

CONSTRUCTING CLASS, GENDER AND NATIONALITY IN SOCIALISM: A MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF FOOD ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE SLOVENIAN MAGAZINE NAŠA ŽENA

Abstract. The paper explores how advertisements in Slovenia's oldest women's magazine Naša Žena published during the socialist period from 1960 to 1991 construct gender, class and nationality. The findings are based on the method of multimodal analysis of and presented with regard to three representative advertisements for three decades. The paper shows how during the 1960s advertisements construct women's gender and class identity in line with the dominant socio-political socialist ideas. This is compared to the period of the 1970s when economic liberalisation was reflected in advertisements showing a working-class utopia of living a bourgeois lifestyle. The analysis concludes with the 1980s when Slovenia was foreseeing a new national identity detached from both socialist values and the Yugoslav identity.

Key words: *socialism, advertising, multimodal analysis, class, gender, nationality*

Introduction

In an essay from 1961 Roland Barthes points out that food is a system of communication. Because, according to Barthes, advertising reflects the collective psychology much more than it shapes it (Barthes, 2008), food advertisements offer plentiful information about food that should be analysed in order to establish what it signifies. Barthes believed that exploring food advertisements would be exploring specific units of signification. This is also crucial for the analysis presented in this text and along these lines food advertisements will be treated as texts, i.e. as artefacts full of potential meanings. We believe advertisements promoting foods go beyond their mission of increasing sales of the advertised product to the consumer. Inevitably, they form part of a broader corpus of social texts which guide our understandings of what it means to select, prepare, cook and eat food, what is

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entailed by good cooking and eating, and who is responsible for preparing meals. Food-related practices are always concerned with the principles of right and wrong behaviour since they transfer raw matter from “nature” to the state of “culture”, and thereby “civilize” and domesticate it (Lupton, 1996: 2). By civilising it, we construct it as part of societal discourses that direct cultural and social practices, form social relations and shape identities. Often food-related advice primarily entails instructions for the correct performance of a woman, wife or mother’s social roles (Tivadar, 2009: 7). Advertisements for food and drink, when treated as texts, are therefore full of signifiers that lie at the heart of ethnic, national, class, gender and other identities (Wilson, 2006: 12).

Advertisements also played an important role in reflecting the ‘collective psychology’ of society during socialism. As Hyder Patterson (2011: 2) notes, by the late 1960s consumerism in Yugoslavia was well underway as advertising had come to play a prominent role in the daily lives of Yugoslavs and it even expanded in the 1970s, resembling and following Western trends in advertising (ibid.: 81). In contrast to other socialist states, from the early 1950s advertising specialists had gradually turned Yugoslavia into a place where citizens were bombarded with advertising messages. Ads were present in newspapers, magazines, on the radio and on television, in movie theatres and on the streets (ibid.: 52), although the amount was still modest compared to Western standards (ibid.: 70). Socialist advertising was often assigned the didactic function of rational education about lifestyle. As the analysis will show, especially in the case from the 1960s presented below, advertisements aimed to shape consumer practices and ways of living by informing people about what is useful to them but at the same time minding their economy (Greene, 2014).

In this article, our interest lies in the cultural meanings produced and reproduced by food advertisements in the Slovenian women’s magazine *Naša žena* (Our Woman) during the time of Yugoslav socialism. The article aims to show that the promotion of food practices in the magazine subtly mirrors and reproduces the social, cultural, economic and political characteristics of the period and, accordingly, constructs gender, class and national identities. With this article we also seek to fill the gap in the literature as only a few studies (see Tominc, 2015; Tivadar and Vezovnik, 2010; Tivadar, 2009) have so far addressed food and food-related practices during Slovenian socialism.

Method and sample

The analysis presented here represents only part of a broader research project in which food-related texts (i.e. recipes, food columns, practical

suggestions for house-keeping and cooking, articles on food topics, advertisements and advertorials for food and kitchen technologies) appearing in the magazine *Naša žena*¹, starting with 1960 and finishing with 1991, were analysed. The sample was narrowed down by including seven volumes per year: issues published in February, April, June, July/August, October and December. This paper presents a selection of three representative case studies by analysing three advertisements for food. It provides a detailed analysis of three texts – selected cases that illustrate what is a typical (see Patton, 1990: 182–183) ad for the analysed period as it best reflects the hegemonic cultural discourse of the selected period by mirroring the current value system and initiating trends in future socio-cultural practices. We start from the presupposition that advertisers' communicative choices may show how consumption values and consumption choices as well as the broader value system changed through the period of socialism. The three selected cases pertain to three distinctive periods in socialist Slovenia: the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. These three decades were selected according to the socio-political and economic contexts relevant to each of these decades².

The methodological approach employed in this article is multimodal critical discourse analysis (henceforth MCDA) (Machin and Myer, 2012). MCDA is an interpretative qualitative methodological approach which lies at the intersection of social semiotics (Hodge and Kress, 1988) and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1992). Thus, multimodal analysis allows us to explore images by semantically describing features and elements of visual images. Multimodal analysis is therefore a methodological tool positioned in between texts (visual images like photography, films, TV shows, advertisements, press etc. but also design, architecture and art) and the interpretation of their meanings. However, images are usually only part of the message. So as to see the whole context, we also have to take the written texts that usually accompany the images into consideration. The advertisements analysed in the following sections are made up of written and visual elements. In order to analyse the two components of the advertisements a lexical analysis has to be performed. The aim of MCDA is not to determine final interpretations of meanings but to explore potential meanings of texts and

¹ *Naša žena* has been published since 1941, first becoming the newsletter of the Women's Antifascist Front of Slovenia. In the initial period, the aim of *Naša žena* was to propagate to the readers the socialist struggle for women's equality (Verginella, 2006: 55). The focus changed in the late 1960s when housekeeping, cooking, lifestyle, fashion, parenting methods, health and family topics took the lead with a significant increase in full-colour advertisements after the late 1960s. Until the release of *Jana* – another women's weekly in 1971 – *Naša žena* was the only women's magazine on the Slovenian market during the socialist period. In 1969, 33.3 percent of Slovenians who claimed they read printed media were readers of *Naša žena* (Toš et al., 1969: 47).

² Due to space limitations these will not be addressed. For further reference, see Luthar and Pušnik, 2010, Tivadar and Vezovnik, 2010, Ivanič, 1979, Hainz, 1979.

their function in specific contexts. According to MCDA, visual communication and decisions about the inclusion of and manipulation of visual elements or signs in the process of message production have to be interpreted not as mere representations but as those reproducing, constructing, legitimating and sustaining hegemonic social ideologies and practices.

Critical multimodal analysis will be conducted by exploring three advertisements that are typical of the three above-mentioned periods. Each advertisement will be methodologically addressed on two levels. The first level consists of lexical analysis of the advertisement that will focus on the wording, grammar, modes of discourse, pronouns, presuppositions, adjectives and rhetorical devices of the written text appearing in the advertisements. The second level explores the connotative level of the visual semiotic choices, such as attributes, settings, salience, iconography, representations of the subjects, size, colour, focus and typography.

Analysis

The 1960s: The food industry as a saver for a busy working class woman

The 1960s were the most stable and successful period of Yugoslav socialism. The industrial sector was prospering. Especially the food industry was one of the leading industries in Yugoslavia until 1965. The living standard was quite high and the shortages that had been common even 15 years after the end of the war were relatively rare. In most families, particularly in towns, both marriage partners were breadwinners, the rate of women's employment was around 40 percent. Although the key element of the socialist emancipation project was women's inclusion in paid work and education, this did not lead to a reduction of women's domestic and reproductive responsibilities (Ghodsee, 2014; Massey et al., 1995). A Slovenian public opinion survey from 1975/76 (Toš et al., 1976: 204–209) showed that women did most of the household work. What respondents saw as a possible solution was a more egalitarian position for women in the family, a more balanced distribution of work in the household and the modernisation of households and social services so as to allow more free time for women.

It was at this point that the industry played an important role in freeing women up from domestic duties by introducing new foodstuff, such as canned food. By launching ready-made dishes that were fast and easy to cook, the industry was trying to help the busy working class woman who was struggling to balance between her domestic and working duties. In order to illustrate our point, let us now turn to the analysis of the first advertisement.

Picture 1: ADVERTISEMENT FOR CANNED RAVIOLI³

NOVA SPECIALITETA!
poljane testenine
v mesni omaki

NOVA SPECIALITETA!
poljane testenine
v mesni omaki

Ravioli v mesni omaki so
idealna obroka, lahko pre-
bostljivi in z veliko kalo-
rično vrednostjo. Vsebine
konzerve pripravite
v pičlih 12 minutah.

Zahtevajte jih
pri svojem trgovcu!

If we first look at the wording, i.e. which words are used and its potential connotations (Machin and Myer, 2012: 32), words such as “new” and “specialty” can be found. The connotative level of the word “new” reveals the industry’s presumption that canned ravioli was a novelty for the Slovenian consumer. The industry was well aware that daily meals needed to be prepared economically, taking account of all the resources invested, especially time. This required a skilful housewife who should be able to bring some variety into the repetitive and dull dishes consumed daily at home and in public diners. Therefore, the industry aimed to sell such products by labeling them something “new” that would help the housewife enrich her day-to-day cooking. These products were new on the market and housewives were unfamiliar with them. Therefore, this particular product needed to be carefully introduced. The explanatory mode used in the sentence “stuffed pasta in meat sauce” reveals the industry’s expectation of the consumer’s unfamiliarity with the product. The explanation of what ravioli actually is seems to be offered in order to allow the presupposed sceptical and ignorant consumer to build trust and knowledge regarding the new product. The purpose of stating twice what ravioli is: “a new specialty, stuffed pasta with meat sauce” is used in order to rhetorically secure the emphasis.

The food industry was also encouraging women to incorporate new products into their everyday life by attributing products with an exceptional status. This is evident from the connotative meaning of the word “specialty” that seeks to give canned ravioli a special culinary status. This special status of the dish derives from ravioli’s ethnic origins. Ravioli is not a traditional

³ NEW SPECIALTY! Stuffed pasta in meat sauce. Ravioli in meat sauce are an ideal meal, easily digestible and with a high caloric value. The can’s contents can be prepared in just 12 minutes. Demand it from your retailer!

Slovenian dish, but an Italian one and therefore the “specialty” of the product might relate to Italian cuisine that would give the ordinary Slovenian worker the experience of a culinary experience different and more refined in taste, but now accessible.

However, the high culinary status attributed to the product not only means exclusivity in terms of something new and exotic now accessible to the ordinary consumer who in reality struggled with the sometimes limited selection of food available in the market mostly due to the restrictive import policy (Tivadar and Vezovnik, 2010: 382). The product’s high culinary status was also due to its fulfilment of the socialist imaginary, especially the need for saving time and for nutritious meals (ibid.: 389). The word “ideal” used in the ad therefore designates what a perfect meal should be like. Describing the dish as “caloric” and “digestible” reflects the nutritionist understanding of food and body that was popular during the 1960s when food was seen as an essential source of health or even as fuel for the working class body machine (ibid.: 399). Food was discussed in terms of ‘not enough’ and never of ‘too much’ in order to create the perfect balance for a healthy body ready to resume work after a meal. Along with clues about nutrition, the economisation of time achieved with the “swift” preparation was an important part of modern life. With its products the industry was giving the socialist housewife some extra time to spend with her family and on work, without neglecting one of her primary tasks: cooking.

It is thus interesting at this point to look into the relationship between the food industry and the consumer. The grammatical analysis reveals use of the imperative grammatical mood to express authority. The imperative mood (Machin and Myer, 2012: 190) – “Prepare the can”, “demand it” – implies an authoritative relationship between the industry and the housewife, positioning the housewife as the one who fulfils the industry’s command. The imperative sentence with the exclamation mark “Demand it from your retailer!” discloses two potential meanings: (1) the new food was not available throughout the stores and that it was the housewife’s job to make it available to her; and (2) the industry saw the housewives’ role of consumer as providing active support for the industry. The quite authoritarian addressing of women reveals the industry’s attempt to socialise housewives into a modern consumer with the right and obligation to demand particular goods and products from retailers. With its patronising tone, the ad sought to educate women to become better suited for the modern future by incorporating such pre-prepared industrial food in the family’s daily menu. This allowed women to step onto the symbolic path leading to the new modern era.

The analysis of the visual semiotic choices confirms our interpretations of the lexical analysis. The attributes of the visually exposed object (the image of the can) in the ad’s photograph are always communicating

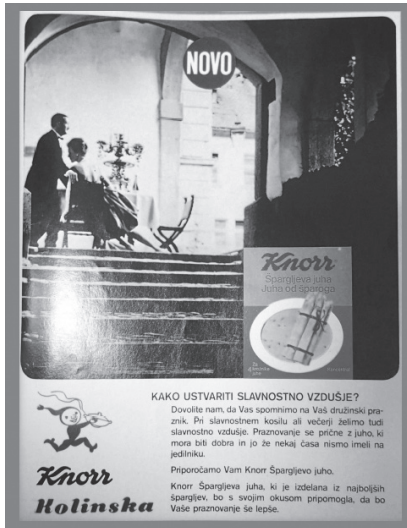
values and ideas (Machin and Myer, 2012: 51). The image of the opened can is a visual attribute that beckons the consumer to peek inside the product, connoting transparency. The industry allows the consumer to gaze at the contents of the can as it has nothing to hide. By showing the open can, the advertiser probably aims to build a better understanding of what the food in the can looks like. This appears to be crucial for quickly reducing the suspiciousness regarding the novelties the industry was providing (Tivadar and Vezovnik, 2010: 387). Encouraging women to openly accept the food industry's new products and gradually changing the traditional ways of preparing food was important for increasing demand for the ever-growing supply. The importance of this new foodstuff is revealed in the white and clean setting in which the photograph of the can is positioned. According to Machin and Myer (2012: 52), settings communicate ideas and values. The whiteness of the background puts the can in complete focus, as if the can were able to communicate by itself. The analysis of the salience (colour, tone, focus and size) reveals that the can is centrally positioned while its size takes up most of the whole advertisement space. This feature constructs the can as a protagonist, a general and important signifier of modernisation in which processed food's addition to everyday eating practices is welcomed.

The 1970s: A bourgeois lifestyle as working-class utopia

While the 1960s mainly reflected socialist prosperity relying on Yugoslav industry, in the early 1970s trade, banking, insurance and tourism were booming and Yugoslavia was starting to build business relationships with the developed countries of the West, also paying more attention to Western business models. This was a period of economic liberalisation, the increasingly presence of advertising, and the consumer culture which had become an important feature of the everyday lifestyle (Hainz, 1979: 910; Ivanič, 1979: 918; Hyder Patterson, 2011: 61, 69). The more prosperous, more open and more competitive Yugoslavia, coupled with shopping for satisfaction, self-expression and status (Hyder Patterson, 2011: 3), paved the way for the New Class generation for whom participating in the modern style of mass consumption was an integral part. Nevertheless, its promotion by far did not reach the level seen in the West (ibid.: 3, 295). Still, class identity in Yugoslavia became more flexible than in the early decades of socialism. Due to the hegemony of the egalitarian discourse in Yugoslavia (Luthar, 2014: 19–22), the sphere of consumption suddenly offered a playground for symbolical cultural differentiation. The mass consumption of small, easily accessible everyday luxuries, like the Knorr asparagus soup we analyse below, had a profound democratising effect on Yugoslav life (Hyder Patterson, 2011: 272) in the sense that it introduced the idea of consumer choice,

the individual's right to choose but also make to demands on the market, first with regard to the consumption of goods, but later on also with regard to wider cultural and political issues.

Picture 2: ADVERTISEMENT FOR ASPARAGUS SOUP⁴



The written text of the advertisement starts with the rhetorical question (van Dijk, 1993: 276) “How to create a solemn atmosphere?” aiming to replicate the supposed internal dialogue of the consumer, a housewife for whom it is expected she wants to create a formal atmosphere by preparing a special meal for a special occasion. The rhetorical question gives the impression that the industry is still working hand in hand with the housewife by sensing her hidden desires and offering her solutions to break with the everyday reality and dull routine. The selection of the words “we desire” designates aspiring, dreaming, imagining something out of the ordinary, maybe even something utopian – i.e. the idea that the consumer should not only be satisfying basic needs but should be introduced to a higher cultural level of eating pleasures. The pronoun “we” represents an imagined community, a togetherness of consumers and industry working as a whole to achieve a common goal. The reader becomes part of the ‘we’ group and is supposed to identify herself with it (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001: 123). The asparagus

⁴ “How to create a solemn atmosphere?” “Allow us, to remind You of Your family celebration. At a festive lunch or dinner, we also love a festive atmosphere. The celebration starts with a soup that has to be good and has not been on our menu for some time. We recommend Knorr Asparagus soup. Knorr Asparagus soup that is made from the best asparagus will with its taste help Your celebration be even more wonderful.”

soup is presented with the adjectives “good”, “tasty” and “exceptional” as it “has not been on our menu for quite some time” but also as something luxurious as asparagus is a pricy and uncommon vegetable and therefore as part of socialist economisation could not be consumed very often. The emphasis on the tastiness of the dish communicates taste as an important feature of a sophisticated dish, which was supposedly not commonly experienced in everyday food consumption. Although it is quite common for Slovenians to eat soup as part of a daily meal, the soup in the advertisement is constructed as something exclusive, a symbol of luxury inducing the idea of the consumer’s desire to experience something different and special in an otherwise praised equal society where consuming and possessing luxury items were not completely morally acceptable. However, the pleasure derived from possessing and consuming luxury items was integral to the utopian promise of socialism based on abundance and fulfilment (Crowley and Reid, 2012). Along these lines, the asparagus soup with its signifying spectrum seemed to offer a legitimate utopian escape. The soup therefore helps the housewife escape from the boring everyday working class reality and symbolically elevate her social status. This is also sustained by use of the pronouns “You” and “Yours”, which are capitalised and can be seen in other advertisements from the period. This form of addressing an individual is used in the Slovenian language when addressing a person in a formal, respectful manner. It expresses social distance between the one speaking and the addressee. It also connotes politeness expressed due to differences in age, social status, but above all to emphasise respect for the person being addressed. In the analysed advertisement, such a linguistic form offers a point of identification for the working class reader, implying that use of Knorr Asparagus soup will help you climb the social ladder, differentiate from the working class taste, and make you a respectful member of society. Interestingly, this is a very good example of “conspicuous consumption” (Veblen, 2007) through which people aspire to the sophistication of upper-social classes and is in tune with Naccarato and LeBesco’s (2012) study on culinary capital in which, drawing on Bourdieu’s theory of capital, they demonstrate that food-related practices serve as markers of social status. Further on, the text continues: “Allow us to...”, again using a very formal way of expressing the alleged power of the addressed consumer and the humble position of the speaker, i.e. the industry. However, this formal speech that elevates the consumer’s social status comes together with the authoritative addressing evident in the words “to remind You”. Although the industry shows the consumer great respect, it still teaches the consumer by addressing her in a paternalistic mode, aiming to guide a naive housewife. This is also seen in the use of the imperative mode expressed in the sentence “The celebration starts with a soup ...”. The statement lives out alternative options

and implies that no meal may properly be called festive without asparagus soup.

The analysis of visual semiotic choices supports the above lexical interpretation. A mere look at the attributes of the photograph included in the ad discloses a festively set table connoting celebration, luxury, aristocracy, high social status, and wealth. At the table we find two chairs suggesting intimacy, romanticism and luxury. This is also evident in the clothes worn by the two agents (man and woman). Their outfits connote wealth, sophistication and good taste. The man stands, looking ahead towards the open part of the atrium where the source of the light comes from. His pose is active, while the woman is passive, sitting on a chair, with her face turned towards the man, looking slightly down at his waist, which suggests her passiveness, humbleness and fragility. The couple is represented as an 'offer image' (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996: 127), meaning it is exposed to the viewer's gaze without directly looking at the reader. This creates a symbolic distance between the viewer and the agents in the picture, symbolically positioning the couple as role models for working class people. The stairs lead to a podium on which the two are positioned, symbolising their higher social position and implying that those on the podium have access to luxurious settings and items, and have time to enjoy them. The setting reveals a bottom-up perspective in which the reader is positioned, looking from below at the couple on the pedestal. This implies stairs need to be climbed to reach the socially privileged position of enjoyment. The analysis of the salience, especially the colour, which is dim, dark and golden, which are signifiers of wealth, elegance and luxury. The bright tones of the setting on the pedestal are opposed to the darkness at the bottom of the stairs. The light on the podium is soft and bright while the bottom of the stairs, where the gaze of the reader is directed, is dark (Machin and Myer, 2012: 54-56).

As Merkel (2010: 58) points out, whereas the communist vision of utopia had an ideal image of productive, working, creative citizens at its heart, popular utopias tended to hark back to feudal habitus in which each individual was an aristocrat. The ad emphasises bourgeois elegance that elevates the consumer above the coarse, pragmatic way of dealing with things in everyday life. "Prosperity for all" (Wohlstand für alle) was the declared goal of the socialist consumption policy, whereby the authorities and the population shared the same expectations of prosperity and satisfaction. However, these equalising tendencies on one hand, and the urge for distinction and individualisation on the other, collided again and again (Merkel, 2010: 68). Paraphrasing Marx, Merkel (2010) points out that what formerly seemed luxury is now a necessity. As it seems, the asparagus soup is an item with two meanings, on one side it helps the consumer feel special through experiencing something luxurious while on the other it encourages a supposedly luxury

item to be consumed by everybody and therefore triggers the socialist aim of the democratisation of luxury. Along these lines, asparagus was profaned by putting it in ready-made products.

The 1980s: In search of a genuine 'new' national identity

In the 1980s Yugoslavia was confronted with absolute economic stagnation, leading to a serious political and economic crisis, especially after Tito's death. The political crisis that in 1991 triggered the dissolution of Yugoslavia led to a revival of the traditionalism present since the late 1980s, not only in Slovenia but also in other socialist countries (see Smith and Jahlčička, 2007; Caldwell, 2007, 2002). Home-grown and home-made foods were gaining in value, especially when the imaginary of abundant nature came to signify a 'new' post-Yugoslav Slovenian identity.

Picture 3: ADVERTISEMENT FOR PICKLED VEGETABLES⁵



⁵ My garden. When They will praise the taste and the colour and crispiness and the scent and I do not know what else, you will say: "This is my garden!" On a Ptuj field, where Slovenian soil arches and calms down hard-working hands of good people love their own soil still in the traditional way. This soil of Ptuj is fertile and on it enough produce grows for the whole year – cabbage, beetroot, cucumbers, onions, carrots, and who would keep on counting – the one and lone gigantic garden. About two thousand farmers live here and cultivate the crops that the agricultural combine prefabricates in pickled vegetables, solely to keep them fresh throughout the whole year. My garden. Were named these products of pickled vegetables. Partly because of the landscape, partly because of the effort and consideration put into its preparation. There are no preservatives and artificial additives and it is only prepared with authentic home-grown herbs, like you would prepare it yourself at home. Fruits of the generous soil and the effort of good people.

The last analysed ad is a manifestation of the trends described above in which the representation of the national identity becomes important even in apparently apolitical texts like food advertisements. The lexical analysis of the written text discloses many rhetorical devices, especially metaphors and metonymies, repetitions and synecdoche. The text starts with the quote: "When They will praise the taste, and the colour, and the crispiness, and the scent and I do not know what else, you will say: This is my garden". The repetition of the conjunction "and" creates a rhetorical effect, emphasising the many positive qualities of Slovenian crops such as crispiness, tastefulness, scent and colourfulness. What signifies "Slovenian" is implicitly mentioned through the use of personifications, a rhetorical figure present when human qualities or abilities are assigned to inanimate objects (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001: 58). The sentence "Slovenian soil arches and calms down" enables the reader to identify with the object – Slovenian soil, which acquires human properties (arching, calming down) without explicitly mentioning Slovenians as a concrete agent. The Slovenian nation and its growth are clearly represented in the garden metaphor. The text says "my garden", using the possessive pronoun "my" in order to affirm the readers' attitude to their piece of land. "My garden" designates my personal garden as if such fruits could easily come from my own garden, cultivated at home by myself. Later on in the text, the garden becomes a "gigantic garden", therefore a metaphor for a bigger piece of land or even a country or a nation that still has to be carefully cultivated in order to flourish. The garden (my garden) can be interpreted as a metaphor which has the function of predicationally constructing ingroups and outgroups, whether they are imagined as 'races', 'nations', 'ethnicities' and 'tribes' or as specific 'racialised', 'national', 'ethnic' or 'religious' majorities or minorities (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001: 58). The key to understanding "my garden" as a metaphor can therefore be found in the popular conception of Slovenians historically identifying as a nation of diligent, hard-working and humble peasants who "love the soil in a traditional way", as the ad says. The Slovenian love for the soil symbolises the traditional way of living and surviving and is therefore constitutive of the Slovenian national identity. This is evident in naming those who cultivate the land "good people", implying instances of the commonly constructed national character of Slovenians known as good-natured and hard-working people. This identity construction descends from the Christian-socialist discourse – a hegemonic discourse from the late 19th and early 20th century which played an important role during the national awakening and was later transposed to the post-socialist period as a grounding identity formation discourse (Vezovnik, 2009). The above described argumentation can be further sustained by interpreting the use of synecdoche, i.e. a rhetorical figure in which a part represents the whole, often used to avoid being specific

(Machin and Myer, 2012: 172). The synecdoche “hardworking hands” stands for the “hardworking Slovenian peasants”, emphasising their devotion to caring for the Slovenian land to make it fertile like a garden and therefore being prepared for the cultivation of a ‘new’ Slovenian nation.

To complement this implicit way of lexical identity construction based on the affirmative positive identification with what signifies Slovenian, the pronoun “my” is used before the word “garden”. The pronoun works by itself but also has an implicit function of excluding everything that might signify the ‘other’s’. If we interpret this within a broader socio-political context, ‘the other’ signifies everything and everybody akin to Yugoslav socialism. For instance, the “small domestic garden” (aka a kitchen garden) mentioned in the advertisement can be read in opposition to the big agricultural fields and the food industry which were a characteristic of Yugoslav socialism. This is also seen in the following sentence: “There are no preservatives and artificial additives and it is prepared only with home-grown herbs, like you would prepare it yourself at home”, which is rejecting the artificial additives and preservatives more commonly used in the socialist mass production of food and emphasising home-grown and authenticity. Along these lines, the home-grown, domestic, organic, traditional way of growing food is opposed to the socialist model of industrial, artificial and convenience food.

Our findings can be supported by the analysis of visual semiotic choices. The iconography, i.e. the visual elements and features of an image, layout and picture (Machin and Myer, 2012: 220), of the advertisement connotes the concepts of rusticity, rural, nature, homeliness, tradition and Slovenian-ness. Similar connotations can be ascribed to the painting which is used as a background resembling a landscape in a realist style along with typical Slovenian countryside. One was able to see this kind of landscape in the 1983 campaign *Slovenija, moja dežela* which consolidated the image of Slovenia as a tourist destination by picturing Slovenia as an utopian green country with hard-working, good-natured, welcoming and happy people. In the photo itself we can see pickled vegetables in a jar, also connoting homeliness, home-made, home-grown, the traditional way of preservation referring to the long-term Slovenian but also the Eastern European (Smith and Jahlička, 2007: 403) tradition of self-provisioning and home canning of vegetables and fruits. The colourful vegetables in the photograph connote freshness, naturalness and healthiness addressing and managing the food-related risk discourses that were increasingly emerging in the late 1980s. Pollution and food additives were classified as perils to health, belonging to the past socialist era marked by a massive food industry. The setting of the photograph in the ad discloses a straightforward (face-to-face) perspective directly engaging the viewer’s gaze. The setting of the painting follows

the slogan “my garden” and adopts a top-down perspective, suggesting the viewer’s position of power over her fertile land.

The photo of the product is juxtaposed with the painting, positioning the product in the forefront as a metonymic representation of a possible detailed image (a crop) of the painting and therefore of a potential product picked from the cultivated field or garden. The focus is on the product while the landscape in the painting fades out, giving the viewer an impression of infinity and futureness. By looking at typographical elements (van Leeuwen, 2006) the main text is bigger and bolded, and in handwriting as if written by a common person. Thus, it could be regarded as another signifier of homeliness and detachment from the standardised, impersonal industry. Like on homemade pickles, the information about the jar’s contents is handwritten. In addition, the logo “Moj Vrt” is decorated with a rustic pattern of wheat-like flowers, closing the circle of meaning by again connoting rusticity and tradition.

Conclusion

The main finding of the analysis is that advertisements published in three different periods – the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s – offered Naša Žena’s readers three different streams of possible identification with a specific identity position. In the 1960s, the most evident identity position was that of a working class woman who mainly struggled with time shortages. She was a typical, triple-burdened superwoman who was expected to manoeuvre between house-keeping, family care, full employment, and community participation. This heavily gendered identity position offered by the analysed advertisement was in contrast with the primary ideas of socialist state feminism whose aim was to promote women’s political rights and economic equality. This opens up one of most important critiques of the often glorified Marxist interpretations of state feminism that, in our opinion, left unreflected the gap between public and private. This gap prevented women’s rights from being fully reached as state feminism, although promoting women’s political and economic equality, did not change the expectations regarding women’s domestic work and family care⁶. The analysis clearly showed how advertisements promote and reinforce the ideal housewife who had to provide meals for her family in order to guarantee them good nutrition. She also had to save time in order to be able to complete an eight-hour working day.

While in the 1960s the socialist idea of a solid working class was built on the image of a superwoman, the advertisements of the 1970s became

⁶ For similar findings in other communist contexts, see Ghodsee, 2014.

detached from working class ideals of an economically equal society and more oriented to an identity based on bourgeois lifestyles based on the consumption of luxuries and goods. The identity position in which socialist women from the 1970s became interpellated in was associated with cultural modes of class identity in which the role of consumption and taste came to play a significant role in social diversification (Bourdieu, 1984). This shift reflected socio-economic changes such as economic liberalisation, trade, and the growth of the banking, insurance and tourism sectors. Socialism in the 1970s became more liberal and oriented to Western habits and standards. An important part of the social imaginary became the enjoyment of leisure time, which symptomatically was only a utopian projection of the 'good life' that had been promised in socialism for everyone. In this utopian dream, represented in Knorr's advertisement, the woman would be elevated to a higher social class, possibly aristocratic or at least a bourgeois one, where she would be allowed to enjoy what she had worked for in the previous decades.

The last identity shift emerges in the 1980s when gender and class identity are suppressed by national identity. The advertisements became the advocates of a newly developing national identity. The analysed ad for "My garden" anchors what seems to be the 'new' Slovenian national identity. Implicit distancing from everything signifying socialist Yugoslavia and embracing what supposedly signifies 'Slovenian', even though the search for those signifiers had to be made in premodern national imaginary, became the framework through which one can interpret the Slovenian political ideology of exclusion which spread its seeds in the 1990s. The analysis shows how food advertisements became spaces of banal nationalism "flagging" nationhood and national ideologies during the disintegration of Yugoslavia (Billig, 1995).

Underlying the presented findings is the claim that advertisements reflect cultural conditions or constitute efforts to change culture (Schudson, 1984). We have shown that the analysed advertisements had the power to do both. The advert from the 1960s reflected the conditions in which the social expectations of what a woman should be like had developed. The advertisement from the 1970s reflected women's desires to experience pleasure but also aimed to set trends of how a modern, fashionable woman should live her life. Finally, the advertisement from the 1980s clearly anticipated the political developments of the 1990s and simultaneously reflected the disruptive political climate that for quite some years was boiling beneath the surface of the idealised coexistence of Yugoslav nations.

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