

SYMBOLS, SLOGANS AND IDENTITY IN THE SLOVENE SEARCH FOR SOVEREIGNTY, 1987-1991

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1. Introduction

At the end of June of 1991, the (by then already former) Socialist Republic of Slovenia formally seceded from the then Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia and thus the Republic of Slovenia was on its way of becoming a sovereign state in the international community of nations. This particular action or event was certainly no surprise to many Slovenes themselves because they have been thinking about or searching for (greater) sovereignty especially since 1987; this year had seen the publication of the 57th volume of the literary monthly magazine of culture, *Nova revija*, comprising some 16 philosophical and sociological articles and essays on the topic 'Contributions For the Slovene National Program.' This particular issue of the *Nova revija* may be viewed perhaps as the first of several major 'symbols' which attracted many Slovenes in their more 'intensive' search for sovereignty. Such symbols also generated slogans which, in turn, contributed to a more focused identity of Slovenes, that is, as to who they were and what was, or was to be, their place in Yugoslav and European contexts.

But what really are symbols and how do they relate to our discussion here? W.L. Warner first defines symbols as "things which stand for or express something else" (1959:3) and says that the principal parts of a symbol are a sign and its meaning (1959:455). Symbol is also "a mode of guided communication and cannot be considered independently from the process of communication itself" (De Vos and Boyer 1989:6). Symbols are also "ingredients of ideologies" (Lee 1988:62) and M. Schudson (1989:155, 156) says that "symbols, not people, are pliable." Moreover, symbols and slogans may evoke not only feelings but also intense emotions or moods (compare Aaker, Stayman and Vezina 1988:2). For example, by 1990 'socialism' as an ideology was totally discredited and the aforementioned 'socialist' ideological attribute in the *Socialistična republika Slovenija* had to be dropped. In other words, the 'sign' with its socialist 'meaning' and for decades 'a mode of guided communication' in socialist 'ideology' was no longer tenable and since symbols are 'pliable,' the name of the country became simply *Republika Slovenija*.

It is the purpose of this paper to identify some important symbols (and slogans) used by Slovenes, especially between 1987 and 1991, in order to show how Slovenes were examining or trying to find their 'true' identity which, in turn, 'directed' them in their search for sovereignty. This will be done by examining two major areas of interest, first, the **geographical orientation and direction** (emphasizing some components of political and physical geography and the directional west-east-north-south components) and, secondly, **sociocultural aspects of change** (with a brief characterization of a few symbols or slogans as components of changing identity in sociocultural change, but emphasizing in greater detail the economic and language components of those changes in particular). There will be some attempt to identify symbols as 'traditional' or 'innovative' (cf. Dillistone 1986:122) and also to discuss briefly the use of 'symbolic power' (Bourdieu 1991:170). As for the term 'culture,' it is viewed here rather broadly, namely, 'everything that people have, think and do as members of their society' (Ferraro 1990:18).

2. Geographical Orientation and Direction

2.1 Components of Political Geography

Perhaps the three most important 'traditional' components would be Slovenia-Yugoslavia-Serbia, the key political-geographical units, acting as symbols (that is, acquiring additional or special connotations) and each of them generating a number of innovative variant symbolic components, positive or negative, depending on which side of the (sociolinguistic) tug of war one was on. In addition, *Evropa* began to be used more extensively as well, especially in the slogan *Evropa zdaj!* ['Europe, Now!'], in 1989. Another variant of the latter was *Ali Evropa ali propad* ['Either Europe or Downfall'] and it was already becoming *nekakšen mali mit, v katerem je vse jasno in nič spornega* ['a kind of little myth in which everything was clear, and nothing controversial'] (J. Zlobec 1989b:493; compare Will 1990:4B).

As for 'Slovenia', Slovenes wanted to be united as much as possible so they began to speak more 'intensively' about at least three different Slovenias, namely, the *Matična Slovenija* ['Homeland Slovenia'], *Zamejska Slovenija* ['Slovenia Across the Legal Boundaries,' that is, Slovenes living in adjacent border territories in Italy, Austria and Hungary] and *Zdomska Slovenija* ['Slovenia Abroad,' especially Slovene guest workers abroad] or simply *Tretja Slovenija* [The Third Slovenia'] (Papež 1990:435). Some speak of two additional Slovenias abroad, namely, a *staroizseljenska Slovenija* (a reference to older, mostly economic immigrants) and *emigrantska Slovenija* (more recent, especially

post-war political immigrants). These non-homeland 'Slovenias' have been, of course, in existence for many years, but have now become much more important because of the need to unify all Slovenes (see, e.g., Škoberne 1991b:20). To encourage greater support, a popular construct, a tourist slogan, in fact, *Slovenija, moja dežela!* ['Slovenija, My Homeland!'], was started in 1985. However, by 1986 there was *pod tem geslom /v Sloveniji / močno slovensko narodno gibanje* ['under that slogan in progress (in Slovenia) a strong nationalist movement'] (T.S. 1986:2). Moreover, this construct gave rise to other 'innovative' symbolic variants as well, e.g., *Kosovo, moja dežela* and *Litva, moja dežela*, that is, Slovenes giving (moral) support to Albanians in Kosovo and to Lithuanians in Lithuania (see, e.g., Yugoslavia, 1989:39 and A. Novak 1990:23).

The traditional or neutral 'Yugoslavia' generates even more equivalent innovative terms or constructs of all types. Of the simplex terms, *Juga* (or, *juga*) or *Yuga* (or simply *YU*) and *južnjak* ['a southerner'] seem to be fairly common (see, e.g., Jeklin 1989a:3). The more neutral examples of complex terms or constructs might be those with ordinal numerals, i.e., *Prva Jugoslavija* (in 1918 or, rather, 1929), *Druga Jugoslavija* or *Titova Jugoslavija* (since 1945) and *Tretja Jugoslavija* (the date usually ending with a question mark, i.e., "199?") (see, e.g., Labernik 1990:14) or simply with a obituary title like *Tretja smrt Jugoslavije* ['The Third Death of Yugoslavia'] (Butković and Grakalić 1989:25). More stylistically marked constructs are, e.g., *balkanski kotel* ['a Balkan cauldron'] (Partljič 1991a:22) or *balkanska krčma* as in *Kar zadeva Slovenijo, so njeni najvišji uradniki sklenili /da /vsak najplača svoj zapitek v tej balkanski krčmi* ['As far as Slovenia is concerned, its highest organs have made a decision (that) in this "Balkan tavern" everyone ought to pay for their own drinks'] (Škoberne 1991a:3). In this connection it is also useful to note the difference between 'Slovenija' and 'Yugoslavia' as perceived by some individuals (and which I have heard expressed personally), namely, when people say *domovina* ['homeland'] they think of Slovenia, but when they say *država* ['state'], they think of Yugoslavia (Marinovič 1989:24). Yugoslavia was thus perceived (by some Slovenes), not as a *mati* ['mother'], but as a *mačeha* ['(harsh) stepmother'] (C. Zlobec 1989a:2).

'Serbia' had relatively few (negative) connotations, e.g., one person called it a *sovjetska republika* (Dukić 1989:22) and another compared it to the *nekdanje Dušanovo carstvo* ['Dušan's ancient Empire'] (Jeklin 1989b:3). (Tsar Dušan was the strongest ruler of the medieval Serbia). Perhaps the most popular term, at least for a while, was the term *Srboslavija* (see, e.g., B. Kovač 1991:12). An example of more figurative language might

be: 'Slovenia is crawling out of the Serbian rucksack' ("Slovenija se plazi iz srbskega nahrbtnika" 1990:10).

We can see from the above that a heavy lexicosemantic load is being carried by *Jugoslavija* and *Slovenija* to the extent that *naša zvezna država /je/ Titanic, Slovenija pa nanj priklenjen rešilni čoln* ['our federal state is the Titanic and Slovenia is a lifeboat chained to it'] (Rupel 1989:22) or *Jugoslavija* is identified as a *vlak brez voznega reda* ['train with no timetable'] (Slivnik 1989:2). Nevertheless, while Slovenia's search for sovereignty involved, among other things, a separation from Yugoslavia, Slovenia was also in 'conflict' with Serbia since the latter was viewed as the driving force behind the 'unitary Yugoslavia' and was thus perceived as 'Serboslavia.' The various kinds of 'Slovenias' and (especially) the slogan 'Slovenia, My Homeland' were a kind of symbolic identification or manifest-ation of unity among Slovenes (regardless of their ideological persuasions) which enabled them to face their most formidable (political) opponent (understandably presented in a negative light), namely, Yugoslavia or, rather, Serboslavia.

2.2 Components of Natural Geography

If we are to select just three natural features of Slovenia which tended to be used more extensively as identity symbols of Slovenes in the period under discussion, they would most likely be the *Triglav*, *lipa* ['linden tree'] and *Alpe*. These are, of course, the traditional symbols, but they have acquired additional meanings or identities as well.

Mount Triglav, Slovenia's (and Yugoslavia's) tallest mountain traditionally seems to carry the greatest amount of symbolism. It is a *simbol svobode* ['symbol of freedom'] (Čurin, 1989:6) and a *prispodoba hrepenenja* ['simile of longing'] (Roš, 1989:2). It is a *simbol modernega slovenstva* ['symbol of modern Slovene nationhood'] (Šavli 1990:28). Šavli (28) also says that the mountain (*triglav* means 'three-headed') does not have three heads at all and that this *skrivnostno ime /je/ lahko samo baje-slovno* ['mysterious name can only (be) of mythological origin']. The linden tree, on the other hand, was the *simbol naše narodne pokončnosti* ['symbol of our national uprightness'] and it (the Slovene *lipa*) *je ozelenela* ['has become green again'] (Škoberne 1990:3) — a reference to post-election situation in Slovenia in 1990. And, in 1989, a small *lipa*, called *Lipa sprave* ['Reconciliation Linden'], was planted at the largest cemetery of Slovenia, Žale (in Ljubljana), and it was designed to be a *simbolno drevo pomiritve slovenskega naroda* ['symbolic tree of pacification of the Slovene nation'] (Meden 1989:1). Furthermore, the trunk of the Slovene *lipa širi svoje veje v raju pod Triglavom* ['linden is spreading its branches in the paradise at the foot of Mount

Triglav'] (Kozar 1990:6). The term *raj* ['paradise'] here is no doubt a variation on or a reference to the construct *nebesa pod Triglavom* ['heaven at the foot of Mount Triglav'], a well-known characterization of Slovenia by the famous Slovene writer, Ivan Cankar (1876-1918). (See portions of Cankar's description of that 'Eden' in J. Debevec 1986:12, translated into English in 1937.) Finally, both *lipa* and *Triglav* were proposed as possible 'candidates' for the name of the new Slovene currency of Slovenia (see, e.g., Šprogar 1990). That certainly would have been an 'innovative' use of the old symbols. However, the term *tolar* (an Austrian and German silver coin, used from the 16th to the 19th century) was adopted instead, perhaps as another symbol of *Evropa zdaj!* orientation and the symbolic use of *lipa* and *Triglav* helped bring that about.

The name *Alpe* generates a number of constructs or slogans as well, the most popular of which has been (a characterization of Slovenia as the land of) *Na sončni strani Alp* ['On the Sunny Side of the Alps']. This slogan further generates variants of all kinds (used somewhat pejoratively at times), e.g., *podalpska skromna deželica* ['the unpretentious little land at the foot of the Alps'] or a *podalpski politični vrtiček* ['political little garden at the foot of the Alps'] (Jež 1990:17). One person would like to have his personal income in Slovenia approach that of *na senčni strani Alp* ['on the shady side of the Alps'], i.e., in Austria (see Doktor za politiko 1990:5) while yet another, upset by unfriendly treatment of foreign drivers by Austrian traffic police, calls Austria the land of *na divji strani Alp* ['On the wild side of the Alps'] (Mekina 1991:14). And still another would like to change the name of *Slovenija* to *Sony* (since Slovenia was always viewed by the Western Press as the *najbolj zahodna, najbolj razvita in najbolj demokratična jugoslovanska republika* ['most Western, the most developed and the most democratic of the Yugoslav republics'] resulting in a slogan (so as to really attract more foreign capital) "On the Sony side of the Alps" (Hladnik-Milharčič 1990:10).

The greater symbolic use of some natural features (of Slovenia) has thus either further intensified the importance of Slovene nationhood (as a prerequisite to sovereignty) or else it has become a means of self-criticism or self-evaluation.

2.3 Directional (West-East-North-South) Components

There are basically three sets of bidirectional symbolic components, namely, the traditional *zahod/vzhod* ['west/east'] opposition characterizing the Cold War period in general, a more productive *sever/jug* ['north/south'] set (the *jug* component being a marked one in particular) and a somewhat innovative *severo-zahod/jugovzhod* ['northwest/southeast'] correlation being emphasized especially in the last two years before the disinte-

gration of Yugoslavia. The first component of each bipolar opposition would normally be viewed as 'positive' (from the Slovene point of view, of course) and the second as 'negative,' that is, west-north-northwest vs. east-south-southeast. These, and especially north/south opposition, sets can be observed elsewhere as well, e.g., the Italians *so bentili nad svojim jugom* ['were cursing at their South'] (Rakovec 1988:3) and Löfgren (1989: 12) reported on this kind of stereotype (of national space becoming cultural space) in Sweden where the Southerners were more "easy-going (but less dependable)" than their Northern countrymen.

An example of the first bipolar opposition set might be this: *Tudi na Slovenskem čutimo piš vzhodnih vetrov, ki grozijo pomoriti še ne povsem razcvetelih rož demokratične pomladi* ['In Slovenia also we feel the gust of the east winds which threaten to kill off the flowers of the democratic spring, not yet in full bloom'] (Škoberne, 1989:3) — the 'easterlies' being of course the Serbs and, by implication, the Slovenes would be influenced by the 'westerlies,' that is, the 'winds' from the 'West.'

In the second set, as mentioned, the 'South' carries the heavy lexicosemantic load. There are at least a dozen lexemes or larger constructs with the component *jug(-)* or *yug(-)*, e.g., Yugoslavia may be identified as *juga* or *Yuga* or *jugodržava* [*država* 'state'] (Miheljak 1989:12), *jugokonvoj* as in *počasni jugokonvoj* ['the sluggish Yugoslav convoy'] (Guzelj 1990:19) and *jugos* may be for some rather perjorative for 'a Yugoslav' (see, e.g., Zajc 1990:1). There is a certain traditional hesitancy to 'go south [*na jug*],' especially if you have to serve there in the military, e.g., "it is well known that Slovenians mostly don't like to go 'south'" (Toporišič 1978:484) and an American visitor to Slovenia, in 1988, reported that "the South is said to be a place where people are unable to discuss politics without also acting it out, sometimes violently, and a place where people do not work well" (Ryavec 1988:2). In fact, according to a well-known Slovene psychologist, philosopher and theologian, even the *slovenski narodni značaj* ['Slovene national character'] is being transformed under the influence of the South. He says: *Skozi tisoč let smo se Slovenci vzgajali v disciplinirane državljane, poštene delavce točne uradnike, vzorne učence in učitelje, zanesljive železničarje. Danes to pod vplivom Juga na celi črti upada, splahneva* [Throughout a thousand-year period we Slovenes were educating ourselves to be disciplined citizens, honest workers, punctual and accurate civil servants, model pupils and teachers, reliable railway servants. Today, under the influence of the South, all this is declining, it is being debased'] (Trstenjak 1986:703).

In the third set of these bidirectional symbolic components, the 'northwest' part of Yugoslavia would normally include

Slovenia and Croatia and the southeastern *koncept preobrazbe Jugoslavije* ['concept of transformation of Yugoslavia'] (Mihe-ljak 1989:12), for example, would generally refer to Serbia in particular. At times this correlation is given as two separate terms each, i.e., north + west and south + east. For example, one commentator first speaks of a *nagibanj severnih delov Jugoslavije na Zahod* ['leaning of the northern parts of Yugoslavia towards the West'] and a *nagibanj južnih delov na Vzhod* ['leaning of its southern parts towards the East'] and then also says that *Jugoslavija ne poka zgolj po šivih med razvitimi, med severom in jugom, pač pa poka tudi (in morda že predvsem?) po šivih civilizacijskih razlik med Vzhodom in Zahodom* ['Yugoslavia is cracking up not merely along its seams of differences between the developed North and the under-developed South, but also (and perhaps even more so?) along its seams of civilizational differences between East and West'] (Volk 1989:61).

We can see from this even brief discussion of these symbolic directional components how national space becomes cultural, political and ideological space and Slovene search for sovereignty is in the 'direction' of one of these 'spaces,' namely, the North, or the West, or the Northwest.

3. Sociocultural Aspects of Change

3.1 Symbols and Slogans as Components of Changing Identity

We have seen from the discussion thus far how the various components of geographical orientation and direction have been either modified or even changed so as to facilitate Slovene search for sovereignty. Thus, there is greater emphasis on bringing all Slovenes (i.e., the three or more 'Slovenias') together while at the same time creating sharper opposition or contrast between the homeland (Slovenia) and the state (Yugoslavia or Yugoslavia as Serboslavia). This was done by making use of some natural features of Slovenia so as to emphasize the 'positive' side of Slovenes, e.g., Slovenia being not only 'On the sunny side of the Alps' but also in the 'proper' (geographical) location, i.e., in the Alpine region, in Europe, in the North-West with all its 'positive' or 'civilizational' attributes while the South-East being identified with 'negative' attributes.

Furthermore, the 'socialist' Yugoslavia is often characterized by such slogans as *bratstvo in enotnost* ['brotherhood and unity'] and (the traditional Communist construct) *proletarci vsehdežel, združite se* ['workers of all countries, unite']. These slogans spawn other (innovative' and often quite entertaining) constructs reflecting 'identity' changes as well, e.g., the former may generate *bratstvo in različnost* ['brotherhood and diversity'] (see, e.g., the monthly *Mladika* in Trieste, October 1988, inside back cover).

The second slogan, in particular (used, incidentally, by the Ljubljana daily *Delo*, until mid-1989) seems to be most productive or appealing in generating new ideas or identities, e.g., *davkoplačevalci vseh dežel, združite se* [taxpayers of all countries, unite'] — an advertising slogan by a marketing firm in Ljubljana (see the youth weekly *Mladina*, April 20, 1990, p. 39) — and about a year later the second part was replaced by *pokličite nas*, that is, 'Taxpayers of all countries, call us!' (*Mladina*, March 26, 1991, inside back cover). Or, *Turisti vseh dežel, oglejte si Jugoslavijo!* [Tourists of all countries, visit Yugoslavia'] — the article carries the subtitle *Oglejte si skrajno državo skrajnosti* ['Take a close look at a country of the uttermost extremes'] (Partljič 1989:4). Also, *Slovenske matere — združite se* ['Slovene mothers, unite'] — a reference to a group of concerned mothers who had petitioned the President of Slovenia in regard to their sons doing military service, not in Slovenia, but in (at the time) troublesome Kosovo province. And, again, on a lighter side, the new 'sovereignty' or 'pluralism' initiated the Valentine's Day with the slogan *Zaljubljeni vseh dežel, združite se!* [Lovers of all countries, unite!'] (Lupša, 1991:3).

We can see from just the two (original) ideological slogans above and their innovative derivatives that (verbal) symbols also are important 'signs' with 'meaning,' including 'ideological' meaning, but they are also 'pliable': when ideologies change, that is, when those ideologically conditioned 'modes of guided communication' (i.e., the ideological symbols and their slogans) fail or outlive their usefulness they are either discarded, or modified, or else they become a springboard for new and innovative metaphorical 'modes of guided communication' reflecting new realities or identities, e.g., *Lačni vseh dežel, pokličite nas!* [The hungry of all countries, call us!'] — a reference to the latest example, in 1991, of private enterprise in Slovenia, a home delivery pizza (Ažman 1991:18).

There are of course other constructs and areas of Slovene life which could be discussed in terms of changing symbols (and slogans) and sovereignty in greater detail, e.g., the construct *skupni slovenski kulturni prostor* ['the common Slovene culture space'] which is supposed to be *ideologija brez ideologije, ki združuje vse Slovence doma in po svetu* ['an ideology without ideology which unites all Slovenes at home and abroad'] (C. Zlobec 1988:300) and which would include a *Slovenska tretja univerza* (Mali 1989:285), that is, all Slovenes working at different universities or research institutes outside Slovenia. (See also Papež 1989.) Then there was established a *Svetovni slovenski kongres* ['World Slovene Congress'] so as to link Slovenes throughout the world and across political and ideological differences. It would be a *simbol narodne sprave* ['symbol of national reconciliation']

(Hribar 1990:19). Another interesting area of discussion might be heraldry and state symbols in general, especially the Slovene flag, e.g., a person not visiting Slovenia until the red star was to be taken off its flag (see Lipovec 1991:9; also Šavli 1988 and 1990). Then there is some evidence of a religious-secular (symbolic) struggle (on the part of some individuals) that, e.g., the *verouk* ['(Catholic) religious instruction'] might possibly replace the *rdeči verouk*, implying its 'red' or Communist 'content' (see, e.g., Vasle 1990:17). The humor component also plays an important role in a changing society, e.g., in the form of aphorisms and satire, especially the epigrams (see, e.g., Inkret 1981, Bor 1990:5 and Partljič 1991b). (Of particular interest would be the tug of war between *Sv. Miklavž* ['St. Nicholas'] and *Dedek Mraz* ['Grandfather Frost.']) However, there are two components (economic and language) which should be mentioned in greater detail because they are probably central to recent Slovene search for sovereignty.

3.2 The Economic Component

While the economic situation in Slovenia was deteriorating in the late 1980's, Slovenia was still viewed (by some Slovenes and certainly by much of the Western press) as "by far the most prosperous, most industrially advanced and culturally Westernized of the six Yugoslav republics" (Harden 1991:A5). On the other hand, one Slovene columnist viewed Slovenia with a dubious distinction as being *prvi v Jugoslaviji, zadnji v Evropi* ['the first in Yugoslavia and the last in Europe'] (Kos, 1990:24).

The following are some key terms or constructs which symbolize the 'negative' and 'positive' aspects of the Slovene economy in general. The two main contributing factors of the economic crisis have been the so-called *dogovorna ekonomija* ['consensual economy'] and *delavsko samoupravljanje* ['worker self-management'] (see, e.g., Ribnikar 1989:23 and Miller 1989:101) resulting in the *siva ekonomija* ['gray' or 'second economy'] as well as (*hiper*)*inflacija* and *stagflacija*. In addition, there was also a *trgovinska* or *gospodarska vojna* ['trade' or 'economic war'] between Serbia and Slovenia, especially in 1989, and misappropriation of a sizable amount of money by Serbia (at the end of 1990) (see, e.g., Harden 1991:A5). On the more 'positive' side, that is, the attempts to improve the economic situation have been identified with the terms like *trg* or *tržno gospodarstvo* ['market' or 'market economy'] *ljubljska borza* ['the Ljubljana stock exchange'] (see, e.g., Petrovčič 1991:18, 19), *holdinška korporacija* ['holding company'], *kreditna kartica* ['credit card'], *konzultantska firma* ['consultant firm'] becoming 'reputable' again (see, e.g., Čeh 1989:26) and the trademark

Made in Slovenia (rather than *Made in Yugoslavia*) was being used more and more as the label or symbol of quality.

In this transition from a planned to a free-market economic system the two core concepts are also *denacionalizacija* and *(re)privatizacija*. By the Spring of 1991 some major guidelines have been formulated as to how best to proceed towards the denationalization or (re)privatization of major companies of Slovenia. Two privatization models were proposed, one by J. Mencinger, the then economics minister (and also vice president) of Slovenia and the other by J. Sachs, a Harvard economist, who was brought in rather unexpectedly by the premier of Slovenia himself. Mencinger's model builds on the fact that one needs to exploit the 'potentials' already existing in the Slovene economy (strong exports, financial and commercial links with Austria and northern Italy, the port of Koper, a considerably higher living standard, etc.) and bring about *privatizacija* gradually while Sachs */obravnava/slovensko gospodarstvo kot eno od vzhodno-evropskih gospodarstv* ['(treats) the Slovene economy as one of the East European economies'] and wants to bring about the privatization quickly, that is, with a kind of shock therapy treatment (Grah, 1991:12). Mencinger resigns his position, but his resignation may be 'connected' with Slovene 'culture' as well.

Ferraro (1990:18) suggests that 'culture is everything that people have, think, and do as members of their society.' If we accept this broader definition of culture we may more fully understand or at least appreciate the statement on the 'potentials' of the Slovene economy and the reasons for Mencinger not agreeing with Sachs regarding the 'proper' road to privatization. The first structural component of the concept of 'culture,' have, is defined by Ferraro as 'material objects.' And the Slovene economy did have at the time the basic physical structure or appropriate (physical) ingredients of a viable economy (factories, transportation system, etc.). The second component, think, includes 'ideas, values, and attitudes' and the third, do, includes 'normative or expected behavior.'

For decades, the Western press reports and all kinds of studies have been presenting Slovenia and the Slovenes as being in the forefront of economic development, with traditionally good work habits, thrifty and the like. If this perception were true then one could assume that such 'normative or expected habits of behavior' would continue and one could view them as the potential for planning the thorny subject of *privatizacija* as well. Therefore, the resignation of the economics minister and the economic component of a search for sovereignty may in some ways be connected with Slovene 'culture' as well. Nevertheless, there is one other 'cultural' component which may be perceived as even more central to Slovene identity (than the economic one) and

which cannot be ‘tampered with’ at all as the following discussion will try to show.

3.3 The Language Component

Ana Kovač, a Slovene ethnologist, says: *Tisti element, ki druží različne sociokulturne svetove v Sloveniji v narodno skupnost, vsekakor ni folklor, temveč slovenski knjižni jezik in visoka kultura, v okviru katere se je slovenski knjižni jezik razvil* [‘The element which unites the various sociocultural worlds in Slovenia into a national community is certainly not folklore, but the Slovene literary language and high culture within the framework of which the Slovene literary language has developed’] (A. Kovač 1991:293). In other words, it is the ‘literary Slovene,’ not its other varieties, which “represents the only common standard which unites the speakers of Slovene” (Lencek 1982:26) so that “Slovenian national identity was saved by their written word” (Kadic 1988:183). Since Slovenes have become a ‘nation’ primarily because of their language, they are “a prototype of a linguistic nationality” (Lencek 1988:47) — they could have become easily assimilated among their neighboring nations (Austrian-German, Croatian, Italian, Hungarian) — their mother tongue has become to them a symbol of their existence, a *svetost* [‘sacred thing’] (see “Jezik je Slovencem svetost” 1988:4), *nedotakljiva svetinja* [‘an untouchable relic’] (Moder 1982a:33) and, of course, when a ‘relic’ is trampled upon, society at large can easily be mobilized to safeguard that relic, e.g., by establishing a special institution called *Jezikovno razsodišče* [‘Language Arbitration Tribunal’] (see, e.g., Moder 1982b and Paternost 1984:232) so as to preserve the ‘sacredness’ of that special ‘cultural space of language’ (compare Poulsen 1984:39).

This ‘trampling’ upon Slovene in recent years has been noted especially by Toporišič (1991) and Gjurin (1991) and it is to a great extent a struggle for language sovereignty (in terms of standardization and multifunctionality) in connection with the Serbo-Croatian language.¹ It is a kind of sociolinguistic-psycho-linguistic tug of war (Paternost 1985:17) between the representatives of these two languages. This tug of war may to a great extent also reflect the use of ‘symbolic power’ which is, according to Bourdieu (1991:170), “a transfigured and legitimized form of the other forms of power.” For example, Gjurin (1991:19) states that *Slovenščina in makedonščina sta med drugim razpoznavni simbol Jugoslavije kot države, nič manj kakor srbo-hrvaščina* [‘Slovene and Macedonian are, among other things, no less than Serbo-Croatian, the identifying symbols of Yugoslavia as a state’]

¹ See my review of the two works: Paternost (forthcoming).

and yet, if a Slovene wanted to apply for a visa (at the American consulate in Zagreb, for example) he was given an application form only in Serbo(-Croatian) and may therefore needed a translator to fully understand some of the content of the form. Gjurin (1991:38) then speaks of the *jezikovni rasizem jugoslovanski bankovcev* ['linguistic racism of Yugoslav bank notes'] because every inscription (on a bank note) begins in Serbian (Cyrillic). And the name of at least one particular military building (in Slovenia) resembled more Serbo-Croatian than literary Slovene. Furthermore, in the Ljubljana Trial of 1988, four young men were tried before a military, not a civilian, court and in the Serbo-Croatian language, rather than in their own (Slovene) tongue. Mastnak (1989:47) characterized this trial as follows: "In violation of the constitution of Slovenia and Yugoslavia, the trial was conducted in Serbo-Croatian (a foreign language) and then translated into a language which can only be described as Slovene with an abundance of good will." Huge spontaneous demonstrations in behalf of the Four [*četverica*] took place because, among other things, the symbol of Slovene identity, the language, was threatened, was 'trampled upon.'

The above illustrations show not only the 'monopoly' of official naming' (by the official 'Serbo-Croatian' Yugoslavia) but also as the "monopoly of legitimate symbolic violence" (Bourdieu 1991:242) committed by the 'official' (Serbo-Croatian) Yugoslavia and especially its real, not symbolic, 'form of power,' the Yugoslav Peoples' Army as it 'trampled upon' that 'symbol of national inviolability,' the Slovene literary language. Nevertheless, by 1991, all this struggle for language status changed, that is, when the more or less culture-national language [*narodni jezik*] acquired a *novo poslanstvo* ['new mission'] (cf. Moder 1989:37), that is, it became the sovereign state-national language [*nacionalni jezik*] of the Republic of Slovenia. Thus language (whether on a personal or state level) can be more than a means of communication. It plays a recurring symbolic role in the ethnicity experience. It is "the quintessential symbol, the symbol par excellence" and "in the process of symbolizing it tends also to become valued in itself" so that "the link between language and ethnicity is thus one of sanctity-by-association" (Fishman 1977:25).

Finally, the 'language' component also implies Slovene literature, that is, the many writers (from Trubar in the 1550s to those of the late 1980s) and how they, by their written word symbolized Slovene cultural and national aspirations and thus enjoyed, as a group, a somewhat privileged position in culture and society. However, with the change of the sociopolitical system, in 1991, these writers, says Debeljak, "long accustomed to public attention" have become "marginalized." "As individuals who

struggled for freedom and against totalitarian limits to human spirit, they were defeated by their own success” because “freedom also implies a freedom not to listen to the writers’ voices any longer” (Debeljak 1991:193). Thus, writers as symbols are also ‘pliable.’

4. Conclusions

The recent search for sovereignty among Slovenes includes certain components of orientation, direction and change in terms of symbols, slogans and identity. Thus, important components of political and natural geography and direction are the various ‘Slovenias’ in the world today, the most important of them being, of course, the *Matična Slovenija*. The *Republika Slovenija* then, shed of its ‘socialist’ attribute and further symbolized by Slovenia’s (and Yugoslavia’s) tallest mountain, *Triglav*, as well as by *lipa*, is situated in the right geographical location, in the Alpine region, in Europe, and is influenced by the right ‘wind’ direction, namely, from the West (one of whose ‘saving’ attributes being the free-market economy), not from the East. The ‘winds from the ‘East,’ on the other hand, are not desirable, and the ‘South [*Jug*]’ is even blamed, in part, for the decline of the ‘Slovene national character.’ However, the central symbol of Slovene national identity appears to be the Slovene literary language, it is something that should not be ‘tampered with’ at all.

The key slogans that reflect or support this ‘orientation and direction and change’ in regard to sovereignty of Slovenes are ‘Slovenia, My Homeland,’ located ‘On the sunny side of the Alps’ and demanding ‘Europe, Now!,’ and ‘Slovene, Now!’ In other words, in regard to the latter (Gjurin 1991), now is the time for the Slovene (literary) language to realize its full potential. That is, instead of being more or less just the culture-national language of Slovenia (within the framework of the Yugoslav state and thereby quite restricted functionally on the federal level), in 1991, Slovene became the sovereign state-national language representing the Republic of Slovenia in the international community of nations. It thus acquired all the necessary functions in all the public domains so as to be truly effective both functionally and operationally, thereby revealing its full ‘potential.’ Some of the slogans and certainly their ‘extensions’ or derivatives are new and at times quite ‘innovative,’ e.g., ‘Slovenia, My Homeland’ becomes, to some extent not only a symbol of a ‘nationalist movement’ but it generates related ‘solidarity’ equivalents as well (‘Kosovo/Lithuania, My Homeland’). However, the slogan, ‘Workers of all countries, unite’ seems to generate the greatest number of (mostly humorous) constructs, reflecting changing attitudes and identities in Slovene society.

It was pointed out that the Slovene (literary) language is viewed as the central symbol of Slovene national identity. On the other hand, the Serbo-Croatian language was often imposed (directly or indirectly) as the representative language of Yugoslavia, thereby denigrating the other two official languages there (Macedonian and Slovene). This led to a prolonged socio-linguistic-psycholinguistic tug-of-war between the representatives of the two languages (especially in the late 1980's) and also reflected, to a great extent, the use of 'symbolic power,' in fact, the 'monopoly of legitimate symbolic violence' on the part of the official Yugoslavia and especially its (nonsymbolic) form of power, the Yugoslav Peoples' Army, against the speakers of Slovene, in Slovenia (the case of the Ljubljana Trial of 1988). This 'trampling upon' the 'symbol of national inviolability' did mobilize a large part of Slovene society and eventually contributed not only to Slovene search for sovereignty and the subsequent realization of that sovereignty, but also to a rather quick disintegration of Yugoslavia and the tragic consequences thereof. While Slovene may also exemplify (at times and in a few public domains) 'surrender' to symbolic domination on the part of Serbo-Croatian, it also shows persistent, overt or covert, resistance to such domination (compare Priestly, 1990).

We have seen from this discussion that symbols and slogans are not only important, in fact, almost necessary markers of identity and change, but that they are also 'pliable.' They may reflect, in our particular illustrations here, not only some ramifications of the Slovene search for sovereignty in particular, but also point to such search or struggle for human 'sovereignty' in general, that is, who is going to rule over whom and how.

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POVZETEK

SIMBOLI, SLOGANI IN IDENTITETA V PROCESU ISKANJA SLOVENSKE SUVERENOSTI V LETIH 1987-1991

Članek obravnava nekaj osrednjih simbolov in sloganov, ki jih je slovenska publicistika uporabljala posebno v letih 1987-1991 v prizadevanju za razjasnitev vprašanja slovenske narodne identitete, katerega cilj je bil - dosega slovenske suverenosti v Jugoslaviji in Evropi. To prizadevanje je prikazano z dveh izhodišč. Najprej je govor o geografskih koordinatah slovenskega narodnega ozemlja, njihovih etničnih in političnih komponentah, zlasti pa zgodovinskih in kulturnih usmerjevalnih (zahod-vzhod-sever-jug) faktorjev. Nato članek govori o spremembah v družbeno-kulturnem razvoju s posebnim ozirom na simbole in slogane, ki so uvajali in spremljali spreminjajočo se identiteto slovenskega naroda. Temu sledi bolj podrobna obravnava ekonomskih in jezikovnih faktorjev, obeh osrednjih dejavnikov v iskanju slovenske suverenosti. Avtor poudarja, da simboli in slogani v tem razvoju govore o spreminjajoči se identiteti in so v nekem smislu "upogljivi", v tem smislu, da ne kažejo samo na razvejenost iskanja suverenosti pri Slovencih, ampak tudi na sam proces rasti slovenskega naroda - v narod s svojo državo.