave any significant attention to the emigration of women and their life abroad. More was written about emigration in general; more extensively in Catholic papers, less so in the liberal press, and in the socialist press, least of all. Certain exceptions to this are the liberal *Soča* (1871) and the Catholic *Primorski list* (1893–1913) that paid more attention to the *aleksandrinke*, girls and women who had left the Goriška region for Egypt to work as wet-nurses, housemaids, nannies, etc. Other central papers also published some articles about these women (Anon. 1904 and Anon. 1910). In

Anton Gogala's family in 1866. Source: Light from the Heart: Central Minnesota Pioneers and Early Architecture *(Brinkman and Morgan 1987: 5).*

10 *Slovenka* (Slovenian Woman), the first women's magazine in Slovenia first emerged in 1897 as a supplement to the political newspaper *Edinost* (Unity) in Trieste (Trst), and then on its own as a monthly until 1902.

short, the creators of public opinion at that time, with the possible exception of the Catholic Church, were not particularly interested in the phenomenon of emigration, although by the end of the first decade of the 20th century critical voices began warning against the emigration of intellectuals. If they did address the topic, they associated it with issues of national defence or fears about the declining population of the Slovenian nation, broken families, and the weakening of the faith. They warned about scams during the journey abroad, warnings meant especially for women (Drnovšek 2003b).

In this period, Zofka Kveder (1878–1926), an intellectual and a writer noted for her efforts on women's rights, dealt with migrant topics in her literature. An emigrant of a sort, both in the physical and emotional sense of the world, she spent a short time in Switzerland, stopped in Munich and Vienna, lived in Prague between 1900 and 1906, and after that in Zagreb, where she died. Kveder was interested in the dark side of the lives of women, and she disclosed the neglect they suffered in the Habsburg society, which favoured men. Because she wrote in Croatian, she was misunderstood by Slovenian society and very few supported her work – among them was the famous Slovenian writer, poet, and playwright Ivan Cankar (1876–1919). Likewise, Slovenian literary history had little interest in her, but she has lately become a true "icon" of the women's movement in Slovenia (Tucovič 2006: 77–99). The following is a list of her major works dealing with emigration issues: *Hrvatarji* (The Croats) (Kveder 1903), *Potovalci* (The Travellers) (Kveder 1906), first published in the *Ljubljanski zvon* (The Ljubljana Bell), *Sin* (Son) (Kveder 1907), a social drama *Amerikanci* (The Americans) (Kveder 1908), and *Tinka* (Kveder 1912). We can of course find the motifs of alienation, foreign lands, disdain for women, emigration, and more in her other works as well. She addressed the then-widespread warnings about the negative aspects of Slovene emigration with her article *Slovenci na tujem* (Slovenes Abroad), where she mentioned only in passing her visit to a Slovenian emigrant family near Essen, Westphalia. She noticed that miners married girls from their homeland:

> Their wives are Slovenian. They're more frugal and modest than the Germans, therefore the miners are willing to risk travelling home. To bring a family from there for life. (Kveder 1907: 7–10)

The female characters in Kveder's work are stereotypical and treat the role of emigrant women only cursorily. Kveder's migrant experience and her daring otherness put her at the pinnacle of the problematisation of emigration to America (Poniž Mihurko: 2003). Maybe I should add that Kveder her-

self was one of those thinking about the fate of emigrants who emphasised their dark destiny and pointed out the insecurity of leaving and of life abroad.

Was America really a "paradise for women", as the priest and publicist Jurij Matej Trunk (1870–1973) wrote in his famous book *Amerika in Amerikanci* (America and the Americans) (Trunk 1912)? He travelled to the United States several times to gather materials for his book, and his own answer was "yes" and "no". The "yes" referred to the male-female ratio in the United States, which automatically gave women an edge when it came to the opportunity for marriage, and the "no" referred to the life that was paved with thorns and tears for American women as well. Trunk remained faithful to Catholic doctrine and pointed out the adherence to Slovenianness and the family as two decisive virtues:

> The women have always been prized, and because he usually remains within his kin, Slavic women don't have to wait long for a bridegroom. A male migrant looking to settle for good in America will soon try to found his own home, his own family. (Trunk 1912: 430)

With the beginning of mass emigration to the US, the proportion of women increased, but they remained a minority. According to Austrian sources, of all the migrants who left the Austrian half of the empire between 1876–1910, 65% were male (670 473) and 35% were female (361 179), while according to the statistical data from the American immigration services, of Slovenian or Croatian people entering the country through Ellis Island between 1898 and 1914, 81.6% were male (374 173) and 18.4% were female (84 407) (Drnovšek 1997: 24–25). The relatively small number of women in the Slovenian-Croatian wave could have been due to the fact that Slovenian emigrants were more likely to be individuals (mostly male) than families, as was more often the case with Germans or Scandinavians. In his book, Trunk, as a priest, often negatively touched upon women and their world of beauty products, and men and their drinking. In 1903, priest and editor Frančišek Saleški Šušteršič (1864–1911) published instructions for Slovenes in the home country, because of their incorrect understanding of the moral life of Slovenes in America (Šušteršič 1903: 50–54). In his opinion, the people in Carniola had the impression that the religious level of the Slovenes in the U.S. was very low, that America attracted the "sewage of Europe", that the number of "wild marriages" and illegitimate children was on the rise, and that husbands forgot about their homes and the wives and children they'd left behind. Šušteršič emphatically renounced such an image and especially the generalisations

that it was built upon, perpetrated by the gazette of the Ljubljana diocese (Drnovšek 2003b: 7–33). He did invite girls to America, specifically those willing to join convent life and help with the upbringing of American-Slovenian youth in the Catholic spirit.[11]

Liza, a cook, in New York. Source: Author's private collection.

Women immigrants to the U.S. joined the male-managed associations or fraternities. The Catholic ones were busy with activities linked to religious life. In the era of mass migration to the U.S., there were no independent women's associations. They did, however, have some women's associations under the auspices of larger male-dominated associations. Thus in 1908 the Slovenska narodno podporna jednota (today, the Slovene National Benefit Society) had 4147 male and 146 female members. That year, there was a "women's section" operating within it, which established its own set of rules as of 1 January 1909 (Zavertnik 1925: 578). After 1900, women began gathering in local associations within the Kranjska slovenska katoliška jednota (today, the American Slovenian Catholic Union), but they were in a subordinate position, unequal to men (Friš 1997). There was a "women's sub-committee" organised within the Society of St. Raphael in New York that minded the safety of the girls coming through Ellis Island; for this purpose, there was also St. Mary's Society in New York which had operated

11 Beside the Franciscan brothers, the school sisters of St. Francis d'Assissi Congregation – Christ the King, were in charge of parish schools for children. Between 1895 and 1918 there were 15 such schools in the U.S. (Friš 1995: 204–238).

within the Church since 1908 (Trunk 1912: 412). At the peak of immigration into the U.S. women didn't have a Slovenian-American newspaper dedicated to women's topics. The only true women's magazine was *Zarja* (The Dawn) from Chicago, which was established in 1929 and continues to be published. It is the newspaper of the Slovenska ženska zveza Amerike (The Slovenian Women's Union of America) in the U.S.[12] Prior to World War I there were some housekeeping magazines, such as *Naš gospodar* (Our Manager) (1912–13) from Chicago and the *Slovenski ilustrovani list* (Slovenian Illustrated Gazette) (1913) from New York. We can find female editors in religious press, for example Sebastijana Neuwirth (Amalija)[13] at the youth paper *Mala Ave Maria* (1917–18). From the end World War I until 1926, teacher, writer, and poet Katka Zupančič edited the *Mladinski list* (Voice of Youth) (established 1922), and the poet Anna Krasna Praček in 1943/44 the *Glas naroda* (The People's Voice), published in New York between 1893 and 1963.

Šušteršič's advice in 1903 was intended for the existing and future female immigrants and informed them about the possibilities for employment in the U.S. in specific cities and states. He stated that the majority of them were wives or led households for their families. Many were employed in mines, especially coalmines, doing the above-ground work; in factories making, for example, furniture, kitchen utensils, and iron objects; others worked as cooks or maids for Slovenian or American families; as waitresses in restaurants, coffeehouses, and hotels; as seamstresses and (straw) hat makers; and as butchers. Their knowledge of the English language, and in some cases, of German, opened doors for them and helped them find employment. It is interesting that Šušteršič mentioned working in mining and factories before he mentioned their work in the service industry as maids, cooks, and waitresses. We see no mention of them in farm work. With regard to mining, it is safe to assume that they were doing the surface work, not work below ground. He only mentions the phenomenon of "boarding houses"[14] once, perhaps because they were rare, or simply because he didn't want to point them out. For women, taking in single men for food, board, and laundry often meant an income much higher than the one the husband brought from the mine. It

12 See Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik's contribution in this book ("Representation and Self-Representation").

13 Sebastijana Neuwirth (1871–1936) was a school sister from Maribor in Lower Styria (Austria), who arrived in the United States in 1912, and joined the Catholic work.

14 Boarding-houses (*penzioni*), provided lodging for single male migrants. They were run by women who also cooked and did laundry. For many men, boarding houses were the first lodging in the New World, and for women, a source of good income.

enabled the women a certain level of independence, and it enabled the moralist's rants about loose morals and drunken debauchery. In passing, he mentioned that in Leadville (Colorado), marriageable Slovenian girls were scarce, as there were as many as 500 bachelors from the regions of Dolenjska (Ribnica and surroundings) and Bela krajina (mostly Metlika) wishing to settle down (Šušteršič 1903: 59–125). He didn't neglect to mention that in 1895 he had established the first Slovenian parish school in the United States in Joliet (Illinois), where two sisters from the order of St. Francis taught (Šušteršič 1903: 73–85). He had some harsh words to say about the women in New York, as they neglected religious rituals and didn't fulfil their duties to their Church. He reproached them for their laziness and claimed that the women who served in houses could get up and come to the first service at 6 a.m. And once they got married, they found even more excuses to avoid God's service (Šušteršič 1903: 100–102). Based on the collected data from his informants and his own observations, Šušteršič presented information on the number of persons or families, where they came from, what the church organisation was like, religious life, children's schooling, as well as the list of possible occupations given above. As for women, we can be surprised that he mentioned them specifically.

Let me now draw some attention to the migrant wave in which men were the minority. The first *slamnikarice* – female straw-hat makers from Domžale, a town north of Ljubljana with a strong milliner industry – arrived in New York as early as 1882, but the real wave started only in 1905. The majority worked in New York, others in Cleveland, Chicago, and elsewhere. Franc Bernik, the parish priest in Domžale, created a list of them in 1923. Of the 384 Domžale parishioners in the United States, 240 were women. Many married in America. In Bernik's opinion they maintained close ties to their hometown and he emphasised their religious faith, though it was not manifested through attendance at religious services (Bernik 1923: 245–254). New York was where many maids, seamstresses, and cooks found work. They needed to speak German at a minimum; English was of course preferable. In the beginning of the 20th century, seamstresses and cooks earned between 5 and 20 dollars per week, while a girl in a straw-hat factory could make between 10 and 25 dollars a week (Šušteršič 1903: 101). It's worth remembering that straw-hat makers (women and men) were skilled workers. Many convinced their relatives and friends to join them in the States. The majority of women were young girls. Older women were less inclined to join unions, which more attractive to the young (Arnez 1966: 95). Despite that, women found themselves in a social environment of organised or informal associations, of

A girl wearing a traditional costume, holding a Carniolan and an American flag. Source: Amerika in Amerikanci *(Trunk 1912: 608)*

people of parochial or liberal, or socialist persuasions, especially in the era between the two wars and after World War II (Praček Krasna 1991).

It seems that the only public space for a female migrant was in migrant organisations and the Church, and even there her position was subordinate and unequal. In all cases, especially in the U.S., there remains the question of female migrants' contact with public space beyond that mentioned above. Unfortunately, this has been studied neither for the period presented here, nor for later periods.[15] Most immigrants, male or female, were not organised into Slovenian communities. They lived without any contact with them. The deeply rooted opinion that the wife and the mother was responsible for all things related to household and childrearing included her role in instilling national and religious emotions into an emigrant child. The Church was aware of the responsibility of the women who stayed behind in Slovenia and had to take over male jobs, not the least the caring for the economic needs of the family. The Church was primarily concerned with broken families, which is why they advised male emigrants to return as soon as possible, or else send for their wives and children to join them. "Do not break off the tender ties, do not break up families!" emphasised the priest Jurij Trunk, who knew the conditions among the Slovenes in the U.S. very well (Trunk 1912: 403). Moral values were examined, the so-called bad influence on the Slovenian environment when a wife was alienated from her husband who worked abroad. They also claimed that many emigrant women "waddle into the swamp" and lose their faith and

15 When discussing immigrant organisations in the new environments, it's important to note that these are only the tip of the iceberg. The majority of immigrants were either inactive or simply integrated or assimilated in the new environment.

morals; it was not only the "prostitutes" they were talking about. Many at home scolded the departing girls that the longing for freedom, the desire for easier work and a more comfortable life and striving for prestige and so on would quickly bring them down to the "depths of the swamp" (Anon. 1913: 183). In short, the public image of an emigrant woman was often black and white, but more and more married women followed the advice to keep the family together, be it on this or the other side of the Atlantic.

Immediately following World War I, the feminist movement began spreading among Slovenian women in America. Within the associations, they founded housekeeping and social clubs and published articles in newspapers. They participated in conventions, and sometimes were even members of the (male) board of directors of the central organisation. And when there were not enough women to form a women's section of an organisation, they simply took part in the men's group. They were active in charity work and were particularly involved in collecting funds for the post-war homeland. For this reason, they founded the Association of Yugoslav Women and Girls. They entered educational activities, for example, choirs, amateur theatre groups, etc. They were also members of the mixed Yugoslav Club in New York, where they organised a women's section, made up mostly of Slovenian and Croatian women. They supported and took care of Church facilities, but they didn't really much care for Slovenian national and cultural questions, at least not according to Minka Govekar:

> One must not forget that 99 percent of Slovenians in America are peasants. Strange there should be not one newspaperwoman or writer among them: she would surely never lack work. (Govekar 1926: 275)

Their public appearances in social and cultural fields and at the association meetings were rare. However, there were no explicitly feminist movements among them. Their battle for daily bread too, was hard. In the public space, their opinion was more respected than the opinion of women back in Slovenia, as they enjoyed all the social rights accorded to American women in general. They were freer than they would be at home. Such were the views of Minka Govekar (1874–1950), a teacher, translator, and campaigner for women's rights, when she wrote about "poor national education" in all but the Catholic Slovenian families. She gave two reasons for this: first, Slovenian parishes in the States cultivated the language, customs, and religion; and second, Catholic families sent their children to parish schools where they were taught in Slovene. Other children were only educated in English speak-

ing schools. However, even among Catholic children there was a noticeable decline in the knowledge of the Slovenian language, and that was due to the weak nationalist sentiments of the parents, especially mothers. Many Slovenian women who entered higher education were considered lost, because they were on their way of becoming Americans, by education and by feeling (Govekar 1926: 274–276).

The most active and diversified women's movement in the emigrant communities between the two wars was in the U.S. As early as 1915 Marie Prisland (1890–1979) from Sheboygan (Wisconsin), founded the first Slovenian Women's Benefit Society as a part of the Carniolan Slovenian Catholic Society (Kranjska Slovenska Katoliška Jednota) – KSKJ (Cleveland, 1894) and the Slovene National Benefit Society (Slovenska Narodna Podporna Jednota) (Chicago, 1904), both offering membership to men and women. So in the spirit of the age, they were considered equal to men. But they began establishing their own benefit societies within the Societies (Jednota). An interesting question arose: should a married woman belong to the association where her husband was already active, or should she join a separate, women's one? Men felt the former was appropriate, while women generally favoured the latter solution. This was the first sign of emancipation that made rapid progress among American-Slovenians as well. In the mid-1920s there were 49 women's associations belonging to the KSKJ; of the 18 000 adult insured members, more than 8000 were women. Between the two world wars, two important women's societies were established, the Slovenian Women's Union of America (SWUA), established in 1926, and the Progressive Slovene Women of America (1934–2004). The SWUA was established as a benefit society based in Joliet (Illinois). It is an independent and Catholic women's benefit society, working in the fields of education, culture, national protection, charity, and publishing. They publish the magazine *Zarja* (The Dawn). The founder and first president was Marie Prisland. It gave special emphasis to educating women, spreading American and Slovenian ideals, encouraging the participation of Slovenian women in American public issues, and helping its members. In 1964 they had 96 branches and approximately 120 000 members all over the U.S. (Friš 1998: 16; Petrič 1995: 360). The second association, the Progressive Slovene Women of America, was based in Cleveland (Ohio). The statute guarantees its members religious, philosophical, ethical, and political freedom. They stood for spreading knowledge and reaffirming social consciousness among the Slovenes in the United States, and for the improvement of their social and economic situation. The members viewed post-

war Yugoslavia favourably and offered economic help, for example, with the construction of the Children's Hospital in Ljubljana (Žitnik 1995: 370–371).

SLOVENIAN WOMEN IN THE SHADOW OF THE PYRAMIDS

The emigration of Slovenian girls and women to Egypt was a typical female migration. It was the best known and the longest of the migrations; it began just after the completion of the Suez Canal (1869) and lasted roughly until World War II. This migration is unusual not only because it is almost exclusively female – men were a clear minority – but also because of the limited geographic space from which the migration originated: the Goriška region, the lower Vipava valley, the Karst, and the Istrian area beyond the port of Trieste. In Egypt they were known as *les Goriciennes* (the women of Gorica), or *les Slaves* and *les Slovènes*. At home, they were known – after their presumed final destination, Alexandria, Egypt – as *aleksandrinke*, Alexandrian women. The nearness of the port certainly played a role in embarking on a ship for Egypt. The reasons for migration were poverty and the possibility of greater earnings. Another interesting thing about this migration wave is that it occurred over a long period of time. The memory of it is still very much alive in the Goriška region (Koprivec 2008: 167–184). At the beginning of the 20th century there was much social activity among the Slovenian women in Egypt. With the help of the Franciscan father Hubert Rant, the first Slovenian priest in Egypt, they established the Slavic association Sloga (Unity) in Alexandria. Three years later it was transformed into a Slovenian association, Slovenska palma ob Nilu (Slovenian Palm by the Nile), that was active until 1908 (Jagodic 1967: 207–208). The immigrants were soon gathering in the Krščanska zveza Slovenk (Slovenian Women's Christian Union), established in 1902, also following Father Rant's initiative. In 1908, the Slovenian school sisters from the Order of St. Francis and Christ the King from Maribor (Lower Styria) were responsible for kindergarten and school. Some working mothers brought children with them, and girls got married and had children needing someone to take care of them. Later, Father Rant collected money to set up the Asylum of Franz Josef (Azil Franca Jožefa), which in 1930 had to be renamed St. Francis Asylum (Asilo San Francesco), for servants in Cairo. The Asylum provided support to girls and women that found themselves unemployed (Makuc 1993). In 1906, the Society of St. Cyril and St. Method was established as a women's association. The purpose of the society was to organise cultural and religious activities, with an eye to the prevention of moral destruction. The departure of the *aleksandrinke*, women, to the Muslim world started rumors about their morals, despite the fact that were

mostly working for European families in Egypt. The Church in particular was bothered by the fact that they were serving as wet-nurses, which meant weaning their own babies and leaving them with the fathers, other relatives, or even putting them in foster care.

The society had a library; the members put on plays and received information about events at home by reading Slovenian newspapers. At the turn of the century their lives in Alexandria and Cairo were discussed in Slovenian newspapers, especially in the liberal *Soča* (1871–1915) and the Catholic *Primorski list* (1893–1913). How many were there? Estimates differ. In Alexandria proper there were between 4000 and 5000 Slovenes, of whom only 100 were men. In the whole of Egypt the estimate is 7700 Slovenian women and 300 men (Anon. 1897). They all had different stories, beautiful and ugly, just like life itself. Many planned to go for a short time but stayed much longer. Their fates were also shaped by political turmoil and the two world wars (Barbič and Miklavčič-Brezigar 1999: 164–177).

Pavla Susič, the secretary of the Society of St. Cyril and St. Method in Cairo wrote a letter to Minka Govekar, mentioned above, and informed her that Slovenian women in Egypt nurtured the pure Slovenian word and the gentle, lovely and resonant Slovenian song. They put on Slovenian plays. They were aware that they were members of a small nation, but one with a rich culture, and they would not forget their mother tongue. She mentioned that they had a reputation for being honest, clean, reliable, and hard working. The society was for women only; their leader was a priest (Govekar 1926: 276–277). This information was undoubtedly aimed at all those back home who doubted their moral and Christian behaviour. The Slovenian press of the time carried too many stories about their dark fates; stories that were denied by many, including Dr. Karol Pečnik, a physician in Alexandria, who categorically stated that the girls in the port of Trieste and in Gorica were in a lot more danger than the girls along the Nile.

The majority worked for families, but there were a fair number of women who ran their own businesses as milliners and seamstresses. Before World War I there was a school run by the school sisters of Christ the King from Maribor, where they taught Slovene, German, English, and French. The school was later closed, even though the women felt they needed it. The Yugoslav consulate was not interested, because there were allegedly not enough children. In Alexandria were an asylum for unemployed women and the incoming girls and a job agency (Govekar 1926: 277–279). We have to emphasise their status as wet-nurses, cooks, chambermaids, nannies, governesses, and companions to the wives of wealthy businessmen; they were respected

and had a reputation for being honest and diligent. The knowledge of foreign languages was a must, their image was elegant – if we have before us the albums of photographs, for example, from the time between the two wars (Barbič and Miklavčič-Brezigar 2002: 109–110).

What is surprising is the response to this migration, stemming from a rich array of fiction and non-fiction. It seems that they were more concerned with descriptions of tragedy and the sad fates of the *aleksandrinke*, the suffering abroad, etc., than they were with highlighting the positive aspects of this phenomenon. For several decades this memory has been preserved; now the emphasis is shifting more and more towards the scientific analysis of their personal stories (Koprivec 2006: 97–115; Škrlj 2009: 143–189).

EUROPE: MIGRANTS CLOSE TO HOME

Housewives and Seasonal Workers in European Fields

Being a housewife was probably the most typical activity for women migrants, no matter their new environment. During the Westphalian period, that is, the period of male migration to the North Rhein and the Westphalian parts of Germany, which we can trace from the 1880s until World War I, the wives and children either left with the men or followed later. Although the peddlers from the Bela krajina, Gottschee, and Dolenjska regions were almost exclusively male and – interestingly – focused mostly on the German speaking parts of Europe, the share of women in the Westphalian period is relatively large. The German census of 1900 asked about mother tongue and the country of origin of foreign citizens, and found 9193 persons with Slovene as their mother tongue, 6453 men and 2740 women. Both came mostly from Styria and Carniola, which were parts of the Habsburg monarchy (Valenčič 1990: 64). Women were the pillars of family life. When priest and politician Janez Evangelist Krek (1865–1917)[16] visited them in 1899 he mentioned them in connection to religious life and organising through the Church. The women joined the sororities of Christian mothers that were active in the Catholic parts of Germany. On the other hand, church circles were worried about the corruption of the women as the result of materialistic thinking and life. They wrote about the purity of the girls that only the Catholic Church could protect. Women were also considered a danger to men in the same way drinking and gambling were. Krek explained his views in study notes titled *Dostavki Socijalizmu* (Addenda to Socialism) (undated, probably 1906), where he touched upon

16 Janez Evangelist Krek was the most important Slovenian Catholic politician at the beginning of the 20th century, a member of the Viennese parliament and an expert on Slovenian emigration in Germany.

The Slovenian Catholic society St. Barbara in Meerbeck (around 1910). Source: Author's private collection.

the questions of family, prostitution, and emigration. Through his thoughts on the draft of the Austrian emigration law – which, by the way, Austria never managed to pass – he vaguely mentioned that the law should protect the safety of the wives who stay at home. It should appoint a guardian for them for the time men are working abroad. He also demanded harsh provisions for the trafficking of girls (Krek 1906: 43–45). He knew many Slovenes in Germany who married Protestant girls, which he considered a heresy. Interfaith marriages were a consequence of the fact that only a civil marriage contract was required in Germany. He was worried for the children from these marriages who were supposedly raised in the Protestant spirit. All this, according to Krek, was the result of ignorance and religious indifference (Drnovšek 2007b: 84). Krek paid little attention to the question of women. Some labelled his attitude toward women as moderately traditionalist; a woman for him was primarily a mother. Krek saw Christianity as the only solution of the women's question, while he considered family and family life sacred (Mlinar 1992: 195–210). After Krek, missionaries came to Germany, among them was I. Knific, who approached a family in the working-class settlement Kletterheide in Dortmund, a family

that was – according to him – Slovenian, but already Germanised. He was horrified to find that they had pictures of Karl Marx and Friederich Engels on their walls, rather than a cross or an image of a saint (Knific 1900). This family reflects another side of the emigrants in Germany, one that felt closer to social democratic ideology than it did to Catholicism. The question of the quick assimilation of Slovenian men and women in Germany remains unanswered. Missionary Luka Arh wrote in 1900 that Slovenes in Germany were lost to their nation, as the mother and the father still communicated in Slovene, but the children did not. He blamed German schools for that (Arh 1900). The organisation of women was also poor. There were no special women's societies, but that doesn't mean that they didn't participate in male societies, especially as singers, in various Church fraternities, different branches of the society of Mary, etc. (Werner 1985).[17]

Between the two world wars some believed that the erstwhile Westphalians disappeared into the German melting pot (Schmelztiegel). The German sociologist Erich Werner found, on the basis of the statistical data from the German census of 16 June 1933, that 17 258 Slovenes registered as Yugoslav citizens lived in Germany (Werner 1985: 85–86). The interesting finding from this census is the gender ratio and the knowledge of the Slovenian language. The ratio between men and women was 8881:8377, that is, almost equal; as for the language: 75,2 % spoke only German at home, 7,9 % used German and Slovene, and only 16,9 % used Slovene exclusively in communication at home and with family and friends (Werner 1985: 91). Many had Germanised their first and last names, but felt Slovene because of a personal or family conviction. Just before the outbreak of World War II there were two main organisations working in Germany: Zveza jugoslovanskih narodnih katoliških društev v Nemčiji (Union of Yugoslav National Catholic Societies in Germany; 34 societies and 2243 members) and Zveza jugoslovanskih delavskih in podpornih društev (Union of Yugoslav Workers and Benefit Societies; 36 societies and about 1690 members). Beyond these, there were 16 women's societies with 218 members. Yugoslavia sent Anton Šlibar and Marija Ažman as emigrant teachers to Germany.[18] A German priest, Božidar Tensundern

17 Societies of Mary have existed since the mid-16th century as a part of particular, Marian, activities of the universal church and the church in Slovenia, and were particularly strong at the turn of the 20th century. Glorification of the mother in the Catholic Church was strongly present. The image of Mary from Brezje, the central pilgrimage church in Slovenia, was venerated among the emigrants regardless of their sex (Zalar 2001).

18 The few emigrant teachers in European countries were sent and paid by Yugoslavia. In addition to carrying out their teaching duties – focusing of the preservation of the Slovenian

from Gladbeck, started a Slovenian school.[19] From a photograph from 1926, the gazes of ten males and eighteen females meet our eyes (Drnovšek 1994: 150–157).

In the first half of the period between the two world wars male emigration was prevalent, in the second, female. After the introduction of immigration quotas for immigration to the U.S. (1924), the male migration wave turned towards the developed countries of the European west (France, Luxemburg, Belgium, the Netherlands). It was interrupted by the Great Depression in 1929 and in the decade that followed, more cases of repatriation than emigration are recorded. However, in the second half of the 1930s, there was a renewed interest by French and German employers for workers of both sexes in agriculture and forestry. While male emigration to the mining areas of Western Europe was mainly from the central mining areas of Slovenia (the cities of Zagorje, Trbovlje, and Hrastnik), the agrarian workforce emigrated mostly from Prekmurje. The greatest recipients of female workforce were France and Germany. The work was typically seasonal in character and regulated by the bilateral agreements Yugoslavia signed with different countries, for example Germany in 1928/29 and 1939. I will only briefly present the attitude towards female seasonal workers in Germany. Workers younger than 25 were in principle forbidden to seek individual accommodation in places where seasonal work took place, a restriction for security reasons. The Law of Agreement from 31 December 1929 no longer included the promise of protecting the health and morals of minors and women. The work contract (1928/29) allowed workers (men, married women with their husband's consent, minors with their parents' consent) to enter employment at a German employer that ended no later than 15 December, which was tied to the end of agricultural work. Female workers had to guarantee that they were not pregnant and were skilled in farm work. Wages were the same for both genders, and foreign workers earned as much as German workers did. They lived in shared housing, separated by gender. They were also paid in-kind. The employer designated one of the women to be the cook; she was also responsible for cleaning the shared living areas and bedrooms and peeling potatoes. The number of cooks was calculated according to the number of workers, although there was no proportion set in the contract. The employer demanded

language – they were responsible for wider cultural, societal, and other tasks. Their work was based on respect for the Catholic Church.

19 Tensundern Božidar (1890–1972), a German theologian and community organiser, learned the Slovenian language in Slovenia and served in Gladbeck and Höevl. He worked as a teacher and religious life organiser among the Slovenes in Germany.

obedience, compliance with house rules, and preciseness at work. In the case of immoral acts the employer could terminate the contract. The 1939 Agreement introduced only minor changes, for example, in addition to not being pregnant, female workers were forbidden to have the following diseases: eye diseases (trachoma), skin diseases (scabies), sexually transmitted diseases, spinal curvature, and varices. A medical exam to rule these out became a requirement for employment (Drnovšek 2006: 219–234).

Franciscan Kazimir Zakrajšek and the Emigration of Girls and Women

In the period between the two world wars, the Franciscan Kazimir Zakrajšek (1878–1958), who had returned from the U.S. in 1927, was the main force behind the idea of organising Slovenian emigration. Among other things, he was the editor of *Izseljenski vestnik* (Emigration Gazette) (1932–1935), in 1938 he edited the *Izseljenski zbornik* (Emigration Yearbook), and he advocated cooperation between the Church and the state in the field of migration politics. At the outbreak of World War II, he returned to the United States.

In 1929, Zakrajšek listed five "poisons" to which emigrants were exposed: drinking, "whoring", atheism, bad company, and bad newspapers. As for the second "poison" he scolded male emigrants who abandoned themselves to fornication and burdened themselves with the "loathsome and shameful disease". He advised them to take their wives with them, for, when abroad, a wife is an emigrant's "guardian angel". Even more: he also believed that a man who took his wife with him could save up more than if she'd stayed at home. Separation can cause coolness in marriage and push the husband into the abyss of sexual misconduct. Zakrajšek also suggested that young men hurry and send their first earnings to their betrothed and marry them as soon as possible. If they had not chosen yet, they should choose a girl in their home parish and marry as soon as possible (Zakrajšek 1929: 9–12). Zakrajšek had a great deal of active experience in religious and organisational work among the Slovenes in the U.S.: referring to the boarding houses mentioned above, he claimed that women could easily fall prey to male lust which put their conjugal love and fidelity in danger. If they had children, they were exposed to scandal. He warned men not to become slaves to alcohol and worthless life. He also issued warnings to women who ran boarding houses, writing that men were dishonest and liked to avoid payment. "Therefore, woman, it is better to starve abroad than enter this kind of life," he concluded his counselling (Zakrajšek 1929: 20–21).

The Church was active at home in issues concerning migrants. For the purpose of the *Pouk našemu narodu* (Teaching for Our Nation), which was published as the sixth brochure of the *Izseljeniški vestnik* in 1931, they treated emigration – within the frame of the "national emigration programme" – as a "necessary evil". They pointed out the common moral aspect and advised that wives should follow their husbands and girls their boyfriends. A marriage of a Slovenian couple would also ease repatriation. The tireless Zakrajšek was joined in his endeavours by Franc Grivec (1878–1963), a theologian, historian, and Slavic studies scholar, by and Alojzij Odar (1902–1953), a theologian and lawyer. Together they published a booklet, *Če greš na tuje* (If You Go Abroad) (1934). It contained a special chapter "Za slovenska dekleta" (For Slovenian Girls) (Grivec et al. 1934: 12–15). They stated that Slovenian girls left for the cities in the southern parts of Yugoslavia and abroad. They labelled this as an "emigrant disease" that infected more than 10 000 Slovenian girls. The opinion of Catholic priests was that many had been morally ruined, so their advice was: "Don't leave home, either to the cities or abroad!" Despite the hard life in the countryside, the girls should be aware that they did not know the terrifying malice of the world they would encounter. As house servants they were to become slaves to their mistresses and lewd masters, working long hours for a pittance. And then the three moralists gave the well-known advice: if you have to go, take your religion with you, turn to a Church organisation, read religious press, for example, *Bogoljub* (Theophil) (1903–1944) and *Domoljub* (Patriot) (1880–1944) which were popular among the general population. They also advised the girls to maintain contact with their parents, but certainly not with men, and to refrain from immoral acts that would poison their blood and soul. They also emphasised that the girls should not enter a marriage with a non-Catholic. In the last part, they repeated the warning and again threw in a little something uplifting:

> Slovenian girls, stay at home! But if you do leave, do not bring shame to your homeland and your nation. And if you have to leave home and go abroad, leave so that your departure will be the first step to happiness abroad. (Grivec et al. 1934: 15)

In 1933 the Društvo za varstvo deklet (Society for the Protection of Girls) was established in Ljubljana to offer help to women and girls travelling for work and to help them find jobs. Similar societies were set up in Maribor, Zagreb, Beograd, Skopje, Sarajevo, and Split. They offered lodging and help with finding jobs, cared for unemployed maids, and organised meetings,

lectures, and entertainment for them. The Society paid special attention to the train stations, but to the stations and ports in Yugoslavia, where they were helped by individual Society members, as well as school sisters, sisters of mercy, and nuns. Abroad, they could take refuge with different national or international organisations; in Vienna with the Caritas (Zentralstelle der Caritas socialis), Home (Heim), and Social Assistance (Zentralstelle der BhM Soziale Hilfe); in the Netherlands they could go to Homc Lydia in Amsterdam and to Kortenaerstraat No.1 in Rotterdam; and in Basel (Switzerland) to Marienhaus (Grivec et al. 1934: 45–47, 53). This international help network, however, was not very extensive.

At the first Slovenian emigration congress in Ljubljana, on 1 July 1935, Josip Srebrenić (1876–1966), the bishop of Krk, an island in the Adriatic Sea, warned again in his inaugural speech about the moral decline of "Slovenian girls" in the south of Yugoslavia, and advocated for a Slovenian Catholic priest who would provide moral, religious, and national care and support (Anon. 1936: 17–18). Milica Grafenauer, the president of the Society for the Protection of Girls spoke on her association's behalf (Vidovič-Miklavčič 1996: 74–78; Grafenauer 1936) and advocated increasing help for female migrants, especially servants, both within Yugoslavia and abroad. Zakrajšek supported her statements, claiming that they were exposed to economic and moral demise and bad education. At that time, Zakrajšek was the president of the St. Raphael Society and the main organiser in the field of joining all forces for the protection of and connections with Slovenian (Catholic) emigrants around the world (Friš 1995). The congress adopted a resolution regarding the establishment of a special agency at the authorities of the Drava Banovina in Ljubljana and the Ministry of Social Policy in Belgrade (Anon. 1936: 46–48). Special acknowledgement was given to the school sisters as the educators and leaders of emigrant youth in the U.S., Argentina, and Egypt, where they worked as teachers in Slovenian parish schools, as organisers of home economics schools and courses, and managers of charity institutions, especially those intended for the protection of girls (Anon. 1936: 49–51).

At the first Slovenian emigration congress (1935) in Ljubljana, Milica Grafenauer, the president of the Society for the Protection of Girls, expressed her concern for girls who left for cities at home and abroad, especially as servants. They wanted to establish contact with the girls abroad. Zakrajšek agreed and claimed there were thousands of girls in Egypt, France, and elsewhere, that many of them were victims, and – thus repeating the words of bishop Srebrenić – that for every fallen girl, a mother goes down as well. The resolution of the congress asked both the Ministry of Social Policy and the

government of the Drava Banovina in Ljubljana to set up a special agency for the protection of girls. That was all. The Catholic Church emphasised that the protection of the girls could only be achieved by the Church and religion when abroad.

The Work of Slovenian Female Migrants in Western Europe Between the Two World Wars

The community organisations and emigrant societies of female migrants can be divided into Catholic and leftist, of whom a very few were communists. The women from the Primorska region in particular leaned towards the left, especially those who migrated to France, Belgium, Luxemburg, and the Netherlands. In addition to Slovenian societies, female migrants were also organised into pro-Yugoslav societies. In Germany in 1926, there were 25 male mining societies of St. Barbara (750 members) and nine sororities of the Rosary (820 members). With the advent of Nazism in 1933, the Slovenian Catholic societies were allowed to continue their activities. In 1938 there was a split when some Catholic societies organised into Yugoslav National Societies under the great National-socialist influence (Tensundern 1973: 151). In 1938 there were 34 societies operating in Germany with a total of 2234 members under the Union of Yugoslav National Catholic societies of St. Barbara and 36 societies with 1690 members within the Union of Yugoslav Workers' and Benefit Societies. Independently, there were 16 women's societies with 218 members (Drnovšek 1996: 33–49). Women were most active in Belgium and the Netherlands, but also active in France.

"Come out, Slovenian emigrant women and girls in Alès and Grand-Combe!" invited the public appeal by Adela Kosec from Alès (the Gard department), published in July 1938 in *Glas izseljencev* to establish a women's society, Proti vojni in fašizmu (Against the War and Fascism) in France's Gard department (Kosec 1938). The 1930s were a time of economic, ideological, and political frictions in Europe and Slovenia. Fascism, Nazism, and communism aggravated relationships and divided people. The overture to new military combat and aggravated opposites was the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939). And fear of the war was very much alive among French women, as many French men had lost their lives on the frontlines of World War I. The Spanish Civil War mobilised many left-leaning emigrants, and to an extent, migrant women as well. France, in particular, was the ultimate destination of many Slovenian women from Yugoslavia, as well as those who lived in the territories that were annexed to Italy after the First World War. They went to France as wives, factory workers, agricultural labourers in the French coun-

tryside, and as house servants in Paris and other cities. Despite the more favourable circumstances in France governed by the Front populaire (Popular Front), the emigrant press related the dissatisfaction of emigrant women with their difficulties in obtaining work, lower salaries, and physical and emotional exploitation, therefore we must not be astonished by the appeal of Kristina Fabič for the establishment of a girls' association for "migrant girls" in Paris, where about 200 were working, mostly as house servants (Fabič 1938). In particular, left-leaning women migrants, influenced by the communist party, gathered, for example, into the Antifašistično žensko društvo (Anti-fascist Women's Associations) (Pas-de-Calais). They were very successful until the beginning of World War II, especially in gathering help for Spanish people. The women also gathered in societies for peace, and against war and Fascism, including societies in Courriers, Lens, Vendin-le-Vieil, Sallaumines (Pas-de-Calais) (Perpar 1938a). They participated in international women's meetings. Two representatives of migrant girls and women and Yugoslav women students attended an International Women's Conference in Marseille in May 1938, where together with about 700 women they cast their vote of support for republican Spain and the struggle of the Czech nation for independence and survival, and condemned the Japanese appetite towards China. They wrote, among other things:

> Emigrants from Yugoslavia must take care that the extremely important world congress of women for peace and democracy also echo in full amongst ourselves. (Smrekar 1938)

A Slovenian representative attended the Peace Congress (Rassemblement Universel pour la Paix) in Paris in 1938 (Koprivšek 1938). Emigrants in the north of the country (Pas-de-Calais) were particularly active; on 13 October 1938 they organised the first congress of women's associations in Liévin, and three Slovenian delegates from Lens and three from Sallaumines attended. They emphasised the non-partisan character of their movement, in line with the illusion of that time that it was possible to unite everyone by placing goals above ideological choices and worldview. It was to become a women's movement for all women of good will, regardless of their worldview. The spirit of the Popular Front, relaxed and favourable to the working class, was of short duration, and ideological interests prevailed. On one side there was the Church and on the other the communist movement in France, in which Slovenian communists, following the Comintern directive (1937) that communists must pay more attention to the women's movement for peace

Men and women of Prekmurje, waiting in Murska Sobota for the departure abroad for seasonal work. Source: Spominski zbornik Slovenije *(Lavrič et al. 1939: 531).*

and against fascism, also participated (Drnovšek 1988 and 1990). The Catholic part condemned their "politicising", undoubtedly because of ideological differences, but cited loyalty to France, the host country (Anon. 1938a). The women actively joined together to help raise money and mail packages for the Yugoslav brigadists (known in Slovenian as španski borci, the Spanish fighters), to assist their wives in childbirth and with newborns, their children, and later to volunteer in the care of invalids.

They also wrote letters of encouragement to the wounded. The women of Pas-de-Calais paid special attention to the Slovenian Cankar squad and gave them a flag that they sent to the front along with a memory book (Ilovar 1938). Their modest, but heartfelt contributions appeared in the emigrant press, for example *Glas izseljencev* (Ilovar 1937). In this paper men, Tomo Brejc for example, also wrote about women.[20] As a communist he criticised the hypocritical care for mothers in capitalist societies, where a pregnant

20 Tomo Brejc (1904–1964), a communist, was exiled to France where he worked among Slovenian emigrants. As of May 1937, he was the editor of *Glas izseljencev* (1936–1939), the most important Slovenian communist paper in France.

worker had to operate machines until she went into labour and then return before her body had the chance to recuperate from pregnancy and childbirth. Brejc also stressed that women were more vulnerable to job loss and earned lower wages than men. Brejc accused the Italian fascists of pressure to increase the number of childbirths in order to raise more men for the army, and criticised state education of the children (Brejc 1938). It was typical of all the previously mentioned totalitarian regimes in 1930s Europe to control family life, and that included raising fertility rates and raising children in "the national spirit". *Glas izseljencev* also published information for female agricultural seasonal workers (women from Prekmurje), telling them that they could turn to the Fédération Nationale des Travailleurs de l'Agriculture (C. G. T.) for all questions regarding their rights (Anon. 1938b).

The journal also appealed to women not to prevent men from being active in their unions (Anon. 1938c) and wrote about the holiday at sea that the Vesna benefit and educational society from Sallaumines organised for children (Perpar 1938b; Drnovšek 1988: 105–108). It was very active despite the protests from Catholic circles that advocated political inactivity in the host country. In June the Catholic newspaper *Izseljenski vestnik* published a letter from Liévin, in which the author comments on the end of the Spanish Civil War:

> Our emigrant life is now peaceful, more peaceful that it was in the last couple of years. All those pesky agitators and their newspapers disappeared overnight, gone is the incessant collecting of money for all sorts of things. The women who collected funds at the anti-fascist rallies can now return to their work at home more easily…our only wish is for peace, just like all people who do not wish to lord over others but simply work and live peacefully. (Anon. 1939: 106)

Unfortunately, the hope for a more peaceful life did not come true, as the winds of war in Western Europe had already flared up.

FEMALE REFUGEES, FORCED MIGRANTS, DISPLACED PERSONS, CONCENTRATION CAMP INTERNEES, AND EMIGRANTS

The First and Second World Wars caused waves of refugees consisting mostly of women, children, and old men. This is understandable, as all men capable of fighting were drafted. This was not the first time in history women had had to leave their homes and move elsewhere, willingly or by force. Take, for instance, the period of Turkish plundering in the 15th and 16th centuries when mostly young men and women were taken into captivity. Slovenian oral

history holds a number of stories about successful escapes of people of both genders from Turkish captivity (Šmitek 1986: 21–22). How many young girls who transgressed the accepted norms of their own time had to enter, more by force than on their own accord, convents? In this case, it was women from the higher strata of the society: nobility, the landed gentry, and wealthy city dwellers, because serfs could not become nuns as they were not free subjects. Female convents mostly imposed cloistering, or belonged to orders that took vows of poverty, while male ones were more oriented towards production (Hančič 2004: 277–282). Without any doubt, there were many kinds of pressure on women, for example, arranged weddings, or placing children from the same family in foster care segregated by gender, etc. Teachers in particular were at times obliged to go where school authorities sent them; the situation was similar for female postal workers. However, the most massive form of migration was that of refugees from the wars of 1914–1918 and 1939–1945 and the events that followed. In addition, I would like to emphasise that not everyone migrating during or after either war was a refugee; there were many other types of forced migration, for example, evacuations, internment into concentration camps, deportations, corvée labour, etc.

World War I was a total war. From the migration point of view it was two-fold; first, men aged from 18 to 50 were sent to different fronts; second, displaced families were scattered around different parts of the Habsburg monarchy or the Kingdom of Italy. Following the opening of the Soča (Isonzo) front, the Austrian authorities moved about 80 000 people from the eastern part of the front to Carniola, lower Styria and Carinthia, and to the refugee camps in Lower Austria. Between 10 000 and 20 000 Slovenes had to move to the Kingdom of Italy (Svoljšak 2001: 124). The jobs that were considered men's now landed squarely on women's shoulders. The woman became the head of the family and was supposed to protect its spiritual and economic well-being (Svoljšak 2001: 123). One consequence was the feminisation of certain once-male jobs, in the war industry for example, which resulted in more emancipation and higher self-confidence of the female population.

The history of war focuses mostly on the military events, primarily the domain of men, and tends to forget the civilians: women, children, the men sent to fight. The victims were also divided into those who died in combat and were acknowledged with monuments and memorials after the war, and those killed by famine, disease, epidemics, etc. In wartime, a special role was afforded to Slovenian women refugees, who – as with their counterparts in the hinterland – carried all the burden of wartime life, many in refugee camps, others outside of them throughout Carniola and Styria. With the help

of the Posredovalnica za goriške begunce (The Agency for Refugees from the Goriška Region) in Ljubljana, they found employment as seamstresses making garments and undergarments for the military, worked as refugees in laundries, kitchens, and various workshops. Teachers taught in schools and other educational institutions. Many middle-class city women collected materials or money, preserved food, organised charity events, worked as nurses, etc. On one hand, they experienced a certain "freedom"; on the other, they encountered many novelties and "temptations": the war brought the novelty of a more liberated and relaxed fashion, yet hunger, family needs, want, sadness, and despair often steered them into prostitution. Many Slovenian refugees, male and female, stayed in places that sheltered them during the war even after the war ended. According to the data of the Office for the Occupied Territories at the National Council in Ljubljana, about 15 000 Slovenes remained in the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs[21] (Svoljšak 2001: 126).

The creation of the new state border between the Kingdom of Italy and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (1920) cut a substantial part of the Slovenian population off from their homeland, triggering a new wave of refugees which included women (Anon. 2001: 34). The consequence was a strong current of migration from the Julian March in Italy across the Rapallo border into Yugoslavia, estimated at 105 000 Slovenes and Croats. Although distinguishing between economic and political reasons for emigration across the ocean, particularly to Argentina, was difficult, the departure for Yugoslavia, especially of young and educated people, was undoubtedly caused by fascist political and national persecution (Anon. 2001: 41). Many of the refugees were women. Female refugees from Primorska were a part of the emigration wave into Yugoslavia and Argentina between the two wars. They were partners, wives, mothers, and girlfriends, because for the most part, entire families left. The emigration of women from the Goriška region to Egypt continued. The line between voluntary and forced migration became blurred.

The first wave of people coming from the Primorska Region into Yugoslavia began immediately following World War I and consisted of the members of the administrative structure of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire and public servants. It was partly their free choice and partly the

21 The State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs was an independent state formed by the Yugoslavs of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy on 29 October 1918. It was not internationally recognised, but it had its own government. It ceased to exist when it unified with the Kingdom of Serbia on 1 December 1918. It became a part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, which changed its name to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in the mid-1930s and existed until the end of the World War II.

replacement of the old apparatus with a new one (Kalc 2002: 42). In agreement with the Yugoslav side, there were the so-called migrant trains running from the Julian March, taking migrants and their families to Ljubljana and beyond. Many escaped across the border illegally. The pressure was on intellectuals of both sexes; for example, one such migrant was Marica Nadlišek Bartol (1867–1940), the Triestine teacher, writer, cultural and national activist, and co-founder of the first women's magazine *Slovenka*. In 1919 the Italian authorities forced her entire family to emigrate to Yugoslavia (Kalc 2002: 46). Refugees from Primorska brought a different lifestyle, different habits and traditions, cuisine, etc. into Yugoslavia. Their children born in Yugoslavia were brought up with the "spirit of Primorska", always fostering the hope of return to their homes. Especially in the 1930s, some of them lived in miserable conditions. Many survived with the help of state and private financial support funds. The environments they'd settled in differed as well, from Ljubljana to Maribor, from Prekmurje to Serbia and Bistrenica along the Vardar River in Macedonia. In the countryside, they were tenant farmers (*coloni*). In Benica on the Hungarian-Slovenian border in Prekmurje two colonies were set up by 1922, and became a home for the Slovenes from the Goriška and Karst regions. By 1934, there were a few more set up. All together, there were 142 families with about 600 members. The people from Prekmurje felt cheated because of the land distribution, so they left – especially women – for seasonal work in France and Germany. The settlers from Primorska began working the land and had barely rebuilt their lives when they were hit by a new war. Between 1942 and 1945 the Hungarian occupying authorities sent them to the Sárvár internment camp in Hungary, where they worked as seasonal agricultural workers, returning to the camp during the winter. Their children were saved by the Orthodox congregation in Novi Sad, transported to Bačka and placed with farming families where they lived until the end of the war (Kalc 2002: 54–56).

Railway workers in Italy were employees of the state, as were teachers, and therefore dependent on the new authorities. They went on strike in February 1919. About 1 500 were fired and moved to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, because the majority among them were Slovenes. Together with their family members, some 6 000 persons left. Whoever stayed was subjected to "deslavisation", a process of breaking up the Slavic (Slovenian) enclaves by assigning employees to move to different parts of Italy with their families (Kalc 2002: 93–94). A similar procedure was in place for teachers. The Gentile school reform (1923) gave them two choices: to keep their jobs and move to the interior of Italy, or lose their jobs. Many teachers disap-

peared to various Italian cities, alone or with their families, from Piedmont and Lombardy, to Apulia, Campania, and the islands. Among them were at least 314 Slovenes. At least 415 teachers from the Primorska region emigrated to Yugoslavia (Kalc 2002: 102–103; Lavrenčič-Pahor 1994).

There was an ethnic bonification process in progress in Italy, that is: a systematic ethnic transformation that included lowering the number of non-Italians by forcefully moving them to central Italy. The population turnover, a sort of internal migration, was supported by economic and social measures, including dowries to Slovenian girls who married Italian men. The policy of the state was to support emigration, in this case emigration of Slovenes to Argentina. Italian authorities recommended the emigration of the remaining Slovenian teachers and administrators, the removal of Slovenian priests, and the creation of obstacles to the demographic growth of non-Italians, preventing the creation of a new stratum of intellectual, supporting the emigration of people of all professions and replacing them with Italians capable of assimilating into the environment. An agency was to be established that would buy off Slovenian and Croatian land and prepare it for Italian colonisation. Many Slovenes were confined to the islands and southern Italy. They Italianised the first and last names of about 500 000 people. According to Italian police sources, between 500 and 1000 people illegally crossed the border, most escaping to Yugoslavia. The Zveza emigrantskih društev v Jugoslaviji (Union of Emigrant Associations in Yugoslavia) estimates that over 100 000 Slovenes and Croats emigrated from the Julian March: 70 000 to Yugoslavia, 30 000 to South America, especially to Argentina (between 20 000 and 25 000), and 5 000 to France and Belgium (Kacin-Wohinz 1995: 24–30).

The majority of Slovenian immigrants in Argentina were from Primorska, with several thousand coming from central Slovenia and Prekmurje. They were of three political persuasions. The most numerous were the leftists, followed by the moderate liberals, and the Yugoslav nationalists. People from Prekmurje were split into Catholics and Protestants. All their activities were organised within these camps, including societies, publishing newspapers, events, and others.

The Second World War was, like the First, a total war. Among the Slovenes, the first to get a taste of it were the emigrants working in the countries of Western Europe: Belgium, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, France, England, and also Germany, Italy, and Austria. The only ones who escaped the war were the Slovenes in Switzerland. France was the most important (or at least most frequent) destination for Slovenian migrants. The life and work of migrants to that country can be divided into the following areas: first, par-

ticipation on the side of the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War and help for the refugees during and after it; second, evacuation due to the imminent danger of war, especially from the northeast of France beginning in September 1939; third, refugees from the German attack on France in May 1940; and fourth, participation in the clandestine resistance movement in the years 1940–1941 (Drnovšek 2001: 254).

I have already discussed the help women provided for the Spanish Civil War volunteers. For the emigrants around Europe, the second war started in September, 1939, causing logistical problems during the evacuation into central France. The emigrants themselves established the Odbor za pomoč jugoslovanskim in primorskim beguncem (The Committee for Helping Refugees from Yugoslavia and Primorska), a committee that included two women. The Committee's estimates were that over 3000 Slovenes living at the border had to leave their homes (Anon. 1940a: 46–47).

And how did the German military penetration into France affect the emigrants? On 14 June 1940, when the Germans had already entered Paris, one of the female seasonal workers from Prekmurje became a refugee. She became a part of the mass of refugees rolling towards the south of France. They travelled on foot, or by horses, carts, and tractors. German bombs were being dropped around them and this was the first time in her life that she felt fear or saw death. They were on the road for three weeks, travelling at night and hiding in the woods during the day. She wrote a letter to her husband, sent regards to her sister, brother-in-law, and especially little Iliko, and ended with the thought that no one had believed that France would bow to the Germans so quickly (Anon. 1940b).

The second war interfered with the lives of Slovenian women even more than the first one had because the border between the frontline and the hinterland was blurred. The totalitarian war, the armed resistance against the occupier, and the communist revolution left its traces also in women who had joined the military operations, at least those on the side of the national liberation war. On the other side, collaboration and counter-revolution were an exclusively male issue: they were carried out by a club that retained a traditional view of women, basing family and morals on Catholic values. The revolutionary camp had women experienced in participating in social events before the war, for example, during the Spanish Civil War, and had the help of the Slovenian emigrants to the Yugoslav volunteers on the Republican side, so while women did actively participate in the resistance and join the Osvobodilna fronta (Liberation Front), men were the majority. During the war, women began organising within the Antifašistična fronta žensk (Women's Anti-fascist

Front), established in December 1942 in Bosanski Petrovac. In January 1943 the Slovenska protifašistična ženska zveza (Slovenian Anti-Fascist Women's Union) was established. Its goals were: to encourage more Slovenian women to join the armed resistance; to collect money, food, clothes, shoes, and medications for the army; and to battle for the realisation of women's political and social rights in the spirit of equality and democracy. However, both during and after the war, the "male" attitude towards women was obvious. The women had difficulties being appointed to leading positions. In fact, Edvard Kardelj had to intervene from Belgrade for the first Slovenian National Government to appoint Vida Tomšič as the only woman minister responsible for social policy (Deželak Barič 2004: 317–322). In addition to Tomšič, another visible member of the Central Committe of the Communist Party of Slovenia was Lidija Šentjurc. Both, especially Tomšič, helped mould women's politics in Yugoslavia. Tomšič was also very active in the field of Slovenian migration politics.

Back in Slovenia, men and women were faced with three occupying forces – the Germans, the Italians, and the Hungarians – who wasted no time in repressing and oppressing the population. The Germans led the way, planning the deportation of 220 000 and 260 000 Slovenians and replacing them with 60 000 to 100 000 ethnic Germans. Between June 1941 and the end of July 1942 the Germans deported 7 500 persons to Serbia and 10 000 to the Independent State of Croatia from the territory they occupied. In October 1941 they deported 37 000 people to Germany from the area along the rivers Sava and Sotla in the south-east of Slovenia. The deportees were sent to around 150 Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle camps in Germany, and were replaced by 2833 families (with 11 509 persons) of the Gottscheer Germans, following the agreement of August 1941 between the governments of the German Reich and the Kingdom of Italy. Approximately 17 000 people escaped from the Germans to the Region of Ljubljana, which was under Italian occupation. Deportations of Slovenes lasted until the end of July 1942. In the summer of 1942 the children in Lower Styria were separated from their families and sent to special homes known as *Lebensborn* (Well of Life), to be put up for adoption by German families. In the German occupation zone, between 30 000 and 40 000 men were drafted into the German army. All three occupiers sent the population of both sexes and all ages to concentration and work camps in Italy and Germany. All three occupiers carried out executions of hostages. In 1942 ring of barbed wire was erected around Ljubljana, the pre-war capital of the Drava Banovina, thus turning the city into a peculiar kind of a "camp". The Mauthausen concentration and extermination camp near Linz in Upper

Austria operated between 1938 and 1945 and had a branch just below the Ljubelj (Loiblpass) mountain pass in occupied Slovenia.

Beginning in January 1941, Mauthausen was ranked as one of the concentration and extermination camps with the strictest regimes. There were about 200 000 prisoners altogether, more than 20 000 of them were women. 102 795 prisoners died. There were 4092 Slovenes in the concentration camp, 129 of them women (Filipič 1993: 26). On 15 January 1945, Germany proper was strewn with concentration camps. There were 23 main camps with about 1200 affiliated branches in which 714 211 were interned, 202 764 of them women (Filipič 1998: 11). During World War II, German and Italian occupiers sent approximately 22 000 Slovenian women, mostly to Ravensbrück, Auschwitz, Rab/Arbe and Gonars. About 9000 women never returned. There were 2432 Slovenian women and men interned to Birkenau, the affiliated branch of the Auschwitz extermination camp. Half of them never returned. In the biggest women's concentration camp, Ravensbrück, there were 132 000 women interned between 1938 and 1945; 2 230 of them Slovenian. More than 200 Slovenian women died there (Anon. 2008).

EMIGRANTS TO ARGENTINA

During the second Yugoslavia, Slovenian women formally reached a high level of equality, the limitations of their role as merely mothers and housewives was allegedly surpassed. The emphasis is on "formally". An image (a myth) of the mother-worker was being created: educated, self-confident, the maker of her own destiny, politically, and socially equal and active in socialist society (Tomšič 1978: 95–96). The female workers temporarily working abroad were seen as a part of the Yugoslav working class, although it was soon perceived that conditions in the new environment were different and more difficult for women; experts ascribed this to the low level of information that these women had – blaming it largely on their country of origin – and there were increasing consequences of the separation of the families (Kavčič 1971: 18–21). Many a migrant worker found a more appropriate cultural and spiritual milieu for herself abroad and lost enthusiasm for the regime from which she had come. Because their absence was temporary, the Slovenian media didn't cover the stories of these modern migrants, only occasionally mentioning those of the "old" female migrants who favoured Yugoslavia, and even that was in the emigrant press *Rodna gruda* (Home Soil), *Slovenski izseljenski koledar* (Slovenian Emigrant Calendar), etc.), which didn't reach a wide audience, while women's magazines, for example *Naša žena* (Our Woman) paid very little attention to emigration issues.

However there was a complete blockade of knowledge in Slovenia about the emigrants who left for Austrian Carinthia in May 1945, or joined their husbands or boyfriends in the 1950s – the post-war political emigrants. They called themselves *zdomke* (because they had to leave *z-doma*, from home); however, the "official" Slovenian word *zdomec/zdomka* was used to describe a Yugoslav male/female worker temporarily employed abroad. Political migrants began building new lives in the refugee camps in Carinthia, where they worked as kindergarten teachers, school teachers, nurses, and librarians; participated in cultural activities as singers and actresses; took part in athletics and sports. Girls went to grammar schools, home economics vocational training, and advanced programmes for trades and crafts (for example, in Peggez near Lienz, Judenburg, Kellerbers, Spittal, and also in Italy). Many went out to work; the rest took care of their families (M. B., I. P. 1951: 160–193). But the impression that they lived in the shadow of men remains, especially when we look at the organisational forms: men had separate lectures, the youth section was intended for young boys, the social work course was for men, the youth home housed boys, etc. (Pernišek 1952: 110–124). In 1946/47, the twice-monthly *Slovensko dekle* (Slovenian Girl), aimed at women migrants, was published in the camp in Spittal (Mlinar 1950: 183–184). The situation in Italian refugee camps was similar, although maybe less diversified (Marolt 1952: 125–138). Later, men and women moved all over the world as displaced persons, mostly to Argentina. By 1950, 3216 men and 2066 women moved to Argentina; 5282 persons altogether (Anon. 1950: 231).

In their new environment they joined the social life of Slovenian societies. In 1948, Društvo Slovencev (the Slovenian Society) was established (becoming, in 1958, Zedinjena Slovenija (United Slovenia)), which was – then and later – mostly in the hands of men.

And what was there for women to do? They managed the chid-rearing, youth, and education activities, the organisation of cultural activities and summer camps for children, and secretarial work. We do not find women on the boards of the societies. We can assume that the role of women and their participation in the public life in the Slovenian emigrant community in Argentina, which was divided into pre-war (Primorska) and post-war (political) emigration, wasn't any different; what was different were the worldview and ideological starting points. These have always been two different worlds, poles apart. The stigmatisation of female political emigrants and their placement into the "dark" so the Slovenian population remained ignorant of them was as harsh and total as was the stigmatisation of their men, although the women were far less publicly active and vocal. Just leafing through the ma-

terials on the SPE (Slovenian Political Emigration) from the archives of the Central Committee of the Communist party of Slovenia shows that the attention was focused on opinion makers and their responses in the press, an area in which women representatives were less present, or were active only within the family and partly within the educational and religious framework.

In 1966 the Zveza slovenskih mater in žena (the Slovenian Mothers and Wives Association) was established in Buenos Aires, and included mothers, wives, and educators who agreed with the "Christian emigrant ideology", that is, the goal of retaining the mission of the emigrant society "in their personal and public life" by: bringing up children in the Slovenian spirit; transferring Slovenian habits and traditions to the young; providing help for those compatriots alone and in need; and loyalty to the principles they'd left their country for (Rant 1998: 571). Strengthening religious faith and morals and cultural and charity activities were the main tasks of Zveza slovenskih mater in žena. As early as 1964, Unitied Slovenia organised a memorial day dedicated to Slovenian girls and women who suffered during the war, as refugees, or because their husbands and fathers were refugees, with the slogan: "The Calvary of Slovenian Women and Girls" (Rant 1998: 384–385). To summarise, a Slovenian girl, and especially a Slovenian mother abroad were supposed to support more than just three corners of that house called home and Slovenian community.[22] Not only religious faith, but also the fear of material and materialist (communist) views can be seen in their thinking. There was a pervasive fear of the development of the young who had begun to veer away from the traditional values of their parents, values which could be stated in three imperatives: Catholicism, Slovenehood (nationality) and anti-communism.

The above presentation of female migrants through the lens of history is merely a fragmented overview. Research into the history of Slovenian emigration gets very little help from the available archival and newspaper (or media in general) sources, because they speak with neutral or only male undertones. More is written about female migrants by men than by women. The decisive expert on the question of women in Slovenia is (was) the Catholic Church that, within its doctrine, consistently advocated the ironic topos: children – kitchen – church, or wife/mother – family – church. However, when we discuss the processes of migrations, we must not ignore the role of the church and the large number of sources and materials that it has created within the last two centuries, whether about leaving home to get married or

22 See Jernej Mlekuž's contribution in this book.

the emigration of a woman to another part of the world. The world opened the possibility for women to be different, especially if they migrated to non-Catholic countries or if they cut the ties with the Catholic Church when abroad (which doesn't mean they renounced their faith). We know very little about those women migrants who were of different persuasions, whether they were following non-Christian ideologies or were atheists. Likewise, very little is known about women who married outside of the Catholic Church, for example, had a partner who was a Protestant. We know even less about emigrants who achieved knowledge and became respected in their new environments. If we flip through *Who's Who of Slovene Descent in the United States* (1992), which includes famous and important men and women of Slovenian origin who have achieved success or contributed to American or Slovenian-American life, we find very few female names in it. Despite the limitations of the source – as many didn't want to be mentioned in it – it does give a certain picture: out of 193 people, only 37 women were deemed worthy to be included (Velikonja and Lenček 1992).

CONCEALMENT AND PATRIARCHY

MAN IS AN IDEA, WOMAN IS MATTER; MAN IS THE HEAD, WOMAN IS THE HEART

Marina Lukšič-Hacin

Throughout history, these words have been repeatedly used in different social contexts and on different levels – on the level of everyday life, in politics, ideologies, theories, etc. – not only in the European tradition but also elsewhere around the world. The saying articulates a basic message that is one of the fundamental axes of patriarchal or androcentric perceptions of reality.

This chapter offers a debate on migration situations in synchronous and diachronous perspectives, using both the theory of gender dichotomy, more precisely patriarchal gender dichotomy, and examples of the experiences of Slovenian women around the world. In social relations, that dichotomy is maintained through socialisation processes. One of the more important mechanisms for the production and reproduction of a patriarchal or androcentric construction of reality is a historic (national) memory that excludes women: memory of their agency and social achievements is simply overlooked and not preserved. Cultural practices, social contexts, and power relations differ, but often the "relative constant" that follows women and is only beginning to change into narrativeness, in some environments faster than in others, is concealment. This becomes clear in the context of migration.

BEING A WOMAN, BEING A MAN!?

What does it mean to be a woman? What does it mean to be a woman in cultures and societies that are labelled as Eurocentric, consumerist, modern, or even post-modern? Women represent about 50% of the entire world human population. So what joins such a large population of people into one group? Do they share something or is the sameness merely a typological invention that is stereotypically, perhaps even scientifically, anchored in human perception of everyday life?

On an abstract level, where 'human' and 'people' are defined in relation to nature, a man and a woman are the same. They belong to the group of

humans, distinct from non-humans. However, on the level of the differentiation of human species, taking into consideration internal differences, there is a conceptual differentiation between men and women, known as sexual dimorphism[1], which is socially and culturally manifested in gender dichotomy. On the level of human cultural practices, this is realised in various ways. A human being is a biological creature, but not merely that. It is also a social being. Sexes are initially biologically given, but we are not born as men or women. We become them. Processes of socialisation/inculturation ensure the (re) production of men and women suitable for a given environment, through different cultural practices.[2] In contemporary debates about the social/cultural aspects of an individual, different categories are used, including concepts of personality, identity, and identification. For all these concepts, which are to be understood as processes, a social construction of reality is key (Berger and Luckmann 1988). Identity is a process that is constantly being (re)established through a relationship of mutuality between an individual and the environment in which he/she lives. It is an element of a subjective reality (Berger and Luckmann 1988: 160).[3] The axis of a continuously establishing relationship towards oneself is physicality: I am a body and I own a body. Theodor Adorno argues that apart from biological foundations, which are 'a being by itself' (nature), 'being for itself' (nurture) represents the key moment in becoming human. But self-confidence is neither abstract nor independent. An individual is shaped in the relationship between one self-confidence and another, through which he/she reflects himself/herself (Adorno 1980: 47–56). Stane Južnič adds that human autoreflexivity cannot be reduced to entirely personal perceptions. It is not possible to entirely replace personal identity with self-identification. That is because an individual is capable of various types and degrees of self-deception and situational distancing from himself (Južnič 1993: 101).

1 In anthropology, differences between genders in the anatomical and physiological sense, sex characteristics that differentiate one gender from another, are referred to as sexual dimorphism. Realisation, understanding, and valuation of those differences in a cultural/social context are referred to as gender dichotomy.

2 In practice, these processes can be more or less successful. In reality, the 'successfulness' is manifested through individual stories, which can more or less deviate from the culturally/socially preferred directions.

3 Different historical social structures create different identity types that become recognisable in specific situations. In this sense, we may say that an American has a different identity than a French person, a New Yorker is different from someone from the American Midwest, a clerk different from a transient, etc. Identity types are relatively stable elements of an objective social reality. The level of stability is socially defined (Berger and Luckmann 1988: 161).

The attitude towards one's own body is culturally/socially conditioned and is simultaneously a starting point for one's understanding of his/her cultural/social environment.[4] Physicality is linked to sex, race, age, morphologic peculiarities, and their cultural/social perception. Mysteries concerning creation of life and of death are also important.[5] Physical identity is primarily linked to sex and sexual identity, which is not merely in a biological domain, but includes the socially and culturally conditioned processes of recognition followed by self-identification (Južnič 1993: 17–60). Men, women and their relations are thus initially biologically characterised (sexual dimorphism), yet the overall realisation and valuation are socially conditioned. Therefore, only valuation shapes the actual relation (gender dichotomy). In Eurocentric societies, where men are economically and politically empowered, gender dichotomy is referred to with the term patriarchy, a patriarchal society.[6] Its primary characteristic is the subordination of women. But are women really subordinated and are their positions really so similar that we may consider them as members of the same social group?

Women as such can be referred to on the (very) abstract level of relation analysis, with respect to gender dichotomy. This does not mean, however, that women are similar, they are also very different from one another. Similarity is a construct of analysis, carried out on a particular level of abstraction with specifically set criteria, taking into consideration sexual dimorphism as a fact that cannot be found in reality. Different realities of cultures/societies within (post)modern or Eurocentric environments demand that the

4 Reciprocity of restrictions can be observed between a (biological) organism and a social/cultural environment: by offering options to an individual, a society encourages and restricts a development of biological predispositions, while simultaneously a body with its predispositions limits the development of social possibilities (Berger and Luckmann 1988: 160).

5 Death especially puzzles people and has a powerful impact. Understanding death is linked to one of the fundamental religious questions about the soul–body relation, as is life. In religious interpretations, both are intertwined with gender dichotomy and vice versa: religious interpretations are one of the constitutive factors in the development of the concept of gender dichotomy.

6 According to the initial definition, the patriarchy "is the dominance of men as a class over women and also a system by which rights and duties to persons and things descend through the father's line". Today, the concept is redefined and used in a different manner. "Patriarchy in now used to describe a situation in which men have primary control of the most prestigious social, political–economic, and cultural institutions in their society. [...] Social theorists now believe that the so–called patriarchal societies are actually cross–cut by other social identities, so, for instance, women of the dominant race, class, and religion tend to have more status and power than men of the non–dominant race, class, and religion." (Povinelli 1997: 350). "As early as 1980, Barrett suggested that patriarchy is better conceived as an adjective than as a noun." (Pratt 2000: 575).

population of women be divided into different subgroups and individuals, if we are to understand their lives. An understanding of cultural/social relations should be based on the life of an individual woman. She combines various roles and statuses and belongs to different social groups: the ones that she chose and the ones that were attributed to her by society. Women may have different family statuses, be members of different social classes, have different education levels and occupations, follow different religions, belong to different ethnicities, have different nationalities, become migrants or not, etc. What can women migrants say about their lives? Why did they decide to emigrate? What networks did they create and how were they treated by the society of their new residence?

These questions lead us not only towards unveiling the fate of a single woman, but towards unveiling the life journeys of women migrants of the past two centuries, in the age of mass emigration. A discussion about migration dynamics using the framework of (patriarchal) gender dichotomy is broad, as it includes synchronous and diachronous perspectives. In the case of Slovenian women migrants it is very complex, as they migrated all over the world. We must understand the age of mass emigration from central Europe in the second half of the 19th century and the deep intertwining of the society of origin with its patriarchal gender dichotomy, one which has become more loose over the past two hundred years and has begun manifesting itself on a more latent, systemic level. Gender dichotomy was also reflected in the reasons for emigration. In the case of Slovenian emigration, there was a typical women (labour) migration that had an important impact on the economy and broke traditional patterns. Despite this fact, the strong patriarchal perception of the passive role of women in public life, present in the society of origin, has persistently remained until today. It is only recently that the redefinitions and reconstructions of the (patriarchal) construction of historic memory, based on the research into historical facts regarding active and employed women, social actors, etc., have emerged.

THE HISTORY OF (PATRIARCHAL) GENDER DICHOTOMY IN THE SOCIETY OF ORIGIN

We live in a European space where understandings of gender, gender differences, and their social/cultural constructions are part of the androcentric mentality[7]. In the past, during times of mass emigration from central Eu-

7 Mentality as a category is similar to the term tradition. In certain viewpoints the terms correspond and intertwine, but they also differ. While tradition is oriented towards the past, mentality is construction of the present conditioned with history. Both terms denote proc-

rope, part of which was emigration from the Slovenian space, social/cultural relations were marked by patriarchal power relations. The substantiation and justification of the existing patriarchal structure occurred in all existing social/cultural spheres, including philosophic thought. Even today it is interesting and informative to read texts by the great philosopher Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel (1986: 257) regarding his understanding of relations between genders. The author discusses his viewpoint on differences between men and women, or more precisely, justifies the existing (patriarchal) gender dichotomy, in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, where he writes about human and divine law. Human law is a spirit of community, a given morality on which a government (authority) leans, a social reality that aims at an active individual. Human law entails a male principle of action and thus only a man can become a part of social life, extending beyond family life and attaining self-awareness in society. Divine law functions in the sphere of an individual, involving the substance in its indirectness. It is present in the family, where the female principle of action is dominant. The morality of a family is merely ostensible.

In the first decades of the 20th century, those starting points were developed further by Otto Weininger, a philosopher and long-time fellow national of Carniolans. What does it mean to be a woman according to Weininger? In the spirit of philosophical dualism, Weininger forms ideal-typical gender dyads. Woman is sensual, man is ideational. Woman lives subconsciously, man lives consciously. Woman is an object, man is a subject. Female nature is passive, male nature is active. Woman is matter, man is a structure. Woman is matter, man is an idea. Permanent, valuable, perfect is an idea, is a subject, is activity, is a structure, is a man. Unworthy, sinful, transient is the sensual, is the subconscious, is an object, is passivity, is matter, is a woman (Weininger 1936: 281).

In 'our space', these views were defended by, for example, Bleiweis,[8] who believed that man is a head and woman is a heart. His primary trait is rationality, hers is emotion. Man is making an effort in the outside world, woman is carrying three corners of a house (in Vodopivec 1994: 35). The important

esses (not states) that are constitutive aspects of practices encompassed in the process of culture. We may claim that culture as a process is the intertwining of dynamic processes with more stable, slowly changing, long–term processes which, in connection with some other processes, form long–term axes of cultures.

8 Janez Bleiweis was an important figure in Slovenian political, social, and cultural life in the second half of the nineteenth century.

message was that the domain of women is nature and the domain of men is spirit.

Similar viewpoints were defended by Anton Mahnič,[9] who took up the question in order to quiet women down, as explained by Peter Vodopivec. He justified subordination of women with two important arguments. He argued that the creator himself wanted to make a wife subordinate to her husband, which is evident from the way he created her. And secondly, he believed that this subordination is punishment for the sin she committed. Mahnič also insisted that God equipped man with reason and woman with heart. Taking into consideration six characteristics of male and female mentality, Mahnič argued that reason takes first place and passion last place where men are concerned, whereas for women it is precisely the opposite (Vodopivec 1994: 41).

According to all these viewpoints, reason is the domain of a man.[10] The domain of a woman is sexuality. But sexuality, linked with sensuality, is sinful. The only sexuality that is allowed and desired is linked to reason and thus sexuality should not be associated with emotion or sensuality, which are in the domain of woman. This discourse is linked to caring for homeland (fatherland), manifested primarily in glorifying motherhood and keeping the birth rates high, which becomes a woman's holy obligation. According to Marija Jurić Pahor, such an attitude is based on a puritan morality. She argues that:

> the ideology of 'virtuous' (desexualised) Slovenian motherhood is one of the most vital issues of national politics, because motherhood is a holy and the most superior responsibility of a woman. Blessed is a woman who becomes a mother and meets her obligations selflessly [...] She will be repaid with the infinite love of her children and the gratitude of the nation. (Jurić Pahor 2000: 42)

The importance of caring for one's country was emphasised intensely in the time of nation-states. The classic nation-state and attitude towards nationality, as we know it today, have their roots in the French revolution,

9 Anton Mahnič, theologian and philosopher, was one of the main figures in Slovenian political and cultural life in the last decades of the 19th century.

10 Even at the end of the 19th century strong limitations were imposed for women in the field of education: "Women were fundamentally deprived: according to the 1878 provisions, they could only exceptionally attend university lectures. Their applications were considered individually, case by case. [...] Even if they managed to obtain the permission to attend the lectures, matriculation was still not allowed. [...] Only in March 1896 were women allowed to validate medical degrees obtained abroad, and only in March 1897 were they allowed to enrol in the Faculty of Arts. [...] Even after that year, not many Slovenian women studied at the monarchy universities." (Gantar Godina 2002: 187).

the French state. The era of nation-states brought important attitude changes regarding the understanding of the human body, its social/cultural appreciation, and the understanding of gender differences through the dyad of reason – emotion. Patriarchal relations between genders and a patriarchal understanding of sexuality were becoming important emphases of nationalist ideology, which negatively valuated sex and sexuality. Sex and sexuality presented grounds for nation-states to begin implementing repressive control over people. Concern about natality shifted[11] from the level of an individual's life, to the level of concern for a country. A discourse on the citizen's duty emerged, emphasising caring for his/her country, rather than vice versa. This duty to care was unevenly distributed between the two sexes and women were required to be more responsible and committed to giving birth and upbringing; creating the right kind of citizens, that is. Such nationalist discourse is intertwined with reasoning that Jurić Pahor describes as the eugenic discourse:

> It is known that [the discourse] has not been concerned with the size of a state or a nation, but predominantly with their 'quality'. It was practised most brutally and intentionally by the Nazis. They forced some women to have children (programme Lebensborn) and others not to have them. [...] Otherwise, it is important to emphasise that eugenic constructions of national reproduction encompass more than physical and psychological 'health': they include the term 'national origin' that does not allow 'mixing' with others, supposedly 'inferior', and biologisation of cultural differences: others can 'flood' us, take our essence. (Jurić Pahor 2000: 43)

The eugenic construct can often be found in debates about emigration/immigration and minority problems in Slovenia and in countries where Slovenian women have emigrated to, not just recently, but ever since the period of mass emigration. Such prejudice can be additionally reinforced and preserved due to the fear of the nation becoming extinct. Fear is a common element in the political discourse of certain political parties in countries of immigration and emigration. In the former, the debate is about a flood of foreigners, the threat they present and the danger of mixing blood, while in the latter, the debate is about the outflow of the 'nation's blood'. Moreover, women as citizens have a duty towards their state to ensure a high birth rate, whereas in the case of immigrant women there is a fear of high natality, which increases the danger of a majority culture being flooded and destroyed. These per-

11 This shift is evident in the emphasis on ensuring preservation of natality and creating the individual's pledge to preserve the state and its identity (Jurić Pahor 2000: 22).

spectives are articulated even in the present day when promoting the process of naturalisation. While in countries of immigration there are doubts and warnings that naturalisation might be a harmful process, countries of origin are concerned about their nation and treat individuals who for various reasons decided to change citizenship as traitors. In both cases, we find a tendency on the part of states to control their citizens and limit their right to choose. In such discourses, individuals who become 'suspicious' include those who do not speak the original language (e.g. descendants of Slovenian emigrants), even though they may identify with their own origin or the origin of their parents or grandparents. An even more critical tone is detected in debates regarding immigrants to Slovenia and their rights to identify with the environment (culture) into which they've immigrated and in which they've settled. Like their forebears, children of immigrants, born in Slovenia, face the argument that Slovenianness is not 'in their blood'. Fears about 'mixing blood' (in case of immigration) and 'bleeding out' (in case of emigration) are also present and articulated. Both could potentially lead to the extinction of the Slovenian culture and nation.

This "spirit of times", present in everyday life, was very strong in the Slovenian ethnic space. Preservation and transmission of values were achieved through socialisation and its agents, which were changing with time. In addition to the family, the Church had an important role in maintaining and reinforcing existing gender roles. Aleksej Kalc offers the example of Marijina družba (Mary's Society), active in the area of Trieste and elsewhere in Slovenia, which has had a clear and precise purpose since the 1890s. Its primary mission was to celebrate Mary, a woman who is a caring wife and mother and who takes care of a household and children, as opposed to an emancipated person who goes out to sell bread or does other things to make a living and who loans money to village farmers when they get into financial trouble (Kalc 2002: 165–166). The Church was against the migration of women, as it claimed that it can lead to moral and physical decay. The Church had a strong influence on people's lives and a fairly consistent negative attitude towards the emigration of women.

THE PATRIARCHAL CONSTRUCTION OF A (NATIONAL) MEMORY

In the epoch of nationalistic discourse, a woman is pushed to the private sphere and reduced to emotionless biological reproduction. She is pushed first from public life and then from the so-called collective memory. There are several processes by which this occurs:

1. Due to the patriarchal construction of relations and reality, women were excluded from or had difficulties in accessing the public sphere. Those who managed to enter it were not spoken of. They were kept secret and therefore, in the long term, did not exist. Vodopivec argues that the history of Slovenians is a history of men. The extensive volume *Zgodovina Slovencev* (The History of the Slovenes), which was published in 1979 by several authors and covers the entire period of Slovenian history from prehistoric times to the 1970s, mentions only three women (Vodopivec 1994: 30). Similar findings, but applicable primarily to the emigration situation, are delivered by Marjan Drnovšek. He argues that from the historical point of view, not much is known about the so-called woman question. The role of women in Slovenian society was neglected and the role of women emigrants even more so. Emigration from Slovenia as a whole has been insufficiently studied, but women emigrants have been simply overlooked in both the older literature as well as the new schoolbooks published after Slovenian independence in 1991 (Drnovšek 2002: 174).

The Dutch demographer Hofstee also pointed out that the problem of the migration of women is one of the most neglected issues in the demographic science and economics of his time. The migration of women is thus a phenomenon that we know exists, but we are not familiar with its dimensions, frameworks, and characteristics (in Zanini 1964: 9). In the past, it was neither researched nor discussed, as women emigrants only became an interesting research topic when they outnumbered male emigrants (Morokvašić 1984: 976). Women were of marginal importance and were regarded only as persons that accompany men. They were supposed to passively accompany their husbands, because this was their natural role. At the turn of the 19th century this was evident from the fact that when an entire family travelled, a passport was issued only for the husband. The names of wives and children were added to his passport. When travelling with a family, a married woman was not issued a passport of her own.

Concealment is not only limited to the Slovenian case but is a phenomenon present in across all of European history, especially in the context of migration. Mirjana Morokvašić (1984: 976) argues that despite an increase in the number of women migrants, they remained invisible in theory and research for a long time. Giovanna Brunetta (1983: 154) adds that they finally became more visible due to the emergence of (liberal) migration policies in Western European countries, where the need for cheap labour was reflected in encouraging the immigration of women.

2. The second strategy for disregarding or concealing the achievements of women was to transform their accomplishments into men's, using the mechanisms of language to masculinise them.[12] This issue was taken up by Inga Brezigar Miklavčič (2002) and Sabina Žagar Žnidaršič (2000), who established that women from the Slovenian environment have always been economically and socially active. The same is argued by Kalc in his debates on the role of women in Slovenia. He stresses that women played a key role in the monetarisation of the peasant society, at least until the last decades of the 19th century. This is also evident from the research of the Trieste area (Kalc 2002: 165), for example.[13] Women who migrated to work daily or took a temporary job abroad played a special role in the economy, working as: wet nurses, chambermaids, washerwomen, housekeepers, chestnut sellers, smugglers, bread sellers, fruit and vegetable market traders, milkers, egg sellers, hawkers, yarn makers, farmers, cooks, maids, etc., excluding for the moment the role of women intellectuals and the impact of their social/cultural activities. In the historical memory, these activities have been either omitted or masculinised, until recently.

3. It is important to mention the so-called modesty syndrome.[14] The self-image of women is shaped in patriarchal relations, which foster stereotyped gender roles. Therefore, we should not be surprised by the fact that even today, when talking to Slovenian women abroad, one finds that they modestly believe that nothing they did in their lives is worth mentioning. Their life stories should, due to the modesty syndrome, be analysed together with stories of their children (mostly already adult) and men – colleagues or friends.

> It seems typical that quite a few women whom I asked for an interview modestly tried to decline: "What is there to say about my life?", many of them ask themselves, especially when I explain that I am interested in their everyday lives. Women have trouble sharing their stories, because they think they are not important and worth the attention. They believe they have nothing to say about being mothers, wives, workers, housewives, activists, volunteers. Such

12 In Slovenian grammar, nouns and verbs are used differently when referring to women and when referring to men. By using male language forms when discussing the agency of women, their acts become masculinised and subsequently attributed to men.

13 This is discussed by Marta Verginella in her book *Ekonomija odrešenja in preživetja* (The Economy of Salvation and Survival) (1996), where she sets out the impact of working women, bread sellers and milkers in rural Trieste, on the economy.

14 This phenomenon was discovered by Mojca Ramšak (2002: 191) when researching life stories of women belonging to the Slovenian ethnic minority in Austria. She named it the "modesty syndrome".

> self-perception of work and life needs to be strongly taken into consideration when analysing their stories, as it is the key element of self-censorship and the key mechanism of reducing the richness of experience in their narratives. (Milharčič Hladnik 2002: 184)

A patriarchally constructed national memory of the environment of origin is (was) the agent of socialisation and has an important impact on the construction of a male or a female identity and self-image, in the sense of producing individuals acceptable for the environment. Migrants took it with them to their new environments, where it remained as an agent of self-recognition, alongside potential processes of resocialisation/acculturation.

Lately, additional records have been discovered that contradict the patriarchal construction of memory. They are based on interviews and archival sources that, as argued by Jurič Pahor (2002: 147):

> …contradict the image of a frail, devoted, nearly 'saintly woman', which was spread among Slovenians by the ideological hegemony of Krek's[15] movement, and also by the secular asceticism of Slovenian liberalism, and later by socialism. These movements constructed an entirely male or 'brotherhood world' in which the polarisation between genders was so significant that it led to quieting down a 'woman's voice'. Data also contradict the perception of history as both a myriad of asexual human beings, or active men and a few passive women who perform limited types of stereotypic and repetitive activities in the background.

Even today, the humanities and social sciences in Slovenia create knowledge that often becomes masculinised due to the usage of male language forms. This knowledge is transmitted through the existing ideological state apparatus (Althusser 1980). However, the typical androcentric stance, politically supported (on the subconscious level of construction of relations) in the past and to a great extent even today, did not result in the production of ideal-typical stereotypic perceptions of women in reality. On the level of social/cultural practices, women succeeded in overcoming the bondage of relations in various ways and began participating in public life. But patriarchal construction of memory erased their contributions or attributed them to men. This is happening in present time as well, although not as intensely nor as obviously manifest, but more subtly and systemically.

15 Janez Evangelist Krek was a Christian socialist and an important figure in Austria's political sphere.

The rigid patriarchal relations that are typical of Slovenian history left their mark. In such an atmosphere of national ideology and concealment of the work and influence of women, the 'appropriate' stereotypisation of a man and a woman character (a patriarchal stereotypisation of gender roles) came to life. This is important for understanding the everyday life in migration (emigration/immigration) contexts, as stereotypes are a constituent element of a migrant woman's identity and construct her reality even in a new (immigrant) environment. They create glasses for the perception of reality. Stereotypes have an impact not only on women migrants, but also on their descendants, as primary socialisation[16] occurs in the context of family dynamics. Family dynamics that include raising children have been the domain of women, especially in migration situations. Women subconsciously transmit their reality to descendants (children). The other important agents of socialisation are peers, who often belong to the same or similar ethnic groups and share similar values. As patriarchal relations are present in all those groups, they are therefore further reinforced through peer relations.

Women in emigration are very important in preserving the mechanisms of identification: teaching a language; transmitting knowledge of the culture of origin (teachers);[17] working with young people, publishing newspapers with and for them; organising social activities for children and adolescents;[18] preserving rituals, myths, and symbols; and maintaining contacts with the environment of origin. Maintaining contact is especially important for the preservation of group identities, e.g. gender or national identities.[19] Graziella

16 Socialisation is a process of humanising an individual. Its most important aspect is a subconscious constitution of reality for each individual. It is realised through different agents of socialisation, the most important being a family, which in patriarchal contexts is entirely the domain of women.

17 Apart from the family, school and education present another important agent of socialisation that establishes the identification of an individual with a certain group or community. Archival data shows that among Slovenian emigrants, women have always been active in this field of action: as mothers or as women (teachers). In environments where education in the Slovenian language was not possible, women (mothers) usually educated their children themselves.

18 Women also worked with and for children and adolescents in emigrant societies, where they organised various activities. They were in charge of different programmes intended for children, organised day care, mentored children who wrote for bulletins and edited individual pages that were intended for them. More on this issue is discussed by Jernej Mlekuž in the next chapter, "Patriarchy and Representation".

19 This was achieved with e.g. correspondence, contacts with the environment of origin and ritual preservation of memory. In the past, correspondence was an important tool of communication between those who moved and those who stayed home. In most cases it was women (mothers, daughters, sisters) who took care of keeping in contact. With correspond-

Favaro and Mara Tognetti Bordogna argue that women have the immensely difficult task of being carriers of traditional values and habits, which are closely connected to the past and their collective history, and being messengers of change and mediators of cultural differences, with a strong desire to synthesise both. Some authors believe that their agency is complex due to having to connect and intertwine two opposing cultures (Favaro and Tognetti Bordogna 1991: 13–24).

When it comes to the reproduction of tradition in an immigrant environment, including a historical memory, women are (were) more important than men. This is probably due to the fact that patriarchal relations push women into those spheres of social life that are of greatest importance for socialisation processes: the processes of becoming human and essential processes of social reproduction. This shows the ambivalence of the position of women in relation to patriarchal relations: although women (can) change those relations, simultaneously, they (consciously or subconsciously) reproduce them.

MIGRATION AND PATRIARCHY OR ANDROCENTRISM: WOMEN'S STORIES ABOUT EMIGRATION AND LIFE IN A NEW ENVIRONMENT

Migration dynamics is an important factor in the framework of changing social relations in societies experiencing emigration and immigration. This is especially true when considering the phenomenon of migration through the prism of gender dichotomy, especially, and specifically, patriarchal gender dichotomy. Under the influence of migration experiences and cultural contacts, existing gender stereotypes and relations between genders are radically redefined on individual and community levels. The positions of women who are taking part in migration dynamics because they are accompanying their husbands and those who migrate alone are complex and differentiated. Even in cases when women do not migrate along with their husbands, remaining at home instead, social changes occur. But they are more profound and distinctive when women themselves migrate.

First, let us look at examples of the impact of migration on gender dichotomy when men leave and women stay home. This phenomenon is present in highly patriarchal societies, where women are not allowed to leave their homes. Morokvašić argues that in patriarchal societies, where a woman is

ence they maintained their feelings of belonging and remained in contact with the Slovenian language. For more on this issue see the chapter, "History and Concealment", by Marjan Drnovšek.

subordinate and dependent, men are predominantly the ones who emigrate. The percentage of women who decide to emigrate is very low. Emigration is socially inappropriate for women. In societies with gender segregation, or where spatial mobility is limited for women, only a certain category of marginalised women is included in migration patterns: divorcées, singles, and widows (Morokvašić 1984: 979). Gabriella Arena adds that this is typical for environments in which women are significantly subordinated and have less power to make their own choices. In such environments it is unacceptable for a woman to travel abroad alone, find employment and take over the role that has been ascribed to men (Arena 1983: 180). But in these situations, the migration of men also has an impact on the existing patriarchal relations and gender dichotomy. Family dynamics is changing. Social roles and status are being redefined. Maura Palazzi explains that a wife who stayed home sometimes had to take up the role of a man and take charge of the household, although in many cases the husband's role in the family was filled by his family or her own. Women were often forced to find employment in the environment of origin. But due to the increased emigration of men and the subsequent increased demand for a workforce, it was easier for them to find employment (Palazzi 1992: 371–373). In Slovenia, we observe similar dynamics. This led to a gradual redefinition of the attitude towards the employment of women and resulted in their increased economic independence, which had a long-term impact on their way of life and social relations.

Women also migrated. In such cases, gender dichotomy is reflected in the structure and autonomy of the act of migration. Kalc argues that the movement of men was freer than that of women. Women were limited by institutional frames, especially the family as a social institution – whether the woman was a partner and mother, or daughter, or other family member – in the new environment in which she is included as a worker (Kalc 2002: 154).

Gender dichotomy is reflected in women's reasons for emigrating. In the case of Slovenia we can find typical female (labour) migration. I already mentioned daily or seasonal migration of women, which had an important impact on the economy of their origin: wet nurses, chambermaids, washerwomen, housekeepers, chestnut sellers, smugglers, bread sellers, fruit and vegetable market traders, milkers, egg sellers, hawkers, yarn makers, farmers, cooks, maids, etc. They were important to the economy but at the same time they actively deconstructed the traditional patriarchal perceptions about the passive role of women in public life.

Egg sellers became a symbol for a brave, persistent, and hardworking Istrian wife. They had a special social status in their family and in the soci-

ety. Being sellers, they walked around the Istrian peninsula every week. They were separated from their family for several days. They discovered the difference between poverty in the upcountry and the glamour of Trieste (Ledinek and Rogenja 1996: 654).

Drnovšek explains that in the 19th century, some Slovenian women from Venetian Slovenia were hawkers, and those from the eastern part of Slovenian ethnic lands were yarn makers and farmers who were migrating to Croatia and Hungary. Women also migrated to larger European cities and tourist centres such as Trieste, Gorizia, Milan, Paris, Zagreb, Belgrade, Vienna, etc. (Drnovšek 1997: 28). Female straw-hat makers from Domžale who migrated to the U.S., housewives and wet nurses who migrated to Egypt (the so-called *aleksandrinke*, Alexandrian women), and housewives and chamber maids who migrated to Argentina, were all part of the typical women's emigration waves. The emigration of women had a significant impact on their environment of origin. Migrants who were single women sent home remittances and reported on their active lifestyles, which changed the stereotypical perception of women. Married women migrants left their husbands and family behind, changing the stereotypical family and parental relations and roles.

Women have also temporarily or permanently migrated to various countries as part of mixed-gender waves (as individuals, partners, or mothers with families) or largely female migration waves. The reasons for migration were typical and are well-known in migration studies. However, from the viewpoint of gender dichotomy research, another issue must be mentioned. In the patriarchal Slovenian environment, entrenched with the gender stereotypes of a subordinate woman and a superior man who is the head of a family, some women considered emigration as a means of escaping to a more 'woman-friendly' environment. A similar phenomenon is observed by Favaro and Tognetti Bordogna in the case of Italian migration. The two researchers discuss migration as an escape from the violence of men, the authority of kin, and subordination in patriarchal relations to environments of increased autonomy for women; they also discuss migration as emancipation (Favaro and Tognetti Bordogna 1991: 138). In the case of Slovenian migration, several stories of women migrant support these arguments, among them those of the Alexandrians,[20] who saw their life in Egypt as different from the one in their environment of origin; many of these women also had a particular attitude towards Islam and its postulates and towards the Egyptian social/

20 Here, I am not directly addressing the primary reasons for women's departures to Egypt, but rather, am pointing out that some of them found opportunities in Egypt that were not offered by their environment of origin.

cultural environment. Similarly, migrant women in the U.S. had the possibility of living in a less discriminatory environment. In the case of migration to Argentina, however, two populations of women migrants must be addressed separately: (1) for those who emigrated from a rural environment at the turn of the century and especially after World War I, emigration meant a departure to a freer, more open environment; and (2) those who emigrated from an urban environment after World War II as refugees and encountered an entirely different situation.[21] The case of emigrants to Argentina shows that we must be aware of the complexity of various factors in order to understand the phenomenon of migration dynamics.

Women who emigrated to the U.S. reported that conditions there, in comparison with most European countries, were more woman-friendly. Even in the early 20th century, women occupied more social space and had more social and political rights.

In her book, Marie Prisland described one of her first impressions of America as follows:

> The honour and the freedom which American women were enjoying was a marvel to me. This is not duplicated in any other country on the globe. A few married men, however, were of a different opinion. Used to European behaviour, they thought that America was over-protecting the little woman. One complained: 'In Europe a man could mishandle his wife and nobody bothered him, but here, if a man beats his wife a little and the neighbours hear her cry, they quickly call the police! The man is taken to jail for something he believed it was his right to do. Isn't the wife his property? And is he not free to do with it what he thinks is right?' (Milharčič Hladnik 2007: 129)

The U.S. allowed women to become more independent, more equal to men, and offered better education opportunities. Emancipated women migrants, including Slovenes, were establishing women's societies or sections in the established and functioning migrant societies. They took part in public protests such as the republican movement during World War I. There are interesting photographs of women on horses, women carrying guns, women having picnics, etc.

Political and professional initiatives by women in the U.S. commenced after World War I with the establishment of Slovenska ženska zveza (Slovenian Women's Society), comprised of Catholic women, and an organisation called Progresivne Slovenke Amerike (Progressive Slovenian Women of

21 More in the chapter, "Patriarchy and Representation" by Jernej Mlekuž.

America), which welcomed members regardless of their religious, philosophical, ethic, or political convictions and was active in cultural, humanistic, and educational spheres.[22]

Marie Prisland established Slovenska ženska zveza (1926) because she was irritated by the fact that women in Slovenian organisations could work but were not allowed to occupy managerial positions. Irena Milanič explains that she was joined by Mary Jugg Molek in her protest against the positions of women in Slovenian organisations in the U.S. in the 1930s. In her articles she describes the position of women in Slovenian socialist societies in America, arguing that although women were full members of these organisations, male members often remained prejudiced and held on to patriarchal stereotypes brought from home, keeping them alive in the Slovenian emigré society in the U.S. Jugg was aware of the fact that women themselves need to be encouraged to embrace a different, more progressive attitude towards their own abilities. She believed that their feelings of inferiority could be attributed to the Catholic religion. In her opinion, Catholicism glorifies suffering and encourages giving in to one's own fate. Yet women need to trust their abilities and powers, as that is the only way to improve their situation. Jugg was not critical only of Slovenian societies but directed her critique towards wider social relations in the U.S. and ar-

A Slovenian woman hunting in Minnesota. Source: Amerika in Amerikanci *(Trunk 1912: 608).*

22 See the chapter "Representation and Self-Representation", by Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik for more on this issue.

gued that discrimination is still present. Women engaged politically, publically, or in other ways also made the critical realisation that there is a vast divide between a norm and its realisation in practice. Their ideal and goal was to achieve the position of women observed in the countries of northern Europe, and they were critical of male chauvinist propaganda in fascist Italy and Spain (Milanič 2002: 181).

A brief look at the history of the organised public agency of women in the beginning of the 20th century reveals that the women of that time were active in Slovenia as well. A more in-depth analysis, however, reveals that those women primarily belonged to the middle and upper classes, or bourgeoisie, whereas those from the rural areas were more likely to emigrate, only becoming politically active abroad.

South America also offered new opportunities, especially for women who immigrated after World War I. Slovenian women belonged to a special group of housekeepers: as cooks, chambermaids, and governesses. They were employed by:

> the richest families in Buenos Aires; [...] even by the family of the president of the republic. This was a whole new world of adventure for these girls, although they eventually left their jobs when they got married and gave birth to their children. Urbanisation, professional change, and social climbing are very common in this community. Of the women from Primorska, none were employed in managerial positions, none were presidents of a society or editors of a newspaper, but they were cultural workers, [...] choral directors, teachers, etc. (Mislej 2002: 152)

The position of women in a new environment depends not only on the conditions in that environment; it is also linked to their reasons for emigration and the status of women in their countries of origin. What do I mean by that? The example of the Slovenian political community established in Argentina after World War II shows that migration can often result in poorer living conditions, as it did with the population of women who fled with their families from the newly founded state of Yugoslavia, thus becoming refugees. About six thousand refugees from Italian and Austrian post-war camps immigrated to Argentina.[23]

> The position of women in post-war political emigration differs significantly and instead of climbing up the social ladder in the society of immigration, they

23 See the chapter, "Patriarchy and Representation", by Jernej Mlekuž for more on this issue.

> climbed down. This is the case for the bourgeoisie political emigrants who originally came from Ljubljana or other Slovenian towns and became socially and spatially marginalised in Argentina. In this post-war community, the Catholic family concept prevails. This concept and mixed marriages in the second generation were thoroughly analysed and written about by the pedagogue and a philosopher Dr. Vinko Brumen. Women suffered greatly as they were doubly punished in the new environment: by the Slovenian community and by the Argentinean community. The environment had a specifically South American mentality, which was distinctively machist and unfavourable for women, at least in the post-war period (in my generation things started to change). (Mislej 2002: 152)

With emigration, women changed their social/cultural environment. They arrived in a different environment that they often judged as less discriminatory. Many of them found employment and earned their own money, enabling them to survive independently. This was especially significant in cases of family migration, or when they married Slovenian men (once resettled in the new environment). Increased autonomy resulted in a redefinition of family and partner relations and a change in the role of women in the family. However, there are also cases of family migration where women stayed home and remained committed to the values of their society of origin, including the reproduction of gender dichotomy. But in all cases, even in changed and less discriminatory circumstances, women remained the main agents of their children's socialisation and thus the main agents of preserving ethnic (national) identity.

Another example of social mobility and family relations are mixed marriages.

> When Slovenian boys marry outside their ethnic or national community, it is usually because they work in places where there are no Slovenian girls. Generally, they look for them, travel, or even send for them from their home villages,[24] whereas a woman, a Slovenian girl who lives in the city centre where there are plenty of available Slovenian boys, may decide to marry a man of another nationality. (Mislej 2002: 168)

24 "Quite a few women from Ribnica and the surrounding area travelled across the ocean due to prearranged marriages. This was also the case for Terezija Francelj, who otherwise had no money for travelling. It was her aunt who introduced her to Jože Pucelj through letters." (Kante 2002: 178).

This is a clear example of women choosing mixed marriages more frequently than men, and it can be observed in all Slovenian women immigrants' environments. Such a choice is linked to gender asymmetry and can be observed in ethnically stratified migration contexts; that is, when an individual's minority immigrant ethnic community ranks lower or higher in the majority society than his/her partner's. In these cases, relations between communities are also important.

The concept of gender asymmetry can be found in sociological and anthropological research into migration contexts. When considering gender asymmetry in migration contexts, at least two viewpoints must be mentioned:

1. Inside ethnically stratified nation-states, which today, by and large, are multicultural and yet are societies of immigration, women migrants who belong to cultures that rank low on the stratification scale often marry members of a majority culture or cultures that rank higher on a stratification scale than their own culture of origin. For men, this is more an exception than a rule. Their marriages to members of a majority culture are usually to members of the lower classes. When, in rare cases, they marry a member of the upper class, it is because the woman, for various reasons, has trouble finding a more suitable partner. Another type of mixed marriage for both genders is marrying a member of another 'immigrant ethnic group' When choosing a partner, ethnic or religious stratification is important in certain environments and irrelevant in others.

2. Women migrants find partners from a majority culture more easily than men. This may speed up their social mobility. Their last names, which are often a label of their ethnic belonging and potentially a cause for stigmatisation, also change with marriage. This is another important aspect of gender dichotomy. Changing a maiden name to husband's last name is legitimate in patriarchal societies. Moreover, such act is not only acceptable, but is in fact a recommended patriarchal pattern for subordinating women. All other attempts of immigrants to change their names are strongly criticised and accusations are made that they are trying to hide their national/ethnic origin, especially if they are male. Such accusations are linked to the previously mentioned political or nationalistic discourse, which builds upon the doctrine of the citizens' duty towards the state, or the members of a nation towards their nation. To sum up, a mixed marriage can offer an easier means of integration and social mobility for women migrants in patriarchal societies – this is especially beneficial to their descendants as they may avoid being stigmatised, especially in ethnically prejudiced societies. From a gender perspective, men are primarily exposed to the approaches mentioned above.

Gender asymmetry is linked to status incongruence, which is a typical phenomenon in migration contexts. In patriarchal relations, men become more exposed as women are pushed into the so-called private sphere. We may argue that they live in the 'one-dimensional social world', whereas status incongruence can only be present in the 'multi-dimensional social world' of an individual.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The debate on concealment and patriarchy in migration contexts in synchronic and diachronic perspectives reveals many questions. Finding answers in the framework of relation analyses for an individual community is a complex task, especially in the context of migration situations, which demand additional explanation of the differences between dynamic, ever-changing communities.

In order to understand the European situation over the past two hundred years, the era of nation-states, we need to build upon the fact that relations were entrenched with a patriarchal gender dichotomy, which has gradually loosened, moving to a more latent, systemic level. Gender dichotomy managed to preserve itself through the stereotypical patriarchal construction of (national) memory. Its primary characteristics are the concealment of women as agents, masculinisation, and the modesty syndrome. The domains of women are the emotions and sexuality, while the domain of men is reason. This discourse is linked to care for the homeland and manifested primarily in the duty to maintain a high birth rate. Maintaining natality becomes sacred and is reflected in the glorification of motherhood, which is the responsibility of women. A discourse emerges on the duties of female citizens to give birth and raise (appropriate) citizens. In migration and minority contexts, such reasoning leads to eugenic discourse, which has been present in Slovenia and in states where Slovenian women have been emigrating to ever since the mass emigration period. Its main characteristic is fear of a nation becoming extinct, which becomes a popular element of political discourse in countries of immigration and countries of origin. In the former, the debate is about a flood of foreigners, the threat they present and the danger of mixing blood, while in the latter, the debate is about the outflow of the 'nation's blood'. Women as citizens have a duty towards their state to ensure a high birth rate, whereas in the case of immigrant women, the majority culture fears a high birthrate, which increases the danger of the majority culture being flooded and destroyed. These perspectives are articulated even in the present day when advocating for the process of naturalisation.

Strong patriarchal perceptions of the passive role of women in public life, i.e. a public life without women, have been present in European space until today. Only now are we beginning to witness efforts to redefine and reconstruct the (patriarchal) construction of a historical memory and build the image of an active and employed woman, a social agent, etc. Concealment as a 'relative constant' has followed the female gender throughout history, but this is slowly beginning to change, more quickly in some environments than in others, as becomes apparent when observing migration processes. Feminised narrativeness began to change the social construction of memory from a predominantly male one to a balanced gendered construct. This makes memory also the domicile of women and, in the case of migration studies, reveals the concealed stories of women.

We must ask ourselves where women were when a masculinised image of history without women or an image of merely passive women was developing and maintaining itself. Even in this case women were active and co-responsible. The fact remains that when it comes to the reproduction of a society – for example tradition, including the historical memory – women are (were) more important than men. This is also due to the fact that patriarchal relations push women into the spheres of social life that are of most importance for socialisation processes: the processes of becoming human and the essential processes of social reproduction.

This reveals women's ambivalent position in relation to patriarchal relations – on one hand they (could) change them but simultaneously they (consciously or subconsciously) continue to reproduce them – some more than others.

PATRIARCHY AND REPRESENTATION

HOUSEWIFE, WIFE, AND MOTHER. THREE ROLES THAT THE CREATOR ENSCONCED IN WOMEN'S HEARTS

Jernej Mlekuž

In this paper I attempt to answer the following questions: what model of womanhood was established by the Slovenian political emigrant community (SPE) in Argentina; how is this topic articulated; and what materials are used in the construction of gender. Gender is of course always subject to a struggle over definitions. However, as Liebset van Zoonen (1994: 39) states, placing emphasis on the susceptibility of gender to constant negotiation over definitions does not presume equal adversaries in these negotiations, because different social actors and groups have different powers of (self-) definition. As Karl Marx (1967: 106) would say: "They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented."

In seeking answers to the questions posed above, I limited myself to analysis of a single source, the main print medium of the SPE, which to this day carries the proud moniker *Svobodna Slovenija* (Free Slovenia, hereinafter *SS*). I analysed its articles for content that relates in any way to women and womanhood, from its first publication in Argentina in 1948 until 1990, when the name of the magazine became a political reality.

This methodological limitation, however, requires a caveat. The source which I put under my research microscope does not offer descriptions of any "actual" situations, any "actual" images of women in the Slovenian community in Argentina during a certain time, but rather an imagined, desired viewpoint, more of an idea, construction, or ideal than a material reality.

Thus, my point of departure is as follows: the articles I analysed create a particular version of the world and offer a means of orientation and socialisation within that world; they have definite but not necessarily direct effects; they reflect the social relations of power/authority; and it is not possible to claim that readers understand them in a uniform manner and accept them uncritically.

However, the situation is more complicated than it looks at first glance, or than the foregoing text might imply. We are not talking on one hand about

men who occupy the seats of power in society, control the media, and produce false images of womanhood, and on the other about women who are helplessly subordinated to these prevalences and are unsuccessful in their attempts to resist them.[1] An actual, real woman is a complicated and controversial construction who is continuously formed within discourses.

Within discourses, that is, in the sense of Michel Foucault's (2001: 55) oft-used formulation as "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak". Or as the more didactic Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1987: 108) put it: "What is denied is not that such objects exist externally to thought, but the rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive condition of emergence." Things thus acquire meaning and become objects of knowledge only within discourses – which however do not reflect some "natural" essence of things, but merely *construct* them.[2] Discourse, again turning to Foucault (1991: 18), "has to be construed as violence with which we afflict things".

But within this debate we have to clearly define the limits of the analysis. This is not an analysis of the constitutive role of discourse, nor of discursive effects. This is not a study of the politics of representation, but of the poetics of representation. To put it simply, we will be interested in images of women in the SPE, and not a lot more.

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1 Researching images of women in the media was not and is not an esoteric exercise in social sciences research. In the 1970s and the first half of the '80s the analysis of the division of gender roles in the mass media focused mainly on the prevailing images of women in the media. Methodologically, this was a good fit for content analysis, which allowed a quantitative, comparative, and systematic description of the content of the media reports. The final intent of these content analyses was a comparison of images of women as portrayed by the media with so-called "real" images (Hrženjak 2002: 15). These studies began with the thesis that the media, reflecting the unequal division of power between the sexes, present and therefore reinforce a false and erroneous image of women, while actual, real women were something completely different (Moi 1985: 44–45).

2 We restrict ourselves to just one of Foucault's analyses of the objects of knowledge which reveal the constitutive role of discourse. What we refer to today as homosexual behaviour has probably existed from time immemorial. But the category of homosexual as a special form of sexual identity or social subject appeared, as Foucault (1990) pointed out, only within medical, psychiatric, legal, and moral discourse in the late 19th century, with the appearance of theories of sexual perversion. Outside of specific discourses, thus outside of the formation of certain behaviours, outside of certain discursive practices, regulations, disciplinary techniques (of particular societies and particular times) the homosexual could not appear as a specific type of social subject. Thus the objects of knowledge, as Foucault showed in the examples of insanity, punishment, crime, disease, homosexuality, etc., exist only within certain discursive formations.

But let us not forget: even if we postulate that the view of women presented in *SS* is in some way illusory, imagined, or unreal, that does not mean that it does not have its own real effects. After all, we are talking not only about textual representations of womanhood, but also about (re)produced meanings which influence the lives of actual women.

THE SLOVENIAN POLITICAL EMIGRANT COMMUNITY IN ARGENTINA

was and still is the most recognised Slovenian emigrant community. It is a community that represents the losing side of World War II, a community with a relatively high proportion of intellectuals, a large number of priests, and with, for the most part, very uniform and clear political ideas, visions, and worldviews, which were often entirely at odds with the official prevailing doctrine in the homeland. It is a community based on religion (strict Catholicism), ideology (intense opposition to communism), and nationality (Slovenian). To this we can add a strict organisational structure (local cultural centres, an umbrella organisation), which among other things can boast an exceptional wealth of cultural, religious, political, artistic, and educational activities, and an emotional connection to the history of the *domobranci* – the best organised and largest military group of opponents of the partisan movement during the second world war in Slovenia. All of this was very well preserved by the SPE with respect to ethnic and political identity (Žigon 2001a; Žigon 2001b).

We have hinted at the community's exceptional level of structure. Initially at the top of the predominantly pyramidal hierarchy were two individuals, Miloš Stare as the political leader and Msgr. Janez Orehar as the religious leader. Upon their deaths the second level of decision-making, the "Council of the Wise" (*svet modrecev*) remained, which functions in various areas and in various ways. The actual, if informal, decision-making about fundamental guiding issues of the entire community occurs at this level. It is realised in the formal institution Zedinjena Slovenija (United Slovenia), called Društvo Slovencev (the Slovenian Society) until 1958, and is the umbrella organisation of all of the other institutions. One level lower in this hierarchy we find the Interorganisational Council, which connects and coordinates the activities of the political centre, United Slovenia, with the individual local cultural centres. The Interorganisational Council includes representatives of education, the press, the Church etc., and decisions are passed on to the next level via this body: to schools, local cultural centres, various associations, etc., and

from there all the way to the families, which are the basic social cells of the community.

Politics and the Church were the most influential factors in establishing the structure of the SPE. They are interwoven, owing to the exceptional power of religion and the Church, but we can still speak of separate functioning with partially separated organisational subsystems. United Slovenia is in charge of the community's cultural life, education, distribution of information, external political and other activities, and preserving the historical memory, which is the core of the community's political identity. There is a similar subsystem in the Slovenian church in Argentina, which through publishing, religious instruction, holding social/religious events, etc. makes a significant contribution to preserving the identity of the SPE through rituals, the preservation of symbolic patterns, and continual moral supervision. The interconnectedness of both entities and systems is frequently visible: religious instruction is part of the school curriculum, every major occasion begins with a mass, before the start of "Slovenian Saturday School" in addition to hymns and the oath of allegiance to the flag, prayer is also mandatory etc. (Žigon 2001b: 117–119).[3]

WOMEN TOGETHER WITH THEIR FAMILIES OR HUSBANDS, AND ONLY OCCASIONALLY ALONE, LEFT THEIR HOMELAND

in May 1945.[4] Some of them joined their husbands and families in the refugee camps or years later in Argentina. In the Austrian/Carinthian and Italian camps they worked as schoolteachers and kindergarten teachers (B. 1951: 160–180; P. 1951: 181–193), librarians, actors, and singers in cultural activities (Pernišek 1952: 110–124; Marolt 1952: 125–138), etc. In 1946 and 1947 the biweekly *Slovensko dekle* (Slovenian Girl)[5] was published at the camp in

3 At the level of the institutional interconnectedness of the Catholic Church and politics, belief, and ideology, we find the organisation Slovenska katoliška akcija (The Slovenian Catholic Campaign). In its initial period its influence was very large, but its importance has waned considerably over the years (Žigon 2001b: 119).

4 In the first few days of May 1945 a large number of refugees fled Slovenia for Austria, comprising collaborators with the occupiers, opponents of communism (particularly among the intelligentsia), and many others who fled before the Partisan army. These refugees were joined in the Austrian and Italian refugee camps by numerous Slovenian prisoners of war, people who had been pressed into forced labour in Austria and Germany during the war, internees, students at Italian and other universities and in general everyone who did not want to go home for ideological and other reasons. Their number ranged between 20 000 and 25 000, and included about 10 000 Slovenian *domobranci*, who were turned over to the Yugoslavian authorities at the end of May (Drnovšek 1996: 98).

5 The purpose of the publication, as we are told in the *Koledar Svobodne Slovenije 1951* (Cal-

the town of Spital (Austria), followed in 1948 for a short time by the publication *Pisma sestram v tujini* (Letters to Our Sisters Abroad) (Mlinar 1950: 183–184). *Slovensko dekle* was put out by a group of women under the mentorship of Prof. Pavel Slapar, i.e. a man (Mlinar 1950: 184). And to go even further: all of the people listed as editors of the numerous periodicals published in the refugee camps were men. Similarly, in articles describing the educational and cultural activities in the camps, women were listed in subordinate roles if at all. All of the people listed as principals were men, women were (just) teachers; choir leaders, directors and stage managers were almost always men, the women were (just) singers and actors; only men read their works at literary readings, etc. (see the aforementioned sources).

A survey of organisational structures also clearly shows that the women were at least a step behind the men: we see mentions of lectures for men and boys, but not for women and girls; the Youth Section had lectures for young men, but young women are not mentioned; only boys had instructional meetings at the Youth Centre, etc. (Pernišek 1952: 110–124).

We find a similar, but even more unbalanced picture in the literature of the SPE in Argentina, where the majority of refugees from the Austrian and Italian camps went in 1948 and the beginning of 1949.[6] The first 13-member committee of the SPE's main political and organisational body in Argentina, the Slovenian Society (renamed United Slovenia in 1958), included one woman (Rant 1998: 26), who, as we learn from the monumental *Zbornik dela v zvestobi in ljubezni: Zedinjena Slovenija 1948–1998* (Anthology of Work in Loyalty and Love: United Slovenia 1948–1998, hereinafter the *Zbornik*), "was in charge of bookkeeping from the very beginning" (Rant 1998: 33). In an article entitled "Laying the Groundwork for Cultural Activity" we read only men's names, and the same goes for the article "The Beginnings of Slovenian Education". Women are rarely found at the top of the pyramids of the numerous SPE organisations, committees, associations, bodies and other organisational structures. They are only observed in significant numbers at the lower levels: as course instructors, teachers (but never as school representatives), kindergarten teachers, librarians, organisers of cultural and social events, etc. According to Irene Mislej, women in the post-war community reached

endar of Free Slovenia 1951), was religious instruction and moral support for girls abroad (Mlinar 1950: 184).

6 According to data from the Slovenian Society, in 1952 in Argentina, when the SPE was no longer receiving significant influxes of people, there were 5282 so-called "new arrivals", of whom 2066 were women and 3216 were men (Rant 1998: 16). Other authors for the most part give higher figures, up to as many as 7000 people.

their highest positions in teaching children. They established a school system parallel to the official Argentine system: "As teachers they helped to create the so-called Argentine miracle, as it was called by some people, i.e. the fact that the third generation still spoke good Slovene." (Mislej 2002: 152).

Even a detailed perusal of the more than 800 page *Zbornik* does not reveal a large number of articles that refer in any way to the lives and work of women. Women are the protagonists of only two or three of the articles. The first "women's" article talks about Zveza slovenskih mater in žena (the Slovenian Mothers and Wives Association), founded in the Argentine capital in 1968. Its purpose, as written in their rules, was to "ensure the inclusion of Slovenian mothers and wives in the general operations of the Slovenian emigrant community in their personal and public lives" (Rant 1998: 571). The rules also state that: "The Slovenian Mothers and Wives Association is an organisation that unites all mothers, wives, and teachers who agree with Christian emigrant ideology." (Rant 1998: 571).

Among the numerous memorial celebrations, the *Zbornik* describes a memorial day called "The Via Dolorosa of Slovenian Wives and Girls" (the second "women's" article), which United Slovenia "decided to dedicate [...] particularly to Slovenian women and girls". As can be seen from the titles and summaries of the speeches, recitations, and other events at the celebration, the memorial day was driven more by the communist terror than by any wider feminine content. A terror that, as the speeches and other events at the celebration emphasised, was felt by Slovenian women. For instance, Vera Debeljak in a speech entitled "Slovenian Woman in Memoriam to Our Heroes" revealed the "suffering of Slovenian women after the liberation, which they themselves had endured". Alenka Jenko, the president of the Slovenian Girls' Organisation, in a speech entitled "The Story of the Youth", presented

> a child on whom the Second World War, communist revolution, and post-war violence had left their mark; even children have to feel and bear the entire brunt of the cruel fate of our nation, particularly under the communist bosses. The girl told of mothers who created "miracles" only so their children would not be corrupted. [...] Therefore today they must promise that they and their children would perpetuate the Slovenian people and fulfil the motto: "Mother, Homeland, God!"

This is followed by a recitation of female detainees in the homeland entitled "Who Could Measure Your Love, Mother", and then an illustration entitled "By the Thorny Path" which showed a "wife/mother in a communist

camp/bunker", and then "poems written by a poetess in the homeland" entitled "Broken Saints", "Desecrated God", etc. (Rant 1998: 38–6).

We also find an illustration of the function or position of women and girls in the SPE in a description of the first "Slovenian Catholic Emigrant Assembly" (the third "women's" article). This assembly, which was held August 15–17, 1952, in the Argentine capital, included several sections, including separate meetings for boys and girls, with separate and different lectures. We will list only the titles of the lectures given to girls by, with one exception, male lecturers: "Religious and Moral Issues for Slovenian Girls", "Girls' Cultural and National Duty" and "The Place of Girls in the Community" (Rant 1998: 55). Need we say more?

At the end of the *Zbornik* we find Slovenska dekliška organizacija (the Slovenian Girls' Organisation) in a list of abbreviations. But besides a few citations in the text, we learn nothing more about the organisation from the *Zbornik*.

These scraps demonstrate that the issue of womanhood in the SPE cannot be dealt with separately from the central imperatives of the SPE: faith (Catholic), nationality (Slovenian), and ideology (anti-communist). But the role and activities of women in the establishment and implementation of these postulates was markedly different from the roles and activities of men. Let us therefore look at how womanhood was viewed in the SPE, how the topic was articulated in the written word, and what materials were used.

IN THIS PAPER I WILL LIMIT MYSELF

to the selected publications of the Slovenian Society / United Slovenia: the weekly and later biweekly *Svobodna Slovenija* – a magazine which informed and formed the political views of the Slovenian political emigrants, was their main political medium,[7] and has been published in Buenos Aires without interruption since January 1, 1948.[8]

7 It would be very difficult, at least in the period in question, to find a family in the SPE who did not subscribe to it.

8 The Slovenian Society / United Slovenia also published several school and young people's leaflets, readers, textbooks, manuals, dictionaries, literary works, etc. Of particular note were the *Koledarji Svobodne Slovenije* (Calendars of Free Slovenia) and the *Zborniki Svobodne Slovenije* (Anthologies of Free Slovenia), which were published from 1949 to 1975 (Rot 1992: 211–213). The *Calendars*, which were originally "merely yearbooks" of an "instructional pedantic nature" (Debeljak 1976: 408), were later renamed the *Anthologies*, which focused on political and cultural debates and documentary materials from the present and the recent past. The *Anthologies* particularly focused on Slovenian history, present conditions,

Until 1990, *SS* was the semi-official magazine of Slovenska ljudska stranka (the Slovenian People's Party, hereinafter SLS), ardent opponents of the communist regime in the homeland,[9] thereafter becoming the property of

settlement data, descriptions of institutions, biographies, etc. Altogether, 24 large-format books were published, amounting to 7588 pages.

A "questionnaire" was published in the *Zbornik Svobodne Slovenije 1963* with the title "The Slovenian Girl and the Slovenian Woman in the World" and the telling subtitle "The woman props up three corners of the house". The *Zbornik Svobodne Slovenije 1968*, under the title "The Slovenian Woman at Home and Around the World" featured thoughts on Slovenian women from England, Belgium, the U.S., Canada, Italy, Argentina, and Slovenia (signed with initials). Both of these "questionnaires", featuring reflection and responses to questions, were discussed by Marjan Drnovšek (2004). Andrej Rot (1992: 209–210) has written further about the relative abundance of Slovenian printed materials in Argentina after World War II.

9 The Slovenian People's Party (SLS) was founded in Ljubljana in 1892 as the Catholic National Party to operate in the territory of Carniola. In 1909 the Carniolan SLS was joined by neighbouring Catholic organizations from other regions in the Habsburg Empire with Slovenian populations (at which time the SLS changed its name to the Pan-Slovenian People's Party) and thus became the leading and most powerful Slovenian political party. At the last National Assembly elections in the Habsburg Empire it took a full 87% of all Slovenian seats (various sources; for this and more see also Wikipedia).

Before the beginning of World War II – after an extremely politically colourful interwar period in the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (King Alexander imposed a dictatorship in January of 1929, all of the parties including the SLS were outlawed, after King Alexander's death in 1934 the SLS received 78% of all Slovenian seats and formed a new Yugoslav government together with Serbian radicals and Muslims, etc.) – the SLS had over 70% support among Slovenian voters and was the largest and most powerful political party in Slovenia. At the beginning of the war the SLS, following the death of long-time charismatic leader Anton Korošec, obtained two new leaders, Miha Krek and Marko Natlačen. The party agreed that Krek would accompany members of the Yugoslav government to join the Allies in London, while Natlačen, who was also the Ban of the Drava Banate, would lead the party during the occupation. On 6 April 1941, during the German, Italian, and Hungarian attack on the Slovenian territory, at that time part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the National Council was established at the initiative of the SLS, whose objective was to form an autonomic Slovenian territory under one single occupier with as few casualties as possible. During the civil war that occurred during the Second World War the SLS began to lose its support and former political influence due to the cooperation of many of its politicians with the occupier. Krek, despite sending an appeal from London to cease cooperating with the occupier, did not manage to retain control of the SLS.

After World War II, Slovenia was taken over by the Slovenian Communist Party, which outlawed all political parties including the SLS. Members of the leading political parties emigrated to the U.S. and Argentina. Krek went to Washington and remained Chairman of the SLS. The party, which did not operate in Slovenia, joined the Union of Christian Democratic Parties of Central Europe in 1952. In 1954 the SLS adopted a new program, in which Miha Krek undertook to strive for Slovenia's independence. After Krek's death in 1969, Miloš Stare, who worked in Argentina, was appointed Chairman of the SLS. After Stare's death in 1984 the party leadership was assumed by Marko Kremžar.

United Slovenia. The magazine's connection to the Slovenian Society, United Slovenia, and the SLS is readily apparent. Miloš Stare, the former head of the SLS, was the chairman of the Slovenian Society for the first five years and was at the same time the publisher of *SS* (Rot 1992: 209–210).[10] *SS* dealt mainly with political topics. It described and commented on events and relations in the homeland and around the world in a very committed and uncompromising manner. Vehement anti-communism and an open inclination towards and support for the Catholic Church – viewpoints endorsed by the SLS – were emphasised in nearly every article.

How much was written about women in the *SS*? If we say not all that much, we have to point out once again that the magazine was dedicated primarily to global political events, the situation in the homeland, and the life of the SPE community. There were a few somewhat more general social discussions and articles about various social phenomena and problems. It is no easier to offer absolute figures: some articles refer to women, femininity, and other feminine topics indirectly, obliquely, or unintentionally. And what kinds of content and topics do we find in the articles about women? We can list five different categories with respect to the content and purpose of the articles:

- articles about/celebrating Mother's Day
- the supplement "Woman and Her World"
- reports on the activities of the Slovenian Mothers and Wives Association (and other institutions and events connected with "women's" topics)
- a broader category of articles dealing with women and women's issues, generally connected with various conferences, papal bulls, etc.
- other (a story about meeting a Slovenian maid, "Notes on Fashion" etc.).[11]

Several important questions were raised in reading and analysing these texts: what was the impetus for the individual articles and groups of articles

10 On 1 January 1948, Stare once again began publishing the leaflet *SS*, which he had founded in the autumn of 1941 as an illegal leaflet in his homeland (Rot 1992: 212).

11 Articles with "feminine content" in *SS* are found not only among journalists' articles, but also in publicity texts, speeches from events, etc. Following the division of journalistic texts into those whose primary intention is to report (i.e. inform), and those that establish contact with the reader through influential, value-laden means and appeals (i.e. explain and analyse, assess and convince), the majority of the articles in question fall into the latter group. Thus in *SS*, in texts with "feminine content" the interpretive function of texts is prevalent, and is usually realised through judgment and critique in genres such as introductions, commentaries, articles, etc.

(directives from the top, editors' area of interest, women, single women, etc.), that is, who were the "real" authors of both the signed and anonymous texts; how much were the texts influenced by editorial or other policies; how did they tailor and modify the texts, etc. In other words, how and to what extent did women (re)present themselves? And are these questions – the majority of which we cannot answer – really unavoidable in revealing the ideas, constructions, and ideals of the SPE?

During the period in question, 1948–1990, nine articles were published referring in one way or another to Mother's Day. Except for a report or an outline of the Mother's Day program in Mendoza (Mendoza, Mother's Day (29 Oct. 1970)), all of the articles are introductions which mainly praise and honour (pious, Slovenian) mothers and motherhood in general. Despite various stylistic approaches, the articles describe women and mothers in very similar if not identical roles and manners. Take for example an introduction entitled "To Our Mothers" (15 Mar. 1951):

> We, who are not and do not want to be communists, have totally different views of women and mothers. We see women as mothers within the circle of the family and with a child in her lap.
> Housewife, wife, and mother. Three roles that the Creator ensconced in women's hearts. A housewife, who props up three corners of the house, who like a bee tirelessly takes care of a hundred tiny, often invisible things... A mother! Above all a mother! To be a mother is the most natural thing... A mother, who in a blessed union gives birth to a new generation for the nation and for God, and through sacrifice and suffering raises them to be valuable members of human society... Today the Slovenian mother must perform an enormous task: at home to prevent the planned dechristianisation of society and families from destroying our nation's future, and abroad to make sure that the young generation, who were given life by their Slovenian mothers, does not forget whose blood flows through their veins and does not forget the sacred tradition of our fathers.
> In the fight for one's daily bread, today many mothers must take jobs outside the home. Undoubtedly to the detriment of the home and family! God grant that the situation is soon righted, so that Slovenian mothers, wherever in the world they are, may dedicate all of their strength to the purpose for which God created them: for the home and the family.

As we can see from these introductory words, women were in no way excluded from the SPE's ideological/political battle with the regime in the homeland. In an article with the succinct title "To Mothers" (25 Mar. 1954), the anonymous writer indicates yet another aspect of this ideological, political struggle, a common motif appearing in other articles as well:

> Thus good mothers live only in a noble Christian environment, which is able to give love, suffering, and sacrifice a supernatural quality. For the modern mother, who is the product of the material and dechristianised environment in which the world lives today, the beauty of maternal love and sacrifice makes no sense. The modern mother does not like children, since she is afraid of the burdens of motherhood. If she has children, she gives them to others to raise. She is drawn more to the dance hall than the children's bedroom, she prefers the society of shallow gallants to the babbling of her own children...
> The wide world is dangerous for everyone, including our wives and mothers, who are exposed to bad influences at every step and who must constantly endure the half-chiding, half-mocking words: why so many children? Why destroy your health and youth with countless births and everything that comes with them?

The supplement "Woman and her World" was published from the end of 1964 until May 1972. This supplement was usually published, with widely varying periods of interruption, in every other issue of the weekly. Thus at least 126 items[12] were published "on women's problems", as we can read in the first article, which carries no additional title (12 Mar. 1964)): "[the editorial board] in responding to numerous requests from our women readers to publish a weekly which would speak only about women's problems, has decided to dedicate a special space to this purpose." "Women's World" is most often packaged in a sort of moralistic/instructional genre and for the most part limited to raising children, as we can see from a brief glance at the titles: "Thoughts on School Bags" (9 Apr. 1964), "Television and Children"

The sculpture of the Holy Family by Slovenian emigré artist France Ahčin. Photo: Kristina Toplak, Argentina, 2004.

12 Five issues of *SS*, from 18 June to 30 July 1964, were "absent" from the manuscripts department at the National University Library (NUK), where I studied these materials. Since it was published fairly regularly in every other issue both before and after this period, it is unlikely that more than 126 items were published. Of course, owing to the sheer volume of the materials, I may have overlooked an article or two.

(23 Apr. 1964), "With Children through the Present into the Future" (2 Sept. 1965), "So We Don't Cry Too Late" (23 Mar. 1967), "Solid Foundations, Solid Structure" (31 Aug. 1967), "Respect your Father and Mother" (27 Jun. 1968), "Raising our Children" (6 May 1971), etc. In raising children a love for the homeland, the importance of religion, and the fear of materialism and technology are nearly always emphasised. Thus for example in the article "Television and Children" (23 Apr. 1964), Anica Kraljeva, the author of nearly all of the articles in the supplement, asks: "Is television not very guilty for the fact that our children, and adults as well, are sinking quickly into foreign ways of thought and thus distancing them from our Christian and national traditions?"

Some of the articles also deal with marriage, family, and intergenerational relations, touch on wider social topics, and also broach other moral issues (e.g. charity, relations with loved ones).

There are very few articles which deal primarily and explicitly with the role and importance of women in the SPE or in society in general. The sole examples are an article entitled "Here Comes the New Woman" (17 Apr. 1969), in which the emancipation processes occurring around the world are discussed very critically, and an article which summarises a talk given at an event held by the Slovenian Mothers and Wives Association, entitled "Wife – Public Figure?" (4 Jun. 1970), in which female "public figures" are put into a very specific place:

> I am convinced that behind every public figure in the emigrant community there stands a self-sacrificing woman. It is true that there are many cases where men have increased their wives' level of thought and culture, but, thank God, there is also no lack of cases where the wife raised up the husband, encouraged him to work for others, and as the folk saying goes "made a man out of him". Therefore such wives are worthy of respect, because they know in advance that they will have to sacrifice a lot of quality time together and take the place of the husband in raising the children. Let us praise such women, the invisible public figures!

Many of the other articles in the supplement construct a similar iconography of women as the invisible but solid support for men of great actions. In the article "An Important Day" (21 May 1970) we read:

> Slovenes do not have any brilliant women in their history. Slovenian women in the past were models of the wife who lived in quiet labour, sacrifice, and prayer. In the biographies and memoirs of our important men, a good Christian

> mother stands behind them, usually a peasant mother, strong in her faith, caring for her family, personally humble, a benefactress to the needy. The road to the church is a true joy for her, the greatest joy a pilgrimage, usually together with a night vigil in the pilgrimage church.

Many of the articles – these semi-instructions for living a moral life – touch on the role and place of women more indirectly, or in passing. For instance, the article "What is More Important" (29 Apr. 1965) states: "And it is the wife who is called on to maintain a pleasant peace at home, which is especially important for the entire family at the weekend. The husband, who spends the entire week in an alien environment, will particularly enjoy it." Confining women within the walls of the home, in the bosom of the family, is a very common element in all of the texts and is often presented as a motto, such as in the article "Steel Chains Are Not Always the Heaviest" (18 Jan. 1968): "The home is the kingdom of the mother and wife."

The Activities of the Slovenian Mothers and Wives Association, usually general meetings, lectures, and tea parties, were presented in numerous different reports; both in very short and concise summaries and in detailed and precise descriptions. These reports frequently include summaries and verbatim excerpts from speeches and lectures. In the article "Slovenian Mothers and Wives Association Tea Party" (18 Sept. 1975), we read: "She (Mrs. Pavla Kremžar) then spoke about the duties of the Slovenian emigrant woman. Women must above all maintain their families' faith and nationality." Or, as Pavlina Dobrovšek is quoted in an article entitled "Ten Years of the Slovenian Mothers and Wives Association" (16 Sept. 1976):

> We must not correlate our Christian and entirely national Slovenian thinking with the current regime in Slovenia. Our ideology is diametrically opposed to the communism that prevails at home. In such conditions the Christian woman is turned into a second-class citizen, since she does not have the right to her ideological and cultural life.

The statements and quotations from individual speeches and summaries were originally products of the "ideological apparatus" of the SPE; however, this understanding of the construction of womanhood in the SPE can easily be discussed along with other texts about women. The selection of statements, quotations, and summaries creates a very similar construction of womanhood to that seen in the other texts in the magazine; views that are problematic and incompatible with the constructed ideal of womanhood are of course impossible to find.

In addition to the recurring motif of confining women within their private lives, the texts in this section sometimes also grapple with the above described issue of womanhood in the "unfated" homeland. Thus in an article entitled "The Slovenian Woman in the Fight for the Nation" (25 Nov. 1971), we read a summary of a talk by Vera Debeljak: "I should, by the way, mention that, particularly at home, women have reached high political positions as Communist Party leaders, unfortunately in the service of foreign interests and the moral destruction of our nation." In the same article under the subheading "Mother and Educator", but also in Vera Debeljak's lecture, we find a new motif:

> Women are the mothers and educators of the new generation, and therefore the entire weight of the future of our nation rests upon them. We are faced with questions that demand immediate answers, particularly from Slovenian mothers and wives in the emigrant community: What is the nature of the Slovenian emigrant woman's fight for the nation?

The speaker then poses three questions:

> First question: Should and how should we emigrant mothers present our children with the heritage of their ancestors? [...]
> Second question: Should I show the desire and the struggle of the Slovenian nation to my child in such a light that that struggle will appear to him to be a shining goal which he will also feel is worth fighting for? Should I show him our leaders of the past few decades as great men, full of unselfish love for their nation? May their shining examples warm our youths' hearts to the work and prosperity of the Slovenian nation!
> Third question: Are we aware that perhaps our youth in particular are called upon to bring the new oil of the righteousness of love and respect for the sacred objects of our nation, when the time comes!?
> At that time it will become evident whether we Slovenian emigrant women were true to the ideals for which we left our home. We women are also called upon to smooth out dissention, disagreement, hatred and discord that could destroy our community.
> Therefore, women, let us repeat the May Declaration,[13] let us collect signatures, even unwritten ones [i.e. informal declarations of support], for the reform of the Slovenian emigrant community united in love and understanding.

13 The May Declaration was a political statement by the Yugoslavian Club, which Slovenian, Croatian, and Serbian deputies presented to the Viennese Parliament on 30 May 1917. In it they demanded the creation of an independent Yugoslavian state within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Austro-Hungarian Empire rejected the demand, and in response Slov-

Thus women were assigned and also assigned themselves a very important role in the political struggle, as Pavlinka Dobrovšek said in a different place and in slightly different words, in an article entitled "Slovenian Mothers' and Wives' Association Tea Party" (5 Sept. 1974):

> It is our duty to foster loyalty to the ideals for which we left our homeland. Slovenian mothers [must] constantly encourage respect for the sacred objects of our nation and we fervently hope that we Slovenes will at some point reach our long sought-after goal: United and free Slovenes.

And where did women (the SPE) see the pitfalls of modern times? In a report entitled "General Meeting of the Mothers and Wives Association" (28 Nov. 1974) we read the following:

> As you yourselves can see and feel, Slovenian women are exposed to the dangers of modern times: modernism, materialism, liberalism, etc. Therefore our annual program and/or central idea was: Which way the family? These questions have been discussed at many meetings. Individual sections of the centres held a series of talks on this topic.

Furthermore, in these texts a certain change in the zeitgeist can be sensed with regard to attitudes towards and images of women. We have referred to the example of the woman as a public figure, whose actions are reduced to supporting and propping up a male public figure. In a speech by Rudolf Smersu, published in an article entitled "Slovenian Mothers and Wives Holiday" (29 Sept. 1983) on the 16th anniversary of the Association, women are placed in the public sphere:

> I would like to conclude with an acknowledgement. Slovenian women uphold their duty in full measure not only as wives and mothers, but also as public figures, which fills us with joy and pride, and we only wish them to continue that work to the benefit of the Slovenian nation.

We can also classify in this category the reports and statements from speeches at other organisations' events that occasionally touch on the subject of women or the issue of womanhood. In an article entitled "Mother, Homeland, God. Thoughts from Miloš Stare's speech on the celebration of the 8th anniversary of the Slovenian Centre in Berazategui on 11 November"

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ene women in particular began to collect signatures for the declaration. 200 000 signatures were collected.

(22 Nov. 1974) we read: "Mother! Homeland! God! And the communists say that Cankar[14] was one of theirs. What a lie and a fiction. For communists, mother and motherhood are without spiritual content."

The wider theme of women and the issue of womanhood also include articles that deal with various conferences, papal bulls, etc. These include articles with short titles, e.g. "Women's Year" (8 May 1975), "Women and the Council" (20 Jan. 1965, 23 Oct. 1965), as well as articles with longer and more descriptive titles: "A Farce of Marxist Dialectics. The World Conference on Women in Mexico" (3 Jul. 1975), "The World Conference on Women. The Issue of Womanhood Resolved 2000 Years Ago" (26 Jun. 1975), which states that progressive women

> advocate anarchy, the dissolution of marriage, free love, the death of unfated children and similar debauched ideas. [...] Otherwise the entire problem of women's rights was solved 2000 years ago, but there are very few women who would take the Holy Family of Bethlehem as their model.

"Women's Year" (8 May 1975), mentioned above, enumerates several of these motifs and information about women:

> but all women should always be aware of the importance and future importance of Slovenian women [...]
> Women's Year aims primarily to honour women, especially in their primary role as mothers. [...] The further women stray from the ideal of true motherhood, which our faith presents to us in full credence, the more they fear sacrifice, the more they flee from motherhood, in a sometimes criminal, sometimes immoral way. Materialism and the desire for ease and enjoyment today is destroying so many families that everyone who is seriously observing the constantly increasing spread of these cancerous wounds looks on the future with fear. [...]
> The Slovenian mother and wife in our world is saved by all of the difficult work that she had to do at home in order to prop up "three corners of the house", but the tasks through which, together with the husband, she maintained the property and which modern times and exceptional conditions impose demand perhaps much larger sacrifices than the ones at home. In her new home she must also support three corners so that our homes can remain Slovenian not just in

14 Ivan Cankar (1876–1918), the central figure of Slovenian literature, frequently addressed political, social, and cultural problems in his stories, plays and essays. He sympathised with socialism, and among other things ran for political office in 1907 as a member of the Yugoslavian Social Democratic Party. The article most likely refers here to his most ambitious novel, *Na klancu* (1902) and to several short stories from his latter creative period, in which the figure of the mother is in the forefront.

feeling, but also in respect for and cherishing our words, our customs, our traditions, and our problems. Faithful to God and the faith of our fathers, especially regarding honesty, prayer, Sunday Mass, and the sacraments; proud of who we were and who we are. Let us be aware of our great responsibility to the nation at home, who are led by their enemies and who expect of us, living in freedom, always to be pious heralds of their difficulties and striving.
The Slovenian mother and wife always wants to be in the front row when something has to be done for the good of our nation. We even have an uninterrupted string of examples in the emigrant community of what our women have created. Without their participation, we could say that our existence as a unit would be impossible. I could mention only our schools, our organisations, our events, our charity. Unfortunately we are frequently not aware how thankful we should be to them.

In the article "A Farce of Marxist Dialectics. The World Conference on Women in Mexico" (3 Jul. 1975) we encounter, like so many times before and after, the ideological struggle in which women are constantly present: "while no woman has yet publicly protested for women's rights in the countries behind the Iron Curtain".

Some of the articles about women would be difficult to classify into the aforementioned categories, as they deal with women indirectly. For instance, in an article entitled "Something about Fashion" (25 Nov. 1971), the anonymous author highlights his (her?) text and prescribes the following view of women: "In conclusion: we should adapt to fashion, but in accordance with our Slovenian essence, with our Christian worldview. Let us be proud Slovenes, who do not follow any sort of fashion blindly." A completely different article entitled "Meeting the Maid" (17 Feb. 1949) talks about the initial difficulties of young Slovenian female servants in the big city, their loneliness, connection with their faith, etc.

NOTHING NEW ON THE WESTERN FRONT?

The above mentioned subjects and articles undoubtedly deal with women and womanhood from various perspectives and with varying approaches. But the contextual, genre, stylistic, and other differences nonetheless create a very uniform view of women and womanhood and give women in the SPE and in society in general a clearly defined place, specifically as mothers, children's educators, wives, supporters of their husbands, housewives, and queens of the home. And not a whole lot more. There is no room here for difference, such as individual psychology and social and cultural positions which would reflect the differences within this firmly conceptualised col-

lective. *SS* thus constructed a mythology of motherhood,[15] homeyness, and passivity. A familiar expression was used in most of the texts: the women in these articles are most often referred to as *wives* and *mothers*, and very rarely in the more neutral term *women*.

In constructing this viewpoint, the author of the texts is not important. Male, female, and anonymous authors alike (re)produce very similar views of women and prescribe similar if not identical roles. Nor were there any major cracks in or corrections to this very solid construction over the forty-year period.[16] The only exception is that, beginning in the second half of the 1970s, women were gradually acknowledged an otherwise very limited public place, mainly as teachers and kindergarten teachers in Slovenian schools. Thus women were only allowed a public arena under the auspices of religious, national, and political education.[17]

The presentation of these views of women as maternal, consecrated to the family, the nation[18] and God,[19] could be understood merely through the close connection of the SPE with Catholicism and the generally conservative

15 Isn't maternal love an inseparable component of all ideological discussions? One of the most successful ideological manipulations of women in the twentieth century was, according to Svetlana Slapšak (2000: 106), precisely this ideological storytelling about mothers. Let us recall just a few examples: mothers who are celebrated since all of their sons were killed; mothers who endured the death of their children, sacrificed on the altar of the homeland, with dignity; mothers who killed their children only in order not to betray the soldiers.

16 The world has undoubtedly changed (a lot) in forty years, probably these women also slightly, this journalism not at all. We could therefore conclude that its function in the SPE has changed. That is, if only one element in a system remains unchanged, this means that its unchanged quality plays a special role.
Very few articles were published in the eighties that touched on women or womanhood in any way, so the last decade was omitted from this analysis.

17 The question which arises is how the SPE responded to women who did not adhere to this prescribed image and path. Here we will mention only one "different" woman, the painter Bara Remec, who gained immense admiration and respect within the SPE, as numerous articles and accounts attest.
But how was it for the other "different" women? How many of them were there? And what did their "differentness" mean, how was it received, understood, tolerated? Unfortunately there is no room in this paper to address these questions.

18 Many feminists have written inspirationally about the constitutive role of women in fantasies about the nation and the ideological connections between nationalism and masculinity. Here, without any preference for one work over another, we will mention only the anthology *Woman – Nation – State* (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1989), in which we find a large number of examples from different countries.

19 Regarding the Catholic construction of women, Luisa Accati's *Beauty and the Monster: Discursive and Figurative Representations of the Parental Couple from Giotto to Tiepolo* (2006) remains an extremely inspirational book, although it is not directly applicable to this paper.

stance of this community.[20] However, the debate about women in *SS* is not restricted to the offering of these homogeneous images of women. In many of the articles a distinction is drawn between attitudes toward women in the SPE and attitudes towards women in the "unfated" homeland. These articles also frequently express a fear of materialism, liberalism, and other features of the modern world. This indicates that women were not excluded from the ideological and political battle which the SPE fought with the hated regime in the homeland. Women are useful, pliable, and stretchable material – bodies through which ideological aims can undoubtedly be effected. So, nothing new on the western front?

20 The conservative view of the issue of women in the Slovenian lands can be found in the very extensive Catholic interwar press, in the thought of Catholic sociologists from the first half of the 19th century (Janez A. Krek, Aleš Useničnik, Josip Jeraj, and Andrej Gosar). It also received a critical treatment in Angela Voda's book *Žena v današnji* družbi (Women in Modern Society) (1934), the work of Maca Jogan (1986; 1990), and elsewhere.

REPRESENTATION AND SELF-REPRESENTATION

LONG LIVE AMERICA, WHERE WOMEN ARE FIRST!

Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik

> It was a beautiful morning in May 1906. After leaving the French ship La Touraine, we were transported to Ellis Island for landing and inspection. There we were 'sorted out' as to the country we came from and placed in a 'stall' with the letter 'A' above us ('A' was for Austria). There were at least a hundred Slovenian immigrants. We separated ourselves, as was the custom at home – men on the right and women and children on the left. All of us were waiting to leave for all parts of the United States. The day was warm and we were very thirsty. An English-speaking immigrant asked the nearby guard where we could get a drink of water. The guard withdrew and returned shortly with a pail of water, which he set before the group of women. Some men stepped forward quickly to have a drink, but the guard pushed them back saying: 'Ladies first!' When the women learned what the guard had said, they were dumbfounded, for in Slovenia, as in all Europe, women always were second to men. Someone dramatically explained it this way: 'First comes man, then a long time nothing, then comes the woman.' Happy at the sudden turn of events, one elderly lady stepped forward, holding a dipper of water, and proposed this toast: 'Long live America, where women are first!' (*Živjo Amerika, kjer so ženske prve*!). (Prisland 1968: 19)

In this last chapter we finally leave behind what has been said about women migrants by others, and let them speak for themselves. Describing biographical methods and a study of Slovenian women migrants and their descendants in the U.S., this chapter presents the importance of the migration experiences of women and their own interpretations of social phenomena. Such interpretations have enabled a "democratisation" of social sciences and humanities, because they have shifted the point of interest from historical events and political interpretations to individuals, that is, to the participants' experience and the weight they ascribe to events. Biographical methods have been important in the development of women's studies since they developed primarily to make the historically overlooked "half of the human race" visible and audible. Over the decades, not only the methodology itself but the

entire field of gender studies have been honed in the area of identity and subjectivity research, which is particularly useful in migration studies.

Only in the last two decades has special attention been paid to women migrants. This attention is the result of the realisation that migrations are gender-marked processes. With the help of autobiographical and other qualitative methods knowledge about migrations has been enriched through a number of studies and research into the different roles, experiences, positions, and treatment of men and women within the migration context, both in the past and today.

CONTEXTUALISED LIVES

Since the 1980s the biographic method has also been established in women's studies. Tanja Rener estimates that in the beginning, the biographic and autobiographic narratives

> in women's movements, feminism, and women's studies [had] a completely different status than they did in other humanistic research. Although the times of reviving biographies in the humanities and feminism more or less coincide, the motives for it are different. Women's orality, narrative, and auto-narrative within women's movement of the 1970s have principally political and therapeutic functions. A biographic narrative is thus one of the main expressions of the need for individual and collective presence and the desire for the reconstruction and description of personal, subjective experiences that was not allowed within the hierarchy of the political and the linguistic narrative conventions. (Rener 1996: 762)

Gradually, the use of this methodology changed and Rener describes how the naïve understanding of women's narratives as authentic expressions that needed to be interpreted with political appropriateness shifted into a different, methodologically codified research in the beginning of the 1990s.

> The representation of women became colder, more scientifically documented and less ideological, and at the same time not moving into the direction of the traditional treatment of biographic material characteristic for humanities and social sciences. It has, namely, retained the eclecticism of disciplinary elements, and does not hide the 'declarative position', while at the same time tries to rationally control manipulations and above all does not give up the pleasures of interpretation suggested by scientism and naïve feminism. (Rener 1996: 763)

Gabriele Griffin and Rosi Braidotti place this need for individual and collective presence, and the reconstruction and description of personal, sub-

jective experiences at the starting point for the development of women's and gender studies. In their reader on the development of women's studies in Europe they emphasise that empiricism was of key importance for its development and flourishing because it legitimised the basic principle of women's studies: "the importance of experience as the source of knowledge and of theorizing" (Griffin and Braidotti 2002: 4). In British and American academic circles, where a specific philosophical tradition of scientific empiricism had been established, it was a lot easier to break through with research that was based on personal experience and brought a new, different view of the established societal, social, and ideological scientific dogmas. Therefore gender studies developed much faster there than they did in Europe.

In continental Europe the intellectual and political tradition was slow to allow experimentation, to introduce novelties, or to undermine the existing knowledge simply on the base of experience. Additionally, the role of European intellectuals and their social status differs from the role of their more pragmatic British and American counterparts: it is rigid, arrogant, and mystical and still often prevents women from obtaining the means for intellectual activity and adopting intellectual roles in society. Griffin and Braidotti mention that, "In the 1970s and 1980s a happy coincidence emerged between English pragmatism and down-to-earthness and the empirical urge to document women's ways of knowing and to legitimate women's experience." (Griffin and Braidotti 2002: 4).

Liz Stanley states that in the field of using women's experience and narrative method, the understanding that reality is not unified and therefore cannot be scientifically "discovered" is of key importance, as is the knowledge that the roles of researchers and the research "objects" are interchangeable and transferrable. Stanley presents the idea of "auto/biography", with which she conceptually rejects a series of dichotomies (autobiography – biography, author – reader, outer – inner). She proposes three more crucial ones: I – others, public – private, and immediate – memory (Stanley 1992). The argument for her rejection of the first dichotomy is that every autobiography contains biographies of people, while every biography is full of autobiographical elements. The public and the private intertwine in a similar way, even when we consider the seemingly private genres, such as letters and journals, often being explicitly intended for publication. The third crucial dichotomy shows that every record is already an interpretation and that it is based on the selectiveness of memory, even though it might be "immediate". Stanley links the notion of auto/biography to the notion of the "auto/biographical I".

She defined three key elements of auto/biographical feminist research, or feminist auto/biographies. The first element signifies a reach beyond the reductionist approach that puts the protagonist in the limelight. The author instead suggests taking the wider social context into consideration, along with social networks and relationships that intertwine and correlate with the individual's social status; she demands a dispersed, far-reaching light. The second element is the rejection of objectivity, which puts the writer/researcher and the reader into seemingly equal positions. Instead, Stanley demands a clearly articulated ideological position of researchers, exposing the process of producing writing and knowledge to the eyes of the readers. With the third element, Stanley abolishes realism:

> Anti-realism disrupts chronology and periodisation; disputes gender and fixes 'sex' as character, in character flaws and not essentialism; combines love with contempt; multiply disrupts 'reality'; and turns aside the eyes of the seen, not the seer. Anti-realism in this biography confounds the certainties of the reader, pulls away all that can be pulled from under our collective readerly feet. We end with one certainty: that lives are not simple. (Stanley 1992: 252–253)

The rejection of dichotomies and the recognition of intersubjectivity were important in the development of the narrative method, or life history research. The narratives, the life stories are "lives in context" says Garry Knowles. They are positioned into social, economic, historic, religious, and educational circumstances; subjected to the influences of the family, community, and social institutions; dependent on the cultural landscapes, personal convictions, intimate actions, independent decisions, and their consequences (Knowles 2001).

Of key importance here is Stanley's warning that we need to take into consideration the ideological, political, and social standpoints of the "knowledge producers": those researchers-listeners that then abridge these stories, shorten or adapt them, fitting them into frames, theories, and concepts, and finally, interpretatively place them into their own contexts. Her warning is thus about the contexts of people who narrate, and also the contexts of those who produce knowledge and authority from these narratives. History and other studies are therefore "democratised" not only through the use of auto/biographical sources and methods. The key is how they are used and what becomes of them. As Alessandro Portelli says of historians and the assumption that the working class can finally speak through oral history: "Even accepting that the working class speaks through oral history, it is clear that

the class does not speak in the abstract, but speaks *to* the historian, *with* the historian and, inasmuch as the material is published, *through* the historian." (Portelli 1991: 56). The auto/biographical method by itself does not enable the voices of "ordinary" people to be heard. Their voices, interpretations, and experiences can only be heard if the decision of the researcher makes that possible. For this reason, the methodology of auto/biographical research is constantly subject to ethical and moral considerations, similar to the ones Mojca Ramšak writes about. She emphasises that,

> For those recording life stories in countries with an extensive network of trained recorders and large archives of oral history accessible to the interested public, the ethics of the research is not a marginal theme, but one with precise rules and ethical norms all the recorders must follow. Nothing in recording a life history is left to mere coincidence, instincts, judgement, and the dictates of one's own consciousness, but rather to knowledge that are based on tradition and especially on personal cognition and decisions based on our ethical professional consciousness. (Ramšak 2003: 126–127)

However, ethical research issues and professional consciousness are not the only concerns here. The extent to which the voices of people who narrate stories will be heard, and how, also depends on the world view and political orientation of the researchers. Their position within the network of authority and power, the institutions they represent, the meanings they fit into the structures of values and knowledge – all this affects their utterly intimate decisions.

HOW MUCH OF ME IS THERE IN YOU?

In sociological and socio-historical approaches life stories are used and interpreted for two primary purposes: as material for studying life paths in different social contexts and as texts through which the means of personality and personal identity construction are reflected. The very definition of a life story stems from these two uses and interpretations, since we can understand a life story as a story about one's life events or define it as a story about personal character as it is reflected through the narration. When analysing more than sixty stories that I have recorded among Slovenian women emigrants and their descendents in the U.S.,[1] I noticed a difference between them that

1 Life stories were recorded and analysed as a part of the research project "The role and importance of women for preserving the cultural heritage among the Slovenian emigrants in the United States of America" (Slovenian Migration Institute at the SRC SASA, 2001–2004).

was hard to describe, no matter which theoretical or analytical approach I used. Some narrators did mostly talk about the facts and events from their lives (or mostly the lives of their parents and relatives), while others spent more time describing emotions and relationships. However, the majority of the narrators intertwined both aspects, with only the emphasis differing. Only for a small number of narratives could this division into fact reporting and the subjective narration of a life story hold, and even then not for the entire narration, but only in some parts. We must bear in mind that a fact-reporting story can, after a while, become subjective because of an intersubjective situation and vice versa.

For example, once a narrator spent a long time dryly describing family relations and relationships. It was clear from the description of her grandmother, a Slovenian immigrant, that their emotional relationship was the key to all that the granddaughter accepted as an important part of her identity. The narrator became truly emotionally upset at the end of the story when she spoke about her own daughter who had a child with an African-American man and she started crying. That had no direct connection to the theme I was interested in, but it was important for the consistency of her personality, something I will discuss later in the chapter. Another example is the narrator who began to tell her tragic story without any pathos. Her narrative shook me so much that I broke the fundamental rule, to listen without interrupting. Afraid that tears would get the better of me this time, I started to ask her questions, which of course cut the stream of her narration. What would she have told me had I been better equipped to deal with this kind of story telling? How can we better understand such situations?

Instead of using these two established approaches to life stories, Pertti Alasuutari suggests a third option. He places a discursive approach between the socio-structural approach that understands a life story as an image of life and the socio-linguistic approach, for which a narrative of a life story is an image of a personality. He describes the discursive approach as a perspective through which a personality is seen as a strategy for maintaining continuity and dignity. In my opinion, this is an extremely important approach. The author rejects the assumption that everyone possesses some sort of authentic self that can be caught when she or he is telling her or his life story. He says that life-story narrating is always situational and serves a function (Alasuutari 1997: 5). It depends on the personal relationship between the narrator

All the quotes are from this research, unless otherwise stated. All copyrights reserved by the author.

and the listener, on what the narrator thinks the listener expects from her, and the other way around. Those who work with the method of listening and interpreting life stories know that people do not walk around with such stories readymade. They create them during the intricate situation of recording, even though the session has been planned in advance. With the discursive approach Alasuutari has drawn attention to the fact that narrating a life story serves a particular personal, intimate purpose for the narrator, and that at its very core lies the retaining of personal dignity and consistency. The author recommends:

> Let me now further pursue the implications of the discursive turn in life-story research by introducing an ethnomethodological aspect to the discussion. It is obvious that individuals use life-story narration and autobiographical accounting to construct their individuality, continuity over time. That is how a sense of self is discursively accomplished. This leads to the question of what are the cultural premises on which members' understanding of a life story as a story about an individual life, a story of a personality, is based. (Alasuutari 1997: 7)

As I experienced in my fieldwork, life story narration and listening is based on the principle of cooperation. That is, the consistency of the image drawn by the narrator is equally important as the consistency of the role played in the process by the listener. As an example, I can present a decision I had to make when a Slovenian woman in Washington, D. C., suggested that I record her story as a part of the research. Because I also carried out the research among the members of the Slovenian Women Union of America and participated in its events in different parts of the United States, I had run into this particular member several times, and she knew what I was doing. But I was shocked by her direct offer to give her life story. Not because of the directness of the offer, as all of the stories I recorded were recorded because the women were willing to tell them – I either asked them or they responded to my invitation which they received through their friends. I was disturbed because I didn't want to and could not record her story. Although the research was wide open to the women of all walks of life, regardless of their age, education, time of the arrival into the United States, place of residence, political affiliation, association memberships and similar, it was still clear that it concentrated mostly on pre-World War II migrants and their descendents, and less on the women who migrated after World War II. Such a decision was a result of the estimate that post-WWII immigrants make up a mere six percent of all the Slovenian migrants in the United States. The goal

of the research was to focus on the oldest migrants and their descendants. To emphasise the political neutrality and at the same time leave the interlocutors the freedom of creating their life story, I never asked about the reason for the migration (their own or their ancestors').

The source of awkwardness in this case lay elsewhere. Since every kind of research is in some aspect political, and since every researcher carries out her work from a certain ideological point of view, a clear decision was needed in this case. The woman from Washington, D. C., emigrated from Slovenia as a child with her parents immediately after World War II and spoke about the Slovenia of 2003 as a country with a non-democratic regime, still ruled by the ruthless communist regime. I had known that from our previous meetings. When she asked me whether I would record her story, I politely replied that there was not enough time. The reason for my refusal was of course otherwise. I didn't want to record her story because I would not be able to play my role in the interactive situation. In this situation, the life story narration serves a certain personal, intimate purpose of the narrator, and its essence is retention of personal dignity and consistency of both the narrator and the listener, in this case the researcher. Since her political views were extremely unpleasant and unacceptable to me, I wouldn't have been able to listen to her story the way the methodology requires – I would put the dignity and integrity of both of us in danger. Of course, I was able to avoid this – undoubtedly interesting – life story, because the focus of my research wasn't political migration. But had it been, my personal and research "training" would have also been different. In any case, I had a personal experience of the rules regarding "anti-objectivity" that the reflection of the researcher's position demands, and the "auto/biographical I" that determines how the knowledge is contextually and situationally produced with regard to the class, race, gender, world-view, and religious position of the knowledge.

When a person decides to tell her story, she enters an interactive situation with the listeners (researcher), although she is aware that the audience later will be a lot wider and unknown to her. All this is also true for the listener. An explicit case in point is a situation we encountered in Cleveland when we were recording a woman with a camera in a public space, where some other people waited to be recorded.[2] At one point the director asked the narrator, a well-known person in Slovenian circles, if she had any children.

2 Based on my research, we filmed the documentary *100 % Slovenian* (*Američanke*). The documentary was directed by Hanna A. W. Slak and premiered on TV SLO in 2005. It can be accessed at http://isi.zrcsazu.si/index.php?q=en/node/14 . The description shows a situation that occured during the shoot in Cleveland.

She nodded and told us that she had given birth to a son as a young girl, but had given him up for adoption because she wanted to study. She had only established contact with him years later. To us, who did not know the narrator, this was an interesting part of the story, but it didn't seem extraordinary. It was only later that we learnt from others who were present at the shoot that she had revealed a secret. None of those people who had known her for decades had any idea that she had a child. Would she have revealed the secret had the director not asked? Why did the director ask in the first place? In order to find out how she passed on the parts of her ethnic identity to her child? Does it matter at all?

What matters is that we would not have missed this part of the story, that we wouldn't have noticed that something was "missing", because her story about ethnic identity and literary creation was perfectly consistent, full of turns in the structuring of personal identity and interesting interpretations of personal decisions. The fact that she had a child added no essential information to the story that she'd told us. But this event did essentially influence the attention that I as a researcher turned to the understanding of life stories as a means of construction of self and identity and to the understanding of the situations in which this happens. And that includes the (research) situation of listening to and narrating a life story. Maybe the narrator seized the moment to tell her secret precisely because there were people present who had known her most of her life. The disclosure had nothing to do with making the film, but with her intimate need that she could realise by deciding in that split second. When the director asked her whether she had a child, she answered immediately and without hesitation. She decided to reveal her secret on the spot, totally consistent with the rule that narrating a life story is always a presentation of self in the making.

I shall describe another case which also shows how the story depends on the situation in which the narrator and the listener find themselves, that is, in a unique and unrepeatable interactive situation and with an intimate need to retain dignity. When doing research in Pittsburgh I had arranged to meet a successful food writer. Although she was born in the lively Slovenian community of Pittsburgh in the 1930s, she had continued her studies and career in New York. This was not a typical path for a girl from a Slovenian community at that time, when the girls (or their families) mostly chose early employment and marriage as close to home as possible. She latter returned to Pittsburgh with her own family, but didn't join the activities and events of the Slovenian community. I had learnt about all that from the mediators who arranged our meeting, just as I learnt that she would have very little time due to

her work. We met in a hotel lobby and proceeded to the coffee shop where we were to carry out the conversation as quickly as possible. We ordered tea and my interlocutor pulled a piece of paper from her bag with some handwritten data about her Slovenian ancestors that she proceeded to read out for me. I listened to her and then explained what I was researching, what my methods were, and why I would like to hear her life story, which would take a lot more time. She apologised, observed me for a while without saying a word and then sighed: "You know, I was expecting an older woman with a black headscarf." We were both surprised: she, because she was facing a younger woman with short hair and in modern clothes; I, because it had never occurred to me that someone might think that Slovenian researchers walk around wearing black headscarves and full, floor length skirts.

We found ourselves in an interesting interactive situation. My interlocutor expected an older woman with a black headscarf and wanted to get out of the conversation as quickly as possible. Maybe it felt like too much because of the stereotypical image that the topic of the conversation evoked in her, namely the role of women in preserving Slovenian culture and ethnic identity. In any case, when faced with an interviewer whose image was different from what she had initially expected, her resistance crumbled. She suddenly felt sorry that she could not carry out the conversation in the way I'd suggested, because she had pre-arranged engagements. That the change in her attitude and desire to tell me her life story and not send me off with some bare facts was real became obvious when we were filming the aforementioned documentary a year later. She enthusiastically responded to my invitation to participate. There were no problems coordinating schedules and her thorough story contributed immensely to the quality of the film. She spoke about the importance of food in retaining ethnic identity and later requested my grandmother's recipe for *potica* for her column about ethnic food in the US. She baked it following my instructions, took photos, and the resulting article was available on the Internet for a long time. This case reveals an interactive situation in which the narrator is sceptical and hesitant. A pre-existing image about the interactive situation is negative and causes resistance, which is not strong enough for the potential narrator to decline to take part in the conversation, but she does select an effective solution. Agreeing to the interview with a limited time available is a way to eschew an unpleasant situation in a dignified manner, which is, as we have seen, essential. However, the somersault that came during the meeting triggered a narrative that could only be told and heard a year later.

There was also an opposite case, again in Pittsburgh. I recorded the long life story of a woman who had been active in the Slovenian community ever since she was a child. She had helped me a lot with the organisation of the interviews, was an important source of information for my research, and I spent a lot of time with her during my short stay in Pittsburgh. Afterwards I asked her to sign the release form that transfers the copyrights from the narrators and allows me as the research author to use and retain the life stories.[3] The said interlocutor had decided not to sign. She explained that her story contains descriptions that could hurt her family and insult relatives and therefore wished that I wouldn't use her story. While talking to a relative – after our interview – she had found out that she didn't remember some persons very well. The explanation was clear and concise, but it did make me wonder whether it was genuine. It seemed to me that the reason for her decision could be some sort of change in our interactive situation, that I had let her down. I could not recall any particular word or act, but the feeling that I somehow betrayed her expectations has never left me. Of course there was no way for me to check my suspicion, but I also couldn't find anything in her story that I could consider controversial, or even insensitive towards her relatives. Perhaps she later felt the telling of her life story over a couple of days during my stay in Pittsburgh to be inappropriate, maybe indecent and undignified. There is no way to find out what did in fact happen during our interactive situation and what during the process of her reflection. It is only clear that the author of the identity constructed during this process – after reflecting and discussing with a relative – could not recognise herself in it, or did not want to share it with me and a potential audience. Whether it was I who played an important role in this process, or her relative, or herself, is not possible to explain. Erzsébet Barát sees such interaction/connection between the process of identity construction and life stories in the very definition of identity, which, to her, is an

> intersubjective, retrospective construction from within the existing discursively mediated practices of writing and telling a life. Living as a human being inevitably entails reflexivity, and human understanding is narrative in nature. [...] Consequently, the auto/biographical story is a means for a reflexive understanding of the self. Furthermore, as representation is always intersubjective, it is necessarily located within a social relation to others. In this sense, auto/

3 Since the research was carried out in the United States, I created a release form to allow the use of life stories for scientific, historic and educational purposes following the recommendations of the American Oral History Association.

> biography is a form of discursive practice that reconstructs the past as the major means of self/other understanding. (Bar Barát 2000: 165)

What we're dealing with is the process of identity construction. This process is a particularly interesting topic in (women's) migration studies, which I will discuss next.

GENDER-MARKED MIGRATIONS

In the last two decades the number of research studies on the migration of women has increased sharply, as has the use of narrative research methods. The turning point came with the thematic issue of the *International Migration Review* in 1984, dedicated to women's migration and an appeal for migrations to be studied as a gender-marked phenomenon. Twenty years later we can say that many female and male researchers responded to the call. In 2006, a group of highly respected authorities in the field of women's studies edited a thematic issue of the *International Migration Review* to determine how numerous, extensive, and multidisciplinary the studies of women's migrations had become in the previous two decades. The starting point of their review was the recognition of two generally accepted rules: first that migration flows have been feminised, and second, that migrations are a gender-marked phenomenon. Of course, the research approaches went through a theoretical and methodical development, so the editors of the thematic issue discovered that,

> Scholars now analyze gender in the lives of both female and male migrants, in the politics and governance of migration, in the workplaces of immigrants, in neoliberal or welfare state policies toward migration or foreign-born populations, in diasporas, and even in the capitalist world system. (Donato et al. 2006: 6)

By sharpening the women's perspective, migrations suddenly emerged through the complicated structures of family decisions, intimate considerations, and densely knit personal and kinship ties of both sexes. They are seen as much more than mere consequences of socio-economic and legislative circumstances that pull and push tired hands around the world. The biographic approach, or the use of "life documents" (Plummer 2001), proved indispensable in understanding the social structure of the migration phenomena. In Slovenia, probably the first migration study based on life histories was the work of Silva Mežnarić, who studied workers and their families from

other Yugoslav republics in Slovenia and their relationships to Slovenians (Mežnarić 1986). Breda Čebulj Sajko presented the autobiographical materials she collected among "Australian–Slovenians" in an extensive monograph, in a very direct manner, retaining the characteristics of their speech (Čebulj Sajko 1992); and her overview of ethnological research of Slovenians around the world between 1926 and 1993 is also important (Čebulj Sajko 1999).

Dorica Makuc (1993) was the first to begin collecting the stories of the *aleksandrinke* and to present their authentic narratives to the public.[4] Marjan Drnovšek (2004, 2009) and Aleksej Kalc (2004) studied many written and oral correspondences of migrant families; Jernej Mlekuž (2009) collected the life stories of girls, members of the Slovenian minority in Italy, working in the cities of northern Italy; likewise, the life stories of Slovenian migrants and their descendants in the U.S. (Milharčič Hladnik 2003) and the stories and testimonies of Slovenians in Sweden (Lukšič-Hacin 2001) have been collected. In the last few years, more inter-disciplinary studies researching migration to Slovenia using auto/biographical sources and oral history methods have been conducted. Špela Razpotnik and Bojan Dekleva (2002) studied the lifestyles of the descendents of immigrants in Ljubljana (2002). The life stories of those who came to Slovenia as young people and grew old here are presented in the Slovenian portion of an international study about growing old in foreign cultures, led and published by Alenka Kobolt (2002). An anthropological study, carried out by collecting the stories of refugees and their destinies, was edited by Uršula Lipovec Čebron, et al. (2002), while Natalija Vrečar (2007) presented forced migrants from Bosnia-Herzegovina and their life in Slovenia. Sanja Cukut (2008) described the experiences of women migrants to Slovenia from Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Soviet Union before and after 1991 by using their stories. Mojca Pajnik (2008) conducted a study about prostitution in Slovenia in the context of migration and human trafficking in which she used narratives of men and women involved. A monograph, "Dressed to Go" (Milharčič Hladnik and Mlekuž 2009) is dedicated to the life stories of women migrants – both emigrants and immigrants. I have studied women and their migration experiences, using the narration method, through life histories, auto/biographies, and personal and family correspondence (Milharčič Hladnik 2003; 2005).

It is impossible to list, or even to mention, the most important representative foreign studies of women migrations and their experiences, or all

4 *Aleksandrinke* are presented in the chapter, "History and Concealment", by Marjan Drnovšek.

the representative studies in which ordinary people were given a voice. Subsequent developments, from the contemporary feminisation of migration flows and the scientific "discovery" that migrants can (also) be women to the development of women's studies and expanding the use of qualitative research methods and "democratisation of history", have triggered and facilitated a number of studies about the life experiences of women migrants in different migration contexts. In just over two decades much more work has been done than the initiators of research migrations as a gender-marked phenomenon could ever have imagined.

Floya Anthias and Gabriella Lazaridis (2000), who edited a representative book of the different experiences of women migrants, estimate that there are around 14 million "non-Europeans" living in the European Union today: people without papers or second-rate citizens who have migrated from different parts of the world: Eritrea, Somalia, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Latin America, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, countries of Eastern Europe, ex-Yugoslavia, and Albania. The large number of migrants in Europe is a novelty and represents a historical shift in societies – in just the last two decades of the 20th century, traditionally emigrant societies have changed into typically immigrant ones. The authors state that at the same time we can also observe a shift in the structure of migration processes, which can be defined as the feminisation of migration flows. Among the 14 million migrants in the European Union, about six million are women, but their number is in fact much higher due to illegal immigration. They are mostly employed as house servants, nannies, cleaners, and sex workers. These new directions of migration and their feminisation are part of globalisation and transnational processes. Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie R. Hochschild list the following data in the book on global woman in the new economy:

> From 1950 to 1970, for example, men predominated in labor migration to Northern Europe from Turkey, Greece, and North Africa. Since then, women have been replacing men. In 1946, women were fewer than 3 percent of the Algerians and Moroccans living in France; by 1990, they were more than 40 percent. Overall, half of the world's 120 million legal and illegal migrants are now believed to be women. Patterns of international migration vary from region to region, but women migrants from a surprising number of sending countries actually outnumber men, sometimes by a wide margin. (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003: 5–6)

What is the "new economy"? In the developed world, it means global corporations with their constantly growing needs for highly educated and

qualified experts, among whom the percentage of women is growing. The work is demanding, competitive, and requires working long hours, often on weekends. Regardless of the fact that it is (relatively) well paid, it offers no alternative for women who have to deal with family and maternal obligations. In countries without a well-developed child-care system or the other services of a welfare state, the responsibility of caring for children and aging or disabled family members falls squarely on immigrant labour.

As is well known, in Italy the Filipina, "la nostra Filipina", became a generic name for a maid, a nanny, a cleaner, a caregiver. In a book on the "global woman", Rhacel Salazar Parreñas researched the position of women migrants from the Philippines, not in Italy but rather in the Philippines. She revealed the mechanisms of the specific situation of women migrants, utterly distinct from the position of male migrants, and precisely represents the way women are stuck in traditional religious, ideological, discursive, and cultural patterns used to exercise control over women. The migrants, in this case the Filipinas, are the subject of public ideological and political campaigns at home, where they are stigmatised as bad mothers who have abandoned their children and endangered their families and consequently Filipino society; a phenomenon they call the "care crisis". What is interesting is the fact that such stigmatisation of women migrants is happening in a country that has a special state agency for emigration and which every year benefits from the seven million workers – of whom two-thirds are women – who send money to their families every year, making remittances one of the most important sources of foreign currency the country has (Salazar Parreñas 2003: 41).

When stigmatising the women, the media in the Philippines quote studies researching the children of the women migrants who suffer from various physical and psychological conditions caused by the absence of their mothers. With her research, based on 69 in-depth interviews, Salazar Parreñas tried to confirm the findings of these studies. She found many different examples, from the children who, for various reasons, felt that their mothers' absence caused irreparable loss, to those who were perfectly content and respected the efforts of their mothers to enable a better life for them, to those who even saw them as martyrs. The collected materials undoubtedly prove how difficult life is for those children who grow up without mothers. However, Salazar Parreñas finds that:

> As national discourse on the care crisis in the Philippines vilifies migrant women, it also downplays the contributions these women make to the country's economy. Such hand-wringing merely offers the public an opportunity to dis-

> cipline women morally and to resist reconstituting family life in a manner that reflects the country's increasing dependence on women's foreign remittances. This pattern is not exclusive to the Philippines. (Salazar Parreñas 2003: 52)

The moral disciplining of women migrants and the stigmatising of their work affect their children the most – the ones in whose name this whole public and political campaign is carried out. It tries to convince them that there is something wrong with their mothers and homes and that everything would be fine if they just returned. Shaming the migrants as bad mothers prevents the public from facing the problems of women's migrations in a way that would allow the communities, schools, and other institutions to adjust to the needs of the so called transnational families. Of course, such patterns of discussing migrants, specifically women migrants, are not unique to the Philippines, nor to the modern global economy. A comparison with the moralist public shaming of the *aleksandrinke* seems appropriate. The shaming was orchestrated by the Church, from the pulpit and in the media, as is well documented by Marjan Drnovšek in the chapter "History and Concealment".

> The priests warned that the girls who were leaving for Egypt were the ones with a tendency to be independent and live the easy life, that many of them were corrupted and had had too much of dangerous freedom and some of them even married foreigners of the Mohammedan faith, rejecting the good Christian life and their mother language. And so they marked them with the seal of 'sinfulness' they then had to carry all of their lives. When they returned home, envy and speculations awaited them. (Bric 2005)[5]

This is another case in which the biggest victims of the public shaming of women migrants were their children, even though the husbands didn't fare much better. As in the Philippines, the public attention focused on disciplining the women and not on the necessary re-structuring of relationships in the community nor on discourse about gender roles and the moral attributes of women.[6]

5 The text comes from the theatre programme for the play *Trieste-Alessandria Embarked, Štorja od lešandrink*, by Neda R. Bric, produced by Maska in 2005. The word "Mohammedan" was used by the Church at that time.

6 About moralist disciplining of the women, especially migrants, see also the chapter "Concealment and Patriarchy" by Marina Lukšič-Hacin.

THE RESTRUCTURING OF GENDER ROLES

Floya Anthias (2000) says that the new directions of migrations as a part of globalisation and transnational processes can only be understood when taking into account the opposing processes of inclusion and exclusion. In her opinion these opposing processes contain the discourse of tension and conflict: the idea of the universality of human rights and equal treatment of all before the law is in obvious conflict with the prevailing limitations on the human and civil rights of migrants and with the racist treatment they often receive. On the level of the European Union, there is an obvious gap between the declarative opening of the borders for the free movement of people, goods, and capital on the one hand, and on the other, a great investment into the ideological defining of "the others", determined primarily by the fact that they are not white and Christian, and the consequent closing of borders to them. In this context, a new situation must be taken into consideration. If the migration flows of the last couple of decades have become a women's phenomenon, it is important to understand that this phenomenon is extremely heterogeneous and structured by ethnic, racial, religious, class, identity, and cultural differences. Within the heterogeneity of women's migration waves the only common denominator seems to be that we can no longer consider the women to be merely passive victims of circumstance, but rather must see them as active decision makers regarding the change in their own, and to a great extent, their families' lives. Although there are still circumstances in which we cannot see any positive changes in the position of women, there are situations in which women migrants gain power, influence, importance, and work and income autonomy.[7] On the other hand, Anthias points out: "Assumptions that the migration of women leads to more egalitarianism, as a general principle, given the discussion above and the predominance of domestic work and sex related activities in migrant women's lives, may therefore be questioned." (Anthias 2000: 38).

This is a key characteristic that the researchers of migration processes as gender-marked processes have found; a fundamental law that says migrations reshape gender roles, reorganise, and restructure them. Suzanne Sinke uses the concept of "social reproduction" to explain this concept, and she defines it as "a framework to describe a variety of roles in re-creating families, networks, and communities", that women used to – and continue to – have in migration contexts (Sinke 2002: 6). In her historical analysis of Dutch women

7 Due to lack of space, the author is not able to deal with the well-known and various forms of forced migration and trafficking of women.

migrants in the U.S. she found that social reproduction is a women's function, because women nurture, care, serve, and protect their families, communities, and connections; however, they don't do it the old way, that is, the way they learnt in the old country. This activity is positioned within constant considerations of changing and preserving, adjusting and non-adjusting, conservatism and innovation that depend on numerous circumstances and personal needs. In the past, migration brought to women a greater variability in the roles than they'd had in the places they'd emigrated from. When researching the history of migration into the United States, Donna Gabaccia finds that for the women migrants, the

> main challenge of migration was to claim new forms of power – whether in the form of an individual wage, the choice of a spouse, or leisure time – without losing older female modes of influence within community and kinship networks. […] By continuing to think of themselves as hyphenated or ethnic American women, immigrant women could behave in new, and modern, ways without casting off the values learned on the other side. (Gabaccia 1994: 134)

The hyphenated identity[8] Gabaccia talks about places us in the centre of the research of women's migrant experience as an experience of lost, reshaped, transformed, and re-assembled personal, ethnic, and sexual identities. This centre is particularly relevant because it clearly discloses the "contexts of lives" as explicitly complex, dynamic, and complicated: they include different societies and countries (emigrant and immigrant); within their frame lie the branching transnational family, kinship, and friendship ties; they're the crossroads of different cultures and religions. In addition to that, women are "the principal bearers of ethnic culture: they reproduce culture and the tradition of the group and their religious and family structures and ideologies", as Anthias (2000: 31) says, summing up the findings of numerous studies.

Transmitting and reproducing culture is a contradictory and ambivalent process. What Sinke found for Dutch women migrants also holds true for Slovenian women migrants in the U.S.: the reproducing and safeguarding of ethnic identity and the place of origin's culture in the broadest sense of the word (including religion, customs, habits, tradition, holidays, etc.) means re-

8 Hyphenated identity is a term that was created in the U.S. at the end of the 19th century and describes immigrants who feel affiliation to the culture they came from as well as the one they migrated into. In the beginning the term was rather pejorative, but it gained a positive connotation with the policy of multiculturalism. It is also used to denote a modern notion of identity as a multi-level, hybrid, and fluctuating identity.

tention through transformation and imitation through originality. It is what the individuals who were leaving in different ways and for different reasons, from different places and in different periods, brought with them to the new country. As a part of their personal identity it was then transformed and rethought, or retained and kept unchanged like an immutable image, frozen in time and place. For this reason, we can find Slovenian traditions and cultures in the U.S. that often differ in form from those in Slovenia, in both the traditional as well as the innovative sense. Not because in Slovenia both are changing dynamically in accordance with the changes in the society while in the US this "preserved culture and tradition" is supposed to be immobile, but because the migrants have preserved the culture and tradition in ways that have suited them "on their own side".[9] Preservation through changing and imitation through originality are, as elements of the same process, subjected to further structuration. Migrants from the same country or state are affected by gender, class, religious, philosophical, ethnic, and regional differences, which means that ethnic migrant communities aren't homogeneous – quite the opposite.

In addition to those mentioned, there are other differences that influence the situation significantly: differences among the migrants regarding the place from which they migrated, the situation in the state of origin, and the target country. As for women migrants and their strategies of adjustment to a new environment, Sinke mentions that personal decisions and choices within the context of a conservative or an innovative approach were also influenced by a number of factors. To her, emphasising that migrant women were relentless keepers of the conservative traditions and gender roles seems as historically and sociologically inappropriate as the opposite view that they were modernisers who took advantage of "the land of the free" for their public and political activity, rejecting everything traditional. Several different circumstances played a role in which route the women migrants took, and Sinke divided them into five factors. The first was the life period in which the woman migrated and their marital status. The decision of how she would adjust to the new environment was completely different for a young single woman than it was for a married one with a number of children.

9 A good example within liturgy is the Slovenian *polka maša* (polka service) that was created by the religious migrants which we cannot imagine being "sung" in Slovenia. Within folk music there is the Cleveland polka that is a favourite of the migrants (and many Americans) and differs from the polka played in Slovenia, as well as the songs for which the migrants wrote the music themselves, changing the lyrics. Even some "Slovenian" foods, rituals, customs are different on "the other side".

> The second was the degree of ethnic clustering in their new home, particularly of her extended family members. This was a defining feature of whether women could re-create many familial and social networks, and of the degree of control which the ethnic group could place upon its young adults. Third, the proximity to urban areas largely dictated the degree to which women were exposed to "dominant" American roles and various opportunities. Fourth, class made a major difference in perceptions and opportunities. It translated into education for girls and certain leisure activities for women. Adult women who were already part of bourgeois life in the Netherlands generally did not like migrating, while young women from this background were the ones most likely to take advantage of American educational and career opportunities. Women's place in the ethnic/racial hierarchy of America, the fifth factor, was often invisible, yet it was a striking determinant of opportunities from the ability to migrate at all to marriage options to job possibilities. (Sinke 2002: 4)

These factors are also relevant for Slovenian migrants. As an example I can introduce the life story of Marie Prisland, a writer and activist, and the founder of the Slovenian Women's Union of America – SWUA. She arrived in the United States at the age of fifteen, without any family or friends. She got off the ship in 1906 and settled into a Slovenian community in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, which had a variety of cultural and political organisations. Although small, Sheboygan at the time of her arrival wasn't a rural settlement, isolated and far from urban centres. Marie Prisland belonged to the working class and she soon understood that working in the chair factory would not pay for her teacher training college. How did these four factors, together with her personality and intimate decisions, influence her adjustment to her new environment? Her class affiliation prevented her from schooling and fulfilling the desire that prompted her to emigrate in the first place. On the other hand, her migrant aspirations pushed her to further her education through evening courses that she could afford to attend, because she had time and was free to organise it as she saw fit. She was intensively involved in her new environment, typically Slovenian traditions and religion, as she lived in a community which in that time had Slovenian political, cultural, artistic, and religious institutions, and shops and banks. At the same time, she learnt from her wider environment, following the footsteps of the last, decisive decade of the women's struggle for the right to vote, which ended in 1919, and the activities of many a women's organisation that were developed by women from other ethnic groups. Little Sheboygan with its traditional gender roles and ethnic identities was just as much her world as was the wide world of American civil values, liberty, and modern roles for women. She accepted both and

united them in a unique combination of keeping and changing, tradition and modernity.

When she started a women's organisation in 1926, it was extremely unusual and even unacceptable to Slovenian communities around the U.S. The men who were chairing Slovenian organisations and communities predicted its quick demise. Prisland set up the organisation with a small group of like-minded women in Chicago, a big city where she was just as comfortable as she had been in the small town of Sheboygan. She spread her ideas about a women's organisation in Slovenian, with the help of newspapers and modern technology that quickly delivered these papers across the country. She founded her organisation on Catholic values, with the purpose of reinforcing traditional women's roles, and she conditioned the membership on religious faith; yet she also founded it on contemporary American, I could even say feminist, values and goals that ascribed important social and political roles to women. In this unusual, contradictory, and undoubtedly original combination she was extremely successful. The predicted demise of the organisation she conceived and created is still pending; the organisation continues to thrive. Despite the great changes that all ethnic organisations experienced in the second half of the 20th century, the Slovenian Women's Union has remained. It is interesting, though, that its bylaws stipulated as late as 2003 that membership is pre-conditioned on Christianity, and all attempts to change that have failed.[10]

NARRATIVE BUILDING SITES OF IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

The findings and narratives based on life stories that I have acquired during my research among the Slovenian emigrants and their descendents disclose so much more. Each story is a biography of an identity in the making, a process of narrating the experiences that construct it. Each identity surpasses what we call ethnic or national identity or belonging, and at the same time includes various combinations of its elements in different life periods of the narrators: knowing the language, practising the religion, singing folk songs and playing instruments, preparing and enjoying traditional

10 The attempt to remove this stipulation from the bylaws occurred during the SWUA convention in Duluth (Minn.) in June 2003. I was present at the debate in which the proponents of the change emphasised that due to marriages this stipulation began to be violated mere years after its establishment, and that in 2003 it really made no sense. When Slovenian migrants and their daughters married men who weren't Catholics and converted into their religions, nobody ever expelled them from the SWUA nor prevented them from becoming members. The argument, although true, was unsuccessful.

foods, celebrating holidays, keeping the rituals and traditions alive. In the dynamic course of life, these elements – retained, lost, forgotten, regained – are linked by a memory full of emotions. Robert Orsi, who analysed the community of Italian women in Harlem, New York City, lists three functions of memory:

> Memory locates the individual in a community: individuals share memories with various groups – family, neighborhood, city, and so on – and this communion of memory is the foundation of their membership in these groups. Memory is also that which binds men and women together in their most intimate relations with their families. Older members of the family share their recollections, which are often part of a corporate memory they too had once been taught, with their younger kin, who in this way are invited and integrated into the generations. Memory finally helps share personal identity: men and women discover who they are in their memories. (Orsi 1985: 153)

It is memory that can turn auto/biographic stories into narrative building sites for identity construction, as Barat (2000) poetically defines it. As a Slovenian writer, born in Cleveland during the era of civil rights and the gender equality movement, describes: "the idea that you are a part of the Slovenian culture, which in fact was never yours, comes from the stories you were told, and they became one with you and somehow turned you into the 'other'."[11] Four sisters, born over seven decades ago, also into the Slovenian society in Cleveland, described the function of storytelling in the following way:

> Our parents spoke so much about Slovenia that we felt like we were actually living there. We would talk about everything during dinners, and they always remembered things that happened in their childhood, in Europe. So we knew the names of all the neighbours and friends. When we travelled back in 1973 with our choir, Jadran, Mother took us around the entire village. At that time, all her friends were still alive and we knew all their names. We knew where we were going, because we knew every street and corner by heart.[12]

I have heard many similar stories, but I have also heard those in which women explained that the elders hadn't transmitted their memories to the younger generations. My estimate is that the ethnic element of identity in these cases is inevitably more rational and lacks emotionality caused by

11 E-mail to the author, September 2007.
12 The quote is from the recorded material of the above mentioned research project.

childhood contact with the memories of (beloved) elders. On the other hand, the social and political context is also crucial. This is best represented by the statement of a young man from Cleveland, who grew up in the era of multiculturalism and glorification of ethnic roots of immigrants and their descendants. His relaxed hyphenated identity is best summed up in his statement: "During the week I'm an American, and at weekends a Slovenian."[13]

This is an important self-definition, as the research on Slovenian emigration and the political discourse are both often ruled by a simplified understanding of ethnic identity. It is understood as a simple characteristic of an individual within a dichotomy: you either have it or you don't, you either are or you aren't, in both understanding of "yourself" and "the others". It is linked to the concept of culture as something monolithic and with inner consistency, without taking into the account that such culture doesn't exist and that its members daily question its significance and our individually produced versions of these significances. Jane Sugarman, who studied ritual (wedding) singing and dancing in the ethnic migrant communities of Albanians from Lake Prespa who have settled in North America, emphasises that we must understand how subjectivity is formed as a result of intimate negotiations about cultural forms. During her talks with the performers (of singing and dancing) she found out that there are often tensions, and occasionally even conflicts, between these highly formalised versions of a common cultural (in this case musical) form. She adjusted her research approach and reflection to this fact.

> Working with immigrant families who have found their views of social order radically challenged by those of mainstream North America, I have had to give particular attention to the renegotiations of meaning that are currently taking place among diaspora families within and through musical performance, and to the ways that musical practices may address, or mask, societal tensions. (Sugarman 1997: 26)

Similar findings resulted from research into women migrants recently carried out in several European countries, the difference being that the findings hold true for the migrants as well as the women in the countries they migrated to. In the study, Rosi Braidotti and Esther Vonk warned that: "Everyone, even if sporadically, experiences her/himself to be a foreigner, a stranger, in her/his own country, place, environment or culture; no one fully coincides

13 From the documentary about the Slovenian church Saint Mary of the Assumption in Cleveland by Joseph Valencic.

with their national, sexual, ethnic, social, cultural or political identity. This impels us to identify with the other, the foreigner." (Braidotti and Vonk 2004: 35). Using the methods of oral history, several authors tried to study what kinds of subjectivity are produced by contemporary forms of mobility in migrants from Eastern Europe and in women in the countries of migration (all of them now part of the European Union). The narratives clustered around human relationships and communications, love and work. They describe an interesting fact that ordinary casual communication with people means for the women migrants a central place of happiness and a sense of acceptance. From the narratives it is also clear that the forms of belonging are multiple, synchronous, and complementary.

> The possibility of possessing several identification documents and the experience of passing several national borders creates a mode of thinking which allows changes of migrants' identity and sense of belonging. For some of the women interviewed, home is in the plural, for others still it is multiple. This means that they do not have a straightforward identification with a single nationality alone. Belonging is also powerfully expressed in relation to food. Indeed the interviewees' food-talk (processing and consuming) is used as a marker of identity and as a frame of narrating various forms of difference, a flexible site for constructing self and other. (Braidotti and Vonk 2004: 13)

Along with this, the research emphasises that cultures are battle scenes where identities are formed, along with fears, curiosity, and recognitions – all results of intimate negotiations. Negotiations of course mean active intervention in cultural forms and meanings and present individuals as creative factors who structure their emotions, memories, and stories by themselves. Just as they structure their identities.

Migrants travel continents and seas, and their children set off on a journey from the culture of their parents and community, from the tales, memories, and emotions of their beloved elders onto the culture of playgrounds, schools, peers, television cartoons, music, and films from their wider environment where distances and destinations are unknown. And if we're willing to listen, we can find ourselves on their narrative building sites and see our reflections in the constructions of their composed subjectivities. To do this, we need to have what Stanley calls anti-realism: the ability to turn away the look of the observed, but not the observer. To be able to use the auto/biographic methods in research, one must be able to overcome the moments of uneasiness and embarrassment caused by closeness and look into the eyes of an intimate stranger.

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A NOTE ON THE PICTURES

Cover: Gail Nachtigal, Miss SNPJ 1962 (author unknown, source Joseph Valencic).

At the beginnings of chapters: 1958 Miss SNPJ Contest, Universal, Pennsylvania, September 1957 (author unknown, source Cecilia Dolgan).

Miss SNPJ: Icon of Slovenian-American Young Women

Every year, the Miss SNPJ Pageant honors young women for their personality, talent, and achievements within their Slovenian-American communities. Slovenska Narodna Podporna Jednota (The Slovene National Benefit Society, SNPJ) has sponsored the competition since 1956, attracting members from around the United States. The event is presented during Slovenefest, the Society's summer festival at the SNPJ Recreation Center, halfway between Cleveland and Pittsburgh. Young women compete in different categories, demonstrating special skills, academic ability, personal qualities, activities, and volunteer service. All contestants are active with their local SNPJ lodge or youth circle, participating in Slovenian music groups, sports, crafts, Slovenian language courses, or community work. Winners receive a college tuition scholarship and a trophy. Each Miss SNPJ poses for a studio photograph for the next year's SNPJ calendar. Over the years, the Miss SNPJ calendar has proved to be one of the most popular and enduring artifacts of Slovenian-

American culture, decorating thousands of Slovenian kitchens, garages, *gostilnas,* and cultural halls from coast to coast.

Activities like the Miss SNPJ Pageant, Teen Leadership Program, and Young Adult Conferences allow young members to meet their peers from around the country and develop lasting friendships and Slovenian-American contacts. Programs also help them keep interest in their Slovenian heritage and discover Slovenia. Many continue their SNPJ work as adults and eventually step into leadership positions within the Society or other Slovenian groups. The majority of Miss SNPJ contestants are of Slovenian heritage, but not all, showing that Slovenian organizations and activities also appeal to Americans of varied ethnic backgrounds.

With 42 000 members, the Slovene National Benefit Society is the largest Slovenian organization outside of Europe. Fraternal societies like the SNPJ offer low-cost life and medical insurance and investment programs, as well as social events, entertainment, sports, and youth activities with a Slovenian accent. The SNPJ was founded in 1904 by Slovenian settlers in the United States for mutual protection in time of need through insurance and as a social organization with national reach. Slovenians borrowed the name *jednota* from organizations founded by their Czech neighbors because the concept of a mutual benefit society was new to them at the time. Five such national societies still serve the needs of Slovenians, their families, and friends. Membership is not restricted to Slovenians only.

Headquartered near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the SNPJ owns halls and recreation centres in many Slovenian-American communities. The 200-hectare SNPJ Recreation Center offers lodgings and outdoor activities, such as swimming, tennis, and balina, and the Slovene Heritage Center with an auditorium, restaurant, *gostilna*, museum, and library. The Recreation Center is home to Slovenefest, the largest outdoor celebration of Slovenian culture outside of the homeland, attracting upwards of 5 000 guests with traditional Slovenian-American music, dancers, crafts, and food.

The Miss SNPJ Pageant celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2006. The first Miss SNPJ (1957), Marlynn Turki Donaldson, arrived from Florida to crown the 50th Miss SNPJ (2007), Darcy Brand. The current queen is eighteen-year-old Kara Maruszak of Willoughby Hills, Ohio, who reigns as Miss SNPJ 2010. She is a fourth-generation SNPJ member within her family. With a new generation of talented and engaged young women ready enter future pageants, Miss SNPJ will continue as an all-American Slovenian tradition for years to come.

Joseph Valencic

MIGRACIJE 19
MIGRANTKE 2

GO GIRLS! When Slovenian Women Left Home
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Published by
Slovenian Migration Institute
Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Ljubljana
and
University of Nova Gorica
Publisher
ZRC Publishing / Založba ZRC, Ljubljana
For the Publisher
Oto Luthar

Printed by
Littera Picta, d. o. o., Ljubljana, Slovenija
Print run
600 copies

The book was financially supported by Slovenian Book Agency
and
Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Slovenes Abroad

The book is a result of cooperation between
Slovenian Migration Institute at SRC SASA
and
Joint Master of Arts in Migration and Intercultural Relations, jointly organised by University of Stavanger, Norway; Carl von Ossietzky Universitaet, Germany; University of Nova Gorica, Slovenia; University of Zagreb, Croatia; University of South Bohemia, Czech Republic; and Universidade Aberta, Portugal.

"Slovenian girls, stay at home! But if you do leave, do not bring shame to your homeland and your nation."
From a booklet entitled Če greš na tuje *(If you go abroad), published in 1934.*

"Man is a head, woman is a heart; he bears reason, she bears emotion."
Janez Bleiweis, an important figure in Slovenian political, social, and cultural life in the second half of the 19th century, in his lecture in Graz in 1866.

"Housewife, wife, and mother. Three roles that the Creator ensconced in women's hearts. A housewife, who props up three corners of the house, who like a bee tirelessly takes care of a hundred tiny, often invisible things... A mother! Above all a mother! To be a mother is the most natural thing... A mother, who in a blessed union gives birth to a new generation for the nation and for God, and through sacrifice and suffering raises them to be valuable members of human society... Today the Slovenian mother must perform an enormous task: at home to prevent the planned dechristianisation of society and families from destroying our nation's future, and abroad to make sure that the young generation, who were given life by their Slovenian mothers, does not forget whose blood flows through their veins and does not forget the sacred tradition of our fathers."
From Svobodna Slovenija*, the primary printed media of the Slovenian political emigrant community in Argentina, published in 1951.*

"Long live America, where women are first!"
Marie Prisland, Slovenian emigrant in the U.S., in her book From Slovenia – to America*, published in 1968.*

ISBN 978-961-254-170-5

9 789612 541705

13 €

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