

CURRICULUM VITAE

Prof. Irena Avsenik Nabergoj, PhD

I. RESEARCH AND ACADEMIC PROFILE

Irena Avsenik Nabergoj is a literary historian and researcher, a full professor and a research fellow. Her research stems from literary studies, particularly Slovenian and comparative literature, literary history, theory and interpretation, and extends to the study of intertextuality, reception, cultural memory and the biblical literary tradition. At the heart of her interest lies the question of how literature, across different historical periods, shapes fundamental human experiences – love and guilt, longing and loss, truth, suffering, war and violence, responsibility towards others, emotions and ethical decisions.

Slovenian literature occupies a special and enduring place in her body of work. She explores it both as an independent literary-historical sphere and in terms of its integration into European literary, cultural and spiritual currents. Among the authors to whom she has devoted extensive research are Ivan Cankar, France Prešeren, Franc Ksaver Meško, Alojz Rebula, Edvard Kocbek, Drago Jančar and others, whilst her work also extends into the older Slovenian literary and translation tradition.

The comparative dimension of her work spans from ancient and biblical literature to European and world literature. In individual studies, she has placed Slovenian authors, works and motifs in dialogue with Homer, Sophocles, Euripides, Dante, William Shakespeare, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Alexander Pushkin, Heinrich Heine, Fyodor M. Dostoevsky, Leo N. Tolstoy, Henrik Ibsen, Charles Dickens, Gerhart Hauptmann, Thomas Mann, Imre Kertész and other authors of the European literary tradition. This broad literary-historical perspective is combined with a close reading of individual texts and an examination of how related motifs, imagery and ethical dilemmas change across periods, languages and cultural contexts.

The starting point of her research method is a close reading of the literary text – its language, narrative, dramatic or poetic structure, perspective, characterisation, imagery and symbolism. This is followed by an exploration of the relationships between texts and traditions, the historical and cultural context, and the transformations of motifs, images and narrative patterns across different periods and literary systems.

II. EDUCATION AND ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

Her educational background stems from literary studies and later expanded into fields that enabled in-depth research into biblical literature, Judaism, early Christianity and their influence on European and Slovenian literature and culture.

II.1 University education

Between 1989 and 1994, she completed her undergraduate studies in Slovenian language and literature and art history at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana.

II.2 Master's degree in Literary Studies

Between 1995 and 1998, she continued her Master's studies in Literary Studies at the same faculty, focusing her research on literary history, theory and interpretation.

II.3 PhD in Literary Studies

Between 2000 and 2004, she completed her doctoral studies in Literary Studies at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, and was awarded her first doctorate in 2004.

II.4 Second PhD – Biblical Studies, Judaism and Early Christianity

Between 2011 and 2015, she completed a second doctoral programme in the field of biblical studies, Judaism and early Christianity at the Faculty of Theology, University of Ljubljana. This second PhD broadened her literary research through direct familiarity with biblical sources, the Jewish literary tradition and the history of their reception, enabling her to conduct comparative research into the trajectories of motifs, literary forms and symbols from ancient texts to European and Slovenian literature.

II.5 Language and additional research skills

Over the years, she has supplemented her research work with the language training required to work with ancient literary and cultural sources. She has studied Ancient Greek and Latin (on courses at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana), and has also undertaken two one-month intensive courses in Hebrew at the University of Haifa in Israel. Her knowledge of these languages enables her to work more directly with biblical and other ancient texts and to monitor their subsequent translations, interpretations and literary transformations more closely. Her research also encompasses Old Church Slavonic and several Slavic languages, whilst she uses English and German for research purposes within the international academic community.

In 2021 and 2026, she undertook further training in the field of digital humanities and information and communication technologies at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, the ZRC SAZU and the Faculty of Economics, University of Ljubljana.

III. ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH WORK

Irena Avsenik Nabergoj's academic and research work is carried out across several Slovenian university and research environments, whilst remaining fundamentally rooted in literary studies. Since 2000, she has been working at the University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Theology, where she is currently a full professor of religious studies and religious anthropology. Since 2005, she has been a researcher at the Institute of Cultural History at ZRC SAZU, where she is a research fellow in the field of literary and cultural history. Between 2005 and 2021, she also carried out teaching and research work at the University of Nova Gorica, where she was appointed full professor of literature and lectured on literary theory, Slovenian literature, the works of Ivan Cankar, and the methodology of literary studies. She was also appointed full professor of Slovenian literature at the Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor. Her work in these academic and research environments enables her to combine university teaching with research into Slovenian literature, literary and cultural history, and comparative and intercultural studies.

Her dual research expertise – a PhD in literary studies and a second PhD in the field of biblical studies, Judaism and early Christianity – enables her to work independently at the intersections where knowledge of multiple literary, linguistic and cultural traditions is required for an accurate interpretation.

III.1 Academic supervision and the design of research programmes

An important part of her work also involves leading collaborative scientific research. She led the ARIS flagship project *'Sources and Transformations of Motifs and Symbols in Literature and Languages'* (2009–2012); since 2015, she has been leading the ARIS research programme P6-0262, initially *'Judeo-Christian Sources and Dimensions of Justice'* (2015–2021), and subsequently the ARIS research programme P6-0262 *'Values in Judeo-Christian Sources and Tradition and the Possibilities for Dialogue'* (2022–2027). Between 2023 and 2026, she was the initiator and leader of the ARIS J6-50212 fundamental research project *'The Power of Emotions and the Status of Female Characters in Various Literary Genres of the Old Testament'*, which brought together researchers from the University of Ljubljana, the ZRC SAZU and the Koper Science and Research Centre.

It is characteristic of her that she does not separate research leadership from her own academic work. Research questions evolve from individual studies through group projects and international discussions to individual and joint monographic syntheses.

IV. SLOVENIAN LITERATURE

A significant and ongoing part of her research into Slovenian literature is the oeuvre of Ivan Cankar (1876–1918), to which she has devoted more than two decades of research, four independent monographs and numerous academic studies and international presentations. Due to its scope and continuity, this area of research is presented in greater detail in a separate Chapter V.

She has also extended her research into Slovenian literature to include other authors and periods. In 2009, she lectured at the University of Udine on the poetry of Slovenian women writers living abroad; on 9 November 2015, she presented research on the seduction and abduction of Lepa Vida (Beautiful/Fair Vida) in Slovenian literature at the University of Klagenfurt; on 20 October 2015, she lectured on wartime violence and post-war fates in Slovenian autobiographical and biographical literature at the University of Graz.

She has also extended her comparative research into Slovenian poetry to the Slavic world: she examined the symbolism of water in literary depictions of love and death in the works of France Prešeren and Alexander Pushkin, and presented her 2014 research at the AATSEEL conference in Chicago.

In 2023, at the International Society for Cultural History conference held in Singapore – which she attended remotely – she presented a paper on Cankar's critique of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the years leading up to its collapse. In 2024, she gave a lecture on the theme of love in the literary oeuvre of Franc Ksaver Meško at a symposium in Slovenj Gradec; in 2025, this

research took on an expanded academic form in the study *The Transformation of Love in the Mature and Late Works of Franc Ksaver Meško: Between Longing, Renunciation and Devotion*. In 2026, she situated Slovenian literature within an international framework of comparative literary studies by presenting a paper at the AATSEEL Annual Conference, held in New Orleans from 19 to 22 February. Her paper, entitled *Love as Resistance: Ethical Proximity in the Wartime Prose of Slovenian Writers Edvard Kocbek and Drago Jančar*, examined the literary representation of ethical proximity, interpersonal responsibility and human responses to war and violence in the prose of these two Slovenian authors.

Her research encompasses a broad historical spectrum of Slovenian literature, extending from early Slovenian literary traditions and biblical translations through the works of France Prešeren, Simon Jenko, Ivan Cankar, Franc Ksaver Meško, Ciril Kosmač, Edvard Kocbek, Alojz Rebula, Dominik Smole and Zorko Simčič to Drago Jančar and contemporary Slovenian writers, including Maja Haderlap, Tina Vrščaj and Ana Svetel.

Rather than examining individual authors and works in isolation, she approaches Slovenian literature from a comparative literary-historical perspective, situating literary texts within broader European aesthetic, thematic and ethical contexts. Her research explores intertextual relationships, thematic and structural parallels, and the transformation of literary motifs across different national literatures, historical periods and cultural traditions.

Within this comparative framework, she has examined France Prešeren's poetry in relation to that of Alexander Pushkin and traced the literary motifs of longing and temptation across the works of Goethe, Pushkin, Heine, Prešeren and Jenko. Her research on Ivan Cankar has also explored the anthropological and ethical dimensions of his literary works in relation to Shakespeare, Dostoevsky and other European authors, with particular attention to literary representations of the human condition, moral conflict, guilt, love, suffering and responsibility towards others.

This comparative approach does not diminish the distinctive features of Slovenian literature; rather, it illuminates its specific literary and cultural characteristics through a systematic examination of its relationships with broader European literary traditions.

V. IVAN CANKAR – LITERARY INTERPRETATION, ETHICS AND INTERNATIONAL RECEPTION

One of the longest-standing and most consistent areas of her research is the works of Ivan Cankar. This research has developed over more than two decades and has outgrown the scope of individual papers: it comprises four independent academic monographs, numerous academic studies, as well as lectures and presentations on Cankar within the Slovenian and international academic spheres.

The starting point for this research is Cankar's literature itself – his narrative, poetic and dramatic language, symbolism, depictions of humanity and interpersonal relationships, and the close interconnection between personal experience and social, ethical and spiritual issues. The research focuses on love and guilt, the mother and woman, longing, truth and reality, justice and salvation,

poverty and social exclusion, war, human dignity, faith, and the relationship between the artist, the individual and society.

In this context, Cankar's oeuvre is also examined in terms of its intertextual and comparative relationships with European literature. The analysis ranges from Shakespeare and Dostoevsky to the broader European spiritual and literary tradition and the Holy Scriptures; however, the comparison always stems from Cankar's text itself – from his transformation of borrowed motifs, imagery and ethical questions into his own distinctive literary world.

V.1 Monographic research focus

The first major synthesis is the monograph *Love and Guilt in the Work of Ivan Cankar* (Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2005, 794 pp.). In it, Cankar's oeuvre is examined through the fundamental tension between the human longing for love and the experience of guilt. Particular attention is paid to the images of the mother and the woman, and to the way in which the intimate emotional experience in Cankar's literature is transformed into the broader question of human conscience, responsibility and one's relationship with others.

V.2 Further research and new interpretations

The next phase of Cankar studies has made a more pronounced entry onto the international stage. The monograph *Mirror of Reality and Dreams: Stories and Confessions by Ivan Cankar* (= *Zrcalo resničnosti in sanj: zgodbe in izpovedi Ivana Cankarja*; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2008, 309 pp.) presents Cankar to international readers as a European modernist author and focuses on the relationship between reality, memory, dreams, autobiographical experience and the artistic transformation of life.

In 2013, Peter Lang in Frankfurt published a 463-page monograph entitled *The Power of Love and Guilt: Representations of the Mother and Woman in the Literature of Ivan Cankar* (= *Moč ljubezni in krivde: podobe matere in ženske v književnosti Ivana Cankarja*). The study explores the issue of female figures in Cankar's oeuvre in depth and demonstrates that, for him, the mother and the woman are not merely biographical or thematic categories, but bearers of a complex literary language of love, sacrifice, longing, guilt and moral responsibility.

The fourth monographic synthesis, *Justice and Redemption: Anthropological Realities and Literary Visions by Ivan Cankar* (= *Pravičnost in odrešenje: antropološke resničnosti in literarne vizije Ivana Cankarja*; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2014, 353 pp.), broadens the scope of the research from the intimate world of love and guilt to the social and anthropological dimensions of Cankar's literature. Questions of justice, poverty, humiliation, human dignity, injustice and the possibility of redemption come to the fore. In this way, Cankar emerges not only as a leading Slovenian writer, but as an author whose literary anthropology raises questions of broader European significance.

Four monographs – Ljubljana 2005, Frankfurt 2008, 2013 and 2014 – thus form a coherent body of research. The path leads from love and guilt, through reality, memory and artistic imagination, to images of the mother and the woman, and finally to justice, human dignity and salvation. A particular strength of this research arc lies in the fact that a significant portion of the findings was

published in English, thereby making them directly accessible to the international literary community.

The research did not end with the monographs. In the study *Ivan Cankar and the Great War* (2015), she placed Cankar's writing within the historical and ethical context of the First World War and explored his literary response to war, violence and social crisis. The work was published in *Zgodovinski časopis*, vol. 69, no. 3/4, pp. 352–400.

More recently, she has revisited Cankar from the perspective of the ideological and spiritual reception of his work. In 2022, she published a study entitled '*Questions of Ivan Cankar's Worldview in the Early Assessments of Slovenian Literary Historians*', in which she explores various interpretations of Cankar's worldview in Slovenian literary history. This was followed in 2024 by a study entitled '*Josip Vidmar on Ivan Cankar's Catholicism and the Views of Izidor Cankar through the Prism of Contemporary Theological Interpretation of Catholicism*', which re-examines the question of Cankar's relationship to faith and its subsequent interpretation.

V.3 Cankar in the international context

An important aspect of her research is the comparative literary-historical study of Ivan Cankar's works and their place within the broader European literary tradition. On 4 and 5 May 2009, she delivered two invited lectures at Charles University in Prague, examining the motifs of love and guilt in Cankar's literary works. On 14 May 2009, she gave a lecture at the University of Udine on Ivan Cankar's life and literary work during his years in Vienna, focusing on this formative period of his literary development. In 2023, she further explored Cankar's position within the European historical and cultural context by presenting a study of his literary critique of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the years preceding the collapse of the monarchy.

Her research into Cankar thus goes beyond the study of a single author and particularly clearly reveals the dual focus of her literary scholarship: in-depth research into Slovenian literature and its placement within the broader European and international context. Through Cankar's body of work, she examines issues of love and guilt, human vulnerability, social injustice, war, faith, responsibility towards others and human dignity.

The international scope of this line of research is confirmed by three standalone monographs published by Peter Lang in Frankfurt in 2008, 2013 and 2014, as well as presentations of the research at foreign universities and international academic conferences. Cankar is thus regarded not merely as a Slovenian classic, but as a European author whose literary anthropology raises questions about the universal human condition.

Research into Cankar therefore represents more than a study of a single author. Through his body of work, it is possible to trace the central questions that later also emerge in other areas of her research: how literature expresses love and guilt, how it portrays vulnerable human beings, how it responds to social injustice and war, how it understands responsibility towards others, and how individual life experiences give rise to a literary portrayal of the universal human condition.

It is precisely her studies on Cankar that particularly clearly demonstrate the dual focus of her literary scholarship: an in-depth exploration of one of Slovenia's most important authors, whilst simultaneously introducing him to an international audience. Three standalone books on Cankar were published in Frankfurt by Peter Lang in 2008, 2013 and 2014, and she has also presented her research at foreign universities and international academic conferences. Thus, Cankar is presented not merely as a national classic, but as a European author whose literary explorations of love, guilt, justice, war, faith and human dignity remain relevant to contemporary humanities.

VI. LEPA VIDA: FROM A SLOVENIAN BALLAD TO A EUROPEAN MOTIF OF LONGING, TEMPTATION AND LOSS

An important and self-contained body of literary research by Irena Avsenik Nabergoj centres on the motif of Lepa Vida (Fair Vida) – one of the most recognisable and, at the same time, most interpretatively rich motifs in Slovenian folk and literary tradition. The research draws on Slovenian tradition, yet examines Lepa Vida within a broad comparative literary context: as a tale of longing, seduction, departure, loss of home, motherhood, guilt and the unfulfilled desire to return, and as the Slovenian variant of broader European and Mediterranean narrative patterns.

The focus is on the literary transformation of the motif over time. For 'Lepa Vida' is not a uniform story with a single meaning. Its variants from Slovenian literary folklore and later artistic adaptations alter the protagonist's character, the reasons for her departure, the balance between voluntary choice and compulsion, and the significance of her longing for home and her child. These changes enable an exploration of how collective tradition adapts to new historical, social and aesthetic circumstances.

The main outcome of this research project is the comprehensive monograph *Longing and Temptation in the World of Literature: The Motif of Lepa Vida* (in the original Slovenian version: *Hrepenenje in skušnjava v svetu literature: motiv Lepe Vide*; Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2010, 726 pp.). The monograph examines the motif in its development from Slovenian literary folklore to fiction, placing it within a broader comparative framework of motifs of longing, temptation, seduction, abduction, departure and return. The scope of this comparative analysis extends beyond the history of a single Slovenian ballad: the motif of Lepa Vida opens up to related narratives of longing, seduction, temptation, abduction, departure and loss, ranging from ancient and biblical traditions through medieval literature to more recent European literary adaptations. It is precisely this movement between distant texts and traditions that makes it possible to determine more precisely what in 'Lepa Vida' belongs to the broader Mediterranean and European tradition of motifs, and what constitutes a specifically Slovenian literary transformation of this tradition.

The study of Lepa Vida thus contributes both to Slovenian literary studies and to comparative literary studies. Taking the Slovenian ballad and its variants as its point of departure, it broadens the scope of inquiry to encompass related literary motifs across different cultural and literary traditions. This comparative approach makes it possible to distinguish elements belonging to a wider European and Mediterranean motif tradition from those that have acquired distinctive meanings through their transformation in Slovenian literature. Particular attention is devoted to

the specific semantic configuration of the Lepa Vida motif, especially the interrelationship between longing, home, motherhood, loss and the unattainability of return.

VI.1 LONGING AS A LITERARY AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL CATEGORY

At the heart of this study lies longing, one of the fundamental categories of the Slovenian literary imagination. In Lepa Vida, longing is not merely an emotional state of a literary character, but the driving force of the narrative: it is precisely the contrast between the life the character lives and the life they long for that triggers their departure and determines their subsequent experience of loss.

This raises the important question of the human desire for a different life and the price that the transition from the known to the unknown may demand. Lepa Vida becomes a literary figure embodying the inner conflict between here and elsewhere, duty and desire, family ties and individual longing. In various literary adaptations, the relationship between these poles shifts; consequently, the motif also allows us to trace historical changes in the understanding of women, motherhood, personal freedom and responsibility.

It is precisely for this reason that the study goes beyond merely collecting and comparing variations of the motif. It is concerned with how the portrayal of the character changes whilst retaining the same core motif. Some texts emphasise Vida's seduction or deception, others her abduction, and others still her decision and longing; with every shift in narrative perspective, the ethical judgement of the literary character also changes.

VI.2 FROM THE BEAUTIFUL VIDA TO A BROADER COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TEMPTATION

Research into Lepa Vida was also situated within a broader international comparative literary framework. In 2009, Cambridge Scholars Publishing in Newcastle published an English-language monograph entitled *Longing, Weakness and Temptation: From Myth to Artistic Creations* (XII + 321 pp.) (= Hrepenenje, šibkost in skušnjava: od mita do umetniških stvaritev). The book extends the exploration of longing, human weakness and temptation from a specific Slovenian motif to broader literary and cultural patterns. The comparative scope of the study ranges from biblical and ancient narrative patterns to European literature of more recent periods. Thus, the motifs of longing, seduction and temptation bring together Homer, Goethe's Faust and the ballad 'The Fisherman' (Der Fischer), Pushkin's Rusalka, Heine's 'Lorelei', Prešeren's 'The Fisherman' and Jenko's 'Sea Spirits'; another line of inquiry leads from the biblical story of Joseph, through ancient parallels, to its literary transformation in the work of Thomas Mann. Such comparisons enable us to trace the same fundamental human experience across very different periods and poetics: it is precisely the differences between the texts that reveal how individual literatures reshape longing, weakness, temptation, free choice and its consequences

This English-language monograph, together with the monograph *Longing and Temptation in the World of Literature* (2010), thus forms a dual research arc: from an international comparative

perspective to an in-depth examination of one of the central Slovenian motifs, and back to its place within the broader European literary tradition.

Within this research framework, temptation is treated not merely as a theme, but as a narrative structure: a literary character is confronted with the promise of a different life, a choice or a trial, and the decision triggers consequences that determine the further development of the narrative. Such an approach enables a comparison of very distant texts and periods, and raises the question of how different cultures give literary form to human desire, weakness, responsibility and loss.

VI.3 LEPA VIDA IN THE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC SPHERE

Research into Lepa Vida has not been confined to the Slovenian academic sphere. Irena Avsenik Nabergoj has also presented this motif at foreign universities and international academic conferences, thereby bringing distinctly Slovenian literary material into a comparative literary dialogue with other traditions.

On 9 November 2015, she gave a lecture at the University of Klagenfurt on the seduction and abduction of Lepa Vida in Slovenian literature. The very fact that this topic was presented in an international university setting is significant: Lepa Vida is presented as a motif through which the specificity of the Slovenian literary tradition can be demonstrated to a foreign academic audience, whilst at the same time highlighting its connection to broader European motifs and narrative structures. Particularly significant was the presentation of the motif in its Mediterranean context at the 6th Conference of the Mediterranean Worlds ‘Symbols and Models of the Mediterranean’ at the Università della Calabria, Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici, in Rende, Calabria. On 9 September 2014, she presented a paper entitled *The Abduction in the Slovenian Ballad of Fair Vida: Symbolism and Parallels in the Mediterranean Region* in the ‘Mario Alcaro’ lecture theatre. This very presentation clearly illustrates the comparative dimension of the research: a distinctly Slovenian motif was interpreted within the Mediterranean context and placed alongside its broader thematic and symbolic parallels.

The motif of Lepa Vida was also featured in research presentations at two sessions of the International Medieval Congress at the University of Leeds in 2010 and 2011, where the comparative perspective was extended to include older literary traditions and tales of temptation. Such presentations reflect a characteristic focus of the research: Slovenian literature serves as the starting point, but is presented in terms of questions that are understandable and relevant beyond the Slovenian context, and which open up important comparisons of interest to the international academic community.

VI.4 LEPA VIDA AS PART OF SLOVENIAN CULTURAL MEMORY

The particular significance of this research lies in the fact that Lepa Vida is not treated merely as a historical motif, but as an example of the enduring life of a literary tradition. Her story has evolved over the centuries, yet remains recognisable because it touches upon questions that transcend the time of her creation: human dissatisfaction with the status quo, the longing for another world, the cost of leaving, the loss of home, the relationship between personal desire and responsibility, and the yearning for what can no longer be restored.

It is precisely the motif of Lepa Vida that thus particularly clearly illustrates the distinctive nature of Irena Avsenik Nabergoj's research profile: she moves from a close reading of Slovenian literary material to a comparative exploration of motifs and their transformations, before returning to the Slovenian text with a broader European perspective. Such a circular research approach enables the distinctiveness of Slovenian literature to be revealed more clearly precisely through comparison with other literary traditions.

Research into Lepa Vida also forms an important link between the various works in her body of work. It is connected to her studies of Cankar through the themes of longing, guilt and inner conflict; to her research into the Bible and comparative literature through the themes of temptation, trials and the transformation of motifs; and, through her more recent research on female characters, the themes of the female voice, freedom, vulnerability, social status and emotional experience. 'Lepa Vida' is thus not a marginal topic, but one of the earliest and most fundamental examples of scholarly interest in the way literature has reshaped fundamental human experiences over the centuries.

Within the field of Slovenian literary studies, this research project holds particular significance also because it examines one of the most recognisable Slovenian motifs from both an internal and an external perspective: through a detailed understanding of its development within Slovenia and via a comparative perspective that situates it within the broader European literary and cultural history. In this way, 'Lepa Vida' becomes not only a subject of research into the Slovenian tradition, but also an example through which Slovenian literature can be convincingly presented to the international humanities community.

VII. IMAGES OF JEWS, JEWISH LITERATURE, ANTISEMITISM AND CULTURAL MEMORY

One of the most extensive and substantively well-rounded areas of her research is her long-standing study of images of Jews, Jewish literature, the history of anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism, and literary forms of remembrance of persecution and suffering. This line of research has resulted in four comprehensive monographs, which address the subject from various, interrelated perspectives – the European history of anti-Semitism, representations of Jews in the arts, Jewish literary traditions, and the Slovenian literary tradition.

VII.1 Four monographs – from the European history of anti-Semitism to the Slovenian literary tradition

The first synthesis, *A History of Anti-Judaism and Anti-Semitism in Europe* (in the original Slovenian version: *Zgodovina protijudovstva in antisemitizma v Evropi*; Slovenska matica, 2016), examines the historical roots and development of anti-Jewish ideas, as well as the mechanisms by which they have been preserved and transformed within European culture.

The monograph *The Image of the Jews in European Literature, Theatre, Music and Film* (in the original Slovenian version: *Podoba Judov v evropski literaturi, gledališču, glasbi in filmu*; Slovenska matica, 2017) extends the research into the field of cultural representations. The focus

is no longer solely on the history of ideas, but on the question of how literature and other arts have shaped, conveyed, reinforced or problematised images of Jews. The literary dimension of this research is also evident in specific analyses of European authors and works: amongst others, she has examined the formation and transformation of images of Jews in the works of Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, Nikolai Gogol, Fyodor M. Dostoevsky and James Joyce, and, in particular, the unconventional representation of the Holocaust in Imre Kertész's autobiographical novel *Fatelessness*. Thus, the history of anti-Semitism is not treated in isolation from literature, but through the question of how the literary imagination adopts, reshapes, challenges or transcends stereotypes. This perspective links literary history with the history of ideas and cultural memory, yet its starting point remains the specific literary text and the way in which it shapes the individual, the community and the Other.

The monograph *Suffering and Death in the History of Jewish Literature* (in the original Slovenian version; *Trpljenje in smrt v zgodovini judovske literature*; Slovenska matica, 2020, 556 pp.) shifts the perspective of research: from external representations of Jews to the Jewish literary tradition itself, and to the ways in which, over the centuries, this tradition has given voice to suffering, death, mourning, hope and human dignity. The scope of the research ranges from the Psalms, ancient Jewish poetry, elegies and liturgical poetry to modern Jewish literature and literature on the Holocaust. Through the works of Hayim Nahman Bialik, Abraham Sutzkever, Paul Celan, Nelly Sachs and other poets, it explores the poeticisation of pogroms, persecution and loss; whilst, through the works of Primo Levi, Stefan Zweig and Imre Kertész, it examines the relationship between historical experience, autobiography, testimony and literary form. The voices of Jewish women writers – Anne Frank, Hélène Berr and Etty Hillesum – also occupy a special place, as do questions of empathy, moral choice, memory and the possibilities of literary testimony in the wake of the Holocaust.

The monograph *Sources of the Image of Jews in the Early Slovenian Literary Tradition* (in the original Slovenian version; *Izvori podobe Judov v starejšem slovenskem slovstvenem izročilu*; Slovenska matica, 2023, 1021 pp.) focuses a broad European study on Slovenian material and extends it deep into the history of Slovenian literature. It examines the portrayal of Jews in medieval ecclesiastical songs and monastic texts, in the works of Primož Trubar, in the Škofja Loka, Kapela and Drabosnjak Passions, in the Poljane Manuscript, and in the extensive tradition of old Slovenian folk songs, prayers and devotional texts. It does not treat the Slovenian material in isolation, but considers it alongside European, Slavic and other parallels, thereby exploring the pathways through which motifs, stereotypes and narrative forms were transmitted across languages, cultures and periods. The research thus links older Slovenian literature, literary folklore, manuscript culture, comparative literature and the history of European cultural representations. The author has also compiled extensive material for a forthcoming monographic study of the portrayal of Jews in modern Slovenian literature from Prešeren to the present day.

The four books published to date should be understood as a coherent body of research, produced between 2016 and 2023. The path leads from the European history of anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism, through depictions of Jews in European art and the inner voice of the Jewish literary tradition, to an in-depth study of the Slovenian literary landscape. It is precisely this final step that reveals the broader significance of the entire research project: European and Jewish source

material enables a more precise understanding of the Slovenian tradition, whilst research into Slovenian source material establishes the place of this tradition within broader European cultural history.

VII.2 Literary history, cultural memory and the relevance of the research

The relevance of this work is striking. At a time when issues of anti-Semitism, prejudice, cultural and religious diversity, violence and collective memory are once again coming to the fore, literary history offers insight into the long-term processes by which images of ‘the other’ are formed – and into the ways in which language and narrative transmit such images from one generation to the next. Here, literary history confronts the question of cultural memory and ethical responsibility: how words, images and narratives shape attitudes towards the ‘other’ over long periods of time, and how literature can not only preserve them but also reveal, question and transcend them.

VIII. THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE: LITERARY FORMS, INTERTEXTUALITY AND THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE ON EUROPEAN AND SLOVENIAN CULTURE

VIII.1 THE LITERARY NATURE OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

One of the central and most recognisable areas of Irena Avsenik Nabergoj’s research is the literary study of the Bible. The starting point for her approach is the Bible as literature: as an exceptionally diverse corpus of narratives, poetry, songs, prayers, dialogues, speeches, parables and other literary forms, whose meaning is shaped through language, composition, narrative perspective, characterisation, metaphor, symbolism, rhetorical structure and genre conventions. It therefore treats biblical texts not merely as historical or religious documents, but as literary texts with their own poetics, which, precisely because of their expressive and narrative power, have become one of the fundamental sources of European and Slovenian literature and culture.

The central question is how a biblical text creates meaning. The research analyses how the narrative shapes literary characters and their interpersonal relationships, how speech and silence determine their roles, how repetition, contrast, escalation and perspective guide the reader’s understanding, and how metaphor and symbol enable the expression of experiences that are difficult to capture in direct conceptual language. Particular attention is paid to the literary portrayal of love, longing, fear, guilt, justice, suffering, sacrifice, fidelity, hope and salvation. This approach situates the study of the Bible directly within the fields of literary studies, narratology, rhetoric, semantics, hermeneutics and comparative literature.

An important synthesis of this approach is presented in the monograph *Literary Forms and Genres: Ancient Israel, Greco-Roman Antiquity and Europe* (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 2011, 623 pp.). Its comparative framework links the literary forms of ancient Israel with Greco-Roman antiquity and later European literature. In this way, biblical literature is not treated as an isolated textual tradition, but as part of the broader history of literary forms, genres and modes of expression that have helped shape European literature.

Another major synthesis is the monograph *Images of Reality, Truth and Love in the Bible and Literature* (Ljubljana: Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 2018, 745 pp.). In this work, the research is grounded in three fundamental categories of human existence – reality, truth and love – and traces their literary representations and semantic transformations from biblical texts to later literature. The monograph thus combines a close reading of the text with an examination of its long cultural life, demonstrating how biblical images and concepts find their way into the European literary imagination.

A central work in this field is the monograph *Literary Forms in the Bible and Their Echoes in Later Judeo-Christian Culture* (Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2021, 658 pp.). Its very conception links two levels of research: the poetics and literary organisation of the biblical text on the one hand, and its intertextual and cultural life on the other. The study traces how biblical narratives, poems, prayers, metaphors, symbols and motifs are transmitted into later Jewish and Christian tradition, where they are not merely repeated but are reinterpreted and literarily transformed within new historical and cultural contexts.

In specific interpretations, the comparative method also extends to older literatures and cultural traditions. The biblical narrative of man's trial and fall is explored alongside the Epic of Gilgamesh; the story of Joseph is examined in relation to ancient parallels, later Jewish tradition, Philo of Alexandria and the Qur'an; whilst the tale of the Pharaoh's daughter is juxtaposed with Euripides' Medea. Such comparisons are not intended to blur the differences between the texts, but rather to facilitate a more precise understanding of them: they demonstrate how different cultures and literary forms articulate the concept of trial, free will, compassion, vengeance, loyalty and human moral decision-making.

A methodological feature of this research lies in the interconnection of four interdependent levels: text – intertextuality – context – reception. The starting point is always a close reading of a specific text and its linguistic, literary, rhetorical and symbolic organisation. From this, the analysis extends to intertextual connections and the historical and cultural context, and then to the reception and transformation of the text in new literary and cultural environments. This involves not merely tracing sources and influences, but exploring the processes of literary transformation: how the meaning of a biblical motif, literary character, metaphor or narrative pattern changes when it is transferred to another language, historical period, literary genre or cultural environment. Such an approach allows for the simultaneous maintenance of philological and literary-critical attention to individual texts, whilst enabling comparative research into the long journeys of motifs, images and narrative structures across different languages, literatures and cultural traditions.

VIII.2 FROM THE BIBLICAL TEXT TO THE EUROPEAN LITERARY IMAGINATION

The second major strand of research traces the long journey of the biblical text through European culture. Over the centuries, the Bible has provided one of the fundamental repertoires of European literature: its stories, literary characters, symbols, metaphors and ethical conflicts have served as the material for ever-new literary interpretations. Irena Avsenik Nabergoj's research therefore

focuses precisely on these processes of transformation – on the question of what later literature retains from the biblical tradition, what it alters, and what new meaning it bestows upon it.

The Song of Songs holds a special place as one of the most striking literary texts on love in world literature. Its imagery and semantics of love enable an exploration of the relationship between the physical and the spiritual, between longing and belonging, and between direct poetic expression and its long history of interpretation. In the study *Euripides' Medea and the Biblical Song of Songs: A Test of the Discourse of Love* (2022), the biblical discourse on love is placed in dialogue with one of the key texts of Greek antiquity. Such a comparison reveals different literary ways of depicting love, passion, fidelity, loss and violence, and situates biblical literature within the broader history of European literary expression of the human intimate experience.

A significant part of the research is also devoted to the intertextual transformations of biblical narratives within the Jewish, early Christian and medieval traditions. A study from 2024 thus traces the transformation of Hannah's prayers from the First Book of Samuel into the Hymn to Mary, the apocryphal *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* and the Targum of the Prophets. Research into the Song of Deborah from the same year combines a literary analysis of the original song with its later adaptations and with the question of the literary construction of the power of female characters.

Reception is understood here as a creative literary process. A later text engages with its biblical predecessor, interpreting, supplementing, altering or updating it. It is precisely by tracing these transitions that we can reconstruct the long paths along which biblical narratives and symbols have become part of European cultural memory.

VIII.3 LITERARY CHARACTERS, EMOTIONS AND ETHICAL DILEMMAS IN BIBLICAL NARRATIVES

In more recent times, literary analysis has focused in particular on the question of how biblical narratives shape the emotions, relationships and ethical dilemmas of their literary characters. In this context, emotion is not treated as a psychological category imposed on the text from outside, but as an integral part of its poetics: it is revealed through narrative perspective, action, speech and silence, bodily gesture, repetition, contrast, metaphor and the relationships between literary characters.

A significant area of research concerns female characters in the Old Testament. In 2023, two studies were published: *Emotions and Values of Female Characters in the Old Testament* and *Love Overcomes Fear and Brings Freedom: The Courage of the Female Characters in the Pentateuch*. In 2024, research into Hannah, Deborah and other female characters shed further light on the literary portrayal of the female voice, courage, vulnerability, motherhood, prayer and social power.

This line of research culminated in 2026 in a comprehensive synthesis set out in the 692-page monograph *Love Is as Strong as Death: Women, Emotions and Social Relations in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient World*. The monograph combines a literary analysis of the Hebrew Bible with a comparative perspective on the ancient world, exploring how narratives reveal the

structures of interpersonal and social relationships through their female characters. At its heart lies the question of how literature transforms human experience into narrative – and how it is precisely the literary form that enables experiences of love, fear, loss, fidelity, motherhood, conflict and courage to remain comprehensible even to a reader belonging to an entirely different historical world.

The literary approach also enables a new reading of narratively extreme situations. In the study *The Drama of Obedience and Emotion: The Sacrifice of a Child, Authority, and the Human Trial in the Narratives of Abraham and Jephthah*; 2025), the narratives of Abraham and Jephthah are analysed comparatively through the lens of the structure of the trial, the question of authority, the sacrifice of a child, and the emotional dynamics of the literary characters. The literary analysis thus reveals the multi-layered nature of the text, which cannot be reduced to a single moral lesson: it is precisely the narrative structure that brings to light the tensions between obedience and responsibility, authority and conscience, love and sacrifice.

VIII.4 THE LITERARY NATURE OF BIBLICAL TRANSLATION AND THE SLOVENIAN LANGUAGE

The literary nature of the translation of the Bible constitutes a specific field of research. In this context, translation is not merely the transfer of information from the source to the target language, but rather the re-creation of the text in literary form. The translator is confronted with the rhythm, repetition, metaphor, polysemy, stylistic registers, semantic fields and phonetic qualities of the original – in other words, precisely those elements that decisively shape its literary impact.

Since 2010, Irena Avsenik Nabergoj has led the expert group on language and style for the new Slovenian translation of the Holy Bible. This work combines literary interpretation, philological precision, semantics and stylistics with practical translation work. At the same time, her research delves into the history of Slovenian Bible translations, focusing in particular on Štefan Küzmič, Matevž Ravnikar, Jurij Japelj and other translators, and examines their role in the development of the Slovenian literary and written language.

A significant part of this research is also linked to the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts. In 2024, her study *The Semantic Field of Divine and Human Love in Küzmič's Translation of the New Testament* was published by SAZU in the academic monograph *Štefan Küzmič: On the Three-Century Anniversary of His Birth* (edited by Academician Prof. Marko Jesenšek), in which she links the study of biblical translation with semantics, the history of the Slovenian language and the literary formulation of fundamental biblical concepts

Predlagam angleško različico za akademski CV, pri kateri so naslovi vseh treh študij navedeni najprej v angleščini, nato v slovenskem izvirniku. Pri prvem naslovu je angleški prevod pripravljen za ta opis; pri drugih dveh sta angleška naslova navedena tudi v bibliografiji COBISS.

In 2023, in her study *The Semantic Field of Love and Fear in Three Earlier Slovenian Translations and the Most Recent Slovenian Translation of the Book of Deuteronomy* (original Slovenian title: *Semantično polje ljubezni in strahu v treh starejših in zadnjem slovenskem prevodu Pete Mojzesove knjige*), published in *Slavia Centralis* (16/2, pp. 175–190), she compared how

Slovenian Bible translations from different historical periods render and convey the meanings of the fundamental biblical concepts of love and fear.

In the same year, she published the methodological study *Development of the Method of Semantic Fields on the Example of the Hebrew Concept of Truth* (original Slovenian title: *Razvoj metode semantičnih polj ob primeru hebrejskega pojma resnice*) in *Bogoslovni vestnik* (83/2, pp. 339–357), examining the development and application of semantic-field analysis to the Hebrew concept of truth.

In 2025, she further developed her research on Bible translation in *The Inexhaustible Word: On the Literary Dimensions of Bible Translation* (original Slovenian title: *Neizčrpna beseda: o literarnih razsežnostih svetopisemskega prevoda*), published in *Tretji dan* (52/1, pp. 41–62), focusing on the literary dimensions of biblical translation.

This line of research also extends to the Slovenian Bible translations of Matevž Ravnika, Jurij Japelj and Anton Volc. In 2026, she published the study *The Old Testament Hymnic-Liturgical Formula of Love between God and Israel (Exod 20:4–6; Deut 5:8–10; 7:9–10) in the Translations of Ravnika, Japelj and Volc* (original Slovenian title: *Starozavezni himnično-liturgični obrazec o ljubezni med Bogom in Izraelom (2 Mz 20,4–6; 5 Mz 5,8–10; 7,9–10) v prevodih Ravnika, Japlja in Volca*). The study extends her comparative analysis of Slovenian Bible translations to questions of continuity and change in language, semantics and literary expression across different periods of the Slovenian Bible translation tradition.

In the Slovenian context, such research carries particular significance, as the history of the Slovenian literary language and literature cannot be separated from the history of Bible translation. Biblical translations did not merely convey content; they also helped shape Slovenian vocabulary, style, imagery, phraseology and cultural memory. Exploring their literary qualities therefore also means exploring one of the key sources of Slovenian literary expression.

VIII.5 THE BIBLE AND SLOVENIAN LITERATURE

The third major arc leads from the biblical text and its translation to Slovenian literature. At this level, biblical studies are directly linked to research on Prešeren, Cankar, Meško, Rebula, Kocbek, Jančar and other Slovenian authors. The question is not merely whether a particular motif is of biblical origin, but above all how the Slovenian writer reworks it literarily: what he retains from the tradition, what he alters, how he transposes it into a different historical experience, and what new ethical, existential or aesthetic significance he ascribes to it.

Thus, the research ranges from the metaphorical imagery of the Exodus in Alojz Rebula's work and the spiritual and biblical dimensions of Slovenian literature to the religious and ethical horizons of Cankar's literature, love and renunciation in the works of Franc Ksaver Meško, and questions of war, violence, guilt, sacrifice and responsibility in modern Slovenian literature.

Comparative studies of ethical and existential issues in European and Slovenian literature form an important part of this research focus. She has thus juxtaposed the literary heroes of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy and Cankar in relation to questions of goodness, guilt and human moral decision-making, whilst in her exploration of children's suffering, a comparative framework has linked Dickens,

Dostoevsky, Hauptmann and Cankar. The comparison here does not stem from external similarities between the authors, but from a shared literary problem – innocent victims, suffering, guilt, responsibility or the possibility of an ethical response – and illustrates the various ways in which individual poetics and cultural contexts give it literary form.

Biblical intertextuality thus becomes a key to understanding Slovenian literary history. Slovenian literature is revealed as part of a broader European context in which biblical stories, metaphors and value concepts have, over the centuries, been transformed, secularised, debated and given new literary meaning.

VIII.6 FROM THE POETICS OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT TO CULTURAL MEMORY

The scope of the research thus ranges from the closest reading of the biblical text to the question of its cultural impact over several millennia: from literary forms and genres, narrative techniques, metaphors and semantics, through intertextuality and translation, to its reception in European and Slovenian literature. Monographs: *Literary Types and Genres* (2011), *Images of Reality, of Truth and Love in the Bible and Literature* (SAZU, 2018, 745 pp.), *Literary Forms in the Bible and Their Echoes in Later Judeo-Christian Culture* (2021, 658 pp.) and *Love Is as Strong as Death* (2026, 692 pp.) represent major syntheses of the individual stages of this research.

The originality of this approach lies in its consistently literary foundation and, at the same time, in the breadth of its scope. The same research method enables the study of the poetics of a Hebrew narrative or poem, its transition into later Jewish and Christian texts, its translation into Slovenian, and its new literary existence in the work of a Slovenian or European writer. In this way, fields that are often studied in isolation are brought together: literary theory and history, comparative literature, biblical literature, semantics and translation, intertextuality, reception, and Slovenian literary and cultural history.

Such an interconnection is particularly significant for the Slovenian research landscape. The Slovenian language and literature have developed over the centuries in an intensive dialogue with the biblical and Judeo-Christian traditions; however, these connections can only be explored comprehensively through a simultaneous understanding of literary studies, biblical sources, the history of their reception, translation and Slovenian literary material. It is precisely at this intersection that Irena Avsenik Nabergoj's research combines an in-depth literary analysis of the Holy Scriptures with an investigation of its extraordinary influence on European and Slovenian literature, language and cultural memory.

IX. RESEARCH WORK WITHIN THE ZRC SAZU AND COLLABORATION WITH SAZU

The ZRC SAZU and her collaboration with the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SAZU) form a significant part of her academic work. She serves as a research fellow at the Institute of Cultural History at the ZRC SAZU, and since 2020 has also been a member of its Scientific Council (serving her second term).

Her collaboration with SAZU dates back at least to 2014, when she gave a lecture on the topic *'Reality, Truth and Beauty in the Artistic Word of Selected Poets and Writers from the Pre-Romantic Period to the Modern Era'* at the symposium *'Humanism and the Humanities'* held in the SAZU Hall. This research gave rise to a more extensive comparative literary study, *Reality, Truth and Beauty in the Artistic Prose of J. W. Goethe, J. Keats, L. N. Tolstoy, I. Cankar and S. Kosovel*, which was published in 2016 in the collection *Humanism and the Humanities* by the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (pp. 147–176). The comparative framework of the study links Goethe, Keats and Tolstoy with Cankar and Kosovel, and explores the relationship between artistic expression, reality, truth and beauty across different literary periods and national traditions. Following the publication of the collection in June 2016, she also took part in its presentation in the Main Hall of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SAZU). Even this earlier body of work reveals the characteristic direction of her research: she places Slovenian literature, particularly the works of Cankar and Kosovel, in a comparative dialogue with the great European literary traditions, and treats the questions of reality, truth and beauty as literary and humanistic issues.

In 2018, the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts published her comprehensive monograph *Images of Reality, Truth and Love in the Bible and Literature*.

In the same year, at the symposium *'Academic Perspectives on Cankar'*, held in the SAZU Academic Hall to mark the centenary of Cankar's death and the eightieth anniversary of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, she presented a paper entitled *'Ivan Cankar in Relation to Faith and his Views on Catholicism'*. This linked her collaboration with the Academy to one of the central areas of her literary research – Slovenian literature and Cankar's oeuvre.

Within the research environment of the ZRC SAZU, she has also spoken at academic conferences, including in 2018 with a lecture entitled *'Forms and Significance of the Biographical in Literary History'* at the symposium *'Biography – Historiography – Humanities'* in the ZRC Atrium, and in 2021 at the 12th Grošelj Symposium at the ZRC SAZU Atrium with a lecture entitled *'Erotic Love and the Response to Infidelity in Euripides' Medea and in Selected Texts from the Hebrew Bible'*. The latter also demonstrates the characteristic comparative dimension of her work, as it links ancient literature and the Hebrew Bible through an exploration of literary representations of love and emotions.

In 2024, her study *'The Semantic Field of Divine and Human Love in Küzmič's Translation of the New Testament (1771)'* (pp. 65–86) was published by the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SAZU) in the scholarly monograph *Števan Küzmič: On the Three-Hundredth Anniversary of His Birth*, edited by Marko Jesenšek. The paper links research into biblical translation with the history of the Slovenian language, semantics and the literary formulation of fundamental concepts, thereby situating her collaboration with the Academy within the context of research into the older Slovenian literary and translation tradition.

In October 2024, she participated in a scientific symposium commemorating the centenary of the birth of Academician Alojz Rebula, entitled *Alojz Rebula: A Slovenian between History and the Timeless* (original Slovenian title: *Alojz Rebula: Slovenec med zgodovino in nadčasnim*), held at

the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SAZU) in Ljubljana on 21–22 October 2024. She presented a paper entitled “*The Magnificent Possibilities of the Metaphorical*” in the *Portrayal of Female and Male Characters in Rebula’s Novel Jutri čez Jordan* (original Slovenian title: »Veličastne možnosti metaforičnega« v prikazih ženskih in moških likov v Rebulovem romanu *Jutri čez Jordan*). The abstract was published in the symposium's programme and book of abstracts, edited by Brane Senegačnik and published by SAZU in 2024 (pp. 27–28). The research was subsequently developed into a more extensive scholarly study.

Her involvement in the organisation of scholarly events was particularly intensive in 2025, when she conceived the international symposium *The Power of Emotions: From Ancient and Judeo-Christian Roots to Their Echoes in World and Slovenian Literature, Art, and Culture* (original Slovenian title: *Moč čustev: od antičnih in judovsko-krščanskih korenin do njihovega odmeva v svetovni in slovenski literaturi, umetnosti in kulturi*), held on 22–23 May 2025 at the SAZU Hall in Ljubljana. She initiated the symposium and chaired its scientific and organising committee. The event brought together researchers from Slovenia and abroad and was held in a hybrid format, combining in-person presentations with online participation via Zoom. The symposium involved the University of Ljubljana, the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (ZRC SAZU), the Science and Research Centre Koper (ZRS Koper), and SAZU.

At the symposium, she also presented a paper entitled “*Love Is as Strong as Death*” (Song 8:6): *Between Longing, Vulnerability, and the Tragic Dimension of Love in the Hebrew Bible and in Shakespeare* (original Slovenian title: »Močna kakor smrt je ljubezen« (Vp 8,6): med hrepenenjem, ranljivostjo in tragičnostjo ljubezni v hebrejski Bibliji in pri Shakespearu).

She also edited the 151-page bilingual publication *The Power of Emotions: From Ancient and Judeo-Christian Roots to Their Echoes in World and Slovenian Literature, Art, and Culture: International Symposium in Ljubljana: Programme and Abstracts of Scientific Contributions* (original Slovenian title: *Moč čustev: od antičnih in judovsko-krščanskih korenin do njihovega odmeva v svetovni in slovenski literaturi, umetnosti in kulturi: mednarodni simpozij v Ljubljani: program in povzetki znanstvenih prispevkov*), published by the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts in 2025 (ISBN 978-961-268-112-8). She contributed the introductory essay *The Power of Emotions: Between Vulnerability and Resilience* (original Slovenian title: *Moč čustev: med ranljivostjo in odpornostjo*, pp. 9–12). Her conference paper was also included in the publication (pp. 23–26).

Her direct academic output is the collective monograph *The Power of Emotions: Biblical Foundations, Cultural Transformations, and Contemporary Perspectives* (2026), which she conceived and edited, and for which she wrote the introductory study *The Power of Emotions: Between Human Vulnerability and the Possibility of Transformation*. The book, which runs to over 550 pages, brings together some 25 original contributions and ranges from ancient and biblical sources, through patristic theology and European literature, to contemporary cultural issues.

Her collaboration with the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SAZU) continued in 2026 with the publication of the study ‘*The Metaphorics of the Exodus as a Path to Identity in Alojz Rebula’s Novel Jutri čez Jordan*’ in the academic monograph *Alojz Rebula: A Slovenian between*

History and the Timeless, edited by Brane Senegačnik and published by the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts. The study, on pages 53–79, presents a developed scholarly version of the research presented at the SAZU symposium in 2024, and examines biblical metaphor as one of the pathways to understanding Rebula's literary construction of identity. Thus, in collaboration with the Academy, the study brings together fields that are otherwise characteristic of her broader research profile: Slovenian literature, literary interpretation, biblical intertextuality, cultural memory and the history of the Slovenian language.

Her work within the ZRC SAZU and her collaboration with the SAZU do not, therefore, represent separate institutional dimensions of her research, but rather a space in which individual research directions – ranging from Cankar and Rebula to older Slovenian literature, Biblical translations and comparative studies of literature and emotions – come together in joint academic projects, conferences and publications.

X. INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH WORK

International work has developed in parallel with research into Slovenian literature and today represents one of the cornerstones of its academic profile.

X.1 The United States of America and AATSEEL

Her presence in the American and British academic communities has been particularly consistent. In the United States and Canada, she has participated in research and conferences on at least ten occasions, within the framework of the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages (AATSEEL), where, over the years, she has presented research on Slovenian and comparative literature – including Prešeren, Cankar and, most recently, Kocbek and Jančar. Her presentations in Boston, Chicago, Seattle, Philadelphia, Austin and elsewhere, as well as in New Orleans in 2026, demonstrate the ongoing integration of Slovenian literature into the American field of Slavic and comparative literature.

X.2 Cambridge and the 'International Medieval Congress' at the University of Leeds, United Kingdom

Her research presence in the United Kingdom is equally long-standing. Since 2010, she has spent time conducting research at St Edmund's College, University of Cambridge, almost every year, usually for between one and four months, and has also given lectures on approximately ten occasions at the major international conference, the International Medieval Congress, at the University of Leeds. Among her more recent presentations, on 7 July 2025 in Leeds she presented research on the origins of narratives about the life of the Virgin Mary and the development of Marian devotion in medieval monasteries, and from 6 to 9 July 2026 she presented research on Biblical Foundations of the Concepts of Time and Eternity in The Confessions of Saint Augustine.

X.3 A broader international network

This international approach is not based on individual visits, but on returning to the same key academic environments and on the gradual establishment of more lasting research links. In addition to the USA and the United Kingdom, she has also carried out research and/or lectured in Austria, Italy, Germany, France, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Croatia and Israel. Among the key international forums for her work are the international associations

AATSEEL, the International Medieval Congress, the European Society of Biblical Studies (EABS), the International Society for Cultural History (ISCH) and IOSOT (International Organisation for the Study of the Old Testament), at which she has occasionally chaired panels; she has also given guest lectures at universities in Austria, Italy, the Czech Republic, Germany and elsewhere.

On 2 July 2024, at the International Congress on the Study of the Middle Ages, she presented research on the dramatic reactions of the Jews in Mainz at the start of the First Crusade in 1096.

On 7 July 2025, at the International Medieval Congress in Leeds, she gave a lecture on the origins of narratives about the life of the Virgin Mary and the development of Marian devotion in medieval monasteries.

On 15 August 2025, at the 25th IOSOT Congress in Berlin, she presented a comparative literary and ethical analysis of the narratives of Abraham and Jephthah – *Trial, Temptation, and Ethical Dilemmas in Biblical Narratives: Abraham (Gen 22:1-19) and Jephthah (Judg 11:29-40)*. In the same year, the research was also published in the form of a study on obedience, emotions, authority and human trials.

This was followed by a presentation at the AATSEEL conference in New Orleans on 19–22 February 2026, focusing on Kocbek and Jančar, and by research *on Biblical Foundations of the Concepts of Time and Eternity in The Confessions of Saint Augustine* in Leeds on 6–9 July 2026. It is important to note that these international presentations are not the culmination of her research, but often mark the beginning of her next stage of development. Following the research presented in Leeds in 2025, she received an invitation to write an independent academic monograph in England; following her presentation in New Orleans in 2026, she also received an invitation to contribute to a book project in the USA. A publishing contract has already been signed for one of the planned monographs.

XI. SCHOLARLY MONOGRAPHS

Her body of monographic work is significant because it allows one to trace the development of research questions over a longer period of time – ranging from Slovenian literature and comparative motifs to European cultural history, Jewish literature, biblical literary studies and the study of emotions.

1. *Ljubezen in krivda Ivana Cankarja* (English translation of the title: *Love and Guilt in the Works of Ivan Cankar*). Mladinska knjiga, 2005, 794 pp.
2. *Mirror of Reality and Dreams: Stories and Confessions by Ivan Cankar*. Peter Lang, 2008, 309 pp. (Original English title.)
3. *Longing, Weakness and Temptation: From Myth to Artistic Creations*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009, xii + 321 pp. (Original English title.)
4. *Hrepenenje in skušnjava v svetu literature: motiv Lepe Vide* (English translation of the title: *Longing and Temptation in the World of Literature: The Lepa Vida Motif*). Mladinska knjiga, 2010, 726 pp.

5. *Literarne vrste in zvrsti: stari Izrael, grško-rimska antika in Evropa* (English translation of the title: *Literary Forms and Genres: Ancient Israel, Greco-Roman Antiquity, and Europe*). 2011, 623 pp.
6. *The Power of Love and Guilt: Representations of the Mother and Woman in the Literature of Ivan Cankar*. Peter Lang, 2013, 463 pp. (Original English title.)
7. *Reality and Truth in Literature: From Ancient to Modern European Literary and Critical Discourse*. V&R unipress, 2013, 229 pp. (Original English title.)
8. *Simboli neizrekljivega / Symbols of the Inexpressible*. 2013. Co-authored with Academician Jože Krašovec and Academician Andreja Žele. (Original bilingual title.)
9. *Justice and Redemption: Anthropological Realities and Literary Visions by Ivan Cankar*. Peter Lang, 2014, 353 pp. (Original English title.)
10. *Zgodovina protijudovstva in antisemitizma v Evropi* (English translation of the title: *A History of Anti-Judaism and Antisemitism in Europe*). Slovenska matica, 2016, 248 pp.
11. *Podoba Judov v evropski literaturi, gledališču, glasbi in filmu* (English translation of the title: *The Image of Jews in European Literature, Theatre, Music, and Film*). Slovenska matica, 2017, 352 pp.
12. *Podobe resničnosti, resnice in ljubezni v Svetem pismu in literaturi* (English translation of the title: *Images of Reality, Truth, and Love in the Bible and Literature*). SAZU, 2018, 745 pp.
13. *Trpljenje in smrt v zgodovini judovske literature* (English translation of the title: *Suffering and Death in the History of Jewish Literature*). Slovenska matica, 2020, 556 pp.
14. *Literarne oblike v Svetem pismu in odmevi v poznejši judovsko-krščanski kulturi* (English translation of the title: *Literary Forms in the Bible and Their Echoes in Later Judeo-Christian Culture*). Mladinska knjiga, 2021, 658 pp.
15. *Izvori podobe Judov v starejšem slovenskem slovstvenem izročilu* (English translation of the title: *The Origins of the Image of Jews in the Earlier Slovenian Literary Tradition*). Slovenska matica, 2023, 1,021 pp.
16. *Močna kakor smrt je ljubezen: ženske, čustva in družbeni odnosi v hebrejski Bibliji in antičnem svetu* (English translation of the title: *Love Is as Strong as Death: Women, Emotions, and Social Relations in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient World*). 2026, 692 pp.

The development of these monographs reflects a distinctive research trajectory: from intensive research into Cankar and Slovenian literature to comparative studies of motifs, truth, love and guilt; then to the history of European cultural representations of Jews and their Slovenian variants; and, more recently, to literary research into emotions, female characters and narrative structures.

XII. RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS 2024–2026: FROM INDIVIDUAL STUDIES TO A MONOGRAPHIC SYNTHESIS

The period 2024–2026 represents a particularly intensive phase of her research work. During this period, several long-standing lines of research – Slovenian literature, biblical literary studies, the study of female characters and emotions, reception, cultural memory and international academic

collaboration – converged in new studies, international presentations, a symposium and individual and collective monographic syntheses.

XII.1 2024 – from individual analyses to a broader research synthesis

The year 2024 is marked by intensive research into literary representations of female characters and emotions in biblical and early Christian texts. Analyses of Hannah, Mary, Deborah and other biblical female characters focus on how narrative structure, characterisation, speech, silence and emotional response determine their literary function.

The result is not merely a series of individual interpretations. A research model gradually takes shape, in which emotions are understood not merely as psychological states, but as elements of literary characterisation and narrative dynamics, whilst female characters are seen as active agents of narrative turning points. This research forms one of the foundations for a subsequent major monographic synthesis.

On 2 July 2024, at the International Congress on the Study of the Middle Ages, she presented her research *entitled Narratives of the Dramatic Response of the Jews of Mainz to the Political Crisis at the Beginning of the First Crusade, 1096* (= Accounts of the dramatic response of the Jews in Mainz to the political crisis at the start of the First Crusade in 1096). This marked a continuation of her research into Jewish literature and cultural memory following her major monograph published in 2023.

In the field of Slovenian literature, she continued her research on Cankar in 2024 and embarked on a new line of research focusing on Franc Ksaver Meško. A paper on the theme of love in Meško's oeuvre, presented on 28 October 2024 in Slovenj Gradec, was developed into a standalone academic study the following year.

XII.2 2025 – academic leadership and international expansion

The year 2025 marked a more pronounced transition from individual research to the creation of a broader research environment. The key achievement was the conception and organisation of the international symposium '*The Power of Emotions*' at the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SAZU). The research topic, which emerged within the framework of project J6-50212, thus evolved into a gathering of researchers from various institutions and disciplines.

On 7 July 2025, at the International Medieval Congress at the University of Leeds in England, she presented her research on the origins of narratives about the life of Mary and the development of Marian devotion in medieval monasteries.

On 15 August 2025, at the 25th IOSOT Congress in Berlin, she presented a paper *entitled 'Trial, Temptation, and Ethical Dilemmas in Biblical Narratives: Abraham (Gen 22:1–19) and Jephthah (Judg 11:29–40)'*. That same year, the research was also published in academic form as the study *The Drama of Obedience and Emotion: The Sacrifice of a Child, Authority, and the Human Trial in the Narratives of Abraham and Jephthah*.

In the field of Slovenian literature, Meško's 2024 research evolved into the study *The Transformation of Love in the Mature and Late Creative Period of Franc Ksaver Meško: Between Longing, Renunciation and Devotion*. She has also published the academic study *The Inexhaustible Word: On the Literary Dimensions of Biblical Translation*, which directly links literary analysis with her long-standing work in the field of the Slovenian biblical language.

XII.3 2026 – individual and collective monographic synthesis

The first major achievement of 2026 is the 692-page monograph *Love Is as Strong as Death: Women, Emotions and Social Relations in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient World*. In it, several years' research into female characters, emotions, narrative structures and social relations are brought together in a comprehensive, individual scholarly synthesis.

The second major achievement is the collective academic monograph *The Power of Emotions: Biblical Foundations, Cultural Transformations, and Contemporary Perspectives*. Irena Avsenik Nabergoj conceived and edited the volume, and wrote the introductory study *The Power of Emotions: Between Human Vulnerability and the Possibility of Transformation*, as well as a chapter and the conclusion. This publication, running to over 550 pages, brings together some 25 original contributions.

The particular significance of this achievement lies in the entire process of its creation: from the research question and project management, through the collaboration of researchers from three institutions and an international symposium at the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SAZU), to the editorial synthesis of the results in a joint academic book.

XII.4 2026 – Slovenian literature on the international stage

From 19 to 22 February 2026, at the AATSEEL Annual Conference in New Orleans, she presented a paper entitled '*Love as Resistance: Ethical Proximity in the Wartime Prose of Slovenian Writers Edvard Kocbek and Drago Jančar*'. Slovenian literature serves here as a starting point for the broader question of how literature, in the extreme experience of war, shapes closeness, responsibility and resistance to dehumanisation.

From 6 to 9 July 2026, she presented her research, '*Biblical Foundations of the Concepts of Time and Eternity in The Confessions of Saint Augustine*', at the International Congress on the Study of the Middle Ages in Leeds. This research has already been accepted for publication in an academic journal, due to appear in 2026.

The period 2024–2026 is therefore not merely a sequence of individual publications and presentations. It illustrates the entire research process: from a close reading of a specific text to a broader research question, from a project to an international debate, and from there to an academic article, an individual monograph or a collaborative monographic synthesis.

At the same time, the focus on Slovenian literary studies is not waning but strengthening: Meško, Cankar, Rebula, Küzmič, Kocbek, Jančar and contemporary Slovenian literature feature in articles, monographs, international lectures and work with teachers.

XIII. TEACHING, MENTORSHIP AND THE TRANSFER OF RESEARCH INTO EDUCATION

Teaching is an integral part of her academic and research work, as it enables her to directly link research findings with university education and the wider educational sphere. At the University of Ljubljana, she teaches at all three levels of study, including courses such as *Spirituality in Literature and the Arts*, *Literature and Ethics*, and *The Influence of the Bible on Culture*, as well as doctoral-level courses. Prior to this, she taught core literary studies courses at the University of Nova Gorica for over a decade, covering the fields of literary theory, Slovenian literature and, in particular, the creative work of Ivan Cankar. Her teaching thus combines fundamental literary knowledge with contemporary interdisciplinary approaches to literature.

An important aspect of her academic work is her supervision of Master's and doctoral students, as well as her participation in doctoral committees, habilitation procedures and the evaluation of scholarly work. In this way, she contributes to the development of new generations of researchers and to the advancement and preservation of academic standards in the field of literary studies. Her contribution to **the integration of literary research into secondary education** is particularly notable, especially in the area of the scholarly analysis of literary works selected for the school-leaving examination essay. Her interpretations go beyond mere preparation for the school-leaving examination, as she situates literary texts within broader aesthetic, ethical, cultural-historical and social contexts. For instance, in her analysis of Maja Haderlap's novel *Angel of Oblivion*, she developed interpretative approaches that link literary analysis with questions of cultural memory, historical trauma, identity, language and the intergenerational transmission of experience. She has continued this kind of work with contemporary Slovenian literature, including Tina Vrščaj's novel *Na Klancu (On the Slope)* and Ana Svetel's short-story collection *Steklene stene (Glass Walls)*.

In 2025 and 2026, this transfer of research knowledge took on a particularly concrete form. In 2025, she prepared extensive interpretations of works by Ivan Cankar and Tina Vrščaj for a school-leaving examination handbook, and in 2026, chapters on Nikolai V. Gogol and Ana Svetel. She complemented the published interpretations with full-day specialist workshops for Slovenian language teachers, aimed at fostering a deeper understanding of literary texts, presenting contemporary interpretative approaches and demonstrating their application in the classroom. The last two workshops, held on 17 and 18 September 2026 at the St Stanislaus Institute in Ljubljana, were attended by a total of around 60 Slovenian language teachers from across Slovenia, as was the case with the workshops in 2025.

Such initiatives establish **a direct link between academic research, university teaching and secondary school literary education**. Research findings are thus not confined to scholarly publications and the academic sphere, but enter the wider educational process through professional handbooks, teacher training and the teaching of literature. In doing so, it contributes not only to the professional development of teachers and a deeper understanding of literary texts, but also to the cultivation of new generations of critical and discerning readers of Slovenian and world literature.

XIV. RESEARCH, PROFESSIONAL AND EDITORIAL ROLES

Since 2020, she has been a member of the Scientific Council of the Institute of Cultural History at ZRC SAZU. Since 2016, she has been a member of the Commission for Doctoral Studies and Research at the Faculty of Theology, University of Ljubljana. She served two terms on the expert committee of the Prešeren Fund's Administrative Board for the field of literature; since 2018, she has been the subject editor for religion and theology at *the New Slovenian Biographical Lexicon*; she is a member of the editorial board of the journal *Romanoslavica* and is the subject editor for literature at *the Bogoslovni vestnik*.

In 2017–2018, she served as secretary of the national honorary committee and head of the working group for cultural events under the President of the Republic, Mr Borut Pahor, to mark the centenary of Ivan Cankar's death. This role is particularly linked to her long-standing academic research into Cankar and also demonstrates the broader cultural significance of this work.

XV. MEMBERSHIPS, AWARDS AND INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

In 2009, she received the national Zois Award for significant scientific achievements.

In 2015, she was elected a full member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, First Class: Humanities.

In 2016, she received an award from the University of Ljubljana for being the best researcher at the Faculty of Theology, University of Ljubljana.

Membership of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts holds a special place in her profile, as it signifies inclusion in the wider European academic community and complements her long-standing international research work at universities, conferences and within scientific associations.

XVI. RESEARCH PROFILE AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Irena Avsenik Nabergoj's research profile has taken shape over three decades through persistent work with literary texts and in dialogue with various research traditions, institutions and academic environments. Its starting point and enduring core remains **literary studies**: the close reading of texts, the exploration of their language and form, narrative perspectives, imagery and symbolism, and the question of how literature creates meaning from human experience. From this starting point, the research extends into comparative literature, history, religion, ethics, cultural memory and the study of emotions, without losing its original commitment to the text.

This research framework brings together fields belonging to different historical, linguistic and cultural contexts: Slovenian literature, older European literary traditions, Jewish literature and the

history of its cultural representations, biblical literature and its subsequent reception. Their interconnection does not stem from a desire for breadth for its own sake, but from the gradual unfolding of the questions raised by the texts. One research question has led to another, and over the years the individual corpora have emerged as diverse spaces for reflection on humanity, one's relationship with others, history, community and personal responsibility.

Slovenian literature occupies an independent and central place within this framework. Research into Cankar, Lepa Vida, Prešeren, Meško, Rebula, Kocbek, Jančar, the older Slovenian literary tradition, Slovenian biblical translations and contemporary literature constitutes one of its fundamental threads of continuity. The comparative perspective does not replace literary-historical rigour, but rather complements it: it situates Slovenian texts within broader European currents, whilst at the same time enabling a clearer recognition of their own linguistic, historical and cultural experience.

Cankar is thus revealed not only within the context of Slovenian literary history, but also within the broader European landscape of themes such as love, guilt, social justice, war, vulnerability and human dignity. Lepa Vida remains deeply rooted in the Slovenian tradition, whilst her story raises the broader literary themes of longing, temptation, departure, loss and unfulfilled desires. Through their experiences of war, violence, guilt, memory and ethical responsibility, Kocbek and Jančar engage with the broader European experience of the 20th century. The comparison here is not intended to equate differences, but rather to understand them more precisely.

A similar line of research can be seen in four monographs on Jews, anti-Semitism and Jewish literature. The study of the European history of cultural representations, stereotypes and images of Judaism has gradually led to an examination of Slovenian literary material as well. Knowledge of European and Jewish sources has enabled a more precise identification of the distinctive features of Slovenian texts, whilst Slovenian material has been integrated into the broader history of European literary and cultural representations.

The study of the Holy Scriptures also remains, at its core, a literary endeavour. Biblical texts are treated as narratives, poetry and other literary forms, with their own rhetorical, metaphorical and symbolic structure, whilst also being regarded as one of the significant intertextual sources of European and Slovenian culture. This establishes a long historical arc between older literary traditions and their subsequent transformations. Questions of love, guilt, sacrifice, forgiveness, justice, violence, compassion and responsibility are revealed here primarily as questions about humanity and the ways in which literature narrates, preserves and passes on human experience. The internal coherence of this body of work therefore lies not primarily in the similarity of its subjects, but in the persistence of the questions that recur throughout them. From Cankar and Lepa Vida to Jewish literature and biblical narratives, from older Slovenian literature and the tradition of translation to Kocbek, Jančar and contemporary literature, the central question remains: how does literature shape human experience – love and guilt, longing and loss, suffering and memory, freedom and responsibility, vulnerability and dignity – and how these meanings are preserved and transformed as they traverse periods, languages and cultures.

This line of inquiry forms part of the long and diverse tradition of Slovenian literary studies, which has examined Slovenian literature in its historical specificity whilst simultaneously opening it up to comparative, European and broader cultural perspectives. Irena Avsenik Nabergoj's work seeks to contribute to this tradition, particularly where the integration of diverse sources and research experiences can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of Slovenian texts and to their greater presence in international humanities discourse.

The two-way nature of this research is crucial. Knowledge of European, Jewish and biblical traditions enables a more nuanced reading of Slovenian literature; whilst research into Slovenian texts brings material, historical experiences and interpretative possibilities linked to the Slovenian language and cultural memory into the wider humanities landscape. International openness is thus not a departure from the Slovenian context, but one of the ways in which its literary heritage can be kept alive, relevant to research and present in dialogue with other cultures.

At the same time, individual research work is linked to activities that are communal in nature. Long-term work with texts and historical sources continues in the formulation of research questions, the management of research programmes and projects, inter-institutional collaboration, university work and international scholarly exchange. Work at the ZRC SAZU and the University of Ljubljana, collaboration with the SAZU, full membership of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, and ongoing contacts with the European, British and American academic communities are, in this sense, primarily different paths towards the same endeavour: to connect people, texts and research environments, and to enable knowledge to circulate amongst them. The dissemination of research findings is of particular importance in this regard. Scholarly work only achieves its broader significance when it can become part of shared knowledge: when research findings are consolidated in monographs and articles, incorporated into university studies and the teaching of literature, serve as a starting point for new research, and are made available to younger researchers and future generations of readers. In this respect, research is not merely the creation of new knowledge, but also its preservation, dissemination and transmission.

Therefore, the significance of this research profile cannot be sought solely in the scope of the body of work or the range of fields covered. More important is **the ability to establish connections**: between Slovenian and other European literatures, between older sources and contemporary issues, between national cultural memory and the international research landscape, and between individual research and collaborative scholarly work.

Such a connective approach is also vital for the future of the humanities. No research tradition is sustained merely by repeating what has already been achieved; it remains vibrant when the knowledge of previous generations is respectfully accepted, re-examined, supplemented with new questions, and passed on. It is precisely this continuity between tradition and new research approaches that enables Slovenian literary studies to remain both faithful to its subject and open to changes within the wider academic landscape.

In this process, collaboration across generations, disciplines and institutions is of particular value. Different research experiences are not mutually exclusive but can complement one another; an in-depth knowledge of Slovenian literary and cultural history lends substance to new comparative

research, whilst international connections open up further opportunities for Slovenian material to become a more prominent part of shared European and global knowledge. The academic community is at its strongest precisely when it is able to maintain continuity whilst simultaneously creating space for new connections.

In this, one can also see the central significance of Irena Avsenik Nabergoj's research profile: not in placing individual research work in the foreground, but in integrating it into the longer history of shared scholarly endeavour. Her contribution lies primarily in forging connections – between the Slovenian, European and global spheres; between literary analysis and cultural and historical memory; between older traditions and the concerns of contemporary humanity; and between individual research and the community within which knowledge is created, tested and passed on. It is precisely this two-way movement – from the Slovenian to the broader European and global sphere, and from European, Jewish and biblical traditions back to the Slovenian – that gives his research its distinctive continuity. Its purpose is not to replace other avenues of research, but to add connections, material and questions that can enrich the shared space of Slovenian humanities. If such work can help to ensure that the valuable legacy of Slovenian literary studies is preserved, developed and opened up to new generations, and that Slovenian literature enters the wider international discourse with self-confidence yet with an awareness of its own history, then therein lies its most enduring significance.