

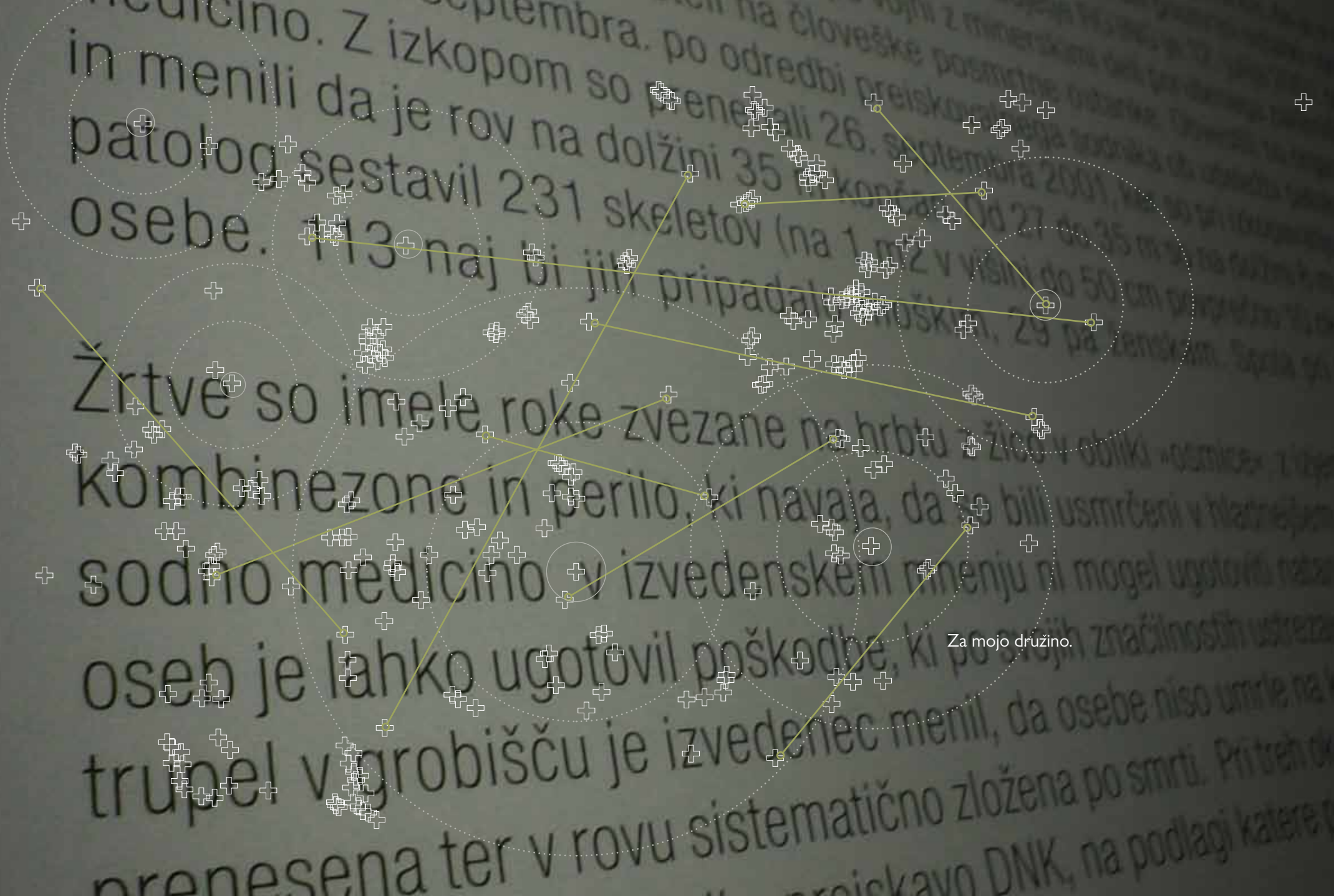


SPOMENIK MONUMENT

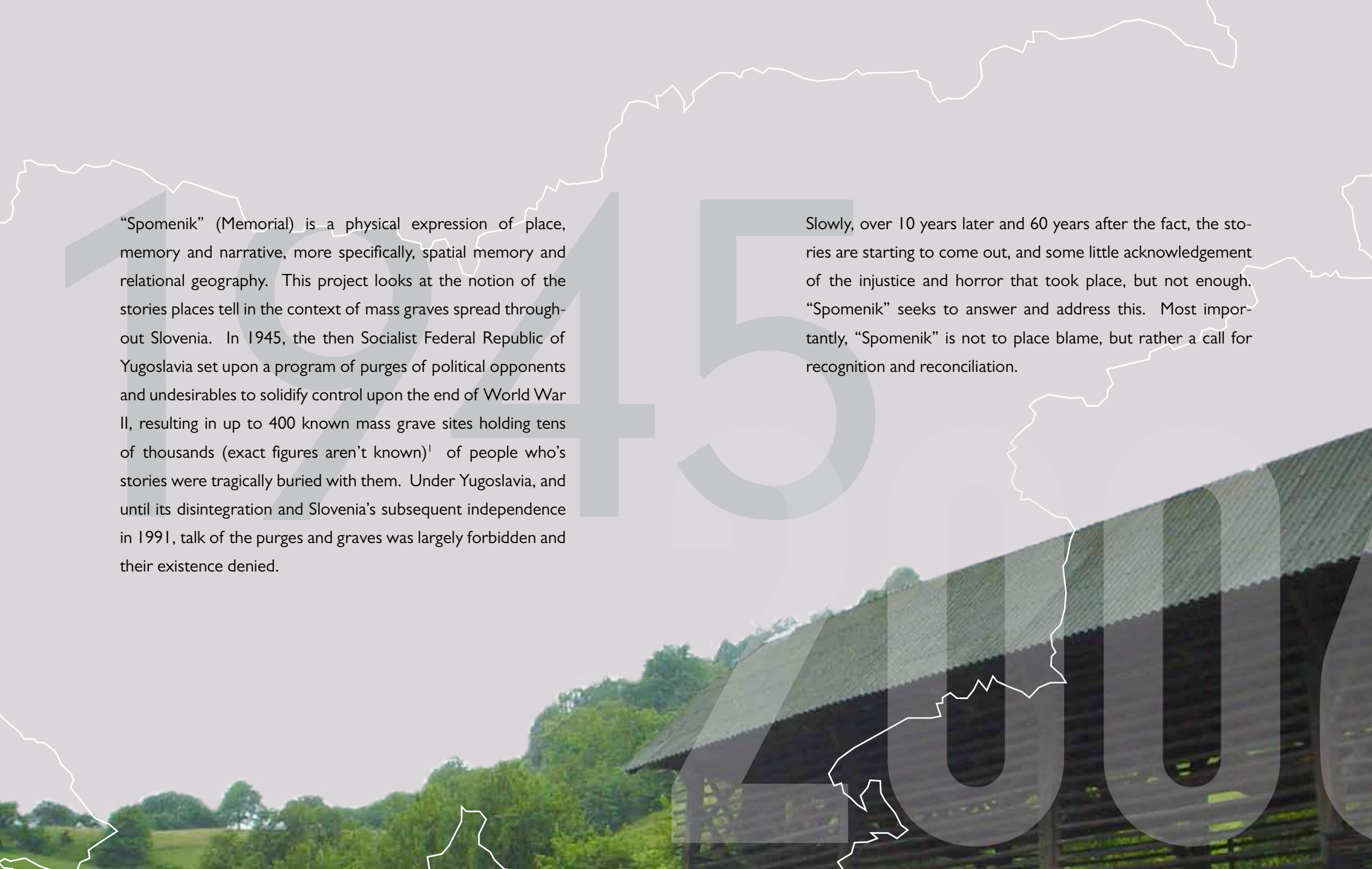
www.spomenik.org



Design for a networked monument exploring spatial memory and relational geography.



Za mojo družino.



“Spomenik” (Memorial) is a physical expression of place, memory and narrative, more specifically, spatial memory and relational geography. This project looks at the notion of the stories places tell in the context of mass graves spread throughout Slovenia. In 1945, the then Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia set upon a program of purges of political opponents and undesirables to solidify control upon the end of World War II, resulting in up to 400 known mass grave sites holding tens of thousands (exact figures aren’t known)¹ of people who’s stories were tragically buried with them. Under Yugoslavia, and until its disintegration and Slovenia’s subsequent independence in 1991, talk of the purges and graves was largely forbidden and their existence denied.

Slowly, over 10 years later and 60 years after the fact, the stories are starting to come out, and some little acknowledgement of the injustice and horror that took place, but not enough. “Spomenik” seeks to answer and address this. Most importantly, “Spomenik” is not to place blame, but rather a call for recognition and reconciliation.

Memory is very spatially oriented, both in terms of physical, three dimensional objects, as well as to the spaces formed around us. We as human beings feel an overwhelming need to keep memory alive, in a way providing the impetus to remember deliberately, through things and in speech as well, using things in discourse to keep them alive. We need to keep records, records of events to keep those events alive. We likewise form memories around places. “Place memory,”² or the forming of social identities around particular sites of events and their remembrance, perhaps may come to the fore again as it was before they started drawing borders over the past 200 years of the modern state with ferocity. However, “when the past is no longer obviously connected to the present, memory becomes of diagnostic importance.”³ Perhaps we should just learn how to create our own places as easily as we create and retell our stories.

Just as we can and need to create places, **the past becomes a place we can visit**⁴, because it is, in essence, an “instantaneous configuration of experiences.”⁵ Just as you can recreate an experience, you can also recreate a place. Place is therefore, also transitional and transferable. With the modern phenomena of people, groups, and to an extent, entire communities on the move, housing and the very notion of home itself is more and more provisional. Likewise, so too can monuments, as physical expressions of groups and their memories, be equally mobile. With much of this transitory phenomenon being dependent on technology, particularly communications and network technology, it could best suit people who are always on the move, and in a sense in-between places, to have places brought to them.





PLACE might be “whatever stable object catches out attention,”⁶ but a place need not only be physical, for it can just as easily exist in a memory, a moment or a glance just as well. A place is just that- a pause⁷. That pause, that reflection shining through the predawn haze and the murky grey makes it something. For that split second you are somewhere. For that split second, where your mind, whether now or *a priori*⁸ from a decision hundreds of years ago, decided that something had value. Something pulled it out of the void of time and space and gave it something. It gave it somewhere to rest, it gave it meaning.⁹ “Primary and Immobile,”¹⁰ as Louis Marin says. As immobile as a gravestone, and just as personal.

3 TRANSPORT

1. Plavnik Miha ✓	16. Kraposnik Igneo
2. Legvert Alojz	17. Jucifridria ✓
3. Blasi Venci ✓	18. Gorstner Joz
11. Pap Franc ✓	19. Rastmajer Mirko
12. Borušak Franc ✓	20. Libert Anton
13. Gornik Slavko ✓	21. Koznik Franc
14. Jager Jp ✓	22. Kalivak Anton
15. Brinar Ida ✓	23. Ruge Rudolf
16. Kurent Katarina	24. Kusa Valentin
17. Perol Joz ✓	25. [REDACTED]
18. Laupar Marija ✓	26. Belter Martin
19. Dečnik Ladislav ✓	27. Dek Silva
20. Pap Alojz ✓	28. Pankl Jozef
1. Kapelari Terezija	29. Čerem Anton
12. Kapelari Anton	30. Grossner Franc
15. Kestic Miha	

3 TRANSPORT

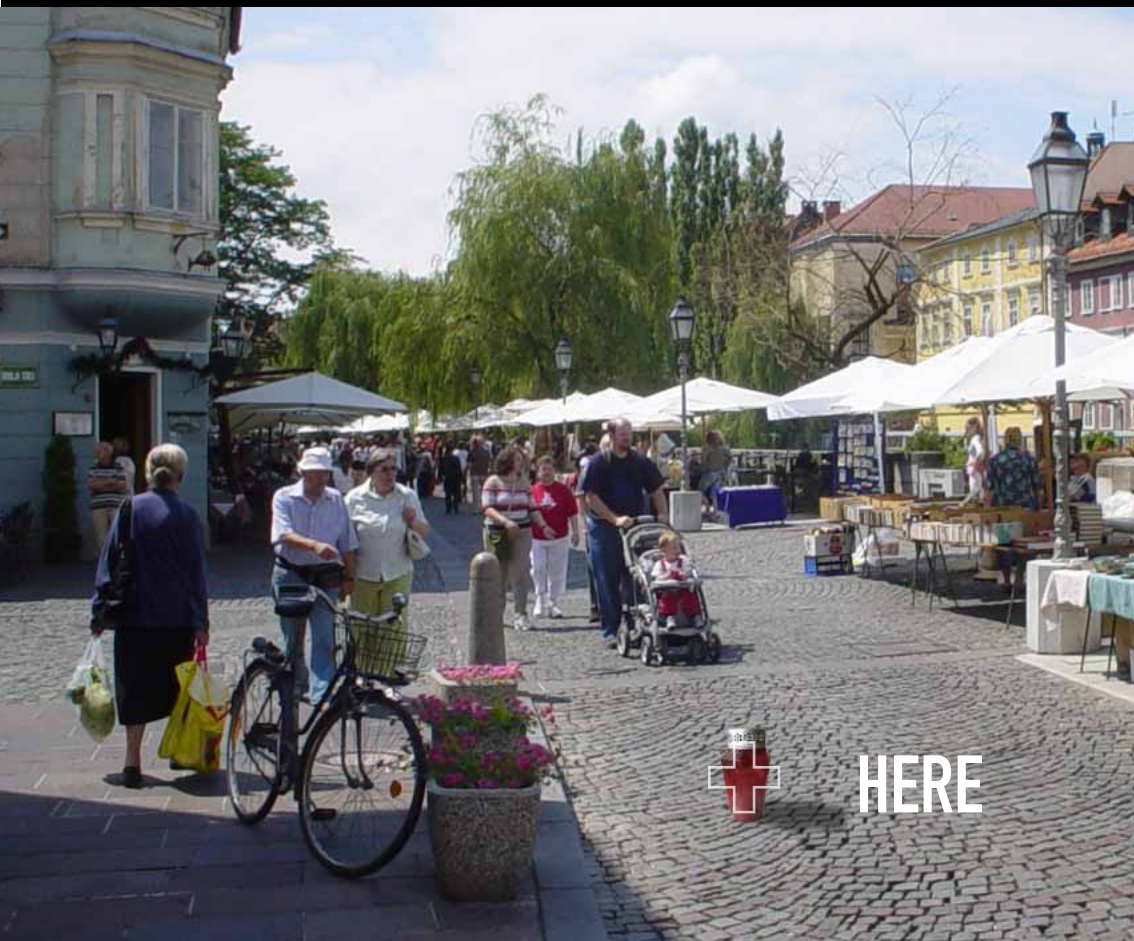
1. [REDACTED]	16. [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]	17. [REDACTED]
4. Jamsak Rudolf ✓	18. [REDACTED]
5. Jevih Jozef	19. Jozse Jozef
6. Lebar Alojz	21. Kayilovsek Ivan
7. Lotbar Pani	22. Jahnjnik Leopold
8. Prek Franc	23. [REDACTED]
9. Mori Alojz ✓	24. Kalstel Franc
10. Kofir Franc ✓	25. Miklavcic Ivan
11. Povsic Ivan ✓	26. Velekcnja Karl
12. Polutnik Karl ✓	
13. Polak Ivan ✓	
14. Pristav Stane ✓	
15. Romih Franc ✓	

We are our stories.¹¹ Our personal “acts of narration not only represent, but also realize theories of self and world, and these theories are not confined to the past, but guide present and future understandings and behavior as well.”¹² Thus, we are doomed to be the bearers of history, trudging along under its constant weight and watch. As the eternal optimist Marx puts it, “The tradition of the dead generations, weighs like a nightmare on the minds of the living.”¹³

The answer might lie in “narrative as [a] coherent sequence [which] makes history or experience comprehensible.”¹⁴ The twists and turns of a good tale wrap around the reader/listener because the teller knows how to lead them along, and how make them relate. “Part of this experience of following involves a re-contextualization of the narrative imagery and events in terms of the listener’s own life experience.”¹⁵ Thus, stories, whether our own or someone else, are a way for us to understand and empathize.



How do we collectively remember and how is this best expressed spatially? How do you design for mass death, injustice, and truth literally buried in the ground? How do you design for competing histories and grudges and feelings as fresh today as they were over 50 years ago? How does this relate to our (post) modern world where place itself is transitional? What “Spomenik” is, is a network of remembrance as expressed through mapped mobile access points recreating a macro-geography in the urban environment. “Spomenik” is thus inherently mobile and relational, and instead relies on a technological and narrative framework rather than on concrete and steel to express memory. So therefore, it is more of a framework, an emergent network of distributed stories and places. This framework designed so that the narratives kept hidden for so long would be provided by those and the loved ones of those who were victimized. With a web interface to maintain and provide the content, and a locale-dependent, physical output, it would be distributed in every sense of the word, being non-hierarchical and distributed both geographically and structurally. It’s inherently moveable as well because physically it is nothing more than a network of small, easily deployable networked objects, meaning it could be in a gallery space, city center or public park.



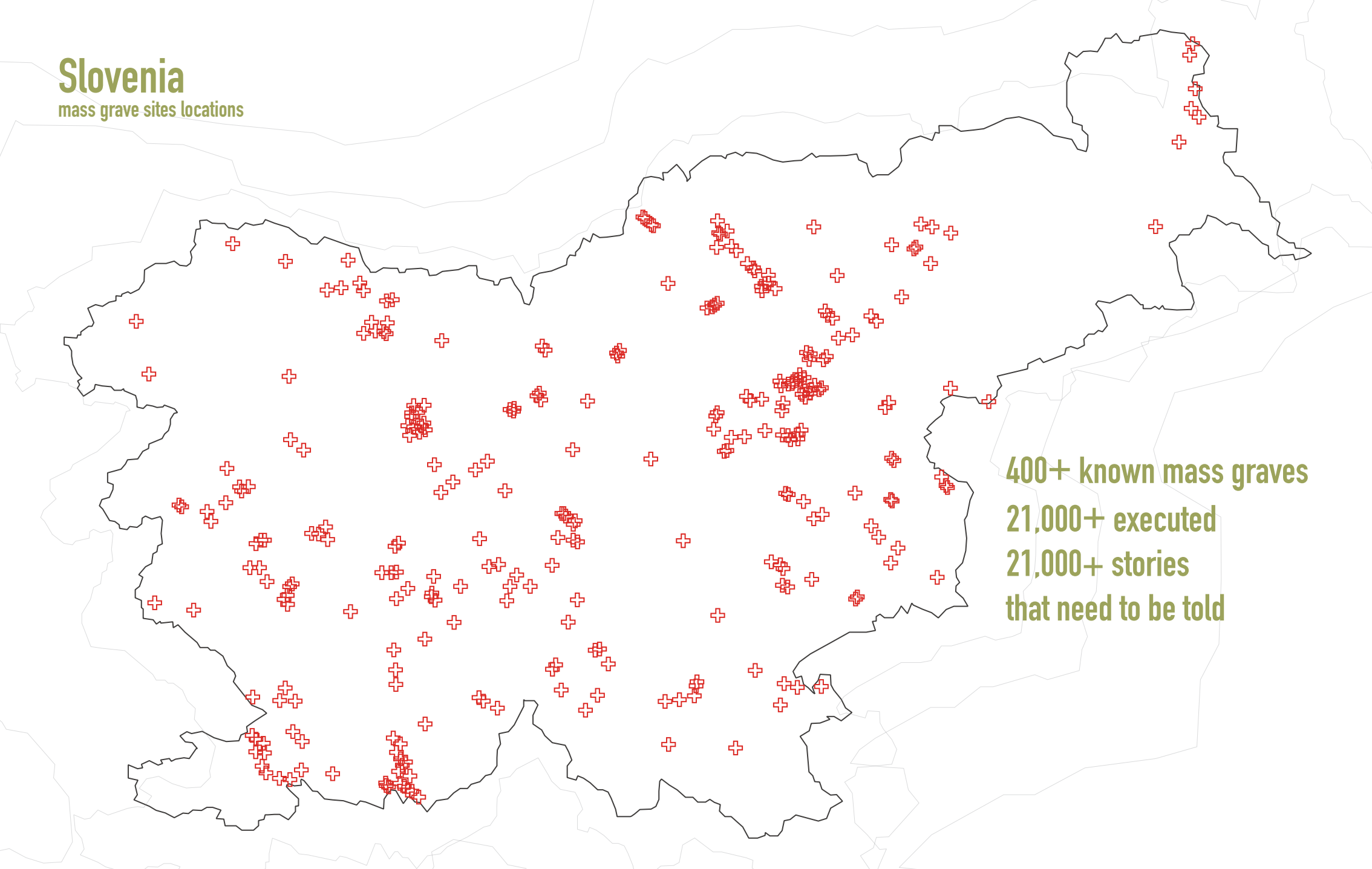
HERE



= T H E R E

Slovenia

mass grave sites locations



400+ known mass graves

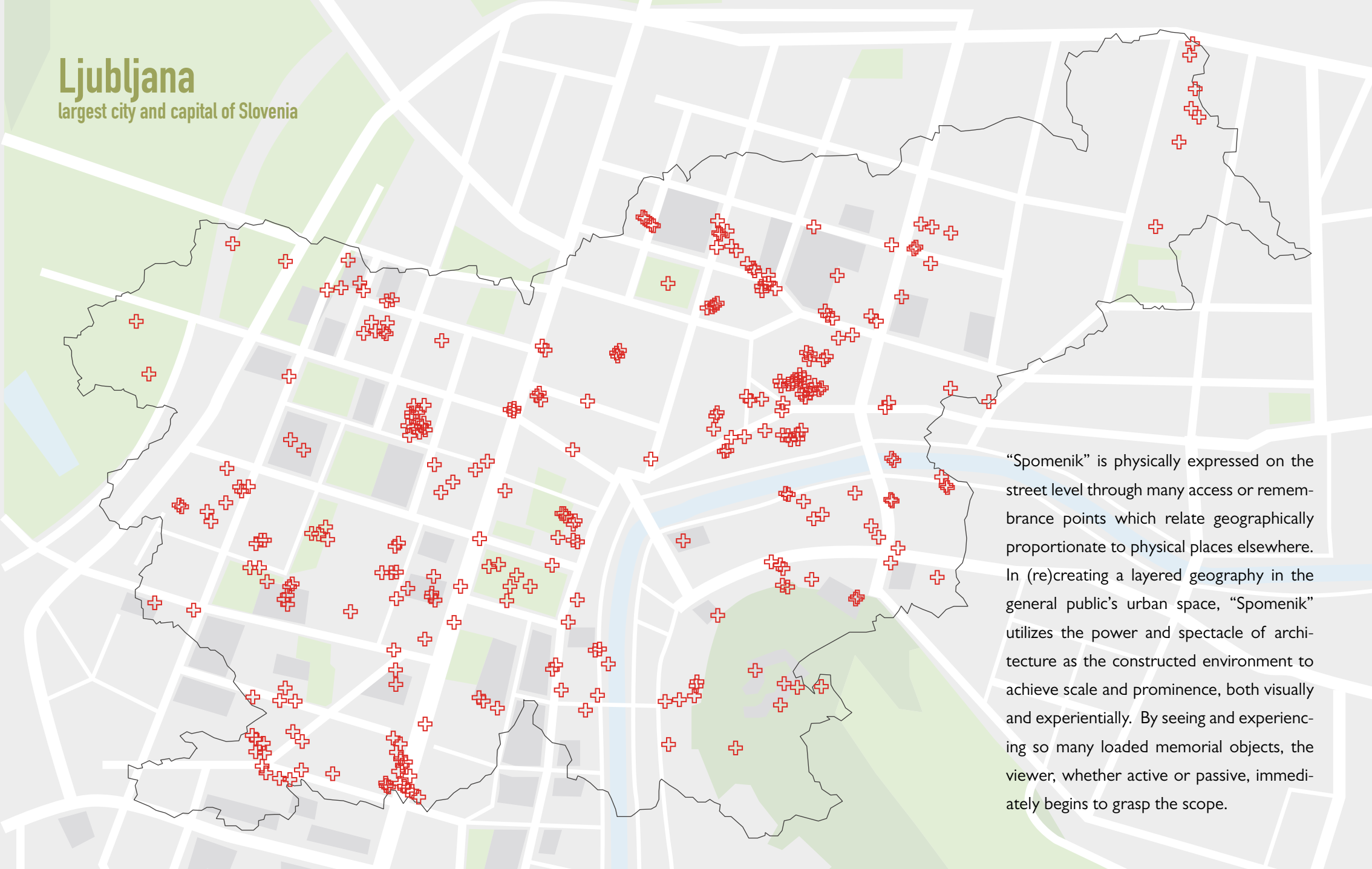
21,000+ executed

21,000+ stories

that need to be told

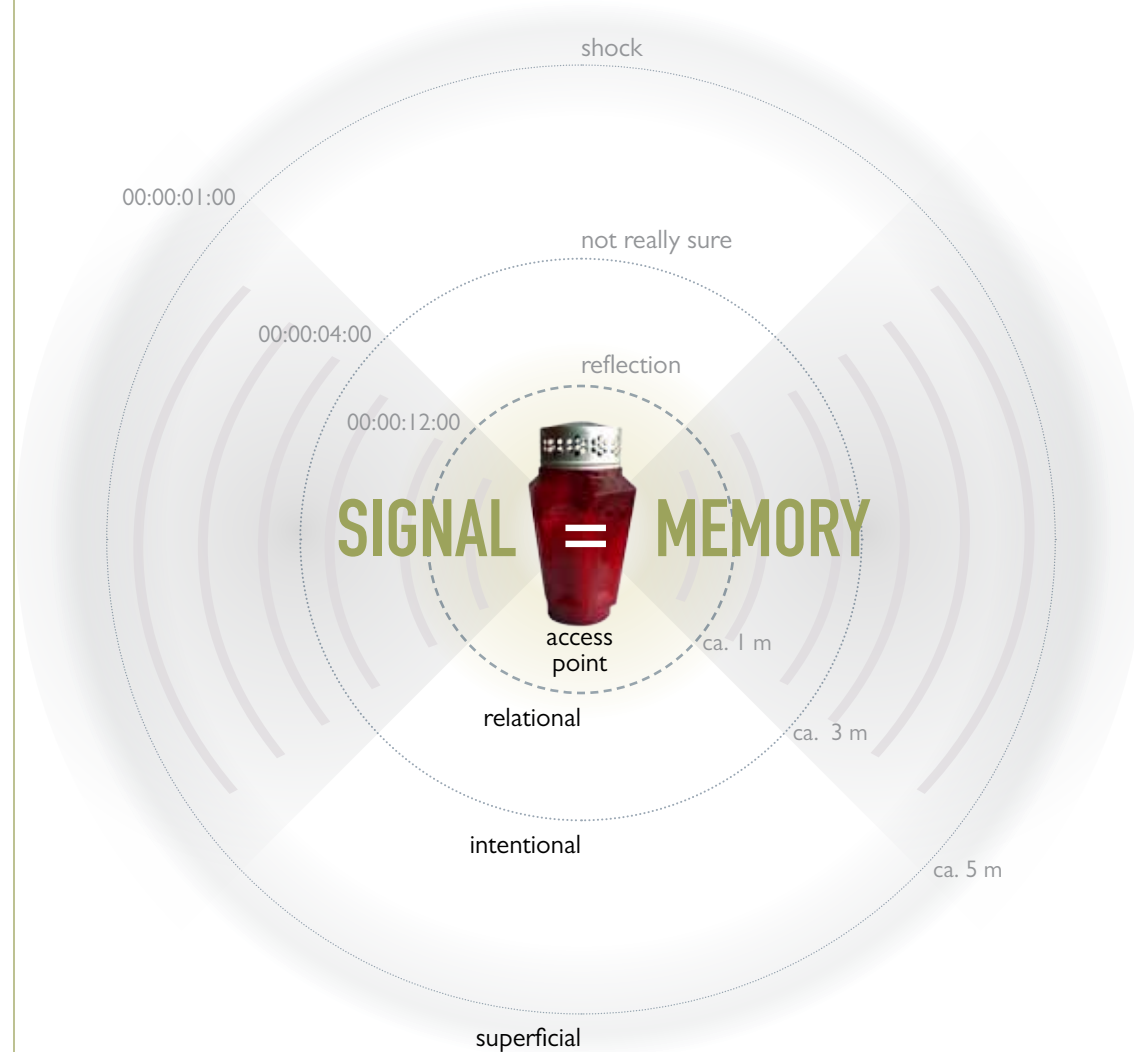
Ljubljana

largest city and capital of Slovenia



“Spomenik” is physically expressed on the street level through many access or remembrance points which relate geographically proportionate to physical places elsewhere. In (re)creating a layered geography in the general public’s urban space, “Spomenik” utilizes the power and spectacle of architecture as the constructed environment to achieve scale and prominence, both visually and experientially. By seeing and experiencing so many loaded memorial objects, the viewer, whether active or passive, immediately begins to grasp the scope.

As a platform, “Spomenik” is meant to publish and push stories out of the ground far away where they have been buried to those that either may not know, or that don’t want to hear. As a system, it is there for those who have suffered, for them to have a bottom-up way of expressing their remembrance with their own means and of claiming and making known their history.



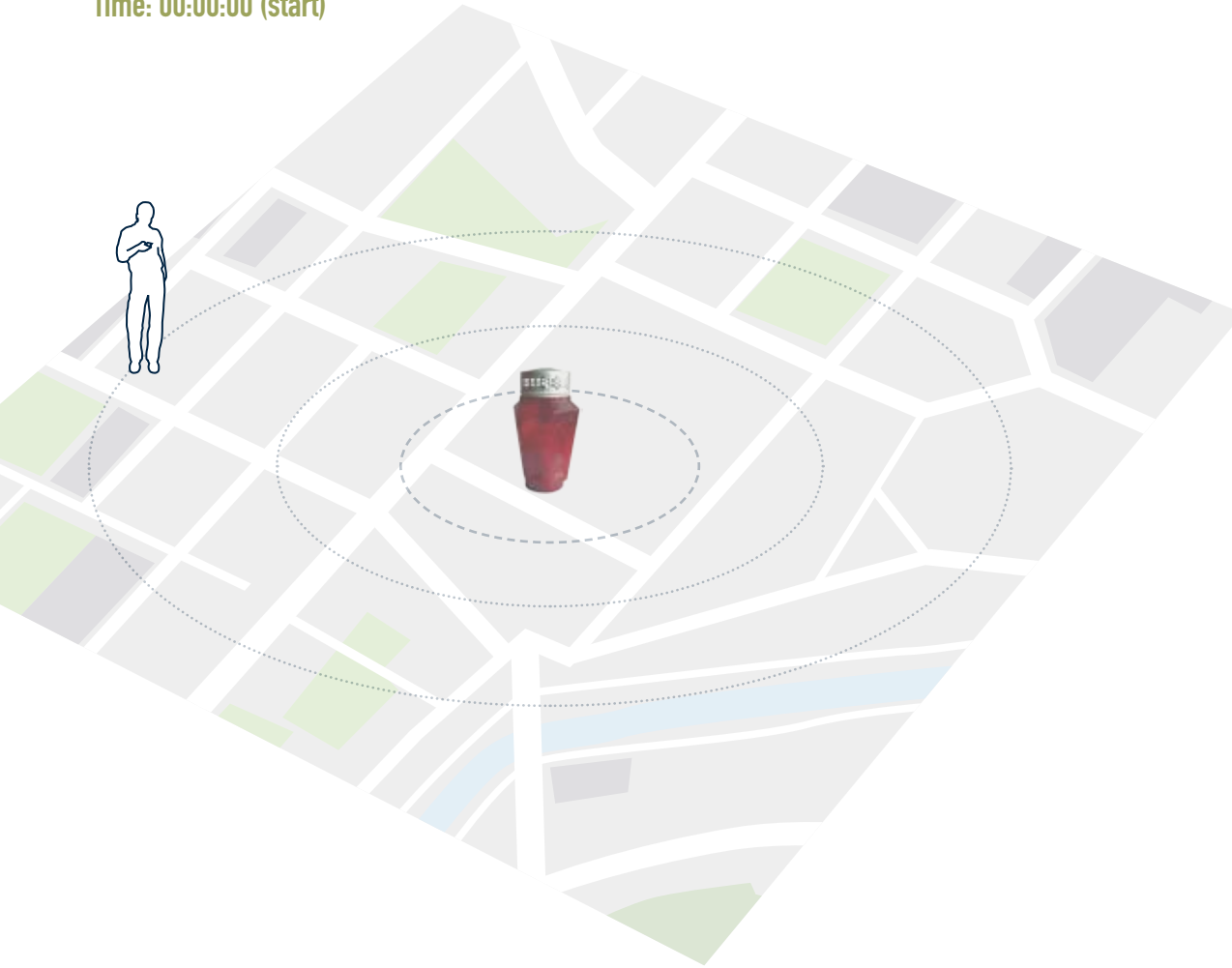
The use of grave candles and markings is significant in central and eastern Europe. These particular candles, almost always red, are widely used to mark death sites and graves, and can be seen everywhere from on the sides of roadways to mountain crevasses. They always mean death.



accessing Spomenik: GPS/Bluetooth

Distance: 5 m

Time: 00:00:00 (start)

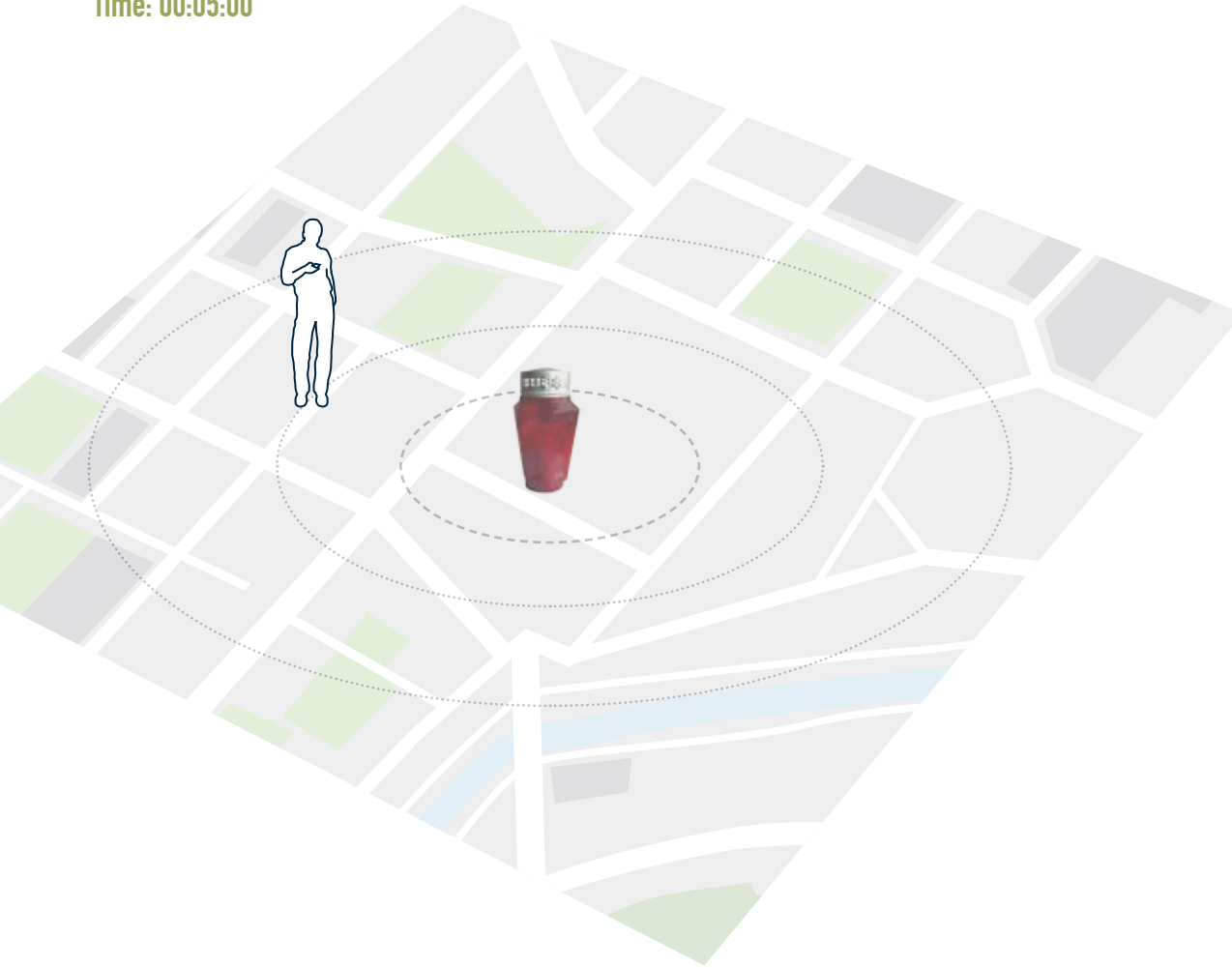


User approaches the access point and upon entering and approving access is presented with the location of the 'place' and the number of dead there.

accessing Spomenik: GPS/Bluetooth

Distance: 3 m

Time: 00:05:00

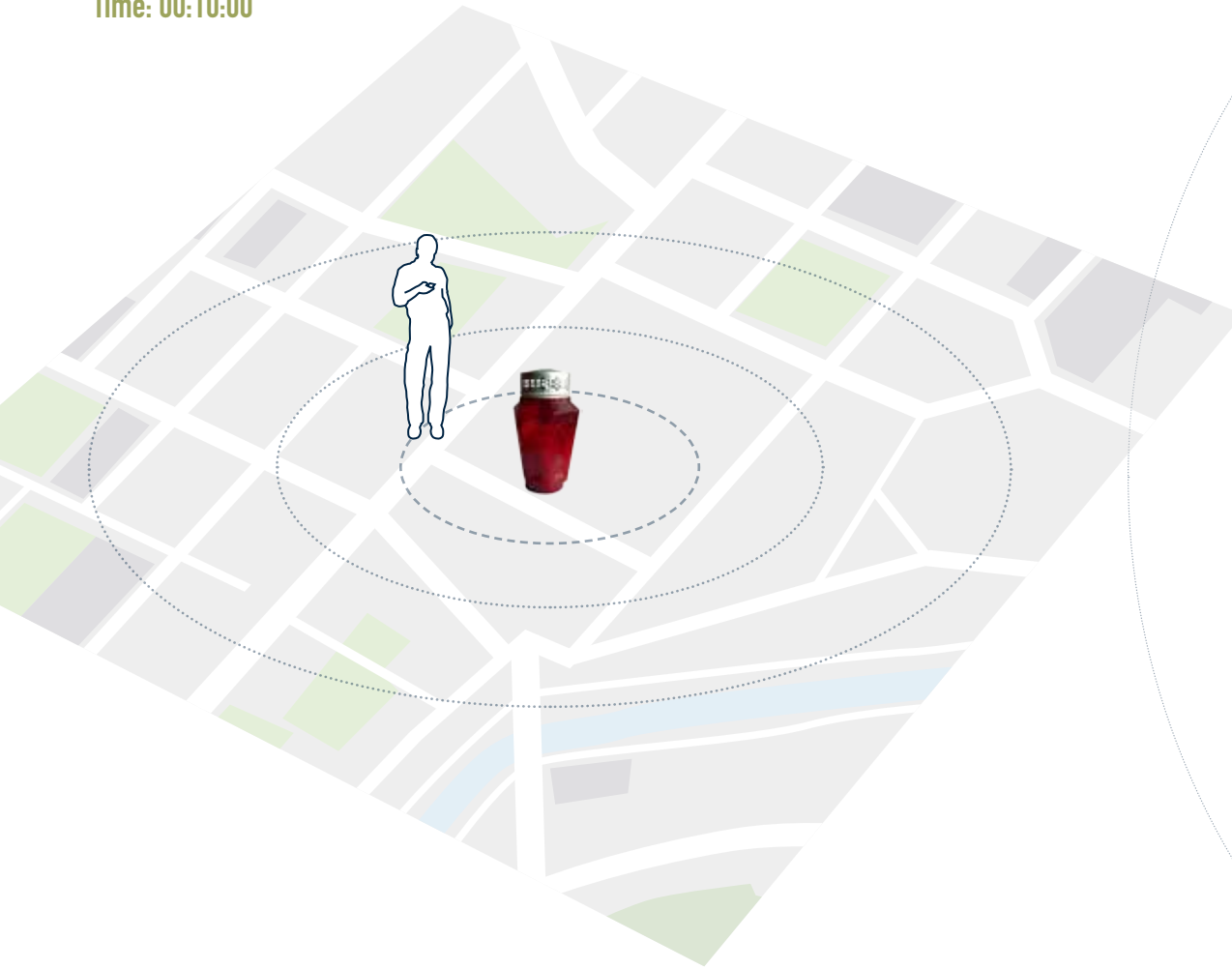


Once entered into the memorial, the memorial displays a picture (if available) of a victim executed at that 'place' and any story attached to the victim.

accessing Spomenik: GPS/Bluetooth

Distance: 1 m

Time: 00:10:00

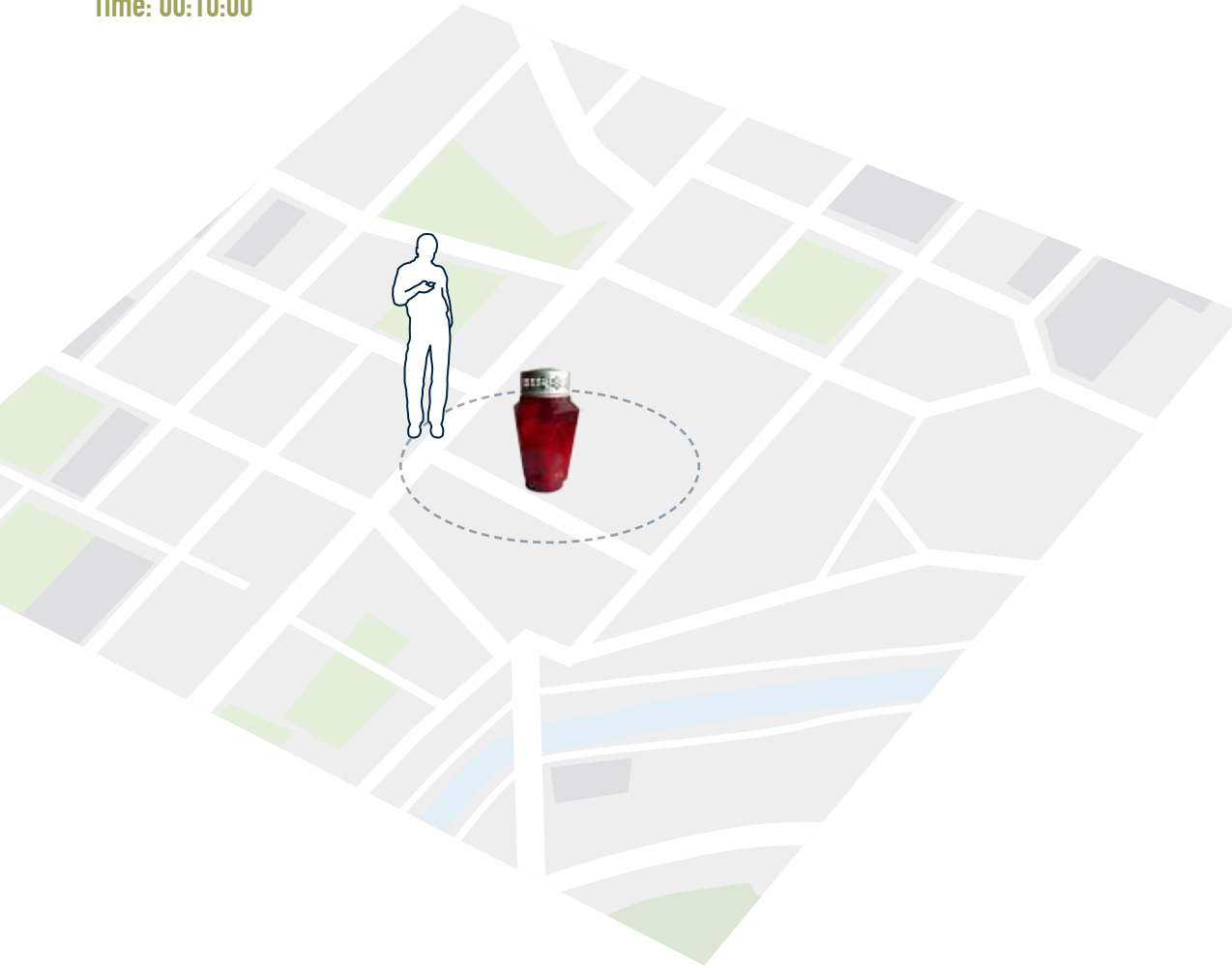


Finally, when within close proximity or otherwise next to the access point a final level of intimate narrative, their name, surname, place of birth and where and when they were excuted is related to the user.

accessing Spomenik: SMS / MMS

Distance: 1 m

Time: 00:10:00

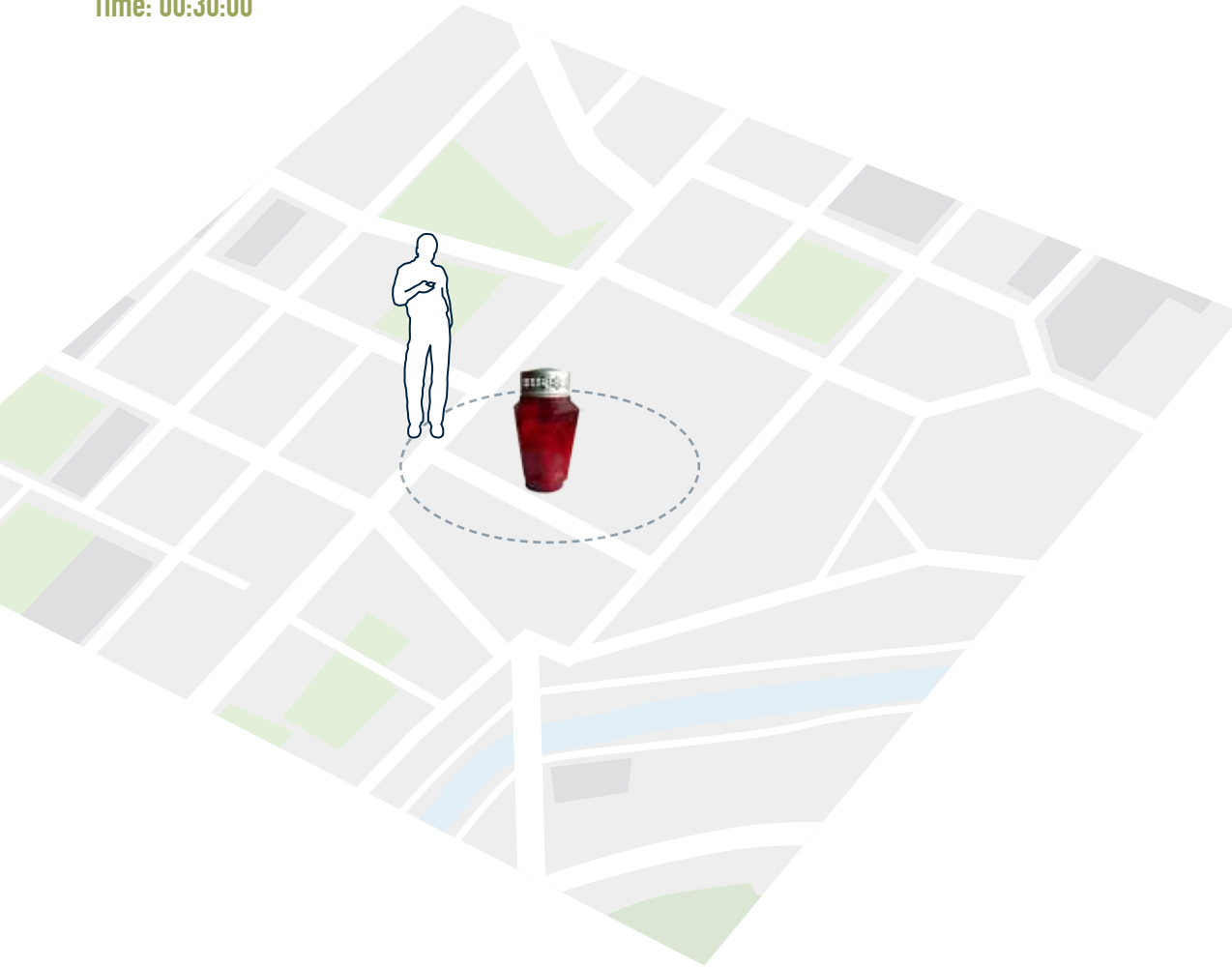


If there is not Bluetooth access or if the user wishes instead to use the SMS-based version the user sends a message to the phone number on the access point with the name of the place. The user is then sent back a message with a story of a victim of that site.

accessing Spomenik: SMS / MMS

Distance: 1 m

Time: 00:30:00



Alternately, the SMS access also provides a text based interface to the monument records. In this instance, the user can search to see if someone he was related to was killed there, or perhaps he could just search by his surname to see if he potentially had family killed there.

- ◆ Dovze
- ◆ Kocevski Rog
- ◆ Glazuta
- ◆ Huda Jama
- ◆ Kosnica pri Celju
- ◆ Zelje pri Komendi
- ◆ Bistrica ob Sotli
- ◆ Bukovje
- ◆ Celje
- ◆ Divaca
- ◆ Teharje
- ◆ Mislinja
- ◆ Dol pri Hrastniku
- ◆ Gornji Dolic
- ◆ Marija Reka
- ◆ Ljutomer
- ◆ Gorenja Trebusa
- ◆ Iska
- ◆ Idrijski Log
- ◆ Jelčni Vrh
- ◆ Kalce
- ◆ Komenda
- ◆ Obrov
- ◆ Knezdol
- ◆ Lasko

more....



◆ Teharje

Tone Slavec : b.1926 - d.1945 (Poholv gradec)



Tone Slavec was from Poholv Gradec, and was killed at Teharje. At the very least what is going to be needed is his first name, surname, date of birth and date of death and where he was killed. All of this information would all go here in this box. Here would also follow some text about who he was or maybe how and where he died, or under what circumstances all of this happened if this is available.

So all of this text will be either collected from existing sources or also through the website. So for instance, in this case Tone Slavec's nephew has gotten access to the

Spomenik website where he can enter in a story about his long lost uncle as well as his date of birth, birthplace, date of death (if known) and most importantly where he was killed. With all of this data and information he can be put on the map so to speak, as the one above, where you could browse through all the people who were killed at Teharje that are in the system.

Login

Password

Submit

[Forgot your password?](#)

[Interested in registering?](#)

News

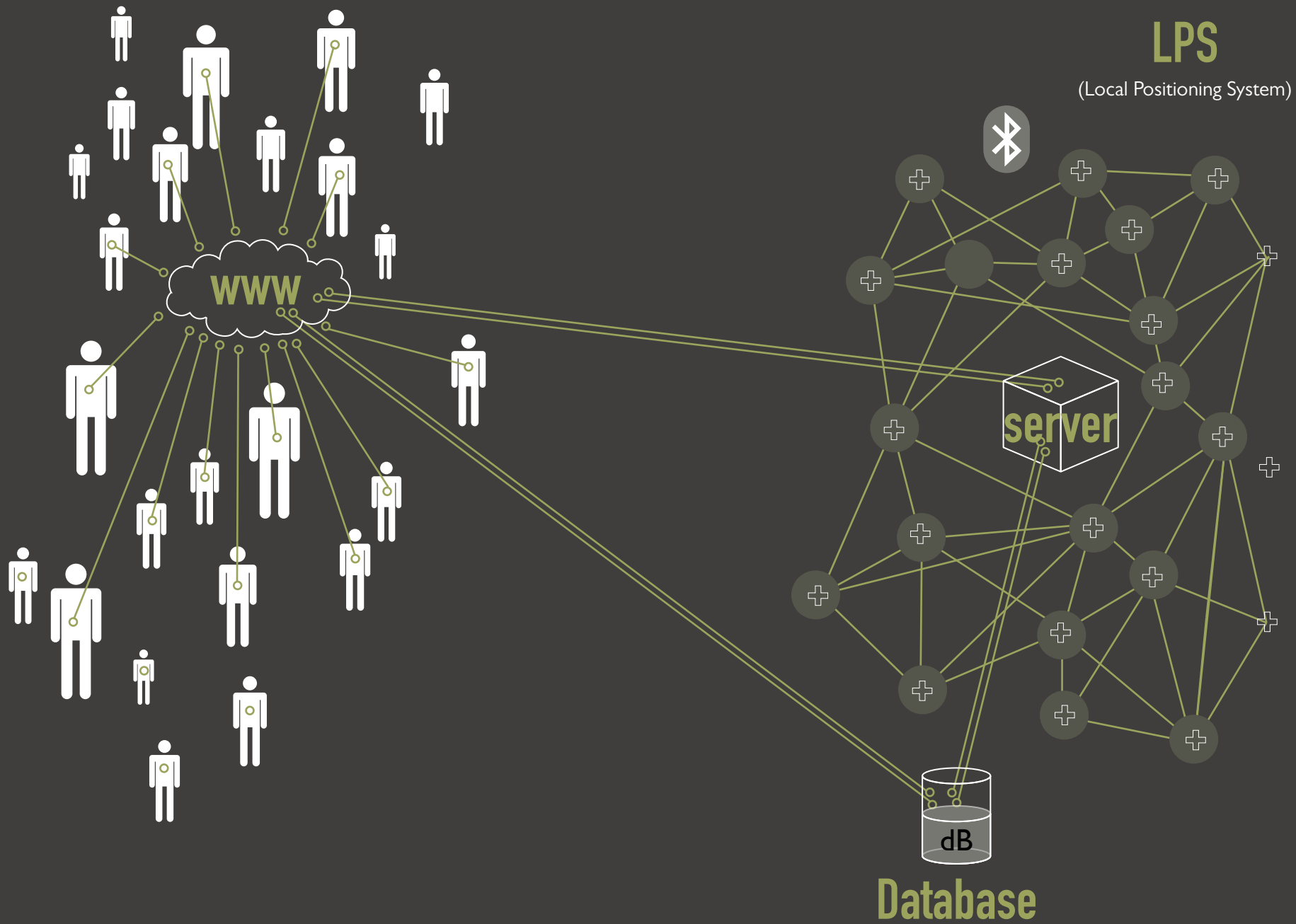
News Article 1 about current stuff happening...

Some other news stuff...

Somehow we get money....



Spomenik.org





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- ⁵ DE CERTEAU, Michel. Cited in AUGE, Marc, 1995. *Non Places*, p. 173.
- ⁶ TUAN, Yi-Fu, 1977. *Space and Place*, p. 161.
- ⁷ TUAN, Yi-Fu, 1977. *Space and Place*.
- ⁸ Translation (Latin): prior or presupposed knowledge.
- ⁹ MASSEY, Dorreen, 2004. *Geographies of Responsibility*. *Geografiska Annaler*, p.7.
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