The collapse of communism in the former Yugoslavia has sparked an avalanche of personal and political questions for Croatians everywhere on the meaning of Croatian history, traditions and identity. In the midst of tumultuous changes brought about by the war, homeland Croatians have been struggling to (re)build/(re)imagine a new/old state and, in the process, reinvent themselves. Similarly, diaspora Croatians, who have, over the years, constructed themselves as an ethnic group within the Canadian political and multicultural landscape, have been grappling with the impact of these changes on what is now means to be Croatian. This paper investigates the politics of recognition and representation for Croatians through an analysis of the (re)production of sentiments of desire and disdain between diaspora and homeland Croatians. This multi-sited research demonstrates that the mutually constitutive relationships of diaspora Croatians and the focus of their desiring gaze, a free Croatia where its citizens are participating in the "production" or "recovery" of the historic Croatian state, are highly contested. For example, Croatians in the homeland have been reluctantly drawn into the politics of diaspora identity by virtue of their newfound status as members of the new Croatian state and outright reject the nostalgic imaginings of the diaspora. By spurning the gaze of the diaspora, homeland Croatians, in effect, blunt diasporic efforts to positively identify with and/or participate in the (re)invention of the homeland, underscoring the paradoxes that characterize the condition of multiple location and belonging.

Key words: IDENTITY, DIASPORA/HOMELAND RELATIONSHIP, CROATIA, CANADA

Since the winter of 1992, when Dr. Franjo Tudjman, the president of Croatia, proclaimed the realization of the Croats’ “one thousand year old dream of independence”, Croatians all over the world have rejoiced in the birth of the new Croatian state. Croatians in the homeland and in the diaspora have been actively engaged in the recuperation of Croatian traditions through public displays of unity and a reinvigorated and reinvented sense of Croatian identity: cultural/folk festivals; the introduction of new Croatian studies programmes; the revival of Croatian cultural associations; the establishment, renaming or resurrection of Croatian icons, monuments and folk songs; the publication of numerous glossy, illustrated coffee-table-style books and ethnic and geographical maps that celebrate the cultural and historical heritage of Croatia; the establishment of Croatian radio programmes and news services as well as the proliferation of web-sites on the Internet. The collapse of communism and the resulting war in Croatia has initiated a flood of personal and political questions and reflections for Croatians in the homeland on Croatian tradition, history and identity (Tanner, 1996; Hayden, 1996). In the diaspora, narratives of displacement and disarticulation from the homeland have been largely replaced by those of purpose and pride (Winland, 1995). However, despite this openly celebratory mood, there have been numerous signs of discord and tension amongst and between Croatians in the diaspora and in the new homeland. While I was encouraged by the Croatians I came to know in the early stages of my fieldwork to interpret this momentous occasion in Croatian history - the realization of a nationalist dream - as an opportunity for Croatians everywhere to come together, rejoice and reaffirm a shared, historic sense of peoplehood, the reality, as I hope to show, is far more complex.
While Croatian independence would suggest grounds for the solidification of identity, the emergence and/or exacerbation of tensions suggest otherwise. Conflict, while a typical part of diaspora life, can only be understood, however, by seeing identity formation as a process which is shaped both locally and transnationally. According to Hannerz (1992), we live in a seamless world where culture is primarily a thing of relationships rather than of territory. In order to fully appreciate the significance of transnationalism in configuring Croatian identities, it is important to follow what Marcus refers to as the "connections, associations and putative relationships" (1995:97) among and between Croatians in the diaspora and in Croatia and to investigate the circulation of cultural meanings, objects and identities that are at the heart of Croatian struggles over the definition of a collective reality.

For example, in its broadest manifestations, Croatians in the diaspora and in Croatia, express both sentiments of desire and of disdain for one another. Croatians in the homeland have always maintained multi-stranded ties with kin, friends and associates, but they have been reluctantly drawn into the politics of diaspora identity, by virtue of their newfound status as members of the new Croatian nation-state. While Croatians in Croatia are indeed fascinated by democracy in the West, they have shown an unreserved disdain for the Croatian diaspora in particular, for a variety of reasons, some of which are quite common amongst homeland peoples, such as, retaining a vulgarised ethnic culture and obsolete political ideals, capitalizing on investment opportunities of questionable benefit to homeland Croatians and meddling in Croatian internal affairs. By the same token, tensions inherent in the diasporic relationship between Croatians here and the focus of their desiring gaze - a free Croatian state where citizens are participating in the "production" or "recovery" of the historic democratic Croatian state - are often manifested in their criticisms of current attitudes and actions of their compatriots in the homeland. Many Croatians I interviewed about their fellow Croatians in the homeland felt that they should look to Croatians in the diaspora for inspiration and guidance in their transition to democracy. As one dismissively observed: "Croatians at home don't know the meaning of democracy. They have been under the Communists for so long. They have a lot to learn". However, what these views partly reveal is the resentment of Croatians towards the indifference to or rejection of diasporic imaginings of the new state by Croatians in the homeland.

Upon closer examination I've found that underlying this tension between desire and disdain are ambiguous sentiments, conflicting desires and renderings of Croatianness not just between diasporic and homeland populations but within the Croatian diaspora itself. Among other things, the issues raised by this research have led me to examine, in a more critical light, some of the concepts and frameworks that have been central to the study of identity, for example, traditional localizing notions of immigrant and community, most of which are rooted in old logics of identity based on notions of self and other, individual and society and culture and place. These, as some have commented, can become rather slippery when they take on a nonlocalized quality. The recent surge in interest in such areas as transnationalism and border studies (Gupta, 1992; Appadurai, 1991; Glick Schiller, 1992; the centrality of such scholars as Gilroy, 1987; Ghosh, 1989; Hall, 1990; Spivak, 1990; Bhabha, 1990) is testimony to the realization that the deterioration of national boundaries (brought about, for example, by the related global processes of migration, displacement and the economic and technological nature of the global capitalist economy), has profound repercussions for the ways in which dispersed/displaced peoples construct their identities and inscribe their presence. Appadurai has called these spaces "global ethnoscapes" (1990). Home and country is thus no longer a functional equation (Bammer, 1994:94). Rather than accept a definition that makes use of the requisite botanical metaphors of arborescent roots (Boyarin, 1992; Malkki, 1992;
Basch, 1994) based on notions of physical proximity and contiguity, it is now agreed by many that identities should be understood as being both local and global.

It should therefore be clear then, why I use the term ‘diaspora’ rather than immigrant group to discuss Croatians in Canada. One of its attractions is that diasporic identifications reach beyond mere ethnic status within a plural state and points to the need to interrogate the context in which certain assumptions about collective identity prevail. Diaspora places emphasis on the hybridity of ties that bind migrants/immigrants in a “host country” to their place of origin thereby rejecting notions of pure origins and identities. This perspective departs from old paradigms that assume permanent rupture between the country of origin and the host nation and conflate geographic space and social identity. While certain characteristics of the Croatian community fit quite nicely into standard and structural models of immigrant community structure and dynamics (in terms of institutional organization and processes of socio-economic adaptation and accommodation), their ties to the homeland have always been strong. So, while Croatian independence has forced many Croatians to reevaluate long-held sentiments about their identity as Croatians and as Canadians, this is a process which is not new to them. Diaspora Croatians have always looked to the homeland for images and meanings which resonate with or reaffirm their ideas of what being a Croatian is or should be. Furthermore, Croatia and the meaning it has held historically in the diaspora, has always been central to their self-definitions rather than a temporary symptom of independence euphoria.

The new context of an independent (and democratic) Croatia has allowed for the emergence of positive public displays of ethnicity in Canada, thanks in part to the media attention generated by the war. It has given the community a visibility it never had before. While many of these efforts have been directed at the Canadian media, government, and public at large, they have also provided some Croatians with an outlet for inventing or articulating nationalistic sentiments and ethnic pride. This diaspora has been galvanized by the issue of Croatian independence in unprecedented fashion. Many diaspora Croatians now speak of their transformation as a people from what they represent as an historically repressed minority group in the former Yugoslavia to being members of a proud, new nation that has successfully shrugged off the yoke of communist rule and asserted a new sense of purpose and pride. For example, Croatians have tirelessly mobilized support for Croatian relief through fund-raising and volunteering services (both in Canada and in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina). However, despite these displays of unity and a reinvigorated sense of Croatian identity, these changes have also exposed cracks beneath a rather brittle surface of renewed community vitality and confidence. The concatenation of events surrounding Croatian independence has transformed the community along political and other lines. While, to be sure, all immigrant/diaspora communities are characterized by some form of social differentiation, these differences take on new dimensions when political changes occur in the country of origin. The internal dynamics of most diaspora communities are seldom harmonious, and in this way Croatians are in no way unusual; as Rasporich argues, Croatians in Canada have never been the model of community cohesion and unity, and the impact of national independence in the mother country on a diaspora community has introduced new elements into the analysis of Croatian community dynamics.

In order to best understand how independence has affected the Croatian community in Toronto, it is instructive to look at pre-independence linkages with the homeland and to appreciate some of the more prominent features of this group. Although, like other ethnic groups so defined, Croatians have developed a variety of different organizations servicing religious, social and cultural needs, intragroup relations have never been characteristically harmonious, nor had Croatians generally attempted to assert a highly visible public profile, even in the last twenty years or so of government sanctioned multiculturalism.
One of the most important factors in the internal dynamics of the community has been the date of settlement in Canada. For example, the nature of Croatian political organization and affiliation can be correlated quite closely with date of migration. Many earlier immigrants to Canada (mostly labourers) were politically left-leaning primarily due to their trade union-related activities while those immigrants often right-wing and virulently anti-communist (after Tito assumed power) who came after World War II opposed not only earlier immigrants but also the ideologically centrist and right-wing group who arrived in the 1960's and later. Numerous nationalist political organizations (of every political stripe) began to proliferate (particularly after the Croatian Spring incident of 1971 - which involved the suppression of the Croatian nationalist movement in Yugoslavia by Tito) with the result that over the years, such political differences have pitted some Croatians against others and even fuelled provocative acts such as vandalism and incendiarism. For example, there have been several incidents in Toronto of nasty graffiti (e.g. swastikas on Croatian churches) but Croatians have confided that they aren't sure whether these acts were perpetrated by fellow Croatians or by Serbs.

Class has also been a contributing factor to a general lack of community. Those immigrants who arrived in Canada as refugees soon after World War II (5000 by 1952) differed from earlier Croatian immigrants not only in their political views, but in their levels of social status, education, professional training, and regions of origin. While most pre-World War II migrants had rural roots, many post-World War II arrivals came from urban areas and had professional training. Between the years 1967 and 1973, approximately 15,000 Croatians arrived in Canada as economic immigrants. Many of these migrants were trained in Yugoslavia in such professions as engineering and administration and often made a successful economic transition to Canada as entrepreneurs in fields like real estate, engineering and construction. The fact that many had skills and personal resources that enabled them to embrace opportunities in Canada evoked some resentment in those who had been here longer and had achieved modest goals. While these tensions are not unique to Croatians they take on interesting dimensions in the wake of Croatian independence.

National Independence and Croatian Identity in Canada

The new context of an independent Croatia, has allowed for the emergence of positive public displays of ethnicity in Canada, thanks in part to the media attention generated by the war. It has given the community a visibility it never had before. The outpouring of support and sympathy here for the traumas suffered by Croatians and Bosnians was no doubt enhanced by the fascination of the West with the reinvention or rediscovery of democracy in Eastern Europe. Serbs have been effectively demonized in the public eye. While it is not surprising that some tensions have been de-emphasized in the wake of nationalist fervour and euphoria, what is perhaps most interesting is how differences have been re-emphasized in some cases and in others, have taken on new form and meaning. On a large scale we see the whole process of mutual influence among shared memories, definitions of future and collective action. At an increased magnification though we can see the contestation that surrounds every effort to create, define, or impose a common memory - to form a coherent discourse about the origins of a people. Despite claims by leaders and other members of the Croatian community that the emergence of the Croatian nation has only strengthened their unity, evidence obtained during the course of my research suggests the contrary.

Croatians have organized information campaigns and lobbying activities in order to gain both public and political support for Croatia. Most want to set the record straight on what Croatians regard as smear tactics by Serbs both in Canada and in the former Yugoslavia, particularly about the brief period of fascism (Ustase regime) in the short-lived independent state of Croatia during World War II. Although their efforts as a whole have had some
success (for example, in lobbying federal politicians), they don't mask the difficulties in defining and presenting an image acceptable and meaningful to Croatians at large, which often involves differing or competing images of the mother country (its past, symbolic representations, etc.). Narratives connecting Croatian Canadians to Croatia, which often revolve around an irredentist theme, do not best describe their current relationship to the mother country. That is not to say that at one level, Croatians, are not united in their endorsement of Croatian independence - they are, but, nationalist ideology (as understood by Croatians) does not correspond to any one body of discourse. This is because the texture and significance of the nationalist ideal has been filtered through personal and/or collective memories and experiences both in the homeland and in the diaspora. Memory has a politics and it is often not what is remembered but how it is remembered (Boyarin, 1992).

Those who have responded most strongly to recent changes in Croatia are young Canadian born Croatians who have not yet built up an inventory of memories, symbols, experiences, and networks as extensive as those of previous generations. To these young people, the most compelling images of Croatia are those that convey a strong, independent nation, full of hope and opportunity. The images of Croatia that resonate with them are those portraying a rich cultural heritage, heroism, and purity of purpose. The language of diaspora invoked by the younger generation of Croatian Canadians reclams and invents connections to a prior home and provides them with a sense of status beyond that of just another ethnic group in a pluralist, multicultural Canada (reflecting what Appadurai (1993) has called, nostalgia without memory). As Croatians, they are a nation ('narod') and have roots and destinies as well as recently acquired international recognition, which extend beyond the boundaries of Canada.

Older generations, on the other hand, particularly first-generation immigrants, have developed discourses over the years that reflect the experience of displacement, of adaptation and accommodation. Like other immigrants, they can trace their present situation and success to circumstances that brought them where they are. The juxtaposition of these narrative themes of displacement and disarticulation (from Croatia) and survival and success in a sometimes hostile host nation accentuates the sense of continuity with the past for these older Croatians in a far different way than for their children. A 61-year-old contractor explains, "When I escaped from the Communists, I ended up in a D.P. camp in Austria and I had nothing. I came to Canada and worked hard to built a life for myself here. I am thankful for the opportunities I got here that I never would have had at home". The terms of such narratives are personal and circumstantial, not collective and historical.

It is however, also crucial to understand the role of Croatian elites. At one level, tensions between Croatians are manifested as (political) differences of opinion concerning the conduct and policies of the new Croatian government. At another, more symbolically-charged level, are efforts to restrict the discourse(s) of Croatian identity to those considered acceptable by Croatian elites. Since independence, some of these newer immigrants have by virtue of their education, and financial and social status, assumed a prominent role (as some argue self-appointed) leaders in the community. One of my Croatian informants sardonically referred to the Croatian elite as the "drywall intelligentsia" (alluding to the fact that many have been successful in the construction industry). Some Croatians further claim that these more recent immigrants are capitalizing on the present situation in Croatia by both seizing upon investment opportunities in the new Croatia, and attempting to gain prestige both in Canada and Croatia for their role in raising funds for Croatian relief efforts. Several prominent Croatian businessmen in Ontario have initiated a variety of ambitious projects in partnership with the Croatian government to build housing and shopping complexes in Croatia. Resentment of some Croatians is also directed at prominent Croatian-Canadian businessmen who have received plum political appointments in the new Croatian government.
While the series of changes that propelled Croatia towards its independence in 1991 are to be found in the long and turbulent history of the region, there is no doubt that one of the most important forces in fuelling the momentum of these changes was to be found in the diaspora. Central to Tudjman’s success in 1990 was his ability to drum up considerable financial and political support in the diaspora, representatives of whom he recruited for his new national cabinet. In addition to the direct presence of members of the diaspora in political posts in Croatia (the second most powerful member of Tudjman’s government, Gojko Susak) were the lobbying and fund-raising efforts of Croatians in the diaspora. Croatians in Canada, Australia and the United States, put a great deal of pressure on their host governments to officially recognize Croatia and to militarily (through UN peacekeeping support) and diplomatically intervene on their behalf during the war. Thus, Croatian emigrants have played a central role in the success of the present regime. Over a million dollars was raised by the emigrant Croatian community in Toronto alone towards the HDZ political campaign in 1990. According to one of my well-connected informants: "If it wasn’t for us, Croatia wouldn’t be independent today". She also remarked that Toronto Croats as she put it "have our little finger in the politics of the country". The continued importance of diaspora support is evidenced in the steady stream of Croatian parliamentarians and government officials who are featured as keynote speakers at Croatian fundraisers.

The impetus for surreptitiously redefining the essence of Croatian identity (through the return to ‘tradition’) is largely the result of elite-driven representations of the mother country and hence of Croatianness. High profile supporters of the current Croatian government, who often have the financial and political resources to influence these discourses, have taken on the role of interlocutors for the community at large arousing some suspicion and resentment among those Croatians who feel that their voices are now not heard and their experiences are not considered legitimate. The images promoted by Croatian elites champion the democratic image of Croatia and directly link the identity of Croatian Canadians to selected, usually essentialist nationalist images of the mother country. The motivation to engage in sententious rhetoric usually comes from those who have a more compelling and enduring stake in the homeland. Croatian politicians (particularly those from the governing party, the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ)), who have strong ties with Croatian expatriates, also visit diaspora communities to solicit both political and financial support and to reinforce these images. Not all Croatians have responded warmly to the overtures of political representatives from Croatia or their supporters. Croatians who have always maintained a strong interest in political developments back home, has had its share of political associations ranging the ideological spectrum often representing political parties in Croatia. However, now their existence is seen by those who support the present regime as undermining their message of Croatianness, and, more importantly, encouraging negative public perceptions of Croatia and Croatians. Diaspora supporters of the ruling Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), often chastise Croatians who are critical of the present government with accusations of meddling in the internal affairs of Croatia and, more importantly, of not being "loyal Croatians" (and even of being "troublemakers"). Their views are often derided as being obsolete or in the words of one influential supporter, "washed up". Despite the fact that Croatian Canadians were able to vote in Croatian elections, resulting in a strengthening of their political interest, commitment and in their stake in the new state, the traditional political role of Croatians in Canada, according to one critic, has been reduced to that of "pep team" for the ruling HDZ.

A major flashpoint for Croatians concerns heraldry. One manifestation of efforts to direct discourses of Croatian identity is the recent spate of iconographic and literary representations of Croatian heritage: these consist primarily of or are treated as nationalist symbolism. Since the establishment of the new independent Croatia, a steady stream of (English and Croatian language) publications has poured from Croatia and from Croatian presses in
Canada the United States and Australia). These not only chronicle the horrors of the war in Croatia but also articulate the new sense of nationhood through glossy, illustrated coffee table-style books and (ethnic and geographical) maps that celebrate the cultural and historical heritage of Croatia. Many of these publications have been financed by the Croatian community abroad. The reclaiming and celebration of old conquests and heroes has become commonplace and more importantly, presented as authentic symbols of their past. However, these renovated and selective images of the mother country again are not shared by all Croats, especially those for whom the stage of romanticism and idealism surrounding independence has dissipated.

Some Croatian Canadians find a great many of the new state's "image management" strategies problematic. Such management includes the central position accorded to the political theories of the 19th century political commentator, Ante Starcevic, which some argue is the mirror image of the expansionist and racist programme of a "Greater Serbia" to which ultra-nationalist Serbs adhere; others worry about the relation of this theory to the ideological foundations of both World War II fascist Ustase government and to that of the present Croatian government. Furthermore, comments made repeatedly by Tudjman (both in his speeches and publications) which in essence relativize the genocidal aspects of the Ustase past as part of the normal progress of war (as part of the process of ethno-national homogenization), freeing it of its unique onus of responsibility concerns those Croatians in Canada who fear a backlash in Canadian and international public opinion. The images then projected back to Croatians in Canada are more akin to corporate national populism than to those that contribute to their positive imaginings of and identifications with Croatia as members of the diaspora. Regardless of their political points of view, most Croatians made it very clear to me that they do not want their newfound national identity to be associated with fascism, especially given the efforts of Serbians (both in the former Yugoslavia and in the diaspora) to link present day Croatians to their Ustase past. As one remarked: "Too many people still believe we are Nazis". Admittedly, the images of peoplehood conveyed to Croatian Canadians by Croatian politicians and those who support them imbues many Croatians with strong and newfound feelings of pride and a sense of importance and destiny. At a certain level, this form of expression gives Croatians a pedigree as a legitimate nation, but at another, it fails to acknowledge the importance and complexity of identity apart from that informed by official nationalist ideology. It also does not acknowledge the multi-stranded relationships that Croatians sustain across borders.

Here is where we come back to my introductory comments regarding the significance of sentiments of desire and disdain between the homeland and the diaspora. By (in essence) spurning the desiring gaze of the diaspora, Croatians in the homeland in effect, blunt diasporic efforts to positively identify with and/or participate in the (re)invention of the homeland. The reinscription of diaspora identity onto the territory of the homeland is thwarted. Thus, while Croatia, like the rest of Eastern Europe (with the possible exception of the Czech Republic), may be returning to the West "the repressed truth of its democratic desire" (Žižek, 1990) in all its populist forms, much to the chagrin of the West, the Croatian diaspora struggles to define its tenuous and stormy, yet intimate relationship with the homeland.

Conclusions: Croatian Identity at a Crossroads

In a post-modern world, individuals and/or groups are increasingly drawn into an ever-expanding and often perplexing array of networks and linkages, many of which defy the familiar lines between ‘here’ and ‘there’ (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992:10). By investigating the specific, local trajectories through which people articulate their similarities and/or differences at different times and in different contexts, we discover that identities are, in fact, provisional and partial (Gilroy, 1987). Shared and contested notions of the homeland by diaspo-
ran populations are continually negotiated along the fault lines of regional, class, attitudinal (e.g. political views) and customary differences, thus emphasizing the specificity of heterogeneous diasporic identifications. The need to investigate the role of transnationalism in producing differentiated identities therefore becomes essential. I argue along with others like Lisa Malkki (1992), that it is critical to specify the dimensions, contexts, idioms and mechanisms that constitute a particular diaspora and the parts that make it up. In order to make sense of the vicissitudes of globalization at both local and global levels, new perspectives that focus on identity as a condition of ‘multiple location’ (Gilroy, 1987) and identification are necessary. For example, in those instances where these identities are essentialized (Spivak, 1990; Appadurai, 1993), rather than a haphazard mix of regional affiliations or hyphenated definitions as with the Croatian case I’ve just discussed, it is crucial to investigate the circumstances under which ethnic groups or parts thereof reconfigure their “ethnic projects” (Appadurai, 1991:191) and to look for those “moments and locations” in which these meanings/identifications are produced or come undone (Basch et al., 1994:34). If there is one thing that Croatian independence demonstrates, it is that despite its message of a united peoplehood, the ontological boundaries of Croatian identity in the diaspora are not secure in representation.

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Propast komunizma u bivšoj Jugoslaviji izazvao je lavinu osobnih i političkih pitanja o značenju hrvatske povijesti, tradicije i identiteta za Hrvate svugdje u svijetu. Usred potresnih promjena koje je uzrokovao rat, Hrvati u domovini hrvali su se da (ponovo)izgrade i (ponovo)zamisle novu/staru državu, i da u tom procesu (re)kreiraju sebe. Na sličan način i Hrvati u dijaspore, koji su se tijekom godina konstruirali kao etnička grupa unutar kanadskog političkog i multikulturalnog krajolika, suočavali su se s učinkom tih promjena na to što sad značiti biti Hrvat. Članak istražuje politiku prepoznavanja i reprezentiranja za Hrvate kroz analizu (re)produkcije osjećaja želje i prezira između dijaspore i domovinskih Hrvata. Istraživanje (provedeno u Kanadi i Hrvatskoj) pokazuje visoku napetost u uzajamno izgradjućem odnosu Hrvata iz dijaspore i središta njihovih željnih pogleda, slobodne Hrvatske u kojoj njezini građani sudjeluju u "proizvodnji" i "povratku" povijesne hrvatske države. Na primjer, Hrvati u domovini novoljko se uključuju u politiku identiteta dijaspore temeljem njihovog novog statusa kao članova nove hrvatske države i potpuno odbacuju nostalgične slike dijaspore. Odbijajući pogled dijaspore, domovinski Hrvati zapravo otapaju napore dijaspore da se pozitivno identificira i/ili sudjeluje u (re)invenciji domovine, potretavajući paradoks koji karakteriziraju stanje mnogostruktih lokacija i pripadnosti.

UVJETOVANE LIČNOSTI: HRVATSKA DIJASPORA I POLITIKA ŽELJA

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