

Anja Moric

Are the Gottschee Germans in Diaspora a Part of Slovene Emigration?

Slovene nationalism has developed along the lines of the so-called Eastern nationalisms, which are characterised by their understanding of culture and ethnicity as the fundamental unifying element of a nation. Accordingly, the prevailing view is that the Slovene nation and Slovene emigration are based on Slovene ethnic origin and the Slovene language, wherefore the members of other ethnic groups (Germans, Hungarians, Jews, etc.) are excluded from the concept of Slovene nationhood or Slovene emigration, despite their long-standing presence in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia. Indeed, the question arises; if they do not belong to Slovene emigration, to whose emigration do they belong? Based on the civic (voluntaristic, territorial) understanding of the nation and field research conducted among the Gottscheer diaspora in the USA, Canada, Austria and Germany, I analyse the problem described in the case of Gottschee Germans.

Keywords: Slovene emigration, Slovene Germans, Gottschee Germans, Gottscheers, diaspora, minorities, nationalism, identity.

Ali so kočevski Nemci v diaspori del slovenskega izseljenstva?

Slovenski nacionalizem se je razvil po modelu t. i. vzhodnih nacionalizmov, za katere je značilno, da kot temeljni povezovalni agens naroda/nacije razumejo kulturo in etničnost. Prevladuje mnenje, da sta slovenska nacija in slovensko izseljenstvo utemeljena na slovenskem etničnem poreklu in slovenskem jeziku, zaradi česar so pripadniki drugih etničnih skupin (Nemci, Madžari, Judi itd.) kljub njihovi dolgotrajni prisotnosti na ozemlju Republike Slovenije iz koncepta slovenstva oz. slovenskega izseljenstva izključeni. Postavlja se vprašanje, kam izseljeni pripadniki omenjenih etničnih skupin sodijo. Če niso del slovenskega izseljenstva, del čigavega izseljenstva so? V prispevku opisano problematiko analiziram na primeru iz Slovenije izseljenih kočevskih Nemcev, in sicer na podlagi državlanskega (voluntarističnega, teritorialnega) razumevanja nacije in terenske raziskave, izvedene med izseljenimi kočevskimi Nemci v ZDA, Kanadi, Avstriji in Nemčiji.

Ključne besede: slovensko izseljenstvo, slovenski Nemci, kočevski Nemci, Kočevarji, diaspora, manjšine, nacionalizem, identiteta.

Correspondence address: Anja Moric, Glasbenonarodopisni inštitut ZRC SAZU, Novi trg 5 SI-1000 Ljubljana; Oddelek za etnologijo in kulturno antropologijo, Filozofska fakulteta Univerza v Ljubljani, Zavetiška ulica 5, SI-1000 Ljubljana, e-mail: anja.moric@zrc-sazu.si, anja.moric@ff.uni-lj.si.

1. Introduction

In April 2021, in a Facebook group – a meeting place of Gottscheers (Gottschee Germans) living in the diaspora who are interested in genealogy – the question arose of whether any member of the group had succeeded in obtaining Slovene citizenship on the basis of ancestors/kinship, i.e., through the naturalisation process. The question was not answered in the affirmative, but a debate opened on the topic whether and under what conditions the emigrated Gottscheers who had lived in the Kočevska region in south-eastern Slovenia for six centuries were entitled to Slovene citizenship. Shortly after this post, I posted the same question on three different Facebook pages where Gottscheers living in the diaspora meet, asking them to share their experiences of acquiring Slovene citizenship. Alicia (I use a pseudonym when describing my interviewee's experience), a third-generation Gottscheer from the United States, responded. In search of work and a livelihood, her grandmother travelled to Cleveland in 1909. Until her death, she preserved the Kočevska (Gottschee) homeland in her memory and passed the memory on to Alicia's father and Alicia herself. Because Alicia is, in her words, a "proud Gottscheer", in late 2020 she asked the Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Slovenians Abroad for information on whether she met the requirements for acquiring Slovene citizenship under the principle of naturalisation. She received a negative answer, which indicates the current situation in which emigrated Gottscheers (and other Slovene Germans) and representatives of other emigrated minorities are not legally perceived as part of Slovene emigration despite their centuries-long presence in the Republic of Slovenia.

The territory of the Republic of Slovenia has always been ethnically diverse (Komac 2016). In addition to Slovenes, Italians, Hungarians, Serbs, Croats, Jews and Roma, a numerically strong German minority lived in Slovenia for almost a thousand years, which today is represented only in fragments in the Kočevska and Styria regions. The reasons for the emigration of Germans from the territory of Slovenia were mainly economic and political. Their pre-war migrations paralleled the migrations of Slovenes during the economic crises (Drnovšek 2005). The Gottscheers are the leading example here, as the Kočevska region stood out in the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century in terms of emigration to other European countries and to the USA, compared to other provinces (Ferenc 2005, 47; Drnovšek 2005, 7–37). The political migration of Germans began after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, when German officials left Slovenia en masse under pressure from the authorities, and exploded in the autumn of 1941 and the winter of 1942, when the majority of the Gottschee and Ljubljana Germans opted for the German Reich on the basis of the agreement between Hitler and Mussolini.¹ The majority of the population of the Kočevska region, 11,509 Gottscheers,

decided to resettle (Ferenc 2002, 155). After World War II, the mass expulsion of Germans who had not managed to flee across the border, namely to Austria, began in May 1945, following the German defeat. The last large transport convoy with German expellees left Slovenia in November 1946.² After the war, most of the emigrated Slovene Germans – approximately 24,000 – settled in Austria, and a smaller number in Germany. When the United States opened to them in 1952, most of the Gottschee Germans moved there. In the mid-1950s, the members of the once large German minority in Slovenia finally scattered all over the world and became a diaspora. Only a handful of them remained in Slovenia, where they largely assimilated with the majority population.

Prior to Slovenia's independence in 1991, there was practically no talk of a German-speaking community or emigrated Germans in Slovenia. The question of the constitutional recognition of the German minority has been a constant in Slovene-Austrian relations since June 1992, when the Republic of Austria assumed protective rule over the German-speaking community in Slovenia. However, the issue of acquiring Slovene citizenship among emigrated Slovene Germans has only recently become topical, which is why there has been no public debate on this issue and consequently no initiative to amend the definition of Slovene emigration and the corresponding legislation. The legally formalised definition of Slovene emigration emerged at the time of Slovenia's independence, when the Slovene nation had just gained its own state according to the model of nation-states with one titular nation, and thus corresponded to the spirit of the time; however, it has not (yet) adapted to the current reality and the needs of emigrants (as well as members of the Slovene minority in neighbouring countries). Slovene nationalism developed along the lines of what are known as Eastern nationalisms (Kohn 2008), which are characterised by their understanding of culture and ethnicity as the fundamental unifying element of a nation. Accordingly, the prevailing view – reflected both in the formal-legal conception of Slovene emigration and in the statutes of Slovene emigrant organisations – is that the Slovene nation and Slovene emigration are based on Slovene ethnic origin and the Slovene language, which is why members of other ethnic groups (Germans, Hungarians, Jews, etc.) are excluded from the concept of Sloveneness or Slovene emigration, despite their long-standing presence on the territory of the Republic of Slovenia. However, if we consider the nation in a broader framework – as a unit of different ethnic groups living on the territory of the country (Slovenia) – and consider the findings of anthropologists and sociologists on the situationality and variability of ethnic identities (e.g. Cohen 1969; Barth 1998), the issue takes on new dimensions. The question arises of whether the traditional definition of the Slovene nation and Slovene emigration based on common origin and language is still appropriate. It in fact excludes from the term "Slovene emigration" members of other ethnic groups (who are part of the Slovene nation if we understand it in terms of the territorial or civic

principle) who emigrated from the Slovene territory, including Germans. The question becomes even more complicated when we consider that the majority of emigrated first-generation Germans could speak Slovene (fluently or poorly) and that among the emigrated Germans there were also many Slovenes who emigrated with their (mixed) families (Moric 2016).

The main aim of this article is to discuss the question of whether emigrated Gottschee Germans are a part of Slovene emigration. I will use the concept of ethnic and territorial nations as a framework, although I am aware of its many shortcomings (e.g. Sand 2010, 81). It is precisely this ethnic conception of nation, and consequently Slovene emigration, that is currently causing problems for those emigrants who can prove long-term residence and ties to Slovenia, but who do not belong to the same ethnic category as the majority population. In this article, I look at the issue of Slovene emigration from a different angle – namely, from the perspective of the voluntarist understanding of nation, according to which a nation is not a fixed entity into which we are born, but a community of people connected by a mutual sense of belonging. Belonging to a nation is therefore a “daily plebiscite” (Renan, cited in Hribar 1989, 41) or a free choice by each individual to belong to this “imagined political community” (Anderson 2007). Moreover, I understand the nation according to the voluntarist principle, i.e., in my opinion, all persons living permanently in the Republic of Slovenia who wish to belong to the Slovene nation should be considered part of the Slovene nation (Moric 2016). Consequently, emigrated Slovene Germans, who have been living in Slovenia for almost a thousand years, are also part of the Slovene emigration, if they express an interest to be.

In the first part of the article, I perform an analytical-descriptive review of the legal sources that determine the understanding of Slovene emigration, i.e., with regard to its formal-legal definition and its understanding in Slovene emigrant organisations. In the second part, I present some of the results of the Maintenance of the Gottscheer Identity research project, which I conducted mainly between 2007 and 2015 (first in the context of a diploma thesis (Moric 2007), later in the context of a doctoral dissertation (Moric 2016)) among Gottscheers in the USA, Canada, Austria, Germany and Slovenia, and which is based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. I began the study by collecting quantitative data (a questionnaire with 166 Gottscheer respondents from Slovenia, Austria, Germany, Canada, and the U.S.), followed by the collection of life stories (62 written and many more informal interviews). Owing to the displacement of Gottscheers around the world, I used a multi-sited ethnographic research method (Marcus 1995; Falzon 2009), attended at least ten events organised by Gottscheer associations in Slovenia, Austria, and the U.S., and visited Gottscheer societies and individuals around the world (for more on the research and interpretation methods I used see Moric (2016; 2018a)). In April 2021, I obtained information on the experience of acquiring Slovene

citizenship on the websites and Facebook pages of the Gottscheer associations and in an online conversation with Alicia and other interlocutors.

131

2. Ethnic-Civic Division of Nations

Although the predominant form of political organisation today – the nation-state – seems to have existed since time immemorial, it is nevertheless a relatively recent phenomenon. The nation “established itself as an entity with socio-historical relevance” during the French Revolution (Kosi 2013, 3); before that, the centre of political organisation were multilingual states connected by dynastic ties (Kohn 2008, 17). In the 19th century, national movements spread throughout Europe, and demands arose for an arrangement in which “political and national entities must coincide” (Kosi 2013, 2). Within the field of the study of nations and nationalism, the concept of distinguishing between voluntaristic: civic, political or territorial, and primordialist: ethnic or cultural nations has taken hold. The author of this division, which has become very influential since its introduction in 1944, is historian Hans Kohn (2008). In the civic model commonly attributed to Western Europe and the United States, nationhood is determined on the basis of political territory, whereas in Central and Eastern Europe, nations were not formed on a previous territorial basis, rather the nation was understood as an ethno-cultural community that unifies several political units or even forms part of a larger political structure (Kohn 2008, 329; Brubaker 1996; Shulman 2002, 554). In contrast to the Western nations or nation-states, which had formed on a pre-existing territory, the Eastern nations, including the Slovenes, had yet to conquer their own territory and justified their demands for changing the borders of the existing multinational states to which they belonged based on their original and linguistic similarity. In order to legitimise their demands, national activists usually referred to the specificity of the nation’s culture, language and the heroic deeds of great men (Jezernik 2013, 8–9) and sought the existence of the nation in the distant past. They also or primarily managed to do that through nationalised history, which has become a means of consolidating nationalist ideology. Kohn’s division has many limitations and could be reproached for a lack of criticism of the Western nationalisms, orientalism, and even geographical determinism. Indeed, modern nations, Eastern and Western or ethnic and civic, combine both civic and ethnic elements of nationalism (Smith 1991, 13) and strive for the ethnic and cultural unitarity of their citizens or ideas of a (single) nation-state, without taking into account “a reality in which there is always at least a minimum level of ethnic and cultural diversity and plurality” (Žagar 2006, 292). This is reflected in the “structure of constitutional arrangements and in the political systems of existing nation-states, which are often rigid (inflexible) and do not reflect the current existence of diversity, asymmetries and social and multi-ethnic structures of

modern societies” (Žagar 2006, 292). The purpose of this article is therefore not a critique of the current situation, but a desire to reflect on Slovene emigration from a different perspective, i.e., in terms of territoriality and freedom to exercise their choice (for citizenship) of belonging to a nation, and not the currently prevailing ethno-nationalist understanding of the nation.³

3. Understanding Slovene Emigration

3.1 Formal-Legal View of Slovene Emigration

Alicia obtained the aid of a law firm from Ljubljana to manage the process of acquiring Slovene citizenship. They explained to her that her right to citizenship could be exercised on the basis of Article 13 of the Citizenship of the Republic of Slovenia Act (2007) and Article 3 of the Decree on criteria for establishing the compliance of national interest for acquiring the citizenship of the Republic of Slovenia through article 13 of Act on the Citizenship of the Republic of Slovenia (2007), according to which “a Slovene emigrant or his descendant including second-degree relatives in the ascending line may apply for extraordinary naturalisation for national reasons”, but it is possible “if the applicant referred to in the preceding paragraph demonstrates yearslong personal active ties with the Republic of Slovenia and at least five years of active participation in Slovene societies abroad or other Slovene emigrant, expatriate or minority organisations” (Decree on criteria ... 2007, Art. 3). The law firm could not help her inquire whether the Gottscheer organisations in the USA were considered to be Slovene emigrant organisations, therefore she turned to the Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Slovenians Abroad for help, where she received a negative answer. They explained to her that on the basis of naturalisation an applicant for citizenship can refer to his/her “Slovene ancestor” born in Slovenia, whereby he/she must submit official documentation on his/her “Slovene origin”; the phrases “Slovene ancestor” and “Slovene origin” were underlined in the explanation (Alicia, personal communication, April 2021).⁴ She was also informed that the Gottscheer Heritage and Genealogy Association (hereinafter referred to as GHGA), of which Alicia is a member, does not belong to the Slovene emigrant societies and therefore does not meet the criteria (Alicia, personal communication, April 2021).⁵ The GHGA organisation’s aim is to study the genealogy of the Gottscheers, i.e., those who were born in the Kočevska (i.e., Gottschee) region. Even though the Kočevska region is in the Republic of Slovenia and, consequently, any connections to Kočevska are, in a territorial sense, undoubtedly also connections to the Republic of Slovenia, Alicia and the GHGA do not meet the ethnic aspect of belonging to Slovenia.

Whether the current list of relevant organisations corresponds to the actual situation in emigration, I already pondered in 2019, when I attended the

annual meeting of the GHGA in Cleveland and a day later at the Polka Mass at the *Slovenska Pristava* Slovene society. At the Slovene event, I met some Gottscheers whom I had met the day before at the Gottscheer event. They told me that they often attend Slovene events because they have friends there, and that they are also connected through (Slovene) folk music and traditional dishes. A few months later, Oktoberfest was organised by *Slovenska Pristava*, where a Gottscheer band and a folklore group performed and a Slovene ensemble played. Thus, a connection between the Slovene and Gottscheer communities is not uncommon in Cleveland. Both communities share similar cultural traits that they brought with them from Slovenia: they eat virtually the same traditional foods and listen to folk music. The participation of Gottscheers in events organised by Slovene organisations also exists (and existed) elsewhere – soon after World War II and immigration to the USA, some Gottscheers from California, in places where there were no Gottscheer or (linguistically related) German societies, participated in meetings of Slovene societies (Mary, first generation, USA, personal communication, June 2009).⁶ In 2019, Alicia easily joined the Slovene Genealogy Association, which operates in the USA and is deemed a suitable means for proving connections with Slovene organisations required for obtaining Slovene citizenship after naturalisation, however Alicia has not been a member for long enough; two years instead of the required five. Disappointed, Alicia wondered whether her rejection at the Office was influenced by the position of the German minority in Slovenia, or whether Gottscheer emigrants would be considered part of the Slovene emigration if the German minority in Slovenia were constitutionally recognised (Alicia, personal communication, April 2021). The Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia recognises one nation, namely the Slovene nation. It collectively determines the status of autochthonous national communities for Italians and Hungarians, and nominally for Roma, thus giving these groups the right to co-financed preservation of their identity (education and training). Under Article 61, it grants individual communities (e.g., Germans, Serbs, Croats, etc.) the individual right to express belonging to their nation or national community, to maintain and express their culture, and to use their language and script (Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia 1991, Art. 61). However, although Hungarians, for example, are constitutionally guaranteed minority rights on the territory of the Republic of Slovenia, the Constitution does not recognise any status for Hungarians who emigrated from the territory of the Republic of Slovenia, for example, in the interwar period for economic reasons. It recognises this for Slovene emigrants and expatriates and even for Slovenes without citizenship. The fact that the Gottscheers do not meet the criteria for acquiring citizenship through naturalisation would, therefore, be unlikely to be changed by the constitutional recognition of the German minority in Slovenia.

The ethnic and linguistic understanding of Sloveneness is also contained in the provisions of the Act Regulating Relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenes Abroad (2006) and the criteria it establishes for defining who is a Slovene or who may apply for the status of a Slovene without Slovene citizenship. Article 58 of the Act states that “The Republic of Slovenia is the home state of all Slovenes, therefore it also recognises a special status for Slovenes without Slovene citizenship on its territory” (Act Regulating Relations ... 2006, Art. 58), which may be acquired by an individual “who is of **Slovene descent** [bolded by the author] [...]” (Act Regulating Relations ... 2006, Art. 59). The law thus explicitly defines Slovene origin as a fundamental characteristic that constitutes a Slovene. In addition, Sloveneness is not determined by the territory of the Republic of Slovenia, as stated in Article 61:

It is not a condition that the ancestors of the person who wishes to obtain the status come from the territory that the Republic of Slovenia comprises today. The ancestors of a person who wishes to obtain the status may also come from abroad, exile and emigration (Act Regulating Relations ... 2006, Art. 61).

Thus, according to the above-mentioned articles of the Act, Sloveneness is primarily or exclusively based on common descent or origin but is proven “by extracts from the birth register and other relevant evidence” (Act Regulating Relations ... 2006, Art. 60). The exclusion of all those who cannot prove kinship relations with Slovenes from the concept of being Slovene is joined by exclusion on the basis of language, as Article 68 states that “the rights under this Act may be exercised **exclusively in the Slovene language** [bolded by the author]” (Act Regulating Relations ... 2006, Art. 68). Furthermore, the Act establishes the same conditions for obtaining the status of a repatriated person. As with Slovenes living in the Republic of Slovenia, Slovenes living abroad are expected to make the Slovene language their “predominant value” or the “most obvious and fundamental identity definition” that determines their affiliation to Sloveneness, although this excludes all those descendants of Slovene emigrants (Drnovšek 2008, 328) and those persons who do not understand the Slovene language but who, e.g., feel a symbolic affiliation (cf. Gans 1979) to Sloveneness or those with multiple or ambivalent ethnic identifications. More on this in the second part of the article.

3.2 Emigrant Organisations’ Views on Slovene Emigration

The ethnic and linguistic conception of the Slovene nation is also present in the main organisations in Slovenia that maintain contacts and connections with Slovene emigrants (*Slovenska izseljenska matica* (Slovene Emigrant Association), *Slovenski svetovni kongres* (Slovene World Congress), *Rafaelova družba* (Rafael

Society), *Izseljensko društvo Slovenija v svetu* (Emigrant Society Slovenia in the World)). They would be expected to better understand the specifics of the migrant experience, i.e., multi-layered migrant identities or the prevalence of multiple identifications, but their websites are, as Milharčič Hladnik notes (Milharčič Hladnik 2008, 68), exclusively in Slovene. Similarly, the *Slovinci.si* web portal, managed by the Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Slovenians Abroad, offers content only in Slovene since its inception in 2008 (the English version was under construction at the end of November 2021).

Slovene emigrant organisations follow the formal, legal understanding of Slovene emigration, therefore the ethnic presumption of Slovene emigration can be found in their statutes, particularly in the description of their purpose and the terms and conditions for membership, e.g.:

The basic purpose of the Slovenian World Congress is to achieve that people of **Slovenian descent and origin** [bolded by the author] feel like a special, unique community all over the world (Slovenian World Congress).

A member of the Emigrant Society Slovenia in the World

may become a citizen of the Republic of Slovenia who has returned from emigration or descendants of Slovenian emigrants living in the Republic of Slovenia. Other persons of **Slovenian descent** [bolded by the author] may also be members of the society; the condition for all is that they express their desire to join and meet the requirements of the programme of the association (Emigrant Society Slovenia in the World 1996).

4. Whose Diaspora are the Slovene Germans?

The question of whose diaspora the Gottscheers – or more generally Slovene Germans – are, however, is more complex than it seems at first glance and also more intricate than understood – according to the situation described above – in the light of Slovene legislation. Given the appellation Germans one could conclude that it is a German diaspora, but we have no sources that clearly attest to the origin of the so-called Germans who settled centuries ago on the territory of the present Republic of Slovenia. An essential element of diaspora identity is the memory of the “lost homeland” (Južnič 1987, 230). In the case of the Gottscheer communities, the memory of their original (i.e., medieval) homeland in Austria or Germany (e.g., in narrative, folk song tradition) has not been preserved. However, there are several theories about their origin. The findings of (Austrian) linguists, based on the analysis of the Gottscheer dialect, are the most widely accepted. According to them, most of the immigrants are said to have been settled in the Kočevska area in the 1330s by the Counts of

Ortenburg from their northern estates in Carinthia and Tyrol – the Puster and Lesach Valleys (Petschauer 1984, 87). On the other hand, according to the writing of the Bishop of Ljubljana, Tomaž Hren (consecrated in 1599), 300 rebellious families from Franconia and Thuringia were also sent to the Kočevska region after the end of the first phase of colonisation (Grothe 1931, 33). Some of the immigrants are even said to have come from other Slovene-speaking areas – Stari Trg, Lož, Cerknica and Idrija (Petschauer 1984, 87–88), however a small number of Carinthian Slovenes were probably also among them (Simonič 1971, 9).

Can this motley mediaeval immigrant group be rightly considered a German diaspora simply because of its linguistic similarity to the Germans and despite the fact that the memory of the German homeland has not been preserved in their consciousness? Is this still appropriate today, when we know that national identities are a product of modernity (Anderson 2007; Hobsbawm 2007; Gellner 2004 etc.) and when there are several studies on the initial phase of nationalisms (cf. Hroch 1996) in the mixed linguistic regions of the former Austria-Hungary? Historian Pieter Judson (2005), who studies interethnic relations in Lower Styria, points out that the understanding of the German diasporas must take into account the fact that national affiliations, as we understand them today, only took hold with the rise of nationalism and nation-states, therefore the concept of diaspora must also be understood in relation to the nation-state and must be understood with an awareness of its origins in the 20th century. Given the above-mentioned ambiguities regarding the origins of the Gottscheers, we can agree with Judson.

This thesis is supported by sources from the turn of the 19th to the 20th century, from which one may conclude that national affiliations were not yet present in the Kočevska region in the middle of the 19th century and that, as in other multilingual regions of the former Austria-Hungary, ethnic differentiation began on the initiative of (immigrant) Austrian and German intellectuals, especially linguists and ethnographers inspired by the German idea (Moric 2020; 2021). Within the ideology of the German language islands, they ascribed German origin to Gottscheers on the basis of their linguistic similarity with the Germans (cf. e.g., Schröer 1870; Hauffen 1895 etc.) and also called them “Gottschee Germans” – for example, Schröer in 1869 and Czoernig in 1878 – with which it can by no means be asserted that the population of that time also identified itself with Germanness. The term German language island emphasised the Germanness of the Kočevska region without taking into account the actual multilingualism and the mutual exchange of cultural peculiarities, such as folk songs and the narrative tradition (cf. Kumer 1987; Stanonik 2004 etc.), which were present there and which, after all, are also reflected in the Gottscheer dialect – medieval German with admixtures of Slovene (cf. Schröer 1869; Hauffen 1895; Tschinkel 2004 etc.).

The author of the first systematic folkloristic and ethnological study of the Gottscheer language island in 1895, Adolf Hauffen (1863–1930), described the situation of national identification in the Kočevska region in the second half of the 19th century as follows: “Local patriotism was quite foreign to the Gottscheers a few decades ago; the rural population was previously almost unaware of its belonging to the German people” (Hauffen 1895, 165–166). Similarly, before Hauffen, the headmaster of the Kočevje Grammar School, Benedikt Knapp (1824–1904), born in Schwarz, Tyrol, Austria, remarked that the Gottscheers had “many good qualities, but enthusiastic loyalty to the tribe as we know it in Tyrol, is only weakly present among them” (Braune 1922, 34). Based on this observation, Knapp even called for a selection of a song, which should awaken the patriotic, i.e., German feeling in Gottscheers (Braune 1922, 34). Following the example of the German nationalist song *Die Wacht am Rhein*, the first Gottscheer anthem *Die Wacht am Kolpa* was created, which emphasised the German origin of the Gottscheers (Moric 2020, 147). It was written by another Austrian intellectual, Josef Obergföll, a teacher at the Kočevje Grammar School, who was born in Lienz, Austria and immigrated to the Kočevska region in 1875.⁷ Judson (2005, 219–229) notes that prior to 1914 – partly due to the major role of regional loyalties in slowing down the building of a common German national movement and a sense of self-identification – affiliation with Willhelm’s Germany was weak. The turnaround in the identification of these communities occurred only after the humiliation of the Treaty of Paris and the Treaty of Trianon. Their problematic position (or second-class citizen status) in the new nation-states that emerged after the First World War, rather than their traditional mode of self-identification, led them to turn to Germany or Germanness (which had not previously played a significant role in their lives) and to see and observe themselves as “lost German diasporas” (Judson 2005, 219–229). Nationalist ideas, including the notion of German language islands that spread throughout Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, were not open to diversity as found in the Kočevska region (cf. Moric 2020) as well as in other mixed regions of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (cf. Judson 2006; Zahra 2008), as they did not rely on commonalities but on differences and borders (cf. Barth 1998) to delimit ethnic groups. Since the ideology of German language islands, as pointed out by Weber-Kellermann, still lived on in scholarly research in the 1950s (Weber-Kellermann 1959) and is still present today, it should be critically reconsidered.

5. Gottschee Germans as a Part of Slovene Emigration

The next section is intended to present some of the results of the Maintenance of the Gottscheer Identity research project, focusing on the territorial and voluntaristic aspects of the Gottscheer identity, on which the civic conception of

the nation is based in an ideal type model. I have already described the relations of the Gottscheers to their Gottscheer homeland elsewhere (Moric 2014; 2018a), therefore in section 5.1 of the article I summarise the basic findings and pay more attention to their national identification.

5.1 Links to Their Homeland Gottschee – Territorial Aspect

A fundamental feature of the diaspora is the preservation of the memory of the old homeland and all contact to it. The central place in the Gottscheer emigrant communities belongs to the old homeland Gottschee, which essentially determines the identity of the Gottscheer people. Furthermore, the denomination Gottscheers suggests this, since it primarily means the inhabitants of the Kočevska region, but it only acquired its national note with the appearance of nationalisms in the 19th century and the prefix Gottschee Germans (cf. above, more in Moric 2020). The present-day Gottscheer people in the diaspora most often define themselves as Gottscheers (cf. Thomason 2010, 27), i.e., locally as (former) inhabitants of the Kočevska region. Their identity therefore does not refer to the border-defined territory of the Republic of Slovenia, but to the local entity, the (region) – Kočevska, or as Gitte said, who spent the first years of her childhood in Kočevje and has lived in Graz since 1945: “I still feel as a Gottscheer, although I later found another homeland in Brežice [in the resettlement area in 1941–45, author’s comment] and a third homeland in Graz. But in my heart of hearts I am and I will remain a Gottscheer” (Gitte Dornig, interviewee in Moric 2018b).

The memory of the Kočevska region is preserved in the intimacy of the home, where it is passed on to younger generations through storytelling and the preservation of various traditions, and emigrant societies play an increasing role in passing on information to younger Gottscheers. The Gottscheer emigrants recreated their lost *Ländchen* in new homelands. There, they established ties with a specific locale with which they identify and through which they remain (symbolically) connected to the places they left. In the case of the Gottscheers in the USA and Canada, these are cultural houses with adjacent land, in the case of Austrian Gottscheers (also) churches or chapels, where the social and cultural life of Gottscheer communities in the diaspora or various ritual practices take place, all of which are more important for strengthening the sense of belonging to a community than settlement density (Moric 2014, 84). Every functioning Gottscheer Society owns or rents premises (club buildings, plots of land, churches, chapels) where members meet. Even if the architecture adapts to the norms and legislation of the environment in which it was created, all premises are reminiscent of Kočevska, at least in certain elements. When possible, clubs were built in a grove or another location that visually resembled the Kočevska landscape (e.g., the Toronto and Cleveland clubs). Chapels or churches that

some communities built on their land (e.g., in Graz, Cleveland, Walden) or rented (in Klagenfurt) are also reminiscent of the Kočevska region, as they once stood in almost every Gottscheer village. The symbolic importance of these places for the community is reflected in their (official and unofficial) names (e.g. *Gottscheer Straße* in Klagenfurt and Graz, *Gottscheer Avenue* in New York, *Gottscheer Park* in Cleveland, etc.) and in the symbols that can be found in clubs (paintings and photographs of the Kočevska area, the Kočevje coat of arms and flag, memorabilia, etc.) (Moric 2014, 94). Some clubs and churches keep objects brought from the old homeland. These are mainly church equipment from the Kočevska region: statues, banners, bells, etc.

The connections between the Gottscheer diaspora and the Kočevska region are reflected not only in the clubs and their symbolism, but also in maintaining contact with compatriots in the Kočevska region and in the rituals of pilgrimage to the old homeland. Emigrants have been financially supporting their relatives in Kočevska since the time of the first migrations in the 19th century; after World War I, e.g., American Gottscheers contributed most of the funds for the purchase of new bells in the Kočevska region, and in the 1950s they sent relatives flour, clothes, and other goods (Hans Jaklitsch, interviewee cited in Moric 2018b). Before World War II, return migrations were present in terms of both permanent returns and visits (Muschler 2003, 13).

The Gottscheers began to visit Kočevska again en masse only after the independence of Slovenia.⁸ The evaluation of questionnaires (Moric 2014; 2016) revealed that 86 % of the 145 respondents living in Austria, Germany, the USA or Canada had visited the Kočevska area at least once in their lives. Among them, mainly because of geographical proximity, the majority of those living in Austria, followed by those from the USA. The fact that the generations born after resettlement visit Slovenia or the Kočevska region only slightly less often (80.1 %) than those born before resettlement (90.3 %), indicates the prevalence of what is known as roots tourism (Moric 2014). Visits as part of excursions organised by Gottscheer societies from Austria (every year from Klagenfurt and Graz) and the GHGA from the USA (every three years) are also becoming increasingly popular. The offer focuses on visits to villages and old cemeteries in the Kočevska region, but in the past decade, visits to the resettlement area around Brežice and Krško, as well as to other Slovene tourist attractions and cities (e.g., Bled, Ljubljana, Maribor) have been added.

5.2 Conundrums of National Identification: Gottscheers, Austrians, Germans, Slovenes, Americans?

In the questionnaire, the question on nationality was open-ended, meaning that respondents had to write down the answer without provided options from which to choose. Most respondents (26.4 %) indicated Austrian nationality,

22 % German, 10 % Gottscheer, 8.8 % American, 8.2 % Slovene and 5 % Canadian. 19.6 % of respondents stated mixed identifications, and 4.2 % of the respondents did not answer the question about nationality (Moric 2016, 194). Although Gottscheers in the interviews invariably identify themselves first as Gottscheer (i.e., with a local identification), it is not surprising that the questionnaire shows a somewhat different picture. Namely, it turned out that the respondents most often identified with the nationality of the dominant nation in their country of residence: most Gottscheers from Slovenia identified with the Slovene nationality, from Austria with the Austrian nationality, from Germany with the German nationality, and from Canada with the Canadian nationality (see Table 1). The fact that national identification mostly coincides with the country of residence points to the (universal) dominance of the concept of the nation-state in the understanding of nationality.

Table 1: Ethnic identification by country of residence, N = 166

NATIONALITY	COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE				
	Slovenia	Austria	Germany	USA	Canada
Slovene	63.2 %	1.8 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
Austrian	0 %	62.5 %	18.8 %	6.5 %	0 %
German	5.3 %	26.8 %	43.8 %	12.9 %	30.8 %
American	0 %	0 %	0 %	22.6 %	0 %
Canadian	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	61.5 %
Gottscheer	15.8 %	1.8 %	25.0 %	12.9 %	0 %
mixed	15.8 %	3.6 %	0 %	40.3 %	7.7 %
did not specify	0 %	3.6 %	12.5 %	4.8 %	0 %

Source: Moric (2016, 195).

The percentage of those who indicated their nationality as Gottscheer in the survey is much smaller than the share of those who identified themselves as Gottscheers in the interviews. The vast majority of my interviewees, like Martha from New York, identified themselves as members of a particular community of Gottscheers:

Most Gottscheers I know – and including myself – have a very strong sense of self as Gottscheers, as a unique group that stands apart from Austria or Slovenia. That was always so and still is. If you saw us march in the German American Steuben Parade you would think we represent a country all of our own – not Germany, not Austria, but ourselves (Martha, USA, first generation, cited in Moric 2016, 189).

Similarly, the Gottscheers are considered as a special community by some Gottscheers in Slovenia.

“A Gottscheer is a Gottscheer,” says Florjančič, “The Gottscheers never considered themselves Germans, because the national identification was not relevant to them.” As Gottschee Germans mostly identified those Gottscheers in the 1930s and 1940s who sympathised with Nazism (Šabec et al. 2012).

Hans Jaklitsch, former president and one of the founders of the Society of Native Gottschee Settlers (*Društvo Kočevarjev – staroselcev*) from Občice, Slovenia, disagrees with the term Gottschee German:

[...] historians, like everyone else, have accepted this enforced title, which is not appropriate in terms of content. Since the ancestors of the Gottscheers came from Tyrol and Upper Carinthia and were for centuries, until the end of World War I, predominantly under Austrian rule, they have nothing in common with Germany except Old German language, therefore they can only be Gottscheers or Austrians, not Germans (Jaklitsch 2013, 29).

Regardless of the heterogeneity of the understanding of Gottscheerness, the definition of Gottscheer remains a fundamental identification to which others can be adjoined. A high percentage of those who identify with Austrian and German nationalities can be explained by the aforementioned fact that respondents associate nationality with the nation-state; it can also be attributed to the importance of the linguistic component or similarities of the Gottscheer dialect with Germans or Austrians. From the interviews, one can conclude that the Gottscheers often equate Gottscheer identity with Austrian and German identity, or as Thomason (2010, 27) has correctly noted, these two identifications are understood as a broader category of Gottscheer heritage and are often used interchangeably, usually in the sense of a synonym. (Older) Gottscheers feel a sense of belonging to Austria-Hungary and as its successor also to Austria, while the attitude towards the state of Slovenia is more complicated owing to the unpleasant past:

But we do know that we never had our independent state, that this land was always part of Krain in Austria, today Slovenia. My longtime ancestors lived in Austria, my parents lived in both, Austria and a short time in Slovenia, I lived a very short time in Slovenia – so my identity is tied to Austria, because it represents the longtime heritage of my people, and also, it must be stated, the association with Slovenia has been an unfortunate one, at least so for most of the final, tragic part. So, my homeland feelings go with, first, Gottschee, and second, Austria (Martha, USA, first generation, cited in Moric 2016, 189).

The reason for this identification with Austria and Germany could be found in the fact that the Gottscheers were part of several countries: i.e., the Habsburg Monarchy until 1867, Austria-Hungary until 1918, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia

until 1941, and from 1941 Germany (the Third Reich). Due to the unfortunate ties with Yugoslavia, which they remember above all as a violator of their minority rights, they do not identify with this political entity or, consequently, with its successor Slovenia, but rather turn to Austria and Germany when they need a broader national framework.

Emigrants adapt to a new environment and life in different ways: 1) they are said to acculturate when there is a complete identification with the new culture and a distancing from the old one; 2) they may resist the change of identity and remain faithful to their previous (ethnic) identity; 3) for the most part, however, they develop a kind of intermediate style of adaptation and become bicultural (Suarez-Orozco 2001, cited in Bratun 2005, 93–94). Weiner and Richards (2008, 102) note that most migrants in the United States want to be recognised and treated as American citizens while retaining elements of their native culture, and a person's ethnicity and citizenship may differ (Kallen 1924, 62). This duality is expressed through double or hyphenated (Milharčič Hladnik 2015) affiliations – e.g., Italian-American, Polish-American, etc. Immigrants adopted a dual identity that included “American” self-identification while retaining “real or imagined (ancestral) customs, values, and traditions” (Weiner & Richards 2008, 104–107). Gottscheers are no exception:

I would describe myself as an American Gottscheer because I am a native-born American citizen with a strong Gottscheer background; I was raised with the language, culture, traditions, and strong work ethic that have shaped the person I am today. I am proud of my Gottscheer heritage, to which I attribute my strong family bond, honesty, integrity, and lack of fear of hard work (Ingrid, second generation, USA, cited in Moric 2016, 198).

These identifications are also influenced by the environments in which the Gottscheers live today. Among the Gottscheer in the USA, where multiculturalism is common, the younger generations also retained at least partial identification as Gottscheers, while among Gottscheers in Austria and Germany, who live in culturally (linguistically) related environments (and where the understanding of the nation, as in Slovenia, is based on language and origin), the younger generations have largely assimilated. Of the nearly 19 % of all respondents who identify with two or more nationalities, most are American and Canadian Gottscheers (34.7 %, see Table 1), including Helene:

I define myself as a Gottscheer, an Austrian, an American, because we became refugees after the war, people without a state. This is how I define myself, because I am proud to be a Gottscheer, my parents were born in Austria, and we accepted USA as our new homeland (Helene, first generation, USA, cited in Moric 2016, 198).

Table 2: Presentation of hybrid identifications by country, N = 166

	Slovenia	Austria and Germany	USA and Canada	Total
identifying with one nationality	84.2 %	91.7 %	61.3 %	77.1 %
identifying with two or multiple nationalities	15.8 %	2.8 %	34.7 %	18.7 %
did not specify	0 %	5.6 %	4.0 %	4.2 %

Source: Moric (2016, 199).

The fact that the locale Gottschee was once not to be found on the map and the designation Gottscheer did not correspond to any of the known ethnic groups or nationalities, caused problems, especially for the younger generations:

I identified stronger with my Austrian heritage than I did with my Gottscheer heritage because, as a child, it was all so confusing. No matter what, I was a Gottscheer but didn't understand really what that meant because I couldn't find it on a modern map. There was no real (ethnically) fitting in anywhere except for when I was at the club surrounded by other Gottscheers and their families (Cheri, second generation, Canada, cited in Moric 2016, 192).

[...] when I explain to non-Gottscheers what I am, they usually say, oh, so you're German, or Austrian. Yes, I am ... but it's more complex than that and any Gottscheer will understand that perfectly. I'm not German like a Berliner, or Austrian like a Wiener, or Slovene like a Ljublianer. Gottschee was really a Germanic enclave, but with a fairly strong Slovene influence of the surrounding area. It really had its own unique identity (Barbara, second generation, USA, cited in Moric 2016, 193).

The identification also depends on the situation. They identify themselves as Gottscheers in conversation with those who know Gottscheer history. In other situations, they characterise themselves more broadly – as Austrians, Germans or Americans, as evident in Thom's thinking:

When it comes to me identifying my heritage to others I respond differently depending on who is asking. If it's just another American I answer, "On my father's side I am Austrian." What American would have a clue what a Gottscheer is? Even while discussing it with Europeans, I just say Austrian. It's nothing more than they have no idea who Gottscheers are so starting off the conversation with being a Gottscheer makes it confusing. But if the conversation continues or the person is from Austria, Germany or Slovenia I'll initially identify myself as half Gottscheer. The younger people have no idea what Gottscheers are, but older Austrians, etc., remember them [...] (Thom, third generation, USA, cited in Moric 2016, 196).

5.2.1 Identifying with Slovenia?

144

In the questionnaire, only Gottscheers living in Slovenia identified themselves as Slovenes. Which is partly because of understanding nationality in relation to the nation-state (and linguistic similarity), and partly because of a negative historical experience:

I and my relatives and all Gottscheers I spoke to on this subject (it continues to come up in our conversations, time and again), we are not sure who we are. When an American asks me – because of my accent – “Where are you from?” I know he means my language, so I have no problem just saying, “from Austria”. But if they ask “**What** are you?” then we all appear to have a problem that requires explaining. I am Gottscheer, yes. German, yes. Austrian, yes. American, yes. Slovene?? The last time I checked Slovenia did not want me, so I have no reason to say I am Slovenian (Martha, first generation, USA, cited in Moric 2016, 199).

Martha’s answer indicates the influence of positive or negative experiences on self-identification. When Martha visited the Kočevska region in the 1980s, she was denied access to the then closed-off military area of the Kočevska Reka by an armed soldier. The experience of rejection is deeply etched in her memory, and that is why she has never returned to the Kočevska region, although she has strong patriotic feelings towards it. However, the questions that are increasingly arising today in connection with the acquisition of Slovene citizenship, which I did not encounter a decade ago, show that the situation is changing. In the week before I submitted this article, I was contacted by three Gottscheers from the USA who expressed interest in acquiring (dual) citizenship. John wrote:

My interest in dual citizenship is largely due to my affinity for the cultural traditions that have been instilled in me from my birth onwards. Experiencing many traditions and having my parents, grandparents and even great-grandparents raise me and tell me about family history! [...] I would like to get dual citizenship so that I can visit regularly and delve deeper into Slovenian culture (John, personal interview, April 2021).⁹

A return (permanent or occasional) to the Kočevska region or to Slovenia is becoming a real possibility for the younger generations of Gottscheers, on whom the negative experience of World War II and resettlement no longer has as strong an impact as on the first generation of emigrants. The mythology of the victim, which prevailed in the Gottscheer narrative after World War II (cf. Marschnig 2009; Moric 2016; Samida 2020), is gradually waning among the younger generations. With the growth of contacts, the establishment of friendly ties with the locals, better travel options, and greater availability of information, the identification of younger generations of emigrated Gottscheers with Slovenia is also increasing, or as James from New York said:

Living in Europe for two years put a new twist on the definition. To a German, I was Austrian. To an Austrian, I was Yugoslavian. The facts are that my parents were indeed born in Yugoslavia, so I must be Yugoslavian. Most of my life I have drifted to the German answer since I speak the language, eat Bratwurst and drink beer. The language connection is a powerful one. [...] The more I learn about Gottschee, the more I visit, the more I feel that I am deep down a Gottscheer and a Slovene – which is, in fact, actually what I am (James, second generation, USA, cited in Moric 2016, 193).

6. Concluding Remarks

Slovene legislation does not take into account the reality of variability, as well as the existence of multi-layered identifications among emigrants from the territory of the Republic of Slovenia, which, in addition to complexity, can also be fluid and (over time) changing. The formal-legal exclusion of those who do not correspond to the ethno-linguistic understanding of the Slovene nation reflects the unrealistic conception of a Slovene as someone who has (only) Slovene roots and speaks the Slovene language. This excludes both the emigrated Slovene Germans, Slovene Hungarians, Slovene Jews, and those Slovene emigrants who in fact in one way or another belong to Sloveneness – they consider themselves, for example, to be Slovene Americans, American Slovenes and the like – from the framework of Slovene emigration.

The multifaceted identifications of Gottscheers in the diaspora largely reflect the multiculturalism that existed in their Kočevska homeland before World War II, but which was forgotten with the establishment of the concept of a (single) nation-state and in light of the emancipatory aspirations of the Slovene nation in their own independent country. This was compounded by the negative collective memory of both communities, Slovene and German, which are still healing their war wounds today (Moric 2016). National (and ethnic) identities, as Malešević wrote (2011, 281), depend on the different historical, social and political circumstances in which they are formed. Thus, even some Gottscheers who harbour patriotic feelings for the Kočevska region but have had bad experiences with Yugoslavia do not perceive Slovenia as their homeland. Nevertheless, indirectly through ties with the Kočevska region, they also maintain ties with Slovenia. They express themselves through visiting the Kočevska region, attending events (occasionally and in some places), singing Slovene songs and listening to Slovene music, and joining Slovene associations in areas where there were no Gottscheer or German associations (e.g., California).

Although most Gottscheers in diaspora do not identify with the state of Slovenia, this has changed among the younger generations in recent years, and it is reflected in the increasingly frequent desire to obtain Slovene citizenship. This is probably because of the availability of information in the age of the internet, the increase of positive experiences during visits to Slovenia and, last but not

least, the change of the political system after Slovenia's independence, accession to the European Union, and its international reputation as a green and attractive travel destination.

As for the answer to the question presented in the title of the article – i.e., are the Gottschee Germans in diaspora a part of Slovene emigration? – there is no answer that will satisfy all. What is certain, however, is that the term diaspora relies on historically changing ideological assumptions (Judson 2005, 220) that correlate with relations between communities and the political situation in the country of origin. The author of the article therefore proposes the following solution: given the complexity of the emigrant reality, Gottscheer emigrants who show interest should be able to apply for Slovene citizenship under the same conditions as ethnic Slovenes, and Gottscheer emigrant organisations should be included in the list of emigrant organisations that meet the conditions for acquiring citizenship. It would also make sense to introduce this for other ethnic groups that emigrated from the territory of the Republic of Slovenia.

References

- Act Regulating Relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians Abroad*. Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 43 (2006), 21. 4. 2006, 4605.
- Anderson, B., 2007. *Zamišljene skupnosti: o izvoru in širjenju nacionalizma*. Studia Humanitatis, Ljubljana.
- Bajt, V., 2016. Who "Belongs"? Migration, Nationalism and National Identity in Slovenia. *Treatises and Documents, Journal of Ethnic Studies* 76, 49–66.
- Barth, F., 1998. Introduction. In F. Barth (ed.) *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*. Waveland Press, Long Grove (IL), 9–38.
- Bratun, U., 2005. Pogled na imigracijo z vidika delovne terapije: Slovenci na Švedskem. *Dve domovini / Two Homelands* 21, 91–104.
- Braune, R., 1922. Wie das Gottscheer Heimatlied entstand. In *Gottscheer Kalender* 1922, 34–38.
- Brubaker, R., 1996. *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Citizenship of the Republic of Slovenia Act*. Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 24 (2007), 20. 3. 2007, 2957.
- Cohen, A., 1969. *Custom and Politics in Urban Africa: A Study of Hausa Migrants in Yoruba Towns*. University of California Press, Berkeley.
- Cohen, R., 2008. *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*. Routledge, London, New York.
- Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia*. Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 33 (1991), 28. 12. 1991, 1371.
- Czoernig, K., 1878. *Die Deutsche Sprachinsel Gottschee: mit einer ethnographischen Karte: vortrag, gehalten in der Section Küstenland des Deutschen und Österreichischen Alpenvereins am 23. November 1878*. S. n., München.
- Decree on Criteria for Establishing the Compliance of National Interest for Acquiring the Citizenship of the Republic of Slovenia through Article 13 of Act on the Citizenship of the Republic of Slovenia*. Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 41 (2007), 11. 5. 2007, 5645.

- Drnovšek, M., 2005. Izseljevanje Kočevarjev v Združene države Amerike. *Dve domovini / Two Homelands* 21, 7–34.
- Emigrant Society Slovenia in the World, 1996. *Pravila Izseljenskega društva Slovenija v svetu*, <http://www.drustvo-svs.si/dokumenti/Statut.pdf> (accessed 29 November 2021).
- Falzon, M.-A., 2009. Introduction: Multi-Sited Ethnography: Theory, Praxis and Locality in Contemporary Research. In M.-A. Falzon (ed.) *Multi-Sited Ethnography: Theory, Praxis and Locality in Contemporary Research*. Ashgate, Surrey in Burlington.
- Ferenc, T., 2002. Nemci na Slovenskem med drugo svetovno vojno. In D. Nečak (ed.) *"Nemci" na Slovenskem 1941–1955*. Znanstveni inštitut Filozofske fakultete, Ljubljana, 145–190.
- Ferenc, M., 2005. *Kočevska – pusta in prazna: nemško jezikovno območje na Kočevskem po odse-
litvi Nemcev*. Modrijan, Ljubljana.
- Gans, H. J., 1979. Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 2 (1), 1–20.
- Gellner, E., 2004. *Nations and Nationalism*. Blackwell, Oxford, Malden (MA).
- Grothe, H., 1931. *Die deutsche Sprachinsel Gottschee in Slowenien: Ein Beitrag zur Deutschumskun-
de des europäischen Südostens*. Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, Münster.
- Hauffen, A., 1895. *Die Deutsche Sprachinsel Gottschee. Geschichte und Mundart, Lebensverhält-
nisse, Sitten und Gebräuche, Sagen, Märchen und Lieder*. K. K. Universitäts-Buchdruckerei;
Verlagsbuchhandlung Styria, Graz.
- Hobsbawm, E. J., 2007. *Nacije in nacionalizem po letu 1780: program, mit in resničnost*. Založba
/*cf., Ljubljana.
- Hribar, T., 1989. *Slovenska državnost*. Cankarjeva založba, Ljubljana.
- Hroch, M., 1996. From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation: The Nation-Buil-
ding Process in Europe. In G. Balakrishnan (ed.) *Mapping the Nation*. Verso, New York,
London, 78–97.
- Jaklitsch, H., 2013. Kulturna dediščina Kočevarjev in njena ohranitev. *Bakh / Pot* 23, 28–32.
- Jezernik, B., 2013. Veliki možje in razvoj slovenskega narodnega vprašanja. In B. Jezernik (ed.)
Heroji in slavne osebnosti na Slovenskem. Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete, Ljublja-
na, 7–26.
- Judson, P. M., 2006. *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial
Austria*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge (MA).
- Judson, P. M., 2005. When Is a Diaspora Not a Diaspora? Rethinking Nation-Centered Narra-
tives about Germans in Habsburg East Central Europe. In K. O'Donnell, R. Bridenthal
& N. Reagin *The Heimat Abroad: The Boundaries of Germanness*. University of Michigan
Press, East Lansing, 219–247.
- Južnič, S., 1987. *Antropologija*. Državna založba Slovenije, Ljubljana.
- Kallen, H. M., 1924. *Culture and Democracy in the United States*. Boni and Liveright, New York.
- Kohn, H., 2008. *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in Its Origins and Background*. Transaction
Publishers, New Brunswick, London.
- Komac, M., 2016. Priseljenci: večni tujek ali konstitutivni del slovenske države. In D. Gra-
fenaier & K. Munda Hirnšek (ed.) *Raznolikost v raziskovanju etničnosti: izbrani pogledi*.
Inštitut za narodnostna vprašanja, Ljubljana, 74–98.
- Kosi, J., 2013. *Kako je nastal slovenski narod: začetki slovenskega nacionalnega gibanja v prvi polo-
vici 19. stoletja*. Sophia, Ljubljana.
- Kumer, Z., 1987. Lepá vodá Ljubljánčicá. *Traditiones* 16, 247–254.
- Malešević, S., 2011. The Chimera of National Identity. *Nations and Nationalism* 17 (2), 272–
290.

- Marcus, G. E., 1995. Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-sited Ethnography. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24, 95–117.
- Marschnig, G., 2009. *Gottschee Global: Geschichtsnarrative und Identitätsmanagement im Cyberspace*. Dissertation. Universität Wien, Historisch-Kulturwissenschaftliche Fakultät, Wien.
- Mikola, M., 2012. *Rdeče nasilje: represija v Sloveniji po letu 1945*. Celjska Mohorjeva družba, Celje.
- Milharčič Hladnik, M., 2008. Internet in preobrazbe ohranjanja kulturne dediščine v slovenskoameriških etničnih skupnostih. *Dve domovini / Two Homelands* 28, 57–72.
- Milharčič Hladnik, M., 2015. Kultura mešanosti v nacionalnem in migracijskem kontekstu. *Annales. Series Historia et Sociologia* 25 (1), 171–182.
- Moric, A., 2007. *Usoda Kočevskih Nemcev: ohranjanje identitete Kočevskih Nemcev*. Diplomsko delo. Univerza v Ljubljani, Fakulteta za družbene vede, Ljubljana.
- Moric, A., 2014. Domovina globoko v srcu: Kočevski Nemci v diaspori. *Etnolog* 24, 81–104.
- Moric, A., 2016. *Slovenski Nemci v diaspori*. Doktorska disertacija. Univerza v Ljubljani, Fakulteta za družbene vede, Ljubljana.
- Moric, A., 2018a. Territorial Identifications of the Gottschee Germans: Diaspora – Homeland Relation. *Motus in verbo* 7 (1), 7–21.
- Moric, A., 2018b. *Globoko v srcu jo čutimo / Deep in our hearts we feel it / Tief im Herzen fühlen wir sie* [DVD-video]. Zavod Putscherle, Stara Cerkev.
- Moric, A., 2020. Gottscheer Folk Song: From a Means of Fostering National Differentiation to a Memory Keeper in the Diaspora. *Traditiones* 49 (2), 141–166.
- Moric, A., 2021. A German “Linguistic Island” or a Linguistically Mixed Region? Multilingual Practices in the Kočevska (Gottschee) Area. *Traditiones* 50 (1). [Forthcoming].
- Muschler, F., 2003. Gottscheer Clubhouse in Ridgewood. *The Gottschee Tree* 17 (2), 15.
- Petschauer, E., 1984. *“Das Jahrhundertbuch”: Gottschee and Its People through the Centuries*. Gottscheer Relief Association, New York.
- Samida, S., 2020. “Nationalität: Gottscheer”: Zur Herstellung von Selbstbildern einer deutschsprachigen Minderheit in Slowenien. In M. Spiritova, K. Gehl & K. Roth (ed.) *Eigenbilder – Fremdbilder – Identitäten Wahrnehmungen im östlichen Europa im Wandel*, 35–52. Transcript Verlag, Bielefeld.
- Sand, S., 2010. *Kako so izumili judovsko ljudstvo*. Založba /*cf., Ljubljana.
- Schröer, K. J., 1869. *Ein Ausflug nach Gottschee. Beitrag der Erforschung der Gottscheer Mundart*. K. K. Hof. und Staatsdruckerei Wien.
- Schröer, K. J., 1870. *Wörterbuch der Mundart von Gottschee von Karl Julius Schröer. I. Ausflug nach Gottschee. II. Weitere Mittheilungen über die Mundart von Gottschee*. K. K. Hof. und Staatsdruckerei, Wien.
- Shulman, S., 2002. Challenging the Civic/Ethnic and West/East Dichotomies in the Study of Nationalism. *Comparative Political Studies* 35 (5), 554–585.
- Simonič, I., 1971. Zgodovina mesta Kočevja in Kočevske. In H. Kotar, M. Andeselič & M. Briški (ur.) *500 let mesta Kočevje*. Skupščina občine Kočevje, Kočevje, 5–51.
- Slovenian World Congress. O kongresu, <https://www.slokongres.com/o-kongresu> (accessed 29 November 2021).
- Smith, A. D., 1991. *National Identity*. University of Nevada Press, Reno (NV).
- Stanonik, M., 2004. Kočevarska slovstvena folklor: primerjava in slovenske vzporednice. In W. Tschinkel (aut.), A. P. Florjančič & M. Stanonik (ur.) *Kočevarska folklor v šegah, navadah, pravljicah, povedkah, legendah in drugih folklornih izročilih / Gottscheer Volkstum in Sitte*,

- Brauch, Märchen, Sagen, Legenden und anderen volkstümlichen Überlieferungen*. Založba ZRC, Ljubljana, 229–280.
- Šabec, K., Komel, M., Debeljak, A. & Velikonja, M., 2012. *Etnična vitalnost območij, kjer živijo majhne avtohtone manjšinske etnične skupnosti in staroselci*. Fakulteta za družbene vede Univerze v Ljubljani, Center za proučevanje kulture in religije, Ljubljana.
- Thomason, B., 2010. *Memories of Gottsche: A Narrated History of Fidelity and Fragility*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.
- Tschinkel, W., 2004. *Kočevarska folklor v šegah, navadah, pravljicah, povedkah, legendah in drugih folklornih izročilih / Gottscheer Volkstum in Sitte, Brauch, Märchen, Sagen, Legenden und anderen volkstümlichen Überlieferungen*. Založba ZRC, Ljubljana.
- Weber-Kellermann, I., 1959. Zur Frage der interethnischen Beziehungen in der "Sprachinsel-volkskunde". Österreichische Zeitschrift für Volkskunde 62, N. S. 13, 19–47.
- Weiner, M. F. & Richards, B. N., 2008. Bridging the Theoretical Gap: The Diasporized Hybrid in Sociological Theory. In K. E. Iyall Smith & P. Leavy *Hybrid Identities: Theoretical and Empirical Examinations*. Brill, Leiden, Boston, 101–116.
- Zahra, T., 2008. *Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900–1948*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca (NY).
- Žagar, M., 2006. Etnični odnosi, nacionalizem, manjšine in človekove pravice v jugovzhodni Evropi in v evropskih okvirih. *Treatises and Document, Journal of Ethnic Studies* 50/51, 286–297.

Notes

- ¹ According to Hitler's plan, all Germans or Volksdeutsche were to be reunited in the German Reich.
- ² On the expulsion of Germans from the Slovene territory after World War II cf. Mikola (2012).
- ³ Veronika Bajt (2016) made a similar argument when she proposed a new approach to migration and integration of immigrants in Slovenia.
- ⁴ The personal letter is in possession of the author of the article.
- ⁵ The personal letter is in possession of the author of the article.
- ⁶ The personal letter is in possession of the author of the article.
- ⁷ More on the use of folk songs to promote national sentiments in the Kočevska region in Moric (2020).
- ⁸ Those who came to visit during the period before Slovenia's independence complain about the unfriendliness of the former regime.
- ⁹ The personal letter is in possession of the author of the article.

Acknowledgement

The article was written under the research programme Slovenian Identities in the European and Global Context (P6-0187) and two research projects: Song reflections of intercultural coexistence (J6-9369) and Thinking Folklore: Approaching Dialect from Folkloristic, Ethnological, and Computational Perspectives (J7-9426), all funded by the Slovenian Research Agency.