

COLLECTIONS, WALKS, AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPES SLOVENIAN–ITALIAN CROSS-BORDER HERITAGE INITIATIVES

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This article presents three examples of Slovenian–Italian cross-border heritage initiatives. The ZBORZBIRK project linked thirty-four collections from the border area. The Walk of Peace trail from the Alps to the Adriatic connects the most important remnants and monuments of the Isonzo Front in Slovenia and Italy. The municipalities in Brda/Collio are working to nominate the cultural landscape of this area for the UNESCO World Heritage List. The comparison presents the scope of the cross-border initiatives, the actors, their motivations, the actions taken, and their longevity—that is, the imprints in the cultural heritage discourse between the tourism industry and identity politics.

Keywords: *heritage-making, heritage initiatives, cross-border cooperation, cultural landscape, ZBORZBIRK, Walk of Peace, Goriška brda / Collio (Gorizia Hills)*

Avtorici predstavita tri primere slovensko-italijanskih čezmejnih dediščinskih pobud. Projekt ZBORZBIRK je povezal 34 zbirk z obmejnega območja, Poti miru od Alp do Jadrana povezujejo najpomembnejše ostanke in spomenike soške fronte v Sloveniji in Italiji, občine na območju Goriških brd pa si prizadevajo za nominacijo kulturne krajine tega območja na Unescov seznam svetovne dediščine. Primerjava kaže na obseg čezmejnih pobud, njihove akterje, motivacije, izvedene ukrepe in njihovo dolgoživost, torej na odtise v dediščinskem diskurzu med turistično industrijo in identitetnimi politikami.

Ključne besede: *dediščinjenje, dediščinske pobude, čezmejno sodelovanje, kulturna pokrajina, ZBORZBIRK, Pot miru, Goriška brda*

INTRODUCTION

There is a mutually constitutive interplay between boundaries, borders, and heritage that is understood as a metacultural process (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998, 2004). Boundaries, borders, limits, divisions, and their multiplicative effects can be focal points of transition, encounter, and conflict, as stated at the announcement of the meeting of the SIEF Working Group Cultural Heritage and Property in January 2020.¹ This article considers three different cross-border heritage-making initiatives: a network of collections, a trail connecting remnants and memorials of the First World War, and a terraced cultural landscape. We compare the heritage initiatives, the actors involved, their purview and agendas, the initiatives' longevity, the robustness, impact, and scale² at which initiatives take place, and how scale and (cross-)border heritage interact in a fluid and contingent manner. By employing a comparative perspective, we examine various modalities of cross-border heritage(-making),

¹ Available at: <https://www.siefhome.org/downloads/wg/chp/SIEF%20CH%202020%20Borders-Boundaries.pdf> (accessed September 13, 2021).

² By scale we mean a continual process of (re)construction of power relations: “while scale is often at the heart of how domination is facilitated and inequalities legitimated, it might also be possible to make astute interventions in how power geometries operate through an intelligent and sensitive understanding of scalar politics” (Harvey, Mozaffari, 2019).

its appropriation, and possible internalization. Our aim is also to check the possible impact or at least potentials of these cross-border heritage initiatives to transcend the still dominant nation-building perspective of heritage initiatives and heritage discourse in general.

Cross-border heritage initiatives and heritage-making are a challenge to (sometimes still predominant) monocultural and nation-building heritage endeavors, and they are an opportunity to contest heritage narratives about the nation and national identity that can be claimed simultaneously below the national level (i.e., locally) and above the national level (i.e., transnationally), as well as within it. By presenting and comparing three different heritage initiatives, we seek to answer whether and how they work within or beyond nation-building narratives. Following the objectives of the heritage initiatives studied (e.g., preserving remnants, safeguarding collections, developing tourism, raising the profile of the region, etc.), we analyze how successful they are in achieving their aims and what role the different types of coordinators (experts, local foundations, local communities, etc.) play in each of the heritage initiatives studied. The analyses follow the approach of Maria Lois and examine border areas

as discursive sites, where authorities, locales, the tourism industry, visitors, consumers, and so on negotiate what is to be narrated and what is to be silenced, and, specifically, which scalar dimensions are to be found in border heritage sites, events and promotional materials. (Lois, 2019: 82)

The article draws on various sources—political and planning documents, institutional and media reports, and the ethnography of border sites—by employing (participant) observation, informal conversation, and more or less structured interviews with various actors, as well as self-reflection based on active participation in some initiatives.

ROOTS AND ROUTES: HERITAGE, BORDERLANDS, AND CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

Like borders, heritage “can be understood both in terms of roots and routes. They are matters of administration, but they are also matters of consideration, matters of competition, and matters of contention” (Källén, 2019: 9). The roots of today’s Slovenian-Italian border date to the mid-twentieth century. After the Second World War, the ethnically mixed former Venezia Giulia was divided into two zones. With the exception of Trieste and its surroundings,³ the border between Yugoslavia and Italy was established at the peace conference in Paris in 1946. The Treaty of Paris was signed on February 10, 1947, and its

³ The issue of Trieste and its surroundings was temporarily settled with the establishment of the Free Territory of Trieste, which remained divided into Zone A under British–American military government and Zone B under Yugoslav military government. This provisional arrangement was resolved by

provisions came into effect on September 15, 1947. The status of Trieste (Sln. *Trst*)⁴ and the adjacent border were finally settled by the Treaty of Osimo in 1975 (Troha, 2016). Following the breakup of Yugoslavia in 1991 and Slovenia's accession to the EU in 2004, and entry into the Schengen area in 2007, both countries were part of a broader region that—until the recent COVID-driven changes to the border regime—allowed the free movement of people and goods without border controls.

The changes to various European borders after the late 1980s have given rise to extensive methodologically and disciplinarily diverse research. In the 1990s, a new disciplinary specialization, the anthropology of borders, emerged (Donnan, Wilson, 1999) that sought to document how local communities were important participants in much wider relations of power, exploitation, domination, and subversion (Bellier, Wilson 2000; Haller, Donnan, 2000; Ballinger, 2002; Kockel, Nic Craith, Frykman, 2012; Wilson, 2012; Markov, 2015). Borderwork was no longer the exclusive preserve of the nation-state (Rumford, 2006: 164), but involved several actors and strategies, including the EU and its territorial cohesion and regional development policies.

In the EU's agenda, cultural heritage is recognized as “an irreplaceable repository of knowledge and a valuable resource for economic growth, employment and social cohesion”;⁵ therefore, cross-border cooperation initiatives can receive EU funding for preserving various elements of cultural heritage (Balogh, 2019: 30). Borders influence the understanding of heritage and are undeniably crucial for the production of past, present, and future cultural heritage (ibid.), but heritage itself is in turn sometimes understood as being about constructing borders (Källén, 2019: 7–8). Certain cross-border heritage initiatives and transboundary heritage sites presumably participate “in the symbolic and networked debordering of the EU” (Niklasson, 2019: 118). Nonetheless, the state constantly struggles to control heritage on the border and invests its energy in positioning itself transparently in relation to the processes of its regional development through cross-border EU projects (Kravanja, 2018a: 114). Hence the actors presented in this article and their objectives are not explicit about addressing national perspectives. Despite European rhetoric, they are embedded in the still dominant national(istic) heritage discourse, which is defined through common investments in and common responsibility for “our heritage” (Thompson, 2006;

the Memorandum of Understanding on October 5, 1954 (also called the Memorandum of London), when the respective zones were assigned to Italy and Yugoslavia (Troha, 2016).

⁴ We use bilingual toponyms only at first mention, after which Italian toponyms are used for the Italian part of the borderlands and Slovenian toponyms for the Slovenian part. In the case of areas and rivers that cross the borders, we have decided arbitrarily; for example, in the case of the Isonzo Front, which is named after the river called *Isonzo* in Italian and *Soča* in Slovenian, we use *Isonzo Front* because it is more common in English texts.

⁵ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Towards an Integrated Approach to Cultural Heritage for Europe, July 22nd, 2014, COM (2014) 477: 2, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/culture/library/publications/2014-heritage-communication_en.pdf (accessed April 2, 2021).

Hafstein, 2018). This embeddedness of actors in a national perspective can actually challenge their real cross-border heritage work; however, at the same time it is an opportunity to open the national(istic) heritage narratives to different perspectives, which can be claimed simultaneously above and below the national perspective, as well as within it.

THE NETWORK OF COLLECTIONS

The first cross-border heritage initiative examined is a network connecting thirty-four heritage collections covered by the cross-border project *ZBORZBIRK—Cultural Heritage in the Collections between the Alps and the Karst* (2012–2015).⁶ The project was built on grassroots collecting practices and municipal heritage collections that were not necessarily inventoried by authorized museum institutions. Based on long-term ethnography of the territory since the 1990s, the initiative was conceived by the ethnologist Mojca Ravnik and co-designed with collectors, local stakeholders, and other researchers between 2008 and 2011. It was implemented by eleven partner institutions (two academic institutions, one cultural-educational institution, two museums, and six local communities) between 2012 and 2015, thus interrelating local collectors, municipalities, and experts from various fields (linguistics, history, museology, and digital humanities) on both sides of the northern Italian–Slovenian cross-border area between the Julian Alps and the *Goriška brda / Collio* area.⁷ The motivations of the actors and stakeholders were different. The municipalities and some collectors were predominantly interested in infrastructure investments for presenting the collections and developing cultural tourism based on promotional and awareness-raising activities. A pull factor for academics and museums was documenting and registering collections and their items, as well as gathering folklore. The various responsibilities led to a fruitful dialogue and some divergences in the implementation phase because the partners were not equally bound to all of the aims. However, the majority of the project activities were fulfilled; they revolved around the creation of a network of thirty-four collections and comprised a joint inventory, intensive ethnography of collecting practices, five investments in infrastructure housing collections, presentation of twelve collections to the public, establishing eleven information points, publishing a guidebook (Poljak Istenič, 2015), holding two major dissemination events—a workshop for collectors and an international conference on collections, oral traditions, and cultural tourism (Dapit, Ivančič Kutin,

⁶ The project was co-funded by European Regional Development Fund (Interreg IVa, Italy, Slovenia) and by national funds from Italy and Slovenia. This article predominately builds on participant observations and reflections on the project activities and findings by one of the authors.

⁷ The borderlands are located in the Province of Udine (Sln. *Videm*) in Italy and in the Gorizia and Upper Carniola statistical regions (Sln. *Goriška statistična regija* and *Gorenjska statistična regija*) in Slovenia. For more information on project design and implementation, see Ravnik, 2012; Ledinek Lozej, Ravnik 2016; Ledinek Lozej, 2017, 2020.

Ledinek Lozej, 2015)—and various other dissemination activities.⁸ After the project, the network remained vital only for the range of ordinary activities of the project partners and stakeholders (e.g., drawing on the folklore material collected and insights, the academic partners published several articles; some collections became part of tourism activities and were more systematically included in several itineraries). Some partners, stakeholders, and researchers involved (cf. Ivančič Kutin, 2016, 2017; Kravanja, 2018b) reconfigured the project results in new heritage activities and configurations. This cross-border cooperation also made possible some further partnerships, collaborations, and joint activities on heritage. Nevertheless, the most significant deficiency of the initiative is the lack of longevity and long-term sustainability; because of this, it was brief and its long-term heritagization impacts on borderlands have not been identified.

THE WALK OF PEACE

The Walk of Peace trail is a cross-border route connecting various remnants of the First World War along the former Isonzo Front: military cemeteries, caves, trenches, ossuaries, chapels, monuments, an outdoor museum, crosses, tombstones, memorial plaques, and other memorials from Log pod Mangartom in the middle of the Julian Alps in Slovenia to Trieste on the Adriatic Sea in Italy.⁹ The trail was set up by the Walks of Peace in the Soča Region Foundation (Sl. *Fundacija Poti miru v Posočju*), through several projects, local, national, and European funds, and self-motivated collaboration of several institutions, local communities, and individuals. It became Slovenia's flagship contribution to the pan-European formal remembrance of the centenary of the First World War (Fikfak, Jezernik, 2018: 120; Jezernik, Fikfak, 2018: 26).¹⁰ The concept of the Walk of Peace

⁸ For example, the project website at <http://zborzbirk.zrc-sazu.si/> (where some more information and all project publications are also available), signposts, roll-up stands, posters, and twenty-seven different leaflets for a total circulation of 36,300 copies, the exhibition catalogue (Miklavčič-Brezigar, 2015), three CDs (Dapit, Kropej, 2014; Ivančič Kutin, 2014; Pignat, 2015), and over twenty smaller events.

⁹ For a detailed description of the Walk of Peace, see a general guide (Koren, 2015) and various guidebooks and maps, also available at the foundation website (<http://www.potmiru.si/eng/publications-and-articles>). This article is based on long-term observation of activities, two interviews with Maša Klavora (on March 26 and July 14, 2021), and, due to pandemic circumstances, questionnaires completed by Željko Cimprič (April 5, 2020), Zdravko Likar (March 31, 2020), and Petra Svoljšak (March 26, 2020), to whom we are grateful for sharing their information and perspectives with us. Parts of the text are complemented by information from articles (Likar, Klavora, 2015; Klavora, 2016; Testen, Koren, 2015; Repič 2018, 2021; Kozorog, 2019; Kravanja, 2021).

¹⁰ In fact, the first memorials in the region date back to the period of fascism after the First World War, when the Italian authorities transferred the remains of soldiers to the ossuaries in Kobarid, Redipuglia, and Oslavia (Sl. *Oslavje*), as well as to larger cemeteries, and erected numerous monuments to the fallen in the countryside (Kravanja, 2021; Saunders, 2013: 52). After the Second World War, research on and the museum presentation of the First World War was promoted by the Nova Gorica Museum. For a detailed overview of the memorials, see Drole, 2019; Hazler, 2021.



Figure 1. Booklets *Walk of Peace* in different languages (photo by Špela Ledinek Lozej).



Figure 2. In the battlefield area. On the top of Mrzli vrh (photo by Jurij Fikfak).

trail was proposed as *Friedenswege* (in German) and *Le vie della pace* (in Italian) as early as the 1970s by the Austrian historian Walther Schaumann, who was working on the Italian–Austrian front line in the Carnic Alps in Austria and Italy.¹¹ After that, the idea blossomed in the Italian Dolomites and Slovenia's Soča region in the 1990s. In the Soča region, it was envisioned (alongside the Kobarid Museum, dedicated to material from the First World War and the Isonzo Front) by Zdravko Likar, a versatile social, cultural, and political actor in the Soča region, who (together with some other associations and individuals) had promoted the heritage of the Isonzo Front since the 1980s. The idea of preservation, conservation, research, and tourism built on the heritage of the Isonzo Front was supported by his colleagues: Željko Cimprič, the cofounder of the Kobarid Museum; Anton Jeglič, secretary-general at the Slovenian Ministry of Science, and Technology in 2000; and Robert Blinc, an academy member and research committee head at the Jožef Stefan Institute—all of them influential at the local and national levels. Hence, in 2000, Slovenia adopted a program for the preservation, renovation, research, and tourism use of the heritage of the Isonzo Front. At the end of that year, the Walks of Peace in the Soča Region Foundation was established, which gained government financial support for carrying out the program. In 2007, the outdoor museums, major monuments, and memorials of the Isonzo Front, natural points of interest, two museums (in addition to the private Kobarid Museum also the regional Tolmin Museum), some private museum collections, and tourist information centers were connected to form a trail called the Walk of Peace in the Upper Soča Region. At the same time, endeavors were also made to preserve remnants and to erect memorials to the First World War in southern parts of the Isonzo Front, either in Slovenia or in Italy.¹² Following the example of the Walk of Peace trail in the Upper Soča Region, in 2010 the initiative was scaled up to the entire cross-border area from the Alps to the Adriatic, and it has been progressively implemented since then. The majority of the cross-border activities were carried out as part of two EU cross-border Interreg projects and some other (trans)national programs.¹³ In 2011, the foundation registered the trademark *Pot miru* (Eng. *Walk of Peace*).¹⁴

¹¹ In 1973, he founded the cultural association Friends of the Dolomites (Germ. *Dolomitenfreunde*, Ital. *Amici delle Dolomiti*), which has been promoting restoration, preservation, and awareness-raising for the remnants and events of the First World War in the Dolomites. Available at: <https://www.dolomitenfreunde.at/home-it> (accessed September 14, 2021).

¹² For a more detailed overview of the actors involved, see Likar, Klavora 2015: 101 and <http://www.potmiru.si/eng/publications-and-articles> (accessed May 5, 2020).

¹³ For more information on projects, see <http://www.potmiru.si/slo/uspesni-razpisi> (accessed January 6, 2021). In 2020, the project Walk of Peace was the winner of the Interact project slam, available at: <http://www.potmiru.si/eng/o-fundaciji/152-the-walk-of-peace-in-the-soa-region-foundation-awarded-with-the-golden-apple-prize> and <https://euregionsweek2020-video.eu/video/interreg-30-years-project-slam> (accessed September 14, 2021).

¹⁴ See the Slovenian Intellectual Property Office's database at <http://www2.uil-sipo.si/> (accessed January 7, 2021). In 2021 they plan to register it at the European Union Intellectual Property Office.

In addition, several actors have been working to nominate the Walk of Peace for the UNESCO World Heritage List.¹⁵ The nomination, titled *The Walk of Peace from the Alps to the Adriatic—Heritage of the First World War*, was submitted to the UNESCO Tentative List in 2016.¹⁶ After that, the foundation sought to join the transnational nomination with France and Belgium, but all the efforts came to a halt because UNESCO formed an expert body to reconsider the nominations of difficult heritage based on wars and conflicts.¹⁷

Since 2000, the Walks of Peace in the Soča Region Foundation has managed to obtain support and involve actors at various levels and from different spheres. In addition to the Slovenian government, one of its main (financial) supporters,¹⁸ they have expert support from the Slovenian Cultural Heritage Protection Institute, the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts Research Center (ZRC SAZU), and the Contemporary History Museum. At the local and regional level, it cooperates intensively with associations that bring together (re) interpreters of the events and collectors of the remnants of the Isonzo Front,¹⁹ the municipalities of Bovec (Ital. *Plezzo*), Kobarid (Ital. *Caporetto*), and Tolmin (Ital. *Tolmino*), regional development centers, the Kobarid Museum, the Tolmin Museum, the Nova Gorica Museum, local tourism societies, tourist information centers, and private collectors. After 2011, the Walk of Peace initiative also gained support from the local and regional government, expert institutions, associations, and private collectors in the southern part of the Isonzo Front in Slovenia²⁰ and Italy.²¹ Since 2019, a representative from Italy, a former vice-president of the

¹⁵ The idea was launched by Italy in 2014 with the aim of preparing a transnational serial nomination together with Slovenia and Austria, but it was not realized.

¹⁶ See the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/6077/> (accessed January 7, 2021). The submission format was prepared and submitted by the Walks of Peace in the Soča Region Foundation; its preparation was coordinated by a historian and the vice president of the foundation's management board, Petra Svoljšak, at the (ZRC SAZU) in close cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, the Slovenian Cultural Heritage Protection Institute, the Ministry of Defense, and external experts. The nomination was supported by twelve local municipalities.

¹⁷ See the ICOMOS discussion paper *Evaluations of World Heritage Nominations related to Sites Associated with Memories of Recent Conflicts* (2018), available at: https://www.icomos.org/images/DOCUMENTS/World_Heritage/ICOMOS_Discussion_paper_Sites_associated_with_Memories_of_Recent_Conflicts.pdf (accessed March 15, 2021).

¹⁸ Initially, the foundation was financially supported by seven ministries, and in the last decade by three ministries.

¹⁹ For example, the societies 1313, Peski, and Mengore.

²⁰ The municipalities of Nova Gorica, Brda (Ital. *Collio*), Kanal ob Soči (Ital. *Canale d'Isonzo*), Šempeter–Vrtojba (Ital. *San Pietro-Vertoiba*), Miren–Kostanjevica (Ital. *Merna–Castagnevizza*), and Renče–Vogrsko (Ital. *Ranziano-Voghersca*); the Isonzo Front Society, the Temnica Caving Club Temnica, the 1. SVIT Tourism Society, and the Globočak Tourism and Recreation Society.

²¹ The Province of Gorizia was even a coordinator of the cross-border projects *Pot miru / Via di Pace – Historic Trails of the First World War from the Alps to the Adriatic*. The other Italian partners involved were the provinces of Trieste and Udine, the municipalities of Gorizia and Monfalcone (Sl. *Tržič*), the Mountain Community of Torre, Natisone, and Collio (Sl. *Ter, Nadiža, Brda*) and the Mountain Community of Gemona, Fella, and the Canale Valley (Sl. *Humin, Bela, Kanalska dolina*),

Province of Gorizia (Sln. *Gorica*), and a representative of the Slovenian minority in Italy have been members of the foundation's managing board. According to the director, Maša Klavora, this is a step toward real joint cross-border governance. Despite this and the facts that the Province of Gorizia was the formal lead partner of the first cross-border project (Sln. *Pot miru*, Ital. *Via di Pace*), that Italy initiated the idea for the UNESCO nomination, and that many actors at different levels are involved in carrying out the initiative, we argue that the crucial ideator and operator has been the locally rooted foundation with many (cross-border) horizontal and vertical networks. These networks made possible simultaneous cooperation at the local, regional, and national scales, and also at the supranational level through the commemorations of the centenary of the First World War and with activities aiming to add the Walk of Peace to the UNESCO list.

The motivations and aims of the initial program and reasons for establishing the foundations can be condensed into 1) renovation and preservation of First World War heritage, 2) establishing a study center, and 3) developing tourism to create new jobs.²² In two decades, the initiative has outgrown its original motives and goals. Today, as stated in several sources and by various actors, it promotes the coexistence and reconciliation of the formerly hostile nations and the identity of the area, develops tourism in the (cross-border) area along the Soča River, and represents Slovenia at supranational commemorations of the centenary of the First World War. It has become a recognized brand, not only in the Soča region and in Slovenia, but also at a European level and, through its inclusion in the UNESCO Tentative List of World Heritage, at a global level. As a “palimpsest of a landscape of conflict” (Saunders et al., 2013), it has managed to bring together different modalities of remembering (antagonistic, agonistic, and cosmopolitan; Kravanja, 2021). Despite its heterotopic nature, as detailed by Boštjan Kravanja (2021), the “landscape on the move brings hope across the border and stands for renewal through new modes of land management” (Kozorog, 2019: 73).

and the Jezik–Lingua Target Temporary Association, see http://2007-2013.ita-slo.eu/projects/projects_2007_2013/2015060310130521 (accessed January 8, 2021). The strategic project *Walk of Peace* was joined by the Veneto region and its regional development association (Ital. *GAL Venezia Oreintale*), by the Friuli Venezia Giulia regional tourism organization (Ital. *PromoTurismo FVG*) and its institute for cultural heritage (Ital. *ERPAC*), and the Municipality of Ragogna, see <http://new.ita-slo.eu/en/walkofpeace> (accessed January 8, 2021). The foundation also cooperated with the Provincial Museums of Gorizia: the Great War Museum.

²² Today it receives one-third of its funds from the government, one-third through commercial activities, and the remaining third through various European projects.

THE *BRDA/COLLIO/CUEI* TRANSBOUNDARY TERRACED CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

The idea of the joint cross-border candidature²³ for adding the cultural landscape of *Goriška brda / Collio*²⁴ to the UNESCO Tentative List was born “during a discussion” between the mayor of the Municipality of Brda, Franc Mužič, and the former mayor of Dolegna del Collio (Sln. *Dolenje*), Diego Bernardi, in 2014. The same year, the first activities and networking started between the representatives of the local communities of *Brda/Collio* along the Slovenian–Italian border. The proposal to include the agricultural landscape with innovative land-management systems between the Soča and Idrija/Judrio rivers on the UNESCO World Heritage List was formally proposed by the Municipality of Dolegna del Collio. A category of cultural landscapes, as a heritage defined by UNESCO in 1992, acknowledges the need to recognize and protect the “combined works of man and nature.”²⁵ According to the initiators of the proposal, the *Brda/Collio* region succeeded in preserving its uniqueness in rural architecture, traditions, and agricultural activities (fruit and wine production in particular), together with the mixing of languages.²⁶

The memorandum of understanding for the “project for the candidature for inclusion in the list of UNESCO World Cultural and Natural Heritage of the Italian/Slovenian Collio/Brda” of April 18, 2015 was signed by the Italian Province of Gorizia, the Italian municipalities of Dolegna del Collio, Cormòns (Sln. *Krmin*), Capriva del Friuli (Sln. *Koprivno*), Mossa (Sln. *Moš*), Farra d’Isonzo (Sln. *Fara*), San Lorenzo Isontino (Sln. *Šlovrenc*), San Floriano del Collio (Sln. *Števerjan*), and Gorizia (Sln. *Gorica*), the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region (Sln. *Furlanija Julijska krajina*), the Cassa di Risparmio di Gorizia Foundation, the Chamber of Commerce of the Industrial and Agricultural Industry of Gorizia, and the Slovenian Municipality of Brda. A meeting was then held with UNESCO representatives

²³ Because the candidature’s preparatory committee kept the details of the application confidential until submission, this article predominantly relies on observation and reflection on the project activities and outcomes. Communication with the head of the Slovenian part of the preparatory committee, Tina Novak Samec (the director of the Brda Institute for Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports, April 28 and October 22, 2020, February 12, 2021) and with Francesco Marangon (the head of the Italian part of the committee, University of Udine, February 22 and 23, 2021) allowed some insight into the preparatory processes and acquaintance with limited content of the candidature.

²⁴ The official title of the proposal, *Brda/Collio/Cuei Transboundary Terraced Cultural Landscape*, uses three names for the Gorizia Hills: *Brda* (as a common emic short form of the Slovenian geographical name *Goriška brda*, which we use in the rest of this article) on the Slovenian side of the border, and the Italian name *Collio* and the Friulian name *Cuei* for the Italian part of the territory.

²⁵ *The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/> (accessed March 16, 2021).

²⁶ Giovanni Vale. 2018. Collio and Brda, together towards UNESCO. *Osservatorio balcani e caucaso transeuropa*, October 18, available at: <https://www.balcanicaucaso.org/eng/Areas/Slovenia/Collio-and-Brda-together-towards-UNESCO-190508> (accessed January 21, 2021)

(Srebrnič, 2020: 21) of the Vineyard Landscape of Piedmont heritage site,²⁷ a similar cultural landscape that was added to the World Heritage List in 2014. After a few meetings to promote the project to the public and stakeholders, the memorandum was ratified in 2016. Although there was only one partner from Slovenia, it was agreed that the proposal would be officially presented to UNESCO by Slovenia. This decision was based on the rule that each country can submit only one element per year and that, having fewer UNESCO proposals, it would be easier for the initiative to gain national support in Slovenia. The activities were very intense at the local level. In addition to the Italian municipalities of Dolegna del Collio and Cormòns ratifying the memorandum and establishing a promotion committee, steps were also made toward a joint Italian–Slovenian technical and scientific committee, composed of various experts in charge of the submission preparation. The Italian side worked to engage local and regional administration (e.g., the Friuli Venezia Giulia region) and associations (e.g., the UNESCO Club of Gorizia) to gain national expert support of ICOMOS.²⁸ However, representatives of the Slovenian expert institution (i.e., the Nova Gorica regional unit of the the Slovenian Cultural Heritage Protection Institute²⁹) were not actively involved in the first steps of the preparation of the proposal.³⁰ Despite this lack of Slovenian expert recognition at the national level, already in 2016 the initiative was included in the section “Slovenian cultural monuments and sites awaiting inscription on the Tentative List” of the publication *Heritage in Slovenia and UNESCO* prepared by the Slovenian Cultural Heritage Protection Institute, ICOMOS Slovenia, and the Office of the Slovenian National Commission for UNESCO (see Stokin, 2016: 70–73).

We assume that the heritage campaign of the local stakeholders also had the political support of the Friuli Venezia Giulia region and the two countries. In 2017, the Slovenian foreign minister provided assurances that the Slovenian government would take all necessary

²⁷ For more about the UNESCO heritage site Vineyard Landscape of Piedmont: Langhe-Roero and Monferrato, see <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1390/documents/> (accessed April 9, 2021).

²⁸ Unesco: Nasce il comitato per la candidatura del Collio/Brda. *Il Friuli.it*, December 18, 2016, available at: <https://www.ilfriuli.it/articolo/cronaca/unesco-nasce-il-comitato-per-la-candidatura-del-collio-brda-12/161559> (accessed January 16, 2021); Unesco: Serracchiani, ok candidatura Collio ma valenza culturale. *Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia*, August 3rd, 2017, available at: <https://www.regione.fvg.it/rafvfg/comunicati/comunicato.act?sessionId=6DCFB0292888AAB70892D6F8057703FA?dir=&nm=20170803153729001> (accessed April 15, 2021).

²⁹ The Slovenian Cultural Heritage Protection Institute and the Slovenian Nature Conservation Institute follow the Strategy for the Protection of Cultural Heritage and Valuable Natural Features in the Republic of Slovenia (*Strategija za varstvo kulturne dediščine in naravnih vrednot v Republiki Sloveniji v skladu z mednarodnimi pravnimi instrumenti in aktivnostmi* no. 62000-3/2007/3, December 27, 2007, available at: <http://www.arhiv-spletisc.gov.si/>, accessed April 5, 2021) and are responsible “for the preparation and establishment of the national tentative list, for entries on the tentative list, for cooperation with other countries at the expert level, for cooperation among groups, and for supervision of heritage” (Stokin, 2016: 12).

³⁰ Mitja Marussig. 2015. Čezmejna Brda bi šla v Unesco. *Primorske novice*, November 30th, available at: <http://www.primorske.si/novice/goriska/cezmejna-brda-bi-sla-v-unesco> (accessed January 16, 2021).

measures to add the cultural landscape of *Brda/Collio* to the UNESCO Tentative List.³¹ As seen above, the issue was that the Ministry of Culture had not been formally included in the activities at the local and locally demarcated cross-border level. It was only in January 2019 that the Ministry of Culture and experts from the Slovenian Cultural Heritage Protection Institute reviewed material for the first time, with considerable time constraints. They considered it to be of a working nature and that it did not contain a sufficient measure of exceptional universal value required for the addition to the World Heritage List. The material prepared did not fully comply with the UNESCO norms for assessment of outstanding universal value. There was another objection to the listing because the formally allowed quota for submission of proposals from Slovenia for 2019 and 2020 had already been reached.³²

In 2019, the preliminary submission was delivered to the Italian National Commission for UNESCO (CNIU) and the Italian Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism (MIBAC), which recommended changing the name; instead of *Rural Landscape Collio (Ita) and Brda (Slo) between Isonzo and Judrio* they proposed *Brda/Collio/Cuei Transboundary Terraced Cultural Landscape* (Srebrnič, 2020: 22). The stakeholders agreed to develop the project as required and strengthen the substantive reflection on the concept of the proposal and justify its potential. The Slovenian Ministry of Culture offered administrative and professional assistance in the nomination process after a positive expert opinion.

The Italian Temporary Association of Purpose (ATS),³³ established in January 2020 to manage the various participating entities and the funds in a more coordinated way, and the Slovenian Municipality of Brda have been intensively working together since November 2020. The technical and scientific committee—which is composed of various experts led by Tina Novak Samec at the Brda Institute for Tourism, Culture, Youth, and Sports on the Slovenian side and by Francesco Marangon from the University of Udine on the Italian side—has been preparing the submission focused on terraces³⁴ as the main feature of the landscape in the region as advised by the CNIU and MIBAC (Srebrnič, 2020: 22). Only

³¹ As stated in the parliamentary question by Branko Grims on February 27, 2019. Available at: <https://www.sds.si/novica/mag-branko-grims-zaradi-neodziva-vlade-brda-ne-bodo-uvrscena-na-seznam-kulturne-dediscine> (accessed January 23, 2021).

³² See the response by the Slovenian government to the parliamentary question on adding the *Brda/Collio* cultural landscape to the UNESCO Tentative List, available at: https://www.sds.si/sites/default/files/documents/odgovori-na-posl-vpr/Grims_Slovenija%20v%20UNESCU_280319.pdf (accessed January 23, 2021).

³³ The ATS is led by the Friuli Venezia Giulia Chamber of Commerce and members of the Municipalities of Gorizia, Cormons, San Floriano del Collio, Mossa, Capriva del Friuli, Dolegna del Collio, Farra d'Isonzo, San Lorenzo Isontino, and Banca di Cividale and the Collio Wines Consortium, with support from the Friuli Venezia Giulia region.

³⁴ Tanja Gomiršek, a historian and a member of the committee, emphasizes that archaeological excavations have proven the existence of cultural terraces in *Brda* as early as in the third to fourth century AD (Gomiršek 2020: 1393–1394). The terraces were built manually following a specific process; see: Ambrož Sardoč. 2019. Z edinstveno krajino bi radi med elito. *Goriška*, April 12, available at: <https://www.primorske.si/2019/04/11/z-edinstveno-krajino-bi-radi-med-elito> (accessed January 18, 2020).

individual parts of the region would be included on the list, and so this would impose only minor restrictions on land use.

As stated by the head of the Italian part of the committee, Francesco Marangon, the primary purpose is to present “in one document the characteristics and to emphasize the particular features and uniqueness of the *Brda* and *Collio* terraces, even compared to other terraced agricultural arrangements in the world. All the insights will be used to protect the landscape, agricultural and technical heritage, to raise awareness and educate, to plan development accurately, to preserve settlements (urbanization), and to improve the quality of life of the inhabitants of the *Collio* and *Brda* territory.”³⁵ Therefore, a cross-border perspective³⁶ is central, although the habitual use of the designations “*Brda* and *Collio*” and not “*Brda/Collio/Cuei*” indicates that the unity of the landscape is not so internalized and familiarized as envisaged by its promoters, and that other interests might also be at stake.

THE COLLECTIONS, TRAIL, AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPE FROM A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

The three initiatives described, which are closely involved in heritage-making processes along the Slovenian–Italian border, differ significantly from each other at multiple levels. In the following comparative analysis, we discuss the actors and stakeholders involved, the objectives, longevity, and impact of each, and the cross-border perspective and scale.

ACTORS

The ZBORZBIRK initiative combined the Slovenian and Italian experts’ incentives with local collectors’ and stakeholders’ wishes. The Interreg project was designed according to the program’s rules and was implemented by two academic institutions, one cultural and educational institution, two museums, and six local communities.

The initial idea of the Walk of Peace was put forward by a non-local, but it was embraced by local enthusiasts, who were aware of the heritage potential of the First World War and Isonzo Front long before. In addition to local enthusiasts, the support of politicians and researchers at the national level was crucial for establishing the Walks of Peace in the Soča Region Foundation and the program for developing the heritage of the Isonzo Front. The foundation gained government financial support for carrying out the planned program’s activities, and it also became active in cross-border and transnational cooperation programs.

³⁵ Personal correspondence with Francesco Marangon, February 23, 2021.

³⁶ As reported in the media (Unesco, appello per la candidatura Brda/Collio, available at: <https://www.ilfriuli.it/articolo/politica/-unesco-appello-per-la-candidatura-brdacollio-/3/234171>, accessed January 21, 2021), these cross-border initiatives were recently stimulated by the success of the joint candidature of Nova Gorica with Gorizia for the European Capital of Culture.

The initiators of the *Brda/Collio* initiative were the mayors of neighboring local communities. Local administrations gained the support of local experts and the UNESCO clubs of the Friuli Venezia Giulia region. The Slovenian heritage expert institutions responsible for addition to the UNESCO list became involved in the nomination process only later.

AIMS

Although all three initiatives are embedded in the heritage discourse, their official and publicly communicated objectives somehow differ. In the ZBORZBIRK project, the initial aims of those involved ranged from folklore documentation and supporting grassroots collecting practices to developing cultural tourism and investments in infrastructure. The project results partially fulfilled all the initial expectations by providing a collection network with possible further potential.

The Walk of Peace initiative has sought to preserve and conserve various remnants of the Isonzo Front and to link their tourism development with synergies generated by the centenary of the First World War. The acquisition of heritage labels, in particular inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage List and on the Council of Europe Cultural Routes, was viewed as a suitable means to achieve this.

In the case of the Walk of Peace, the long-term objectives are somehow in line with the purpose of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972); namely, the active and professional protection of cultural and natural heritage. In contrast, in the case of the *Brda/Collio* endeavors, the aim would primarily be promotional³⁷ because the UNESCO World Heritage emblem is of great importance in tourism. The aspired inclusion on the prestigious UNESCO list would raise the profile of the region and have a decisive impact on the cross-border region's joint branding and development of cultural tourism.

LONGEVITY AND IMPACT

After the formal conclusion of the three-year Interreg project, the ZBORZBIRK network of collections remained vital in the range of the project partners' and stakeholders' ordinary activities. Some collections were recognized as having significant tourism potential and were included in local tourism. Cross-border cooperation resulted in some further partnerships, collaboration, and joint activities in heritage. As with many projects co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, it was difficult to ensure long-term sustainability. Therefore, not many substantial long-term impacts on borderlands were identified.

³⁷ Ambrož Sardoč. 2019. Z edinstveno krajino bi radi med elito. *Goriška*, April 12. <https://www.pri-morske.si/2019/04/11/z-edinstveno-krajino-bi-radi-med-elito> (accessed February 10, 2021).

The Walk of Peace initiative gradually raised its profile at the local, national, and supranational levels, expanded its territorial coverage, and expanded its scope by taking on new heritage activities. This included registering the heritage of the Isonzo Front on other European heritage lists, such as Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe and the European Heritage Label for Holy Spirit Memorial Church in Javorca at the European Commission (Klavora, 2016: 136).³⁸ The Walk of Peace is slowly becoming a brand that is recognized among locals and visitors, and, like other such sites and places of remembrance (cf. Balogh, 2019: 30), it is also a setting for various cultural exchange events and high-level political meetings.

On the other hand, the idea of adding the cross-border *Brda/Collio* cultural landscape to the UNESCO World Heritage List did not have a solid organizational backup outside this area, which led to a stalemate and a reformulation of the nomination process. Therefore, the negligible impact to date and the initiative's longevity will depend on the success of the nomination process and inclusion in wider institutional networks.

THE CROSS-BORDER PERSPECTIVE

The cross-border perspective, which already opened during the accession negotiations and intensified after Slovenia's accession to the EU, has been implemented differently and at different stages of the initiatives presented above.

ZBORZBIRK was based on both sides of the border, and a cross-border perspective was integrated into the Interreg project proposal, leading to a subsequent three-year heritage project. On the other hand, it was only later, as part of two Interreg projects, that the Walk of Peace developed its cross-border (and recently also transnational) dimension following the example of similar cross-border heritage routes and trails that are "renowned for their ability to bring about dialogue and interaction" (Balogh, 2019: 32). The cross-border cooperation introduced a supranational perspective, recognized by UNESCO and awarded by the Council of Europe.

The ZBORZBIRK and Walk of Peace heritage initiatives received EU funds from the Slovenian–Italian cross-border cooperation program, which had an important influence on employment and implementing a cross-border perspective. In contrast, the *Brda/Collio* cultural landscape initiative did not receive any direct support from the EU.³⁹

³⁸ The listing of the church was achieved by the Tolmin Museum, Municipality of Tolmin, Soča Valley Tourist Board, Ministry of Culture, and Slovenian Cultural Heritage Protection Institute.

³⁹ Here we do not take into consideration several other cross-border Interreg projects between the Municipality of Brda and some other actors from both sides of the border that, among other things, also have an impact on the cultural and terraced landscape. Examples include TRANSLAND 2007: Sustainable and Integrated Territorial Development of the Italian–Slovenian Cross-Border Area (2005–2007), VALORVINO: Enhancement of Wine as a Quality Product of the Cross-Border Area (2005–2007), UE-LI-JE: Olive Trees in the History, Landscape, and Economy of the Brda Area and

The *Brdal/Collio* initiative emphasizes a region's unity after separation caused by a border regime after the Second World War. The cross-border perspective is therefore central but is questioned by some stakeholders,⁴⁰ who emphasize that the UNESCO World Heritage List candidacy should not be the starting point, but instead the arrival of a real means of cross-border cooperation and innovative management of the territory. An important obstacle to the transboundary UNESCO candidacy is its dependence on one state party's central governmental institutions when submitting a bilateral proposal.

SCALE

The concept of geographical scale indicates social and spatial organization within a bounded geographical area, usually labeled as size or level. In addition to this technical definition, there are more nuanced elaborations, such as scale as a hierarchy, instrument of power, process, or network (Lähdesmäki, Thomas, Zhu, 2019: 4–8).

The ZBORZBIRK network of collections was a cross-border project co-funded by European and national funds of Italy and Slovenia. Individual grassroots collecting practices and municipal heritage collections from both sides of the border were included in the cross-border network. The initiative's span remained mostly locally bounded, even though two academic institutions outside this microregion were heavily involved.

On the other hand, the Walk of Peace has traversed a path from a local initiative—first in the Upper Soča region and then in the entire (cross-border) Soča region from the Alps to the Karst Plateau and the Adriatic—of some (farsighted) enthusiasts to a nationally recognized program supported by the Slovenian government and inclusion on the UNESCO Tentative List in 2016. Although it refers in the nomination to the heritage of humanity by instrumentalizing the multinational nature of the Isonzo Front, actively participating in the wider European and transnational commemoration of the First World War centenary, and even including an Italian representative on the management board, it remains nationally and locally anchored. Thus, the actors have managed to achieve multilevel instrumentalization of the Isonzo Front and have tried to consider and reconcile different perspectives.

Cooperation in the *Brdal/Collio* heritage initiative is based on the joint endeavors of municipalities on both sides of the Italian–Slovenian border. In Italy, various regional administrations, heritage institutions, and clubs (e.g., UNESCO clubs and ICOMOS Northern Italy) of the Friuli Venezia Giulia region were involved, whereas in Slovenia the regional branch of the Slovenian Cultural Heritage Protection Institute was not actively

on the Hills of Eastern Friuli: Conservation and Development (2006–2007), UE-LI-JE II Olive Oil: A Symbol of Quality in the Cross-Border Area (2011–2015), and so on.

⁴⁰ For example, Facebook's Progetto per Cormons, available at: https://www.facebook.com/progettopercormons/?hc_ref=ARQGyjCfKWO_SlOkYKK0i4OJZKV-tvPqOQ45RmuFSdGISSO O6zcnkoXuJuuxgr6cC0A&fref=nf&__tn__=kC-R (accessed December 24, 2019).

involved until recently. The initiative sought political support but did not have sufficient backing from authorized heritage administration and expert institutions at the national level until 2019.

CONCLUSIONS

Former UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova stated that transboundary projects truly enhance the founding principles of the World Heritage Convention, which was designed to build peace through cultural cooperation and foster collective responsibility for shared heritage.⁴¹

Nevertheless, all three of the cross-border initiatives described, which identify and refer to this “common heritage,”⁴² are not equally consolidated—by which we mean, above all, robustness, longevity, and (general) recognition.

This recognition is not guaranteed by the aim and ambition of the project, as is shown by the *Brda/Collio* cultural/terraced landscape example: the ambition to list it on the UNESCO World Heritage List did not ensure the recognition of its heritage potentials by the heritage institutions responsible for additions to the UNESCO list, nor did it guarantee a better profile and approval among the general public at the national level (not to mention the supranational level). Compared to the cultural landscape, collections and remnants of the First World War were much more easily perceived as heritage. The reason lies in the institutionalization and expert authorization of collecting as an authorized heritage(-making) practice, as well as in the materiality and tangibility of collected objects and remnants. Partially, it is also due to the events at the centenary of the First World War, which popularized and enhanced the profile of the remnants of the Isonzo Front.

Nor is the cross-border heritage initiative’s longevity ensured by EU funding for cross-border cooperation, as is proven by the case study of the short-lived network of collections. In a “Europe of regions,” regions are envisaged and promoted not only as institutional structures, but also as strategic formations in planning and development agendas, and cross-border regionalization has become a laboratory to test the integration process.

By forging two (or more) border areas of different states, cross-border cooperation programmes with regional and local actors (institutional and non-institutional; public and private) engage in development strategies where the national states are not the main political space or agency. (Lois, 2019: 83)

⁴¹ *Transboundary Cooperation for Conservation of World Heritage: A Global View. Expert Meeting 3–4 June 2019 Maun, Botswana*, available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/> (accessed March 19, 2021).

⁴² On “shared” and “common” heritage in UNESCO discourse, see Debarbieux et al., 2021.

On the other hand, as shown by the case studies presented by Tatiana Bajuk Senčar (2019), the primary motivation for securing EU funding is often to compensate for the lack of financial resources from national budgets, which in this case is defined according to non-inclusion in authorized heritage programs financed at the national level.⁴³

The main challenge to the similarity and complementarity of collecting practices, identified by the ZBORZBIRK project on both sides of the border, was not language (and other cultural) differences, but establishing a real (local) cross-border joint structure that will incorporate two different national or regional administrations, legislations, and funding systems. The EU's formal solution to such problems is the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), which was established for Italian–Slovenian border areas in 2010 by the municipalities of Gorizia (Italy), and Nova Gorica and Šempeter-Vrtojba (Slovenia)⁴⁴ and is substantially supported through various (cross-border) instruments.⁴⁵ However, as the *Brda/Collio* initiative to nominate a (terraced) cultural landscape for the UNESCO list shows, even in the case of successful administrative cross-border cooperation, transboundary heritage-making is reduced to (only possibly expert) representatives of local communities employed or engaged by the local administration. They (re)present views and understandings of cultural heritage authorized by local administrations. Every local community has its locally authorized heritage discourse and its representatives with symbolic and social capital, gained by heritage brokerage. As determined by Mateja Habinc in the Pivka (Ital. *San Pietro del Carso*) region, they are subordinated to the expert or political understanding of heritage and rarely create new, alternative forms of heritage(-making) (Habinc, 2020: 79).⁴⁶ Because this expert and political understanding is conceptualized at the (inter)national level, it is actually through locally authorized heritage brokers that (inter)national heritage policy is downscaled.

Our scrutiny also shows the overlap between heritage and tourism brands. Much has been said about the UNESCO heritage lists and tourism promotion (cf. Winter, 2010); these are universally acknowledged as major motives for inclusion because countries nominate cultural and natural heritage sites and traditional practices for the UNESCO lists to attract

⁴³ EU cross-border cooperation funding programs are meant to encourage initiatives that transcend national boundaries, but some specialists in the anthropology of EU borders “argue that existing bordering (and debordering) practices have resulted in the proliferation of borders as opposed to their reduction” (Donnan, Wilson 2003; Green, 2013, cited in Bajuk Senčar, 2019: 215).

⁴⁴ The Convention on the Establishment of the EGTC was signed by the mayors of the three founding municipalities on February 19, 2010, and it was approved by the Slovenian government the same year and by the Italian government a year later. The EGTC was registered as a legal entity on September 15, 2011. See <https://euro-go.eu/en/chi-siamo/storia-del-territorio-e-del-gect/> (accessed April 6, 2021).

⁴⁵ It leads predominantly large infrastructural projects, but lately it has also been in charge of the coordination of the Bid Book for the European Capital of Culture in 2025 by Nova Gorica with Gorizia. See <https://www.go2025.eu/> (accessed April 6, 2021).

⁴⁶ As David Harvey warns, “we should understand the spatialized geometries of power rather than be blinded by any warming glow of localness” (Harvey, 2015: 589).

tourists (cf. Tschofen, 2007; Di Giovine, 2009; Halfstein, 2018). Heritage and tourism are collaborative, as Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998: 15) has suggested: “heritage converting locations into destinations and tourism making them economically viable as exhibits of themselves.” These ambitions are evident from the *Brda/Collio* and Walk of Peace case study. Nevertheless, UNESCO World Heritage is primarily a heritage brand (Di Giovine, 2015: 93)—in fact, a heritage brand “through which it is possible to influence national and international heritage policy,” as highlighted by Kravanja (2018a: 118) for the heritage of the Isonzo Front. On the other hand, one can also see that current place branding tactics employ several resources at hand. This anticipation of contradictory futures is, for example, evident from the projects of the Municipality of Brda, which is simultaneously striving to build a new spa resort⁴⁷ that will substantially alter the landscape’s dominant features and to achieve recognition and preservation of its heritage value.

However, heritage is not only employed as an economic resource, but also as a redoubtable resource for emancipation, empowerment, social cohesion, devolution, and scalar politics (see, e.g., Hafstein, 2004; Adell et al., 2015; Harvey, 2015).

Based on the case study of the Walk of Peace, we assume that the number and sectoral diversity of mobilized stakeholders at the local level, as well as complementary recognition and support at the national level, are a guarantee for the longevity and robustness of the heritage initiative. In the long-term heritage-making perspective, EU projects funded through European transnational cooperation are short-lived if they are not embedded in long-term national strategies. At the same time, supranational mechanisms, such as the European Heritage Label⁴⁸ and the UNESCO lists, are heritage promoters, which cannot be realized without the support of the (national) state parties. Despite several cross-border projects and supranational ambitions, key long-term heritage actions are still carried out within the national framework.

The comparison showed that locally born heritage initiatives, supported by cross-border cooperation and driven by supranational ambitions, are successful (in the sense of long-term robustness) only in the case of national support. It is national support that makes possible regular (co)funding, access to EU funds, and, as in the case of the UNESCO state parties, addition to its lists. The lack of recognition as nationally significant cultural heritage reduces the possibility of overcoming bureaucratic obstacles. It was precisely the dilemma in identifying the *Brda/Collio* landscape as a cultural heritage site at the national level—be it Italian or Slovenian—that was, as the nomination process so far suggests, the decisive factor that stifled the initial momentum of the *Brda/Collio* mayors. The rhetoric of a “Europe of the Regions” and the instruments of European Territorial Cooperation that

⁴⁷ See the presentation of the project on the municipality’s website, available at: https://www.obcina-brda.si/obcina_brda/novice/2020011017000888/ (accessed April 6, 2021).

⁴⁸ As determined by Lähdesmäki and Mäkinen (2020: 46), the reading and interpretation of some of the most symbolic sites awarded the European Heritage label is still to a very large extent a national reading, even though they aim at building European communality and feeling of belonging.

frame cross-border projects turned out to be more or less transient inasmuch as they are not embedded in national strategies, as occurred with the network of collections.

Currently the Walk of Peace initiative seems to be the most vital, not only in terms of the number of stakeholders and sectors involved, but also in terms of multi-level balancing, or rather in terms of scaling up the local initiative to the national level and scaling down and embedding the rhetoric of peace and multinational character of the Isonzo Front at the local level. These intelligent and sensitive understandings of scalar politics, through which power geometries operate (Harvey, 2015; Harvey, Mozaffari, 2019), or multi-scalarity, mean that different layers of heritage meanings are activated in certain discourses, policies, and practices at different scales. They can thus be used to foster different scalar identities or feelings of belonging to communities organized at different scales (Lähdesmäki, Thomas, Zhu, 2019: 3).

The Walk of Peace trail has already outgrown the initial phase and has become, as evidenced by the eponymous foundation, an institution for “contemporary pragmatic heritage management, coordinated with national and wider policies, with experts, with tourism and economic use of heritage, as well as with what can be expected from ‘difficult’ heritage and general heritage futures” (Kravanja, 2018a: 107). Compared to the centrality of the cross-border perspective of the EU project on the network of collections and local municipalities’ nomination, the Walk of Peace initiative is more far-sighted and, in its balancing of scales and amalgamation of enthusiasm and pragmatism, the cross-border dimension seems quite ephemeral.

Therefore, we can confirm the introductory statement that cross-border heritage initiatives do not make such a significant contribution to symbolic debordering as envisaged by the EU’s (macro)regional strategies and territorial cooperation programs and that—despite global cultural flows, cultural hybridity and movements of people, numerous cross-border initiatives, and constant questioning of consensual heritage narratives—heritage might be initiated and operationalized at local and cross-border levels. However, in order to be effective in the long term, it also has to be conceived at the national level. The national framework functions as the most common scalar level in promoting communal meanings of heritage (Graham, Ashworth, Tunbridge, 2000: 259). Thus, the national framework has played (and still commonly plays) a central role in dominant heritage discourses and the management of heritage (Lähdesmäki, Thomas, Zhu, 2019: 10). Heritage discourses and the management of heritage, which are predominantly arranged along a hierarchy of spatial scales, reveal that scale is not just a relational construct but also an instrument of power, making possible or even (re)producing uneven power relations. Top-down administrative systems “have been established to reinforce heritage governance at ‘lower’ scales” (ibid.: 6). International heritage policies are still enacted and put into practice by countries and their national heritage actors at the national level (Bendix, Eggert, Peselmann, 2012). As a result, the processes of heritage-making are influenced and manipulated by discourses produced at the “higher” scales of power. The local heritage actors are those that in practice implement

these processes. However, in the initiatives described above, we have also evidenced a significant up-scaling or, rather, a constant movement from local to regional, cross-border, national, and transnational, and back to local; for example, the Walk of Peace initiative becoming the main national and transnational setting at the centenary of the first World War. In this regard, as clearly stated in all of the heritage initiatives described above, cross-border cooperation presents opportunities for supranational alliances and, as is most apparent from the *Brdra/Collio* example, empowers local actors for up-scaling its influence at the national level. Heritage(-making) productively traverses the scales; whereas the network of collections was a balanced implementation of cross-border heritage work in the EU project framework, the other two initiatives are more ambitious. So far, the Walk of Peace has shown artful maneuvering between private and public, inclusive amalgamation of diverse sectors (tourism, research, the economy, culture, and heritage preservation), pragmatic balancing between (transnational, cross-border, and regional) enlargement and integration into the local environment, and successful instrumentalization of diverse scales. In the case of the *Brdra/Collio* initiative for the terraced cultural landscape, time will reveal its eventual potential for more open-ended, inclusive, and progressive (cross-border) heritage-making.

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ZBIRKE, POTI IN KULTURNE KRAJINE: SLOVENSKO-ITALIJANSKE ČEZMEJNE DEDIŠČINSKE POBUDE

V prispevku so na podlagi raznovrstnega gradiva, etnografije obmejnih območij in aktivnega sodelovanja predstavljene tri študije primerov slovensko-italijanskih čezmejnih dediščinskih pobud: mreža zbirk, pot, ki povezuje ostaline in spomenike prve svetovne vojne, in terasirana kulturna (po)krajina.

Čezmejni projekt ZBORZBIRK je povezal 34 zbirk z italijansko-slovenskega obmejnega območja v mrežo, ki je združila zbiralce, lokalne skupnosti in strokovnjake različnih ved. Pot miru povezuje zapuščino in spomenike soške fronte v Sloveniji in Italiji; Fundacija Poti miru v Posočju jo je v sodelovanju s partnerji na različnih ravneh oblikovala v okviru več (nad) nacionalnih, čezmejnih in lokalnih projektov ter pripravila predlog nominacije za Unescov seznam svetovne dediščine. Občine ob slovensko-italijanski meji na območju Goriških brd si prav tako prizadevajo za predložitev nominacije kulturne (po)krajine na Unescov seznam svetovne dediščine.

V članku so predstavljena presečišča in razlike med obravnavanimi dediščinskimi pobudami, in sicer glede na akterje, cilje, dolgoživost in vpliv opravljenih aktivnosti, njihov čezmejni značaj in raven oz. doseg.

Interregov projekt ZBORZBIRK so izvajali različni partnerji na obeh straneh meje, in sicer dve akademski ustanovi, kulturno-izobraževalna ustanova, dva muzeja in šest lokalnih skupnosti. Projekt Pot miru, za katerega so izhodiščno idejo dobili pri primerljivih pobudah v soseščini, je v Posočju zasnovalo več lokalnih pobudnikov, z vsestransko podporo politike in strokovnjakov na nacionalni ravni pa ga je z različnimi projekti in programi ter v sodelovanju s številnimi partnerji na različnih ravneh na obeh straneh meje uresničila Ustanova Fundacija Poti miru v Posočju. Pobudniki pobude vpisa briške (po)krajine na Unescov seznam svetovne dediščine so bili briški župani, ki so pridobili podporo lokalnih strokovnjakov, deželne vlade Furlanije Julijske krajine in tamkajšnjih Unescovih klubov. Slovenske dediščinske ustanove na nacionalni ravni, odgovorne za pripravo in predložitev, so se v postopek vključile šele pozneje.

Čeprav so vse tri pobude del širših dediščinskih procesov, se njihovi primarni cilji razlikujejo. Pri projektu ZBORZBIRK so sledili interesom različnih partnerjev, od dokumentacije folklorne, popisa zbirk in predmetov, do podpore zbirateljem ter razvoja kulturnega turizma. V projektu Pot miru so želeli ohraniti ostaline soške fronte in spomenike prve svetovne vojne kot značilen dediščinski in turistični produkt, namenjen nadnacionalnemu povezovanju in promociji ideje

miru. Prizadevanje briških občin za vpis na Unescov seznam svetovne dediščine pa motivira turistična promocija čezmejnega območja.

Vse tri dediščinske pobude so čezmejne, vendar v različni meri. ZBORZBIRK so zasnovali partnerji z obeh strani meje, čezmejna perspektiva je bila sestavni del projektne predloga in izvedbe. Pot miru je šele v okviru projektov Interreg dosegla čezmejno (in v zadnjem času tudi nadnacionalno) razsežnost. Medtem ko sta omenjeni pobudi prejeli finančna sredstva iz evropskega programa čezmejnega sodelovanja med Italijo in Slovenijo, jih briška prizadevanja za vpis kulturne krajine na Unescov seznam (zaenkrat) še niso bila deležna. In to kljub temu, da dosledno poudarjajo pokrajinsko enotnost območja, ne glede na razmejitve po 2. svetovni vojni. Prav tako do nedavnega niso bila priznana na nacionalni ravni, kar je nekoliko ustavilo začetni zagon pri promociji predloga čezmejne nominacije.

Pobude se razlikujejo tudi po obsegu in ravni vpetih akterjev. Mreža zbirk je kljub čezmejnosti ter večravninskosti partnerjev ostala lokalno omejena pobuda. Na drugi strani pa je Pot miru prerasla lokalne okvire, postala (čezmejna) regionalno in nacionalno poznana znamka, z vključitvijo na Unescov poskusni seznam svetovne dediščine in pridobitvijo znaka evropske kulturne dediščine pa tudi nadnacionalno. Medtem ko so pobudo po graditvi in promociji skupne briške terasaste pokrajine na italijanski strani podprli na več ravneh in v različnih ustanovah, so do nje na slovenski strani strokovne ustanove in upravni organi na nacionalni ravni (zaenkrat) zadržani.

V sklepu avtorici ugotavljata, da opisane pobude načelno sledijo evropskemu vodilu k premoščanju in zabrisovanju nacionalnih mej, za dolgoživost in prebojnost pa sta še vedno najpomembnejša priznanje in podpora na državni ravni.

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