

# Ivan Smiljanić, Matija Zorn, Peter Mikša: SPOMENIKI V FUNKCIJI DRŽAVNE IDEOLOGIJE IN POENOTENJA TERITORIJA: PRIMER SPOMENIKOV VLADARSKE DRUŽINE KARAĐORĐEVIĆ NA SLOVENSKEM

## MONUMENTS IN THE FUNCTION OF STATE IDEOLOGY AND UNIFICATION OF TERRITORY: THE CASE OF MONUMENTS TO THE RULING FAMILY OF KARAĐORĐEVIĆ IN SLOVENIA

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RAZPRAVA

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PROJEKT

PROJECT

DELAVNICA

WORKSHOP

NATEČAJ

COMPETITION

PREDSTAVITEV

PRESENTATION

DIPLOMA

MASTER THESIS

### IZVLEČEK

Spomeniki vladarjem so skupaj z državnimi prazniki, praznovanji rojstnih dni vladajoče družine, to namenskih šolskih proslav ter različnega propagandnega gradiva eden od gradnikov utrjevanja oblasti vladajoče družine. V prispevku so predstavljeni spomeniki, ki so bili postavljeni pripadnikom dinastije Karađorđević na današnjem slovenskem ozemlju v obdobju Kraljevine Srbov, Hrvatov in Slovencev (1918–1929) ter Kraljevine Jugoslavije (1929–1941). Spomeniki so bili postavljeni kot zahvala kraljevi družini, da je osvobodila slovenski narod, hkrati pa so poveljevali vladajočo dinastijo in simbolizirali pripadnost jugoslavizmu. Tovrstnih spomenikov sta bila deležna kralj Peter I. in njegov sin Aleksander I. Lokacije spomenikov so bile pazljivo izbrane in so se nahajale v centrih naselij ali na simbolno pomembnejših krajih. Razen manjših ostankov se spomeniki niso ohranili.

### KLJUČNE BESEDE

spomeniki, ideologija, kralj Aleksander I, kralj Peter I, Dravska banovina, Kraljevina Jugoslavija

### ABSTRACT

Monuments to rulers are, like national holidays, celebrations of the ruling family's birthdays, school observances, and various printed, mass-distributed propaganda material, one of the building blocks of power consolidation of the ruling family, and a way of legitimization. This paper presents this phenomenon via public sculptural monuments that were erected to members of the Karađorđević dynasty in the present-day Slovenian territory during the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenians, and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. A review of the material reveals that such monuments were erected only to King Peter I and his son Alexander I, who embodied the military power of the common state on one hand, and the guarantee of a just rule in an age of peace on the other. Commemorative monuments were usually designed relatively modestly, in the form of busts on pedestals, with some extravagant exceptions such as an obelisk, full-figure statue, and an equestrian statue. The locations were carefully selected, usually in town centers or symbolically significant places - primarily by the western and northern border. With the exception of a few fragments, none of the described monuments survived.

### KEY-WORDS

monuments, ideology, King Alexander I, King Peter I, Karađorđević dynasty, Drava Banovina, Kingdom of Yugoslavia

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Erecting monuments to rulers is a practice established centuries before national consciousness was developed, and before national states were formed in the 19th century. But it was that period that saw the rise of a new, previously unknown function: monuments to rulers became the symbols of unity and strength of a certain nation. Monuments to rulers helped, like national holidays, celebrations of the ruling family's birthdays, school observances, and various printed, mass-distributed propaganda material, consolidate the power of the ruling family (Zorn, 1997; Smiljanić, 2019). Public monuments, therefore, had (and still have) an important role in forming collective memory, solidifying the state ideology and territorial unity (Mikša, 2018). *"They are not merely places of worship of individuals, events, and ideas, but also an influential visual instrument in the creation of (new) societies."* (Makuljević and Murovec, 2013, p.6). Monarchal monuments were thus of great dimensions, designed by most prominent domestic artists, and built from the most quality materials. Even the more modest monuments in smaller towns were given the most distinguished locations. Monarchal monuments were prestige, which was evident in their design, spatial placement, and landscaping. Despite that, *"dynastic monuments [...] saw different formal modernisms being repelled at the idea of authority and monarchy, in any way that was symbolized"* (Čopić, 1976, p.232).

The article discusses a group of monuments erected to the members of the Karađorđević dynasty in the territory of present-day Slovenia during the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenians (1918–1929) and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1929–1941). Since the dynasty never ruled the said territory prior to 1918, the monuments served as one of the propaganda approaches to the legitimization of the new rulers of the new Yugoslav state. The majority was dedicated to King Peter I. (ruled between 1918 and 1921), and his son King Alexander I. (ruled between 1921 and 1934).

The key leitmotifs of the majority of Yugoslav monarchal statues were: (1) military power, personified by both kings, especially by Peter I., as a representation of tribulations during the both Balkan Wars and World War I; and (2) the rule of law and justice during the period of peace, with the king being the supreme legislator and the protector of the rule of law (Manojlović Pintar, 2014, p.263–265).

Table 1: Monuments dedicated to kings Peter I. and Alexander I. in Drava Banovina.

King Peter I.	Location	Date of unveiling	Sculptor
Statue	Kranj, Park Zvezda	August 1, 1926	Tine Kos
Equestrian	Ljubljana, town hall stairs	September 6, 1931	Lojze Dolinar
King Alexander I.	Location	Date of reveal	Sculptor
Bust statue	Domžale, the central intersection	June 8, 1924	Tine Kos
Bust statue	Ljubljana, Tobačna factory	June 16, 1935	Iva Despić Simonović
Waist statue	Ribnica, Sokol Society hall	July 12, 1936	Franc Repič
Bust statue	Gornji Grad, central park	July 19, 1936	Ivan Sajevic
Bust statue	Jesenice, People's School	October 11, 1936	Peter Loboda
Monument	Rakek, railway station	October 17, 1937	Ivan Sajevic
Bust Statue	Sveti Jurij ob Ščavnici, main square school	May 15, 1938	Nikolaj Pirnat
Bust statue	Sveta Trojica v Slovenskih Goricah, town center	June 19, 1938	Lojze Dolinar
Monument	Trbovlje, Sokol Society hall	June 18, 1939	Franc Repič
Waist statue	Sevnica, railway station park	December 1, 1939	Nikolaj Pirnat
Equestrian statue	Ljubljana, Park Zvezda	September 6, 1940	Lojze Dolinar
Bust statue	Zagorje ob Savi, Sokol Society hall	September 8, 1940	Boris Kalin

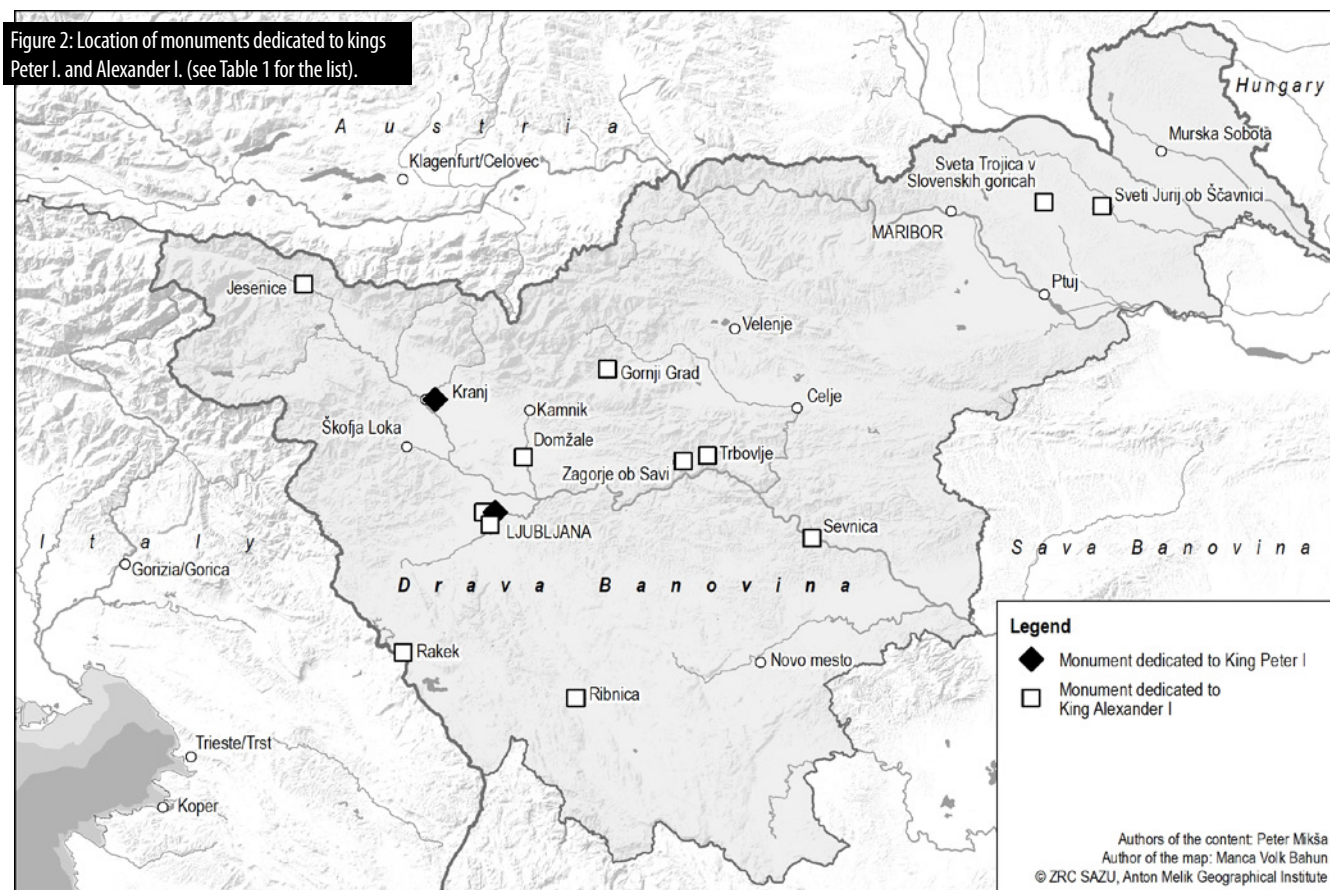
Figure 1: The Slovene newspapers regularly informed readers about the erection of monuments. In the figure is the cover page of the newspaper Slovenec from September 13, 1931 on the erection of a monument to King Peter I. in Ljubljana.



Hundreds of monuments were erected during the interwar period to the members of the Karađorđević dynasty (Figure 1). The state kept an eye on their quality since the committees in charge greenlit the applications to erect monuments that came from local communities after thorough reviews and correctly executed tenders. If the plans did not meet certain artistic standards, the initiative was denied, while already mounted low-quality monuments were removed from the public spaces (Manojlović Pintar, 2014, p.290). There is no complete list of all monuments dedicated to the Karađorđević dynasty on the



Figure 2: Location of monuments dedicated to kings Peter I. and Alexander I. (see Table 1 for the list).



Slovenian territory. Statues of the royal family adorned state headquarters and economic institutions; their names ended up in documents immured in foundation stones of important new buildings; and after the death of King Alexander I., countless memorial lime trees were planted, especially in smaller towns (Smiljanić, 2019). There was an abundance of memorial plaques, popular in smaller towns due to their inexpensiveness, while a number of free-standing sculptures were created to both kings (Table 1 and Figure 2).

## 2. MONUMENTS

### 2.1 Domžale

The first documented public sculpture dedicated to a Yugoslav king was unveiled on June 8, 1924, in Domžale, namely a stone bust of King Alexander I., standing on a granite base with an inscribed letter A. It was carved by the sculptor Tine Kos. It was a result of a private initiative by Andrej Slokar, the doyen of the Domžale charter of the Sokol Society (Spomenik kralja ..., 1924). The location of the statue was thus Slokar's garden, situated prominently by the central intersection. The importance of the location was also implied by the bust of Emperor Franz Joseph I. that had stood there until the collapse of Austria-Hungary. Although the memorial context of the Domžale central intersection fundamentally changed in the span of a couple of years, the location remained. King Alexander himself visited the monument on the anniversary of unveiling. *„He stopped in front of the monument and observed his own image. Before he left, he gave Slokar's wife a carnation.“* (Spomeniki Viteškega ..., 1940, p.5). After the assassination in Marseilles, commemorative ceremonies took place at the statue, while a memorial plaque was revealed on October 10, 1937, to remind people of the King's violent death (Spomeniki Viteškega ..., 1940).

### 2.2 Kranj

The first larger monument to King Peter I. on the Slovenian territory was erected in the former Park Zvezda located between the high school and the People's Hall in Kranj. It was also designed by Tine Kos, but it was on a larger scale than the bust in Domžale. The obelisk (one of the oldest monument designs, devised to tower over its environment) from reinforced concrete was nine meters tall with an oval base decorated by a bronze statue of a kneeling young man (according to some explanations, it symbolized freedom/liberation or gratitude; Globočnik, 2011, p.114), a bronze medallion carrying Peter's profile, and a marble eagle on top of the obelisk. It was unveiled on August 1, 1926, with about 15,000 visitors - including King Alexander I. and Queen Mary (Veličastna ..., 1926). Interestingly enough, the sculptor was ignored during the reveal: *„He received an ordinary invitation to the event as if he had to do with the monument as much as any other man. Furthermore, Mr. Kos was even barred from visiting the ceremonial space. He had to elbow through the crowd, or better: he had to infiltrate! The King did inquire about him, but Mr. Kos was never formally introduced to him!“* (Še nekaj ..., 1926, p.4).

The monument in Kranj was erected thanks to the municipal leadership, which was liberal at the time, and therefore sympathetic to the Yugoslav unitarism and the royal family. By founding the first monument to the late King on the Slovenian territory, they wanted to express their loyalty and the progressiveness of the capital of Gorenjska. The location itself reflected that position: Park Zvezda, later named after the heir to the throne Peter II., was the focal point of the newly built part of the town. It evolved outside the medieval town center and symbolized the rise and progress of the freshly industrialized town with its modernistic new buildings. The statue was framed by the People's Hall, the headquarters to many liberal societies of Kranj, which was designed by Ivan Vurnik. The monument was fashio-

ned to correspond with the architecture of the People's Hall, and the symbolic figures that were planned to be put on its façade (Globočnik, 2011).

### 2.3 Ljubljana

Six years later, a monument to King Peter I. rose in Ljubljana (Figures 3 and 4; Globočnik, 2014; Mikša, 2018). The project was initiated by the Society of reservist officers a few months after the unveiling in Kranj, but there was no mass response: the press criticized the lukewarm reaction and excuses, *„that it is not the right time for such things, that we're in the middle of recession, that unemployment rate is rising, that money shortage can be felt everywhere, etc.“* (Akcijski odbor, 1927, p.3). The committee, therefore, had to be frugal: although the first estimate was 1.5 million dinars of income, they only collected 482,000 in five years. 275,000 dinars were spent for the statue itself, and the remainder was donated to charity (V časopis, 1931). Scarcity of contributions hinted that King Peter I., who was dubbed „The Liberator“ after the war and the unification of Yugoslavia (Jezernik, 2004), faded away less than a decade after his death, while a cult of personality was built around the current monarch, Alexander I. (Manojlović, 1997).

The collected money went into the monument in front of the Ljubljana town hall, which was quite austere compared to the ambitious plans that imagined a majestic space where people could gather, and ceremonies could be organized. Art critic Karel Dobida proposed the statue to be built on a high base similar to the Trajan's Column or the monument to Tegetthoff in Vienna. He imagined the statue to be erected in the middle of Dunajska road or at the end of Miklošičeva road - or to simply build an entirely new square for the monument (Dobida, 1927). First concepts saw the statue in King Peter Square (nowadays Miklošič Park), but in the end, Jože Plečnik's idea to put the monument on the staircase of the town hall prevailed (Komič Marn, 2013). The equestrian statue that has represented the most archetypical way of depicting army leaders since the antiquity or the Renaissance, was carved from the black Podpeč marble by the sculptor Lojze Dolinar. Together with its base, the monument rose four meters up (much lower than the first design that imagined 5,8 meters of height), with an inscription Our Liberator on the front side (Kako, 1931). The committee had to decide between different modes of representing the late king since his public image was both of the indomitable military victor and the just legislator (Manojlović Pintar, 2014). Dolinar opted for the synthesis of both approaches: the king was, like many other army leaders, depicted on a horse, but the horse stood in a peaceful manner. In addition to that, Peter did not wear a uniform, but, *„some kind of stylized coat with a hood and a raincoat“* (Zabel, 1996, p.188). Individual details of the statue, such as the uncovered rider, the sandals, and the tunic, revealed the ancient influence of antiquity.

The monument was unveiled with pomp on September 6, 1931, as part of the so-called King's Week, a series of events celebrating the 10th anniversary of King Alexander's rule. Up to 100,000 people reportedly participated in festivities. Engineer Ladislav Bevc was the main orator and he emphasized: *„The monument created by our master sculptor Lojze Dolinar is an expression of happiness, pride, and gratitude of the Slovenian folk for the historical fact of liberation and unification. The artist breathed life into stone with love and sacrifice of Slovenian people; the life that will watch over the destiny of our history, which was forever tied to the destiny of the royal house of Karađorđević.“* These words were accompanied by the thunder of cannons on Ljubljana Castle and



Figure 3: Statue to King Peter I. in Ljubljana. Photo archive: Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia.



Figure 4: Memorial badge received for the erection of the monument to Peter I. in Ljubljana. Photo archive: Royal Collection of the Rogaška Slatina People's Museum.

the loud cheering of the crowds as the monument was unveiled (Govor, 1931). What Ljubljana obtained with Dolinar's statue, is its first equestrian monument, many European cities already boasted (Jezernik, 2014).

After Ljubljana got its equestrian monument to the late monarch in its very center, commemorating the loyalty of the capital of the Drava Banovina to the royal family in front of the town hall, the symbol of the city power, they also decided on a sculpture dedicated to King Alexander I. It was a bronze bust on a stone base, erected in front of the Tobačna factory headquarters on June 16, 1935 (Spomenik velikemu, 1935). It was the first figurative statue of King Alexander I., erected in pre-set-day Slovenia after his death. It was a cast of already existing statues standing in front of other tobacco factories, for example in Niš, Sarajevo, Banja Luka, and Travnik. Its artistic value was smaller due to the mass production, but the statue was nonetheless prominent for its maker, the sculptor from Sarajevo, Iva Despić-Simonović. She portrayed the monarch in flesh in 1926. The king named the statue the most representative portrait of him (Tobačni uslužbenici, 1935, p.4). It is also the first statue in the Slovenian space made by a female artist. The monument was funded by the workers of the tobacco factory. Representatives of King Peter II., the minister of war and finances, attended the ceremony. The main orator was the director of Tobačna factory, Edvard Jili, a native of Bosnia. He reportedly *„greeted the guests like a native, speaking beautiful Slovene. He remembered the great achievements of the late hero emperor in warm and enthusiastic words.“* (Odkritje, 1935, p.3).

The biggest monument to King Alexander I. in the Drava Banovina was the equestrian statue in Park Zvezda on Congress



Figure 5: Statue to King Alexander I. on the Congress Square in Ljubljana. It was erected on September 6, 1940. Photo archive: Royal Collection of the Rogaška Slatina People's Museum.



Square in Ljubljana (Figure 5). The idea was raised a week after the king's death when the organization of military volunteers started fundraising. The fiery appeal written by poets Oton Župančič and Alojz Gradnik said: „His outer image, carved in a hard mass of marble and bronze shall be the symbol of victory over the destructive power of Death. [...] Both in the center and on the frontiers, may His monument be the source of faith, steadfastness, and fortitude; the center for all our holidays of joy and sorrow; for all our victories. May it be the haven for all our affliction and anguish, for all our humiliation and defeats. When our spirit yields and diminishes, when our pride and dignity stumble and shiver, may His image comfort and encourage us, lift and enthrall us. Marrying present with future, may our heirs express the gratitude of our memory of His acts and His sacrifice. May he be the fountain that gives us strength, the light that shines, the hearth that warms. And may all the sinister and wicked heed this warning: The King is dead - Yugoslavia remains!“ (Rojaki, 1934). Fundraising for this monument gathered more attention than the one for King Peter I. in Ljubljana. If the latter couldn't muster half a million dinars, the monument to Alexander raised 1,600,000 dinars in three years. It was evident that King Alexander became the fundamental figure of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (Manojlović, 1997).

In March 1935, the monument committee decided Zvezda Park should be the location. They commissioned architect Herman Hus to draw detailed landscaping plans (Stelè, 1940) and opened a tender for a statue design, which received 16 drafts. The process of construction started to complicate at that point since the committee did not award anyone the first prize. In addition, new location ideas started floating. Architect Jože Plečnik also offered a couple of ideas, including the one with propylaea - the colonnades - around the king's statue, which were supposed to add the impression of much needed monumentality, according to the critics: „Alexander's propylaea with the statue and Plečnik's regulation are an enormous architectonic symphony of spatial art, architectural art, monumental plastics, and monumental composition. Alexander's propylaea with the statue of King Alexander in Southern Square shall be the central artistical symbol of the future

metropolis of Ljubljana“ (Stupica, 1937, p.7). Numerous artists resisted the idea of propylaea as if to say, „the new statue project is merely architecture that serves the future arrangement of the complete terrain complex, where the sculptural and visual parts are just a decorative motif of absolutely subordinate character and significance“ (Naši umetniki ..., 1937, p.3).

The political division between the town hall and the committee further stalled the erection of the statue. The location became an issue once again and in addition to Congress Square, the university garden, entrance to Park Tivoli, and the square in front of the People's Hall (present times National Gallery) were discussed. Architect Hus won the second tender as well, and he envisaged Park Tivoli as the location. Right after that, in the middle of October 1938, another tender invitation was issued, and among 26 contenders, Tine Kos won the first prize. Despite that, the commission to create an equestrian statue went to the second-placed Lojze Dolinar. When they probed the Tivoli location with a scale model, they realized setting up a statue there would cause traffic issues; in addition, the public demanded the statue to be erected in Park Zvezda. Four months before the reveal, the location was finally chosen (Kako ..., 1940).

Sculptor Dolinar designed a colossal equestrian statue and two reliefs (War and Peace) intended as a base. The statue represented Alexander, clothed in a long military coat, stately riding a horse; like a soldier and a warrior on his victory march, holding the scepter, the symbol of power issued by the people. The equestrian statue was 6.8 meters high, standing on a four-meter base (Kako ..., 1940). Dolinar commented on the statue thusly: „I have imagined the king's statue in large dimensions as something enormous that would impress the viewer with both its external form and its internal force. That is how I have imagined the giant statue that is supposed to represent the great idea of unification; and the triumph of the victorious king who won the war, and ruled with dignity Slovenians, Serbs and Croats united in one state. [...] I wanted to depict the warrior-king, the fighter and the winner on his march of triumph, draped in royal coat and holding the scepter of freedom, given to him by the people. That is the reason I have decided to carve the reliefs showing the two main events of a triumphant king: war and peace, victory and rule, soldier and statesman.“ (Razgovor ..., 1940, p.3). The incredibly festive unveiling on September 6, 1940, was attended by around 50,000 people. The statue was revealed by the young king Peter II., who celebrated his 17th birthday on that very day (Nj. Vel. ..., 1940).

## 2.4 Ribnica

The first Town to celebrate Alexander I. with a statue after Ljubljana was Ribnica. On July 12, 1936, his bronze bust was unveiled in front of the Sokol Society hall. It was one meter high and it stood on a two-meter stone base. The project was led by the royal commission of the gymnastics Sokol Society with the mission to commemorate its 30th anniversary. They commissioned a less-known sculptor Franc Repič, who was a member of the society himself (Ribnica ..., 1936). Many speeches were given at the well-attended ceremony and the statue reveal was the climax: „As the national anthem was played, the bronze image of the Greatest Yugoslav slowly appeared [...]. All eyes were on the features of him, who was our Leader, Mentor, and Father. The eyes of the old veterans watered up.“ (Sokolska ..., 1936, p.3). It is not surprising many more modest statues of the monarch stood in front of the halls of this society, considering Alexander was a great supporter of the Sokol cause, which evolved into an incredibly strong loyalist movement.

## 2.5 Gornji Grad

A mere week after the statue in Ribnica was unveiled, namely, on July 19, 1936, a bronze bust of Alexander I. standing on a stone base was erected in the central park of Gornji Grad. Soon after the king's death, the royal committee of Narodna Odbrana assembled a group dedicated to the statue to collect funds. When they reached the necessary amount, they commissioned sculptor Ivan Sajevec to depict the king wearing a uniform with stripes and medals. The statue was well received in the press and a mass of visitors and representatives of various societies attended the ceremony. King's representative, lieutenant colonel Budimir Martinović did the honors. In 1939, a stone fence was built around the statue (Spomeniki Viteškega ..., 1940).

## 2.6 Jesenice

The third statue of Alexander I. revealed in 1936 was erected in the park in front of the former People's School in Jesenice, present-day Tone Čufar Square. It was a bronze bust on a high stone base; five meters high. The statue was commissioned by the Union of Yugoslav Workers of Prince Andrew from the French town of Amnéville, which was an umbrella organization for 37 chapters of emigrant workers in industrial and mining towns all over France (Spomenik Viteškemu ..., 1936). Originally, another location was considered, namely by the railway in Hrušica, next to the state border, where it would greet all visitors to Yugoslavia. No suitable place was found, so the town hall suggested the school square, which already bore the king's name. They commissioned sculptor Peter Loboda, who designed the entire statue and modeled the bust. He also put a bronze two-headed eagle with the state coat-of-arms on the base, chiseling the dedication by the members of the union. The statue was unveiled on October 11, 1936, the second anniversary of the king's death, with attendance of around 6,000 visitors. About 70 Slovenian workers came from France and they were welcomed convivially by the locals (Spomeniki Viteškega ..., 1940).

## 2.7 Rakek

The monument of Alexander I. was unveiled with a rich program on October 17, 1937 in front of the Rakek railway station. Rakek became the new center of Notranjska region after the establishment of the Rapallo border with Italy (Mikša and Zorn, 2018) after World War I and the „loss“ of Postojna. The king's statue at the state border sent a message that that was the Yugoslav territory, supposedly encouraging Slovenian residents on both sides of the border (Čopič, 2000, p.347). The competent committee commissioned sculptor Ivan Sajevec to construct the statue. Sajevec, who already made the statue in Gornji Grad, modeled the bronze figure of the king (first full-figure statue of Alexander in present-day Slovenia), dressed in a military coat with his hands resting on a saber. The statue stood on a stone base with carved inscriptions (Prizori ..., 1937).

## 2.8 Sveti Jurij ob Ščavnici

The first monument to Alexander I. by the northern Yugoslav border (with Nazi Germany at that time) was a bronze bust on a granite base with an inscription plate that was ceremoniously revealed on May 15, 1938, in front of the school building on the main square in Sveti Jurij ob Ščavnici. The funds were collected by the locals (Spomeniki Viteškega ..., 1940). The statue was made by sculptor Nikolaj Pirnat, who depicted the king in a military uniform with a heavily twisted head, placed almost in a profile position. The ceremony was attended by more than

8,000 people, most of whom came from nearby Maribor (Spomenik kralju ..., 1939).

## 2.9 Sveta Trojica v Slovenskih Goricah

Shortly after the reveal of the statue in Sveti Jurij, another bronze bust on a stone base of the late king was erected not far from Sveta Trojica v Slovenskih Goricah. The plan for the memorial was the work of two engineers, Jelenc and Šlajmer, while the statue of the king, dressed in a military coat with medals, was made by Lojze Dolinar. The erection of the monument was organized by the local Sokol Society. The unveiling of the statue, which happened on June 19, 1938, was attended by thousands of people, with many members of the Sokol Society. The newspaper Jutro emphasized: „Special emphasis was placed on the enormous attendance of the rural people from all parts of Slovenske Gorice low-hills, so this ceremony turned into a mighty national and state manifestation by the border. By erecting the monument, the Sokol Society commemorated the benevolent knight king and expressed their mission to always be watchful guards of the border and to strengthen the national consciousness, aware that only in national unity is our solution.“ (Krasna ..., 1938, p.1). Even in the years after the unveiling, the statue in Sveta Trojica reportedly attracted a number of conscious Yugoslavs (Spomeniki Viteškega ..., 1940).

## 2.10 Trbovlje

Alexander's monument erected by the Sokol Society hall was a full-figure figure. This was another statue funded by the Sokol Society, namely by the Trbovlje charter and a couple of other societies. The leadership of the society raised funds among their members and other people from Trbovlje and commissioned the production of a bronze statue more than two meters high.



Figure 6: Shortly after the occupation of Ljubljana in 1941, the Italians removed the statues of kings Peter I. and Alexander I. They promised that both statues were to be moved to the National Museum, but both statues were destroyed. In the photo, the head of Peter I., which has been preserved and is now kept in the Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia. Photo: Nani Poljanec.



It was made by the aforementioned sculptor Franc Repič, who had a close relationship with Alexander I. due to his renovation works in the court of Belgrade (Razgovor ..., 1939). He depicted the king in a hiking coat with his hand extended into a speaker's posture. The newspaper Jutro reported before the unveiling: „Trbovlje, the valley of miners, will erect a monument to King Alexander I. The Unifier, telling the entire world that the idea of the Yugoslav statehood is deeply rooted in the people of Trbovlje and that the miner loves Yugoslavia as well.“ (Spomenik Viteškemu ..., 1939, p.3). The monument was ceremoniously unveiled on the 30th anniversary of the Trbovlje chapter of the Sokol Society, on June 18, 1939, with a program prepared by the society and the army. The event included a serenade in front of the house of Franc Dežman, who donated land for the construction of the gym, where the monument stood (V Trbovljah ..., 1939).

## 2.11 Sevnica

In Sevnica, the idea of a monument dedicated to Alexander I. arose immediately after the king's death. Mayor Franc Tupej formed a committee to erect the monument right away and started collecting funds. The erection of the statue was made possible only by a generous donation from the Jugotani company, which contributed two thirds of the required amount of 30,000 dinars. The chosen design for the statue was made by the aforementioned Nikolaj Pirnat and it was a cast of the statue that Pirnat had created at the time of the king's death for the lobby of the University of Ljubljana, which at that time bore Alexander's name. Pirnat depicted the king from waist up, dressed in a coat with arms folded. The bronze statue on a stone base was erected in the park by the train station on December 1, 1939, on Unification Day (Sevničani ..., 1939).

## 2.12 Zagorje ob Savi

The last sculpture dedicated to King Alexander I. was erected in Zasavje region. In Zagorje ob Savi, the locals intended to unveil a commemorative plaque first, but the local chapter of the Sokol Society decided that the idea was too modest and opted for a bust (Spomenik Viteškega ..., 1940). The bronze bust of the king, dressed in a uniform with medals, was made by sculptor Boris Kalin, while the stone base and the spatial placement were the domain of architect Ivan Spinčič. The ceremonial unveiling of the statue in front of the Sokol Society hall took place on September 8, 1940, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Zagorje chapter (Spomeniki Viteškega ..., 1940).

## 3. CONCLUSION

»The Karađorđević monuments were erected as expressions of gratitude to the kings who had liberated the Slovene nation. At the same time, they glorified the ruling dynasty and symbolized the idea of Yugoslavism« (Komić Marn, 2013, p.93). A review of the monuments shows that the figurative (thus the most luxurious) monuments dedicated to the kings Peter I. and Alexander I. were not exclusively a matter of larger settlements and that their location was carefully chosen in every case. The statues adorned local centers, central parks, or Sokol Society halls. Several monuments were strategically erected along the state border, where they were supposed to encourage the Slovenes and other Yugoslavs while acting as a reminder to hostile foreigners. The list of sculptors and architects who designed and created the monuments is full of distinguished names of the Slovenian interwar sculpture and architecture milieu, which points to the strict scrutiny enjoyed by said monuments. Even though the monuments were in the service of propaganda meant to

Figure 7: Italians demolish the statue to King Alexander I. in Ljubljana. Photo archive: Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia, photo by Miran Pavlin.

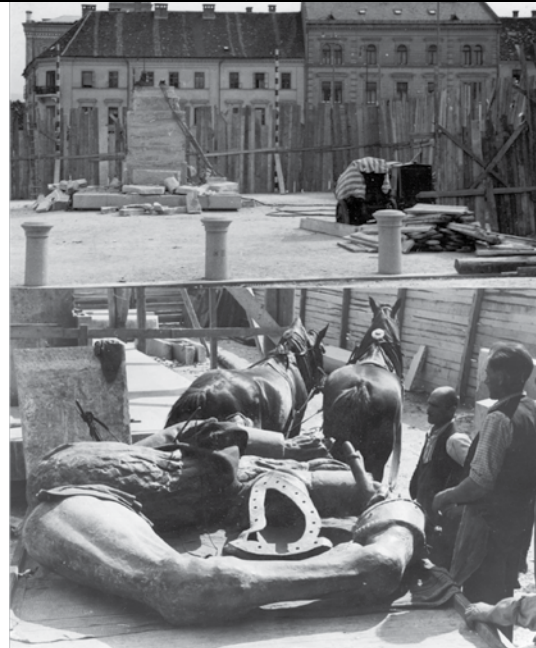


Figure 8: A small remnant of Alexander I. bronze monument. Photo archive: Royal Collection of the Rogaška Slatina People's Museum.

strengthen the power of the state, they were also works of art, thanks to carefully selected authors. Unfortunately, none of the monuments described is preserved. During the World War II occupation, statues depicting the former royal dynasty were an unwanted memory of a bygone era in the eyes of the occupiers and were therefore destroyed in the first weeks and months of the occupation (Figures 6–8; Mikša, 2018).

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