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THE ŠAVRINKA, ŠAVRIN, AND ŠAVRINIJA IN ETHNOGRAPHY AND LITERATURE

The paper is based on ethnographic fieldwork of migrant workers in Istria and an analysis of selected works of literature which directly or indirectly interpret the phenomenon of Šavrinkas, Šavrins and Šavrinija, and which played a crucial role in the »Šavriniization« of the northeastern Istrian countryside. Our current understanding of Šavrinija arises from semi-recent literary production which focuses on female egg sellers, or Šavrinkas, while the ethnographic data reveal shades of overlapping, interweaving and separation among the numerous pedlars and the literary depictions of Šavrinkas, and emphasise the importance of material culture in the formation of literary and regional symbols.

Key words: Šavriniization, processes of identity formation, labor migration, female labor, Istria

1 Introduction

The process of identity formation of the Šavrinka and Šavrinija at the end of the twentieth century and the literarization of the Šavrinka are mutually interconnected. Therefore it is no surprise that the majority of the explanations of the regionalization and nationalization of Istria and the formation of Šavrinian identity focus primarily on the analysis of literary, and to some extent other artistic depictions of the Šavrinka and Šavrinija (BASKAR 2002a, 2002b; BRUMEN 2000; MIHELJ 2006; URBANC 2011). The figure of the Šavrinka (i.e., »woman from Šavrinija«) inspired and attracted the attention of artists, salvagers, and collectors of folk materials, as can be seen starting with Alojz Kocjančič's *Šavrinske pesmi* [*Šavrinian poems* 1962], and particularly with the publication Marjan Tomšič's novels, novellas, and stories at the end of the 1980s (TOMŠIČ 1983, 1986, 1990, 1993). Explanations of the formation of Šavrinian identity have focused to a lesser extent on the material culture and lives of the individuals who played important roles in creating the literary, artistic, and folkloristic images of the Šavrinka (LEDINEK and ROGELJA 2000).

This article looks at the process of the formation of the literary image and Šavrinian identity from the opposite direction, through the focal point of ethnography,¹ the

¹ The use of the word ethnography in modern anthropological and ethnological literature is associated with both the selection of data collected through careful fieldwork and a specific method or series of specific methods, first and foremost participant observation carried out by the researcher, and the establishment of a dialogue with the observed subjects in the form of structured, semi-structured or unstructured interviews (for more on ethnography see HAMMERSLEY and ATKINSON 1995). The ethnographic research for this article was done between 1994 and 1996, based on conversations with (former) Istrian pedlars and their relatives from Boršt, Dol, Gračiče and Kubed, and their customers in Istria, Kaldir and Vrhovščina, and



particular material culture, and lives of individuals. Based, on the one hand, on the ethnography of worker migrations in Istria in the previous century, which were embedded in and conditioned by the physical and geographical characteristics of the area and socio-historical circumstances, and on the other on a review of selected literature, as well as artistic and folkloristic production which directly or indirectly interprets the Šavrinka, Šavrins, and Šavrinija, the paper first focuses on the life stories of female migrant workers from northeastern Istria who were engaged in trade between central Istria and Trst (Trieste) in the twentieth century. Using the actual life stories of Istrian female pedlars as a basis, the second part presents the complex of settings or material culture, the interactions of individuals within these settings, and the emerging images that contributed to the »Šavrinization« of the Istrian countryside. The analysis borrows from Miles Richardson's article Being-in-the-Market versus Being-in-the-Plaza: Material Culture and the Construction of Social Reality in Spanish America (2003), which presents a methodological basis for the concept of embodied space.² The author's premise in explaining the embodied market and plaza is that "being-in-the-world" is both a material-spatial and a cultural fact (LOW and LAWRENCE ZÚNIGA 2003: 5). Richardson presents the process through which material culture determines a situation and how a situation reflexively affects material culture as having three components: 1) the initial definition of the material culture in a **setting**; 2) the **interactions** which occur within that setting; and 3) the **images** formed on the basis of the material culture and interactions and which complement the initial definition through a new sense and understanding of place (RICHARDSON 2003: 76). In the final stage of this otherwise mutual process, the setting becomes the depiction of the emerging situation, or in other words, the social situation becomes physically expressed (RICHARDSON 2003: 85).³ The mutual relationship between the settings, social interactions and images will be presented below on the basis of the geographical layout and the economic and political situation of the trade routes between Istria and Trst, the social interactions and emerging images on and alongside the trade routes through the twentieth century, including the awakening of memories and literary production.

2 The Life Story of Marija Franca of Gračišče⁴

Marija Franca was born on 5 February 1907 in Gračišče. She and her eight brothers and sisters grew up in a house with their grandparents, the families of three of

conversations with the writer Marjan Tomšič, the sculptor Jože Pohlen, a representative of the Šavrini inu anka Šavrinke cultural-artistic society, Marija Knez, and a representative of the Šavrinske pupe en ragaconi society, Rožana Koštial; and the personal experience of walking the circular trade route through Gračišče, Vrhovščina nad Buzetom, and Trieste from 14 to 18 July 1995.

² Embodied space is a space that is understood or conceptualized on the basis of or through actual bodily experience. For more detail, see LOW and LAWRENCE ZÚNIGA (2003: 3) and MURŠIČ (2006: 48–54).

³ Matej Vranješ conducted a comparable study of the relationship between material culture or settings and social praxis and interactions (2008: 111).

⁴ Unless otherwise stated, the excerpts are from interviews with Marija Franca, conducted as part of fieldwork between 1994 and 1996.

their father's brothers, and a bachelor uncle. Her elementary schooling was part in Slovene and part in Italian. During the autumn she would gather chestnuts on her way to school. Her parents would use the money earned from selling them to buy their children clothes and shoes for the winter. Every time they brought their chestnuts to Trst, they brought one of their children with them. Marija would count the days and nights until it was her turn (FRANCA 1992). At the end of the WW I she began earning her own keep. When she was fourteen, her father accompanied her and her older sister to Istria. Marija traded with people in the Vrhovščina region, in the villages above Buzet.

The Croatian Istrians received us graciously without exception. They were kind and hospitable, especially with us beginners. They offered us food and accommodations. If there was nowhere else, we slept in the hay barn. We were overjoyed that we too had found our own people. From then on we went to the same villages every week. [...] We didn't know that we were from »Šavrinija«. [...] They called us Šavrinkas, but they also used our names. They were respectful. When the children's mother would call and say that they had to come home, because a Šavrinka had come, they asked me: »What can we say, a Šavrinka has come?« They were afraid that I would be offended.

In 1927 Marija married Jožef Franca, from a neighboring house that her older sister Ana had already married into. She had four children with Jožef: Marija, Ivan, Jolanda, and Cvetko. Jožef worked on the family farm and worked as a day-laborer on larger farms, while Marija went to Istria. By marrying into the Franca family, Marija became the daughter-in-law of Jožef's mother, Ivana Franca, who was one of the first female pedlars from Gračišče to trade in central Istria. Marija and her sister Ana would take turns collecting eggs, chickens, meats and spirits, taking them to Trst to sell them, and helping to care for the children.

Marija was widowed during WW II. Since she owned some land, she did not receive any vouchers or other state social support, so despite the new circumstances regarding the borders, regulations and customs, she began to trade again. With a special permit she was occasionally able to cross the border between Zone A and Zone B, carrying goods for sale across the newly drawn borders. During the night she became a *kontrabantarka* (contraband carrier, or smuggler), though her work wasn't significantly different. In 1947 she was accused of participating in smuggling people across the border and spent seven months in prison in Pula. After 1947 she occasionally continued to sell goods between Vrhovščina and Trst. She rode the bus to Buzet and continued on foot to the villages around Vrh. At sales and shops in Trst and on the Ponte Rosso she purchased t-shirts, jeans, undergarments, cloth, and dishes, and brought it all to the places where decades earlier she had traded eggs for kerosene and thread. She continued to trade until she was eighty. When she had the chance she visited with people from Istria for the rest of her life. Except for her sister in Gračišče she had no friends. She found them in the teachers and students at the school in Gračišče. She had a lot of time and loved to talk about Šavrinkas. Marija died on St. Ann's day in 1996. She is buried at the cemetery in Kubed. (LEDINEK and ROGELJA 2000: 21–35)

3 The (Co)generation of the Šavrinian Identity: A Complex of Settings, Interactions and (Literary) Images

3.1 The Setting: Marija Franca's Trade Route on the Geographic, Socio-Economic and Political Map

The village of Gračišče is located in the northeastern, higher-lying part of Istria at an elevation of 300 meters above sea level. It is twenty-three kilometers from Trst, and twenty-seven kilometers from Buzet. Towards Buzet, which lies at forty meters above sea level, Marija's former trade route follows a winding side road that climbs towards Vrhovščina. The one-hour climb passes by the Maruški, Jagodičje and Marčeva njiva and reaches the summit plateau at the settlement of Čelo. The route continues along the now-paved road to the village of Sveti Donat and towards the settlement of Vrh (which means 'peak' or 'summit'), 380 meters above sea level. From there it leads towards the surrounding villages of Dol, Dobrovo, Klarići, Potoki, Medveje, Marčineško polje, Marčinegla, Paladini, Ščulci, Barušići, Luskici, Senj, Sovinjak and Sovinjaško polje, which lie on the ridges leading down from the central village of Vrh. The circular route through the settlements of Vrhovščina is around 25 kilometers long. The route from Gračišče towards Trst leads through Kubed, drops down towards Rižana, crosses the river at Mostičje and then climbs up towards Črni Kal. Before Črni Kal it drops into the Osp Valley and leads past Gabrovica and Osp along the level road towards the former small border crossing between Yugoslavia and Italy. On the Italian side it climbs up to Mačkovelje (It. *Caresana*), from where you can see Trst with the refinery in the foreground. From there it leads down towards the centre of town, to Tesi, Molino Vento and Bosco streets, where in the first half of the twentieth century there were barns for livestock in transit, and further on to the former retail area on Garibaldi Square with its statue of Our Lady atop a column.

The entire circular route, from Gračišče to Vrhovščina and back and to Trst and back, is 125 km (77 miles) long. Between 1920 and 1940, Marija Franca walked this route once a week in three or four days. In comparison, the routes of the female bread sellers from Škedenj and the milkmaids from the Koper hinterland were more urban and much shorter than Marija's route.

3.2 Interactions along the Trade Route

Once a week during the 1920s and 1930s Marija, either by herself or together with other female pedlars from Gračišče and nearby Kubed, headed for central Istria in the early morning. Near Buzet the pedlars would separate to visit their steady customers. At the crossroads they left *signade*, agreed upon signals with which they told each other which direction they had gone. The pedlars had steady and reliable suppliers and customers, and established routes. They came to the villages on the agreed day and at the agreed time, regardless of the weather and other conditions. The older relatives and friends would pass their steady customers down to younger ones, or would stand in for them if they were pregnant, caring for children or sick. Since the



customers in Vrhovščina were often even poorer than the pedlars, they frequently gave their customers goods on credit, which they gradually paid off with eggs. In the villages above Buzet the customers gave the pedlars food, drinks and accommodations. In this way a network of trust and assistance was formed in addition to the trade network. The pedlars spent a night or two in central Istria and left for home first thing in the morning, stopping off at the prearranged time in Buzet or Motovun.

The pedlars from Gračišče and Kubed left for Trst around midnight, often the same night, in order to reach the town by five in the morning. They rendezvoused at the edge of the village and continued on together towards Kubed and Rižana. The first part was dedicated to prayer, after which they sang, chatted, did business, told each other jokes, laughed, and napped. On the basis of their shared experiences and trading, bonds of support formed among the pedlars. Before arriving in Trst they were inspected by the city inspectors to make sure they were not carrying any contraband, such as spirits. They left their donkeys with the owners of the barns, with whom it paid to have good relations, since they could give them information about sales locations and employment. Some of them sold eggs and other goods to the milkmaids, who delivered milk to the bourgeois households, while others had steady customers, bakeries, and shops where they could sell larger quantities; and a third group sold at retail in various squares and markets. When they had sold the eggs their customers had ordered and bought the things they needed at home, before leaving they occasionally met in a *betola*, an inn which offered cheap fare. From Trst they brought their eagerly waiting families various treats: cookies for the children, and tobacco and cigarette papers for the men. The pedlars of Gračišče sold eggs and various other items in the towns around Buzet and Motovun and in Trst and other coastal communities until WW II, when the border cut off the route between Trst and Istria, first between Zone A and Zone B of the Julian March, from 1947 to 1954 between Yugoslavia and Zones A and B of the Free Territory of Trst, and from 1954 on between Italy and Yugoslavia. After 1954 Marija Franca bought undergarments, jeans and t-shirts in the shops in Trst, and smuggled them across the Yugoslav-Italian border, either by herself or with the help of family members living in Trst. She often brought her daughter and later her niece with her, but never her sons or nephews.

In the 1970s and 1980s trading was no longer necessary for survival, but was a habitual economic and social practice of individuals, which allowed them to make some extra income as well as maintaining an awareness and rekindling memories of life in the first half of the twentieth century, among other things of trading between Istrian villages and the coastal towns. Awakening memories of the period of egg sellers and maintaining social contacts with the people of central Istria continued in the last decades of the twentieth century through occasional visits. At Marija Franca's house this was further strengthened by conversations with teachers from the school in Gračišče, who rented a room from her, and particularly meeting and living with teacher and writer Marjan Tomšič. At first she told stories about the first half of the twentieth century, and later, encouraged by Tomšič, she recorded them in three notebooks entitled *Šavrinke zgodbe* [*Šavrinian Stories*] (FRANCA 1990; 1992; 1995). At the same time Tomšič published the novels *Šavrinke* [*Šavrinian women* 1986] and *Zrno od frmentona* [*Grain of corn* 1993], the novells *Olive in sol* [*Olives and salt* 1983] and *Kažuni*

(1990) (*kažuni* are traditional Istrian stone houses) as well as other literary works into which he weaved Marija's memories. The fruitful cohabitation between the widowed (former) tradeswoman and the writer led to a wider wave of interest in the travelling saleswomen of the recent past, including the establishing of the Šavrini inu anka Šavrinke (Šavrinian men and also Šavrinian women) cultural-artistic society, which began operating in Gračišče and the nearby villages and which incorporated and recreated in its performances both actual events from Marija Franca's and various other pedlars' memories and stories from Tomšič's literature, thus blurring the line between the material image of the pedlars and the literary image of Šavrinkas.

3.3 Images

In the first half of the twentieth century, two images of pedlars were formed among the villagers. The first was of a hard-working, courageous, physically tough, and tireless woman, who was responsible for the survival of and for contributing to the household. Pedlars were therefore sought after as brides, women who did not go to Istria envied them, while their daughters and nieces (in addition to the treats they brought) also enjoyed the occasional visits to Istria or Trst when their older relatives took them along. Transferring the business, handing over and exchanging customers primarily along the female lines, between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law, aunts and nieces, sisters and sisters-in-law, and finally every week everyone helping at least partly to transport the sales items, strengthened the bonds among the pedlars, empowered the women and created a positive feminine (self)image. The other image was similarly an image of a strong, independent, worldly, experienced woman with excellent communications skills, who left the house every day and headed into the Istrian wilderness and the bright lights of Trst. While the first was a sought after bride, the second skirted the edge of legitimacy. The ethnography thus records that some men forbade their wives from leaving the house to trade.

Interactions with the people of central Istria also led to the formation of two images of these pedlars, who their customers in central Istria in fact called or labelled »Šavrinkas«, since they were supposed to be, as they stated, from »Šavrinija«. »Šavrinkas« were on one hand clever pedlars who, they say, »haggled hard and paid fairly«, and walked about by themselves, without being accompanied by their husbands. The ethnographic data also indicate unambiguously negative connotations associated with the labels Šavrinka and Šavrin.⁵ On the other hand the same Šavrinkas brought all sorts of items and information from Trst, and often gave them goods on credit, and thereby, as Marija Franca stated, one impoverished group supported another.

These images of the pedlars or Šavrinkas were the basis upon which writers, artists, and other creative people; collectors of folk crafts, and later also singers, cultural and folklore groups created the figure of the Šavrinka in the second half of the twentieth century. They emphasised the elements dictated by their personal inclinations and individual social circumstances—suffering (KOCJANČIČ 1962), independence,

⁵ See the life story of Marija Franca above.

refinement, courage, and eroticism (TOMŠIČ 1986), the greatness and caryatid-like qualities in the depictions of sculptor and painter Jože Pohlen and the resourcefulness emphasised in the performances of the local cultural-artistic societies.

Alojz Kocjančič⁶ in his poems »Kubejskim Šavrinkam« [To the Šavrinkas of Kubed] and »Materi« [To mother], published in his collection *Šavrinske pesmi* described Šavrinkas as mothers who sacrifice themselves for their children. Sabina Mihelj established that the metaphor of a Šavrinka is used in this sense as a figure of national/regional history or as its antithesis. Similarly to the way that the metaphor of the family offers a convenient developmental story for Slovenian national history, but is in fact devoid of historical significance and removed from the levers of power, the figure of the mother is equated with Istria (cf. the poem »Istra – mati« [Istria – mother]), and the poet is her son (MIHELJ 2006: 372). The equating of Šavrinkas, Istrian women, and mothers can also be seen in the name of the imposing statue in Hrastovlje, the work of sculptor and painter Jože Pohlen, which upon its ceremonious installation in 1990 was called Istranka (Istrian woman), but was already referred to by the locals as Šavrinka during the time we were doing our fieldwork. Kocjančič's emphasis of the motherly element is no coincidence, as his mother actually was involved in trading between Kubed, central Istria, and Trst. The point is that it was not just not-yet-wed girls and widows who were involved in trading in the higher-lying northeastern parts of Istria (BRUMEN 2000; RAVNIK 1996: 82–83), but also married women, who with the help of their female relatives balanced their intimate family lives with their profitable activities. The writer Marjan Tomšič, in addition to the motherly and wifely images of Šavrinkas, also emphasised their autonomy and active role in (public) life (TOMŠIČ 1986). Contrary to the general beliefs and findings of various researchers who divided male and female roles along active/passive and/or public/private lines,⁷ in Tomšič's writings Šavrinkas are presented as self-reliant, independent, and active individuals whose role as breadwinners was never negligible (LEDINEK and ROGELJA 2000: 90; MIHELJ 2006: 371–372). In parallel with Tomšič, in addition to Marija France, Šavrinkas, and Šavrinija are also mentioned by Rafael Vidali in his collection of poems *Čubejske žrjavce* [*Coals of Kubed* 1989] and Edelman Jurinčič in his prose collection *Istrani* [*Istrians* 1991]. All three of these writers are considered Tomšič's students, who collectively fleshed out and constructed the figure of the Šavrinka as it began to be consolidated towards the end of the twentieth century.⁸ It seems that the »literated« image of Šavrinkas in the 1980s and 1990s, during the time of the fall of Yugoslavia, was an apposite and sufficiently attrac-

⁶ Kocjančič's use of the term Šavrinka in 1962 marked its first appearance in literature (BASKAR 2002).

⁷ Lidia Sciama has already noted the ambiguity and difficulty of such dichotomies, which are popular in structuralist analyses. On the basis of fieldwork conducted in Italy and a rereading of ethnography in which the opposition between private and public was examined, she explores such oppositions in *The Problem of Privacy in Mediterranean Anthropology* (SCIAMA 1997: 90–104).

⁸ Although the work of these artists was the most widely noted, Šavrins and Šavrinkas are mentioned in the work of various collectors of folk goods and literati even before their popularization in the nineteen-eighties and nineties. At the initiative of ethnologists Milko Matičetov and Pavel Merkuš, collector Nadja Rojac Orfanò wrote about the Šavrinian folk tradition in Gažon and its vicinity and in Trst (ROJAC ORFANO 1977: 200–211).

tive image for the Šavrinization of Istria and the discovery of the Šavrinian identity (BASKAR 2002a), which more than the national division of Slovene from Croatian Istrians (BRUMEN 2000) or the Istrian countryside from the coastal towns (BASKAR 2002a: 130) was preserved and consolidated in the twenty-first century in searching for local specialities, authenticity and fasadism (ORBAŠLI 2000) for the needs of tourism and tourism-related events (MACCANNELL 1976, 1992).

4 Conclusion

Some researchers of the Šavrinization of Istria lean towards the thesis that the geographical and political reduction of Šavrinkas to egg-sellers from the southeastern part of Istria is primarily the result of the effect of the writers and artists who created an attractive image of Šavrinkas, which grew into a symbol that became the basis for initiating the process of the discovery of the Šavrinian identity at the end of the twentieth century. Bojan Baskar, for instance, believes that the Kubed-Gračišče-Hrastovlje redefinition of Šavrinkas is not a purely literary or fictional invention (BASKAR 2002a: 127), despite the fact that his explanation is based on an analysis of literary and geographic production. The ethnography attests that in addition to literary production, the actual material culture was also crucial to such reduction, as the pedlars who worked in central Istria and in a certain period actually did trade primarily in eggs (as well as other items at that time and later), encountered the specific use of the ethnic label »Šavrinini« (Šavrinians) at that very location. In contrast with the milkmaids, bread sellers, and other (re)sellers, who did not collect their goods in central Istria but were tied solely to the coastal towns, the travelling saleswomen from Gračišče, Kubed, and the surrounding villages had contacts with the inhabitants of central Istria, who called them Šavrinkas because, as they said, they were from »Šavrinija«. The long and arduous journey on foot – in the case of Marija Franca over a 125-kilometer long circular route between Istria and Trst—was a material fact on which the image of the courageous, long-suffering and heroic Šavrinka was based. While Alois Spinčič, the author of an entry on Šavrinkas in volume 9 of *Avstro-Ogrske monarhije v besedi in sliki* [*The Austro-Hungarian Empire in words and pictures* 1891: 215], and Simon Rutar, the author of the book *Samosvoje mesto Trst in mejna grofija Istra* [*The independent city of Trst and the border county of Istria* 1896: 175], did not emphasise mobility and trade between Istria and Trst at the end of the nineteenth century, it seems that mobility on foot and contacts with customers in central Istria were precisely the crucial elements in the formation of the image of Šavrinkas in the second half of the twentieth century.

It should also be emphasised that in the process of the formation of the figure of the Šavrinka, individuals were not merely passive receivers of the images but also played (and play) an active role in their formation. The process of regionalization is therefore not merely the invention or discovery, awakening or reappropriation of identity (BASKAR 2002a: 115), in the sense of the promotion or popularization of the Šavrinian identity by local and external artistic/cultural promoters and the specific political circumstances in the 1990s (BRUMEN 2000); the process of Šavrinization operates bilaterally, both »from above« and »from below«—through the material culture and

settings and the interactions of individuals within the settings. The Šavrinian identity was formed through the interactions or activities of individuals—specifically through trade, smuggling, walking, and knowledge of the routes between Istria and Trst, storytelling, recollections and only later through recording the stories and memories. Identifications are fluid and changeable (DRUMMOND 1980) and are (re)organized with respect to the changeable, often chaotic relationships between material culture, interactions and images. The process of regionalization and nationalization in Istria and the formation of the image of Šavrinkas is no exception.⁹ The Šavriniization of a part of Istria in the 1990s was, as Borut Brumen wrote, a process of the Slovenization or nationalization of the newly created Slovene Istria (BRUMEN 2002: 404), and later it was more connected with the affirmation of the identity of the countryside as opposed to the coastal towns (BASKAR 2002a: 130). Today it seems that the process of Šavriniization is tending towards the *fasadism*¹⁰ of tourist attractions and that the national and rural/urban distinctions are being overshadowed by romanticized images of the material culture of the lives of the pedlars. Šavrins and Šavrinija are thus once again forced into the background, while Šavrinkas come to the foreground, this time in the role of an authentic figure. The Autentica Tourism Development Agency of Koper in cooperation with writer Marjan Tomšič has recently created a special programme of excursions »following the routes of the Šavrinkas«, which, according to the author of an article in the *Primorske novice*, »pays respect to the figure of the Šavrinka in a special way« (*Primorske novice*, 31 March 2011, 65/66: 9). In the coastal towns of Slovenia you can buy ceramic sculptures of Šavrinkas, Šavrinka dolls, and postcards with a photo collage of scenes from a former trade route, all suggesting that the Šavrinka is a figure from the specific country environment of northeastern Istria, but at the same time and more explicitly works as a supra-regional¹¹ image of the nostalgic search for a lost era and an authentic life characteristic of the mythical reconstruction of the sense of tradition uprooted by globalization (SELWYN 1996: 2). It speaks to a search for authenticity, which was theorized with respect to tourism by American sociologist Dean MacCannell (1976; 1992)¹² or simply playing with images in the postmodern world, as John Urry (1990) described spectacles for tourists.

So let us summarize the above and accompany a Šavrinka from »setting to setting«—from the setting of higher-lying northeastern Istria, the setting of trade and interactions, to the setting of the awakening of memories and new interactions, which is still located in the northeastern part of Istria but is at the same time already

⁹ The process of regionalization is here merely a step in the process of the formation of the regional identity, which forms territorial borders, symbols and institutions (URBANC 2008). While on the symbolic level the formation of the regional identity has reached maturity, in terms of demarcation and in particular on the institutional level the Slovene part of Istria has not yet achieved the level of a stable region (URBANC 2007).

¹⁰ *Fasadism* describes the process of preserving an image which conforms to the tourist imagination (ORBAŠLI 2000).

¹¹ Similar images of country women can be found in other tourism centres; e.g. the images of women from Provence in the form of souvenir statuettes, postcards or puppets, the figure of the stone woman with a basket on her head in Buje etc.

¹² MacCannell's tourist goes on holiday by cognitively constructing or reconstructing structures which modernity is destroying (MACCANNELL 1976, 1992).



transcended. A setting which was previously only preliminarily defined became in the presence of interactions between specific individuals, cultural actors and proponents of tourism a perfect exposition of what had happened (trading) or what is happening (the process of Šavrinization, fasadism and the search for authenticity). Thus on a tour along the trade routes of the Šavrinkas you can sample the »merenda (It. – snack) of the Šavrinkas«, visitors can meet a local woman who plays the part of an egg seller—i.e., a Šavrinka, on postcards we can peek into scenes from the lives of Šavrinkas, and finally, view the imposing lithopuncture statue of the Šavrinka in Hrastovlje. Or, as Miles Richardson wrote, the final step in the process of incorporating the setting into the ongoing situation is the objectification of the sense of the situation upon the setting so that the setting becomes a material image of emerging situation (RICHARDSON 2003: 85), either in the form of stone or portrayed Šavrinkas. Here the literary production is not merely the utilization of the lives of the pedlars (Šavrinkas) in order to form symbolic images and a collective subject (ACCATI 2001: 134–35), but also allowed the individual pedlars, in our case Marija Franca, to take advantage of the opportunity to tell their stories and individuate themselves, and thus enter history as individuals. Furthermore, the literary production not only created Šavrinian identity, but also (re)shaped the landscape and the overall material culture of the Istrian countryside.

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