

**SPEAKING SLOVENE — BEING SLOVENE.
VERBAL CODES AND COLLECTIVE SELF-IMAGES:
SOME CORRELATIONS BETWEEN KANALSKA DOLINA AND
ZILJSKA DOLINA**

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INTRODUCTION*

The intersection of the frontiers of Austria, Italy and Yugoslavia is contained in what is locally known as "the three-country region." Here vernaculars¹ representing Europe's three major language families have been spoken since the Middle Ages. Among these Slavic, whose presence dates from the 6th century (Barker 1984: 26-28, Grafenauer 1975: 113), represents the longest historical continuity.² German speaking élites consolidated their hegemony over the entire region around the year 1000 (Fräss-Ehrfeld 1984: 124) and they retained their dominance until the demise of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in 1919 when, for the first time in modern history, this intersection of Alpine valleys was partitioned by three autonomous European states.

A significant part of the region's population has been plurilingual for at least a century, i.e., has shown facility in verbal codes representing two or all of the region's three language groups: (1) *Germanic* (Standard Austrian and Kärntnerisch/Carinthian), (2) *Romance*³ (Friulian, Standard Italian, and N.E. Italian dialects), and (3) *Slavic* (Standard Slovene and Carinthian Slovene dialects). But while this plurilingualism persists, the respective standard codes have come to prevail in the states concerned. Because of the historical continuity, territorial association and political legitimacy of these "language traditions" within these states, they represent a potent symbol of collective identity.

When state borders arbitrarily separate intermarrying villages such as those compared here, which share a common way of life, religion, and vernacular(s), the inhabitants may eventually question the legitimacy of the institutions which maintain these frontiers; they inevitably sense a disparity between their obligatory status as citizens of one state and the allegiance they feel to groups which are not incorporated therein. Furthermore, the persistence of plurilingualism confounds the supposed axiom that "one language equals one people," an assumption which is manifestly important to the ideological integrity of the states now in control.

Is it unreasonable to anticipate that such circumstances can promote an identity quandary? I think not. On several occasions elderly residents of the Kanalska dolina lamented in my presence that "they speak their own tongue [i.e., a Slovene dialect], are Carinthians at heart and are fated to live in Italy." This collective self-understanding raises a question about the **relative role of language in the formation of collective self-understanding**.

This article investigates and compares, through a series of tentative correlations, the ways in which verbal codes comprising the **code matrix**⁴ of the three-country region function as symbols for collective self-ascription among the residents of two **linguistic communities**.⁵ These are represented by villages located in Italy and Austria, at the base of the Lower Carnian Alps. A very large part of the adult population of these villages has been socialized in the same dialect of Slovene, as well as in one or more Italian or German verbal codes.

Language and identity formation

Language is the quintessential repository for our accumulated experience because it is the primary means for human communication and codification. There is thus reason to believe that language learning as a central component of human socialization is fundamental to identity formation (Cook-Gumperz 1983: 124-25). Furthermore, because of its integrity with the continuities which order the life and experience of every individual, language has formidable potential as a referent which evokes sentiment and commitment in situations calling for the validation and reaffirmation of both personal and social identity.

While language may be a universal vehicle for identity formation, its symbolic potential is always qualified by the historical and environmental circumstances in which it is manifest. And this is aptly illustrated by a cursory evaluation of the relative significance of individual verbal codes as markers of persistent collective self-images in Belgium, Berlin, and Belfast.⁶

I suggest that language's role as a marker of collective self-ascriptions can be usefully investigated from the perspective of individual actors and the groups to which they belong. This draws attention to the context of communication (Hymes 1968). It is through correlations of the use of specific codes in specific situations by specific actors that we can hope to unravel the implicit meaning which individuals and groups attach to specific verbal codes. Such an analysis is based on knowledge about the pertinent linguistic repertoires, and calls for a systematic investigation of the domains in which they are used. Analysis along these lines should elucidate the relative utility of each verbal code in overall communicative strategies and the potential of each code (or combinations of codes) as a diacritic for distinguishing various categories of persons comprising the social universe of the individual actor (Gal 1981: 88-90).

This approach to the study of verbal codes in relation to identity formation rejects any *a priori* association of a specific code with a particular geographically, socially or culturally bounded group. If analysis assumes the perspective of the actor and the groups to which he belongs, the referential meaning of a verbal code is necessarily situational; it cannot be reduced to a universal value held in common by its users. When elderly residents of Ukve/Ugovizza consistently maintain that the language they have learned at home is "our vernacular" (*Naše narečje*), it is mistaken to claim that they are Slovenes because linguists have "objectively" identified their vernacular as a dialect of the Slovene language tradition. When pressed by a curious fieldworker talking to them in a non-local variety of Slovene, some of Ukve's inhabitants [henceforward, Ukljani] explicitly refuse to identify their vernacular with Slovene; rather, they associate it with German. It is therefore necessary to account for the undertone of **locality** which informs many Ukljani's perception of the Slovene dialect which happens to be their vernacular. And this can best be achieved by examining dissimilar contexts in which they use "their" vernacular with one another and "others". For most Ukljani, speaking Slovene and being Slovene are apparently two quite different matters.

Persistent collective identities

I assume that the formation of persistent collective⁷ identities is founded upon the affective mutual experience of common origins and destiny for one's group. The durability of such identities over time is conditioned by enduring oppositions which uphold important we/they distinctions (Spicer 1971). These may reflect the stratification of society, patterns of political domination or economic exploitation, the proximity of state frontiers and/or

competing “national” ideologies and institutions (including language traditions as embodied in standard codes), religious conflict, constraints on the organization of local society and economy, or any combination of these and other features of a mutually acknowledged greater environment. By recalling the examples of Belgium, Berlin and Belfast it is possible to appreciate the complex manner in which factors such as these are involved in the creation and maintenance of persistent identity-rendering oppositions.

An ethnography of communication, such as that intended here, should account for the background knowledge shared by the people under investigation (Gal 1981). It is assumed that this knowledge reflects, in terms of native theory, an understanding of the kinds of contrasts and oppositions alluded to above. This necessarily leads to consideration of the historical data which inform actors’ perceptions of their greater environment. Finally, it is essential that this background knowledge is organized systematically with reference to an explicit theory of social organization and evolution.

The sort of inclusive collective identity suggested here verges on the phenomenon of ethnicity, insofar as this has to do with the “sense and expression of collective, intergenerational cultural continuity” (Fishman 1985: 4). Within the three-country region the theme of continuity is part and parcel of a common-sense “folk” understanding of what it means to belong to a collective. The course of local daily social discourse reflects a quest for and verification of authentic origins⁸ with reference to locality (e.g., farmstead, neighborhood, village), kin, verbal code (vernacular, dialect, and literary code), religious and political convictions, occupation, citizenship and other self-evident continuities.

The agrarian family households which I studied convey, through their own social reproduction, this experience of collective intergenerational cultural continuity. But these households are not of course ethnic groups unto themselves. Their viability depends upon integration into larger social and cultural entities. The members of these households participate perforce in many social formations, ranging from the village to the state and beyond, which offer an array of possible identity associations. The analytical challenge consists of determining which levels of social organization and cultural differentiation mediate for individual actors (and the collectives with which they associate themselves) the most persistent and pervasive affective experience of contrast with “others.”

A COMPARISON OF COMMUNICATION MATRICES

This ethnography is based on extended fieldwork in the Kanalska dolina/Val Canale/Kanaltal and in the Zilska dolina/Gailtal, and on secondary sources. The linguistic communities compared are the villages of **Ukve/Ugovizza** and **Zahomec-Zilska Bistrica/Achomitz-Feistritz an der Gail** [henceforward referred to as **U** and **ZB**]. In 1971 the population of the villages was 469 and 688 respectively (Steinicke 1984: 65, Fischer 1980: 107). **ZB** consists of two settlements located next to one another which form a common parish and share a common commercial and public administrative infrastructure. Of the two, Zahomec, with a population about one-fifth that of Bistrica, is more purely agrarian in its composition. The two are distinct socio-geographic entities and are locally perceived as distinct villages. Each separately integrates the local round of everyday life through its retention of separate highland common pastures and various local voluntary organizations and ritual institutions.

All three villages are clustered settlements located beneath the Lower Carnian Alps (Karnske Alpe). At the crest of the Carnian ridge which marks the frontier established in 1919 the villages retain, close to one another, highland common pastures and forests, as

well as summer homes and quarters for livestock. The historical contact over the Carnian ridge between these and other transhumant communities has been cited by various linguists as the basis for the similarity of the Slovene dialects in the two valleys (Steinicke 1984: 78).

An initial accounting of the linguistic repertoires yields the following.⁹ Nearly all the indigenous inhabitants of Zahomec and Bistrica [henceforward, Zahomčani and Bistričani] who completed elementary school before 1959 actively control the local dialects of Slovene and German, as well as Standard Austrian German. While literacy in Standard German is nearly universal in **ZB**, only a few villagers both read and write Standard Slovene. Village youth and children demonstrate a decreasing proficiency in Slovene vernacular.

Indigenous Ukljani (i.e., those with village origins from 1920 or earlier) commonly control the same German and Slovene dialects spoken on the northern side of the Carnian Alps, plus Italian and Friulian dialects. But within this overall group there is considerable variation among individuals with respect to control of these codes, especially the standard variants of German, Italian and Slovene. Variation in the linguistic repertoires of "native" Ukljani is most pronounced in terms of the village's different generations, as follows:

The oldest, who were born subjects of the Monarchy, control both Slovene and German vernacular, as well as rudimentary Italian and, occasionally, Friulian; they are also often literate in German, Italian, and in some cases Slovene. Those born 1918-1938 are as proficient as their parents in Slovene and Italian vernacular, but have poorer command of vernacular German; it is apparent that functional illiteracy is more widespread among men of this generation than among their parents. Several of these middle-aged individuals are in fact heads of **U**'s most active agrarian households and are quite dependent on their wives as mediators of written information essential to their households' daily affairs. I found little evidence for such a disparity between the literacy of middle-aged spouses in the Gailtal. Literacy in Italian appears to be much more widespread among the post-1945 generation in **U** than among their inter-war cohorts. The post-war generation of indigenous Ukljani remains proficient in Slovene and Italian dialects, but only in a few cases commands any German code. Since 1920 numerous families with a Romance vernacular (a dialect of Italian or Friulian) as their code have resided in **U**—currently about 20% of the total population. Very few of these have achieved even a minimal proficiency in either German or Slovene codes, although some have lived in the village for decades. Hence, the linguistic repertoires represented in **U**'s overall population are much more heterogeneous than those of contemporary Zahomčani or Bistričani.

The following comparison of how individual verbal codes fit into overall communicative practices focuses upon individuals and families who are most actively engaged in the local historical adaptation.¹⁰ Field cropping, animal husbandry involving transhumance and the exploitation of locally owned or controlled forests are the essential components of the way of life which, throughout the marginal areas of the three-country region, has been the historical domain of those who speak the Slovene vernacular.

Local environments for communication

The terrain in this region is such that the introduction of heavily mechanized agro-industrial production is severely constrained. Production is best organized in small units and is relatively labor-intensive. Because of these natural limitations and the marginality of these villages in the greater economic systems of which they are part, the household remains the locus of organization and control over farming. The maintenance of resources and skills essential for their material reproduction is strongly localized within these households.

Hence, investigation of the communicative practices implicated in the above can give insight into the way verbal codes shape locally-relevant self-images.

There are important differences between **U** and **ZB** in the local topographies and in the historical organization of their agrarian adaptations. These differences are, in turn, reflected by the dissimilar roles which Slovene vernacular has assumed as a **register**¹¹ for mediating recurrent subsistence routines.¹²

No other settlement along the base of the Carnian Alps has been as dependent as **U** upon highland pasture [*planina/Alm*] resources. This unique resource base has historically required the presence of a large labor force in the highlands throughout the growing season. For most Ukljani aged over 30 the annual migration has been part of their upbringing. Being in the highlands during the summer thus represents for nearly all indigenous Ukljani a very distinct setting in the annual round of activity. The families involved have been and still are, almost exclusively, speakers of Slovene dialect. During the annual migration this code has thus enjoyed a uniquely isolated environment, where it has been the essential register for talking about all aspects of social life, both within and between households. Down in **U** itself, however, native Ukljani interact frequently with non-Slovene residents as well as with other non-Slovene speakers; here, Slovene vernacular does not prevail so markedly in their daily communicative behavior.

U is Val Canale's most thoroughly agrarian settlement (Steinicke 1984: 78). Both the village and its highlands are known throughout the three-country region as a place where **indigenous vernacular**¹³ is spoken. Both Ukljani and their neighbors view **U** as conservative or backward in relation to neighboring settlements, which have much more enthusiastically embraced tourism and other modern commercial pursuits.

In **ZB** the disposition of arable land and the regimen of production is such that most of the inhabitants must stay in the valley during the growing season. These preconditions for production have thus inhibited the formation of a discrete physical and social setting, like the **U** highlands, where Slovene vernacular might function in the conduct of everyday practical affairs as an essential and prevalent code for most of the local families.¹⁴ Rather, the entire cycle of agrarian activity is mediated through a much more equal use of local German and Slovene dialects.¹⁵

Furthermore, in contrast to **U**, **ZB** does not stand out as more agrarian than neighboring communities; and the way in which Slovene vernacular is used to mediate communication in recurrent activities does not differ from that of similarly bilingual neighboring villages. The use of Slovene dialect in these kinds of settings does not therefore distinguish, as it does in **U**, either its users or their way of life from those of surrounding settlements.

The viability of the majority of agrarian households in **U** and **ZB** has depended, throughout recent centuries, upon external sources of income (Boegl 1885: 9, Steinicke 1984: 79). Active household members have found this necessary supplement primarily through part-time work as loggers, agricultural laborers, miners and industrial workers, and through self-employment as short- and long-distance haulers.¹⁶ In almost all cases this kind of employment has demanded at least a minimal facility in non-Slovene vernaculars, and at times migration over considerable distances. The historical pattern of plurilingualism in these villages can be seen therefore as the consequence of a local natural resource base which severely inhibits the material self-sufficiency of agrarian households.

Both **U** and **ZB** have continued to host a largely bilingual population since World War II, when other neighboring marginal agrarian settlements in Austria and Italy have shown a much more pervasive shift away from Slovene dialects to varieties of Italian or German.¹⁷ It seems reasonable to attribute the retention of the Slovene vernacular in these villages,

at least in part, to the relative vitality of local social networks and institutions, which integrate the agrarian households remaining there (Gumperz 1982a: 46-47).

State-building in village society

Thus far I have mostly treated those codes in the villages' communication matrices which can be designated as vernaculars: these are learned locally, usually within the family and distinctly local networks of social relationships. It is now fitting to investigate facility in verbal codes which are a product of what Gellner (1983: 31) calls "exo-training," i.e., "education proper."

Codes of this kind have been termed **high** (H) varieties of language; they are represented in this region by Standard German, Italian and Slovene. We must consider the locally and regionally based institutions which both integrate the community and connect it with encompassing society; for it is the church, schools, formal political and administrative institutions and voluntary organizations which have facilitated the exo-training of Ukljani, Zahomčani and Bistričani in the non-vernacular codes which are now, to varying degrees, part of their linguistic repertoires. Before language exo-training was available rurally, the bilingualism of these villages was limited (with very few exceptions) to dialect codes, i.e., to **low** (L) language varieties.¹⁸

Within the three-country region both the standard and vernacular codes which these institutions have either promoted or discouraged represent salient alternatives for the formation and management of locally meaningful collective self-images. To appreciate the roles of local institutions as mediators of language learning and as vehicles of identity formation, let us recall the sociological understanding of the transformation of agrarian society into modern European states which underlies my argument.

The integration of agrarian society was essentially atomistic, limited in many respects to the territory of small communities. The essential verbal code of the predominantly rural populations of the pre-industrial epoch was local vernacular, the reproduction of which was tantamount to enculturation. The agrarian family household represented the essential locus of continuity in most individuals' experience of their common origins and destiny in life; and the optimal integration of such domestic units was the local community, where a more or less standard repertoire of "village" institutions regulated and controlled the collective interests of its inhabitants and, through ritual and myth, mediated a common understanding of reality. It is to a social order of this kind that we attribute the quality of **Gemeinschaft**.

Because of their encapsulation in small communities the members of this kind of social order experienced the most profound contrasts in their understanding of social reality at this level of social integration and cultural differentiation. Those collective self-images that elicited the greatest degree of sentiment and commitment found their referents primarily in small self-evident groups and cultural traditions, normally highly localized. We may assume that our modern concern with matters of identity was largely absent in this relatively static social order, where one's place of birth defined a more or less predictable course of life (Bausinger 1983: 337, 340). There was a stable, clear distinction between the in-group, represented by one's place of origin, and the encompassing out-groups. This was marked *inter alia* by differences in local vernacular codes which demarcated individual communities from one another.

The ruling strata of agrarian society were commonly literate in a universal code (e.g., Latin); they distinguished themselves sharply from the illiterate agrarian population upon which they were dependent. As Gellner (1983: 10) has stressed, the ruling stratum in agrarian society actively promoted cultural differentiation among the various social strata,

rather than homogeneity. With the introduction of “rationally” organized high-energy economies founded upon the principles of economic growth and the industrial division of labor, it became both possible and imperative to centralize political control over much larger populations. The modern European state came into being. The atomized social reproduction of individuals, and the perpetuation of “little traditions” (Redfield 1960: 41-42), were superseded by the requirement to standardize society. Industrialization required a mobile “army” of workers which was proficient in a universal literate code. Local patterns of socialization were thus supplemented with universal standardized compulsory education and radically expanded networks of communication and commerce.¹⁹ As Gellner (1983: 34) paraphrases Max Weber: “[the] monopoly of legitimate education [became for the state] more important, more central than . . . the monopoly of legitimate violence.”

Localized control over one’s material and political interests has over the course of the last century increasingly given way, in **U** and **ZB**, to interdependencies with supra-local institutions. I assume that when the individual’s understanding of his origins and especially his destiny have become blurred by the facts of his social and spatial mobility and by his virtual dependence upon the institutions of the state, his collective self-image must necessarily accommodate associations with various specific, yet remote, institutions which demonstrably and predictably influence the conduct of his daily life. Whereas the legitimacy of the family and local community as referents for one’s collective self-ascription is confirmed by their everyday empirical immediacy (Steward 1968: 135-36), those institutions claiming loyalty from a greater distance necessarily compete for the individual’s allegiance. This competition involves the proffering of models for collective self-ascription which, regardless of their “artificial” quality, seek to render authenticity to one’s experience of origins and destiny with reference to that larger social universe of which one has affectively become a part (Fishman 1983: 279, Minnich 1988). This ideological component of state consolidation in Austria is known as the “national awakening.”²⁰

At the turn of the century, when rural Carinthians were experiencing the increasing encroachment of central authority over the conduct of their daily affairs, the speakers of Slovene vernacular in the villages treated here had already become plurilingual. They were thus confronted with competing claims for their allegiance, claims that were dichotomized with reference to languages whose dialects they already knew.²¹ These competing models of collective identity sought to verify the origins of the province’s two “peoples” (the Slovenes and the Germans) with reference to discrete language traditions.²²

Propagating standard codes in local society

Let us then turn to the historical role of individual village-based institutions as mediators of exo-training in those **H** language-varieties prevailing in this region. Since so-called Slovene minority communities are being considered, it is important to compare exo-training in Standard Slovene with that in the locally-dominant standard codes.

The Roman Catholic parishes established in **U** and **ZB** are the oldest local institutions which relate these villages to greater social and cultural universes. Because of the Church’s continuity, parishioners consider it in many respects an essentially indigenous institution. The historical predominance of Slovene vernacular in these villages has been consistently acknowledged by clerical authorities, and a very rich oral tradition of religious music and prayers has been officially encouraged and maintained. Although rites were conducted in Latin until the Second Vatican Council, all attendant religious activity in these villages, including sermons at mass and religious instruction, have been and still are conducted

primarily in Slovene codes.

The priests in both **U** and **ZB** clearly indentified themselves as "Slovenes" during my fieldwork in the early 1980s, i.e., as spokesmen for a Slovene minority in their respective provinces and states. In different ways they have propagated Slovene as a literary tongue, as a *Kultursprache* equivalent to the local *Staatssprache* [state language]. On the other hand, those parishioners who find the H variety of Slovene legitimate as a sacred register (i.e., appropriate for mass) disagree among themselves about the eventual wider use and connotation of this code.

Masses in the **U** parish are regularly conducted in both Slovene and Italian, the latter to accomodate that significant minority of residents who are not proficient in any variety of Slovene. Nonetheless Slovene dialect-speakers are quite unanimous in considering Slovene to be their sacred register. In 1974, following the death of the former parish priest (who spoke no variety of Slovene), more than 100 **U** households successfully petitioned the Archbishop of Videm/Udine for the installation of a Slovene-speaking priest.²³

Over the past century the **ZB** parish has been served primarily by Slovene-speaking priests. Here nearly all the adult population is socialized in Slovene vernacular. Nonetheless, influential villagers proficient in both German and Slovene have taken issue with the suitability of Standard Slovene as the proper code for "public" religious rites, and have succeeded in pressuring the priest into holding mass in both languages.

In the neighboring agricultural village of Blače/Vorderberg, where recently the priest from Bistrica has officiated at mass, there prevails among village notables a conviction that German is the only legitimate public code, in church also. The result is the non-use of Slovene in all formal religious rites in Blače. In both parishes the selection of a proper sacred code for public use is explicitly ideological because the adult population commands the "traditional" sacred register, Slovene. In **U** bilingual usage in religious rites is apparently a pragmatic matter reflecting consideration for the varied linguistic competence of the adult population.

During the waning decades of the Monarchy the local parish churches in bilingual Carinthian communities became a very important setting for initiating voluntary organizations which promoted literacy in Slovene and awareness of its literary tradition; they thus took part in the learning of Standard Slovene throughout the bilingual area. As Carinthia's conservative Slovene clergy increasingly propagated a pan-Slovene heritage through the standard language, the secular institution of local compulsory primary education became for liberal Germans an important instrument for parallel efforts for the standardization of German (Moritsch & Baumgartner 1988).

In **ZB** we still find institutional vestiges of the Slovene "national awakening" of the late 19th century: the *Posojilnica in hranilnica* (Credit and Savings Association) and the *Prosvetno društvo* (Cultural Society). The continuity of these institutions results in the preservation of both standard and vernacular Slovene as a legitimate secular verbal code in the village, involving the carefully prescribed public use of Slovene in their various everyday activities and functions. Furthermore there is a public sign on the *Posojilnica in hranilnica* on the main road through the village.

In **U** the Slovene awakening was promoted largely through the auspices of the church; but no direct vestiges of the original institutions survive to the present.²⁴ However, the priest appointed to the parish in 1974 has, almost single-handedly, taken the initiative to create institutions of this kind: a parish newspaper, *Ukve—Župnijski vestnik*, published in Slovene and Italian, has appeared irregularly under his auspices since 1975; and various secular cultural activities, especially for the youth, have been established which stress the

use of either vernacular or standard Slovene.

Slovene language instruction in the primary schools in both **U** and **ZB** is today optional; the languages of instruction are Italian and German, respectively. While the teaching of Slovene is regulated and financed in Carinthia by provincial and federal authorities, in **U** it is privately organized and supported.²⁵ Language policy with regard to public education in the plurilingual regions of Austria and Italy has been, since the time of national awakening, a central public issue.²⁶

Following the Gentile School Reform of 1923 in Italy, which was an important instrument of Italian nationalist Fascism, all German and Slovene language-teaching was terminated in the Val Canale public schools. Following a 60-year hiatus this training has now resumed. During the interval the parish church was the sole local instrument for maintaining and propagating Slovene as a literary language; but even this depended on the ability and motivation of the local clergy, who had no formal mandate to engage in this kind of activity, and who were explicitly prohibited from doing so during the Fascist epoch.

In Gailtal the interruption of secular primary school instruction in Standard Slovene was confined to the period of the Anschluss with the Third Reich. Following World War II primary school instruction conducted in Slovene and German was compulsory for all pupils residing in what were determined as Carinthia's bilingual communities. In 1958, however, as a result of increasing pressure from Carinthian German nationalists, the *Wedenig Erlass* [edict] was implemented; this terminated compulsory bilingual public education. Since then it has been the responsibility of parents to register their children for Slovene language instruction. As a result of harassment and other forms of negative sanctions, the enrollments in bilingual education were radically reduced in the course of a few weeks following the edict (Barker 1984: 233-35).²⁷

Propagating vernacular codes in local society

Local vernaculars are perpetuated not only through the context of the family and distinctly local social networks; their preservation is also a more or less explicit goal of other institutions. This has already been observed in the overall activity of the church. The following exemplifies the ideological dimension of the process in the village setting.

The very extensive, well-developed tradition of vocal music in the three-country region has been institutionalized through village choirs, many of which have their origin and/or base in the local church. Choirs of this kind are a well-founded tradition in **U** and **ZB**, also; and their repertoire is primarily in Slovene dialect. On major festive occasions, such as the *žegnanje* [parish patron saint's day], this choral tradition plays a prominent role. During the past century many of the Carinthian Slovene song texts have been translated into German; and in Carinthian villages close to **ZB**, e.g., Blače and Čajna/Nötsch, the German texts are sung on public occasions by choirs proficient in Slovene dialect. Nonetheless, in less formal public settings such as inns and public feasts members of the same choirs sing the Slovene texts to the songs that they "officially" perform in German.

It is not surprising that, during the period of national awakening in Carinthia, German *Gesangvereine* [choral societies] were established in many villages as a counter-measure to the very popular indigenous song societies, which adhered to a repertoire in what was felt to be the mother tongue, Slovene dialect. I have been unable to discover in **U** any commensurate initiatives for translating the local Slovene vocal tradition into German or Italian, or for founding an alternative choral society that might sing in either of these languages.

Communicating with encompassing society

For a more comprehensive view of the communicative practices in these villages it is useful to outline the institutions in which the villagers must participate to express their individual and collective interests and thereby assure their material well-being and overall security. Here attention is focused on the **utility** of the verbal codes used.

Ukljani, Zahomčani and Bistričani are citizens of modern European welfare states which regulate, tax and subsidize their economic activity, administer locally-established social and cultural services, and represent extensive information networks, of which the provincial and national media are important components. Control of their respective state's standard verbal code is an important resource for these marginal citizens. But, as noted above, the average proficiency of Ukljani adults in standard Italian appears less adequate than that of Zahomčani and Bistričani in standard German.

The political, administrative and commercial institutions of the Austrian Republic are perceived by most Austrians, whether they belong to a "minority" or to the "majority," as historically legitimate. For the most part, these institutions command respect: they are associated with a legitimate body of law and authority. The local accessibility and relative efficiency of the state administration thus enable and encourage Zahomčani and Bistričani to directly solicit the services of various public offices and officials. Furthermore, the formalized organization of political parties and interest groups is widely understood. Both the individual and the community tend therefore to pursue their interests following an accepted set of rules and expectations. The prime requisite for Bistričani and Zahomčani to participate in these institutions is their literacy in standard German.

In stark contrast to standard German, standard Slovene has little practical utility for the people of **ZB**. It is only the local clergy and a very small group of self-employed professionals, businessmen, clerical and skilled workers who succeed in exploiting their command of Slovene (standard and/or dialect) to fill niches in the economy not filled by non-Slovene speakers. The proximity of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia creates many of these economic opportunities, which include commercial and tourist traffic from Slovenia as well as industrial enterprises under Slovene-Austrian joint ownership. Finally, within the public sector of Gailtal society certified bilingual elementary schoolteachers are given precedence over monolinguals for positions in schools with Slovene classes. Otherwise, in this part of Carinthia there is no requirement that public servants command standard Slovene.

The incorporation of Val Canale into Italy in 1919 brought with it a political-administrative system and network of commercial relations which is yet today considered "alien" by most elderly indigenous residents. In fact, the generation of Ukljani born after the turmoil brought on the valley's indigenous residents by *il Duce* and *der Führer* is the first to lend some credibility to the Italian institutions which regulate their daily lives.

Not only are important administrative institutions of the *Regione Autonoma Friuli-Venezia Giulia* located in distant towns, e.g., Udine, Tolmezzo; also, they are organized in a very involute manner. To represent one's interests and obligations in government offices it is imperative to be fluent not only in standard Italian but also in the very specialized register of Italian administrative bureaucracy. Effective participation in the formalized institutions represented by Italy's political parties and trade unions requires similar fluencies. While they have necessarily adapted the conduct of their public affairs to Italian practice, Ukljani have retained within the confines of their village more purely indigenous institutions for administering local affairs, including their common pastures and forests and the co-operative dairy located in the village.

There is rather strong local consensus about how the forests and the dairy should be run, and participation of interested parties is intense. Whenever, on the other hand, Ukljani have to mobilize themselves vis-à-vis superordinate institutions, they seldom agree about the most effective means to express their collective interests.²⁸ Combined with the generally low literacy level among U men in Italian, these circumstances lead to a very cumbersome contact with vital state and commercial institutions. U thus represents a rather isolated sub-polity within the greater state. This is reflected in the predominance of patron-client relationships between individual household heads and middle-men who command the requisite codes and registers. Indeed, especially-certified self-employed functionaries, referred to locally as *geometri*, perform this role with regard to government institutions; but U's agrarian households also utilize as mediators a small, locally-based commercial élite, a retired lawyer and the parish priest.²⁹

In contrast to the ZB elementary school (whose teachers are mostly indigenous and participate in farming), the U counterpart, the *scuola elementare*, employs primarily monolinguals who tend to be first generation immigrants from elsewhere in Italy. They display a blatant disinterest for learning U verbal codes. It seems reasonable to conclude that the poor performance of Ukljani in their public school system, as compared to that of their counterparts in ZB, is at least partly due to the much greater disparity between the cultural heritage and interests of the teachers and those of the local community. Ukljani view their local school much more ambivalently than do Zahomčani and Bistričani; the administration of the U school is generally quite unresponsive to initiatives and interests stemming from the Slovene-speaking majority in the community.

During the past decade or so, as younger and middle-aged Ukljani have competed with increasing success for employment in the commercial, service and lower-level civil service sectors of the valley's labor market, their rudimentary proficiency in the region's three major linguistic codes has been evaluated positively by local employers as a hiring factor.³⁰ Val Canale's economy is more strongly oriented toward commerce and tourism than is the case in Gailtal. Aside from local clergy and the local representative of the Slovene Research Institute,³¹ there are no local full-time professional positions requiring proficiency in Standard Slovene.³² Nonetheless a small self-employed commercial and land-owning élite exploits its control of both standard and dialect Slovene in the conduct of its business affairs. The failure of U's youth to attend professional schools and universities where they could attain proficiency in Standard Slovene is reflected by the absence of local teachers qualified to instruct Slovene at the elementary schools in Žabnice/Camporosso and U, where it has been necessary to recruit teachers from Slovenia and Trieste/Trst.³³

PERSISTENT OPPOSITIONS AND COLLECTIVE SELF-IMAGES

To demonstrate the dissimilar meanings which the same verbal codes hold for Ukljani as opposed to Zahomčani and Bistričani, I now review the content and organization of oppositions which have been of historical relevance for these villagers' perceptions of themselves vis-à-vis significant others.

The initial formation of German and Slovene nationalist agendas before the 1919 partition is mentioned above. The accommodation of Italian and Yugoslav claims to parts of Carinthia during treaty negotiations after World War I further polarized the "nationalities conflict." In Southern Carinthia this process culminated in the 1920 Plebiscite whereby local residents were required to declare their citizenship preferences.³⁴ During the succeeding decades also, the inhabitants of both the Gailtal and the Val Canale have been coerced

under somewhat different circumstances into declaring their loyalty to state and nation.

Various attempts to determine the national allegiance of this polyglot population inevitably involved the issue of loyalty to language traditions. On such occasions residents of these valleys were obliged to side with one part of their local linguistic heritage at the expense of the other. After the incorporation of the Val Canale into Italy this did not, of course, immediately apply to Romance codes: before 1920 these were the household vernacular of only a very small part of the population. I first consider the situation in Gailtal.

Zahomec-Bistrica: part of a whole

The nationalities conflict in Carinthia increasingly pervaded all aspects of society and culture. A whole range of quasi-political provincial organizations increased their activity as proponents of either German or Slovene nationalist interests. Histories of Carinthia were revised by German nationalists to veil the objectively-founded Slovene historical claims to Carinthia that antedated Bavarian colonization (Haas & Stuhlpfarrer 1977: 46). Academic endeavors of this kind of course fueled the rhetoric of both Slovene and German nationalist press. One example of this conflict at the strictly local level has been noted above, namely that the indigenous tradition of Slovene singing was translated into German and *Gesangvereine* were founded.

The ideological masterpiece of interwar German nationalism was however the *Windischentheorie*, which was advanced with the dutiful support of Carinthian historians (Wutte 1930). This theory claims that Carinthian Slovene dialects are more closely related to Germanic than to Slavic, and that they have somehow developed parallel to but in isolation from neighbouring Slovene dialects. This incredible exercise in academic fantasy was eventually developed with implicit reference to the geo-political reality of post-1920 Carinthia; it came to postulate the autonomous development of a "Windisch" people for whom non-Carinthian and Standard [*Neuslowenisch*] codes are explicitly alien.³⁵

An alternative was thus offered to that significant segment of the Carinthian bilingual population which was ambivalent about its national sympathies. By declaring themselves *Windisch* they have been able to associate themselves with the Carinthian majority without rejecting their linguistic heritage. Individuals making this identification publicly have been considered by German nationalists as *deutschfreundlich* [Germanophile]. The *Windisch* construct has played very successfully upon the distinction between **H** and **L** language-varieties, and has underscored the primacy of Standard Austrian German as the *Kultursprache* of Carinthia.³⁶ Carinthians who have associated themselves with a pan-Slovene identity, i.e., proponents of Standard Slovene, have thus been designated by this theory as alien to the province's natural course of historical development and have been explicitly identified with Yugoslavia and its supposed threat to Carinthia's territorial integrity.³⁷

Since the formation of the nationalities conflict in Carinthia the central issues have remained very much the same, and have included educational policy with regard to both language of instruction and overall school curriculum; the establishment of bilingual public institutions (courts, administrative offices, etc.); and the right to organize collectively on the basis of one's ethnic affiliation.

The generally disadvantaged position of Carinthian speakers of Slovene codes in provincial society is not merely the reflection of their relative numerical dearth.³⁸ It is inherent in the historically peripheral and inferior status of the rural speakers of Slovene vernacular. In past centuries, when the agrarian society described above was typical of most of Carinthia, Zahomec and Bistrica represented rural districts where Slovene was spoken,

whereas in larger population centers the élite spoke German. Bistričani and Zahomčani were ascribed the status of peasants (*Bauer*), whereas the townspeople (*Bürger*) were granted special rights.

In Carinthia today there are many Slovene organizations that explicitly emphasize the preservation of Slovene through education, cultural institutions, and the public media. These organizations, both secular and clerical, tend to uphold the Slovene language as a basic diacritic of Slovene national identity. They address themselves to all but the most extreme political orientations and employ a small but vital élite of self-acknowledged [*bekennende/zavedeni*] Slovenes; they actively solicit the support of sympathetic non-Slovene speakers. As a result contemporary Carinthia hosts a series of Slovene cultural and public interest organizations paralleling that in the German sector of society. Nonetheless control over almost all central political, administrative and commercial functions rests in the hands of individuals identifying themselves in one way or another with a German Carinthia.

The integration of **ZB** into the institutions of modern Europe has taken place entirely within the same territorial polities (Carinthia, Austria) and with reference to the same important centers (Villach/Beljak, Klagenfurt/Celovec, Vienna). These villagers' experience of an increasing regulation of their daily affairs through the instruments of central authority is held to be inevitable, as a legitimate historical process;³⁹ and the legitimacy of this authority is reflected (as is argued below) in local consensus about the validity of the "language conflict" and of the rules for participating in it.

Because there have for a long time been individuals and institutions committed to the pan-Slovene connotation of the local dialect in **ZB**,⁴⁰ the connotation of Slovene as a *Kultursprache*, equivalent to Standard German, has attained a qualified legitimacy here. Several descendants of agrarian households who still live (and in some cases farm part-time) here have achieved the status of Austrian-Slovenes: their completed secondary (and, for some of them, university) education has been an important basis for finding jobs in the specifically Slovene sector of society, and/or for participating in Slovenophile organizations; and they register their children for Slovene classes at the primary school [*ljudska šola/Volksschule*]. While they are active in village-based Slovene organizations, their networks of participation extend throughout Carinthia and beyond. In this way the local population in **ZB** is representative of the provincial population as a whole, and locally-articulated allegiances to Carinthia's "peoples," i.e., language groups, conform to a general Carinthian pattern.

Ukve: part of a whole

With its incorporation into Italy in 1919 **U** was cut off from the former supra-local institutions and understandings which had determined its initial integration into modern European society. The earlier politically-relevant opposition was transposed into an opposition between the Slovene- and German-speaking "indigenous" population and the Romance-speaking "immigrant" one.

Over five decades the demography of Val Canale has been radically transformed. It has been estimated that, of a total of about 8900 in 1971, the indigenous population (persons tracing their local origins to 1920 or earlier) represented 18.5%, whereas they had constituted 82% in 1931 (Steinicke 1984: 65, 36). This change resulted from not only the immigration of Italian- and Friulian-speakers, but also the resettlement to the German Reich of about 5700 *Kanaltaler* during the war, who had declared their preference for German rather than Italian citizenship as a result of the mandatory 1939 *Option*.⁴¹

Since 97% of the population indigenous to Val Canale before 1920 chose German citizenship we may assume that they were expressing dissatisfaction with the Italian régime under which they had had to live for 20 years rather than allegiance to the German nation (Steinicke 1984: 40). As for Ukljani, nearly all had committed themselves to resettlement, but most succeeded in avoiding resettlement until its termination in 1943; and a few months afterwards the Wehrmacht brought the Reich to them, by occupying the valley. Consequently, U today is still 80% indigenous in its composition. Resettlement from and new immigration to other parts of the valley were much greater. Hence, while the ratio of Romance-speaking immigrants to indigenous plurilinguists is 4:1 with reference to the valley's total population, it is 1:4 in U.

The sympathy of the *Kanaltaler* for the Reich was most likely a reaction to the Fascist-inspired campaign of the preceding decades to Italianize the indigenous population. For Ukljani, their declaration of state preference confirmed the new fundamental opposition in their relationship with greater society. As noted, this indigenous:exogenous distinction is substantiated by the organization of public schools and of state administration, and by other features of the inhabitants' relationship with encompassing Italian society. Suffice it to say that all élite functions in public and commercial sectors of Val Canale were transferred to immigrant Italians in the early 1920s, and nearly all influential public administrative posts are still today closed to indigenous Ukljani.

Alongside this basic indigenous:immigrant opposition in Val Canale there remains, in U, a relatively strong consensus about the relative rank of standard German and Slovene codes. The *Windischentheorie* enjoys qualified acceptance among some Ukljani who associate their Slovene vernacular with the German language tradition and German civilization.⁴² Elderly and middle-aged indigenous Ukljani normally express a strong sympathy for Carinthia, whereas they are hostile or at least skeptical toward "Communist" Slovenia. Since however there are several immigrants from Slovenia, as well as some native Ukljani, who consistently associate the local Slovene dialect with some kind of pan-Slovene collective identity, it is impossible to generalize about a common understanding among U speakers of Slovene with regard to its symbolic meaning. But, insofar as both Carinthian Slovene and German dialects are spoken in the village, and are both often found in the repertoires of Ukljani born after 1919, it is useful to refer to **indigenous vernacular** as a set of codes which clearly serve to distinguish the historical population from the "newcomers."

In contrast to ZB, U has not continuously been the home of self-acknowledged proponents of a pan-Slovene identity, who would have propagated Slovene as a standard code. Individuals of this kind today are either immigrants (e.g., the priest) or seasonal residents, and as such are occasionally denigrated by indigenous Ukljani as "outsiders." Aside from the continuity of the use of Standard Slovene in some aspects of religious practice, Ukljani do not commonly associate it with local "traditions." On the other hand standard and dialect German have been maintained by native Ukljani, although none regularly participate in local Germanophile associations such as the *Kanaltaler Kulturverein*. Finally, in contrast to ZB, U is quite isolated from the services and activities of regional Slovene minority organizations, which are mostly based in Trieste, i.e., twice as far away as Celovec, the centre of those organizations in Carinthia.

CONCLUSIONS

Some correlations between code-switching and collective self-identification

For Ukljani, Zahomčani and Bistričani who remain socially integrated through an agrarian way of life, their villages remain a fundamental referent for their collective self-image; and it is within this local context that Slovene vernacular is perpetuated. In the course of everyday life this self-image is self-evident for those concerned: it is not an issue because it does not call for expressions of allegiance. The importance of this collective self-understanding may be discovered in different ways. It is emphasized, for example, by the zeal with which the local agrarian population keeps its yearly round of festive occasions, and the higher rate of participation in these events as compared to provincial or national holidays. Also, serious threats to or crises in the village evoke rapid, massive local mobilization, regardless of political or “national” persuasions. The continuing vitality of the local *sosedstvo/Nachbarschaft* [neighborhood] association in all three villages is a further testimonial to the importance of a local collective identity. Finally, local ideology perpetuates a very rich repertoire of stereotypic characterizations which residents of neighboring settlements in both valleys frequently use with reference to one another. Although these stereotypes are frequently blatantly absurd and used jokingly, their persistent use emphasizes the integrity of the village unit in the overall cultural landscape of the region.

Below it is argued that “village identity” is an **optimal** persistent collective self-ascription for indigenous Ukljani with regard to that larger social universe of which they individually are a part; it is the most extensive self-ascription for which there is local consensus. Bistričani and Zahomčani, on the other hand, demonstrate a much greater agreement with respect to wider collective self-ascriptions, referring to both Carinthia and Austria. As suggested above, this has to do with a greater degree of congruency which they collectively experience between the political *and* the cultural traditions of the larger social universe of which they see themselves a part: for them, therefore, “village identity” is **complemented** with other persistent collective self-ascriptions.

It is not however my intention to associate the inhabitants of **U** or **ZB** with any singular or primary collective self-image (such as German, Slovene, Windisch, Carinthian, Austrian, Italian, peasant, townsman, farmer, employee, or—for that matter—*Ukljan*, *Zahomčan* or *Bistričan*). These social categories all refer to potential, albeit partial identities. Our task is to sort out which of these solicits the greatest collective allegiance among the individuals considered here, which most dynamically integrates their understanding of themselves vis-à-vis others. The following comparison of code-switching in **U** and in **ZB** is a tentative attempt to answer this question.

Carinthia

Throughout the bilingual regions of Carinthia the use of Slovene codes in relation to German ones reflects, generally, a situation where speakers of the latter have historically dominated speakers of the former. As a result, public identification with Slovene codes is socially stigmatized; which is reflected in the following general rule for the use of these codes:

“Regardless of the particular setting or occasion, Slovene is used only when all those within earshot of a verbal exchange control Slovene. Conversation takes place in German codes if anyone is involved, or is within earshot, who is unknown (a ‘bystander’) or who is known not to use, or to condone the use of, Slovene.”

Before discussing exceptions to this rule, we should ask why this norm for the use of Slovene codes is so pervasive; for it underlies the selection by bilingual Carinthians of the code proper to any social interaction.

Virtually all bilingual Carinthians associate German and Slovene codes with what are popularly perceived to be the province's constituent *Völker* [ethnic groups], viz., German, Slovene, and Windisch; and under many circumstances use of these codes is the only means available for articulating the distinction. From their perspective, therefore, individual verbal codes represent social categories which are popularly understood as distinct "peoples." This association of language with ethnicity often leads the self-acknowledged *zavedeni* Carinthian Slovenes to conclude that adherence to the above code-switching rule is an expression of loyalty to the German "nation," for it **implies** the subordination not only of Slovene codes but of the Slovene "nation." On the other hand German nationalists in Carinthia can interpret adherence to the rule as **tacit** recognition of their relative dominance or superiority and hence legitimacy. I contend, however, that conscious association with a specific ethnic group is not intended by most bilingual Carinthians when they more or less automatically adhere to this rule; they understand it simply as "good manners."⁴³ They are following what they believe to be the established norm⁴⁴ and are thereby avoiding a declaration of ethnic allegiance; only by explicitly breaking the norm do they feel that they are making that kind of declaration. It is the pervasive awareness of Carinthia's bilinguals that the codes **can** signify ethnic loyalty which gives this norm its validity.

Several regular exceptions to this rule have already been described; and in many cases these "legitimate" settings for the use of Slovene codes represent institutions that have Germanophile counterparts. These include religious rites and other activities; local ceremonies; Carinthian Slovene cultural, educational and sports organizations; even, in some cases, political forums such as village councils and neighborhood associations, where **all** participants speak a Slovene code which is therefore acceptable (see Priestly 1989: 63). Thus in Carinthia the social stigma attached to the use of Slovene codes, or to the self-conscious identification with institutions propagating these codes, is qualified, rather than all-pervasive.⁴⁵

It should be noted that, apart from what may be termed institutionalized exceptions to the Carinthian code-selection rule, it is consciously and systematically rejected by the *zavedeni* Slovene minority. Individuals voluntarily adopt a strategy for using Slovene which in itself is an explicit statement of their allegiance to a pan-Slovene entity of one coloration or another. "Professing" Slovenes will thus speak Slovene among themselves in the presence of unknown, or of known non-Slovene, bystanders; and occasionally they will address in Slovene bilinguals whom they know to be ambivalent or negative with respect to any association with a pan-Slovene identity, thus provoking a declaration of ethnic allegiance.

Returning to the **ZB** context, I should emphasize that indigenous bilingual villagers have a restricted opportunity to construct social networks based upon personal convictions about the legitimacy of Slovene as either a private or public code. They can either increase or limit their participation in situations where Slovene can be used with a minimum of negative sanction. While Slovene vernacular is commonly experienced as a "natural" (unstigmatized) code in family life, where it is controlled by all co-residents, individual convictions about its wider connotations come readily to the surface on both formal and informal public occasions. It is characteristic of the few *zavedeni* villagers that they participate in a very extensive network of local, Carinthian and even Yugoslav-Slovene organizations that uphold the status of Slovene as a *Kultursprache*. As a counterpart to this

group, there are village bilinguals who oppose all public use of Slovene. The majority of villagers however find themselves somewhere in between these two ideological stances; they more or less uncritically accept the historical relegation of Slovene to the status of an unwritten rural dialect, which is not a proper medium for public occasions or for the formal conduct of institutions. We should note that this perception of Slovene vernacular is perfectly compatible with a local collective self-image which presumes Slovene dialect to be a component of the village code matrix.

As the “silent rural majority” increasingly participates in extensive social networks which erode distinctions between the in-group of the bilingual agrarian population and various monolingual out-groups, Slovene vernacular will lose both its utility and its significance as a demarcation of membership in social groups which are important referents for collective self-ascription.

It should be emphasized that the pattern of code-switching manifest in these villages is repeated throughout bilingual Carinthia. The relative symbolic value of both Slovene and German codes with regard to supra-local collective self-images is very much the same, whatever the unique local patterns in language socialization or language shift.

Val Canale

While an “outsider” (e.g., a tourist) visiting **ZB** may be able to spend several weeks before hearing the use of Slovene, there is a very good chance that in one single visit to an **U** inn the same bystander will observe the use of Slovene dialect. Within the village the use of Slovene dialect is not socially stigmatized. Its use in relation to the other codes in the local communication matrix is, it seems, governed primarily by pragmatic rather than ideological considerations. Indigenous Ukljani will code-switch to a common medium such as German or Italian if conversation involves someone who indicates that they do not understand Slovene dialect; but they do not normally code-switch because they observe the presence of someone unknown to them. Rather, they wait for any such bystander to initiate conversation before adjusting the code.⁴⁶

The informal public use of Slovene in **U** differs somewhat from its use elsewhere in the Val Canale. Whereas most Ukljani speak Slovene, settings outside **U** where all the interlocutors do so are much less frequent. On the other hand, since this is an indigenous code it is freely spoken among native residents of the valley whenever the linguistic competence of the speakers allow, no matter who the bystanders are. Within **U** itself, moreover, dialect Slovene is often invoked to exclude non-locals from participation in verbal exchanges. In this way a social boundary can be demarcated between the indigenous and the immigrant population. It is noteworthy that **U** inns, and celebrations in the village, attract indigenous residents from throughout the valley who seek an opportunity to use their mother tongue, whether this be Slovene or German dialect.

During official public proceedings in **U** such as meetings of the local dairy co-operative or neighborhood association Italian is commonly used, since individuals are usually present who do not command the native vernaculars. Furthermore, among the indigenous population literacy is greatest in standard Italian, and this is therefore the optimal code for keeping minutes, distributing written information, etc..

On other formal occasions where communication among all those assembled is not essential for the event’s realization, such as funerals, weddings and locally-sponsored fire brigade competitions, there are several elderly and middle-aged Ukljani who make speeches or announcements in Standard German, which they assume to be the proper formal code for such matters. The same individuals use dialect Slovene freely in informal public

settings, but do not consider it appropriate as a formal code. In their indigenous linguistic repertoire, therefore, some but not all Ukljani rank Slovene and German codes in a manner reminiscent of the Gailtal.

Within the confines of U and its hinterland the combination of Slovene and German codes (i.e., what I have called the village's "indigenous vernacular") represents a majority code which yields to Romance codes only for purposes of achieving communication. Regardless of setting, however, the use of either German or Slovene explicitly demarcates the opposition native *Kanaltaler* vs. immigrant Italian.

In contrast to Zahomčani and Bistričani there is much less consensus among Ukljani about the connotation of their local Slovene vernacular as a marker of Slovene (or *Windisch*) heritage. The relations of Ukljani with supra-local institutions are essentially pragmatic, whereas among their neighbors north of the Carnian Alps there is consensus about the integrity of locally-based cultural traditions with state institutions. In Gailtal nationalist institutions pervade a common local understanding of one's place in greater society; they do not do so in Ukve. The one-to-one relationship between a people and a language tradition is less self-evident to Ukljani; it is a matter of debate rather than of consensus. As a result, the use of Slovene vernacular by indigenous Ukljani does not imply in any systematic way self-identification with any entity larger than the village itself; it is for them a genuinely local verbal code. Ukve is, through the instrument of its indigenous vernacular(s), a nation unto itself; and this can not be said of Zahomec or of Bistricea.

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NOTES

- * Revised version of paper "On the role of language as a vehicle for collective identity," presented at the AAASS 18th Annual Convention, New Orleans LA, November 1986. The field research on which this was based was conducted over a period of 16 months between 1981 and 1985 when I lived in Ukve/Ugovizza (Italy) and in Zahomec/Achomitz and Drašče/Draschitz (Austria). The Norwegian Research Council for Science and the Humanities provided a greatly appreciated fellowship which made this fieldwork possible (N.A.V.F. project no. 12.51.32.037). I am most grateful to Jan-Petter Blom (University of Bergen) and Andreas Moritsch (University of Vienna) who have commented on several versions of this manuscript, and to two anonymous reviewers for their comments on the New Orleans paper. My special thanks go to Tom Priestly (University of Alberta) who not only commented on content but also provided greatly appreciated editorial assistance. In spite of all this helpful feedback, I retain full responsibility for the final result.
1. *Vernacular* is understood here as a verbal code which is learned locally, usually within the family and a network of social relations which demarcate the local community from encompassing society. A more specific designation of *vernacular* as "mother tongue" or "native language" is not intended, except where specified. The vernaculars discussed do, however, represent dialects which are distributed across the "inter-national" frontiers outlined here.
 2. Steinicke (1984: 26) indicates, on the basis of extensive documentation, that continuous settlement of Val Canale was broken during the period of ethnic migrations after the demise of the Roman Empire, and re-established by Slavic settlement. Fräss-Ehrfeld (1984: 49) observes that in the 7th Century "die einheimische Bevölkerung Kärntens wurde von den Slawen überschichtet and nahm die slawische Sprache an." According to Grafenauer (1975: 114) the continuity of Romance codes (i.e., Friulian) in Val Canale cannot be dated from immigration that occurred any earlier than the valley's colonization by German-speakers.
 3. Friulian and Venetian dialects were the only Romance codes indigenous to Val Canale previous to its 1919 incorporation into Italy.
 4. This term is taken from Gumperz (1968: 464) who defines it as follows: "We speak of the 'code matrix' as the set of codes and subcodes functionally related to the communication matrix." The

latter is seen as “the totality of communication roles within a society.” Here, “society” is arbitrarily delimited to the three-country region, which includes peripheral segments of three state societies where the speech varieties outlined above are in use. Following Gumperz’ distinction, communication roles are understood here as those which reflect significant speech differences.

5. In order to account for the plurilingualism of the villages compared here, Gumperz’ term **linguistic community** is employed. He defines it as a “social group which may be either monolingual or multilingual, held together by the frequency of social interaction patterns and set off from the surrounding areas by weaknesses in the lines of communication,” (1968: 463). The relatively strong social integration of the two villages qualifies them as linguistic communities.
6. It is stressed here that distinct verbal codes, which by definition are an objectification of speech behavior, are of primary interest to the considerations made here. Should one engage in a systematic sociolinguistic study of speech events which accounts for the full range of variation in speech behavior, it may well be possible to discover in apparently monolingual settings such as Berlin communicative conventions which have arisen in response to the geopolitical and ideological division of this city and which now function as identity markers in social discourse involving residents of the two “Berlins” (see Gumperz 1982b: 5-7). Reflecting on the division of Berlin, Schneider (1986) even suggests that two distinct German languages may now exist.
7. A “collective” is understood here to be a social category which holds validity for the individuals and groups described.
8. Fishman (1985: 10) observes that an inclusive collective identity, specifically ethnicity, is tantamount to an “enactment and a celebration of authenticity” vis-à-vis “others.”
9. This summary is necessarily quite general and is not based upon a systematic sociolinguistic investigation.
10. The organization and dynamics of this adaptation are discussed extensively in Minnich (to appear).
11. Halliday (1968: 149) defines *register* as a variety of language “distinguished according to use.”
12. The recurrent routines mentioned here include not only regular work but also encounters among the agrarian population which are thematically related to matters of making a living, i.e., which involve the organization and evaluation of the work events involved.
13. The reason for using this deliberately vague and apparently redundant term, which refers to the local varieties of both Slovene and German spoken by nearly all middle-aged and older multilingual Ukljani, is explained in my conclusion.
14. This physical isolation of the use of Slovene dialect as a highland register suggests a situation of **diglossia**, i.e., “an enduring societal arrangement, extending at least beyond a three generation period, such that two ‘languages’ each have their secure, phenomenologically legitimate and widely implemented function” (Fishman 1985: 39). Consideration of other uniquely local functions of Slovene codes, below, will further test this assertion.
15. The local rules for code-switching in U and in bilingual Gailtal communities are distinctly different. Here we emphasize how ecological conditions have affected the organization of local adaptational routines in a way that influences the selection of one particular code from the available repertoires. Below, numerous other factors influencing code-switching are considered.
16. This source of supplemental income was important only in **ZB**, which in contrast to **U** has ideal conditions for horse husbandry. Upon completion of the Gailtal railroad during the 1890s this activity was severely reduced (Michor 1950/51: 48-50, 200-02).
17. For a discussion of language shift in **ZB** see Gumperz 1982a: 44-47, and, for a somewhat oversimplified account, Brudner 1972. Although commensurate sociolinguistic studies of the Val Canale have not been conducted, it should be noted that a Slovene youth research project, *Tabor Kanalske doline 86*, recently conducted a preliminary linguistic survey of the valley which confirms the author’s observations of a shift to Italian vernacular among the children of Slovene-speakers (Rupel 1988: 58-76).
18. The terms “high” and “low” are applied here with reservations, since it may not be entirely appropriate to qualify these communicative environments as “diglossic.” The distinction does however seem relevant because it involves the contrast between “endo” and “exo” learning. Fishman’s distinction between H and L language varieties is as follows: H designates “the *superposed* variety in diglossic society, i.e., the variety that is learned *later in socialization* (and, therefore, is *no one’s mother tongue*) under the *influence of one or another formal institution outside of the home* (and, therefore, is *differentially accessible* to the extent that entry to formal

- institutions of language/literacy learning . . . is available)." He further qualifies Ls as "universally available and spoken [mother] tongues and varieties of everyday life," (1985: 39-40).
19. In their broad-ranging discussion "Survival of distinctiveness: sources of peripheral identity," Rokkan & Unwin (1983: 66-117) show how centrally-initiated processes of standardization (imperative to the unification of European states) have combined with the historical and contemporary contingencies of peripheral regions, like the one discussed here, to produce diverse types of identity resolutions where vernacular and standard codes assume dissimilar symbolic and functional roles.
 20. Together with Gellner (1983: 5-7, 48) and Rokkan & Unwin (1983: 122) I assume nationalism to be an epiphenomenon of state building; it is most commonly a European response to the need for providing the state with legitimacy, being neither naturally innate nor socially inevitable.
 21. The standardization of Slovene is lucidly presented in Lencek (1984).
 22. As outlined below, these models of collective identity are considerably more complex than as sketched here, in that they refer to a third Carinthian "people," the so-called *Windisch*.
 23. Indigenous Ukljani's nearly unanimous association of both H and L varieties of Slovene with specific spheres of religious practice indicates an "enduring societal arrangement" which qualifies their linguistic community as diglossic (cf. notes 14, 18).
 24. For example, a Slovene reading circle sponsored by the local parish priest, and a savings and credit association, have both existed at one time in the village.
 25. The initiative for Slovene language-teaching in the Ukve primary school was spearheaded by the local priest in the mid-1970s, and led to a conflict with regional authorities which rapidly escalated into a "nationalities conflict" involving the Slovene minority organizations in North-East Italy and the media in Slovenia. Eventually regional authorities allowed this instruction in the public school building, but on condition that it be conducted after regular classes. Steinicke (1984: 76-78) claims that this particular "campaign" amounted to a repolarization of the relations between the German- and Slovene-speaking communities in the Val Canale which was reminiscent of the pre-1919 situation there.
 26. The centrality of this conflict is attested to by the considerable academic interest in Carinthian educational policy (see, e.g., Fischer 1980, Gstettner & Larcher 1985) and by the ongoing political agendas of minority organizations.
 27. The importance of the Wedenig edict as an instrument of aggressive German nationalism is substantiated through several instances, which I noted, whereby Gailtal Slovene-speaking parents not only voluntarily removed their children from primary Slovene language classes, but also stopped speaking Slovene vernacular to each other when in the presence of their own or of other children; they reserved their Slovene dialect exclusively for communication between spouses when others were not present.
 28. A case in point is the villagers' response in the 1970s to plans for building a motorway through the valley (cf. Minnich, to appear).
 29. Note that this élite represents almost all of the locals who command Standard Slovene as well as Standard Italian including its administrative register.
 30. Equally or more important is the fact that these job-seekers do not have to be provided with state-subsidized housing which is normally assured to civil servants. In recent decades it has become increasingly expensive for the Italian state to "import" workers to Val Canale.
 31. The Italian-Slovene *Slovenski raziskovalni inštitut* has four offices, of which one is in Ovčja vas/Valbruna.
 32. The Slovene minority organizations in Italy are mostly based in the distant cities of Gorica/Gorizia and Trieste, and are therefore largely inaccessible to Ukljani who might wish either to commute to them as employees or to participate in the activities sponsored by them.
 33. During the past decade Slovene-speaking Val Canale youth who have completed professional training have, with the exception of some local bank clerks, been forced to settle outside the region to find suitable jobs.
 34. The Plebiscite and the events leading up to it have been the focus of considerable scholarly attention; see, e.g., Pleterski 1980, Barker 1984: 58-171, Fräss-Ehrfeld 1986, Moritsch 1986, Vodopivec 1986. They remain the source for continued popular understandings of the nature of the nationalities conflict in Carinthia; October 10, the day of the Plebiscite, is for Carinthians who bear strong nationalist sympathies a prime occasion for demarcation of their felt allegiance.
 35. For a more thorough presentation of the *Windischentheorie*, see Fischer 1980: 39-41.
 36. This premise of the theory retains validity among German scholars; see, e.g., Steinicke 1984: 81.

37. These aspects of identity-rendering contrasts in interwar Carinthia have been the focus of an extensive post-World War II literature, which has sought to rectify the distorted popular understandings and public myths around which nationalist fascism constructed its rhetoric and validated its policy. See, e.g., Pleterski 1965, Haas & Stuhlpfarrer 1977, Zwitter 1979, Fischer 1980, Flaschberger & Reiterer 1980, Barker 1984. No other Austrian province, however, seems to remain as receptive as Carinthia to the variety of nationalist ideology that found its ultimate expression during the Nazi era, cf. Gstettner 1988.
38. Once individual verbal codes have attained the slightest connotation of national allegiance it becomes virtually impossible, using state sponsored statistical surveys, to determine the actual population distribution of individual control over codes. This problem is of course underscored in nearly all scholarly discussions that are founded on sympathy for "minorities;" it is comprehensively treated by Brix in his study of language censuses conducted in "Old Austria" (1982).
39. Epstein (1978: 121-23) supports my assertion that the experience of continuity can in fact involve identification of one's self or group with a past that includes fundamental structural change in the society one belongs to. What is important is the subjective understanding that this change is inevitable, that it is not challenged by some alternative model. In Carinthia alternative models of supra-local collective identity do not challenge the legitimacy of the province as a historical setting.
40. Many but not all of these have graduated from the Slovene *gimnazija* in Celovec, established in 1959.
41. This declaration of allegiance was imposed upon them (and the people of South Tyrol) as a result of the *Berliner Vereinbarung* between Hitler and Mussolini on June 23, 1939. Most of those who left Val Canale were resettled in Carinthia, and several Ukve families still maintain contacts there.
42. Several public notices and signs put up in recent years in Ukve have been bilingual German and Italian. The individuals who put them up speak Slovene vernacular in normal daily use, but consider standard German as their legitimate indigenous literary code.
43. When German-Slovene relations in Carinthia were extremely polarized, as during the 1920 plebiscite and during the reign of Nazi terror, one can assume that code-selection was nearly always an explicitly conscious act (Priestly 1989: 65).
44. Cf. Flaschberger 1974: 21, on this code-switching rule: "[t]here are a series of 'obvious Carinthian truths' that appear so natural that people have no idea of the alternative possibilities of language use that are found in other minority situations."
45. It is useful to compare this with "ethnic" relations between Sami (Lapps) and Norwegians in the coastal districts of West Finnmark (Norway), as described by Eidheim (1971: 50-67). Here the social stigma of ethnic/linguistic identity is much more pervasive because there is an almost complete absence of local Sami institutions, such as the Carinthian Slovene minority enjoy, which would provide the settings for regular expression of a pan-Sami identity vis-à-vis co-resident Norwegians.
46. The difference between the expectations of Ukljani on the one hand and of Zahomčani and Bistričani on the other with regard to the use of dialect Slovene in public places is shown by the inevitable misunderstandings which they experience when visiting one another's villages and trying, in informal public settings, to talk politely with individuals they know to be bilingual.

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POVZETEK

SLOVENEK SI, CE GOVORIŠ SLOVENSKO. JEZIKOVNI KODI IN KOLEKTIVNE PODOBE SAMEGA SEBE: NEKAJ KORELACIJ MED KANALSKO IN ZILJSKO DOLINO

Kot je znano, odrasli domačini trga Ukve/Ugovizza v Kanalski dolini, in vasi Zahomec-Bistrica/Achomitz-Feistritz v Ziljski dolini govorijo isto slovensko narečje. V obdobju po prvi svetovni vojni sta bili obe naselji, ki ju od leta 1919 dalje loči državna meja, izpostavljeni neenakim integracijskim vplivom italijanskega oziroma avstrijskega okolja. Vprašanje, ob katerem se avtor ustavlja, je to: ali to nekoč isto narečje, ki ga govorijo v obeh dolinah, še vedno služi govorcem obeh strani kot izraz njihove kolektivne individualnosti.

V odgovoru na to vprašanje avtor ustanavlja korelacijo med lokalnimi načini kodnega preklapljanja in komponentami osnovne situacije in kulturnega ozračja v obeh skupinah slovensko govorečih domačinov na obeh straneh italijansko-avstrijske državne meje. V analitičnem delu razprave se avtor ustavlja ob pomenu sociološke interpretacije institucionaliziranja in koristnosti govornih kodov, ki na tej ravni ustanavljajo različne lingvistične repertoarje obeh okolij.