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The Kozolec: Material Culture, Identity, and Social Practice in Slovenia

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Science
Degree
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Toby Martin Applegate
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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my father

Brutus David Applegate, Jr.,

and to

the Mihelič family of Ribnica nad Dolenjskem,

who have been constant friends throughout

my life in Slovenia.

Koliko vam dolgujem?

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Abstract

This research investigates the intersections of national identity, representation, and material culture in the Republic of Slovenia. The subject of the thesis, the kozolec, is a free-standing farm implement, usually made of wood, used to dry hay as fodder for animals and, occasionally, corn for human and animal consumption. It is found on the landscape of Slovenia, a small alpine country that was formerly part of Yugoslavia. The kozolec has been romanticized as being indicative of “where” Slovenia is. It has also been cast aside as a symbol marking the Slovene landscape for both representational and practical reasons.

This thesis makes problematic the use of the kozolec as representational of Slovenia and its ethnic landscape. It retheorizes the kozolec, and by extension, all material culture studies using philosophical framework of American pragmatism. It asserts that we should not try to know a place via its material culture, but appreciate a place by acknowledging the use of its material culture in that place.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1.....	1
<i>Introduction</i>	
Chapter 2.....	6
<i>Slovenia in Europe</i>	
Chapter 3.....	19
<i>Slovenia as Cultural Space</i>	
Chapter 4.....	26
<i>National Identity, Vernacular Architecture, and a typology of the kozolec</i>	
Chapter 5.....	48
<i>Case Studies</i>	
Chapter 6.....	82
<i>Discussion</i>	
Works Cited.....	96
Vita.....	102

Chapter 1 -- Introduction

On Tuesdays every week the women of the village would congregate at the creamery. It was difficult to call it a creamery, as it was just a large stainless steel tank that could be easily sanitized. Everyone present had at least one milk pail and some had two or even three. The pails could hold 10 liters of sweet raw milk. And sweet the milk was. The different grasses each cow ate gave over their sugars and mixed with the fats that rose to the top of each pail. Those smells blended with the common smells of a farming community and only became more intense as now and then sweet cream sloshed onto the floor.

As the dairy truck pulled up to the creamery to siphon off this week's village milk haul, I thought of the two clashing worlds. The new sophisticated milk truck that could hold 12000 liters had just backed into a barn that had probably been built in the middle of the last century. Back then all this milk would be consumed immediately or preserved somehow, as cheese most likely. The 10 or so women standing were all past the age of 50 and each had brought her milk from the family cow. Everyone waited as the truck was readied, then the man from the dairy came in.

He held a ledger book. After weighing, each woman poured her pails into the tank. As the pails were emptied, they were weighed again to set the tare value. The dairyman wrote the net weight in his ledger and then handed money in payment for the milk to each woman in turn. Conversations flew in all directions. Then as the last woman came up to the tank a commotion erupted at the door as one last patron came in. She rode up on her bicycle with two large milk pails looped over the handlebars. The weight of the pails alone would have stopped the strongest cyclist, but she appeared to be in her mid 70s and none the worse for carrying the load.

“Čakaj!” *Wait*. Everyone laughed. It was as if this scene had been repeated a thousand times before. I felt alien, yet privileged to be there. The woman, the grandmother of a friend, looked at me and said, “Vsak teden, tocimo skupaj.” *Every week, we pour together*. The world they lived in was fast disappearing; if only this coming together could remain somehow. Her words rang with this sentiment. It was not at all about the milk or the meager amount of money they received -- not at all.

As we walked back to [you need to identify exactly who “her “is here]her house to meet with my friend who was joining us for dinner after work, I pointed to a barn structure and asked her other granddaughter, “What's that?” She replied, “Oh, that's a kozolec. They are everywhere here in Slovenia.” I asked what it did and she laughed and said, “It makes milk.” *It makes what you just saw possible*.

* * *

The subject of this thesis is the kozolec.¹ It is a free-standing implement made primarily of wood, used for drying grasses, and sometimes corn, to be used as fodder for animals. While found in different forms throughout the Alps, the proliferation of the kozolec on the Slovenian landscape has caused it to be seen as being represented in its highest form there. As an item of vernacular architecture, it is interesting just as a set piece sitting in a field or behind a barn. It is evocative of Slovenia's past as a farming society and it is indicative of the vast changes that are taking place in Slovenia during the transition from socialism to more open economies. It could just be a part of a disappearing landscape, or it could be something that persists into the future creating possibilities for a different sort of Slovenian landscape. It is a practical tool that makes

¹ Slovenian possesses a rare grammatical feature, a dual form, where two is indicated by a separate declension of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Thus: “Imava kozolca” means “(We) (two) have (two) kozolecs.” For clarity, only the singular and the plural will be used -- kozolec and kozolci, respectively

possible the production of cultural space by the people who use it.

This thesis is charged with finding ways to make those possibilities for using the kozolec real. It doesn't try to answer this question: Does the kozolec represent Slovenia? Actually, it problematizes the whole project of using representation as a way to understand the world. The goal, here, is to approach the kozolec from a new theoretical perspective wherein the principles behind the kozolec are treated as idealizations, not foundations. I do not intend to test through this thesis whether or not the kozolec can be used as the representation of an abstraction, but rather to examine whether or not it can still be used as a practical tool in a different way. I will remove its status as a symbolic part of the Slovenian landscape and restore it to a status that cares more about the Slovenian identity by treating it not as a representation of Slovenian society, but by interpreting it as a social practice.

The thesis has six chapters including the introduction. In lieu of a traditional literature survey, each chapter will contain smaller surveys in line with the study. It is hoped that this method will avoid the tedium of the literature survey and lend readability to the thesis itself. Throughout the thesis photographs and maps are provided to allow the reader to see the subject at hand and to allow orientation as to where these kozolci are.

Chapter 2 is a look at Slovenia's place in Europe through time and as it stands now. The turmoil of the 1990s in Southeastern Europe has created opportunities for Slovenia as a nation-state but has also created difficulties that the country is trying to overcome. The chapter is an historical, economic and political survey of Slovenia and sets the stage for understanding why a small people in a globalizing world would be concerned about national identity and how to express it.

Slovenia's rise as the most successful post-socialist European nation in terms of

economic and political stability was accomplished with EU accession as the standard by which that success can be measured. This chapter demonstrates how that is the case and links the accession process to a pattern of subjection to rule by entities larger than Slovenia. The EU is a stop along a historical path that has included the Romans, medieval Franks, the Hapsburgs, and other Slavs.

A discussion of Slovenia's cultural space is found in Chapter 3. Three ways of ordering and defining what Slovenia is are offered and criticized. Nationalism is approached as a project for which Slovenia has always been ill suited given its past as a constituent part of larger political entities. As a marker of what Slovenia is, the Slovene language is problematized as well. How can a language that has only taken formal hold in a standardized manner since World War II be given such a status? Can a language that is fractured by dialects and vast gaps of mutual intelligibility make a cultural space? Many Slovenes speak at least one other language and switch between them with ease. What does this say about the Slovenian language creating a cultural space? With multilingualism the norm, is that cultural space Slovenian or is it European? Can one claim a cultural space with language alone? Does language need help? Finally, the *kozolec* is introduced as one possible tool that can be used to produce a meaningful and more interesting cultural space by serving as a practical tool to build trust among Slovenes and as a locus where that activity can occur.

Chapter 4 contains the product of the fieldwork I performed in Slovenia during 2003 and 2004: a typology of the *kozolec*. Interspersed in this typology is acknowledgement of scholarship and research tradition via the literature on vernacular architecture to which this thesis is indebted. Photographs and maps of where examples are to be found are provided.

The case studies of Dobropolje in Southern Slovenia and Tacen in suburban Ljubljana are

presented in Chapter 5. While they are in many ways contrasting pieces, the tie that binds them is the use of the kozolec in everyday life. This use is for different reasons in different places, but the activity is certainly a Slovenian one. The Dobropolje case demonstrates the permeation of a landscape by the kozolec, but also inspires the second case study with the first glimpse into different possibilities for using the kozolec. This glimpse is expanded in the second case study in Tacen where permeation gives way to a more sublime context for the kozolec and how it can be used in places utterly changed by modernity and globalization.

Finally, Chapter 6 presents discussion and conclusions about the kozolec as a practical tool for creating cultural space. I contend that the kozolec isn't a way of representing the world or presenting Sloveneness to the world. It is a way of building trust among Slovenes that they can be in the world. It symbolizes nothing, yet it can work to connect disparate parts of the Slovene identity as part of a larger global community.

Chapter 2 -- Slovenia in Europe

“A Green Piece of Europe” and “Europe in Miniature” are just two of many advertising and marketing slogans used by the tourist industry and the Slovenian government to give Slovenia’s profile a bit of pizzazz on the European and global stages (Fallon 1998). Slovenia actively seeks to strengthen its image as a full partner in working toward the “European Dream” (Rifkin 2004), and in so doing it also seeks to distance itself from being associated too closely with the Balkans (Todorova 1994). But at the same time Slovenia is also positioning itself as a sort of elder sibling willing to help former fellow provinces of Yugoslavia gain membership in the European Union (Government Communication Office 2008).

In many ways, the assertion that Slovenia is “Europe in Miniature” is true. It is a tiny nation state with a stable liberal democracy, is now a full member of the European Union (EU), has integrated its economy into Europe’s via the shared currency of the Euro, and is increasingly instrumental in brokering relations between Western Europe and the other states of the former Yugoslavia. Slovenia stepped into a position of full EU leadership when it took over the six-month presidency in January 2008. Geographically speaking, Slovenia has physical features evocative of Europe in general; all the major landforms found in the rest of the continent are contained within this space roughly the size of New Jersey: mountains, the sea, vast plains and great rivers. The littoral Kras region gives English its only Slovenian loan word, *Karst*, which is now a whole branch of physical geography (Davis 1986; Kentucky Geological Survey 2005).

Still, Slovenia has had growing pains during its period of transition from socialism. While the Slovenian break from Yugoslavia was neither sudden nor a repudiation of strong, central control of the economy (Woodward 1995), Slovenia’s declaration of independence from

the Yugoslav Federation did precipitate the demise of Yugoslavia as much as did the tensions between the Serbs and Croats (Woodward 1995; Meier 1999; Ramet 1996). Once the break was made, the 1990s became a time of slow transition from Yugoslavia's market socialism to the neoliberal economics of Europe accomplished through the filter of the European Union's accession process. The plodding process of the transition has made the country the most stable former communist country to join to the European Union, but it has also hampered its wholesale transformation. Also, a misbegotten effort to preserve some sort of distinctive Slovenian ethnic identity in Europe has exacerbated the social exclusion of minorities and foreigners within Slovenia (Cox 2005).

This latter "growing pain," was played out on the world stage when repressive measures were taken by ethnic Slovenes and the government against Roma in the southern village of Ambrus – actions that received condemnation both from the Slovene cultural ombudsman and the international community and caused the Council of Europe to intercede on the Roma's behalf (Wood 2006). There is also the lingering problem of stateless refugees, known as the *izbrsani* or "Erased," living in Slovenia since the end of the Balkan wars (Zorn 2004).

Other "growing pains," are less embarrassing but nonetheless stultifying. The slow reform of the Slovene banking and lending systems created a perception that the country was not amenable to foreign direct investment (US Department of State 2006). Also, the privatization of large public concerns such as Zito, Slovenia's largest supplier of bread, and other companies moved at a snail's pace even during the EU mandated liberalization of the economy prior to accession. Foreign direct investment, though long a part of Slovenia's economic history in Yugoslavia – the large Renault factory in Novo Mesto is an example – slowed to match the pace of Slovenia's other reforms. Finally, even as Slovenia turned its back on its legacy as part of

Yugoslavia, it assumed a colonizing business stance vis a vis the former Yugoslavia. Mercator, a leading Slovene supermarket chain, and Pivovarna Laško, a Slovene brewery, managed to penetrate and dominate markets all over the region. Thus Slovenia enjoyed considerable cachet as it prepared to assume the EU presidency for six months in January 2008, yet, in reality, the process of transition continues.

With this sketch of recent Slovene history as a backdrop, I will now lay out Slovenia's demographic, economic and political geography. I then conclude with a brief discussion of Slovenia's historical relationship with Europe. All is offered as context to the discussion of the subject of this thesis: national identity and material culture. My intention is to show the ways in which large structural processes in a modern liberal democracy can affect everyday life and how everyday life can embody resistance to those processes.

Demographics

In population, Slovenia is easily one of the smallest European nations. At 2,009,166 people (2007 estimate), it is dwarfed by the largest members of the EU: Germany with 82 million, the United Kingdom and France with 61 million each (CIA 2007). Of that 2 million people, ethnic Slovenes comprise 83.06 percent of the population (Adamic, *et al.* 2004). The recent trend has been a gradual increase in ethnic minorities. In 1960, fully 95 percent of the population of the Yugoslav Republic of Slovenia reported Slovene as their ethnicity or as the language they spoke (Woodward 1995).

Today, the remaining 17 percent of the population is comprised of Hungarians, Italians, Serbians, Croats, Bosnians, Albanians, Roma and others. Hungarians and Italians make up 0.32 percent and 0.11 percent of the population, respectively, and enjoy special constitutional protections of their languages including a seat in parliament representing each ethnic minority.

Serbs (1.98 percent of the population), Croats (1.81 percent) and Bosnians (1.10 percent) make up the largest minorities in Slovenia and either are residual populations afforded residency in Slovenia after the secession or are work seekers who have emigrated there. Other ethnic minorities are Macedonians (0.20 percent), Montenegrins (0.14 percent), Albanians (0.31 percent), and Roman (0.17 percent). Additionally, the Slovene government categorizes a full 6.14 percent of the population as “Other” (Adamič, *et al.* 2004). The Slovenian constitution formally defines the community as a nation and is not pluralistic per se (Deets 2005). It acknowledges certain members of its ethnic diaspora as members of the Slovene nation, though not necessarily citizens, and recognizes languages other than Slovene as minority languages, specifically Italian and Hungarian. Other South Slav and regional languages (Roma, Istrian, Vlach etc.) are not recognized. Slovene citizenship (as opposed to nationality) can be extended to persons who are not Slovene by ethnicity. The rights of these other minorities are only addressed via statutory law

Continuing the theme of “Europe in Miniature,” Slovenia resembles other members of the European Union in several ways. Its population density (97 inhabitants per square kilometer) is average for Europe. Other metrics such as birth rate (8.8 per thousand), death rate (9.4 per thousand) and age distributions all reflect the general trend among Southern European countries where population growth rates have slowed drastically or are now negative and the population is aging. The present 2 million figure for Slovenia was expected to decline over the next few years, bringing with it the specter of economic hardships and hard choices for policy makers seeking to blunt the effects of population decline and aging, but recent data has shown as turnaround in birth rates. In 2006, raw birth rates were up 4.3% over 2005 with 2006 showing 9.4 births per 1000 people. Slovene people live relatively long lives – men average 73 years and women

average 80 years (CIA 2007). Again, these measures align Slovenia with the rest of Europe in general.

Throughout the transition, however, Slovenes have varied from greater Europe in their rural/urban residential patterns with half of Slovenes still residing in small towns and villages (Adamic 2004); but this is primarily because Slovenia is essentially a commuting country where people live in villages and travel to work in urban areas (Gosar 2003). Ljubljana (pop. 275,000) and Maribor (pop. 170,000) as well as smaller cities such as Novo Mesto and Koper attract workers who split their time between rural and urban life, returning daily or weekly to their “home villages.” (RS Statiscni Urad 2007).

Economy

Prior to 1991, Slovenia was the most open and economically liberal of Yugoslavia’s republics. It’s unique relationship with Western Europe and active, productive, yet differing affinities with Austria and Italy made it the primary interface between Yugoslavia and Europe in terms of trade, migration and cultural exchange (Patterson 2003). With Slovenia’s break from Yugoslavia in 1991, it was on good footing to participate in what John Cox calls the “spirit of integration and cooperation” prevalent in Europe after 1989 (Cox 2005). Nonetheless, during the transition period Slovenia tended to keep ex-communists in power (Woodward 1995), and to move cautiously – even sluggishly -- in economic reform.

This course of action, inspired in part by democratic principles, made all the difference in how Slovene economic transition occurred. There was little incentive to perform a Russian-style shock therapy, nor was there a desire to return to the traditional Yugoslavian trough of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Rather predictably, given Slovenia’s prior relationship to Western Europe, Slovenian leaders chose EU accession as a means to liberalize

the economy. This had two effects. First, it allowed Slovenia to access necessary funds to build and equalize their institutional and infrastructural standards and, second, it allowed previous institutions, the people who ran them and political structures to remain in place. The outcome of the process, however, was ironic because a nation intent on divorcing itself from the overarching state structure of Yugoslavia almost immediately turned to the supranational European Union, and began a process of relinquished vast amounts of national sovereignty to the EU (Friis and Murphy 1999; Brinar and Svetlicic 1999). The historical confluence of Slovenia's secession from Yugoslavia, the prompt recognition of Slovenia's independence by Western European countries, and the signing and implementation of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992-3 is a phenomenon worthy of study in and of itself.

Rather than looking for some sort of epidemic spread of desire for democracy in the Yugoslav breakup, Slovenia's move to the neoliberal economy of the European Union can be seen as merely a pragmatic choice. This move was completed with formal accession to the EU occurring on May 1st, 2004 and adoption of the Euro currency on January 1st, 2007. Slovenia's attractiveness to the European Union is a product of its particular political and economic position that evolved during the period of transition.

There are strong reasons for classing Slovenia as a developed country, even though it is often lumped together with much less developed places. In terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Slovenia's GDP of \$23,400 per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) puts it well ahead of other post-socialist nations that recently joined the EU (CIA 2007). Table 1 presents Slovenia in relation to the other members of the 2004 round of EU accessing states. Importantly, Slovenia's Gini coefficient of income distribution was 28.4 in 1998, the last year available (CIA 2007). This index is a measure of income inequality where a number between 0 and 100 indicates how close

or far a population is to income equality, zero being perfect equality and 100 being perfect inequality. For comparison's sake, the US Gini coefficient of 46 indicates rather extreme income inequality (UNDP 2006), whereas Slovenia's Gini coefficient falls in the mid-range of this statistic for European Union countries.

Another way of measuring Slovenia's economy in larger terms is human development. The United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) is a measure of three dimensions of a place: life expectancy at birth, knowledge in terms of literacy and educational attainment levels, and GDP per capita in terms of purchasing power parity. Slovenia score of 0.910 on the HDI puts it 27th in the world among other nations measured. It ranks just above long-time EU member Portugal and three places behind Greece, the first Southeastern European country to join the EU (UNDP 2006). These broader measures of Slovenia's position in Europe and its success, relative to other post-socialist countries, in the aftermath of the Yugoslav breakup point to a country that, while it stands to benefit from the technological and financial power of the EU also already serves as the benchmark for other Southeast European countries desiring to access to the EU.

Other more descriptive statistics of the Slovene economy speak to how this process of accession has changed its economy. In 1991, agriculture was 7-8% of Slovenia's GDP, while in 2006 it was 2.3% (RS Statiscni Urad 2006). Despite tough negotiations with the EU and many concessions by the EU on Slovene agriculture policy, the accession process has fundamentally changed Slovene agriculture (Erjavec, *et al.* 1998). The long slide from the traditional farming economy has had deep effects on society, not the least of which was the decline in traditional farming methods, but these changes have allowed Slovenes to retool their economy and to be now counted among the better innovators in Europe (URENIO 2006).

Table 1. Countries accessing the EU in 2004. Sources: *(CIA 2007), **(UNDP 2006)

Country	Gini Index of Income Distribution*	HDI Rank (2006)**	GDP (PPP) Per Capita*	Inflation*
Cyprus	n/a	29	\$23,000	2.8% (2005)
Czech Republic	27.3 (2003)	30	\$21,900 (2006 est.)	2.7% (2006)
Estonia	33 (2003)	40	\$20,300 (2006 est.)	4.4% (2006 est.)
Hungary	26.9 (2002)	35	\$17,600 (2006 est.)	3.7% (2006 est.)
Latvia	35 (2003)	45	\$16,000 (2006 est.)	6.8% (December 2006 est.)
Lithuania	32.5 (2003)	41	\$15,300 (2006 est.)	3.8% (2006 est.)
Malta	n/a	32	\$21,000 (2006 est.)	2.6% (2006 est.)
Poland	34.1 (2002)	37	\$14,300 (2006 est.)	1.3% (2006 est.)
Slovakia	25.8 (1996)	42	\$18,200 (2006 est.)	4.4% (2006 est.)
Slovenia	28.4 (1998)	27	\$23,400 (2006 est.)	2.4% (2006 est.)
European Union	31.3 (2003 est.)	n/a	\$29,900 (2006 est.)	1.8% (2006 est.)

While agriculture and the residual manufacturing base of socialist Yugoslavia remain, services comprise 62.9% of the GDP and this sector is expected to continue to grow (RS Statistčni Urad 2006). Overall, Slovenia's gross domestic product grew 4.4 percent in 2005 with an inflation rate of 2.2 percent (RS Statistčni Urad 2006). While joining the Euro currency zone caused brief inflationary pressure, this has been mitigated by increased exports to the former Yugoslavia (CIA 2007) and by increased foreign direct investment, long a problem for Slovenia because of the slowness of its reforms.

All of these measures indicate that Slovenia is well suited to integrate with greater Europe as a member of the EU, but the point just mentioned -- Slovenia's involvement in the economy of the former Yugoslavia -- makes its membership in the Union attractive to larger states such as Germany and France. Its ability to act as a diplomatic intermediary to countries from the Balkans wishing to access to the EU such as Croatia and Macedonia, and its ability also to act as a cultural intermediary to the region has created a unique position for Slovenia in Europe. A brief examination of Slovenia's historical position in Europe is necessary as it sheds light on why this interface role is so crucial to its present and future success.

Brief History

Although there is continuing academic debate over the origin of Slovenes, the generally accepted story is that Slavic peoples first appeared in what is now Slovenia in the 7th and 8th centuries CE having migrated from the Vistula and Dnieper River valleys. Filling a void left in the area after the collapse of the Roman Empire and pushing indigenous Illyrian peoples out or assimilating them, the proto-Slovenes settled in the Southern Limestone Alps. Subsequently, these settlers were taken into the Frankish Empire, soon to find themselves part of the Holy

Roman Empire (Kann 1980). Early attempts at Slovene independence occurred, but, by and large, Slovene political history has been one of being subsumed into (or by) larger political entities (Cox 2005).

As the Holy Roman Empire declined, the Hapsburg dynasty rose. From the 15th Century until the demise of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918 Slovenia was dominated by the Austrians (Kann 1980). During this period, the Slovenes experienced various amounts of freedoms and strictures and, until the ending of serfdom in the Hapsburg's crown lands in 1848, to be Slovene meant to be a peasant. The local dukes were invariably German-speaking and did not understand what was then called the *Windisch* language of their villeins (Davis 1986).

Austrian domination hindered the progress of the Slovene national identity by keeping most Slovene cultural life in the village. Villages in Slovenia have much longer histories than their Croatian and Serbian counterparts, because of the fundamental differences between how they were controlled as part of the Hapsburgian crown lands (Stavrianos 2000). Still, urban movements, centered on the promulgation of a common Slovene literary and cultural bond, managed to foster enough national sentiment so that, when the Empire collapsed after World War I, the notion of splitting away from the traditional German power structures could be entertained (Gow and Carmichael 1997).

Those Slovenes residing south of Carinthia (southern Austria) joined the Kingdom of Croats, Serbs and Slovenes, after a plebiscite in October 1920 called for leaving the Carinthian Slovenes as part of Austria. The Karadjeordvic family dynasty, seated in Belgrade, served as monarchs, but the union was wracked with turmoil leading eventually to the creation of the Republic of Croats, Serbs and Slovenes after a series of assassinations and political plots undermined the monarchy. The subsequent republic was nominally democratic, but devolved

during the global economic turmoil of the 1930s into an authoritarian state. It was, at this time, first formally known as Yugoslavia. The outbreak of World War II and invasions by Germans and Italians were, in many places, initially received as liberating events (see Djilas 1958).

The Axis occupation of Slovenia led to splits in civil society with some Slovenes siding with the occupiers and others joining the various Partisan and Chetnik rebel groups in resistance. These groups ran the range of political ideologies from fascists to monarchists. With the consolidation of Partisan resistance activities under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito, the subsequent victory by Tito's forces, and the failure of Western foreign policy to discern which Balkan power broker should be backed, socialism as interpreted by Stalinist-leaning Tito took hold (Glenny 2004). Eventually, Yugoslavia broke with Russia and throughout most of the Cold War period, Yugoslavia led the non-aligned movement of non-Soviet satellite nations and third-world countries.

Tito's pragmatic socialism became known as "Market Socialism." It was a fluid, makeshift political economy that reacted to whatever the needs of the state were. It allowed freedom of movement for the vast majority of Yugoslavs. This freedom of movement made Slovenia's borders with Western Europe some of the easiest to traverse for visitors, and most importantly for *Gastarbeiters* headed to Germany to work, and for managers of Yugoslav heavy industry who headed abroad to sell Yugoslav products. The flow of Western hard currency to Yugoslavia underpinned its buying power despite enormous international debts to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

The position of Slovenia as the wealthiest of the Yugoslav republics was a product of its geographic good fortune in sharing borders with Italy and Austria. After Tito's death in 1980 and the following years of uncertainty, constitutional crisis, political conflict and, ultimately,

recentralization of state power in Belgrade, Slovenia continued to be one of the economic powerhouses of the Yugoslav federation. The events of 1989 in the rest of Eastern Europe, the looming breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, and the reassertion in Serbia and Kosovo, of federal power, in the form of Slobodan Milosevic's power politics, forced the hand of Slovene leaders who, after painstakingly strategizing the secession of Slovenia from Yugoslavia, declared independence on June 25th, 1991 (Woodward 1995; Meier 1997; Glenny 2004; Cox 2005).

A short, confused war with the federal army ended when Yugoslavia perceiving greater threats closer to its base of power withdrew to deal with Croatia. Thus began the all-out Balkan wars of the 1990s. It is important to note, though, that while Slovenia was part of Yugoslavia, Slovene leaders had built the groundwork for Slovene secession and independence in place during the 19980s, and, interestingly the secession was a surprise only to Western nations (Woodward 1995). A poll of Slovenes in 1990 showed that 88 percent supported a break from the Yugoslav republic and independence (Ramet 1999). With great enthusiasm, Slovenia moved into its post-socialist transition, and was immediately recognized as a sovereign nation by several leading EU countries (Gow 1997).

Despite its newfound sovereignty, Slovenia immediately set out to achieve EU membership and its transition was held up to all the former Eastern bloc nations joining the EU in 2004 as the model of how the process should be undertaken. Not surprisingly, a people historically accustomed to being a minority nationality within a larger political entity were able to manage EU accession with relative ease. I think that the Slovene interface with Europe has repeatedly been one of seeking security on any terms necessary even if, paradoxically, those terms mean loss of power and sovereignty.

Slovenia's relationship to Europe

Slovenia's relationship to Europe, therefore, is as a transition zone, a point of interface, between Europe proper and that part of Southeastern Europe known as the Balkans. Its historic role has provided Slovenia with the cultural and political knowledge to smooth the transitions for EU aspirant states in Southeastern Europe and it is often approached by these countries to serve as a liason.

It is now commonly the perception, both by Slovenes as well as the rest of Europe, that Slovenia is a European culturally affiliated place, a part of the well-understood *Klub Mitteleuropa* (Patterson 2003). It hasn't ever before stood apart as a separate nation in the strongest political sense of that word, but it has been recognized as something other than one of many European geographic units where people speak a different language, but still consider themselves Spanish, German or French.

Dwarfed by states such as France or Germany, the niche that Slovenia seeks for itself in the European polity of states is as an arbitrator for future national accession projects. It has positioned itself for this role well, but what will happen after the expansion of the EU is completed is still an open question. Slovenia and Slovenes might find themselves again a small nation of people recognizable simply by a different language, a history of assimilation to larger states and a few, small but distinctive cultural practices.

Chapter 3 -- Slovenia as cultural space

This chapter introduces the idea of a separate Slovenian cultural space within Europe. It sets up the argument that this thesis makes about how the kozolec works within that cultural space by laying out how that space is constituted. In other words, it proposes a set of possible landscapes that would interest a geographer, then makes the case for one in particular by emphasizing that the tools by which those landscapes are produced are what matters (Lefebvre 1991). Finally, it proposes the thesis of this work that guides how the kozolec can be thought of in relation to the Slovenian cultural space.

The notion of a separate Slovenia in Europe is a relatively new one. Not until the mid to late 19th Century was any mention of Slovene nationhood put forward (Rogel and Pret-Pugelj 2000; Cox 2005). This timing puts Slovenian nationalism in the wave of nationalist fury that swept Europe after 1848 and after the rise of nationalism as a concept in Latin America (Anderson 1991).

Following the brief history laid out in Chapter 2, Slovenia has never really been a separate nation in a political sense during the modern period. The almost mythological medieval states in the area now known as Slovenia were difficult to see as separate political entities as their tenures were brief and their scopes limited. From the 9th Century until the late 20th Century, Slovenia could only be seen as a constituent nation of people under the power of some larger entity.

The Franks and their successors gave way to the Hapsburgs. The Hapsburgs gave way to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Austro-Hungarians fell at the end of the World War I leaving in their wake turmoil, and from this rose the Kingdom of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs. Finally the

Slovenes had appeared in the name of a state recognized by other powers, and that recognition continued through to the short-lived, and brutal, Republic of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs.

The final elaboration as a unified-in-name republic, known as Yugoslavia and consisting of all the peoples of the western Balkans, came after the collapse of the Republic. Slovenia was subsumed under the name Yugoslavia through periods of fascism, totalitarianism, and socialism and remained so until independence in June 1991. The almost perfect chain of custody experienced by the Slovenes actually produced a Slovene nation in the reverse manner from the way nationalist movements and histories usually do. Instead of building a narrative of independent culture and political power, the Slovenes actively participated in the systems of their masters, often filling important roles politically, culturally and economically during these centuries.

The nationalist landscape of Slovenia, despite recent attempts to resurrect its history, is fraught with contradiction. The need to fill in the gaps of the national history is difficult for a nation that was never a nation-state. Its history was always ancillary and almost erased under the power politics of entities such as the Austrians. An example of how powerful this “making of a nation by erasure” was is evident in one of the great English-language books set in Slovenia. In Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, not one word mentions the setting as being in actual Slovene. Instead, the town of Kobarid is Caporetto. The Soca River is the Isonzo River. The reality is that for the setting of his book, Hemingway chose Italian place names in place of Slovenian ones.

Slovenia's cultural space, therefore, is difficult to define by using a nationalist analysis. Slovenia, as a nation, operates differently. The associations that Slovenes create among themselves may look like the associations that normally ethnic, religious and other groups have used to make nations, but until very recently those associations were affirmed not by nation

building, but by being subsumed and protected by larger power structures. It can be argued that Slovenia's breakup with Yugoslavia had little to do with ethnic tensions and more to do with political expediency (Woodward 2005). Yugoslavia showed signs that it was no longer going to provide a useful umbrella for Slovenia. With Slovenia's accession to the EU in 2004, that expediency came full circle and Slovenia found a new, more useful umbrella.

A second method of defining the Slovenian cultural space -- the Slovene language itself -- is somewhat easier to grasp. A South Slavic language, Slovene is considered to be very archaic. It retains ancient Slavic grammatical forms such as the dual and emphasis on perfective and imperfective aspects of verbs. Unlike other South Slav languages, it is not a “tonal” language; inflection does not change the meaning of words as in Bulgarian and Croatian (Herrity 2000).

The physical extent of the Slovenian language is often used to mark the extent of the cultural hearth of Slovenia. Slovenian school maps often offer the original Slovenian names of towns and villages that are now parts of bordering nations (Geodetski Savod Slovenije 1998). Udine in Italy is “Videm” and Trieste is “Trst.” Klagenfurt and Graz in Austria are “Celovec” and “Gradec”, respectively. Rijeka in Croatia is translated to the proper Slovene word for river, “Reka.” Even in Hungary, where few Slovenes lived across the border, Szentgotthárd is called Monoster. After the coming of the Schengen border to Slovenia in 2008, these distinctions have become relics of past national boundaries, but they are still important enough to help demarcate where historic Slovenia was, and is, in Slovenian minds.

The extent of where Slovenian can be (or could be) heard belies the fact that even within the contemporary borders, the language varies widely from place to place. While a Standard Slovene based on the dialect of educated Slovenes living in Ljubljana is taught, there are 47 recognized dialects of Slovene spoken throughout the country. In a place where societal norms

(especially feudalism) and mountainous topography limited contact even between adjacent valleys and even villages, easy communication between Slovenians is a relatively new experience. For example, in the village of Prigorica, the inhabitants speak a more archaic form of Slovene than townspeople in the larger urban center of Ribnica some 4 kilometers away. Where someone in Prigorica would say “Ja, vajm Marijo” (Ya, vai-em Mareeyo), a Ribnica resident would say “Ja, vem Marijo” (Ya, veym Mareeyo). Both are saying “Yes, I know Mary,” but each is instantly distinguishable as to where they are from. It also follows that someone from Ribnica is immediately known elsewhere in Slovenia by their use of German words – until World War II, the greater Ribnica area had a German population that had been there for several hundred years. In Ribnica, one does not say “Konec sem” or “I am finished.” One says “Vertig sem” -- derived from the German, “Ich bin fertig.”

Extending the idea of the Slovenian language's internal diversity further, I experienced several instances where I stopped to talk to people after I became better at the language and I was either met by laughter or confusion. The people who laughed wanted to know who is the crazy American who speaks like someone from provincial Ribnica, and confusion would arise, especially in the Alps, where Slovene is so vernacular and distinctive that no-one understood “correct” Slovene at all. In that case, English or German saved the day, or the local farmer's children would be brought forth to translate. Those children are growing up polyglots whose home language is relegated to the kitchen as they speak globalized languages like English and German.

Therefore, it is hard to even find unity across the Slovene landscape as to what the everyday experience of speaking Slovenian should be like. The development of a true Slovene literature began in the 17th century, but the standardized phonetics is a 19th century creation. The

drive to nationalize the language mimics other such projects such as the creation of the standard Italian language after World War II or the Napoleonic effort to minimize regional differences in what languages were spoken in France -- a place where languages as varying as Burgundian, Breton and Basque still exist. The scale is smaller, but the project to standardize Slovenian is relatively new and has yet to make inroads in rural areas. In these places, regular schooling is a phenomenon only seen since World War II, so to eliminate or to ameliorate regional differences in the language is a nascent effort at best. It is safe to say that there is an idea of what the Slovenian language should be, but the making of this idealization doesn't mean that the language creates the Slovenian cultural space. I would contend that language needs help to do so.

The help that language needs lies in social practices. Social practices produce cultural space. It is important to not limit the definition of social practices, because they can be communication or efforts at reproduction. They can be as sophisticated as high art or as commonplace as the method of butchering pigs (Minnich 1979). Business is a set of social practices as are all economic activities. The creation of material culture is a social practice, and this thesis is concerned with exactly such a social practice, the kozolec.

The kozolec is a free-standing device used for the drying of hay and other fodder for animals and, rarely, humans. It is found in about 80% of Slovenia today and to an extent within the traditional Slovenian parts of the Southern Limestone Alps. It has been praised for its serene beauty and for being evocative of Slovene ideals of efficiency, even-handedness, and sturdiness.

Academicians in Slovenia point to the kozolec as a particular symbol of Slovenia, as a feature that defines what Slovenia is. Slovenes are said to identify so thoroughly with the kozolec, that every Slovene knows just where a perfect example is tucked away on some remote farmstead. Yet, it is this idea that the kozolec stands as a formal representation of Slovenia that

this thesis calls into question. Is the kozolec an embodiment of ideals? Does it represent the Slovene identity or does it do something else? Can it be “retheorized” and used as a tool or implement to help produce the cultural space of Slovenia, rather than just stand as a symbol for that space?

To answer these questions, some further assertions have to be made about Slovenia that use the sketch presented above of how Slovenia was produced historically and culturally. First, the long legacy of domination by larger political and cultural entities has had an impact directly on the way Slovenia works. As a country of small towns and villages, the effect of Germanic influences on the forms of those villages must be emphasized. While the Slovenes themselves have categorized their village types using their own taxonomy (Adamic, *et al.* 2001), I have chosen to simplify matters and address the villages I saw in my test cases by their German names: *Strassendorf* and *Haufendorf* (Dickinson 1949; Bernet 2005). In the first case study on Dobropolje, I argue that the German village forms are imposed landscapes and are a colonial legacy from the Hapsburgs.

Nonetheless, the kozolec is integral to the landscape of the Slovene/Germanic village types and acts as a practical tool that serves two purposes. It is used in its traditional way to dry hay, but it is also used as tool to reinforce the Slovene landscape within the setting of the Germanic village form. While the houses and the villages evoke generic Alpine villages or places where the Austrians once ruled, the kozolec stands along side these houses and villages to reaffirm the Slovenian place.

The second case study, on Tacen, expands on this idea in a more contemporary setting: a suburb of Ljubljana. Again, the changing landscape of urban Slovenia after all of the political and economic upheaval has forced the kozolec to be recast in its role as a practical tool. It has

been readapted as a social practice to reaffirm the place of Slovenia. It is used in such a way that it doesn't represent the totality of Slovenia so much as it creates a sense of trust that where one is standing can be seen as Slovenia.

This pragmatic take on material culture is meant to produce a new way of thinking about material culture in a post-globalization world. It is an antifoundationalist stance on social practice and it urges “that criticism or commendation of [a social practice] be confined to comparison with other social practice and possible social practices” (Rorty 1996). This stance means two things. On one hand it leaves open the possibility that progress toward better ways of acknowledging and in engaging in social practices can be made.

On the other hand, my stance attempts to find ways to evaluate other possible practices of the kozolec. The kozolec is a practice that has changed through time and still has viability as such. It can be compared to other practices and valued accordingly to its effectiveness. Questions like: “How can the kozolec be used?” or “Why use the kozolec rather than a silo or a national flag?” remain valid. It is the intent of this thesis and the following chapters to answer these questions.

Chapter 4 -- National Identity, Vernacular Architecture and a typology of the Kozolec

This chapter is comprised of three elements. First, I review the literature on national identity as it pertains to kozolec. Second, I review vernacular architecture as a discipline and as a methodology by which one can study the kozolec. Finally, a lengthy section presents a typology of the kozolec. This section reveals the kozolec as it is found in the field, and also makes the case for the kozolec as a piece of vernacular architecture worthy of study and reflection in light of its use both as a practical tool and a symbol of Slovenia.

National Identity and the Kozolec

The kozolec has been identified in travel books, landscape journals, and architectural magazines as being particularly emblematic of the Slovenian landscape (Fallon, 1998; Butler, 2003; Kaltenbach, 2004), and this sort of imagining a national landscape from without is not unusual in the world of nationalism (Hobsbawm 1990). The history of associating the kozolec with Slovenia as a physical place, if not as a nation, is, however, quite old.

The kozolec first appears in literature in a description in Valvasor's *Ehre deß Herzogthums Crain* (1971)², a comprehensive physical and cultural geography of the Western Balkans. Valvasor's notice of the kozolec, though, was purely functional and made no connection to the identity of the people he saw using it (Rupel 1969). The form of the kozolec is much older than the 17th Century and has cognates in the Dnieper River region of Belarus, a supposed origin of the proto-Slovenes. This is evidenced by pictorial evidence from the late 19th century in Eastern Poland and Belarus that depicts kozolec-like hay drying implements, some as

² Berk, *et al.* (1993) mentions an earlier depiction from 1649, but I was unable to find an example or their reference. As a single-stretched type of kozolec, discussed below, it is certainly an ancient form.

large as a barn (Prokudin-Gorskii 2003). More importantly, the kozolec experienced a resurgence of interest after World War I when Slovenian social scientists working as Yugoslavs began cataloging the kozolec and noting both its unique uses and features as well as its diffusion across the Slovene landscape (Melik 1931). The tradition of Melik's folk geography of the kozolec was carried on by Marjan Music who coupled the exposition on its uniqueness performed by Melik to its particular Slovene character. Music identified the kozolec as an embodiment of Slovene values and the place where those values were found (Music 1970).

This coupling of an abstraction about a place with a physical feature is not uncommon in nation-building narratives. Benedict Anderson considers the process as a central strategy of how nations as “imaginary communities” are formed (1991). Instead of Anderson's print journalist as a nation-builder, the academic in Slovenia has had a particular hand in pushing the kozolec as a possible symbol of Slovene national identity. Music's students -- he was a professor at the University of Ljubljana -- have figured largely in the discourse of the kozolec as a national symbol or as architectural touchstone for national pride. The kozolec can be found elsewhere in Europe, especially in Alpine settings in simple forms, but it reached “its peak of perfection over much of Slovenia . . . [where]...the 'kozolec' symbolizes the relation of the part and the whole” (Berk, *et al.* 1993). Others have noted that the kozolec, citing Melik, was not just found in Slovenia, but all over the Alps, with cognate forms as far away as China and Japan (Čop and Cvec 1993).³ Still, some scholars desired to link the Slovene landscape, its people and the form of the kozolec together as being perfected in part and as a whole (Čop and Cvec 1993). Finally, one of Music's students who has followed in his footsteps as a professor at Ljubljana notes the

³ Melik went to great lengths to photograph examples in China and in Japan, but failed to see a Slavic connection in its general diffusion as evidenced by the Prokudin-Gorskii photographs.

kozolec as a practical form, but still links its use to Slovene rationality and perfection (Juvanec 2000).

What is interesting about this genealogy of the scholarship on the kozolec is that it appears during a time where Slovenia did not exist as a nation-state and it continued through the turmoil and oppression of the latter 20th century while Slovenia was achieving independence. National identity literature tells us that nation-building narratives are not always overt and often occur in places and within discourses that are sublime in their intent (Anderson 1991). This leads to narratives that create an “imagined” landscape of national identity, but one that is not “imaginary.” The distinction between imagined and imaginary in this national identity discourse is simple. While something is imagined, it exists solely in the mind of the person doing the imagining, the moment that abstraction is acted upon as if it is real, it then has real consequences (Jenkins 2003).

Vernacular Architecture Studies and the Kozolec

My fieldwork in Slovenia involved three full summers plus two shorter trips during winter and spring. The first trip to Slovenia was more exploratory to see if the kozolec was worth pursuing. I quickly realized its potential for what was then imagined as a more traditional material culture survey in the vein of Fred Kniffen and informed by the American approaches to material culture studies developed by Henry Glassie (Glassie 1975; Kniffen 1936). The next summer I went back into the field and quickly realized that not only had I bitten off a huge chunk of work, which in hindsight I can see as an impossible project: a cataloging, description and analysis of a built landscape feature that permeates approximately 80 percent of Slovenia’s areal extent (Juvanec 2000). I realized I could not do this in 25 field seasons, let alone one, and focused my efforts on one small farming valley, Videm-Dobropolje in the southern part of

Slovenia, where the kozolec was used almost solely in its traditional practical role as a drying implement.

What was at first blush a daunting task quickly turned into a fruitful opportunity as I started to listen to people talk about the kozolec and what it meant and didn't mean to them. I came to think that the kozolec was an integral part of the built environment of rural Slovene villages and that there was much more than practicality at play. My conclusion after this field season was that the kozolec was not just a simple symbol of Slovenia, but integral to how Slovenian identity is changing and how it has been performed to some degree for a very long time.

Armed with notes and new ideas, I returned to the States and started reading beyond the traditional Sauerian tradition of cultural geography and found both within and without geography new ways of thinking of how performance of identity can occur. It became important to me that I should avoid a research space that placed more importance upon the kozolec as text or image to be deconstructed, than its lived practicality. I returned to the field in 2004 for a month to look not just for the kozolec in its traditional form, but in other different forms that would indicate that this old way of performing national and ethnic identity had been adapted, copied, and reproduced in a way that continued the performance.

Through interviews and participant observation techniques I investigated how the kozolec continued to operate as a place where Slovenian identity was performed. Through that process I developed a theory of how a practical yet symbolic landscape operates under very specific cultural, political and social conditions present in Slovenia. The following section is a typology of the kozolec – a product of the fieldwork informed by the literature on vernacular architecture.

Typology of the kozolec

Kozolci appear in nine primary types with as many as 14 variations on these forms (Mušic 1970; Čop and Cvec 1993; Juvanec 2000). The primary types can be divided into two categories: the single stretched kozolci (Figures 1, 2 and 3) and the various types of coupled kozolec which are augmented by shelters, varying roofs and architectural styles (Figure 4). This second group includes the stog or toplar-style (double kozolci), which is thought by Slovenes to be found only in the Slovene cultural hearth-land.

The methodology used in the typology here does not capture the totality of the kozolec in a few examples, nor does it just capture the unique. The goal is to expand on the general concept of the kozolec by highlighting its repeatability, which is a method that acknowledges as much as it describes. Later examples and data from the fieldwork revealed in the case studies will expand the breadth of the kozolec's repeatability on the landscape. This typology introduces the kozolec to the reader in anticipation of further discussion to follow.

The hypothesis of this work is that kozolci in all their many forms have become part of a Slovene discourse about national identity in varying ways and in varying intensities. Each kozolec is an item of socially constructed identity. My purpose is to shed light on how these pieces of useful folk architecture both serve as symbols and mark the Slovene landscape, but also continue to work in practical ways. The goal is to merge two different ideas, symbolism and practicality.

What follows is a typology derived from observations in the field, conversations with Slovene friends, and interactions with both the Slovene literature and other literature about the kozolec. This typology serves as an operational methodology that in a real sense conveys the impact kozolci has had on me through my fieldwork and research among them.

- **Enojni stegnjeni kozolec (single stretched kozolec)**

A single kozolec (Figures 1 and 2), which can have many “windows” (okna), correlative to the English term “bays,” or sections of racks (lata) separated by columns. It has a simple cross-member attached to each column which supports a pitched roof made of wooden or slate shakes. More modern examples have asbestos, tar paper or corrugated fiberglass roofs and prefabricated concrete columns. This is a common kozolec found in lower, wider valleys in the Alps (Kranjska Gora), the plain around Ljubljana and into southeastern Dolenjska.

- **Enojni stegnjeni kozolec z zidanimi stebri (stone-columned single stretched kozolec)**

A single kozolec built with stone columns (Figure 3). “Z zidanimi stebri” kozolci are found in the Cerklje Hills, in alpine settings around Idrija on the Soča River and, occasionally, in central Slovenia. The stone columns are indicative of their Alpine origins, but there is also a possible relationship to historic German



Figure 1. A single window with traditional wooden columns and contemporary fiberglass roof. Mojstrana, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.



Figure 2. Enojni stegnjeni kozolec with three “windows.” Mojstrana, Slovenia.

Photograph by Author.



Figure 3. Enojni stegnjeni kozolec z zidanimi stebri. Cerkno, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.

settlements, which are still recognized as such and indicated by place names such as Nemška vas (German Village) in the regions where this type of kozolec is found. It may indicate an adoption or adaptation of a Germanic building tradition to the kozolec.

- **Kozolec s plaščem (kozolec with a “cloak”)**

A single kozolec built with a lean-to or “cloak” to provide covered space for farming implements or temporary shelter (Figure 4). These kozolci are found in the Ljubljana plain and north to Kranj and can stretch to 50 meters or more

- **Dvojni stegnjeni kozolec (double stretched kozolec)**

Found in the Krka and the Sava Rivers regions (Figure 5), the double stretched kozolec is the simplest of the coupled kozolci where two single stretched kozolci are attached with cross-members. These cross-members often have small roofs and serve to widen the kozolec’s footprint on softer ground or against the wind. They also provide minimal shelter for equipment

- **Vezani kozolec – stog na eno drevo (coupled kozolec - stog with one queen post)**

This kozolec is found primarily in the area near Lake Bohinj in northwest Slovenia, especially around the village of Studor near Stara Fužina (Figure 6). The stog can have several windows but two to three divisions of racks are most common Religious symbols are not uncommon and



Figure 4. Kozolec s plaščem. Medvode, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.



Figure 5. Dvojni stegnjeni kozolec. Podsreda, Slovenia. Photography by Author.



Figure 6. Vezani kozolec – stog na eno drevo. Studor, Slovenia. Photography by Author.

many kozolci have niches incorporated into their facades for the placement of statuettes or crucifixes. The stog has either a hipped roof or peaked gable, but its distinguishing architectural feature is a structural cross-member divided by a single upright beam or queen post.

- **Vezani kozolec – topilar na dve drevesi (coupled kozolec – topilar with two queen posts)**

Found in lowland Slovenia (Dolenjska) and into the far southeastern Bela Krajina region (Figure 7), the topilar is nearly the same as the stog, but has two “trees” dividing its cross-members so it has three groups of križi or secondary crossing supports (Mušič, 1970).

Many examples of this kozolec type will also have a small hayloft for long-term storage.

- **Vezani kozolec z zidanimi stebri (coupled kozolec with stone columns)**

A stog with stone columns (Figure 8), it is found from Tolmin in the Soča River valley south to Logatec. Occasional examples of this type are found in lower Slovenia (Dolenjska). There is some variation from the traditional “one tree” design of the stog of Lake Bohinj area, where the cross-members are not divided sharply with an upright timber, but supported with a uniform grid of beams.

- **Vezani kozolec s hodnikom (coupled kozolec with corridor)**

These kozolci are decorative masterpieces found in the Mirna River valley. “S hodnikom” are large double kozolci with a hayloft accessed by a ladder or steps and a lateral corridor (Figure 9). They often have a small terrace or veranda where hay could be tossed down to animals or a wagon. These kozolci are examples of fine Slovene



Figure 7. Toplar na dve drevesi. Trebnje, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.



Figure 8. Vezani kozolec z zidanimi stebri. Trebija, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.



Figure 9. Vezani kozolec s hodnikom. Mirna, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.

carpentry, each bearing either the initials of the craftsman who built it or ornate maker's marks indicating who built it and when.

- **Kozolec na kozla ali na psa (kozolec in the manner of the goat or dog)**

Called the goat or dog kozolec (Figures 10 and 11), because when viewed from a frontal elevation it resembles a Billy goat or dog sitting back on his haunches (Oražem, 2001).

The “na kozla” is a single kozolec with two or three windows of racks, which has an integrated shed or lean-to where tools or firewood can be stored. They are found primarily in the Dolenjska region.

As observed in the field, the type or variety of kozolec depends upon physical geography, settlement tradition, materials at hand, necessary function, personal taste and availability of craftspeople skilled in their construction. It is interesting to note that “necessary function” is not the most influential factor in determining the variety of kozolec.

Kozolci in Alpine settings often have stone columns more indicative of traditional Alpine building traditions, but in non-Alpine areas of Slovenia settled by Germans who assimilated into Slovene culture, there are kozolci with stone or brick columns (Cvec and Čop 1993). At higher elevations where land is more steeply inclined, kozolci are either built with a smaller footprint or down in the valleys where land is more level. Hay is brought by wagon from the higher fields and dried on the kozolci in the valley.

While stone-columned kozolci may be the product of Alpine architectural traditions blending with the traditional Slovene form, it is also the case that stone was easier to find and manage on high steep mountain slopes than large timbers for the columns. Enough wood was available for the framework and finish, but stone was more accessible for the supporting



Figure 10. Kozolec na kozla ali na psa. Prigorica, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.



Figure 11. “A Billy goat on his haunches” Prigorica, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.

elements of the structure. In the lower forests, larger timbers, mainly of oak, were more easily extracted and subsequently used as the columns for a kozolec.

A field may have mixed types of kozolci depending on the need of the farmer at the time of construction. If a farmer near Ljubljana simply needed a rack to dry hay, then the single stretched variety was decided upon. Later, a “cloak” might be added to provide some storage space for a piece of equipment or another kozolec would be built with the cloak added. If the farmer was in Dolensjska, near Velike Lašče in south central Slovenia, then the decision might be between a “na kozla” style kozolec and a larger toplar. If the farmer had a craftsman at hand and had the economic resources, the more elaborate toplar would be decided upon, but if price was an option and/or more protected storage was needed then the “na kozla” would be built. This reflects the practical use of the hayrack, but the conscious decision to use the kozolec emblematically as well. The toplar is, debatably, the more aesthetically pleasing kozolec, but the “na kozla” provides more shelter and has other more practical uses (Oražem, 2001).

The toplar or stog style kozolci incorporate more architectural flourish than their single kozolec counterparts. The “s hodnikom” is the most ornate with complex finishing elements as well as the most barn-like usage of the kozolci, though its open sides provide less shelter than a barn. The stog/toplar will often have details like religious iconography attached to them. Also “owl holes,” akin to those on German-style barns found in Ohio (Wilhelm, 1992), are common on the stog/toplar. They can be simple holes, but linden leaves, hearts, crosses, and clover are common motifs. The single stretched kozolci occasionally have attached iconography, and the stone column variety often has a niche incorporated for this purpose into the columns, but they tend to be austere and are more interesting, architecturally, for their reliance on geometric order (Juvanec, 2000).

The kozolec as a subject

In general, the landscape of the kozolec is diverse, reflecting differing traditions from place to place, differing needs for the kozolec beyond its basic use, and differing personal preferences. While all of the different kozolec are identifiable as such, throughout their range in Slovenia, Slovenia isn't necessarily identifiable by the kozolec alone. It is a tool used within the greater discourse of Slovenian identity and, as we shall see, the kozolec has changed over time from folk uses to newer, more modern interpretations and uses.

What makes it a powerful tool is the repetition of the kozolec in many different forms and uses. It is an everyday item that is present in lives and defines cultural space to a perceptible degree (Upton 2002). It is an example of how culture and everyday life are intertwined and produce space (Lefebvre 1991). This presence of everyday life and the production of cultural space makes the kozolec key to how people in Slovenia have practiced their identities and created a landscape. It is also key to understanding how those practices have changed.

Chapter 5 – Case Studies

This chapter is comprised of two case studies of the kozolec as found in the field and examines different but uniquely Slovenian landscapes: a traditional farming community and a contemporary exurban community that blends both peasant and modern economic life. This chapter is an extension of the previous chapter where observation of the form on the landscape has been enhanced by the observation and participation of the people who build kozolci. Their conceptions of what the kozolec stands for, how it is to be used or disused, and what possibilities exist for Slovenians to express, within the discourse of the kozolec, their ethnic and national identities will be reinforced by the data interpreted in this chapter.

Case studies are ripe with opportunities to capture at least a glimpse of how people experience a landscape through time. Additionally, case studies are solid examples of this experience that can be used as frameworks elsewhere. While the urge to place each of these case studies against each other in some sort of binary opposition is strong, it is better to take each study on its own. The continuing argument made by this thesis is that the practical and symbolic divide is unnecessary: It is an error to separate symbolism from practice.

The two areas examined in my case studies are Videm-Dobrepolje, referred to as Dobrepolje from now on, and Tacen Pri Ljubljani, referred to as simply Tacen. Although they are quite different places geographically and demographically, they are both genuinely Slovenian areas and among the cultural threads that bind them is the kozolec.

Dobrepolje

Dobrepolje rests some 24 kilometers to the southeast of Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia. It is made up of 12 villages of which Videm is the largest, with 3500 residents. The name “Dobrepolje” itself means “Good Fields” and this primarily agricultural area forms one of

the first valleys in a series running southwest from Ljubljana to the Croatia border, forming a region known as Dolenjska (Figure 12). This hilly to mountainous karst region is heavily forested with large cleared areas stretching from the foot of one bordering ridge to the other resulting in the forested ridge and open valley effect for which limestone regions are known. The valley floors are flat with intermittent streams, sinkholes and pits where water disappears quickly after a rain only to emerge just as quickly on the other side of the valley as a entrapment or stream that may again disappear into the sides of the surrounding hills.

To the north Dobropolje is bounded by the Suha Krajina or “Dry Frontier” and to the south, Mala Gora, “The Small Mountain,” separates Dobropolje from the larger Ribnica Valley. The southwestern end of Dobropolje ends at a small gap where the ridgeline of Mala Gora meets the massif of Suha Krajina at a small village called Rapljevo. A road leads over this gap into the Kočevje Forest, one of the largest tracts of conifer forest in Slovenia. The northeastern end of the valley lies 18 kilometers from this point at low gap near the village of Ponikve where the main road runs through Dobropolje and joins the Kočevje-Ljubljana highway. Although Dobropolje is less than 45 minutes drive from the capital of Slovenia, it is considered remote and rural even by Slovenian standards. The surrounding hills and constricted access to the valley via a

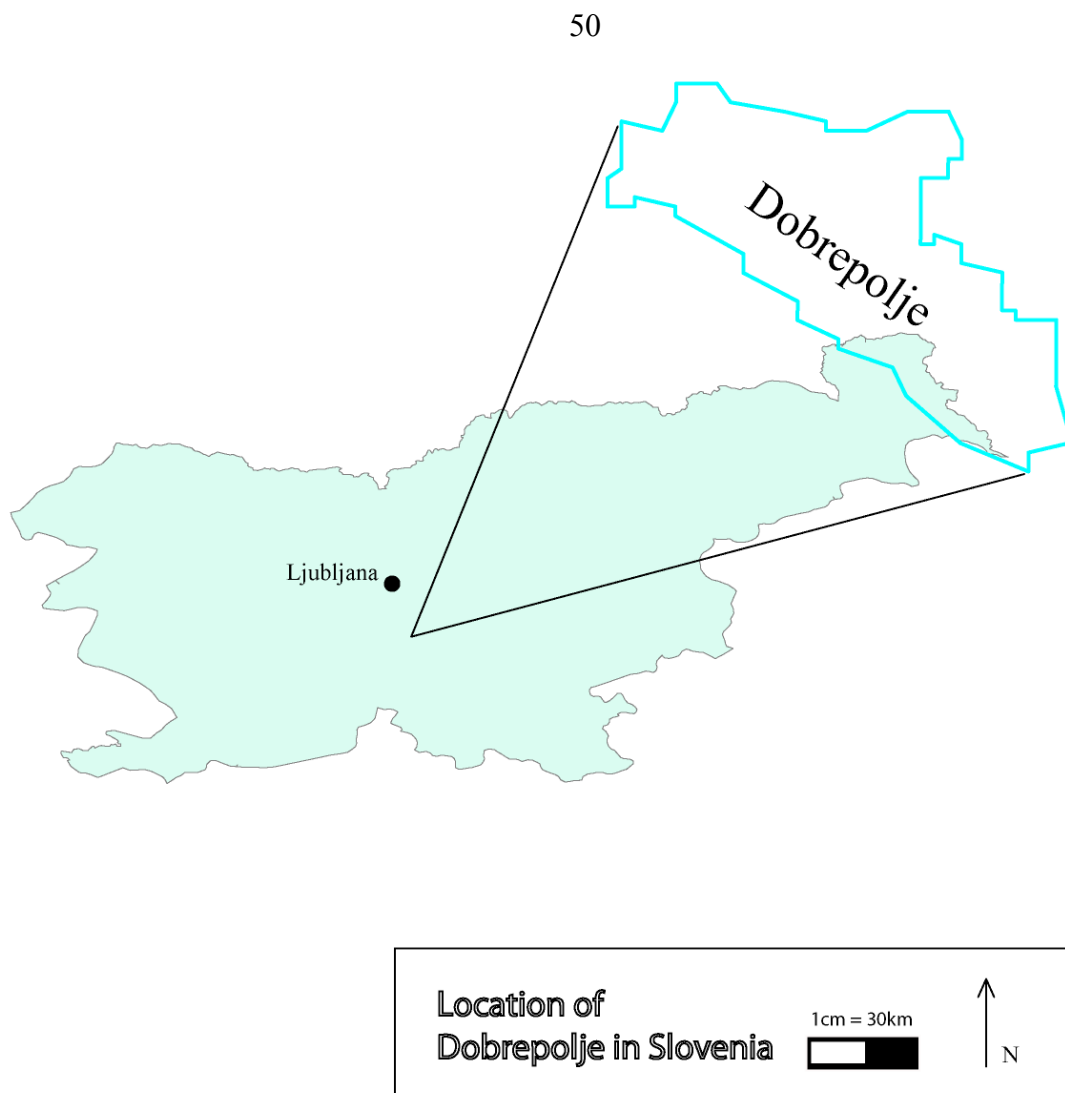


Figure 12. Dobropolje in Slovenia.

small two-lane road and few treacherous mountain paths only serve to reinforce the image of isolation.

But Dobropolje is not just a rural farming enclave; it is also home to small industries. There is a large baking concern, two furniture factories, a forest products company and a large quarrying operation all found within the valley. Videm, the seat of the občina or county, has a large central Roman Catholic church that serves as the administrative home for the area's many small parishes. Nearly every village is within a short walk of a church, a shrine or roadside crèche. Dobropolje is also a bedroom community for Ljubljana. There is hourly bus service from one end of the valley to the other that continues on to the central bus and train station in Ljubljana. As I began my fieldwork for this research one early morning, I encountered a long stream of cars bearing the Dobropolje license plate headed out of the valley carrying the drivers to their jobs in Ljubljana.

Slovenia is a nation of commuters. There is an almost 50/50 divide between rural and urban living in the country. Companies in Ljubljana and Maribor subsidize employee travel greatly, paying for gasoline and transport fees in order to get workers to their jobs but also to ensure their continued participation in a time-honored Slovenian tradition: village life. Even high-powered politicians and business people in the relatively sophisticated Ljubljana identify with a small village somewhere in the Slovenian countryside. These ties to rural places even while participating in an ever more globalized economy means that Slovenia is a "suburban nation" in ways not usually associated with that term (Gosar 2003). Slovenians daily make the transition between the rural and the urban.

Such is the case in Dobropolje where daily lines of cars head to offices and factories in Ljubljana and its urban environs, but where agriculture remains an essential component of life.

Farms are everywhere in Dobropolje and virtually every resident comes home to at least a remnant of farm life. The farm life and the village forms that are built around it are both part of the fabric of the landscape here, but also the product of pre-modern historical realities that shaped that landscape.

In Dobropolje, two main village types dominate. As mentioned in the earlier discussion of Slovenia's cultural space, Slovene villages come in many different types, not unlike the *kozolec*, though none of those types are specifically of a Slavic origin. The ancient Slovene village was probably a reflection of the migrating Slavs' encampments, but the repeated absorption of Slovenes into larger political institutions from the Frankish Empire to the Hapsburgian crown lands solidified the type of village landscape there (Stavrianos 2000). This landscape was a colonial landscape with imported and imposed forms not unlike what one would find in the Netherlands Antilles or Argentina. It has been said that the Austrians in particular were the “subtlest of colonizers” (Norris 2000).

In their classic work, *A Serbian Village in Historical Perspective*, Joel and Barbara Halpern's research bolsters this view. The enforcing of a village form by colonizers is a common way of controlling a landscape. In the case of Serbia, the Turkish destruction of the Serbian medieval urban centers created the *zadruga* village system as a normalized landscape that quickly became viewed as traditional (Halpern and Halpern 1972).

The *kozolec* in Dobropolje fits this model by incorporating three important elements in place: the Germanic house-barn, the Slovene *kozolec* and the Germanic village form. In Figure 12, we see a typical house-barn complex in Dobropolje. This arrangement is repeated throughout the valley, though less so in the hilly parts. House-barns are well documented and very typical of Alpine areas that were under the influence of German-speaking peoples during

medieval and early modern times (Vlach 2003). These house-barn complexes are incorporated in larger groupings that can be generalized as *Strassendorf* and *Haufendorf* village forms.

Podpec, at the foot of Mala Gora, is an example of the *Strassendorf* villages in Dobropolje (Map 1). It is a farming village that lies along an ancillary road between two other villages about 2 km outside the large, central village of Videm. Typifying the form, Podpec's houses all face the road that runs through the middle of the village.⁴ Each house extends back from the road as a continuous unit and most houses were observed during a field survey in the area as having the house-barn form as their basis. As evidenced by the older cadastral map, dating from the 18th century, Podpec has changed little and that lack of formal change includes the house-barn with the characteristic kozolec completing the complex with the working fields stretching out behind the village in the Dobropolje plain.

This sort of *Strassendorf* village is found elsewhere regionally in Slovenia, especially in Notranjsko near Lake Cerknica (Portis-Winner 1971)⁵. Field observation in the Cerknica valley reinforces the *Strassendorf* form as being typical of outlying farming communities (Figure 13). The German village form is made Slovenian by the addition of one key element: the kozolec. The second village form in Dobropolje is the *Haufendorfen*. *Haufendorfen* villages are typically small clusters of homeplaces centered around a key feature such as a well, a tree or a market place. The southeastern end of the Dobropolje valley is where most of these small cluster villages

⁴ A field assistant, Jesse Butler, who helped me with my work in Dobropolje for two weeks, remarked, "In Slovenia, the road must go through the village." "The road must go through the village" became his refrain during his time with me as we drove through the countryside always slowing to pass through small village after small village.

⁵ Portis-Winner mislabels the kozolec as a typical Slovenian barn in this study. She corrected herself in her later, seminal work *The Semiotics of Peasants in Transition* (2002).



Figure 13. A classic Slovenian House-Barn Complex. Dobropolje, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.



Map 1. Podpeč, Slovenia.



Figure 13. Grahovo, Slovenia. A typical Slovenian *Strassendorf* village. Photograph by Author.

can be found (Figure 14). The valley narrows rapidly before closing to a gap that leads through the Kocevje forest toward the Croatian border. Here the kozolec follows a pattern not unlike in the *Strassendorf* villages. Houses are connected to auxiliary buildings with the kozolec standing out back of the whole complex.

Each home site in the *Haufendorf* villages was connected to farmland and, invariably, the more remote the village from the main road to Ljubljana the more tightly bunched the houses were. A constant feature of these villages was their kozolci, though the more typical “toplar” style gave way to smaller “na kozla” types. The smaller plots of land and the compactness of the village form itself lends itself to the smallest of the double kozolec types. A farmer approached me as I shot photos of a very typical example near Rapljevo and explained that the smaller kozolec made more sense as it could dry hay and still afford space for storage (Figure 15).

Thus Dobropolje affirmed itself as a classic Slovenian agricultural community. The majority of the valley went about its business of farming, even if this farming was more a hobby than a form of subsistence now. I qualify this as “the majority” as my survey revealed that the kozolec could be used not just as an agricultural implement on this classic Slovenian landscape.

After I finished my survey at the far end of the valley after a month of riding my bicycle or walking the roads of Dobropolje, I decided to check back through the area to see if I had missed anything. In Ponikve, on the way out of the valley, I stopped to turn onto the road to Ljubljana and realized that I had left my hat back at the last village. I turned around and found it on the side of the road across from some well-appointed houses that faced Dobropolje's large quarrying operation. It was very fortuitous as I saw a small kozolec used as a trellis for flowers.



Figure 14. The southeastern end of the valley of Dobropolje from the Saint Ana outlook on Mala Gora. The clustered *Haufendorf* villages are part of a complex call “Cerkev pri Strugi.” The hills in the background form the Suha Krajina, or “Dry Frontier.”

Photograph by Author.

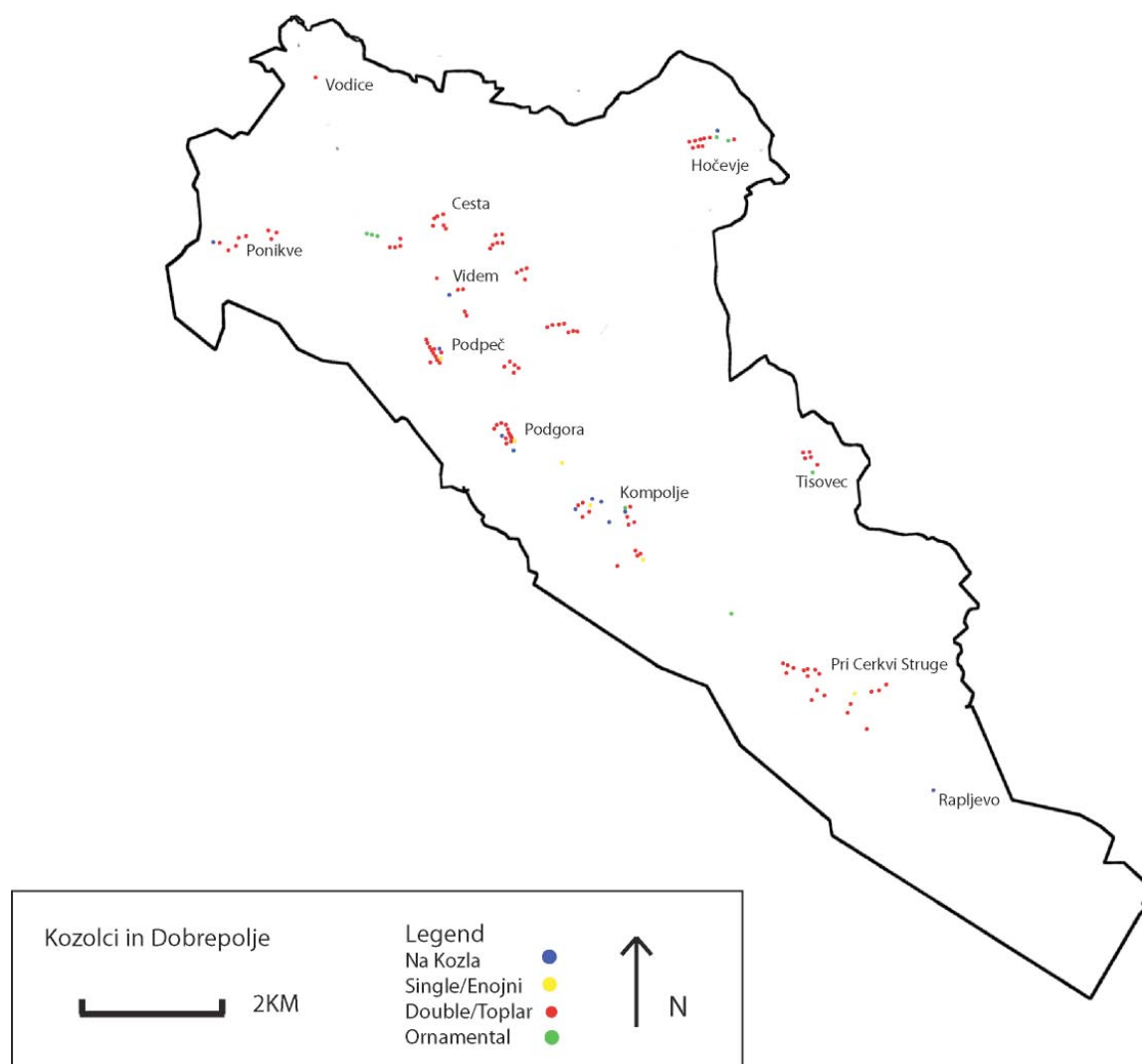


Figure 15. A “Na Kozla” type kozolec. Rapljevo, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.

What was an otherwise unremarkable fixture in a pleasant little garden planted the seed in my head that the kozolec was a implement not just of practical use in a farmer's field, it had another practical use: showing affinity to a place. It struck me that practicality went well beyond the drying of grasses as fodder for animals; it could also be a tool for expressing identity, or more reflexively that that, one's affinity for a place. Just as it could produce food for the barnyard, it could produce space for people to express themselves and that expression need not be as overt as some overwrought, academic discourse on what it *means* to be Slovenian.

The repeatability of the kozolec as evidenced by my field work in the Dobropolje valley (Map 2) wasn't diminished by the realization that the kozolec was so much more than a “mere” practicality. In fact, the realization liberated the kozolec from being some sort of binary “Yes, this is Slovenia” or “No, this is not Slovenia” way of deciding where Slovenia is or could be.

The product of the field work in Dobropolje was two things. First, it was an affirmation that the traditional ways of the kozolec were still evident in the rural settings. There is was no doubt that despite the advent of contemporary technology to dry hay for animals, the kozolec still dominated the landscape in Dobropolje. As late as the 1980s, Slovenian authorities promoted the use of the kozolec on smaller holdings over modern technology because of the effective use of land it afforded and because it affirmed a Slovene way of life (Kmetijski Porocnik, 1980). Second, the kozolec wasn't just a simple



Map 2. Distribution of Kozolci in Dobrepolje, Slovenia

practical tool, but it also wasn't the bellwether of Slovenian identity. It could be played with and adapted in new and interesting ways that were, on first glance, not the actions of people who hold a humble farm implement in high esteem. Quite the contrary, the kozolec, especially that first ornamental one in that garden I noticed, could be reinterpreted and recast in ways that were not necessarily some high-minded cultural practice meant to affirm Slovene identity. The seventy or more years of scholarship on the kozolec in Slovenia had missed the central point of the kozolec: It is a practical implement.

My second case study picks up on this theme of the kozolec as being not an abstraction brought to life, but a practical implement used in different ways. It does not say what Slovenia means; it is what Slovenia uses. But what that use is at any one time is contingent on circumstances.

Tacen

Tacen, a village 6 kilometers north of Ljubljana, sits near the banks of the Sava River, squeezed between Šmarna Gora, an 1100-meter peak towering over Ljubljana's northeastern suburbs, and the Katerina Hills which lie along the northern bank of the Sava. Two distinct features – one geomorphological and one spiritual -- mark its location.

The first is a large rapids on the Sava as it courses through a cut between the Katerina Hills and Šmarna Gora. During the spring melt and rainy summer, the Sava rages through this rapids with a constant roar as it pours out into the Ljubljana Plain. This physical feature alone makes Tacen interesting and attracts people from all over Europe for its excellent whitewater kayaking. The constant drone of the water just down the hill from any point in the village is both soothing and a reminder of the natural beauty for which Slovenia is so well known.

The second feature is Šmarna Gora itself. The name Šmarna Gora means “Saint Martin's

Mountain” and the slopes of this peak have long held both cultural and religious significance for Slovenians. To climb Šmarna Gora is to experience everything central to being a mountain people: nature, striving and accomplishment. At its peak is a small monastery and a traditional gostilna or country inn where both spiritual and physical needs can be met. For many Ljubljana residents, a nice Sunday excursion is a climb up Šmarna Gora to attend mass, bask in warm sunshine and enjoy a meal and a drink or two with one’s family and friends.

Reinforcing the importance of Šmarna Gora to Slovenians in the Ljubljana region is the central role it played in Slovenian history. From its heights one has a commanding view in almost all directions. From here, the monks would set bonfires warning a large part of the Slovenian homeland of impending invasions by Turkish armies. Šmarna Gora’s secondary peak is called Grmada, which means “The Pyre.” To this day, local children still play a game called “med dve ogenjma” – Between Two Fires – much in the same way English children still play “Ring Around the Rosie” in cultural remembrance of the Black Plague some 700 years ago (Smolej 1986).

Tacen is a different place from Dobropolje in that the people find themselves more on the “worker” side of the worker/farmer dyad. The commute to Ljubljana is much shorter with a fast rail line and a direct city bus line connecting Tacen to the city. Tacen’s narrow streets and alleys teem with automobiles in the morning as people head to factories and offices. Still, the cramped quarters of Tacen harbor two working dairy farms with pastures, barns and silage. Sitting cheek by jowl with these farms are small independent and very well kept businesses: an auto body shop, a machine shop, a yoga clinic and family-run stores and restaurants.

Tacen’s natural beauty, small village appeal and proximity to Ljubljana make it popular as a weekend tourist destination and as a bedroom community for Ljubljana’s economic elite. A

home built with worker's wages under Communism during the 1960s and 1970s commands a nice price today. Long time residents are not tempted to move as the enclave has been their family home, in some cases, for hundreds of years, but the windfall of wealth built by a special kind of "sweat equity" does not go unnoticed. As one person put it: "Who would have known that Tito would make us rich?" (Blatnik 2004).

If you look in the alleys, in the front gardens and in the side yards of Tacen, you find in this distinctly suburban setting a very Slovene landscape. Tacen has its share of farming kozolci, but few, if any, are now used traditionally. Rather, the traditional use has been transformed into a new use: the ornamental kozolec. These kozolci do not dry hay as fodder for animals. They do not stand alone behind the barn or out in the field. These kozolci have a different role; they evoke Slovene identity, not in some manner that is prescribed or trickles from the top down. They do the work of identifying a place and identifying with a place by reaffirming that key element of the kozolec: its practicality, its ability to do useful work. The examples that follow from my survey of Tacen are not meant to capture every use of the kozolec in this manner, but they expose some of the possibilities of how the kozolec can be used to express the Slovene identity in a practical way.

As mentioned before, there are traditional kozolci present in Tacen. They are generally not used any longer to dry fodder and are either falling into disuse or are being repurposed as sheds and small barns. Figure 16 shows how one farming family has incorporated a kozolec into their dairy barn complex.

Various implements hang from the kozolec's racks as well as seasonal flowers. The centerpiece is a tradition 'sito' or seive used to sift grain before milling. It holds small examples of everyday tools that a dairy farmer would have used in days gone by: a bullrake, a threshing

pole, a feed scoop, a yoke and a hay fork. A token set of corn ears dry on the racks and other bracketing yokes add balance to the display. Other implements, such as the milking harness to the left, hang on the kozolec as well. These hark back to a time before the automatic milking system was adopted on this farm. Flowers hang in pots indicating the season – in this case early Summer – but also demonstrating the general sense of well-being on the farm. The kozolec is built into the barn itself and is adjacent to the entrance of the home to the right. It shelters the common table where meals are taken during the traditional heavy lunch eaten in the mid-afternoon.

What this tableau offers is a snapshot of the kozolec as a place of communion on the farm. While the symbolism of the kozolec itself is key, the attendant material culture is important as well. The farmers here have found a new way to practice the kozolec and through it they evoke certain beliefs and memories about their place in the world. This practice of the kozolec is the most easily accomplished among Slovenes in Tacen who are closest to that imagined ideal of Slovenian identity – those who are still farmers. The kozolec, in one of its two mentions in English-speaking literature, is said to be directly tied to the Slovene sense of home (Sopher 1989). This Tacen example does project that . sense of home as a place where work, production and everyday life intersect and is evocative of a time when that was the main way Slovene life was experienced. Down the hill toward the Sava River, we find smaller ornamental kozolci. Its everyday use blends the presentation of hanging flower baskets with a small garden shed on the other side. Instead of fodder drying on the racks, flowers, a sign of prosperity and health, are displayed.



Figure 16. Ornamental kozolec. Tacen, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.

The composition of the kozolec directly reflects its larger form, in this case, the ubiquitous single-stretched type, though scaled down to fit the small side yard of this home. The side yard bounds the entrance to a popular hiking path up Smarna Gora. The flowers themselves are a welcoming sight to a hiker, but to a Slovene, their placement on the kozolec is a reaffirmation that this place is Slovenia.

Walking further up that path, a small, seasonal ice cream shop advertises itself using a kozolec complete with a cone piled high with 3 scoops (Figure 17). This use of the kozolec form to support signage occurs everywhere in Slovenia, even in places where the kozolec isn't found in great abundance. Often the centers of villages or crossroads will have a kozolec being used as a community announcement board (Figure 18) or as an advertisement (Figure 19). The kozolec is a tool that affirms Slovenia in these places to Slovenes who notice and comment on the way in which it is being used. The message is both practical and symbolic, connecting in the passerby's mind that the shop is a Slovene place.

Other kozolci in Tacen are used in more metaphorical ways as to show a whimsical take on the state of farming life such as Figure 20, but the preponderance of non-agricultural uses revolve around using the form in different ways. A common use found in Tacen is to take the kozolec form either mimicking its racks or adapting the



Figure 17. Ornamental Kozolec used as a flower trellis. Tacen, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.



Figure 18. Ornamental Kozolec used as a business sign. Tacen, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.



Figure 19. Kozolec used as community signboard. Advertisements include music acts performing at the local fire hall. Skofljica, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.



Figure 20. Example of kozolci available from a craftsman specializing in new construction. Mirna River Valley, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.

frontal elevation to create a garage for automobiles. One of the laments seen in the academic literature is the loss of the traditional art of kozolci building (Berk, *et al* 1993). Less than 20 master kozolec builders are left in Slovenia (Juvanec 2001). During my field seasons, I only saw repair work performed on old kozolci and all new kozolci I observed being built were ornamental in nature. Some kozolci, especially older examples, are being taken down to be shipped either to museums dedicated to Slovenian culture or abroad for display in expatriate or emigrant Slovene homes or farms (Figure 21).

New kozolci are almost always used in the new ways. Figures 22 and 23 are garages found in Tacen. The first incorporates the kozolec with racks along one wall of an enclosed garage. The second evokes the gable end of a doubled kozolec or toplar. It is directly attached to the newer house. The former sits at the end of the house driveway. Both bring back Sopher's idea of the kozolec as being emblematic of home, but are coupled to the contemporary reality that any return to home in Slovenia is done via an automobile. The convergence of the kozolec as a ready symbol of the Slovene home with the modern practical uses of the kozolec is repeated throughout Slovenia. Even mundane places such as a recycling center find their form implemented through the kozolec (Figure 24). It seems that even the hyper-environmental realities of the 21st Century can be handled through the kozolec. Even Tacen's corner store is named "Kozolec" (Figure 25). Thus, commerce, communion, and commonality come together in the neighborhood marketplace.



Figure 21. A kozolec broken down in order to move it elsewhere. Studor, Slovenia.

Photograph by Author.



Figure 22. Kozolec integrated with a contemporary garage. Tacen, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.



Figure 23. A carport mimicking a toplar-style kozolec. Tacen, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.



Figure 24. A “na kozla” style kozolec used as a recycling center. Bohinj Bistrica, Slovenia. Photograph by Author.



Figure 25. The village store “Kozolec” and, in the foreground a kozolec-like religious icon bordering the parking lot. Tacen, Slovenia. Photograph by author.

Across the parking lot from the neighborhood store is the final example of how the kozolec elaborates the landscape of Tacen (Figure 26). It brings together all of the new uses of the kozolec into one place. The tourist association of Tacen has its maps of the various climbing paths up Smarna Gora as well an advertisement for the pub next door hung on the side of the this traditional single-stretched kozolec. The association traces its roots back to the 17th Century and it stores its large wine barrels under the kozolec, bringing them out as kiosks to serve wine and food at the large community parties thrown several times during the year at holidays and for fund raising.

History, commercial production, social reproduction and community values are all on displayed on this appropriate implement that is ready-to-hand as a practical part of the Slovenian landscape. Where the landscape of a place as big as Dobropolje made the extent of the kozolec in space evident, the compact landscape of Tacen -- narrow streets, small yards and boutique-like farms -- make evident the symbolic intent of kozolec in space.

The intersection of two cases

The urge to compare and contrast these two cases, Dobropolje and Tacen, is great. Whereas Dobropolje's physical extent and distance from Ljubljana stands in contrast to Tacen's tiny size and proximity to the capital, there are parallels between the places that highlight their Slovenian characters. Either place is instantly evocative of a Slovene landscape, sharing common elements both traditional and contemporary.

First, both Dobropolje and Tacen continue, to differing degrees, to participate in traditional Slovenian economic endeavors. Where Tacen is primarily a dairy farming



Figure 26. A traditional single-stretched kozolec used as a community sign board, advertising, and storage. Tacen, Slovenia. Photograph by author.

community (inasmuch as it is still an agricultural place), Dobropolje is solidly a part of Slovenia where farming life holds great importance among its inhabitants. How long this is likely to remain the case for Dobropolje is indicated by the vast changes that Tacen has experienced as its dairy farmers have had to face new regulation and pressures under the auspices of the EU. Farming in Tacen will hold on for one or two more generations, but no longer, and this state of affairs holds great import for Dobropolje's longevity. In a rapidly globalizing Slovenia, change could come with lightening swiftness.

Second, the rural/urban nature of both places links them despite differences of scale and articulation. While younger people I talked to over the course of the Tacen study were generally dismissive of the link that Slovenes have to a rural past (especially of the kozolec as a part of that link), the fact remains that link isn't really in Slovenia's distant past. It isn't even in the past at all. The desire to participate in the trappings of both a well-understood, well-ordered rural lifestyle is appealing to Slovenes. The line of cars I passed in the morning on my way to do my fieldwork in Dobropolje is one small example of this participation. My reaction to seeing cars lining up to turn right on highway to go to Ljubljana was to link the rural landscape of Dobropolje to the urban core. I saw economic, political and cultural processes far afield from Dobropolje that elide its identity as an agricultural enclave alone. This realization links Dobropolje to Tacen, because both places share a common future that can and will shape the identities of the individuals that make up their communities.

Finally, to bring the first two points together, the processes of political, economic and cultural assimilation to Europe have stark consequences for Slovenian identity. Each of those types of assimilation guide how individuals form their identities from what are often very abstract or nebulous concepts. In the case of the kozolec, it can be seen in each of these two

communities both as something that makes a difference on the landscape by creating a particular signature look – and also, it makes the two landscapes similar by binding together via its repeatability the people who use it.

In both of these cases I have presented, the landscapes represented are many things at once. They are personal landscapes where the preferences of individuals are represented. When a farmer or a household decides to build this sort of kozolec or that, the force of a person's preferences is inscribed on the landscape. They are ethnic landscapes wherein people who imagine a community make it real via an abstract concept. That real thing is a cultural form that is assumed to be intrinsic to the nature of those people filling the physical and emotional space of that landscape. That landscape is, in turn, a contested one where tensions among people as to “What is Slovenia?” change how that landscape looks. The emotional attachment to a place creates that place and shapes the identities of the people who are attached to it. The realities of Tacen and Dobropolje are bound up in their futures not just as Slovenian ethnic places, but European places.

The elaboration of the ethnic, national and cultural identities that emerge from these case studies are indicative of the influences of global processes on relatively small places. What it means to be someone who lives on the landscape of Dobropolje, Tacen or wider Slovenia is not represented solely by the kozolec, but the kozolec is a practical way of affirming identity, if one so chooses.

Chapter 6 -- Discussion

Interrogating the Kozolec

Vernacular architecture and material culture studies have changed over time from the collection and collation of types and forms to the interpretation and analysis of meaning of types and forms. The subject of this thesis, the Slovenian kozolec lends itself to both types of analysis. It is variegated and distributed across the Slovene landscape in such a way that the sheer numbers of its forms are worth note. It also is imbued with deep meaning for many Slovenes, and serves as a sign of where Slovenia is or where it has been.

While this thesis has these two different traditions of vernacular architecture in mind, I want to ask the question: “Does the kozolec continue to serve as a practice by which Slovenes can express ethnic identity?” Furthermore, does it indicate where Slovenia is going? Has it evolved to reflect the new cultural and historical contexts Slovenia faces?

By asking these sorts of questions, the older, more rational ways of ordering the kozolec as an artifact and interpreting its meaning have to be questioned as well. Does noting frequencies of occurrence and typologies do enough to know the kozolec? On the other hand, can one capture the essence of the kozolec’s meaning via interviews, interpretations and analysis of the landscape? Is a system of semiotics enough and does not this research method fall victim to the same epistemological problems the more positivist count-and-catalog method encounters?

Maybe the point isn’t to make progress within these two traditions of vernacular architecture study at all. It could be that we should participate in acknowledgment of the kozolec, rather than essentializing what it means and attempting to have knowledge of it as a marker of identity. By this I mean, there is a difference between saying “Aha, we are in Slovenia. I see a

kozolec” and “One thing you should not miss in Slovenia is the many kozolci, used on the farm, preserved in museums, and appearing as signboards, fireplace mantels and carparks.” The former speaks to a reality about Slovenia as place that can be known in a pure sense. The latter speaks to a reality about Slovenia as a place that can be known in a practical sense and invites reflection and appreciation of nuance. The theoretical argument that this thesis makes about material culture studies and social science, in general, hinges on this difference.

Knowing Purely

When we develop epistemological perspectives about places as geographers, we fall prey to a desire to know a place in a pure sense. To appeal to *episteme* is to make pure knowledge the goal of a study or experiment. While this appeal has a long history in Western thought and certainly contributes to progress in human endeavors, it causes enormous problems in non-normative situations.

In other words, the making normative of a cultural form such as the kozolec, leads to more knowledge production emanating from the dominant paradigms about the kozolec and its nature. If a field researcher counts each and every kozolec in a valley, he or she can build a knowledge of that place that allows comparison, extrapolation and other empirical analyses to emanate from it. I did this very exercise in the case study of Videm-Dobropolje. Alternately, if a field researcher says there are kozolci in Slovenia, and then begins to talk with people about those kozolci and what they mean, he or she is also setting up a similar situation. The knowledge produced can be subjected to discourse analysis or the like. After some time, another interviewer could come along and ask similar questions producing different results or affirming the first researcher’s work. In a sense, this is what I did throughout this whole course of study, but particularly in Tacen (and to a lesser extent Ribnica) where I lived and talked with people about

kozolci and what it means to be Slovene. That sort of knowledge is also an appeal to *episteme* as it attempts to know a place in a pure sense. It is akin to Sopher's mention of the kozolec as part of a geography of home (Sopher 1989), because his interest in the kozolec was to develop a sense of the pure meaning of it on the Slovene landscape. The metaphor is clear: One *knows* no place better than home. When I talked to people about it and asked about it these certain terms, though, I received quite different answers -- answers that were not part of a pure knowledge of a place and identity derived from that place, but rather part of a way of knowing not concerned with perfectability at all.

It is this different sort of knowledge that I think has emerged from my study of the kozolec and its place on the Slovene landscape. There is no doubt that it is disappearing in its traditional form. Figure 27 illustrates to great effect how the collapse of this traditional use can occur in a relatively short period of time. This particular kozolec was one of the first large toplar style examples shown to me in the summer of 2003. Along the back road running over the Bloke Highlands from Ribnica to Cerknica – a place with many magnificent kozolci – this kozolec has collapsed into ruin. It dates from the late 19th to early 20th century and exemplifies the demise of the kozolec, in its pure sense, as an implement for drying hay and fodder.

Or does it? If we change the terms, this collapse can be seen as something very



Figure 27. Kozolec near Zamostec, Dolenjska, Slovenia.

different and more theoretically useful. My discussion above about *episteme* raises the issue of what kinds of theorizing about a place are going on when we speak about it in terms of pure knowledge. Richard Rorty characterized this sort of theory as a “first order” theory or one that is foundational in nature and requires metaphysical underpinnings to hold fast against analysis (Rorty 1980). The argument against this sort of theorizing is two-fold.

First, it is a diversion from the matter at hand. It does not actually reveal anything about a thing or a place other than to say that a place or thing is either merely approaching some sort of ideal or is not. The discussion is not about the place. It is about the idea of the place. It isn't terribly usefully especially when the project at hand is apprehending something as complex as the social relations among people in an ethnic group and how those relations produce space. Second, it denies those human relationships by making a category error about what a theory is all about. In other words, it confuses idealization with ideal (Rorty 1996).

I use Rorty's ideas here to for two reasons. First, I want to get away from the reliance on post-structuralism and its heirs in social science thinking.⁶ Then, I want to set up an argument about what the kozolec actually is or how it *works* on the Slovene landscape. My argument drifts away from pure knowledge – *episteme* – and embraces its close, but often unseen friend -- *phronesis* -- or practical knowledge.

Knowing critically

Post-modern thinkers, especially Foucault, have taken the project of modern rationality and turned it on itself (Foucault 1966). This has helped release social science from one bad habit: essentializing subjects as those subjects are studied. They took foundational thinking and asked

⁶ It would be wrong to assert that Rorty comes to any different conclusions than Foucault, Deleuze, Derrida and others. In fact, he often cited them as in agreement in different ways. His insistence on the contingency of everything sets him apart though because he was willing to continue to think about how to apply that assertion toward progress and did not throw his hands up as if to say “It is what it is!”

questions about how those types of thinking were formed, what were their histories, and how their applications were manifested. By extension, one can include the range of social science practitioners as a society unto itself, but also a part of societies in general. One of the ways subjects were disciplined and are disciplined by the power of social science is through positivism.

No matter the source of data being gathered and processed by social science, the positive influence of that action in the world was what would be produced once that data became information. In the eyes of positivists, this state of affairs eliminated the overarching effect of metaphysics and the unfortunate clashes that different metaphysics would have with science itself. Since the claims of science were empirical, verifiable and repeatable, they became unassailable and everything else became “god talk.” Instead of attacking positivism as merely making the same mistakes as other epistemologies in the way thinkers such as Popper (1958) and Feyerabend (1990) did, post-structuralists exposed the genealogies of scientific thought.

What became of interest was not whether science worked, since it was quite obvious that airplanes fly, nuclear weapons kill and doctors cure. It was the historical/cultural reasons why anyone would think that way should drive all inquiry. What sort of geographical places, historical settings, genealogical realities or physical influences would produce a person or persons who would make such claims (Barnes 2004)?

While an examination of what sorts of systems that would have produced Kozolec researchers such as Music or Juvanec would be interesting, that is not my intent. It is best to acknowledge those traits, habits and dispositions and then move on to finding ways to either integrate their research in one's own or progress toward something different.

Conversely, the second methodology I claim in this thesis, participant observation, uses a

different type of discourse about its subjects. It does not use metaphysics and explicitly attempts to shift its representation of the world from the objective technologies of science to the subjective field of narratives. Still, I would accuse it of participating in “meta” behavior by raising issues behind the apparent questions that avoid real and tangible effects in the world. Questions as varied as human rights or global warming have such effects, but just being observant of the participants in the narratives surrounding them does not necessarily answer those questions. I alluded to this above when I differentiated between post-structuralism’s “it is what it is” attitude and what I see as a somewhat different attitude that claims contingency as a starting point, but not a foundation. Acknowledging that things are contingent accomplishes that difference, while avoiding essentialized thinking. It also leaves room for addressing problems in real ways that have effect, rather than shrugging shoulders.

Therefore, if I want to move away from “first-order” theorizing, it is best to acknowledge that the surface of any particular issue or matter is important, because that is what causes reactions among people. It is as what Richard Jenkins calls “imagined, but not imaginary” (2003). Because people act as if something imagined is real, those actions have real consequence. We needn't worry about what is going on behind, or what form is being strived for, or what foundations lay beneath any issue. Those “meta” activities aren't even things unto themselves. They are components of what is at issue and often are elevated to a status beyond those necessary for action.

One conclusion that has emerged from this thesis and the research that underpins it is that the kozolec need not be elevated to some higher level of existence and it need only be seen as doing what it does. The conclusions that we draw from what it does and what the people are doing with it – in whatever form that use may present itself – has little to do with any essence of

“kozolecness.” It has more to do with what sort of trust Slovenians are willing to build among themselves.

The Kozolec as a Social Practice

The thrust of this thesis’s argument does not point away from scientific or social research as ways to produce knowledge about the world. Rather it indicates that representing a place as somehow produced by the interaction of its constituent parts is no better than gathering all of those parts together and representing the whole in general terms. It is the “representing” that is problematic, not the desire to see. If we see language, and the kozolec as part of that general term, as a way to build trust rather than represent the world (Rorty 1996), the uses and reasons for the kozolec become much clearer. It could be that ...

a word, signifying an important utensil, is used in action, not to comment on its nature or reflect on its properties, but to make it appear, to be handed over to the speaker, or to direct another man to its proper use A word *means* to a native the proper use of the thing for which it stands, exactly as an implement *means* something when it can be handled and means nothing when no active experience is at hand. (Malinowski quoted in Dewey 1958; emphasis in original).

One temptation would be to say that the kozolec is “merely” what it is, but I want to avoid this pitfall. The kozolec is clearly not a “mere” thing or a trifle no matter the manner in which it is being used. It affects the landscape and marks a place. This is not merely an activity, but it is also not the essence of a place in and of itself. The tendency of certain Slovenes to make real what is simply abstract about the kozolec is an emphasis on representing it as either essential to the Slovene landscape or not. I want to avoid this tendency as I think the metaphysical bases of these uses of the kozolec make the mistake that all purveyors of foundational theories seem to share:

They elevate some constituent part of an object outside its practice, make real what is abstract about that part and then essentialize the part (Rorty 1996).

This tendency could be as simple as a Slovene nationalist using the kozolec as a symbol of national pride or as sublime as a Slovene academic finding essential geometric forms within the accepted body of all kozolci and elevating those forms to demonstrate the genius of their designers (Figure 28). The urge to make real from the abstract is strong. Within feminist and critical theories, it is condemned as 'reification' (Jenkins 2003). Among pragmatic thinkers, it is best called 'hypostatization' or regarding something abstract as a material thing (Dewey 1958).

The actual social practice makes the material thing abstract and, too often, this practice has elevated practical tools to weapons. If we think of think of the kozolec as transmitting not identity, but affinity for one another, it can never be transformed into a symbol that represents an abstraction. It can only be a tool that is used in social interaction. We avoid making something real out of something abstract; we avoid creating a world that is not there.

Conclusion

At the beginning of this chapter, I asked three questions: Does the kozolec continue to serve as a practice by which Slovenes can express ethnic identity? Has it evolved to reflect the new cultural and historical contexts Slovenia faces? Does it indicate where Slovenia is going? The short answers are “No. Yes. Maybe.” I will now expand on those short answers.

My claim is that, through retheorizing the kozolec as a radically practical object on the Slovene landscape, it cannot be used as a practice to reaffirm Slovene ethnic identity, only to express affinity with a place and with each other. It can only be a social practice. With the realities of Slovenia's contemporary political and economic situation so readily apparent,

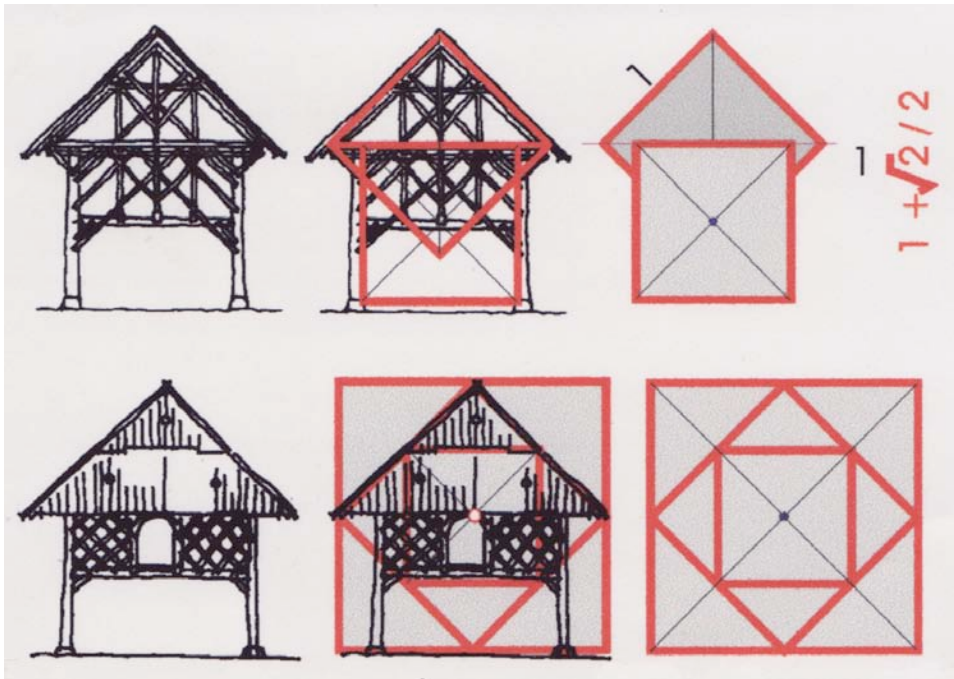


Figure 28. The form of the Kozolec as a perfect ratio. (Juvanec, 2000).

Slovenes are unable to operate at the edge of modernity while using a pre-modern tool as an identity symbol.

Any such attempt has two effects. First, it would reaffirm certain aspects of Slovenia's political culture as well as its position as an unimportant state within Europe. Having certain symbols become essential to an identity that now must subordinate itself to larger forces in order survive is a sign of social desperation. If the European project is to eliminate differences among its constituent states by emphasizing strengths, then the legacy of ethnic identity politics that Slovenia has worked hard to either shrug off or diminish will push Slovenia back into the category of backwater. This is a place it cannot go in order to survive. This first effect is the external one.

Second, there is an internal effect that using the kozolec to mark ethnic identity has. It is evident from my research that the kozolec is used in varying ways and to varying degrees in Slovenia. In some places, it is not even apparent. The effect that using, or theorizing, the kozolec as saying “This is what Slovenia is” becomes one that affirms imaginary differences among those *who are supposed to be the same*. As an item of material culture, the kozolec, following my thesis of *phronesis*, does not say “what,” it only says “where.” We can just as easily see a kozolec in the yard of a Slovene immigrant in Ohio as in the Barje of Ljubljana. The internal effect of the kozolec as a marker of ethnic identity is decoupled from the external effect. This split causes the essentializing. If it just remains a practical tool in a place called Slovenia, then we only need the descriptive “where” not the proscriptive “what.”

By no means is my conclusion that the kozolec should be tossed aside as useless artifact. History matters, and it would be difficult to conceive of Slovene history – a history of a farming people, who have deftly adapted throughout the ages to various political regimes – without

mentioning the kozolec. Therefore the second question I asked above is met with a resounding “Yes.”

While the kozolec is falling out of use as a farming implement in most areas, it is finding new ways to be used in others. This contrast is demonstrated by the competing narratives of Videm-Dobrepolje and Tacen. The former is a classic Slovene farming community hanging on in the face of pressure to change. The latter is the ex-urban Slovenia where people are living lives filled with the European Dream. In Dobrepolje, the kozolec is still used with aplomb, but the fissures are starting to show in that commuting communities are not dropping the kozolec completely, but changing their use from drying hay to showing cultural affinity. In Tacen, the use as an architectural form is more prevalent with garages, porches, flower trellises, signs and ice cream shops all using the kozolec in different and imaginative ways. The odd kozolec still stands in the farmer's field waiting for the first cuttings of spring, but even here those fissures are seen (Figure 29).

These reconstituted kozolci are just the prelude to different ways of saying “where” Slovenia is and lead to my last question: “Does the kozolec and its fate indicate where Slovenia is going?” In short I would say, “maybe.” Already, there are vast efforts underway to preserve the most important historical examples of the kozolec, but I think the future will bring something different. If we deconstruct Figure 29, we can come to a conclusion that makes that “maybe” a very interesting and exciting one.

In the background we can see a single-stretched kozolec: the first step in the history of the production of food in Slovenia. This type is very typical to the Tacen area and easily the most common form found throughout Slovenia. To the right is a large silo that is the second step in our timeline of how animals were provided fodder in winter months. Like the kozolec, it is no



Figure 29. Three ways of preserving fodder for animals found on one farm. Tacen, Slovenia. Photo by Author.

longer being used.

In the foreground are the now ubiquitous *bala* or hay bales wrapped in high tech material that allows the hay to dry but to not get wet during rain storms. This is the present step in the history of hay and drying fodder for animals in Slovenia. I think it is important to note that the older technology is not fully abandoned and when I asked the daughter of the farmer who owns all three of these fodder-producing things described what would happen to the old kozolci and the silo, she replied “My father says that the day his kozolec falls down, his farm falls down” (Bitenc 2004).

The intent is clear. The kozolec is linked to a sentimental vision of what it means to be a Slovene. Even if it has gone past its use for drying hay, it still has the use of marking where the farm is. It is practical. It does not say: “This is what it is.” It says “This is where we are.” We can extend this idealization of the kozolec to the rest of Slovenia, or at least, most of Slovenia. The kozolec still has practical uses as a way to show affinity, or as a pleasant way to have a sign outside a shop, or as way to dry hay in places where it is still needed to do so. None of those things need be elevated in some formal way to represent the world of “Sloveneness.”

In conclusion, the kozolec is a free-standing and permanent way of drying hay and other fodder for animals in a place that acknowledges itself as Slovenia. Let us as non-Slovenes acknowledge it as a magnificent example of *phronesis* – practical knowledge – found among people in that place. It need not be anything else.

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Vita

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