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*Sugnu sempri alla finestra e viru a ranni civiltà
ca ha statu, unni Turchi, Ebrei e Cristiani si stringeunu la manu,
tannu si pinsava ca “La diversità è ricchezza”
tempi di biddizza e di puisia, d'amuri e di saggezza.*

Carmen Consoli, A finestra (*)

(*) Translation: I'm always at the window, looking at the great civilization which it has been/ when Turks, Jews and Christians extended a hand of friendship./ At the time people thought that "Diversity is a value"/ times of beauty, poetry, loves and wisdom.

Acknowledgments and remarks

This master thesis is the result of my work, which is not limited to the time in Trieste, but rather represents the end of a cycle of studies. I would like to thank my family for both the emotional and economic support during these years of research. I would also like to thank all of my old friends who still follow my innumerable transfers around Europe.

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Lastly, I would like to devote a few words to the great city of Trieste. Upon reading my thesis you very well may sense my passion for this town. Although I am originally from this region of Italy, I had never lived in Trieste before conducting my fieldwork. This is one of the most charming cities I have ever visited in Europe: not just from the aesthetical point of view, but in terms of its flair as well. I first started to read and do research about this city as a thesis topic, but now I cannot stop searching for new Trieste literature, created by either famous writers or inhabitants themselves. I am ceased by amazement every single day as I walk through its streets.

Moreover, I would like to also thank all those people who helped me find and obtain research material, those who participated in my research and answered my questions, and to all those new friends who welcomed me and made Trieste yet another one of my numerous “homes”.

Introduction

*'We are the furthest limit of Latinity,'
the Mayor of Trieste exclaimed to me one day,
'the southern extremity of Germanness.'
Triestini love this sort of hyperbole.*

Jan Morris, Destinations, 1980.

This work is a first step towards my understanding of a history, a history that has been silenced for a long time. The relevant historical events are a part of my cultural heritage having been born in this region. Its history involves ancient relations of neighbourhood and disagreements; all past events still represent an obstacle for the peaceful coexistence of both identities currently sharing the same space.

All collected data are the outcomes of a research process, which I primarily conducted for the University of Vienna's European Master of Social and Cultural Anthropology. It was in Vienna where I had the opportunity to enter into this anthropological discourse. Anthropology was not my main subject in my previous studies in Italy, where I learned to study "culture" using a linguistic and literary approach. During my last semester at the University of Vienna, I inquired more about the specific topic of identity and how it is related to certain cultural paradigms, which according to my interests, are connected to Eastern and South-Eastern European countries, or include studies related to Former Socialist Countries.

In an attempt to overcome the 'forma mentis', which focuses my interest on the linguistic aspect, I adopted a general approach to study the multicultural environment in a city which has been the birthplace and melting point of different communities, of which some acquired the status of minorities, and others remained historical communities of the territory. I will focus my work on the nationally recognized minority of the Slovenes, which both previously and today still remain to play a principle role in the historical, political and social conformation of Trieste. There are other minorities and communities that are important for this

cultural environment, such as the Serbian, the Croat, the Jewish, the Greek and others. However, I decided to concentrate on the Slovenian community for several reasons, starting from their status of a minority. In addition, I am interested in the particular ways the community of the Slovenes shaped the complex history of Trieste as a site of ethno religious co-existence, a bridge to Eastern Europe, a “gate” to Balkan cultures and languages and a space of cruel massacres carried out by opposed political forces.

In terms of epistemology and methodology I would like to point out that – in spite of heuristically adopting the “ethnic lens” (Schiller et al., 2006) led by the official and emic dimensions of the Slovenian community in Trieste – I was fully aware and interested in the complex, dynamic and intersecting internal diversity dimensions of persons I have been talking to and spending time with.

The rest of this chapter introduces my approach and outlines the structure of the thesis.

My methodological approach to researching the city of Trieste focuses on the *ethnic belonging* to this city for a plethora of reasons. Trieste is a city where different communities have always lived together. It was the biggest free port of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, thus many different countries aimed to reach Trieste in order to expand their commercial affairs. Thus many different communities settled in Trieste, and the city became a cradle for that very historical multiculturalism which is typical of this city (see Ara e Magris: 172-189; Parotto, 2011: 48-53).

The multicultural atmosphere decreased more and more over the years, especially after the fall of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. It touched its lowest point when Fascism reached Trieste and enforced its power. During this period there was a strong repression towards the Slovenian minority, which has always been recognized as such, but has always been confronted with problems caused by disrespect. By this I mean not only historical “reparations” or socio-economic equality, but I rather refer to cultural acknowledgements and interest from the Italian majority for the “Other’s” situation. After the Fascist period, the scene had of course radically changed, but it is nonetheless apparent how the presence of the

Slovenian minority in Trieste is not sufficiently discussed nor considered, and instead the Italian majority is often stressing its mainly Italian belonging.

After a short presentation of my research methods, the second chapter will then give a general overview of all of the historical communities in Trieste (Slovenian, Serbian, Croatian, Greek, Jewish, Protestant and new communities), focusing primarily on the Slovenian front. Thus the second chapter embeds a general résumé of the local recent history according to the current Slovenian presence in Trieste.

In the third chapter, I will discuss varying relevant theoretical approaches which cover the issues of identity and multiculturalism: identity in a multicultural space, identity and memories, identity and space and identity and language.

In the fourth chapter, I proceed by focusing on the Slovenian minority with a discussion of its status. I compare theoretical approaches as I concentrate on my fieldwork and underline the results gained from interviews, observations and field notes. The chapter is divided in three main parts which also include results and analysis. The fourth chapter is an expression of my circular research process of data gathering, analysis and interpretation.

In the last chapter, I “zoom out” to gain a wider perspective and take a new look at the topic from a wider angle. Furthermore, I discuss the role and scope of the multicultural approach in the Slovenian minority’s integration in Trieste whilst more generally revealing how and which multicultural models are found, considering the historically grown “multicultural” character of the city.

The following questions are general guidelines for my thesis:

Who lives in Trieste and what does *triestinità*¹ mean? How does the focus on the Slovenian minority impact the insights on the discourse of multiculturalism in Trieste? How can we develop a discussion about the identity ‘claim’ for the Slovenian minority? Can the Slovenes in Trieste be considered a minority (not just from a juridical point of view, but from another perspective as well and which one)? More generally, what does integration and multiculturalism mean in the case of Trieste? How can we apply these theoretical tools governed by anthropological, interdisciplinary social science research and political philosophy to this city? Can

¹ About the meaning of *triestinità* see chapter 5 and conclusions.

we talk about multiculturalism as a driving force for the integration in Trieste? And if not, is Trieste able to apply such a multicultural approach in an effort to create an equal status among all communities (in the region)?

I conclude my introduction with several reflexive and personal remarks. My fieldwork in Trieste helped me to better understand this city, or in terms of speaking with Magris, Trieste as a 'microcosm'. Trieste is a special city for me and not solely due to a personal interest, but also due to my own inquiries into the complex history of the city which helped me to understand and deal with particular Triestine habits and behaviours, which quite frankly first struck me as "bizarre".

I would also like to point out that this thesis attempts to give an image of Trieste which may be different from the usual: a second facet of Trieste that its people do know but not always entirely appreciate and endure it; namely, the existence of the Slovenes and how it often remains in the shadows. Through this approach I try to link the way new generations think and act as inhabitants of this diverse city while analysing its historical developments. I describe the common ground where the Triestines create a future based on mutual respect for cultural values and aim at the enhancement of local resources. The multicultural solution is not linked only to the "politics of recognition" (Taylor quoted in Baumann, 1999: 110-120) but to a right distribution of the social and economic possibilities.

1. Research Methods

To begin I give an overview of the research methods that I utilized to conduct the research. The principle tools are: the bibliographical research, fieldwork including participant observation, informal ethnographic and recorded qualitative interviews and a field diary. The circular research process is based on the 'grounded theory' (see Charmaz, 2006: 42-71) approach and consists in a dialectic unity of data gathering, analysis and theory-driven and generative interpretations. I will give a brief description of each method, providing some specific examples and results.

1.1. Interviews

I started my research trying to get in touch with particular associations in Trieste, namely either Slovenian or Italian, in order to establish an initial connection with the Slovenian minority in the city, and secondly to gain more information regarding any cultural initiatives organized within the city. While living in Trieste, I tried to expand my acquaintances through both my flatmates and people I got to know during my first months in the city. Most of them were not directly connected to the Slovenian minority. With this, I mean that they did not have any close relation (linguistic or parental), but they knew people however that do belong to the minority. I did not limit my range to simply just the minority's members living in the city centre. I made the decision to include those people who live outside Trieste as subjects for my interviews (e.g. Karst, surrounding areas, Doberdò lake) as they have a relation with the city and its cultural life. This decision was made out of my previously mentioned endeavour to be responsive to the reality of internal diversity among people that consider themselves as members of the Slovenian minority. Furthermore, and also relevant in this regard, I visited a Couchsurfing² community meeting in Trieste where I got to know three people belonging to the minority, who

² Couchsurfing is a website where people meet up and share news, suggestions about travelling, cultures and many other topics.

happen to have three completely different situations and relations to their ethnic background.

So my first step was to find more 'gatekeepers' according to the approach whereby one is providing participants with a brief explanation of the research and the reasons why it might be important. (O'Reilly, 2009: 5-12). After a first investigation, I drafted an initial questionnaire for a qualitative interview using a structured/semi-structured interview model based on an individual encounter (see Mason, 2002: 62-83). The purpose of the questionnaire was a sequence of information regarding all different areas analysed in the third chapter: identity related to language, memory, urban space and perception of "the Other".

Most of the participants did not agree to have their interviews recorded, but only one of them requested that I use a pseudonym. The interviews were conducted in Italian since all of my interview partners were able to speak and understand this language. I would like to briefly list my interviewees: Alina, Tina, Julie and Zaira, the SLORI³ researcher. In addition to the interviews, I conducted a number of informal ethnographic conversations in the course of my fieldwork observations around the city, at Couchsurfing meetings, during my visits of the Slovenian school etc.

1.1.1. Alina

Alina was born on the Karst, in a village that lies between Prosecco/Prosek and Contovello/Kontovel. She is 23 years old, and she currently lives in Ljubljana where she attends her Master courses. Both of her parents and all four grandparents belong to the Slovenian minority. She attended solely Slovenian schools: from pre-school until high school, and thereafter she obtained her degree at the University of Trieste until finally moving to Ljubljana. The pre- and elementary schools were located on the Karst, and the Science High School was in the centre of Trieste in the S. Giovanni area.

³ SLORI is the Slovene Research Institute, which is based in Trieste.

1.1.2. Tina

Tina is not exactly from Trieste but rather from a small region called Doberdò, which is an area between Monfalcone/Tržič e Gorizia/Gorica. It is surrounded by Italian villages, but all of the inhabitants speak Slovenian. She is 23 years old, and she studies both English and, Slovene Language as well as Literature. She wants to become a Slovenian teacher in Italy in a Slovenian school. She also attended strictly Slovenian schools from pre-school until high school. Her mother is from Ljubljana, and her father is a member of the Slovenian minority and a teacher of history at the minority's school.

1.1.3. Julie

Julie comes from Trieste and defines herself as 'autochthonous'. She is 25 years old, and she studies at the School for Translation and Interpreting the English language, the Spanish language and the Slovenian language. She also attended Slovenian schools from pre-school until high school. Her mother is Italian while her father is a member of the Slovenian minority. She does not have direct contact with her father, but with her grandparents from the father's side. In her case, she struggles with the issue of belonging to the minority, and it is very controversial.

1.1.4. Zaira

The last interviewee, Zaira, comes from the Karst plateau, and she is about 30 years old. She attended Slovenian schools, her family belongs to the minority and she lives in a mainly Slovenian environment. She studied Sociology at the University of Trieste where she began to study in Italian for the first time. She speaks perfect Italian, and she works at SLORI.

1.2. Observations and research notes

My participant observations often had the focus of observing rather than participating. Apart from the ethnographic conversations and interviews, I preferred to look at the situation rather than participate, attempting to establish an overall view of the happenings and instances. Therefore the process of analysing

data rather than creating them (see Mason, 2002: 49-62) was then only appropriate in my case; my exit from the fieldwork did not present any kind of complications.

The perception of my observation of Trieste and its urban texture is different due to the fact that in that case I truly felt as if I was a part of the city.

1.2.1. Examples of observation

I will now report on some examples of observations that I performed during the past few months. I cannot limit all of them to one specific moment in time as I have been in the field since October 2012. I basically stumbled across situations where something or someone could be of interest every day.

The first place I visited was the Karst, more precisely, Slovenian inns better known as *osmize*, and represent a kind of open-house where home-cooked food and wine is served. They are always owned by people living in the little villages along the mountain chain, and they are usually people that belong to the minority at hand. I visited three different inns in Contovello/Kontovel, in Prosecco/Prosek and in Longera/Lonjer. In all three cases the *osmiza's* staff spoke Italian (or the Italian Triestinian dialect) and Slovenian. I noticed that all of the prices listed on paper and pinned on the wall were written in both Slovenian and Italian. The food served there is not specifically Slovenian, but rather more related to the regional area: normally you get a portion cold meat with cheese, eggs and bread; in some cases is possible to find hot food as well, like goulash with polenta (boiled maize flour) or fried squid. I would state that in those places, I met both Italian and Slovenian people: the inhabitants of Trieste love to get away from the city during their days off, to relax and eat good food. The Slovenian people simply enjoy life when there happens to be party in their village: I was there for a Saint Martin feast, which is on the 11th of November in Prosecco/Prosek. I was in two places: one was a kind of kiosk with some tables and benches. The other place was a People's House with typical wind instruments (e.g. trumpet, trombone and bass tuba) hung on the walls, where I then discovered photos, plates and trophies, which were all named in Slovenian. In those cases, my company and I were almost the only Italian speaking people there. While standing at the counter to order, I could only hear

people speaking in Slovenian. The waiter first approached me in Slovenian, and soon thereafter he switched languages. On that very day, there was probably a higher concentration of Slovenian people from different villages. The Saint Martin feast seemed to be an important event, with lots of food places opened, a market and a fun fair. It typically lasts for about three days.

Around the village, most of people I could hear on the street were speaking in Slovenian as well, and for the most part the signs on the street as well as the advertisements on the shops' doors were bilingual.

It was interesting to see how Slovenian-speaking people reacted to the arrival of a hawker, who was a coloured person: even if they were talking in Slovenian at the table they switched into Italian since – as I thought to myself – they know that foreigners living in Trieste do not usually learn their language, and since Italian represents the language of the majority - they switched out of politeness for the outsider. I understood this language switch to be an expression – not only of majority/minority relations – but it also highlights a principally open and sensitive attitude towards cross-cultural communication.

Let us switch our focus and discuss field observation. I am going to explain some other situations where I had the chance to talk about either the Slovenian minority or multiculturalism in Trieste.

I teach Italian to men from Bangladesh and Kosovo, and the institution where these courses are held is called the “Casa dello Studente Sloveno” (House of the Slovenian student): some facilities for Slovenian students are gathered in this building. There is a pre-school, a dormitory and a canteen for the school boarders. The staff is made up by members of the Slovenian minority, which subsequently provided me with the opportunity to talk to them about the situation of the minority in Trieste. All members of staff can speak both Italian and Slovenian, although many of them still have – what I would identify as – a Slovenian accent when speaking Italian. I was having a chat with a woman at the reception counter. She belongs to the minority, but she studied in Slovenia. She is a sports teacher. She compared the current situation within the Italian and Slovenian schools, and she also gave me a really interesting and different perspective about the situation of Italian children who attend Slovenian schools. According to her opinion, the affluence of Italian children at the Slovenian schools can be set out by two factors:

“Either Italians have become more open-minded and they understood that by knowing another language and another culture, they can give more chances to their children in the future. But I’m really sceptic about this! Or it might be that, as many children of immigrants are attending the Italian schools now, Italian children are the minority in the Italian classes. The school has a lack of assistant teachers who could be in charge of giving Italian language lessons for these new students in order for the professors to be current with the school curriculum. Let’s just consider this, how many immigrants coming to Italy would send their children to Slovenian schools? None! So Italians prefer to give their children a certain continuity in their school programs, even if they are in another language”.

I consider this a really interesting point of view, as the Slovenian minority – transforms its role of ‘minority community in the national territory’ and overtakes such a task of offering a ‘safe haven’ for Italian children.

The last conversation I had there was with the person who is responsible for and organizes Italian courses for immigrants, and we had a talk about multiculturalism in Trieste. We were having an informal chat, and I invited her to take part in an interview. She brought me examples related to some problems they were having with the Italian administration when they were organizing a manifestation for inter-ethnic peaceful relations in Trieste. We talked about Trieste and its role in Italy, and more generally about what it means for a Triestine to be – first – a part of this city and, second, a part of Italy.

1.3. Translations

As I have mentioned before, all interviews were carried out in Italian. Due to the fact that the language of my thesis is in English I often had to translate the interviews from Italian into English. By doing this, I used my personal linguistic skills; for the interviews I used the translated text whereas I reported the text in original as a footnote for quotations.

2. Trieste through time: history, social texture and ethnic communities

*La galina con do' teste
mi la go vista svolazar
sora i copi de Trieste
l'alabarda sventolar.*

*E viva l'A e po' bon
xe el vecio moto triestin
che l'A vadi ben, che l'A vadi mal,
sempre alegri, mai pasion
viva l'A e po' bon.⁴*

Trieste is a city where different civilizations have crossed and gathered and is a particularly interesting case due to features such as geographical position, inhabitants and historical importance.

In order to understand this, I will discuss the history of this city in the next pages I will put more stress on the period from the end of the 19th century to the last decades of the 20th century, when a large part of the territories and, more in general, cultural borders have been set out and defined. I attempt to explain how Trieste maintains its magnificent architecture and culture today, how its history has shaped this splendour while giving the city a certain flair, which has a guise of charming decadence and a démodé appearance.

I summarize and outline different historical periods of the city. I follow the line of a book called *Trieste, un'identità di frontiera* (Trieste, a frontier's identity). The book was written by Angelo Ara and Claudio Magris. Angelo Ara is a professor of History at the University of Pavia, and Claudio Magris is a professor of German Literature at the University of Trieste. The main object of the book is to give a short

⁴ Verses of a traditional Triestine popular song. Translated by the author: "The hen with two heads/I've seen it fluttering about/on Trieste's noggins/the alabarda (Triestine symbol) waved./ Long live to A and live good/That's the old Triestine motto/if is A good or A bad/we are always happy, never stress/ Long live to A and live good!". I've to point out that there is a discordance about that "Viva l'A", which might also be "Viva là". That's very tricky, as the first version would probably mention and involve Austria; the other version is, on the contrary, not political motto.

excursus about the history and literature of Trieste, pointing out its undoubted glory.

Literature is one of the major hallmarks, if not the most important characteristic of Trieste. By Magris, Trieste can be seen as the “city made of paper”⁵, by which the reader will be helped to understand how the city, and most of its culture, has been built up, shaped out and defined through its literary tradition. I drop this specific subject, being that literature, even though has a main role for the culture, does not represent the main point of this research that I report and develop in this work.

2.1. Trieste: patterns of coexistence

The local cultural patterns of coexistence in a city represent an decisive factor that is crucial to the understanding of its structure: it is a feature, which does not necessarily visibly appear - that aspect that is voluntarily or involuntarily out of view. In the Trieste case, both sides represent the Italian tradition on the one hand, and all different communities that have affected the culture of the city on the other. We need to give particular attention and relevance to the Slovenian, and more generally, Slavic culture. Cultural equality has been a critical point in the past; through new European politics and the acknowledgement of the “Other’s” knowledge and borders’ opening, all other new faces of the city have been shown off and enhanced after a long period of isolation. If we compare Trieste to other centres of Eastern Europe, we recognize that these same kind of politics have been followed and have been practiced even much earlier than the existence of the European Union. We can distinguish an analogous situation in the past of Fiume (in Croatian Rijeka), which has always been a melting pot of those cultures gathered during the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. (Ara & Magris, 2007: 43-45)

The cultural life in Fiume was based on the acceptance that is both linguistic and cultural pluralism and was spread out among all social ranks. In Trieste, the principal model was the assimilation’s one. Between the Slovenian and the Italian community, *separation* is the first element, which doesn’t necessarily lead to a conflict but rather to indifference. The Slovenian minority has always been the

⁵ Last chapter of the book has been titled “La città di carta”: 187-208.

community that has made the first step towards reaching out to the Italian community. That was the “rule” from the very first moment when they started to establish business and trade with the Italian part of the city, which did not have any intention to step forward or gain any kind of knowledge of the Slovenian language. This did not really change with the times, being that nowadays Slovenian is considered an exceptional language or a surplus and not a normality or necessity in the region.

All this eludes to a centralization of the Slovenian minority in itself: multiculturalism in Trieste is mainly of service to the Italian population, and the city represents a kind of “comb” for the Eastern culture coming through in the Italian world. The Slovenian community, compared to the Jewish-Greek-Protestant community, continues to keep a distance from the cultural scene in Trieste, hardening itself into its own space in order to preserve and save its culture. (Stranj, 1992: 15-20)

This forced an inward-looking attitude of the Slovenians, which finds its expression in the Narodni Dom, the historical symbol of the Slovenian community in Trieste. It was built in the city centre near the train station, wherein the minority’s commercial businesses were located. The Narodni Dom was an all-purpose building where several activities took place and also where many Slovenian offices were established. One of its main functions was to be a savings bank where the inhabitants of the minority (and of the Balkan communities) could deposit their money or could lodge their goods. This building was indeed more than that: a theatre, a café and even a hotel called Hotel Balkan. This main meeting-point for the Slovenian minority has been one of the weakest and more visible spots that unfortunately fell victim to the fascist attacks.⁶⁷

On the 13th of July 1920, after the killing of two Italian soldiers in Dalmatia, the fascist party gathered in Trieste’s main square, Piazza Unità, in order to raise up a manifestation against anti-Italian and pro-Slavic movements. During this protest march, several Slovenian traders’ shops were ravaged. The march stopped at the Narodni Dom, which was then set on fire. After the blaze, it took a long time for the building to be restored (see Pahor, 1990: 148-154). The city of Trieste assigned

⁶ see www.osservatoriobalcani.org

⁷ see http://aestovest.osservatoriobalcani.org/luoghi/hotel_balkan.html

the building to the University, precisely to the Department for Modern languages, Translation and Interpreting. This kind of choice, in my opinion, expresses the perception of this building as a place of cross-cultural knowledge and understanding.

2.2. An Italianità on the border

As asserted in Magris and Ara's book, the Italian-Slavic relations cracked in 1848. The Italian unification movement (Risorgimento) ignited nationalistic feelings and in the Triestine case, this movement led to a self-celebration of the city, which during 1866 was basically breaking any bonds it had with the adjacent Veneto region. This separation created an even greater feeling of isolation from the rest of Italy, and this helped the city to mould both its own specificity and to remark its different kind of *italianità*⁸: an *italianità* on the border. After the first colonies of Slovenians moved to Trieste, a second wave then migrated due to differing ideological principles. The first migrants entered a process of assimilation: they arrived in the new city and simply wanted to be part of its multi-ethnic texture. During the second displacement however, the new population demanded to enhance and increase the value of its own tradition, which was not drawn down by that cultural claim related to the *italianità*. The difference between the Slovenian minority and all other communities based in Trieste was the approach that the Italian majority adopted in relation to them. In the Greek and German communities' case, one sees exchanges based on bicultural and bilingual models since the end of the 19th century, but that is not the case among the Slovenian minority: they constantly lived under Italy's pressure, which tried to assimilate the group both culturally and socially. (Ara & Magris, 2007: 51)

It was not until the beginning of the 20th century that the situation for the Slovenian minority of Trieste began to change radically. During the rising period of Fascism, a huge discrepancy between the ethnic groups in Trieste also occurred. The first year of dictatorship was in 1925, when Benito Mussolini became the leader of the

⁸ With the concept *Italianità*, I mean the feeling of "being Italian", to belong to that specific nation and to its cultural background. This word is mainly used by the authors who write about the ethnic conflict in Trieste (see Magris, Verginella et al.). It is not directly connected to the every-day use of the language, but this concept is used for political propaganda as well.

Fascist movement. The political campaign started earlier though, first during 1919 when the first Fascist squads called *Squadristi*, started their own struggle against the Socialist parties. In October 1922, this power became more visible with the March on Rome when the Fascist party imposed and showed both its power and influence in the Italian capital.

We can imagine the position of Trieste in this context of political and social struggle: Trieste was the last city on the border with the Red forces, a city which was actually almost forgotten by the rest of Italy, and it became the birthplace of the Fascist movement which aspired to reclaim all of those territories that were lost after the First World War. This national ideal called Irredentism (from “unredeemed Italy”) derives and finds its starting point from the popular myth of the “Vittoria mutilata”⁹ (mutilated victory), which fuelled up that general feeling of unfairness after the Treaty of London in 1915.¹⁰

At this point, I would like to highlight Francesco Saverio Vincenzo de Paola Nitti’s speech (1868-1953). He was an Italian economist and political figure who led the Italian government as Prime Minister between 1919 and 1920:

“About the current Adriatic situation there are two solutions: one is a solution of rights, so the enforcement of the Treaty of London (...), therefore, to find a way to conciliate the interests, the tendencies and the aspiration of the Italian folk with the interests, the tendencies and the aspiration of the Yugoslav peoples. (...) we don’t have to create neither in the country, nor in relation to the other population, a feeling of deception. We have really and truly to enforce the Treaty of London in its own integrity: Fiume to the Croats and Dalmatia to the Italians.”^{11 12}

⁹ This phenomenon of the Vittoria mutilata has been coined from the Italian writer Gabriele D’Annunzio. He was the Italian leader of the Decadents and made this historical and national unhappiness one of the main point of its philosophy.

¹⁰ With this Treaty the Triple Entente (France, Russia and Great Britain) offered (among other territories) to change the geographical borders of Northern and North-East Italy (South Tirol and the Adriatic region) in Italy’s favour.

¹¹ I’m going to report here in English just the main point of this declaration, where his point of view emerges from his speech (quoted in bold).

¹² “(...)Della situazione adriatica attuale vi possono essere due soluzioni: una soluzione di diritto, cioè applicazione pura e semplice del Patto di Londra (...) - dunque, trovare modo di contemperare gli interessi, le tendenze e le aspirazioni del popolo italiano cogli’interessi, le tendenze e colle aspirazioni del popolo jugoslavo. (...) né si deve creare nel Paese e verso gli altri popoli uno stato d’animo d’inganno. Se si deve applicare veramente e realmente il Patto di Londra bisogna

He captures the general feeling in Italy at this point in time, or at least that feeling held by the Italian government: an effort to calm down that general feeling of injustice set out from higher political institutions.

This speech made in February 1920, apparently did not stop the fascist forces that were pretty much already settled in the city. As previously said, they set the centre of the Slovenian culture on fire, the Narodni Dom, and with this action they pointed out their aversion to the anti-fascist and pro-Slavic movements which then thwarted the nationalistic reaction.

2.3. Why Slovenians? A matter of political and ethnic power

The antagonism of the Slovenians commences with an anti-imperialistic consciousness, whereby the power, which was actually centralized in Vienna (the former capital of the Empire). The power should have been decentralized and entrusted to national power, which was however not the case. The Slovenians, having always been more faithful to the Imperial power, were then converted to the unleashing reaction of nationalistic parties. In this general fear of “the other” and of the Slavic threat, fascism easily found its ground for punishing expeditions against the national minority.

This period can be considered the shaking point of the peaceful common ground: that is the point when the common desire of the population was to be Italian, and it shattered the cosmopolitan atmosphere, but that was not enough to completely separate the two identities: the Fascist nationalism did not stop the relations that existed between the Italian and the Slovenian communities. Of course that sense of belonging to the city's community was easily lost among some of the inhabitants, who no longer recognized their own environment. This notion is reflected in literature produced during that period: an example is the writer Quarantotti Gambini¹³ (1910-1965) who reported:

applicarlo nella sua integrità: Fiume ai Croati, la Dalmazia all'Italia. (*AP, CD, Discussioni, 1 a sessione, tornata 7 febbraio 1920, p. 993*)”

¹³ Pier Antonio Quarantotti Gambini was a writer and a journalist. He is of Istrian origin and its literary production is strongly influenced by its inclination to the Triestine Free Territory and the disapproval of the ethnic hatreds.

“If sometime I will write my own biography, I would title it *A wrong Italian*. As a man, I feel like I’m a stranger in my own homeland.”¹⁴

This is a clear example of how the Triestines, who first felt like they were a part of the city, could no longer recognize their own space due to the fact that the harmonious sense of living together was destroyed by the dictatorship, which did not leave any space for multicultural and cosmopolitan ways of life.

For many Slovenian authors, among them I focus on Srečko Kosovel (1904-1926), the Karst plateau became a symbolic place for the Slovenian marginalization: the Slavic folk, dominated and forced by the fascist regime, moved out of the city and isolated themselves to the furthest part of the area that they could, which was the mountain chain where villages such as Opicina/ Opčina, Contovello/ Kontovel and Prosecco/ Prosek comprised the last station before the Western border.

After the end of the First World War the conflict hardens even more. During 1941, many demonstrations against the Slovenian irredentism took place. The conflict between the Italian troops and the Slavic partisans increases until 1943 when Trieste and the Venezia Giulia were given to the Third Reich and the territory was named “Adriatisches Küstenland”. National Socialism tried to create its own image of Trieste as the follower of the Austrian empire (Ara & Magris, 2007: 144f).

The Slavic and Italian partisans could not find a ground where to grow a common defence against the new invader: the hardest part was to get over the difference of national ideals and contrasting ideologies.

Basically from year 1943 onwards with the Armistice on the 8th September and after the creation of the Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale (CLN) – The National Liberation Committee¹⁵ – the struggle between the two ethnic groups became a political clash between communist and partisan factions. Even in this political scene, the Italian antifascists did not represent an ally in the fight against the Reich:

¹⁴ *Intervista alla Fiera Letteraria*, in Miglia, *Dentro l'Istria* qn: 169 – In Ara & Magris (2007) *Trieste, Un'identità di frontiera*: 139. Translated by author: “Se un giorno dovessi scrivere la mia autobiografia, la intitolerei *Un italiano sbagliato*. Come uomo, sento di essere qualcosa di simile a uno straniero in patria.”

¹⁵ The National Liberation Committee (CLN) was the Italian Partisan Union founded during the struggle against the German occupation in 1945. It was formed by several political parties of different entity, which had in common an anti-fascist ideology.

“Everywhere, in Fiume more clearly though, this violence is addressed rather to the Italian antifascists, against those who represent an Italianità which didn’t back off the regime and those who are more dangerous for the Slavic nationalism being that they feel morally legitimized to talk on behalf of the other Italy. On the other hand the Yugoslavs, when they attempt to get approvals in the Italian area, don’t scorn the support of fascists who are willing to cooperate.”¹⁶ (Ara & Magris, 2007: 150)

According to the quotation here above, one can fairly state that the political scene was completely twisted: the parties were no longer faithfully upholding their ideals, quite the contrary; the priority was to find approvals and support from different vernacular organizations in order to strengthen their own position among this chaotic situation.

Trieste became a point of interest and not just for the Yugoslav troops, but for the Allies as well. On April 30th 1945, Tito¹⁷ and the CLN assaulted the city from the uplands and liberated it from the German occupation. On the 1st of May, the Yugoslavs entered the city and disarmed the Italian partisans although they did not manage to eliminate the German garrison. On the 2nd of May, the Anglo-American troops reached the city, and the Germans surrounded the territory. In the meantime, the Yugoslav army established an occupation order, set a curfew (people were free to circulate from 10.00 am to 3.00 pm) and adapted to the Yugoslav time zone. This was the end of a nightmare for those Slovenians and Croats who had been oppressed for a number of years by the Italian government. (Vinci, 2010: 7-13, see Sluga, 2001: 133-156)

In July 1946, the Allies and Tito agreed upon a “solution” for the occupied territory: Trieste became the Free Territory of Trieste (ita: Territorio libero di Trieste, slo: Svobodno tržaško ozemlje, cro: Slobodni teritorij Trsta), which was temporarily divided in two separate Zones of Occupation. Zone A contained the city of Trieste and a few municipalities around the city and was under Anglo-American control.

¹⁶ Translated by author: “Dovunque, ma forse a Fiume con particolare evidenza, questa violenza si dirige preferibilmente contro gli italiani antifascisti, contro coloro che rappresentano un’italianità che non si è piegata davanti al regime e che sono più pericolosi per il nazionalismo slavo, proprio perché sono moralmente legittimati a parlare a nome dell’altra Italia, mentre gli jugoslavi non disdegnano, nel loro tentativi di guadagnare consensi in campo italiano, l’appoggio di fascisti disposti a collaborare.”

¹⁷ Josip Broz Tito (1892-1980), politic leader of Yugoslavia, has been in office for different roles from 1945 to 1980.

Zone B contained the towns of Koper/Capodistria, Piran/Pirano, Umag/Umago, Izola/Isola and Buje/Buia. Both zones had their own currency, three languages were officially recognized (Italian, Slovenian and Croatian), but the majority of the inhabitants declared themselves Italians and were subsequently Italian-speaking. This development marks the end of the Italian history in those cities along the Adriatic Littoral. This was not only a political and territorial detachment from the society near Venice, but it also led to an ethnic and cultural rupture, which was the cause of the Italian population displacement known as "Istrian Exodus". According to Ara and Magris, this Yugoslav nationalism - extreme in some aspects - had been the cause of the migration of Slovenians and Croats beyond the Italian border. Now more than ever, during this time period the border was no longer regarded as an example of dialogue and mediation between the cultures, but as the closing line and separation between countries, ideologies and institutions. (Ara & Magris 2007: 154f)

After the separation the most important issue for the Italian majority in Zone B was to keep and preserve the Italianità – the right to feel affiliated with the Italian culture. In 1948, the military administration which controlled Zone A agreed to recognize Italian rights in order to give the entire Free Territory of Trieste back to the Italian government. From 1947 until 1953, the Anglo-American and Yugoslav commandos were committed to find an Italian governor for Trieste: the political scene changed radically with the rupture of the relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, and the situation on the border became more relaxed. (cf. Appendix for a graphic view of the area's division into Zone A and Zone B)

The national issue became more and more politicized: the common idea in the city was to stress its italianità and to weaken the Yugoslavia-orientated trend. The Christian party Democrazia Cristiana became the mouthpiece of this Christian and social movement, which was strongly embedded in the Friuli and Istria zones. The Communist Party, which was largely present in the political scene of Trieste, tried to express and give a voice to the bi-nationality of the city. The rupture between the Titoists and the Cominformists was a primary concern for the Slovenian community, which was mainly divided among three political orders: the Catholic party, the Liberals and the Communists (Ara & Magris 2007: 164-167).

One must also consider the fact that this clash between political forces was stronger and more apparent in Trieste than in any other parts of Italy. It was very

unique as well: Trieste had been “forgotten” for years by the Italian government as it was not successfully able to be a representative figure for those people involved in the political affairs of more powerful nations at that time. During the years of occupation, the harmonization between the cultures had been lost due to conflicting political ideals.

At the beginning of 1952, a mild process of Italianization began to sprout about in Zone A, harming the Slovenians who felt less protected by their rights. Though at the same time the Allies began to practice more neutral politics, which were not largely influenced by the Italian character. During this time of uncertainty between the international political forces, those parties¹⁸ fighting for independence gained much more influence. They proposed a separation of the two states by means of an ethnic line, which would have been the first criterion for defining the border. After the death of the Italian prime minister Alcide De Gasperi¹⁹ (1881- 1954), the separatist solution was disregarded, and the relations between Italy and Yugoslavia appeared to be more relaxed, and the Yugoslavs began to loosen their grips on Trieste as they then entertained the thought of permitting Zone A access to the sea. The official meeting in 1954 - the Memorandum of London - whereby all four forces (US, Yugoslavia, Great Britain and Italy) agreed upon the allotment of the territories: the Italian administration obtained Trieste and almost all of Zone A; the Yugoslav administration kept Zone B and small parts of Zone A. The dissolution of the dissent between Italy and Yugoslavia created a new atmosphere in the city based on the inter-ethnic dialogue. This general behaviour led to a revival of the past's multilingual and multicultural identity, which had characterized the city in the past. With the Treaty of Osimo on the 10th of November in 1975, the agreements made during the Memorandum of London were ratified: Trieste became Italian even though the Triestines did not consider this as satisfying the central government's attention in relation to their city. This laid fertile ground for the creation of a pattern of coexistence, which is nowadays clearly permanent and

¹⁸ Ara & Magris refer to the propagandist action of an Austrian committee for the liberation of Trieste. Generally speaking, these political ideas of independency are based on the Angelo Vivante's intuitions. A. Vivante (1861-1915), journalist committed to the study about the Adriatic Irredentism.

¹⁹ Alcide De Gasperi was the first Prime Minister of the Italian Republic; he set up one of the most important party for the Italian history, the Democrazia Cristiana, the Christian Democratic Party. He became opponent to the Fascism and he is considered one of the founders of the European Union.

plain to see in the city: the *triestinità*²⁰: a characteristic and cultural topos specific to the historic and economic tradition of Trieste. (Ara & Magris, 2007: 185f)

2.4. Historical facts in a nutshell: Italian-Slovenian relations

This chapter began with a summary of Trieste's history from the end of 19th century until the late half of the 20th century. As shown, Trieste a city that has been a crossroad for several cultures and reigns: it was a part of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire until its fall directly following the First World War in 1918. It then became the object of controversy between Italy and Yugoslavia and eventually became a part of Italy in 1954 as a result of the Memorandum of London. Due to the changing and passing of cultures time and again, a unique feeling has formed that of which is peculiar to the city of Trieste.

The political scene, which was always led by powerful nations that occupied not only the city centre, but the entire region surrounding around the city, strung along the smaller groups. The smaller groups were forced to take part in a series of continuously changing events that occurred throughout the 19th Century. In Trieste's case, the Slovenian minority is the most apparent example. In the following chapter another aspect will be discussed as well, which focuses upon the other minorities that tried to find their own space in the confusion caused by the incapability of the new governments to respect and protect all of the ethnic groups after the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

I would like to summarize the history of the Italian-Slovenian border, referring to a document that was recommended by SLORI (Slovenian research institute)²¹: This file called *Relazione della Commissione mista storico-culturale italo-slovena*²² is a compendium that contains a briefly described historical and cultural narration of the period from 1880 to 1954.

I will first outline the period beginning in 1880 until the end of WWI, which is consequently the end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. I will then proceed to the second époque, which includes the Post-War period beginning in 1918 until the

²⁰ For meaning and explanation about *triestinità* see chapter 5.

²¹ see <http://www.slori.org/>

²² see http://www.storicamente.org/commissione_mista.pdf

first year of WWII, 1941. The third portion focuses on the events that occurred during the Second World War (1941-1945), and I conclude with the last conflict period between the two nations that took place during the Post-War period from 1945-1956, which coincidentally marks the rising up of the Cold War.

2.4.1. Fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire: the uncertain nationalities

The conflict between Italy and Slovenia goes back to the formation of the Habsburg imperial power: this new institution did not seem able to set up a political system that appropriately reflected the multicultural character of the territories. The so-called 'Nationalitätenfrage' (Ara & Magris, 2007: 57), or question of nationalities dates back to this Habsburg period, and the Slovenian case is not the only example. We can also apply the same problematic of ethnic definition and preservation to Italy's Southern Tirol case, where a German-speaking community has been embedded into the Italian territory. The process of ethnic, cultural and also political encountering could be summarized as follows: the Italians representing the owners of a particular society, and the other community e.g. the Slovenians as the prime reason of ethnic difference. The community is afraid of its future - just as the previous example of annexation of a region under Italian Reign²³ turned out to be a defeat for the linguistic and cultural rights of the minority (another example on the Natisone Valley belonging to the Venetian Slovenia, which became a part of Italy in 1866²⁴). Generally, the Italian Reign's tendency to deal with national linguistic communities was orientated to the cancellation of the particularisms²⁵, aiming at unification of the Italian nation under a same cultural, geographical and linguistic entity.

Around 1880, the Slovenians set up a fairly stable political and economic structure, capable of holding down the assimilation process, which the Italians were pursuing. As later highlighted, one of the main worries for the Italians was in fact

²³ Reign of Italy refers to that historical period from 1861 to 1946, when the Italian territories were ruled by a monarchic power.

²⁴ Natisone Valley is an area located at the cross border among Italy, Slovenia and Austria. Its inhabitants master four languages (Italian, Slovenian, German and Friulano, a regional dialect). For further information about this topic cf. Cracina (1978), Dapit (1995), Jaculin (2007).

²⁵ Cf. *Relazione della Commissione mista storico-culturale italo-slovena*.

the rise of a Slovenian elite in the political and economic scene. This could have been one of the means to back up their power and importance as a minority in the city. (see Sluga, 2001: 11-38)

The general condition of the Slovenian minority during the last decades of the 19th century improved as their political and economic growth boosted some actions to reduce Italian nationalism. This was however not a sufficient condition which lead to the resetting of the general nationalistic attitude. Even the Catholic Church had been accused of following a pro-Slavic doctrine, enforced by participation of the priests in the political activities of the Slovenian parties. The reforms of the Slovenian and Croatian community addressed the equality of linguistic rights and schools but were not easy to follow through with as the Italian ruling class still held control.

Taking into consideration that the Catholic component, which was more stable in Gorizia's area, never managed to make a compromise with the leading group, the socialist parties tried to establish harmony between the two communities. All the way up until the beginning of the 20th century, the general consciousness of Trieste wafted towards the political idea of the Irredentism, which eventually became a part of the political agenda of the nationalistic party.

The Italians did not consider Slovenian affiliation with the House of Habsburg favourably, as it was now appearing anachronistic in relation to the new political and geographical alignment, which formed after the end of WWI.²⁶

²⁶ About Tirste and the Habsburg see Filippuzzi (1988), Merù (2001).

2.4.2. The image of the Slovenian during the antifascist struggle

After the First World War, Slovenians living near the border were involuntarily encompassed inside the Italian territory and over 290,000 Slovenians were instantaneously cut off from their national territory. The Italian administration was not able to deal very well with the new situation where the non-Italian population was now forced inside of the national border. The Slovenian community, penalized by the general image of the Slavic enemy and brought about as a result the War, were laboured under the illusion of promises, which announced some reforms addressing the improvement of their status and institutions. The general sense of stagnation and no-flexibility between Italy and Yugoslavia was increased by the myth of the “Vittoria mutilata”²⁷ and strengthened by Fascism at the border. July 1920 marks the climax of the spreading out of Italian national expression when the Narodni Dom was set on fire, which again was a symbol of Slovenian culture.

Later that year, the Treaty of Rapallo cut out the geographical and ethnic territory of the Slovenians, and in Dalmazia ²⁸started displacing the Italian population. In the Julian March area there was a massive Italianization of all schools, and all of the Slovenian institutions were removed. In addition to this, the public use of the Slovenian language was banned. This historical period was a witness of a so-called “bonifica etnica” - ethnic cleansing. The Italianization of the geographical names was compelled to the same process led for names and surnames; the emigration of the Slovenian community was supported by the intention to lower the Slovenians to a large and uneducated population by the elimination of their political and cultural elite that could have overthrown the superiority of the Italian population.

On the other hand, Mussolini seemed to be compliant with an incentive by the Slovenian emigration towards the border. For Slovenia, the general opinion about those new “Italian” people coming over was not very welcoming. Slovenians considered them a “bunch of fascists” which would have crowded their country

²⁷ Cf. note 9.

²⁸ Dalmatia is today part of Croatia. It is the coast area around the cities of Dubrovnik and Split.

sides, and that is why in this case there was large opposition in regard to the newcomers:

“After the end of the War, this flow was gradually felt like as competitive. *Refugeeism* was meant as a choice taken by the favoured people. ‘Why didn’t you stay in your native place and didn’t adjust to the new conditions?’ this was a blame of common use: *lahi*, *fašisti* were the prevalent offending adjectives.”

²⁹ (L. Čermelj in Verginella, 2008: 77)

These people from Trieste have always been pointed out as people coming from a place which was far away from certain Catholic values: since the Habsburg Empire Era, the Slovenian minority was always considered akin for language but different for values. (Verginella, 2007: 63f.) This matter was related to the religious area was also problematic: all of those Catholic minority communities, always on behalf of anti-Slavic action, were victims of aggression, which entailed violence against the lower clergy and forced deposition of higher posts like that of Luigi Fogar³⁰, a former bishop of Trieste.

This general feeling of antagonism enhanced the perception of the Italian as a fascist. There was an organization set up along the border called TIGR (Trst-Istrika-Gorica-Rijeka), which was created in resistance to the fascist violence with a similar violent policy: The TIGR was considered a terrorist organization³¹, which caused even higher violent repressions led by the fascists. It built up an association of young people who had more radical ideals in common based on a strong antifascist, more national rigorousness along with violent actions, which included setting places of denationalization on fire (e.g. schools).

As one can read in Verginella's book *Il Confine degli altri*, the regime took scores of TIGR members to trial, who supposedly belonged to the rebel organizations.

²⁹ Translated by the author: “Questo flusso man mano che ci allontaniamo dalla fine della guerra veniva sempre più vissuto come concorrenza. La *profuganza* era intesa come una scelta favorita dai privilegi. Diffuso era il rimprovero: perché non eravate rimasti nel luogo natio e non vi eravate adeguati alle nuove condizioni. *Lahi*, *fašisti* erano di sovente gli epiteti più usati”.

³⁰ Luigi Fogar (1882-197) was the Bishop of Trieste and Gorizia from 1925 to 1936. His open struggle against Fascism was the crucial point of its mandate: he defended the Croatian and Slovenian clergy. He took position against the Lateran Treaty agreed in 1929 between the Vatican and Mussolini.

³¹ Cf. *Relazione della Commissione mista storico-culturale italo-slovena*.

The first trial was carried out in 1930, but the most well-known was the Tomažič trial³² in 1941, when the leader L. Čermelj³³ was arrested:

„This shameful trial shows that Fascist Italy continues the denationalization of the Slovene population, which came under Italian rule after 1919.“³⁴
(Verginella, 2008: 11)

In 1940, many persons who belonged to different social ranks were arrested, and the persecutions covered all kinds of Slovenian inhabitants - deputies of the Communist party in Trieste, intellectuals, farmers and workers. The majority of the opposition group was non-Italian-speaking politicians, who got “trapped” at the Italian border after the Treaty of Rapallo in 1920. The turning point was during the period between 1934-1936, when the communist parties of the two areas agreed on the formation of a stronger antifascist front.

By the start of the Second World War when Germany attacked the USSR, Europe was enshrouded in a bubble of violence. There was now a new dimension regarding the relations between the Italian and Slovenian communities, which influenced future relations. It is important to underscore how during the last century, the connection between both communities had always been ruled by a proportional inversion: the more powerful the Italian community was, the more Slovenians sank into their isolation and segregation.

The declaration of the Persecutor of Trieste was very impressive, which was followed by a nationalistic line created by Fascism:

“A dirty muddle of human reptiles crawling in the shadow in the mud, on this and on the other side of the border, always ready to bite and poison, always there to stoke the Pan-Slavic flame, a kind of Slavic nationalism; always prepared to conceive, to plan and realize the worst misdeeds; every time there to arouse (...) an old race hate, which are fated to extinguish.” (*The detailed*

³² Pepi Tomažič, victim of the first anti-Slovenian trial: he was shot in 1941 in Opicina/Opčina. He was the owner of the historic buffet (Triestine inn) located near Piazza Borsa. His daughter Dana Tomažič and her husband were murdered in 1944 when at home in Via Rossetti. They were honoured by the romance novel written by F. Tomizza entitled *Gli sposi di Via Rossetti*.

³³ L. Čermelj was arrested in 1941, when the Italian troops occupied the Ljubljana's province. At the time he was the director of the Institute for Minorities in Ljubljana.

³⁴ In Verginella (2008), *Slovenes Martyred in Italy*, in *Times*, 20th December 1941.

closing speech of the public persecutor, in “Il Piccolo”, on the 10th of December, 1941 quoted in Verginella, 2008: 23)³⁵

According to what the Persecutor affirms, the blame of this rancour must be laid on the shoulders of the House of Habsburg, which increased the transition of the population, in this case, the Slavic population to the Italian territory. He affirmed that this behaviour led to a perversion of the city's image.

The fascist regime imposed its control on the Slovenian region after the attack in April 1941, when the Italian Province of Ljubljana was established. At the beginning, the occupation's system was fairly moderate although this did not stop the antifascist organizations that formed a new movement called “*Fronte di Liberazione*”, which gathered people from all different social ranks and sharing the common goal, namely a Unified Slovenia. In light of this fact, Mussolini shifted the decisional power to the military forces, who violently reacted with actions of arson, prison camps and general devastation.

After the armistice on the 8th of September in 1943³⁶ the tension between the two communities began to calm down. The Germans tried to mediate for the ethnic and real organization of the territory, even if the antifascist movement's elimination was the driving aspect of their intervention. Slovenians massively participated in the liberation movements; contrarily, Italians did not take part in the actions because memories of the slaughter carried out in 1943 by the Croatian partisans³⁷ frightened them. (see Sluga, 2001: 157-178)

The *Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale* and the *Fronte di Liberazione* found a solution by collaborating and driving the German sit-in out of the region. The most critical aspect after the liberation remained the occupation of Trieste. The area was freed by the Yugoslavian troops who had been welcomed by the Slovenians

³⁵ Translated by the author: “Un groviglio immondo di rettili umani striscianti nell'ombra e nel fango al di qua e al di là del confine, sempre pronti a mordere e avvelenare, sempre pronti ad alimentare la fiamma di un certo panslavismo, di un certo nazionalismo slavo, sempre pronti a concepire, a preparare, ad attuare i più terribili misfatti; sempre pronti a ridestare (...) vecchi odi di razza che sono destinati (...) ad estinguersi col tempo.”

³⁶ Badoglio proclamation, announcing the armistice between Italy and the Allies.

³⁷ On the 8th September 1943 was agreed the Armistice between Allies and Italy. In the same year the annexation of Istria to Croatia was informally proclaimed, the Consiglio di liberazione popolare dell'Istria. A tribunal was established by the partisan forces, who issued plenty of sentences against people related to the Fascism, which led to the mass executions.

and by those pro-Yugoslav Italians. In this period, many executions of anti-Yugoslav opponents occurred, better known as the massacre of the Foibe³⁸.

2.4.3. One nation, one ethnicity: Yugoslavia and the Istrian exodus

After the end of the Second World War, the Julian March³⁹ had been as previously mentioned, divided into Zone A, which was under the Allies' control, and Zone B, which was under Yugoslav command. Throughout the peace negotiations, Italian-Slovenian relations now became involved in the dynamics of the Cold War: a positive compromise for both states was the establishment of a Free Territory of Trieste. Trieste was given back to Italy in 1954 with the Memorandum of London. According to the memorandum, Italians were proud of their power in the city, and Slovenes were granted the right to keep their control over the surrounding territories. Nevertheless, the Cold War signalled a difficult period for both communities as the Italians completely lost the Istrian area, and Slovenians did not have a big city centre like such as Gorizia or Trieste like it did in the past. On the Italian side, there was a general inclination to hinder the development of Slovenian structures, associations, organizations and institutions. It was necessary for the Slovenian population of Gorizia to build up a new city centre on the other side of the border, Nova Gorica, in order to have more freedom for their inhabitants. Even though the widespread behaviour held by the Allies was pro-Italian, they did in fact try to protect the Slovenian minority, giving them rights for the public use of the national language in public including within the schools. Specifically, the Allied Military Government aimed to give back to the Slovenian community those rights cancelled by the Fascist regime. Though on the other hand, they prevented the economic and social relations of the minority with Slovenia. The Slovenian minority

³⁸ The massacre of the Foibe has been led through the years 1943-1945. This is a very touchy topic for the Contemporary history, as it involves incongruities of opinion and individual/collective memory. The Massacre of the Foibe represents still a point of disagreement between the Italian, Slovenian and Croatian opinion about the history. In Italy the Memorial Day of the Exiles and Foibe was set on the 10th February. This led to controversies about equality and historical reparation, particularly in relation to the Slovene ethnic cleansing.

³⁹ The Julian March (in Italian Venezia-Giulia) is a territory which includes the provinces of Gorizia and Trieste, the Slovenian Littoral and the Istria up to Rijeka. It has been coined to rename the former Austrian Littoral.

also had the possibility to be a part of the political scene again: after 20 years of removal, Slovenes could vote for their own delegates during the election of 1949 and 1952. Many Slovenian intellectuals that emigrated in the First Post-War returned to Trieste in order to re-establish their political and cultural power⁴⁰.

Up to the fracture between the Cominform⁴¹ and the Yugoslavian government, the relations between the Italians and Slovenians seemed to improve. After that improvement, the gap between Tito's upholders and the USSR supporters was very much stressed and consolidated, but the two communities once again found themselves in another political clash, which caused new searches in Istria with the aim of terminating all Italian cultural references in the area. The Italian-Yugoslav "brotherhood" that was aspired by the Communists had once again been torn apart.

There was then a new and large wave of Italian migration towards the Italian border because they were afraid of becoming trapped on the "wrong" side of the Iron Curtain. The Istrian exodus is one of the last examples of the multicultural state's dissolution, while the state's model based on the ethnic composition set in. Thinking about Istria's social and cultural texture, one recognizes its ethnic variety that encompasses Italians, Slovenes and Croats. All of these different groups shared a past based on the "other's" culture, considering the "other's" diversity not as an element out of context but as part of their common transnational culture – the *Istrianità* (Ballinger, 2004) . As the ethnic "requirements" played the first role in the building process of the new state, the multicultural diversity of the state based on an internationalist ideology became a weak point for the formation of new national realities.⁴²

Along with the Memorandum of London came the start a new era where Italy and Slovenia tried to cooperate and mutually develop their cultural and economic relations. The border with Yugoslavia could be considered one of the most open

⁴⁰ Cf. *Relazione della Commissione mista storico-culturale italo-slovena*.

⁴¹ Common name for the *Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' Parties*. Founded in 1947, it was the official forum of the international communist movement.

⁴² See chapter 5.

frontiers between the East and West Block: this happened thanks to the presence of both of the minorities in the two countries.⁴³

2.5. Defending a Triestine identity: the other communities through time

Until now I have focused much more on the Slovenian minority as it has been the main object of my research, but as previously said, they were not the only ethnic group, as many other communities became a part of the cultural heritage of the city as well. In the next section I provide a brief description of each historical Triestine community with a short report at the end about the new communities of more recent times.

2.5.1. The Jews

In 1746, a statute sanctioned the official status of the Jewish community in Trieste as “università hebraica”⁴⁴. The Jewish presence in the city grew during the thirteen and fourteen century. Their representatives found their place nearby some new accreditors belonging to small financial enterprises, mostly bankers coming from the Florence region. The rising up of this activity among the members of the community was facilitated by the Catholic religious writ, which forbade the usury: so thanks to their financial services, they obtained more rights and honours as an active part of the economic life in Trieste. According to some disposition made around this activity, almost the entire market of loans and credits was held by Jews by the fifteen century. This commenced an official and recognized profession called “pubblico imprestatore”. A general migration of Jews reached the Triestine city centre: Ashkenazi coming from Northern Italy and Eastern Europe came to find their fortune in this new commercial reality. They also sought out their presence by constructing a Jewish cemetery near the area where they were settled. By the end of the fifteenth century, Frederick III asked Balthazar Duerer, the Captain of Trieste, to reiterate to the Jews their duty of wearing a yellow logo, as was practiced throughout the rest of the Empire (Lancellotti in Benussi, 2006: 12). The first real episodes of intolerance towards the Jews is documented in

⁴³ For the recent history see Cataruzza (2007); Favretto (2004).

⁴⁴ About the Jewish history of Trieste, see Catalan (2000).

1641, when the Triestine Council asked the emperor, Ferdinand II at the time, to expel all of the Jews from the city. Their request- accepted just partially- led to the construction of the Jewish ghetto. In 1695, there were only about eleven families that had been segregated into a ghetto, which was located in the (nowadays) older part of the city centre, by the Saint Giusto's hill slope. High walls surrounded this area where people were forced to go through three monitored doors that were closed from night until dawn. Different from other Italian ghettos, the merchants were able to keep their shops opened on Sunday in Trieste, and Christians were permitted entry with no restrictions. In 1719, during Karl VI's reign, Trieste became a free port. A new fleet of traders and businessmen from the East (Greeks, Corfiots and Jews) characterized the economy of the city. These were the flourishing years of the Hebrew community: they built the first Synagogue, which practiced the German ritual. As of 1735, the wealthiest families lived outside of the ghetto, and the obligation to wear the yellow mark was abolished.

An important example of respect toward the Other's culture was granted by Joseph II, who after the death of Maria Theresa in 1780, launched a political era of reforms that in turn led to the emancipation of the Jewish population. He promulgated the Edit of Tolerance, which authorised the segregated ethnic group to join the social life of the city without having to identify any logo. In order to relieve the Jews from their separation, Joseph II decided to ban Hebrew from mercantile books and set a compulsory threshold of instruction with German as the mandatory language of study. Jews then had access to all of the schools, and the Jewish schools were encouraged to follow the regular schools' programs. In August 1785, the ghetto was officially closed. This new reform led to an increase of the Jewish population with new migration flows of Austrian Jewish families (Brunner, Stock, Bauer, Reiss, Arnstein, Frigessi, Weiss and Eppinger)⁴⁵. The nineteenth century was a thriving period. More newcomers from Austrian-Poland, all whom spoke Yiddish as their mother tongue, joined the trade scene as the assimilation process happened little by little. There was a plethora of Jews who stood for Pro-Italian positions, and they became much more respected when Trieste joined Italy after the First World War. (Lancellotti in Benussi, 2006: 21)

⁴⁵ For other family names see Benussi (2006): 18f.

This peaceful atmosphere was ruined after the establishment of the Italian Racial Laws. Deportations started in October 1943, and the Risiera (rice factory) di San Sabba turned into a Nazi concentration camp. About 1,000 Jews were victims of the Nazi massacre, and many more were deported but were fortunately able to later return to Trieste at the end of the War.

Two main Italian writers were members of the community: Umberto Saba (1883-1957) and Italo Svevo/Ahron Ector Schmitz (1861-1928). In the city the major Synagogue still remains, and there are marks of other Jewish meeting points and places of worship⁴⁶. It is still possible to find kosher food near the synagogue, and there are also some historical shops like the Zampolli ice-cream shop and the patisserie Eppinger, which were both used to provide kosher food for religious feasts back then. The Jewish association has a website⁴⁷, but there are nevertheless several other groups which are also part of the community.

2.5.2. The Greeks

The first appearance of Greeks in Trieste came about around 1719, when Karl VI made Trieste a free port. At that time Greeks did not have a nation; they were subjected by either Venetian or Ottoman domination. Indeed, according to several sources, the really first Greek presence in the city was the merchant called Liberale Baseo, who first arrived in 1714. In 1723, he became Consul of the Greek and Ottoman Nations. When you look more closely at his name, it is clear that his origins are much more than just Greek, as his family seems to be from the Venetian dominance. (Marcheselli⁴⁸) In 1748, there were only seven registered Greek families, and among those we find the surnames of historic shop owners like G. Marulli and G. Prevetto, who sold liquors and spirits by the Piazza Grande, T. Petrato, who owned a coffee shop, and A. Nicco, a jacket and coat seller near the Piazza Grande.

In 1751, at the light of the important contribution of the Greek community in Trieste, they were allowed to build their own Orthodox church. This right is granted

⁴⁶ E.g. the old Synagogue of Spanish ritual in Via del Monte, 8.

⁴⁷ see <http://www.triestebraica.it/>

⁴⁸ see <http://prioratulromanobss.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/lucia-marcheselli-loukas-i-greci-trieste.pdf>, Lucia Marcheselli Loukas was Professor of Modern Greek at the University of Trieste.

to the “Greeks devoted to the Oriental church’s ritual”. At the time the word *Greek*, related to the community, carried a religious connotation and not merely ethnic like it does today. The Greek national belonging was not considered a distinctive sign for the community.⁴⁹

The new church was named San Spiridone, which was common back then for both Greeks and Serbs (‘Illyrians’) since they were considered to be the same religious group. As of 1780, the Greek community began to hold their liturgies separately, and a few years later, the heads of the community decided to build their own place of worship. For to this necessity, a new allotment was purchased and the works started; the church was consecrated in 1787, and the statute of the Greek community was ratified in 1786 by Joseph II.

Trieste and the Greek community have been intertwiningly involved in several historical events: during the Russian-Turkish War (1782-1792), with Austria allied to Russia, the community supported the battle against the Turks. The first martyr of the Greek revolution against the Turks was caught in Trieste, Rigas Velesinilis⁵⁰, and at the end of the Napoleonic wars the community started to build a connection with the upcoming Greek Reign. (Benussi, 2006: 50f)

The Greeks in Trieste shifted their interests to international trade, bank affairs and insurance: and an array of new Greek insurance companies were established. In 1891, when Trieste lost its free port statute, many Greeks abandoned their international trade activities and invested in the industrial sector. The newspaper of the Triestine community called *Imera* (later on changed to *Nea Imera*), became known in the Mediterranean and Balkan area, and has been published until 1912. In the late nineteenth century, the Fascist dictatorship was fairly prominent in the presence of the Greeks: historical buildings, the library, the language school, recognitions for studies about the Greek culture, but all of this came to an end, or at least was enormously restrained by the Fascist regime, which thus led to the school’s closure in 1934. (Bitsani & Kavoura, 2011: 30-35)

The Greek minority today is still based upon the statute issued by Joseph II in 1786, which neither agrees with the Italian nor with the Greek Constitution

⁴⁹ About the Greek community see Stefani (1960), Katsiardi (1979).

⁵⁰ Rigas Velesinilis caught in December 1797, due to a report of a Greek community’s member. He died at the hands of the Qadi of Belgrade

(Marcheselli⁵¹). The Greek community holds an administrative seat, which organizes different cultural events near the Eastern Greek Community.⁵² There is also a Greek language school that is administrated by the Greek government and the Hellenic Foundation of Culture.⁵³

2.5.3. The Serbs

In the first study about the Serbian community in Trieste conducted in 1869, it was declared that no specific information exists before the beginning of the 18th century. The first Serb who reached Trieste in 1737 was a man by the name of Jovo Curtovich, a merchant involved in trades between Vienna, Prague, Odessa and Izmir. The presence of the Serbian community was favoured by the free-port policies of Trieste and Rijeka (Fiume). As previously stated, Greeks and Serbs shared the same place of worship for about thirty years. When their wish of differentiating the ritual according to the appropriate languages in addition to several economic and juridical interests, the Serbian community claimed their official status of an Illyrian community, which grouped those populations from the Dalmatian region to the Balkan hinterland. (Vascotto in Benussi, 2006: 94f)

Their main occupation in Trieste was international trade. They were the proprietors of a number of docks at the Ponte Rosso in the Teresian city area. They owned some private banks and insurance companies as well. The main problem of the Serbian community was the stationary number of its members. While the city and the other communities were growing at a quick pace, the Serbian population remained stagnant in number. Their contribution to the anti-Turkish struggle was very important: the Obrenović and Karađorđević families were two of the main protagonists. They even became advocates of the upcoming Reign of Slovene, Croats and Serbs, which augmented from the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires. Serbian patriots had close relations with Garibaldi⁵⁴ as well, and this influenced the Habsburg's opinion, which eventually got worse with

⁵¹ See note 46.

⁵² http://www.comgrecoTrieste.it/index_eng.htm

⁵³ <http://www.hfc-sezioneitaliana.com/wmt/webpages/index.php?lid=2&pid=1>

⁵⁴ Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-1882) is an Italian national hero; his struggle led to the unification of Italy in 1861.

the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo, which marked the beginning of the First World War in 1914.⁵⁵

The Serbian community is nowadays more related to their religious dimension: the Saint Spyridon cathedral is a symbol of the community. Nearby you find a library, a post school association, the cemetery and several other Serbian cultural associations. In the last few years, there have been some issues regarding the Triestine Serbian community have arisen because they claimed their right to have a Serbian school where new migrants can now enrol their children⁵⁶.

2.5.4. The Croats

The history of the Croatian community in Trieste does not present many clear references. It is fair to declare that Croats were a folk that firmly opposed Ottoman dominance, being that their Catholic conformation was much more widespread than in other Balkan countries. We know that their presence goes back to an ancient time, as it is possible to find some tracks of their ancient language written in the Glagolitic alphabet. (Vascotto in Benussi, 2006: 109f)

The assimilation process of the Croats was mainly facilitated by the distance of their land. I am not solely referring to an assimilation towards the Italian culture, but it is important to consider the role of the Slovenians as well, which created some confusion among scholars studying the Croatian presence in Trieste. It is possible to grant their influence in the Southern part of the region according to some toponyms that are related to the Croatian language. We can roughly affirm that their social structure was set up by activities linked to marine, agriculture and farming. After the installation of Trieste as free port, it became the middle point of communication between the Dalmatian coast and the rest of the Empire.⁵⁷

Dating all the way back to the nineteenth century, the Croatian community became aware of its relevance and improved its socio-economic conformation, introducing professions such as doctors, lawyers and professors, who in turn created a new social structure based on the subsequent associations. Much more relevant is their affiliation to the Narodni Dom, the aforementioned symbol of the Slovenian

⁵⁵ About the Serbian community see Deliĉ (1994); Pirjevec (2002).

⁵⁶ Cf. <http://ilpiccolo.gelocal.it/cronaca/2010/12/15/news/i-serbi-di-trieste-siamo-15milasogniamo-una-scuola-tutta-per-noi-1.19518>

⁵⁷ About the Croatian presence in Trieste see Murković (2007).

(and generally Slavic) presence in Trieste: Croats, Slovenians and Serbians converged in cultural and recreational areas, as well as in the network of the labour unions. Particularly noteworthy is the Croatian bank (Hrvatska štedionica u Trstu) and the insurance agency (Zadruga za osiguranje Croatia). (Vascotto in Benussi, 2006: 113)

The Croatian community has always been numerically evident: their consistency in population also increased at the end of the Balkan Wars in the nineties when a large number of people moved from Istria to the Italian border. Croatian is also a language that is spoken in Trieste, it is recognized in official institutions like the university and in the community⁵⁸ as well..

2.5.5. The Protestants

I decided to include this community because it has relevance within the Italian context. Protestants represent a religion as opposed to an ethnic community, but it is responsible for the convergence of people coming from different, mostly Northern European countries. In the North-East of Italy, the major areas of Protestantism's diffusion were Friuli, Istria, Karst, Gorizia and Trieste. For a short period during the sixteenth century the area between Trieste, Graz, Ljubljana and Istria also seemed to follow the example of several Northern regions, as in Switzerland, Germany, Bohemia and Holland. The Habsburg's reaction against the religious reforms was not obliging. As the Ottomans were warded off, the Emperor took care of the situation in Trieste, providing significant military backup to the Inquisition. This caused a massive number of detentions, questionings, tortures, executions, deportations etc. (Martelli in Benussi, 2006: 123)

The development of Protestantism in the North-East area is majorly related to the figure of Pier Paolo Vergerio (1498-1565), bishop of Koper, who converted to Lutheranism⁵⁹. Juri Dalmatin, a preacher from Ljubljana, was the author of an excellent translation of the bible in Slovenian language, printed in Wittenberg and later spread throughout the Southern part of Austria.

As far as the Triestine situation is concerned, the most prominent figure was the bishop Pietro Bonomo (1458-1546), a promoter of interreligious communication. At

⁵⁸ See <http://www.comunitacroatatrieste.it/default.asp>

⁵⁹ Cf. bibl. Paschini (1951).

the beginning of the 17th century, Protestantism in Trieste was removed by the collaboration among both the Habsburgs and the Inquisition. Although shortly after the inauguration of Trieste as a free port, then with Maria Teresa's liberation's policies and lastly with Joseph II's Edict of Tolerance. the number of the Protestants in Trieste increased once again with the arrival of merchants' families of different religious groups which included Lutherans, Calvinists, Anglicans and devotees of the Reformed Church of Scotland. In 1781, they received complete freedom to practice their religion and carry out its corresponding functions. In 1835, the first Evangelic School was opened, and during that same period two of the most important Protestant families, Ritter and Hausbrandt, founded two of the most important Triestine factories.⁶⁰

The increment of the Protestant community occurred thanks to the arrival of a few families from the Swiss valleys, which had a large influence on cultural and religious life. The Griot family opened the most modern and elegant café in the city, a place of both business and cultural affairs. Thanks to the Griot family is owed for the Saint Sylvester's Basilica, which is the seat of the community. After the First World War, there were also some Waldensians that were the first members of the Helvetic community, and after a short time they established their own religious group, and the two groups are still distinct today.

2.5.6. The Armenians

The forward-looking policies of the Habsburg family regarding the religious differences helped the success of the new free port of Trieste in comparison to the creaking power of Venice. In this context, the Armenians found their place among the multi-ethnic environment of the Adriatic port of the Empire. A number of Armenian monks of the Saint Lazarus convent in Venice decided to move to Trieste. Hereafter the Venetian republic brought about the first difficulties. Maria Theresa recognized the privileges of the Armenian community, which included other people coming from other European areas that were devoted to the Roman-Catholic church (East Christians, Greeks of Catholic ritual and Catholic Turks). There is a lot of information to confirm an Armenian presence in Trieste, which are

⁶⁰ About the Protestan community see Martelli, (1985).

mostly architectural and historical elements. Many Armenian families moved to Vienna, but they had to build the concession in Trieste, the church *Madonna delle Grazie*, a Gymnasium and a royal school as well. The church rituals were held in German. Some Armenian families came to Trieste after the Ottoman massacre in 1915.; Today there is an association called Zizernak that exists to support and protect the maintenance of the Armenian cultural and national memory. (Martelli in Benussi, 2006: 158)

2.5.7. New communities

Trieste, as the rest of the Italian territory, has been characterized in the last decades by an immigration of populations from Eastern Europe, Far East, Northern and Central Africa. During the nineties the largest migration stream came from Albania after the Fall of the Communist regime, even though Trieste became the prominent destination for refugees of the Yugoslav wars. Upon the new millennium in 2000, after the frontiers' opening, a new migration wave from Romania characterized not just Trieste but the entire Italian territory. Romanians form the largest community in Italy, followed by Albanians, Moroccans, Ukrainian and Chinese⁶¹. The Chinese community is quite independent while on the other hand, the other listed communities are involved in international initiatives organized within the country. Near Gorizia in Gradisca d'Isonzo, you find the centre for refugees which hosts people from several countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bosnia, Guinea, Nigeria and Kosovo. According to statistic data, the Serbian community (clearly detached from the other communities) is the largest minority within the Triestine framework, followed by Romanians, Croats and the Chinese⁶². According to a CNEL report, Trieste and its surrounding region seems to be one of the most welcoming places for immigrants to settle and become employed in Italy. This does not necessarily lead to a consequent intercultural integration. This integration still has yet to find its own balance, and this particular issue will be further discussed in the last chapter of the thesis.

⁶¹ See <http://www.cestim.it/> for specific information about statistic data.

⁶² See <http://www.provincia.trieste.it/opencms/export/sites/provincia-trieste/it/menu/documenti/allegati-documenti/Piano-Immigrazione.pdf>

3. Research about identity: how to move through the theory

*"Do you understand Italian?" she asks.
The children look about and answer that they do understand Italian.
The Milanese professor asks again: "You're Italian then, right?".
A girl looks at her puzzled and answers straight away:
"Yes, well... we are Italian citizens, but we are Slovenian".
"Wherefrom?". Silence, the kids look at themselves
without saying a word, and before going back
to their teacher, they answer: "Trieste".⁶³*

3.1. Social identity and personal identity

Among the vast literature of identity and ethnicity (see Banks, 1996; Barth, 1969; Cohen, 1974; Comaroff, 2009), two principle themes can be recognized. On the one hand, we have the instrumentalists who believe that culture can be considered as a commodity - it can be applied to the personal well-being of a person, so it works as means of socialization. On the other hand, there is the primordialist's point of view. According to them, ethnicity refers to kinship and territory so it is pre-given as a part of human nature.

Moreover, as Brubaker and Cooper specify:

"Identity is anchored at one end by the idea of [...] a fix asset, [but] at the other, by social-constructivist conception, [...] identity is a fluctuating, contingent and sometimes quite unstable phenomenon: a process, rather than an entity". (Brubaker and Cooper quoted in Edwards, 2009: 23).

Amidst new tendencies, there are still some social groups that attempt to do away with the social classification. An individual has a natural inclination to categorize its social environment, giving positions and roles to all persons around him/her. Two main components have to be considered by attempting this process: a personal identity and a social identity (see Tajfel, 1978). The personal identity responds to a sort of subjective criteria, which are peculiar to each human being and can be

⁶³ Translated by the author. Quoted from <http://temi.repubblica.it/limes/trieste-dentro-o-fuori>.

categorized into larger groups which are physical characteristics (tall, black, skinny etc.) and temperamental (nice, shy, grumpy etc.). Both of these features are mobile: they can 'leak out' from their category's border and cross into other groups of personal identities. Similarly, this same concept applies to social identity as well, but in this particular case we have to pay special attention to the ethnic identity as a subgroup within the realm of social identity. According to Tajfel, ethnic identity can be described as the ethnic component of a social identity. However, social identity is an individual self-concept, which is constructed in the affiliation process when referring to one group or another. (Tajfel quoted in Liebkind, 1999⁶⁴). In order to complete this discussion about the differences between personal and social identity, I would like to report Bourdieu's concept of habitus, and more specifically *homogeneity*:

"In fact, it is in a relation of homology, of diversity within homogeneity reflecting the diversity within homogeneity characteristic of their social conditions of production, that the singular habitus of the different members of the same classes are united; the homology of world-views implies the systematic differences which separate singular world-views, adopted from singular but concerted standard points. Since the history of the individual is never anything other than a certain specification of the collective history of his group or class, each individual system of dispositions may be seen as structural variant of all the other group or class habitus, expressing the difference between trajectories and positions inside or outside the class." (Bourdieu quoted in Edward, 2009: 24)⁶⁵

We can see here how Bourdieu specifies that the collective history, a wider entity, holds all smaller features of each individual under its wider sphere; the latter considered as a variation of the global whole, which is itself a self-standing certainty.

The second step is to understand the interaction with the "Other". This happens through the acculturation process, which is not always meant as positive. Berry outlines four different strategies of acculturation: integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization. Integration is the strategy which aims at a bicultural identity: the identity is in this case is seen as negotiable, where the

⁶⁴ See in. bibl. J. Fishman (1999).

⁶⁵ The whole passage has been taken from Bourdieu P. (1990), *The logic of practice*. Cambridge, Polity: 60.

person has acquired his/her cultural and ethnic heritage and can process them in order to choose which is useful for the process of approaching a new culture. Here identity is seen as negotiable but not losable, as it is useful and can be applied to both the self's and the group's formation. The next situations which will be described are basically not desirable, as they do not represent the aforementioned exchanging process, which we established is typical of integration. It is through assimilation, that all of the original features are left behind on behalf of a conformation of the dominant group's culture; whereby, separation occurs when no feature of the majority is granted or accepted by the minority, and only the internal culture is acknowledged. Lastly, marginalization occurs when neither the dominant nor the minority represents the group. (see Berry, 1992)

In Bufon (2002) I was able to find a description of several theories that are connected to the concept of ethnicity⁶⁶. They are all part of a wider current of thoughts, which represent the historical base of both anthropology and sociology. In addition to the previously mentioned *primordial and instrumental approach*, we have the *communitarian theory*⁶⁷ (see Durkheim, 1997), the conflict theory, the not-uniform theory, the transitional theory (see Armstrong, 1982) and the modernization's theory (see Connor, 1994; Gellner, 1987).

In T. Baumann's article, he focuses on ethnicity, and A. Smith provided a definition for this concept. According to Smith's definition, an ethnic group, or *ethnie*, consists of six main features that include: first, a *common proper name* to identify and characterize the community; second, a *myth of common ancestry* that includes the idea of common origin in time and place and that gives an *ethnie* a sense of fictive kinship. Then there are the *shared historical memories*, or better, shared memories of a common past or pasts, including heroes, events, and their commemoration. The fourth feature includes one or more *elements of common culture*, which need not be specified but normally include religion, customs, and language. Furthermore, a *link with a homeland*, not necessarily a physical occupation by the *ethnie*, but rather only its symbolic attachment to the ancestral

⁶⁶ I would like to add here a consideration made by Marija Pahor in her article *Hidden identities within national minority groups* (2009), whereby she gives an etymologic explanation of the term *ethnicity*. *Ethnicity* derives from the Ancient Greek *ethnicos*, which means 'don't belong to the main or true religion'. So *ethnic*, sometimes spelled *hethnic*, is linked to the sense of *heathen*, in German *Heide*. The English language revokes the pagan memory of *ethnic* giving a meaning of *other*. *Ethnic* has a function of separating the *us* and the *them/others*. (Pahor, 2009: 39)

⁶⁷ Cf. concept of mechanism in Durkheim E. (1997).

land, as with diaspora peoples; and at last, a *sense of solidarity* that is spread at least to some sections of the *ethnie's* population. (Baumann, 2004: 12)

Contrary to what the instrumental theory claims, the Primordialists state that ethnicity is based on family affiliation and kinship and exists in relations to reproductive fitness. It is essentially nearer to a biological approach, whereas an enhancement of ethnic identity is based upon nature-defined links, and is considered more dominant than the group identity based on social links. (see Isaacs and Geertz quoted in T. Baumann, 2004: 13)

3.1.2. Ethnic/national community and minority

Some consideration about the topic - that Mikolić reports - are interesting and worth our attention as we attempt to provide a proper definition and distinguish the difference between the ethnic and national community. An ethnic community can be a group with or without political awareness, which goes beyond the national configuration. The nation is a national ethnic community, which can have or not have a common ethnic tradition, e.g. United States (Mikolić, 2010a: 639f). We have to consider the 'sense of choice' as well, which prompts an ethnic group's decision to become a part of a nation: this means to choose between 'the status quo and the future for the sake of a unified nation state (Pahor, 2009: 38-43).

Let us now focus on the national groups, which aim to become a nation. They usually tend to enhance their ethnicity as an independent value. The main problem for ethnic groups, which usually maintain a political power given by the leading elite, is that they are often on the opposing side of the majority, which has control on the rest of the population and in turn, denies the Other's expression of identity. Buffon marks the *difference between the ethnic community and the minority*: an ethnic community is a historical formation, which unifies its population on behalf of a common set of traditions and a common language. On the other hand, the minority is a social group whose cultural, ethnic and racial characteristics outline a distinction from the rest of the society in which the minority is a part of. The 'rest of the society' wields a cultural, socio-economic and political discrimination over the minority.

We can find a more traditional meaning similar to this definition, which is more linked to social studies. It regards ethnic minorities as specific social groups with cultural and biological features, which claim recognition of its rights- obstructed or suppressed- by the process of assimilation.

In the century following the First World War, when questions related to minorities arose, different kinds of ethnic groups became involved in varying dilemmas related to national affiliation, self-definition and power. The *first type of minority* is the autochthonous minority, which has been settled in a specified area for a long time. The *second type* is the Other-origins minority: they are the consequence of displacements between either urban or rural areas, so they are national, or between nations, and thus international. The *third kind of minority* is the non-territorial one, which is not related to the territory but to other factors such as religion (e.g. Jewish, Roma). (Bufon, 2007: 47-54)

In today's society, which is basically a melting pot where different cultures and histories are mixed up, trying to define their rising process carried out along the thin border which divides the societal spaces of one ethnic group from the others, it is not easy to understand which group is considered a minority and which is considered a community. Buffon outlines some *criteria*, which can be used as an *evaluation* system. Those criteria are: demographic, territorial and economic dimensions, which include a level of cultural inter-dependency; a level of cohesion in the community; socialization processes (marriages and social life), a common system (social relations), political behaviour and ethnicity, religion and ethnicity and relations between the ethnic community and society (education level and employment). (Kohn quoted in Buffon, 2007: 48)

In order to define what a minority is, one must follow a set of guidelines and consider aspects such as the socio-political position while at the same time underlining the fact that the concept of a minority is not that it is opposed by the concept of a majority, but rather by dominance. As a result, in order to understand the relationship between the two, we have to consider the dichotomy *minority-dominance*. We have to be careful with other factors as well, like the numeric dimension, which is an influent detail for the recognition of the minority's rights. Lastly, we need to consider some geographical and historical aspects, which are elements related to both the minority's inner structure and sense of belonging.

In order to better understand what a sense of belonging means, it is essential to apply these criteria to my research. This matter touches upon not just the anthropological but also the psychological field, and the general complexity of this characteristic should be distinguished between subjective and objective perception and representation of the belonging. In Bufon we find four different classes: both the objective and socio-psychological sense of belonging, objective but not socio-psychological sense of belonging, socio-psychological but not objective sense of belonging, and lastly neither socio-psychological nor objective sense of belonging (Bufon, 2007: 51f).

All of these various approaches have *several implications* for the minorities, whose integrity can be threatened by *conflict*, *compromise*, *separatism* and *adaptation*. With new communitarian politics, for example with the establishment the European Union, national minorities always play a more important role in international relations in their countries: they even grant more recognition to interethnic territories as a symbol of a common ground.

3.2. Identity and space: place for the definition of the Self

In order to corroborate this theory of double-influence between the two realities, I would like to report the ethno-linguistic analysis of the word “border”, which I found in several articles. Let us focus on the word “borders”, or “frontier”. In Latin, the word *frontaria* or *fronteria*, means those regions at the edge of governed territories. There is the same meaning in other languages like Italian *frontiera*, Spanish *frontera* or in French *frontière*. The Germans first named borders with the similar-meaning word *Mark*, but after the 12th Century, it switched from the word *Mark* to *Grenze*, deriving from the Slavic word *granica*, which means borderline. This linguistic change shows us how the meaning of the territorial definition has changed: the linear conception of the border, and not the undefined idea one had with the areal conception entailed in the Latin concept, is the basis for the building-up process of modern-day States. This then led to a variation of the territorial definition, based more upon an offensive political system, rather than a defensive one. (Buffon, 2002: 22-27; Anderson quoted in Brunet-Jailly, 2012: 635)

Therefore, the meaning of the border is not stable but variable as it follows socio-economic changes and embodies the modification of social texture as well. In other words, the socio-spatial differences and components are constantly adjusted. This fact can be seen in the 18th century by observing the division of political borders in opposition to geographical features in the territories. At the beginning of 20th century we recognize the tendency of ethnic cleansing (see Banks, 1996: 164-169), forced assimilations or eliminations (e.g. Fascist regime in Trieste, Istrian peninsula, Greeks in Turkey, German in the USSR, Jewish communities and so on.) In the fifties, there was an intersection of horizontal borders (between territories) and vertical borders (functional, in the social system), which are crystallized in the entity of nations. After the eighties and nineties with the creation of the European Union, there has been a widespread understanding of unfairness of the borders, and subsequently, an attempt to reduce and overcome them⁶⁸.

3.2.1. Spatial definition: a human-made decision

Referring back to the first example that I reported on from Bufon's article which explains how natural borders are not fixed and defined but more transient and inclined to a subjective interpretation, it is fair to say that all borders are human-made. In this example we see the postmodern anthropological commitment to establish how borders are made in terms of its symbols, signs, identifications, representations, performances and stories (Van Houtum, 2012: 675).

Besides this postmodern interest in the meaning of borders, there is a wider problem that more commonly found within anthropological schools and direction, which is namely the necessity of defining an "Our" in opposition to a "Their". Thus, why does a We necessarily need a contrastive They in order to define a social space for the creation of an identity? (Baumann & Gingrich, 2004: 19-27)

In view of this last topic being more related to the mere meaning of "identity". I will now highlight some points of an article written by Elfie Rembold and Peter Carrier

⁶⁸ It is important to distinguish is the different studies of borders and studies of boundaries: the research about the border is focussed on how the border is socially constructed and the boundaries studies want to research about the location of the border. About this see Heigel in Strassoldo & Delli Zotti (1982); Johansson in Strassoldo & Delli Zotti (1982); Minghi (1991); Basso (2010).

(2011), who give examples of the theories of Doreen Massey and of Arjun Appadurai. Doreen Massey, a geographer, considers the relationship between the spatial element and the identity quite positive. According to her theory, there is a growing and “progressive sense of place” (see Massey quoted in Rembold and Carrier, 2011: 365). Massey’s thoughts are related to her feelings that people now do not actually need to coexist in the same space in order to create a common identity, as it is nowadays possible to establish and connect different memories beyond borders. In the same way, Appadurai tries to disconnect identity from space and introduces the concept of *locality* which, in contradiction to *nationality*, is related to the “practises of local subjects in specific neighbourhoods” (Appadurai quoted in Rembold and Carrier, 2011: 366).

By defining an identity, personal or collective, space is not just considered a geographical entity, but it is through space that the distance between cultures and ethnic groups can be expressed and enforced.

3.3. Individual and collective memory: social means of group identity

Let us now consider parts of memory as things, persons and feelings. I do not add “happenings” to this list since events always involve some or all of the previously listed components with a memory. There needs to be two actions in order for something to be or to become constituents of a personal being, or of a culture. Memories first have to be handed down and, secondly, need to be validated as an integral part of a certain individual or collective entity.

The handing-down of memories can be made by members of the same group e.g. a member of the family like the grandmother or grandfather, older persons in the group, persons who know more about the topic, etc (Colangelo, 2000: 20). In this particular case, we pay special attention to the internal passing-on, which is not the only possibility. In fact, let us consider an external integration - carried out and achieved through books, TV programs, newspaper or speeches about the same topic made by other experts (see Sedmak, Sussi, 1984). We then have to consider what can be validated or contradicted. This process entails having to carry out the second step, the validation of a memory. Private memories are usually not subject

to these kind of evaluations - grandchildren do not usually examine the grandparent's memories, as they take them for granted. We can think about our own personal experiences. If we hear a story told to us by an old woman who lived during the WWII period or who witnessed a particular historical event, we typically do not doubt the memory's truthfulness.

The duality identity-memory also includes the element of tradition. We agree that tradition works as a tool for ethnic communities to recollect memories, which influence the formation of identity. Maurizio Bettini, an Italian anthropologist and philologist, declares this trilogy an important point that we should first consider when discussing such kinds of debates. In his article *Against the Roots. Tradition, Identity, Memory*⁶⁹ (Mulino, 2012), he argues the concept and trend concerning how when one talks about "roots" one is in actuality talking about tradition. According to his point of view, the present no-difference, or no-peculiarity, of a country's culture that is related to another culture, takes the new generation to find their references in precedents, or rather in the past of their nation (Bettini, 2012). Bettini does not aim at the abjection of the tradition as a possible element for building and identity, but he is against the agreement that an identity must derive from a tradition:

"...take for granted that the identity is a tradition's product, devolving to the past to life practices, ways of thinking that we got from the past the power to tell us *who we are* in the present."⁷⁰ (Bettini, 2012: 6)

He proposes to introduce a new concept of *horizontal tradition*, to substitute the vertical tradition as the opposite idea of the "roots"⁷¹. Through horizontal tradition this univocal idea of the "right" tradition would not exist, rather the possibility for different traditions to coexist would. From this idea of the tradition as not imposed but created, it is possible to state that the identity can be "learned, thought and discussed". In this acculturation process it is possible for the memory to serve as a principal actor, which in turn is distinguished in *three types*. As previously stated,

⁶⁹ Original title: Contro le radici. Tradizione, identità, memoria.

⁷⁰ Translated by author. Original version: "... dare insomma per scontato il fatto che l'identità sia un prodotto della tradizione, delegando con questo al passato – alle pratiche di vita, ai modi di pensare che ci vengono dal passato – il potere di dirci *chi siamo* nel presente."

⁷¹ According to M. Bettini, the image of the roots reminds of a tree which can't move from its ground and if uprooted dies.

we have an *individual memory* and a *collective memory* but Maurice Halbwachs adds the *historical memory* as well. For Halbwachs, the collective memory is an internal memory and peculiar of a group. The historical memory collects all other memories in order to design a unique pattern (Halbwachs quoted in Weinrich, 1998: 612-614). The collective memory is linked to the group and to the social frames, while the historical memory is free from such relations. The collective memory, since it is related to the social frame of the surrounding environment can be defined as *social-constructive* (Bettini, 2012: 9-11). Traditions should therefore be the result of a dialogue, the outcome of an agreement. The results depend on both of the generations' will to communicate and to build a dialogue. (see Tschuggnall & Welzer in Wang, 2008: 313)

3.3.1. Cultural memory

To further discuss *cultural memory*, I offer the following definition by J. Assmann:

“[...] cultural memory, a collective concept for all knowledge that directs behaviour and experience in the interactive framework of a society and one that obtains through generations in repeated societal practice and initiation.”⁷²
(Assmann, 1988: 128f)

So we can see that according to Assmann's theories, cultural memory is not mainly the result of an operation related to biological evolution, but rather to societal processes. Everyday communication is a clear example of cultural memory: it is usually based on the oral communication between two or more partners, and the exchanging of information motivates these actors; thereby their actions are subordinated by some particular communication rules. Communication is a fluency of information, which is exchanged by different informants: we can then say that communication does not adduce any fixity: this stable point is then offered by cultural formation. The following step in the creation of an identity in the acculturation process is to *objectivize* the culture (Assmann, 1988: 126). By objectivizing a culture, a group finds its 'raison d'être'. That means to find stable

⁷² This quotation is taken from the article collected in the New German Critique Journal. The article was originally published in Assmann J. and Hölischer T. (1988) *Kultur und Gedächtnis* Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp: 9-19.

points in order to afterwards perform their identity through the shield of a collective experience, which is then established and acknowledged by all the group's members and, more generally, from the majority.

Assmann lists six features that we need to recognize for the *crystallizing process of a memory* and for its integration /approval:

- *Relation to the group*: awareness of relations which links all members. This can be based on a positive assumption or on a negative (*we are X* or *we are not Y*);
- *Capacity to reconstruct*: reconstruction happens either on the mode of potentiality of filing information, or on the mode of actuality, so that when we objectivize a memory, we give it relevance;
- *Formation*: transmission in the culturally institutionalized heritage of a society; e.g. to build images and concepts, which can figure as a central thread of the following point;
- *Organization*: consolidation of the communication for occasions whereby the cultural memory has to be confirmed, introduced and passed along;
- *Obligation*: a clear system of values and significant differentiations which accommodate knowledge and symbols;
- *Reflexivity*: which can be practice-reflexive (interprets common practices e.g. rituals), self-reflexive (it explains, distinguish, criticize, control etc.) and reflexive of its own image (it reflects the self-image of the group in relation to its own social system). (Assmann, 1988: 130-132)

Through the process, which I have attempted to explain and summarize above, we now have a better idea of how modality first becomes a *part of the past*, afterwards is then crystalized in a *collective memory* and subsequently is a *part of a group heritage*, and is lastly converted into *cultural memory*. Two other memory functions are the directive and the therapeutic functions. By using the *directive function*, a group of older people in the community can revoke the past and make the memory something still vivid in order to ensure the continuation of it. This pass-on process can turn into a sharing of the memory with the intent of creating a connection between younger and older; or it can be a means of judgement for the present, led by a nostalgic and moralistic attitude. Concerning other purposes of memory, I

think that each society should be able to use the memory as a *therapeutic practice*: through the over-explained process, the crystalized memories and particularly traumas, which all become a reference to representation of a specific experience that can be 'stigmatized' by the mnemonic tradition and norms of remembering and forgetting, and in addition be used as therapeutic healing⁷³ (Wang, 2008: 310f).

3.3.2. Individual memory and forgetting

I have yet delved into the topic of *individual memory*, as I personally think that it probably follows some rules, which are more related to the single person. Personal memories have their own peculiarities and the case record would be excessively broad in order to be described in this brief theoretical chapter. It would therefore need many considerations involving insights from the psychological research field. This however does not mean that I did not consider or analyse private memories, as they are surely a part of my research, but I tried to put and fit them into a more general social frame, which namely unifies the Slovenian group and the multi-ethnic Trieste. In addition, we cannot accept the contribution of the individual memory to the collective memory. There are several approaches, e.g. individual memories can be connected to a larger collective history and feeling⁷⁴.

Lastly, we have to consider *memory loss*, which can cause a cultural change as well: I am referring to the phenomena of 'Forgetting'. It has the same peculiarities of its contrary: the memory, as the cultural factors concur to transform what we want to remember and what we want to forget in order to remove what does not coincide with our identity. According to H. Weinrich, *three forms of forgetting* exist: first we have *amnesty*, a publicly recognized release of someone's fault; then there is the *merciful forgetting*, which is more linked to the religion sphere, and lastly the *prescription*, or the expiring of a trial (Weinrich, 1999: 615). The collective memory is important because an individual memory can survive and be better sustained by the collective memory, which works as a barrier against the individual or collective forgetting.

⁷³ For the therapeutic function of the memory see Cole (2004).

⁷⁴ Cf. Wang (2008: 311) about how individual memory is related to the self or to the collectivity.

3.4. Language and ethnic implications

There are several philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists and linguists who have studied the interaction between the construction of identity and the linguistic formation, among all others we find: J. Joseph (2004), who recognized the existence of this interest around the 1980s; linguists like J. Gumperz (1982), who collected important material about language and social identity; P. Kroskrity (1993), who linked those two aspects with the historical issue; C. Calhoun (1994), who talked about the politics of identity; and D. Hooson (1994), who discussed how identity is related to geography.

In order to understand a more general discourse about the meaning of identity, it is important to understand the connection between individual identity and that of a group. This connection, according to J. Edwards (2009) is based on *continuity*. Joseph (2004) reinforces this thesis, highlighting how inseparable language and identity are, being that language is a basic element of the human being. Language functions as an identity marker and can assume different forms like dialect, standard language, accent, slang etc. All of these features of the language sign the affiliation of a speaker to a specific group, which can be e.g. a political community, a religious group, an ethnic group, a national group or social class.

Over last few years, this conformation has changed via the deconstruction of political borders and the creation of a multi-ethnic prospective. This can lead to two different solutions: according to A. Smith (1991), it is possible to create those post-national solutions, whereby more identities can be held at the same time, giving a possible dimension of the transnational or cosmopolitan culture. Even if the human being and all of its surroundings face this kind of change, the national identity still remains today a central point with an ethno-symbolic power related to myth and memory⁷⁵. (Edwards, 2009: 22f)

When we consider a group of people linked together by linguistic factors, we take several areas of the linguistic fields into consideration: dialect is a feature of speaking abilities, which gives peculiarities to some members of the largest group of one national language. Edwards defines 'language' as

⁷⁵ Cf. the *mediating structures* in Berger (1977).

“First, it’s a system, which implies regularity and rules of order. Second, this system is an arbitrary one inasmuch as its particular units or elements have meaning only because of users’ agreement and convention. And third, language is used for communicative purposes by a group of people who constitute the speech or language community.” (Edwards, 2009: 53)

These are theoretical issues, which actually have more to do with linguistics rather than an anthropological field of study. Nevertheless if we recognize this arbitrary set of rules among all its elements and its communicative purpose, it is clear to see that there are various relational, psychological, behavioural and semiotic elements, involved and are also peculiar to human beings and anthropological research.

3.4.1. Bilingualism

Dialect received a marginal importance in my research, but during the fieldwork I could notice how important the aspect is related to dialect and the creation of a local cultural identity. Edwards considers ‘dialect’ as a ‘variety of a language that differs from others along three dimensions: vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation (accent)’ (Edwards, 2009: 63). Through the dialect, the speaker can give a mark of personality, a distinctive feature of either the ethnic or national group. In my research we are going to see how important it is for the ethnic minority I studied, to first have access to the Triestinian dialect and how their own Slovenian dialect is marked and influenced not solely by the national language, but also by the Italian dialect.⁷⁶

The linguistic abilities, which a minority’s members and transnationals carry, are usually distinguished by *bilingualism*, or *multilingualism* in some cases. In relation to this matter, it is of the utmost significance to think about the possibility of a bilingual person to belong to two different cultures. If one speaks a certain language, we usually put that person into a specific community or ethnic group. We have to understand on the one hand that if this person actually belongs to the group of speakers, and on the other hand if the linguistic fluency necessarily corresponds to the affiliation of a specific group. In my opinions, that is probably

⁷⁶ About minority and group belonging see Edwards (2010).

an approach, which is more linked to old-national thinking, whereby one language is connected to one nation. Nowadays, if we think about different situations as in the European Union (e.g. German for Austrians) or in the Ex-USSR (e.g. Russian for Ukrainians), we notice how the knowledge of a language is not always related to the sense of belonging to a cultural group. According to Grosjean's (1982) studies about language and behaviour, bilinguals themselves sometimes feel that language choice draws out, and draws upon, different personalities (Edwards, 2009: 249).

More interesting for border minorities, we have to consider the discourse related to nationalism (see Banks, 1996; Eriksen, 1993; Gellner 1997) and the conservation of the language. As Edwards states, it is hard to deny that linguistic continuity is a basic factor for the cultural support: a bilingualism can be related to a kinship factor, or by a longer period of living in a new culture. Both these are subject to an acquirement - which according to me is involuntary⁷⁷ - and related to language maintenance. They can be compelled with ethnic or national struggles: in the minority's case, they are forced to inevitably distinguish and split the communicative and symbolic function of the language, so that both the vehicular (practical) and the representative function successfully (Edwards, 2009: 255).

3.4.2. Forms of linguistic survival

In Fishman's in introduced the primordialist approach to language and ethnicity, which states that neither ethnicity nor mother tongue nor even identity can be treated as things, commodities, that one can choose and discard according to the own will (see Liebkind in Fishman, 1999: 140-144). For my work it is important to consider the possible survival technique, which the people of the minority uses in order to preserve their linguistic diversity. These processes of preservation have been caused by historical and social changes (e.g. the Fascist dictatorship) and worked also as enforcement of the ethnic consciousness.

⁷⁷ If we consider a children ability to learn a language, it is surely related to an involuntary acquisition. In the case of an adult, they choose to learn a language, but the learning process and the mother tongue level is a mixture of self- commitment learning process and a involuntary acquirement given by the time in the foreign country and the familiarity with the language.

That is an idea which, on one hand, helps and support the multicultural ideal - as the individual is not forced to leave his/her identity apart but can still integrate in the new society with maintaining its cultural background. On the other hand, I think this excludes a possible change of identity, which in some cases can represent a solution for the *performing act* (see Goffman, 1959) e.g. the social mimicry (see Romania, 2004). The *social mimicry* is usually used by those communities, which are trying to integrate into a new society. That is however not the case of the minorities, which are able to maintain their segregation status in order to have their own schools and institution. If their 'differences' are not physical, they can use the social mimicry technique in order to not be recognized as members of the minority: language is one of the first abilities to improve in order to succeed in their intents. As we previously saw, during the nation building process linguistic communities had to face an unequal division of power and racist behaviours. The racist exclusion on the linguistic base is called "Linguicism" and consisted in the prerogative to determine whether speakers of particular languages are allowed to enjoy their linguistic human rights (see Skutnabb-Kangas in Fishman, 1999: 57; Edwards, 2009: 205-223). The Slovenian minority in the Triestine area, is a good example of linguistic genocide that occurred due to imperialistic views, which were carried out during Fascism. What are the conditions are there for minorities, or ethnic groups, in order to promote, lose or revive their language? According to H. Giles's, this action can be individuated in the *ethnolinguistic vitality*: with this concept he wants to describe a group's ability to survive a distinctive collective entity in an intergroup setting (Giles & Johnson quoted in Liebkind: 144⁷⁸). The ethno-linguistic vitality is set out by three factors: the *group's status*, the *group's demographic strength* and its institutional support and the *control factors* like education, media etc.. He then added a few other factors that are more related to the psychological and inter-relational sphere, like the *perception of the group boundaries*, the *multiple group membership* and the *majority's use of power* (Liebkind in Fishman, 1999: 145). The first three factors are more related to the social conformation of the minority, so the number of its members, their consideration in the society, the position that they hold in the society they live in, and consequently what kind of access they have to the institutions among the

⁷⁸ See Fishman (1999).

minority's member capacity. The other factors are more related to the relational connection between the majority and the minority: we should then consider the perception of boundaries, thus the distance between each other, in order to understand what they can or cannot do by approaching a member of the dominant group. There is a further problem for those people who actually belong to both groups: those are results of a successful integration process, as they do not know insofar how they can define themselves as a member of one or of the other group - thus they can bring elements of the A group to the B group and vice versa. Lastly, all of the factors listed above have to be compared and analysed considering the *power of the dominant group*, whereby "dominant" by definition has a power over the others. This element can influence all previously listed factors starting from the demographic constitution of the minority group to the relation between one or another ethnic group.

4. Case study: the Slovenian minority in Trieste

"And Slovenia? Show us where Slovenia is, your fatherland!"

(the teacher says to me)

*I stretch out my hand, I put out my finger and
then point it out the geographic map,
where Slovenia is. Suddenly I don't see it anymore:
it was hidden under my finger.*

"And where are we then?" asks the teacher.

With my fingertip, I go back to the Italian border.

*Now I feel sure, I point to Slovenia
and move my finger towards the Italian border.⁷⁹*

Marco Sošič, Tito amor mijo

The primary goal of this chapter is to describe the current situation of the Slovenian minority in Trieste. My perception is that calm interethnic relations are based on the mutual isolation of the two communities, which are in many ways living on their own without crossing or stepping into the Other's "green".

The theoretical approaches of the third chapter are the basis upon which the empirical analysis is built: the semi-isolation of the ethnic groups, the forming processes of identity based on alterity/diversification and the possible coexistence of an Italian and Slovenian element for a bi-cultural identity of both the individual and the community.

4.1. Semi-isolation of ethnic groups

The Slovenian minority is considered an ethnic group that is defined by its ethnic features and affiliations. These features have to be placed into a wider border-transiting context, whereby their position is geographically certain - they are in Italy - but ethnically they are "Slovenians-in-Italy" and not Slovenians in Italy or

⁷⁹ Quoted from Sošič M., (2012) *Tito amor mijo*. Trieste, Comunicarte. Translated by the author.

immigrants in a foreign country. As many of my informants said, Slovenians do feel as if they are a part of the local culture albeit the majority does not always perceive them positively.

Personally, I would define the Slovenian minority as an ethnic group with no national but local awareness (see chapter 3.1.2.). From the interviews I conducted, it is difficult to understand the general feeling regarding the national belonging to the beyond-the-border country. According to Alina, the members of the minority are to a certain degree a part of the local bicultural identity even though there is a stronger attachment to the Slovenian component. According to Tina, who is much more involved in a closed community, there is not much space allotted for the 'bicultural' element, but rather to the locality as a main reference point among the inhabitants.

If we consider Tina's case, thus analysing the situation at Doberdò's valley, we can see how the isolation of the minority is even more noticeable than the minority on the Karst plateau. Doberdò does not have much of a public connection to the main cities like Gorizia and Monfalcone. They can be easily reached by car, but they are not as reachable as other areas are (e.g. Opicina/Občina). This gives to the local community a mark of exclusivity, which reflects the sole Slovenian solution and lends to the Doberdò community a status of semi-isolation:

"In Doberdò you are sure all people speak Slovenian, so you just go straight ahead with the Slovenian language even though everyone can actually speak Italian as well." She goes on about this: "There are not a lot of Italians living in Doberdò, they are probably just few of them, even though now things have changed: there's more integration between the two communities." (Tina's interview)

She asserts that nowadays there is more integration between the two communities than there was in the past despite the fact that the majority of the population's ethnical character remains Slovenian. From the interview I gathered that it is not possible to claim that there is homogeneity in the demographical formation of the Doberdò's population as it is basically solely Slovenian, and the next bigger towns that are located nearby are Gorizia and Monfalcone. As a matter of fact, Alina offers us the same explanation:

“Do a lot of Slovenian people live in the Karst?” [By Slovenian I mean residents that reside there whether they are Slovenian or not, which includes inhabitants that are actually Italian citizens].

“That is a difficult topic. I don’t mind being called Slovenian because it is what I basically am. We are considered a minority, but actually if you go up there to Karst, we aren’t a minority anymore!” (Alina’s interview)

The ethnic conformation of the villages on the Karst plateau is, as Alina confirms, mainly Slovenian. There we see how the minority switches to the majority and is dominant. This is a different perception of the power relations, as the minority has to learn how to deal with their acquired freedom of movement in an area where their status has a different value.

In addition, it is important to mention that the demographic conformation in the Karst has changed over the past few years. It has been used as a segregation area where separation occurred naturally (all villages are on the higher part of the plateau). The Slovenians were those people living in all of the surrounding areas, and the Italian dominance was settled in the city centre (Ara, Magris, 2007: 140f). This area did not have a remarkable value in the housing market due to the fact that living in Karst has always been associated with being part of the minority at hand. This has nonetheless changed in the last few years, and Italian people are now moving here. This changed the demographical composition and helped the two communities find common ground where they were able to create new relations based on peaceful exchanges.

4.1.1. The younger generation: stepping forward

As we can see, the interethnic encounters between the groups have increased over the years, particularly after the fall of the Fascist dictatorship. Here below is an excerpt from Alina’s interview:

“How is your relation with the Italian community?”.

“That’s not a problem. I can communicate with all people because nowadays that’s not discriminating. If I walk around in the centre with a friend, I talk Slovenian. For my grandmother though, that is still shocking: she normally speaks Slovenian, but when in Trieste, she does speak quietly so that no one can clearly hear that she talks in her language. I think my grandmother still has a traumatic view of the city till today. (Alina’s interview)

Alina refers to a non-discriminatory attitude of the Italian dominance towards the Slovenian minority. Hence we notice how there is a different relational approach to the Italian minority, which changes from the older to the younger generations. She uses her grandmother as an example, who is still scared and shocked and avoids speaking Slovenian while she walks around the city centre.

On the other hand, we can see what Tina told me about the attitude of Slovenians toward the majority:

“Tina, what’s your attitude regarding the Italian community? Would you like them be more interested in relation to the Slovenian language?”.

“We live in Italy, we can’t demand to go to Gorizia, enter a shop and talk directly to the shop assistant in Slovenian.” (Tina’s interview)

According to what Tina said, Slovenians do not demand that Italians speak Slovenian with them, as they are in an Italian speaking area, e.g. in Gorizia. This marks a difference between the attitudes of other minorities in Italy, e.g. the Germans-speaking population in South Tirol. They are, at least historically, the same result of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire’s fall: namely, a one language-speaking population which got trapped in a different language-speaking country. Or as M. Pahor defines them in her article:

“‘smaller and marginal’ or ‘late’ nations (which) lacked the right of self-determination or even to exist”. (Pahor, 2009: 37)

Contrarily, if we take their political power into consideration, we see how the Slovenian minority has always been more restrained than the German. This however probably has more to do with historical causes (the German-speaking population was not persecuted for ethnic reasons). The German-speaking minority has more rights and recognition in their territory, which also in turn helps this group act as an actual part of the local cultural heritage.

4.1.2. Surviving in the Other's culture: memory and respect through generations

As I reported some theories linked to the assimilation process, we considered the example of the social mimicry. According to M. Pahor, the Slovenian minority in Trieste has an attitude towards the dominant culture that is partly different from the Slovenian minority in Carinthia (see Reiterer, 2003). We first need to consider two different kinds of "assimilation": the passing and the mimicry. As M. Pahor affirms, it is not easy to distinguish between the two, as *passing* is meant to be a proper assimilation, which entails a renunciation to those features determinant for ethnic recognition. Through the *mimicry*, the individual does not entirely renounce his/her ethnic-distinctive features but rather hides them in order to 'normalize' his/her status in the new society. M. Pahor discusses passing as a process driven by the power hierarchy that forces the individuals to wish and prefer to hide their origin or completely abandon it (Pahor, 2009: 46f). She uses the inhabitants of the former Yugoslavia as an example, in order to explain the difference between *ethnic origin* and *ethnic orientation*. This is an important difference for my research as well: according to her example, an inhabitant of the newly formed Yugoslavia would declare himself/herself as a Yugoslav citizen but would have never renounced his/her identity given at birth. This choice does not contemplate the heroic standing for minority rights but prevents the disappearing of an ethnic group, in order to avoid becoming 'contaminated' from the other culture (Pahor, 2009: 38f). According to me, the term "contamination" can be perceived as strong and negative, but by avoiding the "contamination", the new community still maintains its ethnic belonging, which is not subjected to homogenization.

Let us consider these issues about mimicry and passing in my research. Alina is fairly sure of her identity. She at least does not feel the necessity to hide her Slovenian origin even if she feels attacked from a member of the dominant community:

"I had a personal experience with a woman who told me on the street to stop talking that awful language. I answered really bad to the lady, and I'm not going to repeat again it now".

“Why do you feel sorry for your answer? Is this respect for an older woman stronger than your rancour?”.

“I’m respectful to older persons, that’s the first point. I wasn’t supposed to have respect of that woman’s thoughts at all, but I have respect for what happened, maybe the history in its wider mechanisms, what we can’t control. But that still doesn’t excuse what she said and what she thinks. Times have changed, and she should have understood this” (Alina’s interview)

I noticed a slight expression of disappointment while she was recounting this episode, which according to her was part of a long list of other similar stories. The fact that the old woman warns her not to speak that language is related to the historical background in which that woman has grown up in. Somehow Alina regrets what she considers a bad reaction, trying to figure out that the despicable comment is not an example of the woman’s way of thinking but rather a consequence of a wider historical circumstance inherited that she has inherited. I then had to ask her further to clarify, and I tried to connect this sense of regret/anger to wider historical memories, which, according to me, steer the reactions of the minority’s members when ‘attacked’. This reaction is recognized as over-the-top if related to that particular person who offended Alina, but she points out that the same reaction would not be as big of a deal if addressed to a younger person that were to show such intolerance toward the Slovenian identity. Tina has a similar opinion, whose anger is more directed to the younger generation, which, according to her, should not even be involved in this cultural clash, which belongs to a past time:

T. explains to me how nowadays things are much easier for the new generation, even though there are some episodes of racism: this kind of episode shouldn’t even exist: “I could understand maybe if an older person believes such things. I don’t excuse them, but they come from a time when this conflict was open and in some cases they were convinced to think what they thought”. But she doesn’t accept this among the new generations: according to what T. says, there’s no valid reason to be against them, they are not in that conflict period anymore. Their feelings are like a kind of older grudge, which continues to exist for anachronistic reasons. (Field notes from Tina’s interview)

This is a common widespread thought of disagreement regarding younger people’s behaviour that follows old principles, which Tina defines here as ‘anachronistic’. According to all different interviewee’s point of view, this is a

normal reaction for a member of the minority: their effort is to get more respect for those rights that a minority should take advantage of.

Considering the situation of the Triestine Slovenian minority, we see how history plays a role: Trieste has always been a point of cultural encounters, and as many people says “at the very end of the three words which it belongs to”. According to several narrations and particularly that from M. Pahor’s article: Slovenians got their power in Trieste over a long period of time, as the city has always been considered the heart of Slovenia, and a well-known Slogan “Trieste belongs to us” is sometimes advertised and considered among Italian crowds to be the cause of an issue (Pahor, 2009: 52-55). When I conducted my interview at the SLORI⁸⁰, I saw that my interviewee became really annoyed when I hinted at this well-known saying ‘Trieste belongs to us’⁸¹.

First of all, I introduced my research topics and my goals, and she became somewhat nervous when I used the movie ‘Trst je naš’ (Trieste is ours) as an example of a possible form of Slovenian nationalism. She complained that I was still marketing such a meaning that was given to the film: according to her, that nationalistic significance is completely anachronistic and superficial. After shortly discussing this matter, and after I reassert my full objectivity about the matter, she calmed down and we began our interview. (Fieldnotes during the interview at the SLORI)

The reaction of interviewee Z. was very clear: she wanted to give a further explanation of this famous sentence, protesting against its usage in relation to facts happening in the present.

Through my interviewees’ declaration one can reconstruct this state of the minority, which I define as *semi-isolated*. With this adjective I refer to a status of integration in the formal context of the city whereby the minority has its own institutions; today they are informally recognized by all citizens of Trieste with a minority status, Inhabitants are at least assumed to be aware of their existence, even though they do not have necessarily direct contact with the minority. The minority stays up in the Karst, and they are used to being a part of the economic

⁸⁰ SLORI is a Slovenian Institute of Research located in Trieste, which deals with sociological inquiries regarding the Slovenian minority in the city. Here I had an interview with an association member.

⁸¹ In Slovenian: “Trst je naš”.

and political scene of Trieste, but their cultural recognition as a part of the city's history, at least in my opinion, is still "under construction". Many steps have been made to move forward, especially after the fall of the Iron Curtain, but the common Italian community sentiment views the Slovene-speaking person (or Slavic-speaking) as different.

4.2. Negative affirmation of identity

I now delve into the topic of the affirmation of the Slovenian identity in the Triestine urban context. I am particularly interested in the influence that the delineation of individual identity can have on an ethnic group's collective perspective. I take these two aspects, the individual and collective identity, as two factors dependent on the same condition. So if we concentrate simply on the single element of the collective, and if we assume that we can part off the wide whole of the collective identity, it will become clear how my following thoughts can be confirmed by considering how the single individual deciphers his/her own relation in regards to the Other in order to describe his/her identity's features peculiarities.

According to Ara and Magris (2007), one characteristic of the identity shaping process in Trieste is the dependency on the negation of the Other's identity. The same concept about the relational definition of identity - developed through processes of *orientalising, segmentation and encompassment* - is explained in Barth (1969). I am going to clear up this concept in relation to my research. The Slovenian group, the collective dimension, is designed by the individual's affiliation to an ideal, which theoretically has to be opposed to the other group's ideals and characterizations, in this case the opposition of the Italian group. As it is not possible to define a common identity, which should be entailed in the so called *triestinità* (see last chapter), the two groups follow a path of encountering which is based on outlining distinctive connotation, rather than common elements. In my opinion, this is the moment when *individual intimacy and consideration encounters the opposite cultural nature*, and *through its negation*, it primarily builds up an individual identity; and thus if adding another individual's being, a *comprehensive collective awareness* forms. I divide the individual and the collective component, as I personally think that, in this case, that first, individual negation and secondly, collective confirmation of the group's negative approach, play an interesting role.

This process of the ethnic and group definition is the response to a syntax whereby if we have two elements A and B, A will almost always be defined as the negation of B; so *A is what-B-is-not*. (see Bauman & Gingrich, 2004: 19-27)

In order to assign this contrastive view of the individual and group's identity, we first need to consider different factors that belong to the historical field of studies, so that both the individual and collective memories - and more generally other issues which are related to those matters of space, language etc. as A. Carli, E. Sussi & M. Kaučič Baša (2002) state - we have to consider *the process of identity-formation as a process of social negotiation* which individuals enter into, modify and reconstruct on the products of social consensus: the point of this assertion is the individual approach to change, which leads to social consensus, and thus a collective agreement. (ibid: 35f)

4.2.1. Slovenes, Slavs and S'ciavi

I will first analyse the image of the Slovene by the dominant ethnic group in Trieste. In order to give a first image of the "Other" in Trieste, we have to address some back-up factors, which belong to stereotypes, to the history and to the general attitudes of the Triestine culture.

So what are Slovenian stereotypes and where do they come from? To answer this question one must first analyse the actual denomination of the 'historical'⁸² Other in Trieste: 'Sloveni' (Slovenian), 'Slavi' (Slavic) or in the Triestine dialect *s'ciavi*, which actually sounds more disparaging (see Ballinger 2004; Baskar, 2006; Fikafak, 2009). If we commence with Edward Said's definition of the West and agree that that it is a geographical and cultural entity, which is detached from Eastern diversity (see Said, 1979) in the European reality, Western Europe distinguishes its differences from the Balkans and the Eastern hemisphere. If we consider this locally, we have the Italian Triestine culture that intentionally keeps its distance from the (Triestine) Slavic and Balkan culture (see Ballinger, 2004: 34-36)⁸³. We can then also consider several mental and cultural links where the "Other" is seen as barbaric, savage-like, alien, backwards and inferior (Baskar,

⁸² I'm pointing out here the adjective 'historical', as I'm referring to the Slovenian Other which is the counterpart par excellence in the historical interethnic conflict in Trieste.

⁸³ About the anti-Slavic racism see Collotti (1999).

2006: 191), like a subject that should not be used as an example but should rather be exploited and, in some cases, educated. According to Baskar, in the Triestine area created a conception of “good Slavs” (e.g. Czechs) and “bad Slavs” (e.g. Slovenian), which originates from the Habsburg Era. Slovenians and Croats have tended to keep a distance from the idea of belonging to a Central European reality. They have preferred to be a part of the Balkan area, which in the eyes of the Italian community, is much more similar to a ‘savage’ condition⁸⁴. (Baskar, 2006: 190)

According to Joel Kotek’s study about the border town, Trieste presents several features that are peculiar among towns in such specific geographical positions. It has two or more names, it is usually a contested place, where territory is the cradle for two or more (national) dreams. The place is possessed by the past and is divided by different memories (Kotekt quoted in Baskar, 2006: 192). So we can start by analysing the generalization that is adopted by the dominating party of the Slovenians (or more generally the Slavs) in Triestine dialect, *s’ciavo*;

I don’t think that in Triestine it is acceptable to say *s’ciavo*. I don’t think that Slovenians appreciate this, so it would be better to not use it, being that it has such a meaning. I don’t think that its use can be justified because of the dialect (...) (*) If I call a black man a dirty nigger (*sic) I can’t justify this by saying that my traditions, my language and my sensibility are the reasons that I say that because it is linguistically right to do so. ⁸⁵ (discussion in an internet forum)

⁸⁴ I would like to add a note about the sense of belonging to Central Europe or Balkan area for Slovenia. According to some opinions, which I’ve heard from some Slovenian informants and friends, this “being part of Balkan or Europe” is still nowadays a high pitched discourse in Slovenia. The creation of a Central European feeling is probably still under construction, it doesn’t exist clearly in the people’s geographical conception of Europe. Slovenia and Trieste found themselves in a middle-point position between two main cultural pole, which according to my opinion, are not necessarily every inch in opposition.

⁸⁵ Translated by the author. Original text: Con tuto el disprezzo che go per le persone come Rodolfo Lombardi che xe, ripeto, i Menia dela slovenitf e che fomenta l'odio etnico perhcč de questo i vivi, politicamente o culturalmente che sia, [*] no me par che se possi acetar che in triestin se disi "S'ciavo". No credo che i sloveni apprezzzi perciñ saria utile no usarlo visto el significato che ga la parola. No credo nianche che un uso dialettale posi esser giustificazion de tuto, existi anche l'evoluzion (sperabilmente in positivo). Credo che in questo caso l'uiso giusto posi eser quel che vien dala sensibilitf de chi xe ciamf e no da chi ciamma. (*)SE ciamo un nero "sporco negro" no poso giustificar disendo che le mie tradizioni, la mia lingua, la mia sensibilitf fa si che lo ciamo cusē e perciñ cusē xe giusto.

This is a post from a Google forum with title "About the word S'ciavo"⁸⁶, published in June 2002. The original version was written in Triestine dialect and almost all answers following this first comment were written in dialect. In the original version, there are some letters typical of the Slavic languages that use a Latin-derived alphabet (č, ř, ň) - which may have been used on purpose, or the blogger was using a Czech keyboard. In the second case, it is fair to assume that that person is related to the Eastern European zone and not solely to Triestine reality; this linkage influenced his/her comment about the discussed word. For a more complete view on this topic, I suggest visiting the link pasted in the footnote, but I would like to include one different opinion given by another follower of this discussion here:

I don't like it (the word s'ciavo) because it has a disparaging meaning and I usually avoid using it, particularly in some contexts, but that is the Triestine word (and from Veneto), and I don't see a Triestine synonym. By the way, sometime sit refers to 'Slovenian' and sometimes to 'Slavic' in general. After all, even the current Pope (John Paul II) is a S'ciavo.⁸⁷ (ibid)

This opinion is partly different from the other reported before: it is not too restrictive from one or the other side, but it gives the word *S'ciavo* a justification hidden behind the dialect. My last example is very different. It was probably written by a person who generally has a racist attitude towards the Slovenian minority. In the next quotation, this person bases his/her offenses on the rights and subsidies held by the minority, underlining some tendencies of self-preservation to keep a safe distance from cultural contamination:

First of all, its only meaning is Slavic, which it doesn't seem like an insult to me, nobody called them 'dirty s'ciavi'. Secondly, this fact of being sensitive would be like to turn the other cheek with people who despise us; in fact they can buy properties in their area⁸⁸ while we, inferior people, cannot. In their

⁸⁶ <https://groups.google.com/forum/?hl=it&fromgroups=#!topic/italia.trieste.discussioni/z-6vzO46oE0>

⁸⁷ Translated by the author. Original version: No me piasì perchè el ga un significato spregiativo e evito de solito de doprarlo soprattutto in zerti contesti, però la parola triestina (e veneta) xe quella, e no vedo un sinonimo triestin. Tra l'altro, a volte el val per " sloven", a volte per generico " slavo" , in fondo anche el Papa attuale soto soto xe " un papa s'ciavo".

⁸⁸ I'm not sure if here is ment the Slovenian-speaking villages on the Karst or if they refer to territories on across the border.

schools and kindergarten (e.g. in Longera) their sons are kept strictly separated; they represent the 10%, they have everything for them, their break-times take place on a different time even though there's a fairly big garden where everyone can fit in. During the lunch-breaks they have not managed to have their one space, because of a lack of rooms; but there are their teachers always ready to shout them out if they try to talk to a Triestine kid. I don't feel like being kind to those who despise us and feel rancour, I can't manage it. Who wants to turn the other cheek to them, can feel free to do it.⁸⁹

The opinion reported above can have consequences, which directly affect individuals. Regarding this matter, my interviewee Tina explained:

"Some acts of vandalism happened in my school: on the wall were painted some swastikas associated to some writings like "S'ciavi de merda" (own translation: shitty Slavs). You know, some other people don't participate to these 'expeditions' but they prefer to complain about the tax they apparently have to pay for the Slovenian minority, in order for them to get more benefits through the law for the linguistic minorities in Italy (this is the point of view of these people, not Tina's one) [...] I'll give you an example of a friend of mine: she is from the minority and she has an Italian boyfriend which complains about those money he has to give to the minority."

"How can she accept this?"

"They don't talk about it, and she tries to get over this point. But I couldn't manage to do it, if I had such a boyfriend, he couldn't even step in my house and talk to my family. My father is a professor of Slovenian literature and he's really attached to our history." (Tina's interview)

As Tina told me, there are cases where even two people in a closed relationship are forced to coexist with such differentiations of personal views. As for the friend of hers with her boyfriend, like in the previous comment in the blog, he does not accept the rights given to the minority.

⁸⁹ Translated by the author. Original text: prima de tuto l'unico significato che ga xe 'slavo' che no me par un insult nisun li ga ciamai 'sporchi s'ciavi'; secondo questo de aver delicateza saria un porger l'altra guancia con persone che ne dispreza; difati i gnoch pol comprar immobili la de lori, noi inferiori no; nele sue scole e asili (p.es. a Longera) i sui fioi i li tien acuratamente separai; i rapresenta el 10% e i ga un pian tuto per lori, i riposi ga orario diferente con tuto che ghe xe un grandio giardin suficiente per tuti, a la ora de pranzo no i se riuscidi per mancanza de sale a star completamente separati ma ghe xe ben le maestre pronte a zigarghe ai suoi picci se i tenta de parlarghe a un triestin; mi de eser gentile con chi che me dispreza e senti rancor no me la sento, chi che vol porger l'altra guancia che lo fazi pur

4.2.2. The stereotyped Slavic provenance: influences on Trieste's image

Before examining some other opinions mentioned in the interviewees, I would like to take a step back to the origin of the relation between the 'wild Slav' and the Slovenian minority. Any population is set into a specific stereotyped context, which gives them a certain origin and position in the geographical, historical and cultural world. Which context has been set for the Slav? What is their topos? Larry Wolff (1995) identifies the *steppe* as the homeland for the Slavic population, coming from that land between the Carpathians Mountains and the Black sea (Wolff quoted in Baskar, 2006: 192). The steppe is conceived as a conformed entity where no differences exist, that is therefore the reason why Baskar reported why the Slavs are seen as a compact and all-similar ethnic group. In addition to this, he specifies that the Karst plateau functions as a connecting and dividing line between those lands flown by the "fabulous" Mediterranean, divided by the other territories on the other side where barbaric populations live and where the cold Bora wind comes from (Baskar, 2006: 193). As a result, the Karst serves as a border, both a natural and ethnical frontier between the civilized and savage world (see Enzo Bettiza, 1996⁹⁰; C. Carmichael, 1995).

In this context we step back to Bufon's considerations that affirm that the context of the peripheral areas and the centre are considered antithetical in terms of a juxtaposition between a barbaric and civic way of living (Bufon, 2002: 56f). This is an interesting point of view, not just from an historical outlook, but also for anthropological and ethnological research. The connection between city and country relates to both the Italian and Slovenian communities. The settlement of the Italian population has always been typified by the presence in the city, while the Slovenians have always occupied the rural parts surrounding the city. The Slovenian part claimed to belong to the city and its surroundings, as well as in the countryside where there is an affiliation to a certain culture that has remained more genuine, well-preserved and not contaminated. In addition, according to the Slovenian perspective, the city has been shaped by the assimilation processes,

⁹⁰ Bettiza E., (1996) *Il fantasma di Trieste*. Milano, Mondadori; quoted in Baskar (2006), 193: "Don't trust the s'ciavi, Daniele (...) because there is nothing behind their back except the steppe, servility and insanity".

which weakened the presence of the Slovenian element in the cultural life of the city. On the other hand, the Italians consider the national sense of belonging as a result of a cultural and moral development and not as an element deriving from an ethno-linguistic motive. For them the city remains the basic aspect of cultural and civil tradition, which gives a characteristic to the area all around it. (Relazione della Commissione mista, 2001, Klemenčič quoted in Buffon, 2001: 71-73)

This anthropological speculation about the origin of the sense of belonging is one of the crucial points of discussion and confrontation for the historical and political debate, which interests the actual conformation of the Julian March area (Relazione della commissione mista, 2001). In P. Ballinger's article about the ethnic conformation in Istria and North Adriatic area, the same subject is discussed, and she states:

“In the eyes of such urbane *cittadini*, rural dwellers appeared as *barbari*, barbarian; according to her research, the superiority of the Latin *stirpe* or *popolo* onto the Slavic population, which has always been accused of being ‘without culture, prone to laziness and savagery’”. (Ballinger, 2004: 36)

In order to validate the cruelty of the Slavic population, the Italian community exploits the barbaric episode of the *foibe*, a symbol of the executions (according to some, it is considered to have been an ethnic cleansing against Italians) and was carried out at the hand of Tito's army during the 40-day occupation in Trieste⁹¹.

The cultural clash between Italians and Slovenians still occurs frequently, mostly in relation to memories re-emerging from the past, being that nowadays the two groups are basically much more disposed to collaborate for common peace. Some disagreements today are still expressed by graffiti, which is spray-painted on walls, buildings and monuments. An example of the defacement of a monument is provided by J. Fikfak (2009): in the picture proposed by him, there is a historical monument for the partisans' struggle, upon which someone put different writings, singing the praises of Fascism and offending the old Yugoslav regime (the picture is dated back to 1998, cf. Appendix). The ethnic clash once again led to the opposition of the countryside-city: according to the Italian dominant point of view, the reliability of the historical facts is based on the value of the Roman culture and the Latin *stirpe* (Ballinger, 2004: 35f), since those territories belonged to the Italian

⁹¹ About the Foibe see Baracetti (2009); Solari (2002).

dominance by virtue of that ancient heritage. The Slovenian point-of-view is contrarily based on the ethnical resistance of those populations where the countryside maintained their geographical position and ethnic heritage throughout the centuries, and in the city affirmed their importance during the 19th century through their role in the commercial exchange of the port and the raising of a leading elite in the city (Fikfak, 2009, 356; see Verginella in Panjek & Finzi, 2001)⁹². His argument about Trieste is linked to the case of Gorizia, where the situation seems to be partly different from the Triestine one. Katja Škrlić writes specifically about the Gorizia-Nova Gorica's border and the role of the latter, which is compared to the Slovenian copy of an East Berlin: Nova Gorica had to entail all of those features typical of the Yugoslavian block, opposed to its Western copy Gorizia (Škrlić, 2012: 11).

Moving on, we saw in the last chapter how historical facts are basic elements for the construction of an individual and common identity. The history, for the individual or for the group, is based not just upon the scholastic knowledge, but rather more on those passed-on memories. Both of my interviewees Tina and Alina confirm that their identity building process was consolidated by memories that they had heard from different sources:

"Which history do you feel like is the one you belong to? The Slovenian, the Italian, the history of the area where you live, the history of the minority?"

"For sure to the history of the Slovenian minority. In my family we have always talked about our history. My grandparents always remembered what happened, we used to talk about the fascist period". (Tina's interview)

In her assertion about the matter, Alina mentioned elements related to her grandparents' life:

"How is your attitude towards the history of the Slovenes in Trieste?"

"I think about some memories coming from my family: both my grandmothers have always lived in Karst, one of them was deported to Germany for a year. I don't know many things about this because my grandmother didn't want to tell me everything: the good fact is that she was working in the kitchen, so she didn't directly experience the violence of the Nazi camps, but she saw many

⁹² For more details about the representation of the partisans cf. Stankovič P., (2008), *Construct of Slovenianness in Slovenian partisan films*, Social research – journal for general social issues. Issue: 4-5/ 2008: 907-926

cruel things and she can't forget all of the violence she saw in a year!" (Alina's interview)

Julie's thoughts about this topic are quite different:

"When you attend a Slovenian school, they always give you texts about the fascist period. It's not that if your grandparents tell you stories about the Nazi camps you get surprised. Well, these are stories that you listed every day, so it seems normal to you. I admit and realize that is a very bad thing! [...]"

"Do you ever talk to your grandparents about your point of view? What do they think?"

"Yes I do, we argue a lot, basically with my grandfather, he's very interested in politics and matters regarding the minority. So when we talk about the Slovenian situation, I think 'poor him!', he lived during Fascism, and have to discuss with his own niece, who is not interested in carrying on the minority's values...well, he suffers, and I'm not happy with it. But I can't play a role which I don't feel as mine". (Julie's interview)

Both of Alina and Tina's narrations are based on private experiences: our identity is based on an emotional component, which determines what we are - that is different from what the other is. The positive and negative approaches to the group, which is very different in Tina's/Alina's case and in Julie's case, help the human being choose and feel part of a group for particular reasons, or to another for some other causes.

The acceptance or denial of certain features and elements of heritage forces the individual to track his/her own ethnic border (Colangelo, 2000: 37-39). Trieste's history gives even more accreditation to this theory: it has been a city of everyone and of no one, a ground of national quarrels, a consequence of the extreme solutions. The Triestine probably does not probably know nowadays what he is, but he perfectly knows what he is not or what he does not want to be. An example is the graffiti, which can be found mainly in the FFT, where it is written "Trieste ist nicht Italien" (trans.: Trieste is not Italy, cf. Appendix). The discourse around the ethnic and cultural heritage of the city has carried these antithetical schemes as well: first, an Italian community who wants to be part of the Italian territory but faces less consideration from the central government; secondly, an Istrian minority who puts itself in the middle of all cultures, claiming a specific nature; and lastly, the Slovenian minority that searches for a self-definition, trying to strengthen its importance of images of other minority realities in Italy.

4.3. Bilingualism and biculturalism: Slovenian as a language of diversity

Around the areas along the border, there are two different sociolinguistic behaviours to be found: in certain situations it is possible to define exactly where the ethnic border of a nation is simply based on the range where a certain language is spoken. If we consider another scenario, as it happens to be in the Italian-Slovenian border, we do not have a discernible line which tracks the delineation between the two states. The Slovenian minority is part of the cultural heritage of the area, and Trieste itself still remains a border city ⁹³. (Carli et al., 2003: 866)

As we saw in the previous paragraph, the Other is stigmatized, for example take for instance the myth of the *steppe* where differences between the individuals are nullified (Baskar, 2006: 192-194). Therefore we can further confirm the idea expressed in Carli's article, where he discusses the importance given to some languages, which tend to be considered as more prestigious or dominant languages, whereas others are considered rather stigmatised or dominated languages (Carli et al., 2003: 866). This mechanism is submitted to several power relations⁹⁴, which are pragmatically represented by all of those languages, which were territories beyond the Iron Curtain. It must accept a submission to Western languages, which are considered more useful, more culturally important and practically more 'nice' and 'friendly' to learn.

Where is it possible to learn Slovenian in Trieste? The Slovenian language is not taught or offered as a subject in schools, not even at linguistic high schools. The student has the possibility to enrol in a Slovenian high school where Slovenian is used as a vehicular language for other subjects. So as we can see, Slovenian is still not considered a part of the cultural heritage of this area. This is underscored by the fact that it is not institutionalized as a foreign language in the schools as it presumably would not be popular among the Italian students. Slovenian is still

⁹³ Cf. J. Kottek concept of *ville de frontiere*.

⁹⁴ In Carli's article (p. 867) is reported Phillipson's (1992) theories about the three types of linguistic power: which is an *intrinsic power*, thus what the linguistic community is. Secondly an *extrinsic power*, what a linguistic community has; and a *structural-functional power*, what the linguistic community 'does' or is 'considered to be able to do'.

seen as a difficult language, full of “their č-p-č-š-ž sounds”⁹⁵, that still represent an insuperable distance between the two cultures.⁹⁶

When conducting research, I asked my interviewees what their relation is with the language, what do they think about the diffusion of the Slovenian language in the Triestine area and what are their feelings when they speak Italian, the language of the dominant group? Alina affirms that Italian is their language, so they have to know it by default:

“Alina, do you think Slovenes have to learn Italian, do you think it is something they need?”

“Learning Italian at a Slovenian school is not like learning English, it’s easier! We live in Italy and we have to know Italian.” (Alina’s interview)

Alina’s way of speaking is very jaunty and fluent. She even uses some expressions, which highlight her knowledge of the Triestine dialect (e.g. no xe, coccolo etc.). Tina’s language is very different, which is although grammatically flawless, similar to a language that is not as familiar as a mother tongue would be in comparison. She does not have any problem admitting that Italian is a language that she uses in part for her studies at the University (she studies both Slovenian and English literature), or during the few time she spends out of the Slovenian context:

“I feel pretty much bilingual, even if my mother tongue remains Slovenian. I did all schools in this language and my first real contact with Italian has been at the Language department. I’m fluent in Italian but I feel sometimes not so sure about few things. Sometime I don’t find that harmony I have when I talk in Slovenian. My boyfriend did his high school degree in an Italian school, he has a different approach to the Italian language which is different for me.” (Tina’s interview)

Tina compares her situation to her boyfriend’s, as he speaks Italian more fluently and provides Tina access to the Italian community. Julie, my third interview partner, has a different approach to the Italian community, as she more or less feels part of it and remains more distanced to the Slovenian one:

⁹⁵ This č-p-č-š-ž’ sounds definition has been given to me in a language school, in order to emphasize the difficulties of the language.

⁹⁶ About the school system in relation to the minority groups in Italy see Colussi (2007).

“You don’t want to be part of the minority, am I right?”

“When I was fifteen I was feeling Slovene, I was called *s’ciava*, so I decided to deny my Italian part. My one was a not an easy identity crisis, as the other [schoolmates] spoke Slovenian at home, I talked Italian at home, in the city they told me *s’ciava*, as I used to talk in Slovenian with friends. [...] at the beginning I was feeling Slovenian, but then at school professors didn’t accept me: when I gave my compositions, they asked me at the beginning if I was *meticcia*⁹⁷ - I was not of pure race (she laughs) – [...] In any occasion I felt like a fish out of the water, totally out of context”. (Julie’s interview)

Julie often feels very frustrated due to the complexity of her identity. She has a very strict opinion about the Slovenian ethnic group: the distance set between her and the minority was increased more by events that occurred during her adolescence. For her, the Slovenian minority represents a sense of shame, as she relates her embarrassment as a teenager to her not completely belonging to one group or the other. In her case the language was a weak point as well, as she lacked fluency in Slovenian - hence we find the opposite case compared to the other interviewees.

The Slovenian language has gained a lot more attention over the past few years. Thanks to new international European politics that attempt to try and create a cross-border region, parents are beginning to understand how important it is for their children to first learn another language and secondly, to trust and show interest in new politics of cooperation between the two states. According to published articles and statistics, the number of non-Slovenian children who attend Slovenian schools has noticeably increased over the past few years⁹⁸. According to Tina, growing up with two languages offers cultural enrichment. Julie who is of the same opinion, apart from her negative perception of the Slovenian community, thinks that Slovenian now plays an essential role when trying to get a good job in the Triestine area:

“Don’t you think that if you master two languages you can find a job easier?”

“Yes, of course I do! All jobs I’ve found were thanks to Slovenian! Like in a travel agency, or when I was the secretary for a financial promoter in Duino. I

⁹⁷ *Meticcia* means half-breed, hybrid.

⁹⁸ <http://bora.la/2010/04/22/in-aumento-i-bambini-di-famiglia-italiana-che-frequentano-le-scuole-slovene/comment-page-2/>; <http://ilpiccolo.gelocal.it/cronaca/2011/02/25/news/scuole-slovene-boom-di-italiani-1.22246>.

did the job interview, and as I have a strong accent in Slovenian, a strong Triestine accent, at the end he asked me if I was of the minority, or if I was Italian. Cleverly I told, that I was of the minority, and he hired me. He told me that he would not have employed an Italian who studied Slovenian, because he wanted to give work to a minority's member". (Julie's interview)

It is very important to refer to the history of the Slovenian community even when discussing the linguistic matter. In the first chapter, we saw how the minority had been a victim of the Fascist regime. Boris Pahor, a writer belonging to the minority, narrated a number of episodes regarding the oppression of the Slovenian-speaking community. Their status did not contemplate any freedom of public expression in their own language, not even for the religious ceremonies. I could compare some of these narrations with a personal experience that happened to Alina when a woman told her "not to speak that awful language!" (cf. p. 67): that was just a verbal offense. In the thirties, Slovenes would have been victims of physical violence consisting of aggression with punches and kicks, or by spitting in mouth of the Slovenian-speaking person if they were talking in their own language. (see Pahor, 2010; see Ara & Magris, 2007: 114-132)

4.3.1. Slovenian and Slovenian-speaking: "unpacking" the "ethnic" through language

What differentiates a member of the Slovenian minority from a Slovenian citizen? I assume that to the non-expert ear of an Italian community member, who does not speak Slovenian, would not notice any particular difference. But as my informant explained to me, there are many differences between the dialect spoken around the Triestine area and the Slovenian dialect spoken in the area of Gorizia; both dialects are very different from the Slovenian that one hears e.g. in Ljubljana. Julie tells me that she is much more familiar with the Triestine variation, even if she is particularly fluent in the dialect:

"What do Slovenians tell you when they hear you talking in Slovenian?"
"They think I'm an Italian who learned Slovenian very well and congratulate with me! Well, I answer, thank you very much! (she laughs)". (Julie's interview)

Besides this, Tina recognizes other problems related to the Slovenian language:

“There is a difference in the language: they (the members of the community in the Triestine area) use words coming from the Triestinian dialect, while we use other words, which they don't understand. For example the verb šlatati (or zašlatati, I'm not sure how to write it) that in my region means to slap, to punch someone and in Trieste it means to kiss someone! (she laughs)”. (Tina's interview)

According to Tina's description, not even the dialects represent an element of cohesion between the two areas where the minority lives. So I focused the next question in another direction and namely inquired as to what the perception of the Slovenian person is in relation to the members of the minority. I had different answers: Julie's opinion took yet another direction when we discussed Slovenians from Slovenia:

“Let's say that I prefer the Slovenian people, than those of the minority. They are nice people. If you go to Ljubljana, they are friendly, open-minded.. those of the minority - probably because of their history and because of their grandfathers, who passed onto them this hate - they are more closed...let's say that they are constantly angry, because of our historical quarrels”. (Julie's interview)

Tina is half Slovenian (her mother comes from Ljubljana), so she has a deeper understanding of Slovenians as she relatively feels part of their ethnic group. Alina, whose parents both belong to the minority, acquired a positive attitude of the Slovenian minority in Italy after she first moved to Ljubljana :

“It is a love-hate relationship. According to my experience, Slovenian people from the capital are surprised when I speak so good Slovenian, and even by the fact that I did a Slovenian school in Italy. They don't know a lot about the minority.. no one wants us! (She laughs) No I'm joking, my point is that people here have done so much during the past years, we survived Fascism, we preserved a language that has been threatened for more than 20 years, and now you Slovenians do not even recognize all of the efforts we have done to stay with you and be part of your nation and culture! (She laughs) Well, I don't have anything against Slovenia of course! It's just that they are curious but not well informed about the situation across the border”. (Alina's interview)

The relationship between the minority and Slovenia seems to be one of dependency if one realizes that there is a need to be recognized. In order to do

that, they must be supported from the closer strong national group, which is the Slovenian nation. According to me, if we compare their situation with the South Tirol German-speaking community, we notice how their ethnic identity becomes more independent and acquires a stronger awareness based upon local pride.

4.3.2. Identity Pluralism and Interculturality

What does interethnic/intercultural awareness mean? It refers to the intercultural values that are linked to attitude towards co-existing ethnic backgrounds and languages. As Mikolič (2010a) suggests, there are two kinds of relations: an active and a passive one. In the active relationship, the subject is aware of his or her plural identity. This happens through different components: the cognitive component (knowledge and options), the emotional component and the dynamic component (moral and motivational). So the person is able to recognize and analyse their status as a member of two or more communities. The passive relationship instead is the identification with coexisting other cultures, which is attributed and not consciously perceived. Another point of view, which concerns ethnic/national identity, we have to divide ethnic and national identity. By ethnic identity we mean a passive relation, thus an identity that one acquires due to bureaucratic processes. When one becomes aware, national awareness for instance, then the other previously mentioned factors become the base of its active process.

Our question should be how to aim for an intercultural/interethnic awareness, in regards to the context of the Slovenian minority in Trieste. What differentiates the three cases are the two other moments of interethnic awareness.

Julie's case is significant in order to reconstruct a global and objective view of the matter. She has never felt like being a part of the community for different reasons: the strained relation that she has with her father leads to the missing of a step in the passing-on process between the old-middle-young generation. In addition, her perception of the minority's mentality is very negative:

"It would be wonderful to think that we could live with two cultures- one near the other. But at one point you have to pick up one of the two, to decide in which part you want to be. Well, if I were half Spanish half Swedish, two nations which have never had any particular conflict, that would work. But in

such a region like Trieste, no. I don't think is possible, there are too many conflicts, which constantly re-emerge."

"What are conflicts for you? What are they about?"

"No, it's just that...well you know, at school they inculcate it and stir up the hate. For example, when I got an identity card when I was 18, they had us stand up one by one in the class and asked if we would demand to have our double-language ID. Our answer was supposed to be yes, but I told them that I wouldn't...as long as it is written with my name on it, it doesn't matter if it is just in Italian or Italian and Slovenian!" (Julie's interview)

Contrary to Julie, Tina is entirely surrounded by the minority's culture. Her life is determined by it (even considering that her future dream job is to become a Slovenian teacher in the Slovene schools of the minority). Her father, professor at the Slovenian school as well, gives much importance to the historical aspect of their identity; her choice is not just emotional but moral and gives motivation to her life's projects. Zaira shares her opinion: her identity is the basis and the reason for her work. She found this position not only because of her studies but also due to her belonging as well as her Italian and Slovenian linguistic proficiency:

"All people belonging to the minority are commonly bicultural even though the identity is expressed on an individual basis. She added than that 'up to few years before, the citizenship was not a decision given by a free choosing, it was forcedly imposed.'" (Zaira's interview)

So the possibility of choosing one or another group's identity and affiliation is influenced by the emotional and moral choice (e.g. attending Slovenian schools is, among all, showing respect for the identity of my family and its traditions).

I was very impressed during Julie's interview:

She was really frank with me, and she asked me not to judge her for her way of thinking: she doesn't want to seem like a fanatic who wants to recall Fascist behaviour, but she doesn't feel highly proud of her origins; the diffused chauvinism among minority members changed not just her priorities for her personal identity's forming process, but more generally the actual interethnic relations. (Fieldnotes during Julie's interview)

Her anger with the minority that educated her gives rise to her decision to change her surname: she wants to change her typically Slovenian surname's ending in *-ič* with a more common one that does not reveal any specific origin⁹⁹:

"I don't want to let people know that I'm from the minority. I never tell this, no one knows my real surname. People who are not from Trieste, they always think I'm not Italian. [...] It's all fault of my surname!"

"Do you know other people who want to change the surname?"

"Everyone from the minority keeps his/her surname. I do know people who think like me, there are other people from Trieste who avoid mentioning their surname in *-ič*."

"Do these people agree with fascist ideas?"

"No, those with fascist ideas have already changed it! I'm 100% sure of changing it because of personal – and not political – reasons, but I think it's very offensive against my grandfather". (Julie's interview)

Julie's decision is also led by an emotional factor but towards the opposite direction. It remains unrealized though as moral duties and respect for her grandparents, members of the minority, still represent a bounding factor for her personal decisions.

The possibility of conceiving a "hybrid" identity (Ballinger, 2004) was a question in each interview I conducted. If I had to estimate the results in order to give a global answer to this query, I would state that for Tina and Alina, the bicultural identity is possible, and they are an example of that (Alina seems more near to the Italian reality). Zaira from the SLORI and validates the existence of biculturalism even though one of the two cultures has to be surrounded by the dominant one: "the minority has always lived in the shade of the Italian culture" (Zaira's interview). And lastly, Julie asserts that the bicultural approach is not possible, and that there will always be a dominant culture in the human being, which is set and regulated by relations of personal/ethnic/national power and personal/ethnic/national proud.

Julie's ideas are related to those of linguistic power bonds theorized by Phillipson (cf. p. 79); the first negative idea is very interesting as well since it has been declared by a person who works in the specific field of research on the minority. She does not deny the peculiarities of the minority as an ethnic group, but she admits its dependency to the dominant culture, even though the respect toward

⁹⁹ About the surnames' modification see Lucchetti et al. (2011).

the minority's rights are a constitutional principle. Comparing two minorities in Italy, the difference between the Slovenian and the South-Tirol minority is found within independency combined with economic power of the latter. Their history is very different from the past of the Slovenian minority, and their numerical size is simply more noticeable; they probably gained more rights earlier than the Slovenian minority (e.g. the bilingual ID¹⁰⁰), but the multicultural structure of their region has caused, in my opinion, much more separate societies. which surely have been more respected, but this respect has been paid with a mutual indifference. The Slovenian culture cannot aim for a total independency due to socio-economic conditions, but it can be a first actor in the creation of the cooperation set between the two regional realities.

4.4. Last considerations and possible further research

During my research I met very different people while conducting my interviews, so it is not that easy to give a general description about the Slovenian minority in Trieste. The variety of personal cases helped me to understand how different the approach can be and that the perception of an identity can either be inherited or acquired on its own. There are some other specific topics that I have not discussed in detail as well as some other cues that arose during research in the field. They could be the starting point for other research projects, which have to do with the specific theme of the Slovenian minority in relation to different topics. For example, it would be interesting to carry out a specific study with the older generation, to discover if their point-of-view has changed now that the European Union is tearing down cultural ethnic barriers between its citizens.

It is apparent that I based my research on the Slovenian minority in Trieste, but I would really be interested in expanding my research to the Italian minority in Istria.

¹⁰⁰ I talked with Tina about this. Her argumentation was the following: "They do have much more advantages than us and they are more considered. I live in Bolzano where I'm now studying and the visual bilingualism is everywhere and the first language is the one of the majority of the people living in the area, but both languages are displayed. He told us about the Italian ID they have in South Tirol: the headings are in both languages but our one the Slovenian headings are smaller than the Italian, while in the ID in South Tirol the headings have the same size". I checked on internet if the size of the writings on the ID are different, and Tina is actually right about this. It might seem a stubbornness and redundancy for meaningless details, but Tina's critique was not addressed to a negative evaluation but rather to a positive improvement for the future.

In my journeys to Koper or Piran, I noticed some Italian inscription around the cities, which are linked to associations or schools in the Italian minority. It was very charming in the centre of Rijeka as well, where it is possible to see many historical buildings that mirror Triestine architecture. It is even more impressive when walking around some places, they still keep the Italian writings around. There was a kind of nostalgic feeling hovering around, a nostalgic feeling of that intercultural society which grouped Italians, Slovenes, Croats, Serbs and Austrians: a city where somehow the strived respect among the culture was not of hope but rather a certainty.

The multicultural society in Trieste will still be my last point of discussion. My conclusion will highlight an occasion that introduces new questions that take contemporary society in Trieste into consideration as well as take a deeper took into the reaction to new incoming migrations.

5. Trieste: an anthropological view of the local identity

*Trieste has a rude charm. If you like it,
it's like a tough and greedy kid
with blue eyes and hands too big for offering a flower,
like jealousy in love.¹⁰¹*

Umberto Saba, Trieste e una donna (1910-12)

5.1. The Slovenian minority in multicultural Trieste

In order to understand the role of the Slovenian minority in a wider discourse about multiculturalism in Trieste, I asked my interviewees about the possibility of applying new communities in the integration model, which Trieste has done in the case of the Slovenian minority. Two negative responses were given. Alina and Zaira mentioned the historical importance of the minority where there is an exclusive form of integration. According to them, the situations in which the minority has been involved are as follows: the historical and the individual/collective memories as well as a contested cultural and geographical space, all of which are examples of incompatibility with the minority's model for the other new communities. This research tries to respect the terminological differences between 'minority' and 'community', always referring to the Slovenians as the valued minority. In all probability, this is one of the main reasons why its unique position does not pair with new multicultural politics, and has never worked until now. Too many historical interests have been involved in this cultural disagreement. These interests do not apply to the new members of the society and, in my opinion, the associations working for the new incomers do not address minority interests, which have been embraced and institutionalized over the past fifty years.

¹⁰¹ Poem written by Umberto Saba. Translated in
http://www.worldrepublicofletters.com/excerpts/songbook_excerpt.pdf .

Let us take the concept of social space related to the reclamation of the border into consideration, which Lefebvre (1999) presents as a sharing value between residents and visitors, hosts and guests¹⁰². This subdivision underscores the major differences between the Slovenian minority and other new communities. The minority will always be considered more as a part of the city, at least for a resident of Trieste and not for an external person or the new communities, which are namely still seen as outsiders. So here we see a paradox in the Slovenian integration in Trieste: if taken apart and contrasted with the Italian-speaking community, events of the past and subsequent concerns arise again. A community of new immigrants is then introduced in this discussion, and the dominant group will take those previously contested historical facts as a part of their past into consideration, and consequently lend the Slovenian minority a status of “familiar neighbours”. Although this is not a universal solution to the problem because it is important not to forget that some people do not have a contrastive view of the Slovenian minority. These people are usually Italians that do not come from this specific region, and referred to by the minority as *taliani*. On the contrary, some people are simply not foreign-friendly, regardless of whether they are Slovene or from other countries.

In this sense, we can see how all communities are a part of the cosmopolitan atmosphere which has been created throughout the years in the city. I would now like to divide and develop the two following matters and their two different paths: the first matter leads us in the direction of the Istrian context, the other aims to describe the new communities, whereby cultural and religious differences present quite a large obstacle for integration.

5.2. ‘Authentic hybrids’ for a local culture: Trieste, the Istrian capital

Pamela Balliger discusses important suggestions concerning the modality for approaching the topic and the configuration, which I applied to my research. She

¹⁰² In Sofield’s article (2006) the concept of space related to the border regions is constructed by five major form of space: the bio-geographical space, the guided space, the physical space, the social space of residents and visitors and the mental or psychological space.

pursues an anthropological exploration of the Julian March¹⁰³ and the consequent subdivisions and ethnic mixing between all different ethnic groups living in the area. According to Ballinger, the effect of coexistence among three different cultures in the area can be defined as 'new cosmopolitanism'. After the end of the Yugoslav wars along with all of the political, social and geographical consequences that they drag behind, this territory has been forced to rethink its identity through the lens of a new cosmopolitanism, which seems to be opposed to both nationalism and localisms (Ballinger, 2004: 35-38). In this region three main communities live together: the Italian, Slovenian and Croatian. In this context we have Italians opposed to Slavs, whereby the Slavs are seen as the main usurpers of that *Italianness* (*italianità*), which was peculiar of the Istria peninsula. This point of view becomes even more obvious if one does not remain in self-reference but is rather projected out into a European context:

"Their vision of Istria as an inherently European space, given its dual Venetian/Italian and Austrian heritage, becomes key to processes of subverting and refashioning cultural and symbolic boundaries, including those differentiating European from Balkan or non-European, civilized from barbarian, present from past." (Ballinger, 2004: 33)

Ballinger continues on describing her considerations, adding another thesis of commodification of hybridity in the global market (Hutynk quoted in Ballinger, 2004: 33); the threat of homogenization through hybridity (Kapchan & Strong quoted in Ballinger, 2004: 33); or the linkage between hybridism and cosmopolitanism to a global cultural elite (Hale/Friedman quoted in Ballinger, 2004: 32). I refer to some of the authors that she quoted in order to rethink her approach and relate it to my case. The first critique of commodification of hybridity in the global market done by Hutynk clearly belongs and is much more applicable to another context which involve larger entities and realities. In the Istrian case this remains, in my opinion, a specific problematic that touches on the matter in a smaller range, thus *related to the local situation*. On the other hand, if we consider by a wider view, its largest field of interest can be the antagonism between Central

¹⁰³ The whole name of the region is Friuli-Venezia Giulia: that's one united region if we consider it by the administration's point of view; the real cultural division, in the Italian-speaking community itself, is between Friuli (north-west) and Venezia Giulia (south-east).

Europe and the “Balkans”. In regards to Kapchan and Strong’s theory, which denounce a possible homogenization, I state that this specific process is not the case in the Istrian area, as its historical past remains very thorny caustic. The hybridity in this sense has to be seen as a possibility to be recognized in the next future as a unification, which carries a transnational connotation. The last critique (Hale’s and Friedman’s) is near to my reflection regarding the situation in Trieste and its cosmopolitan inclination. I considered this social and cultural feature as property of higher society in the city, but I had to rethink it when I considered the naming’s conformation of the dwellers. Hybridization as rethinking of the identity cannot be limited to a specific part of the society, as it regards many different groups. If we consider what has been stated in the quotation above, we recognize that the Venetian/Italian and Austrian heritage is a crucial point for the contemporary society in Trieste.

By asserting this, we must be aware of two other different factors. First, the Slovenian presence in reconstructing the historic past of Trieste needs to be taken into consideration. Secondly, the Austrian presence belongs to the past and remains an element of the cultural heritage without cultural links in the present (it only regards cultural heritage but not a living community). Therefore we see how the dispute of Trieste was related, in the past, to both factors and to its geographical position. It contentedly includes three different geo-political entities (Austria, Italy or Yugoslavia/Slovenia). Differently, over the past few years the dispute has not been focused on three geographical and political unities but rather three cultural spheres: the Central European heritage that is opposed to the Italian context finds itself in juxtaposition in the claiming of Trieste by the Balkans. The answer to this riddle is Ballinger’s solution in which the acknowledgment of a hybrid identity does not intend to be a new product but simply claims its authentic nature. Ballinger’s conception of hybridity goes in a certain direction, which aims to detach itself from nationalistic nuances. I previously mentioned the “local”, a word that I used in the title of my thesis as well. The usage of this term does not aim to recall any kind of municipal concept of the culture while doing so only grants the territorial and regional culture as true and valuable. With *local* I refer to that meaning of ‘authenticity’ but related to a specific area. I want to promote a kind of ‘no-miles’ analysis of the culture, where we first unravel the knot of the cultural question on a local level, trying to find possible belongings for people living in this

area. Then, if that is not applicable to this first confined area, the problematic can be enlarged and other realities can be involved. My concept of local does not include any nationalist delimitation, but I understand it by considering it a *transnational inclusion*.

In order to do this, it is important to deconstruct the national myth of Trieste (see Filipuzzi and Verginella quoted in Ballinger, 2004: 36). This has already been done several times in the past, and Ballinger suggests that one of the most enlightening examples is Angelo Vivante and his book *Irredentismo adriatico* (first edition printed in 1912). In order to support his thesis, Vivante affirms that the national question is incompatible with the economic needs and interests of a city created by an imperial fiat and in turn proposes a separatist solution that takes Trieste's Slavic hinterland into consideration (Ballinger, 2004: 36-40), which is, the idea of the Free Territory of Trieste¹⁰⁴ that still represents a historical cause perpetuating into the present. One of my interviewees brought a widespread saying to my attention, "I wish the FTT would be formally recognized at some point as part of history", or generally talking about the past "at that time when we were under Austria's rule; that was a golden period!". We can find this in the Triestine folk ballads and songs as well, which celebrate the Austrian period as a golden one, associated to the Triestine way of enjoying life¹⁰⁵. Alina, my interviewee who comes from the minority and lives on the Karst, mentioned her grandfather who told her always: "I can forgive my father of anything, except for the fact that he lost the First World War!" (when Trieste came under Italian rule).

These are several examples of popular conceptions regarding the Austrian period as a glorious one, a time when differences were enhanced and not repressed. After that time of fortune, the dark period of the Fascism came, and Trieste turned into an interesting point for the new regime, which was inclined on focusing on past contentions for gaining the approval of the entire population (e.g. the Istrian question). This response by the Fascist dictatorship was a reaction, which was neither expected or typical in regards to the behaviour of the Slavs. At the

¹⁰⁴ <http://triestelibera.org/it/>; their principle motto is: 'Trieste is not Italy', it is possible to find this statement in a graffiti form spray-painted around in the city, written in different languages mostly German, Slovenian and Italian.

¹⁰⁵ See note 3: "Viva l'A. (Austria) e il po' bon, xe questo el motto triestin." transl: Viva the A. (Austria) and the how-goes-it-goes, that's the Triestine motto."

beginning of the 19th century, the Slavic community began to flourish as they then acquired an ethnic consciousness that arose from the claiming of particular rights, such education in their native tongue (see Negrelli, and Verginella quoted in Ballinger, 2004: 38). This possibility of rights' recognition comes from the 'tolerance' of the Habsburg Empire, which according to Dubin should be perceived and evaluated using other parameters. Tolerance is not the same tolerance we understand in contemporary society, because during the Habsburg Empire it was more related to a groups' utility factor (Dubin quoted in Ballinger, 2004: 37). So can that past cosmopolitanism be considered the new cosmopolitanism of Trieste? Probably not, but the basic idea of the coexistence of different cultures remains valid. Robbins (1998) contributes to my reflections about local transnationalism, as he says that cosmopolitanism should be extended to transnational experiences that are particular rather than universal (Robbins quoted by Ballinger, 2004: 37). With the term *particular*, I understand localized as being in one place, one region and one area in order to understand certain solutions for specific societies.

Thus Trieste can be perceived as a cosmopolitan project, a space of possibility for the elaboration of new, alternative spatial imaginaries, which do not recall nostalgia but rather create and present geopolitical strategies to change the city's position in the European context (Bialasiewicz & Minca, 2010: 1087). Probably, the deepest nature of Trieste's cosmopolitanism is hidden and stopped by the presence of a border: the border in which is not just a geographical one but has the potential to be the social border that could guide societal and interethnic relations in the city. The border remains an obstacle which continues to exist within, "confine dentro" (see Ara & Magris, 2007: 192f; Bialasiewicz & Minca, 2010: 1086), and the possible transfer of cosmopolitanism to multiculturalism might lead to a breaking of that border on behalf of that common origin which Paolo Rumiz recognizes in the topos and not in the genos¹⁰⁶.

5.3. Multiculturalism in Trieste?

Next, it is of the utmost significance to address the fact that I am aware that my previous vision of the 'local' might be misunderstood and linked to some extremist positions. That is neither the aim nor the purpose of my assertions, which I actually

¹⁰⁶ Cf. last paragraph in this chapter.

refer to a transnational possibility as opposed to a national one. A practical example of how this transnational construction of the identity that is based on the localism can work, is the project promoted by Riccardo Illy, the former regional president, who in 1998 started his own campaign for the promotion of a new cooperation between the four different regional realities (Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Croatia, Carinthia, Slovenia). Through this project, performed on behalf of the so-called Euroregions¹⁰⁷, exchanges concerning cultural, social and economic interests between the four nations have increased. In my point of view, it is exactly this possibility of a transnational solution that is a key point for Trieste and can take this city out of its municipal and self-referential limits. The acquirement of a belonging that includes a wider area – thus Istria, which is historically bound to the Triestine reality - can overthrow Trieste's localism (now intended in its limited sense).

Once we agree on what the meaning of identity in the local culture is, we should try to outline what Triestine cosmopolitanism is, which sense and which restraints it has, and if it can be turned into multiculturalism. During my research, I asked Julie, one of my interviewees, if Trieste can be considered a multicultural city, and she answered:

“People say that Trieste is multicultural just because we have lots of immigrants...well, no! Everyone keeps on staying in its own ghetto”. (Julie's interview)

She then explained to me that her wish is to live in a metropolis like London, “where you don't know where the other people come from”. Drawing on her own experiences, her dream is to be in a place where no one pays attention to your surname, where you come from or what your supposed origin is (she is particularly referring to the Slovenian-Italian contrast). Her wish is to not be classified as a non-Italian mother tongue speaker just because she has a Slovenian surname. Her personal technique is a kind of social mimicry, as she does not declare her real surname or her real identity in order to not be automatically inserted into the minority group. In order to find a solution, she plans on changing her surname so that she is not automatically classified as something that she does not want to be.

¹⁰⁷ About Italo-Slovene Euroregion see Rigo E. & Rahola F. (2007)

Within the Triestine context, and taking its history into consideration, this is probably one of the strongest possible reactions. Julie's case is important to understand how the system of those entities, which she calls "ghetto", does not sit well with upcoming generations. The ethnic groups and historical ethnic divisions - usually the Italian-speaking, the Slovenian-speaking and other communities (e.g. Croatian, Serbian, other communities of the Balkan peninsula) – are probably not applicable anymore¹⁰⁸. According to my fieldwork experience, I would say that the two pillars of the Italian and Slovenian communities are much more separated by their ethnic awareness, while the others try to be part of the pillar's base, which can be found in the triestinità. So why can't this triestinità be seen as a "glue" for all of those different ethnic groups? Why does it appear as a "wonderful melting pot" to the tourist who visits Trieste and finds all these diversities, but so different for the inhabitants who create larger problems of cohabitation with the "other"? Why can't multiculturalism in Trieste exist in the name of "authentic hybridization", which could help the new Others integrate in the city? Well, the most immediate answer comes from Julie's interview:

"Trieste is too racist to become a multicultural city. I think that is still missing that internal harmony which can lead to an acceptance of the Stranger. What happened in recent history is still an open wound!" (Julie's interview)

So the Triestine context has to be considered as a reality, which still lives in an immobility of the social texture at the moment. As we can see (e.g. Julie's case), the old conformation is still perceived as oppressing, without permitting any possibility of branching out from the pre-set social structure. So what is a possible solution? Is it to exit, to leave the group (as Julie wishes to do)? This act, if made by a conspicuous number of group members, could possibly lead to an empowerment of those possibilities of transformation (Strasser in Six-Hohenbalken, Tošić, 2009: 158f).

¹⁰⁸ During the centuries who have to remember that Istria has been under many dominations, so that's what give to the Istrianness a very special meaning whereby lots of different origins and belongings are included: "My son, myself, my mother and my maternal grandmother, we were all born in Pisino/Pazin. All very simple, one might say, but instead my grandmother was born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, my mother in Italy, I myself in Yugoslavia and my son in Croatia" (Il Piccolo, November 18, 1996 quoted in Ballinger, 2004: 39)

If the 'triangle of the culture' that is theorized by G. Baumann (1999) and formed among three main actors (*national culture*, *ethnic culture* and *religion as culture*), is used as the main format for a multicultural society, we can find a correspondence between this model and the Triestine case. We have already exhaustively discussed a possible national culture. Trieste can be considered national if we separately examine the Italian and Slovenian communities. They have a nationalist attitude toward their respective states. Some people have considered a solely Trieste-nation as a solution, which was in fact supported by the FTT, and thereby historical conditions are too well-fixed in order to shook up. The ethnic culture remains uncertain and undefined for Trieste when taken in its entirety, and even though an ethnic awareness can be claimed for each group, the hybridization still seems as if it is an unfeasible possibility. The *religious culture* presents an element of discordance. It is not among the historical communities as their status of religious communities is guaranteed on behalf of past cosmopolitanism, which represents the heritage of the Habsburg Empire¹⁰⁹. The religious debate involves the encounter of new Muslim communities and the Christian majority (see Baumann, 1999: 69-80).

Baumann's critique of the existing multicultural theory does not just involve the three vertexes of the cultural triangle but many other aspects of the problem as well, which involve a long list of authors with related themes such as cultural citizenship (see T. Turner, 1993), politics of recognition (see Taylor, 1992), multicultural liberalism, multicultural citizenship (see Kymlicka, 1995) and the pluralistic view (see Verma, 1990)¹¹⁰. These along with many other scholars dealt with multiculturalism and the pluralist approach to the new societies. This thesis attempts to give a first possible description of the Triestine social texture that focuses on the consolidated quarrel between the Italian and Slovenian communities. In this last chapter, I attempt to propose some new arguments, which do not actually only involve old cultural conflicts. Its aim is rather to include all new communities that frame the multicultural/intercultural society of Trieste. In my opinion, these considerations should be made by abstracting the actual old-

¹⁰⁹ About the role of religion in Trieste cf. the different opinion of G. Parotto (2011), which is embedded in an internal context.

¹¹⁰ My readings about the multicultural approach included some other titles. See Galli (2008); Savidan (2010), Khaled et al. (2004).

new community encounter from the triestinità (up to the time when a solution of mutual respect and harmony is no longer acceptable).

Therefore, I agree with G. Parotto (2011). According to Parotto, the discourse around 'multiculturalism' has to be compelled with the cosmopolitan background of the city, even though we should not just refer to it as a past time – idolizing it as an example to follow in the present. Firstly, the multicultural discourse has to be separated from identity building process dynamics, which are characterized by opposition more than by collaboration. In addition, the abstraction of the cultural matter from the political dynamics would be ideal. A pluralistic approach could be a possible solution: a pluralism intended as a development and improvement of multiculturalism, as it seems to be able to create strong values for an identity's determination. (see Parotto in Scarciglia, 2011: 48-53)

5.4. Triestinità and its non-origin

The Triestine culture is very complex and presents much discordance, which gives a certain flair of uniqueness to it. During my research I came in touch with a number of varying aspects, which particularly characterize Trieste. Some possible explanations are those given by scholars committed to studies about Trieste:

“The difficulties which push the city, later on, to deform its originality in an official mark of diversity, to betray its own tradition, or rather to leave the exploration of the new and the different (...); but rather to fall back onto itself, on a self-celebrative autarchy which repeats the past glories, instead of heading to new destinations. In Trieste it is too much discussed about Trieste itself, and about those who talk about Trieste; there is too much support for initiatives addressed to a local ambit. (...) Trieste has really suffered, till that point when it became forced to assume unfair behaviours, to complain and regret, to restate from both Italian and Slovenian sides their national closure. That's the reason why Trieste damages itself, reflecting itself into a culture, which reproduces tautologically its own cliché. The stereotyped image of Trieste is untrue, as it identifies the Triestine culture with the most chastised literature, that one which retreats to the Triestinità, to the Triestine particularism.” (Ara Magris, 2007: 196-197)

In this excerpt, I recognize several points of discordance when compared to my research. Considering that the authors are writing a book about Trieste, I think their aim is not to criticise their own work. I would rather say that their comment

refers more to the literal world as they talk about a “chastised literature”. But if we suppose this observation is true, then we must consider the ethnical aspects. Their criticism goes towards retreating into a loop, which circles around local/municipal identity, assuming its most restraining and self-referential meaning. My opinion is shared by scholar J. Morris who referred to the triestinità situation as follows:

“ My impression is that Trieste, if it had to advertise itself using street posters (...), all what they need to express about itself would be its *triestinità*. According to me, this is an essentialist place and its only aim is to be itself.” (Morris, 2001: 203)

But how is this Triestinità recognisable? How can we experience it? According to Triestine writer S. Slataper (1888-1915):

“He identifies the triestinità with the awareness and the experience of a very real yet at the same time undefinable (sense of) difference, authentic when experienced in sentiment and being, but rendered immediately false, immediately artificial when proclaimed, when exhibited”¹¹¹ (Slataper quoted in Ara & Magris, 2007: 3).

That statement may come across as pessimistic, but it directly refers to the Slataper period just before the break out of the First World War. So the Triestinità have always been discussed, the question has never been “what to be or what not to be”. The principal problem is “who do we include in this identity?” This question arises from the relational definition of the identity - so in the same moment when we accept to include A, we have to deny a part of B, and we have to “pretend” that we agree with it. The balance between negative and positive explained in the fourth chapter, or the inverse relation, whereby if I agree with X-community’s features, I have to deny another Y-community’s characteristics (see Baumann, Gingrich, 2004: 19-27), then we can realise why this balance is so uncertain and unstable in the general definition of triestinità

This solution concerns the two largest communities more than the others, and this widespread negation has been carried out and offered to the population as a parameter for judging the “other”. This criterion, placed beside the historical happenings, created the phenomenon of the *spaesamento* [disorientation] (see

¹¹¹ Trad. in *The border within: inhabiting the border in Trieste*, Bialasiewicz & Minca (2010).

Verginella, 2008: 63-80). This happened on three main occasions: first, during the Fascist regime which undermined the Slovenian minority; secondly, during the displacement of Italian inhabitants in Istria; and lastly, for both communities when the borders were opened (L. Bialasiewicz, C. Minca, 2010: 1085-1087).

So where can you find the *non-origin* of Triestinità if an origin cannot even be set out? Minca suggests in the dialect, which is the result of a negotiation process, whereby 'non-national/ non-territorial' elements are mixed together by a local peculiarity (L. Bialasiewicz, C. Minca, 2010: 1089-1094). According to this possibility, the Triestine identity does include components taken from different cultures. So here we explain Ara & Magris's "accuse": this transmission became mono-directional as the Triestine culture falls into its self-referential loop.¹¹²

Paolo Rumiz seemed to get the gist of the problem:

"The triestini don't have an identity, if not one defined by its absence. We all come from somewhere else and the only thing that binds us is the common condition of living in a place – in this place. There is no *genos* that unites us, only a *topos* within which we can find refuge. It is this particular relationship with place – and the need to reflect upon and reflect ourselves within this place – that defines us" (Gallo, 2008: 91).

This is the most suitable answer that I can find which highlights both the main points of my research questions and results. The locality can be the solution if it is not based on the *genos*, the origin, but rather on the *topos*, the place. The place is considered as a common ground, which is not defined but, on the contrary, still in motion. Accepting this condition, it is possible to define us through place, and in the meanwhile the place is defined by our presence in it. It ends up in a circular relation based on a duality: even though the place is one and we are an enormous number of people, we can do our best by giving much more meaning to the spatial reality and by finding our place within it.

¹¹² See Mica's articles (2009a) and (2009b).

7. Appendix

7.1. Graphic representations and photos

A) Division of the Triestine area in Zona A and Zone B (cf. p. 20), Source: (<http://www.unafinestrasutrieste.it/storia04.htm>)



B) Slovenian monument to WWII Partisans defaced by graffiti. Bagnoli della Rosandra-Boljunec, January 1998 (Source: Fikfak's article)



Graffiti in Basovizza/Bazovica: "Triest ist nicht Italien" (Photo by Valeria Baldissera)



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9. Abstracts

9.1. Abstract in English

This work deals with the topic of identity and is applied to the specific situation of border areas. The research was conducted at the Italian-Slovenian border area, namely in the city of Trieste. After a primary analysis of the historical facts, which contributed to the current situation of the city, and a following excursus about its theoretical approaches, the text then attempts to provide an understanding and an anthropological research is performed. I delve into the specific case study. Although there are several new and historical communities in Trieste, the most important and significant for the city's history remains to be the Slovenian community, which is officially recognized as a minority. In my work, I study their conformation as an ethnic group and their relations with the Italian community, which dominates. My work includes comprehensive themes that are based on perceptions of the social spaces regarding interethnic relations, linguistic knowledge related to the ethnic origin and the role of memory as a balance between the past and the future. In light of the latter considerations, I embed the case of the Slovenian minority in the larger Triestine context, investigating whether this historical example can be used as a model for the more recently immigrated communities. Therefore I examine the Triestine area, giving particular importance to the meaning of *triestinità*: insofar, it is considerable for the development of a multi- or intercultural model, and discussed if this *triestinità* can be used as a basis upon which the changing of the Triestine social texture can be built on.

9.2. Abstract in German

In meiner Masterarbeit setze ich mich mit dem Thema über Identität an der Grenze auseinander. Meine Forschung wurde an der Italo-Slowenischen Grenzgebiet durchgeführt, nämlich in Triest. Erst wird das historische Thema erläutert: die wichtigsten Ereignisse und die Geschichte der ethnischen Gruppen werden ausgelegt, um zu verstehen, insofern Veränderungen zur aktuelle Situation beigebracht haben. Nachdem werden manche relevante theoretische Ansätze dargestellt, die erforderlich und nützlich für eine anthropologische Forschung über die Identität sind. Demnächst wird die Ausführung in dem spezifischen Thema der Minderheit eingebettet: unter den zahlreichen ethnischen Gemeinschaften von Triest, die slowenischsprachige Gemeinde nimmt die beträchtliche Rolle ein, da ihnen einen offiziellen Status von Minderheit anerkannt wurde. In meiner Arbeit erforsche ich über ihre Beschaffenheit und Zustand als ethnische Gruppe, wie auch über die soziokulturelle Beziehungen, die interethnische Dynamiken mit der italienischen Dominanzgruppe beeinflussen und bestimmen. Meine Forschung schließt solche Themen ein, die die Wahrnehmung des Sozialraums und die interethnische Verhältnisse beziehen, die Rolle des individuellen und kollektiven Gedächtnisses als Balance zwischen Vergangenheit und Gegenwart erklären, wie auch welche Bedeutung die Sprachkenntnisse für das Zugehörigkeitsgefühlgestaltungsprozess.

In Anbetracht meiner letzten Überlegungen gliedere ich den Studienfall der slowenischen Minderheit in dem weiteren Triester Kontext: es wird darüber diskutiert, wie die Beziehungen mit den neuen ethnischen Gruppen durch das historische Konflikt beeinflusst werden. Schließlich gebe ich einen Überblick über das Triester Gebiet, wobei die Bedeutung von *triestinità* (Triestinität) erläutert wird: insofern ist es beachtlich für das Entwicklung eines multikulturellen oder interkulturellen Munster, und ob die *triestinità* als Unterbau und Grundlage betrachtet kann, worauf die soziale Veränderung in Triest sich rühen.

9.3. Abstract in Italian

Nella mia tesi mi occupo del tema dell'identità legato alle regioni di confine. La mia ricerca è stata condotta al confine italo-sloveno, in particolare nella città di Trieste. In primo luogo viene introdotto un tema storico, ovvero sono presentati i fatti principali e le comunità etniche che hanno caratterizzato la storia triestina e hanno apportato cambiamenti fino all'era odierna. Dopodiché presento alcuni approcci teorici necessari e utili per la ricerca antropologica sul tema dell'identità. A tutto ciò segue la vera specificità del mio lavoro: i principi teorici dapprima introdotti sono applicati nel tema principale della mia ricerca. Tra la tante comunità etniche che hanno caratterizzato la storia di Trieste, quella degli Slovenofoni è sicuramente la più incisiva, dal momento che gli viene riconosciuto lo status di minoranza etnica. Ed è proprio questo il punto cardine della mia ricerca, quindi lo studio della composizione e della condizione della minoranza slovena, approfondendo le relazioni socio-culturali che influenzano e regolano le dinamiche con il gruppo dominante degli Italofoeni. Oltre ciò, in questa tesi vengono discussi temi riguardanti la percezione dello spazio sociale, le modalità di relazioni interetniche, il ruolo della memoria individuale e collettiva come bilancia tra passato e presente, e il significato delle abilità linguistiche nel processo di definizione dell'appartenenza. Alla luce delle considerazioni fatte, inserisco il caso specifico delle minoranza slovena nel più ampio contesto triestino: si apre quindi la tematica riguardante il possibile utilizzo del caso sloveno per la creazione di un modello da applicare alle comunità nate dai nuovi flussi migratori. In conclusione viene spiegato il concetto di *triestinità*: in che misura risulta essere importante per lo sviluppo di un modello multi o interculturale, e se può costituire una solida struttura portante per i cambiamenti del tessuto sociale di Trieste.

Curriculum Vitae

Personal details

Name: Alessandro Baracetti
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Education

October 2010- 2013	Master CREOLE – Cultural differences and transnational processes – at the University of Vienna, department of Social and Cultural Anthropology. Thesis's title: "The other Trieste: integration of a community on the border. Slovenian minority, inter-ethnic relations and multiculturalism: constructions of a local identity"
September 2007 – September 2008	Exchange year at the Kapodistriako University of Athens
September 2006- October 2009	Bachelor at the University of Padua in Linguistic and Cultural Mediation. Title of the thesis: „Nikos Thémelis as cultural mediator between Greece and the West." Music, theatre and cinema in the novel <i>One life two lives</i> ".
September 2001- July 2006	Scientific High School „M. Grigoletti“ in Pordenone.

Research interests

Border areas, urban anthropology, anthropology of space, ethno-linguistic, languages teaching/learning, material anthropology in relation to consumption goods and lifestyle.
Main geographical areas of interest: Europe, Balkan area, Former Socialist Countries. Eurasia.

Language skills

Italian:	Mother tongue
English:	Very good
German:	Very good (DAF Certificate)
Modern Greek:	Very good (Certificate Pistopitiko Ellinomatheia C1, Summer school in Greece)
Spanish:	Good

Basic/good knowledge of French, Romanian, Slovenian

Work experience and internship

September 2012- nowadays	Italian teaching and volunteering at the Centre for Refugees in Trieste; tutoring for children with disabilities.
March 2011- September 2011	Internship at the University of Vienna for organization of the DGV-Congress (German Association for Anthropology)
June 2008- August 2008	Tour leader for intercultural and leisure travels organized by People to People
September 2009- August 2010	Co-worker in the sociocultural centre "Die Villa" in Leipzig during the European Volunteer Service Year
March 2009- June 2009	English and German teacher for children
October 2008 – December 2008	Collaboration with the University of Padova for a project of Modern Greek language teaching to children.
March 2007- June 2007	Participation to course with internship in Padova, in the context of migration and refugees