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## THE NETWORK OF MEMORIALS OF SLOVENE LITERARY CULTURE AS SEMIOTIC APPROPRIATION OF (NATIONAL) SPACE

This article treats the network of memorials or memorial landmarks of Slovene literary culture, which began forming in the middle of the nineteenth century and yet today powerfully marks the Slovene territories' cultural landscape. The first part of the article reviews historical models for the formation of such networks, which can be understood as the semiotic appropriation of (national) space connected with the canonization of a handful of prominent »cultural saints« and numerous men of letters of lesser stature. Then the partial results of a GIS project to map Slovene literary memorials are appraised, along with its methodological challenges and possible contributions to a better understanding of the spaces of Slovene literary culture.

**Key words:** Slovene literature, literary culture, cultural nationalism, cultural saints, memorials, mnemotopes, space

### 1 Introduction

Literature's semiotic interventions into geographic space are not limited to the textual sphere. Literary cultures reshape physical spaces by means of the network of memorial sites (mnemotopes, *lieux de mémoire*) as well. Such networks have visibly marked the geographic spaces of European cultures, especially since the late eighteenth century, when cultural nationalism started spreading rapidly over the continent. Their treatment in this article has a twofold motivation. On the one hand, it is prompted by study of canonization of national poets and other »cultural saints« that has exposed space as an important element. For the wide network of remembrance sites only enables proper veneration of cultural saints—as can be demonstrated, for example, by the commemorative cults of national poets (such as Aleksandr Pushkin, Adam Mickiewicz, Hristo Botev, France Prešeren, Sándor Petőfi, Karel Hynek Mácha, and others), which often managed to catch up immense masses in whirlwinds of ritual adoration.<sup>1</sup> Spatial dimensions of the canonization of cultural saints (such as preservation and museumification of houses-of-birth and other objects, the designing of public monuments, plaques, and tombstones, and the christening of locations or institutions) turned out to be crucial not only from the standpoint of the »management« of collective memory and the shaping of a (new) community and its common imaginary, but also from the perspective of the (nationalist) symbolic conquest and appropriation of the actual territory.

On the other hand, the GIS-mapping of literary monuments in the project The Space of Slovene Literary Culture has clearly shown that the focus on the core canon-

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<sup>1</sup> See the section on national poets in the fourth volume of *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe* (KOROPECKYJ 2010; PENČEV 2010; DOVIĆ 2010; NEUBAUER 2010b; PYNSENT 2010).

ic authors is too narrow. Only in combination with a large number of marginal, often only locally interesting authors, and a handful of canonized »greats« whose »memory«, appropriated by the center, radiates into the wider (national, and rarely international) space, a proper network of mnemotopes is formed, one that impregnates the formerly »virgin« geographic space with a dense grid of (literary) associations and connotations, subjecting it to (semiotic) nationalization. In many respects, it is possible to draw analogies between the network of medieval saintly shrines, around which the (unified) space of »Christian Europe« was constituted (BROWN 1982: 6), and the memorials to cultural saints that redefined the (heterogeneous) semiotic spaces of the »Europe of nations«.

## 2 Spatial Models of Canonization of »Cultural Saints«

The concept of cultural saints, as understood in the framework of the project Cultural Saints of European Nation States (CSENS), is primarily connected with research on cultural nationalisms in continental Europe during the period of the »long« nineteenth century—that is, from about the end of the eighteenth century to the beginning of WW I.<sup>2</sup> Among other things, comparative inquiry into cultural nationalisms has shown that the patterns and models on which national cultures were formed are surprisingly similar. Despite adamant self-perceptions of their proper singularity, all literary cultures—both those with long traditions and those that were practically only forming during this time—operated with identical developmental matrices for »cultivating national culture«: from language codification (dictionary and grammar writing), collecting folk materials, reinstituting historical traditions, folk costume, and festivals to engendering new creativity and exciting athletic society activities (LEERSSEN 2006: 570–573). The basis of these kinds of activities that the intellectual elites pushed (while gradually extending their sway) was in fact Enlightenment cultivation, the systematic »awakening« work. However, this rational core also had its somewhat less rational and correspondingly more emotional antipode, which no doubt led to national movements being able to pass into a phase where the broader masses joined the intellectual elites (HROCH 1993: 6–8). The »cultural saints«, the nationally anointed ones from the ranks of artists who became objects of intensive adoration, cult worship, and canonization represented this antipode.<sup>3</sup>

It is easy to understand how in the context of a general focus on language matters (as the essential determiner of ethnic affiliation) »men of letters« were best able to fill the role of cultural saints: writers, occasionally linguists, and above all poets.<sup>4</sup> »National poets«, the chosen ones who in some traditions attained and held unassailable

<sup>2</sup> See the project website: <https://vefir.hi.is/culturalsaints/>.

<sup>3</sup> The two poles found an important intersection in the activities of cultural groups and reading centers. As Urška Perenič concludes, in the context of Slovene society, literature primarily supported the »presentation and formation of national consciousness, the idea of national liberation and unification« (PERENIČ 2009: 518–519). Also see PERENIČ (2010) and her contribution in this volume.

<sup>4</sup> The term »men« is entirely correct because there are almost no women among the great anointed ones. If medieval cults of saints were at least at the outset pronouncedly mysoginist, as Thomas HEAD (2001) concludes, we can say the same for the nineteenth-century cults of cultural saints.

symbolic primacy and became the mother cultures' rich referential and intertextual foci, were the paradigmatic cultural saints (NEUBAUER 2010a; DOVIĆ 2011a; JUVAN 2011). It is possible in some respects to compare their status and canonization, a move of recognition and confirmation, with the canonization and status of religious saints.<sup>5</sup> In this article it will not, of course, be possible to treat the principle issues related to cultural saints (HELGASON 2011b), and it will likewise be necessary to leave aside numerous important aspects of their canonization, as, for example, care for their opuses, continual interpretation and appropriation of their artistic works (texts), or indoctrination, the fundamental factor in successful reproduction of the canonical status (see the table in DOVIĆ 2012). The focus of our attention will be the factors that are relevant from a spatial standpoint or, more exactly, those that are connected with the appearance of a spatial network of memorial landmarks of literary culture.

The first spatial factor that is directly connected with the figure and work of an author is, of course, the trajectory of his life (*vita*), with special emphasis on key points, such as birth, death, critical stages of life, or the creation of great works of art.<sup>6</sup> Apart from this, the »imaginary« coordinates populated by literary characters must be taken into account as well, especially when (fictional) texts refer to concrete, physical spaces. A network so derived is essential to what takes place later, in the various phases of canonization, for the most part after the author's death, of course.<sup>7</sup> Among the spatial categories that are key to constituting canonical status (*inventio*), the author's relics are assuredly of interest; they are often tied to the appearance of certain kinds of memorial landmarks (e.g., large tombstones). In general, the appearance of memorials is at first, as a rule, connected with spaces that have a tangible, concrete link with the individual. With model cultural saints, all of the notable »events« —including the settings of prominent works of art—acquire as their spatial correlative at least a memorial plaque.

On the other hand, the practice of »christening« —i.e., the naming of public spaces or their dedication to »patrons« —is no longer necessarily tied to locations of biographic relevance. The memorial landmarks that are not specifically connected with a person's biography form a special group: they do not trumpet *hic locus est*. While national poets with huge representational statues occupy specially chosen, prestigious locations in large cities and sizeable cultural centers,<sup>8</sup> their names gradu-

<sup>5</sup> The apprehension of cultural nationalism as a new, nineteenth-century »civil religion« (existing alongside traditional religions), which the project Cultural Saints implies, must, of course, be understood in a figurative sense. As Mona Ozouf observed in her excellent book on the French revolution, we do not in principle expect miraculous works from secular saints after their deaths (OZOUF 1991: 266–267). However, certain details connected with the cults of cultural saints indicate that mimesis of the sacred is not always metaphorical (HELGASON 2011a).

<sup>6</sup> It is worth stating that »critical points« are not necessarily of great note; it has often been only hagiographic discourse that made them so.

<sup>7</sup> Sometimes canonization begins during the author's lifetime. A classic example of early canonization is that of the Flemish writer Hendrik Conscience (1812–1883), to whom a grand monument and euphoric mass celebrations were dedicated in Antwerp while he was yet alive. However, like the examples of the Dutch poet Hendrik Tollens (1780–1856) and the Prešeren's Slovene contemporary Jovan Koseski (1798–1884), this one also testifies that an early start to canonization does not ensure its long-term success.

<sup>8</sup> Cyprian Godebski's formidable Mickiewicz was erected in Warsaw in 1898, a city that had no special connection with the life of the Polish national poet (KOROPECKYJ 2010).

ally spread over a wide geographic area. In the end, Ivan Cankar and Prešeren have a street of their own in nearly every Slovene town and village, while the name of the Bulgarian national poet and hero Hristo Botev designates »thousands« of locations and institutions, including even soccer fields and clubs (PENČEV 2010: 117).

Of course, it is worth noting that simple enumeration of landmarks might lead to methodological digressions or even mistakes that ought at all costs to be avoided. The first such mistake is ignoring the timeframe of memorials' appearances. If we take into account only the actual (geographic) distribution of memorials, we do not see the historical course of the network's formation, which is really the key to any plausible interpretation. Another mistake, partly connected with the first, is that of »leveling«. It must be emphasized that not all landmarks are equally important. One of the possible ways to rank them would seem to be by the value of the function they have played in the commemorative cult. From a spatial standpoint, among the important categories for the reproduction of canonical status and its transmission in time and space (*cultus*), the most interesting are rituals.<sup>9</sup> An exceptionally colorful array of ritual activities developed across Europe in connection with cultural saints, primarily during the second half of the nineteenth century. As with Christian cults of saints, the rituals were frequently tied to the day of death, which is of course the *dies natalis* as well, the day of rebirth into the heavenly community of saints. In particular after 1850, impressive mass celebrations arose in connection with the »cult of the centenary« (QUINAULT 1998). Even a superficial glance reveals that the centers of the largest rituals remained graves or gravesite memorials, houses of birth, and the new grand memorials in open spaces (on squares, in parks) in large cities. Besides these central focal points, the less significant ones were frequently integrated into a kind of larger basket; for example, ritual pilgrimages »in the footsteps« —often, too, in the form of commentated excursions as a part of obligatory school indoctrination—but always as factors of semantic cultivation (of local) spaces, their participation in the national corpus of symbolic capital, and finally of course, tourism.<sup>10</sup>

From the foregoing it is clear that the memorial network of landmarks of literary culture has quite diverse and broad social reach. Its genesis is linked to a set of different protagonists—from local groups that make all kinds of income for their area by reliance on their countrymen's cultural capital, to intellectual elites that strive for mass patriotic support for their projects and can temporarily take over centers of political power. In this sense it is always necessary to reckon with the relations between the »official« (top-down) and »spontaneous« (bottom-up) dynamics of the appearance of memorials: it must be born in mind that the urban placement of large memorials and renaming of streets, places, and even districts is an exceptionally delicate process that in the first place effects the political (or even military) control

<sup>9</sup> Jan and Aleida Assmann, who were among the pioneers in the study of cultural memory, underscored the significance of effective mechanism of transmission (ASSMANN/ASSMANN 1987: 8–13). Attention to the ritual layers of commemorative cults became even more pronounced with the advent of the »performative turn« in memory studies (RIGNEY 2011: 76–70).

<sup>10</sup> In this sense it is, for example, possible to interpret »Mácha's land« in the Czech Republic (north of Prague). An entire district is today thickly sown with references to Mácha: from memorial landmarks on castle ruins to institutions, hotels on Mácha Lake, and the local movie theater.

of a territory.<sup>11</sup> Spatial designations are one of the key factors in the acquisition and appropriation of geographic space and its transformation into »national« space; it belongs to the political domain in a truly constitutive sense.

### 3 Literary Memorials and »The Space of Slovene Literary Culture«

As was indicated at the outset, a look at the entirety of memorial landmarks of a literary culture reveals a considerably more diverse picture than would be obtained from focusing only on those canonized individuals who usually count as most representative. Undoubtedly the cultural saints lead in density of landmarks, yet they are joined by a large group of less known members of literary culture with their own memorials, dedicated places, and institutions. This applies to Slovene literary culture as well. Thus it is possible to conclude that systematic cataloguing and geographic mapping of the network of memorial landmarks—something like this is currently taking place on Geopedia<sup>12</sup>—would yield the possibility of new insights into the formation of Slovene literary culture, its spread in geographic space, and its social significance as well. Therefore, during the conceptualization of the interdisciplinary project The Space of Slovene Literary Culture, which anticipated GIS mapping of 330 creative writers and other literati's biographies, a proposal came forth to map the network of memorial landmarks connected with these writers as well.<sup>13</sup>

It is necessary to give certain methodological clarifications in connection with this part of the project. At present, analysis of memorials is at a descriptive stage. Students in the Slovene program at the Filozofska fakulteta in Ljubljana are carrying it out; project members are supervising and correcting the work. The list of memorials to authors that are being described is identical to the list of 330 authors selected for biographies. It is worth noting that in the case of each of the selected authors, memorials from after 1940 and ones located outside the geographic borders of the Republic of Slovenia are counted. The database matrix for mapping is presented below (each memorial is treated separately; italicized categories are obligatory):

*Type of memorial*  
*Memorial name*  
*Surname of the person referenced*  
*First name of the person referenced*  
*Author referenced*  
*Text on the memorial*  
*Location by geographic coordinates (Phi/Lambda)*

<sup>11</sup> URBANC and GABROVEC (2005) showed multilayered (re)naming of population centers.

<sup>12</sup> See »Literarni spomeniki« at <http://portal.geopedia.si/sloj/metapodatki/11689>. Regarding Geopedia, see HLADNIK and FRIDL in this volume.

<sup>13</sup> The selection's representativeness is, of course, a questionable point of the research. Foremost these are representatives of Slovene literary culture who produced a significant portion of their works in the period 1780–1940 and whom the project members consider »representative«. It is understandable that such a selection is already a »pre-selection«, because it results from complex, longstanding axiological and canonization processes in Slovene literature and cultural history. While no authors of the core canon are likely missing among the 330, the outliers are somewhat more problematic.

*Location by Gauß-Krüger coordinates (Y/X)*

*Location (descriptive)*

Initiators

Year of installation

Creator(s)

Reference literature

Internet sources

Illustrated materials

*Name and surname of the data recorder*

*Date of entry*

By the fall of 2012, the first phase of memorial entries, for about one-third of the selected individuals, had been completed. Among them are the majority of the central, canonical authors of Slovene literature. For this reason, the data—albeit partial and unverified—already make possible some preliminary conclusions. As might be expected, some of the writers selected have no landmarks at all, while the number of entries for others reaches into the dozens or even over one hundred (e.g., for Prešeren).

As is always the case, the actual cataloguing work revealed numerous obstacles. While there were no major complications with geographic referencing of the memorials, which enables composition of thematic maps, on the other hand the data on the initiators, creators, and year of installation are frequently difficult to obtain: it would demand serious cultural-historical research work, which of course is impossible within the given framework. Another large, practical methodological challenge was the classification of memorials. This is an area that probably must be further pondered and expanded on the basis of existing results. Currently the following categories are available:

Public, exterior statue of the author (full height)

Public, exterior statue of the author (bust)

Memorial edifice (room, house, museum)

Name of an institution (school, society, library, museum etc.)

Name of a location (street, road, square etc.)

This classification requires some explanation. It leaves out interior (though public) memorials and common memorial plaques. The reason for this is simple: While data on interior memorials—there are quite a few, mostly busts, in institutions' halls and corridors—are more difficult to obtain, memorial plaques on Slovene territory are too numerous to cover in this research framework. Of course, the differentiation between statues and busts is maintained, because it is evident that a large statue of an author in a public place is a prestigious form of literary memorial.

This category already shows that numerical indicators are somewhat misleading: we might conclude that the most prominent figures of Slovene literary culture are Rudolf Maister and Anton Martin Slomšek, with four, and Karel Destovnik Kajuh with three »grand« memorials, in comparison with Prešeren, Cankar, and Valentin Vodnik, who boast two, and another dozen with one memorial. Here, of course, it must be stated that Maister and Slomšek's fame is not exactly of a literary nature,

but primarily military-political and religious, respectively. Moreover, the broader context must be taken into account: a memorial's location (its prestige), when it was installed, and how it was financed.<sup>14</sup> From this perspective, the memorials to Vodnik (1889) and Prešeren (1905) turn out to be paradigmatic for Slovene literary culture, having symbolically conquered the Ljubljana city center in the delicate context of Slovene-German and provincial-imperial tensions of their time. These first two large Slovene literary memorials, which gained mass support (and were predominantly financed with typical nationwide collections), decisively contributed to Ljubljana's transformation from a provincial capital to the spiritual seat of »Slovendom«.<sup>15</sup>

A look at the information thus far collected on somewhat less prestigious busts in exterior public spaces provides an interesting picture as well.<sup>16</sup> Aside from Prešeren, Josip Jurčič and Simon Gregorčič have four such statues, while, in addition to Dragotin Kette, Karol Glazer, Anton Novačan, Tone Čufar, and Ivan Trinko have, somewhat surprisingly, three. Next, with two, come Cankar, Anton Aškerc, France Balantič, Josip Murn, Ivan Prijatelj, Josip Vandot, Miroslav Vilhar, and Oton Župančič, and about a dozen literati with one such memorial. As with statues, the first of which to a female writer (Alma Karlin, Celje, 2010) was installed only recently, the portion of these kinds of sculptures of female writers is negligible: aside from the surprisingly old (1870) obelisk dedicated to Josipina Turnograjska at Turn Castle near Preddvor, for now the only ones attested are the busts of Lily Novy (1985) and Mira Mihelec (2005) in Ljubljana and of Ljubka Šorli in Tolmin (1995)—all three are parts of facades. There is also a bust of the (German) writer Ana Wambrechtsamer in Planina pri Sevnici, which was added to the portrait in relief mounted on her house of birth in 1935. To interpret and assess the relevance of all these monuments prudently, it is absolutely necessary to consider the time of installation and its ideological context.

Surprisingly few attested memorials to literary topics and characters have been registered so far—only a handful, like to the writer Vandot's protagonist, Kekec in Kranjska Gora; Levstik's Krpan in Cerknica; and Agata and Jurij from Ivan Tavčar's novel *Visoška kronika* in Škofja Loka. There are, for example, no large public statues of Prešeren's Bogomila or Črtomir, Jurčič's Krjavelj, or Jurčič's Tugomer, even though there is a rich tradition of literary models in painting and sculpture.<sup>17</sup> In preparing entries, a problem arose with classifying memorials that are obtrusively positioned in a public space but do not represent a human figure. Typical of such memorials are the Prešeren pyramid-obelisk in Bled (1883), which was the first real urbanistic »intervention« of Slovene literary culture; the Levstik memorial in Velike Lašče (1889), the Žiga Zois pyramid in Ljubljana (1927), and the Ljubljana memorial to the Illyrian Provinces (1929), whose complex symbolism

<sup>14</sup> Memorials to Kajuh were installed shortly after WW II. Two stand in front of schools, and all three are connected with his home region. Likewise, all four memorials to Slomšek, an atypical figure in literary culture, are in Styria. The two memorials in Celje and Slovenska Bistrica date to the 1930s, and the two in Maribor and Lendava from after Slovene independence, when Slomšek was a candidate for beatification.

<sup>15</sup> On the erection of the Vodnik memorial, see WIESTHALER (1889) and JEZERNIK (2010); on the Prešeren memorial see ZBAŠNIK (1905), Kos (1997), in Dović (2010).

<sup>16</sup> After all 330 writers are treated, the picture might change slightly.

<sup>17</sup> Memorials like the one of Peter Klepec on the Kolpa River near Bosjiva loka, of course belong to folk tradition and cannot be linked to actual authors. For this reason the project does not include them.

pertains, among other things, to Vodnik. These memorials are for now recorded as »memorial edifices«, however, this classification is not optimal, and it would probably be more suitable to categorize them as »non-figural exterior memorials«. Further, the category »memorial object«, proved somewhat unwieldy—that is, it is of import whether a birth house, place of residence, or place of death is only marked with a plaque or perhaps turned into a proper museum. In practice, all of these objects marked with plaques ought to be counted, even if they have not been made into museums.<sup>18</sup>

Yet another special challenge is grave memorials. Initially, the catalog of landmarks of literary culture was not supposed to include grave markers in cemeteries; however, it may be necessary to include at least some. It is not only a matter of the graves of literary greats frequently being the object of pilgrimages and sites of commemorative rituals.<sup>19</sup> Frequently new, monumental tombstones were installed later, when, for example, the corporeal remains were exhumed and reburied in a more prominent place.<sup>20</sup> Money for such grave markers was usually collected in a public campaign consisting of a set of ritual commemorations, supported by the media and institutions. In Slovenia, the first successful campaign of this kind was conducted by Janez Bleiweis for a new tombstone memorial for Prešeren in Kranj (1849–1852). By the end of the century this way of doing things had turned into effective, routine production of memorial plaques, grave markers, and other memorials. Symptomatically, topographic designation at the time became a fundamental concern of the Writers' Benefit Society, the predecessor of Slovene Writers' Association.<sup>21</sup> It would, in any case, make sense to register the most important grave markers that were installed in this way as a separate category. In this context, it is, of course, also worth noting the remaking of cemeteries into memorial parks, especially Jože Plečnik's (Ivo Spinčič's) reconstruction of the Ljubljana Navje Cemetery (1937–1940)—the more so because it was only at the former St. Christopher (sv. Krištof) Cemetery that the »nationalization« of Slovene memorial culture really began (in 1839–1840).<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup> The paradigmatic memorial plaque in Slovene literary culture is, of course, the one on Vodnik's birth house (1858), which at the same time introduced the systematic marking of space in Slovenia and mass commemorative cult. See Malavašič's enthusiastic report (MALAVAŠIČ 1859) and Močnik's ironic commentary (MOČNIK 1983: 210–31).

<sup>19</sup> This is true of the majority of national poets, of which the case of the Czech poet Mácha is especially interesting (BORKO 1936: 4).

<sup>20</sup> The reburial of remains, which belongs to the constitutive features of Medieval cults of saints, is also typical of »cultural saints«. Even more indicative than the early reburial of Prešeren's remains in 1852 (GSPAN 1949) was the Czech example of when Mácha's remains were transferred from Litoměřice to Prague's Vyšehrad (BORKO 1939: 7). The »translation« of relics remains, of course, quite alive in Catholicism: Thus, for instance, in 1941 Slomšek's remains traveled from the Maribor city cemetery to a crypt in the Franciscan church; in 1978, the casket was moved to the cathedral sepulcher; in 1991, to the cathedral's Chapel of the Holy Cross.

<sup>21</sup> The beginnings of the professional association of Slovene writers is also connected with commemorative culture, memorials, and a remarkable ceremonial pilgrimage to Prešeren's birth house, where a memorial plaque was placed in 1872 (VOŠNIK 1982: 398).

<sup>22</sup> Here I refer to the new or renovated tombstones of Linhart, Čop, Vodnik, and Korytko. Prešeren was also enmeshed in the process (JEZERNIK 2010; CEVC 1977).

In general, there have been fewer difficulties with »christenings«—that is, naming institutions and places—than with memorials.<sup>23</sup> Not surprisingly, cultural and educational institutions lead: cultural societies and artistic groups, libraries, museums, and schools; inns, pubs, and tourist and sporting organizations are to be found among them, too. Prešeren is exceptionally prominent in this regard, lending his name to over forty institutions; the next in number are far behind, with no more than ten institutions. The institutions dedicated to Prešeren number not only societies and schools, but also a kindergarten, business companies, a mountain lodge, and the greatest number of cultural institutions abroad.<sup>24</sup> In the category of christened places, Cankar, with sixty-eight places, draws very near Prešeren, with seventy, while the next two on the list, Vodnik and Jurčič, do not reach thirty. The leading types of locations are, of course, streets, roads, and squares, but we also find woods, parks, river embankments, and even mountaintops (e.g., Trdinov vrh); memorial paths are also quite numerous.<sup>25</sup>

#### 4 Conclusion

Data on the memorial landmarks of Slovene literary culture that have been collected so far in the context of the project The Space of Slovene Literary Culture clearly evidence that the Slovene territory is densely dotted with memorials of literary culture. The fact that the great majority of the 330 individual writers selected have at least some kind of memorial landmark confirms the hypothesis that memorial literary culture is not in the least limited to authors of the established core of the canon, but is quite a bit more inclusive. If in addition we take into account the pronounced nationalistic charge that marked the genesis of the network of literary memorials, and the ideological tremors that accompanied its further development, we can confidently conclude that the ethnic Slovene territory is a meaningful and complex memorial text that requires thoroughgoing and careful decoding.

The series of thematic maps that will be produced as the project continues will visually project the spatial distribution of different kinds of memorial landmarks, possible concentrations or sparse areas, and relations between center and periphery. Taking into account the temporal perspective of memorials' installation (historico-thematic maps), the project will attempt to show how the trend of semantic cultivation and acquisition of the land developed from its beginnings in the mid-nineteenth century to the present. It will be possible to see where potential breaks in the eval-

<sup>23</sup> Obviously, it was not possible to include the instances of christenings that do not have stable geographic references. The Prešeren rose, the Prešeren Prize, the medals of the City of Kranj, and Prešeren chocolates are therefore not counted, even though branding and the production of material memorabilia are not at all unimportant in canonization.

<sup>24</sup> The other favorite »patrons« are Ivan Cankar, lipa (linden tree), and Triglav (the highest summit of Slovenia).

<sup>25</sup> Literary pilgrimage tourism has long existed in Slovenia. Lovro Toman, the first ideologist of Slovene commemorative culture, already in the middle of the nineteenth century called on his countrymen to visit Vodnik's Koprivnik (TOMAN 1859: 229). A typical example of a contemporary literary tourism handbook, which combines interest in active vacationing with exploring lands, general history, and literature is Padevč's *Cesty s Karlem Hynkem Máchou* (2010).

ation and canonization of individual writers occur, and at least partially to conclude on what ideologies the planning of the memorial network rested in different environments. Further interpretive possibilities are promised by connecting the memorial database with other segments of the project, most directly, of course, with the GIS biographies. Here it might, for example, be shown how and when the memorial network is able to reach beyond the biography-related spaces: we can surmise that this applies mostly to the canon's big names, while less known writers usually remain on the local level.

Nonetheless, we must be aware that not all the problems will be solved by “reading” thematic maps. First of all, the maps do not offer sufficient insight into social (i.e., the network of initiators, political tensions, supervision, financing, commemorative rituals, etc.) and discursive (ideological) background to the appearance of memorials, without which resolution of open questions is impossible. Problems of interest also arise in a comparative context, where it would be sensible to research to what degree Slovene developments were unique. There is the impression that memorials of literary culture are of pronounced importance, even a fundamental element of Slovene literary culture, which would, of course, correspond to the generally held self-perception of »Slovendom's« literary anointment.<sup>26</sup> The question is whether memorials of literary culture elsewhere have played a comparable role in cultivating national space, or whether perhaps they share this role—more than in the Slovene case—with other ways of symbolically appropriating the territory (e.g., with landmarks that highlight historical continuity, political and military events, and various heroic and resistance traditions), and the bronze and marble greats from the aristocracy and high echelon politics overshadow the immortal glory of the »men of letters«.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> See the recent critical treatments of the »Slovene cultural syndrome« in JUVAN (2008) and Dovič (2011b).

<sup>27</sup> In this respect, Slovene memorial culture's disregard for the two nineteenth-century politicians, Toman and Bleiweis, the proponents of the described appropriation of the Slovene territory, is symptomatic. It is as if the »cultural syndrome« ideology, asserting that literature is the only available vehicle of the Slovene national emancipation at the time (since the politics is impossible), to which both of them contributed, would in retrospect punish them by forgetting their astonishing *political* achievements. The communist No to Bleiweis, »the father of the Slovene people«, only sealed the judgment.

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