

Tripoint over Time: the Case of Cultural and Linguistic Intertwining in the Slovene, Austrian and Italian Borderland

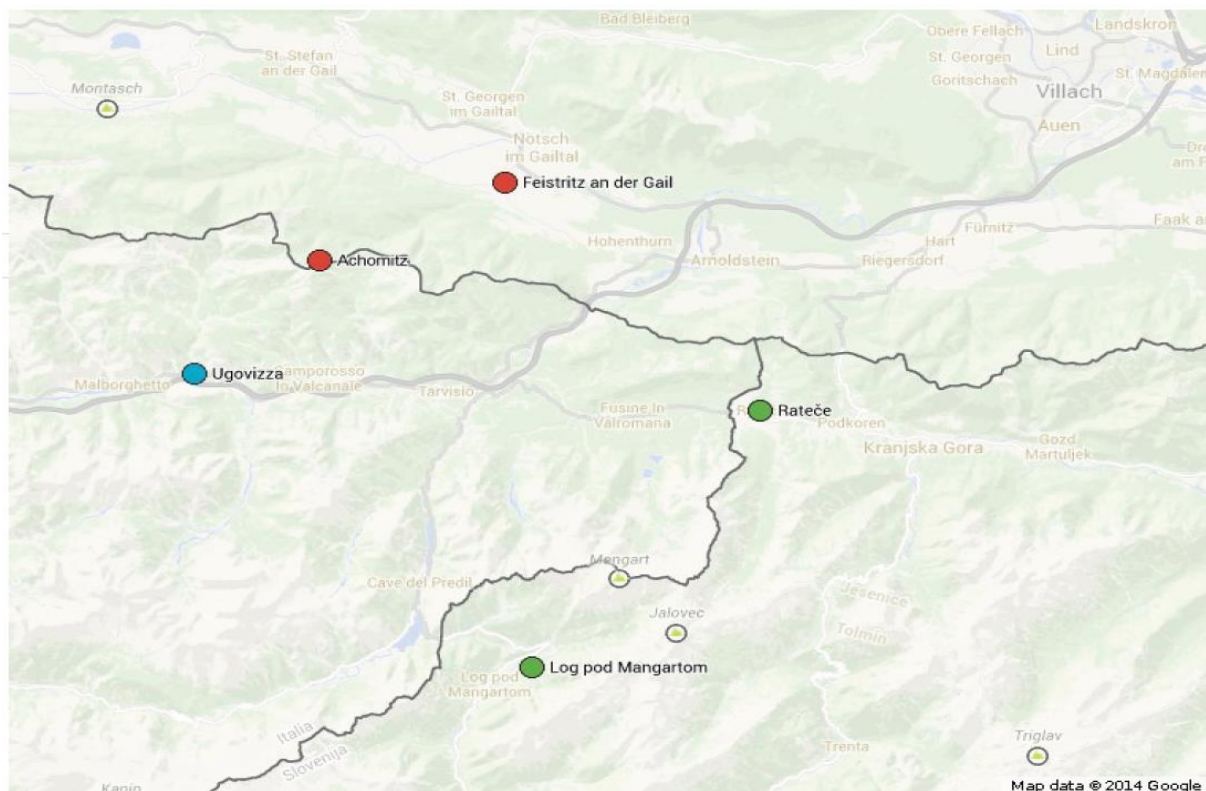
ERC Advanced Grant- ARRS adapted project

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Principal Investigator: Cossutta Rada

The project is set in the context of audio-visual recording of Slovene dialects and speeches in the linguistically diverse Alpine Adriatic Tripoint area that lies at the juncture of Slavic, Romance and Germanic world. The Tripoint, where former borders of Slovenia, Italy and Austria intersect, has always been an excitedly interesting research area because of its geographical position, colourful historic and social turnovers and also geodesic shifts. It has attracted anthropologists, geographers and historians, but remained fairly unexplored from the linguistic, especially lexical, point of view, despite the fact that it is an unique example of different language and dialect coexistence and as such an ideal laboratory for all dialectologists.



The Tripoint area is linguistically divided into two Slovene dialect groups: the Primorska **dialect group** (Slov. *primorska narečna skupina*) with the Upper Soča dialect (Slov. *zgoranješko narečje*), in Log pod Mangartom in Slovenia, and the **Carinthian dialect group** (Slov. *koroška narečna*

skupina) with the Gailtal dialect, in areas of three neighbouring countries: in the Val Canale Valley in Italy (in Ugovizza), in the Gailtal Valley in Austria (in Ahomitz and Feistritz), and in the Zgornjesavska dolina Valley in Slovenia (in Rateče).

In the study *The Lexical Stratification in the Tripoint vernaculars: Slavic, Romance, and Germanic elements* (Cossutta, 2007) on the basis of fieldwork material collected in the year 1997 within the Summerschool Bovec (Slovenia) the project leader etymologically analysed the terminology regarding the house and pertaining objects in four research points (Log pod Mangartom, Rateče, Achomitz and Ugovizza) and determined that the Tripoint vernaculars are genuinely Slovene, as they are connected by the same Slavic lexical fund that was subjected to various phonetical and morphological changes. The presence and vitality of numerous Germanisms and Romanisms are a concrete case of long-term interference in the area and express the lexical richness and diversity.

The leader of the project documented the informants' testimonies of her first aforementioned dialectological field research of the area in 1997 in the amateur film *Tripoint Speaks (Tromeja žabari)* that was produced in cooperation with the University of Klagenfurt the same year, but has since been gathering dust due to the lack of financial resources. The film, recorded in five research points (Log pod Mangartom in Posočje, Ugovizza in the Val Canale Valley, Rateče in the Zgornjesavska dolina Valley, Ahomitz and Feistritz in the Gailtal Valley), is a precious document of the vernaculars of these villages, of which two (Log pod Mangartom and Ugovizza) were completely transformed by natural disasters that hit the villages after the film was shot. Deriving from this assumption it is obvious that the already existing dialectological material and its film documentation formed the base of the project. However, the project does not only strive to deepen the comprehension of the available data and to remake the film, it aims towards capturing a firm representation of the past and present situation of the vernaculars of the area, which have been subjected to constant linguistic interference influences due to radical lifestyle changes and overall globalisation effects, especially after the fall of state borders that intersected at the Tripoint and the inclusion of the area to the EU.

Based on the gathered vocabulary, the project research tried to reconstruct the story of people who have in the last decades in hopes of survival perused careers in various economic sectors that are today sinking into oblivion or have already entirely died out, as they were replaced by gradual industrialisation or because migrations of the local population in hopes of a better life abroad.

The project tends, on the basis of already recorded film *Tripoint Speaks (Tromeja žabari)* and parallel recordings from today, to realize the visual documentation of Slovene vernaculars of the Tripoint, together with intended realizations of ethnological themes, which is a genuine innovation in the research of linguistic phenomena in Slovene–Italian–German language intersection. The description of vernaculars from various aspects and the complete representation of the Tripoint's sociostructural environment will enable a holistic look into the language situation of a specific place, location and time. The films cover all generations of mono- and multilingual inhabitants of the Tripoint who master one of the local vernaculars. The documented statements of elderly informants form the core of the project, while younger informants are predominantly included in the interactional activity. Thus, the visual documentation includes the speech, terminology and the situational context, as well as ethnologic documentation of the material, spiritual and social culture close to extinction in hopes of protecting it from oblivion.

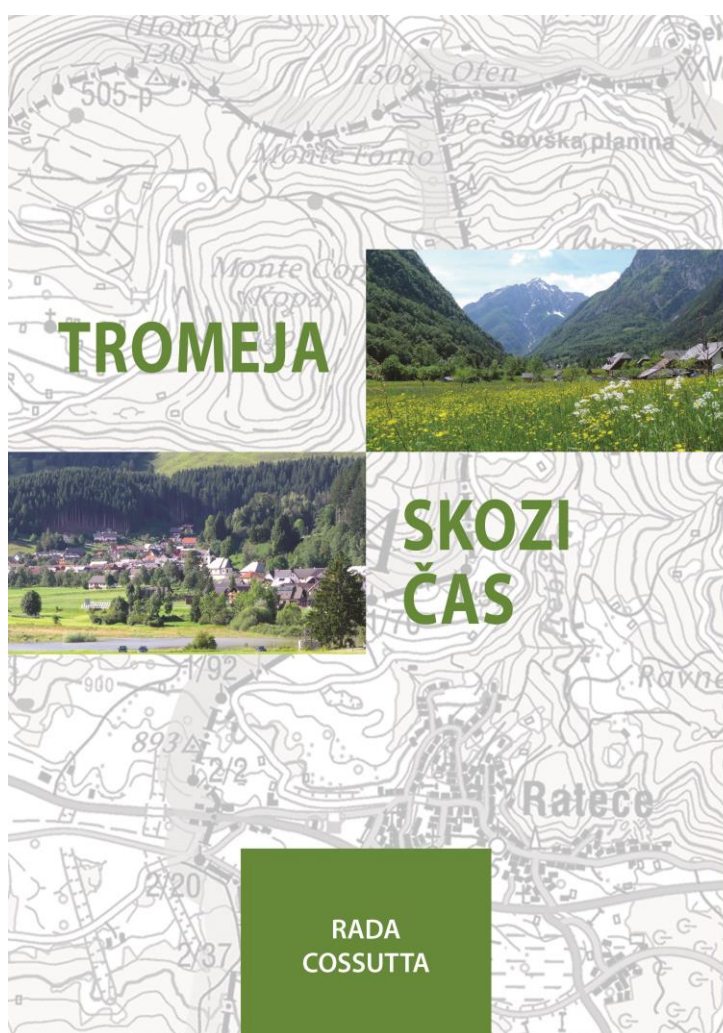
The first dialectological documentary *Rateče, yesterday and today* was awarded at the competition *New ideas for the New University* (Ljubljana, 2018) as a new idea for teaching the contact linguistic of the Alpine-Adriatic area at university level. The English version of the same documentary was awarded as one of the best live performances at the International Conference *SGEM Vienna 2018* (Vienna, Hofburg Palace, 2018) and presented as a success story at the

Research Day Italy-Slovenia 2018 (Area Science Park, Padriciano, Trieste, 2018) and at the the International Conference Slovene dialects in Contact 6 (Portorož, 2018).

The second dialectological documentary *Log pod Mangartom, once and today* was presented at the International Conference Slovene dialects in Contact 7 (Portorož, 2018) and as a success story at the Research Day Italy-Slovenia 2019 (Vipava, 2019).

The project introduces an innovative dialectological approach to multilinguality and multiculturalism of the Tripoint and establishes new scientific starting points for geolinguists and other linguists tackling the questions of interference at European contiguous areas. The gathered dialectological material and film documentation with ethnological content reveal a new insight into the past and present state of the Tripoint.

The final result of the project is the monograph book *Tromeja skozi čas* (Tripoint over Time) with the accompanying documentaries in CD format *Rateče, nekoč in danes* (Rateče, yesterday and today) and *Log pod Mangartom, nekoč in danes* (Log pod Mangartom, once and today). In addition to the description of the documentaries the monograph also includes the textual version of the documentary *Rateče, nekoč in danes* (Rateče, yesterday and today), transcribed using the Slovene phonetic alphabet and translated into Slovene standard language (Published in: Založba Annales ZRS Koper, Koper 2018). In 2019, this achievement of the project was also recognized by the Slovene Research Agency ARRS as *Excellent in Science*.



CURRICULUM VITAE

Upon having concluded the France Prešeren Grammar School in Trieste in 1969, Rada Cossutta enrolled at the Trieste Faculty of Arts in order to study classical philology. On 26 November 1973, she graduated with the diploma thesis *Parole di origine slava nel dialetto triestino (Words of Slavic Origin in the Trieste Dialect)*. She completed her MA and PhD studies in the Slovene Language Studies at the Ljubljana Faculty of Arts on 25 March 1987 and 5 April 1994 respectively. Both her MA thesis *Slovene Speeches of Sv. Križ/Santa Croce near Trieste and Its Environs* and her doctoral dissertation *Agricultural and Viticultural Terminology in Speeches of Slovene Istria* were written under the guidance of Prof. Tine Logar. In 1999, the Senate of the Faculty of Education of the University of Maribor appointed her Assistant Professor of Slovene Dialectology. In 2004, the Senate of the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Primorska (UP FHŠ) appointed her Associate Professor of Slovene Dialectology. In 2010, the same Senate appointed her Full Professor of Linguistics.

As a teacher, she first taught Greek and Latin literature from 1973 to 1993 at the France Prešeren Grammar School in Trieste (with Slovene as the language of instruction). From 1993 to 2006, she was a researcher in Slavic studies at the College of Modern Languages for Interpreters and Translators of the University of Trieste. In the academic years 1984/85, 1985/86, 1990/91, 1991/92, she received a scholarship by the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana. In the academic year 1987/88, she taught translation from Slovene at the College of Modern Languages for Interpreters and Translators of the University of Trieste. From the academic year 1979/80 to 1982/83, she taught Slovene at the Trieste Workers' University. From 1993 to 2006 she lectured in the Slovene language and Slovene studies at the College of Modern Languages for Interpreters and Translators of the University of Trieste. Since the academic year 2002/2003, she taught the following linguistic subjects at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Primorska (UP FHŠ): *The Greek Language and Culture in Humanities* in the academic year 2002/03; *The Latin Language and Culture in Humanities* in the academic year 2003/04; *Istrian Speeches* in 2004/05 and 2005/06; *The Latin Language and Culture in Humanities* in the academic year 2006/07; *The Latin Language* and practical classes in the subject *Dialectology* in the academic year 2007/08; *Dialectology* in the academic years 2008/09, 2009/10, 2010/11. She was an active member of various UP FHŠ bodies. From 2018 she is a member of the Senate and full professor of *Contact Slovene Linguistics in the Alpine-Adriatic Area* at the Faculty of Slovenian and International Studies of the New University, Ljubljana.

For several years, she has been a researcher and since 2009 she is a principal counselor at the Science and Research Centre Koper (ZRS Koper)/Institute for Linguistic Studies, Koper. Her research work is conducted at the meeting point of the Romance, Slavic and Germanic worlds where the phenomenon of interference, which is the constant of her work, is most observable. As a senior researcher, she is a successful collaborator and leader of ZRS Koper linguistic projects, particularly those concerning language contact in Slovene Istria and the Karst.

Prof. Cossutta's research is focused on linguistic geography and contact linguistics on which she has published several publications of vital importance for linguistics. The following three works have brought her professional acclaim: *Slovenski dialektološki leksikalni atlas Tržaške pokrajine (SDLA-Ts) (Slovene Dialectological Lexical Atlas of the Trieste Province)* (1987), the first dialectological atlas of Slovene speeches of the Trieste environs, and *Slovenski dialektološki leksikalni atlas slovenske Istre (SDLA-SI) I and II (Slovene Dialectological Lexical Atlas of Slovene Istria I and II)* (2005–2006), with the latter being an important milestone in Slovene and Romance dialectology.