

Emplacing Eminescu: The Memorial Spatialization of Romania's National Poet in Urban Street Nomenclature

Abstract: Besides being canonized as Romania's "national poet," Mihai Eminescu was hailed as the "complete man of Romanian culture" and the "absolute Romanian," among a profusion of encomiastic praises. Eminescu was immortalized in myriads of ways, from the most solemn and official (e.g. state-run rituals) to the most prosaic and banal (e.g. banknotes). In this article, I investigate the spatial dimension of Eminescu's memory by charting the commemorative landscape defined by toponymy and public monuments honoring the national poet in Romania. Particular attention is given to Eminescu's presence in urban street nomenclature and its regional distribution across the country. Drawing on several datasets of spatial information, I use statistical modeling techniques to examine the factors underpinning Eminescu's memorial namescape. Employing logistic regression analyses, the article highlights an uneven geography of Eminescu's memory and points out the variables structuring its particular spatial patterning.

Keywords: place names, cultural geography, critical toponymies, politics of memory, symbolic space.

Introduction

His short-lived existence was deemed "a miracle of Romanian culture."¹ He was canonized as the "national poet" touched by genius and then sunk into madness.² Beyond the realm of poetry, he was hailed as the "complete man of

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1 Constantin Noica, *Eminescu sau Gînduri despre omul deplin al culturii românești* (Bucharest: Editura Eminescu, 1975).

2 Andrei Terian, "Mihai Eminescu: From National Mythology to the World Pantheon," in *Romanian*

Romanian culture” only to be, eventually, defined as the “absolute Romanian.”³ Indeed, Mihai Eminescu (1850–1889) sits at the very center of Romania’s pantheon of heroes, overshadowing ancient founding fathers (Dacian kings and Roman emperors), medieval and premodern rulers (Michael the Brave), saints and martyrs (Stephen the Great and Constantin Brâncoveanu), and modern military commanders and political statesmen (Alexandru Ioan Cuza, King Carol I).⁴ In quantitative terms, Eminescu is second to none regarding the number of streets named after him and monuments erected to celebrate his memory.⁵ His symbolic primacy in the Romanian national memory is also highlighted by the fact that Eminescu features on the highest value banknote—the 500 lei—issued by the Romanian National Bank.

Enthroned as Romania’s national poet shortly after his untimely death (aged 39), Eminescu’s memorial afterlife developed into a full-blown national cult that continues to this very day. It should be mentioned, however, that during Romania’s period of postsocialist transformations, Mihai Eminescu’s cult did not go unquestioned. A major blow to Eminescu’s myth came in 1998, when a group of critical scholars cast doubt on the national poet’s literary relevance and exposed the nationalistic conservatism imbued with anti-semitism and xenophobia of his journalistic writings.⁶

Notwithstanding this critical setback, almost a century and a half after his passing, Eminescu is now, basically, everywhere. His legacy is celebrated in various forms and shapes, ranging from festive commemorations and opulent public monuments to normative educational schoolbooks, to the rather “banal” banknotes.

Literature as World Literature, eds Mircea Martin, Christian Moraru, and Andrei Terian (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017), 35–54.

- 3 Noica, *Eminescu*; Lucian Boia, *Mihai Eminescu, românul absolut. Facerea și desfacerea unui mit* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2015). On Eminescu’s “parallel canonization,” see Andrei Terian, “Prophet, Martyr, Saint: Mihai Eminescu’s Lateral Canonization,” in *Great Immortality: Studies on European Cultural Sainthood*, eds Jón Karl Helgason and Marijan Dović (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 294–312.
- 4 Mihai S. Rusu, *Memoria națională românească: facerea și prefacerile discursive ale trecutului național* (Iași: Institutul European, 2015).
- 5 Mihai S. Rusu, “‘Eminescu Is Everywhere’: Charting the Memorial Spatialization of a National Icon,” *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* (2024), DOI: 10.1080/14683857.2023.2243697; Mihai S. Rusu, Adela Popa, Alin Croitoru, and Anabella Beju, *The Politics of Street (Re-)Naming Practices: Symbolic Geographies and Identity Landscapes in Postsocialist Romania* (Ministry of Education and Research: Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, 2020–2022). According to the NAMESCAPE dataset developed within the aforementioned research project, there are 221 urban street names dedicated to Mihai Eminescu. He is followed by the 1848 revolutionaries Tudor Vladimirescu, Nicolae Bălcescu, and Avram Iancu, with 197, 188, and 170 street names respectively. Premodern rulers such as Michael the Brave and Stephen the Great are commemorated in 163 and 150 street names, while other nineteenth-century writers, such as George Coșbuc and Ion Creangă are honored in 149 and 146 street names respectively.
- 6 *Dilema Veche*, no. 265, 27 February–5 March 1998; Cezar Paul-Bădescu, *Cazul Eminescu: polemici, atitudini, reacții din presa anului 1998* (Pitești: Editura Paralela 45, 1999).

Romania's Day of National Culture, introduced in the festive calendar since 2010, is purposefully celebrated each year on the poet's birthday on 15 January.⁷ Eminescu is memorialized, cast in bronze, and carved in stone in effigies, statues, and busts throughout the country and well beyond national boundaries. Over a hundred monuments dedicated to Eminescu are placed all across Romania, and around 50 statues and busts have been erected abroad. In textual form, his poems constitute mandatory readings in schoolbooks while his short life inspires docu-fictionalized accounts in contemporary literature.⁸ His image also features on the highest value banknote of the Romanian currency, the 500 lei note, as a "banal," but powerful, reminder of cultural identity and national belonging.⁹

In this article, I focus on another rather inconspicuous—but nevertheless pervasive and powerful—expression of memory, belonging, and identity: the mnemonic institution of the street nomenclature. Drawing on the works of sociologists and historians such as Maurice Halbwachs, Pierre Nora, and Eviatar Zerubavel, street names can be conceived of as immaterial *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory).¹⁰ Street names are toponomastic places of memory that evoke specific political meanings and are imbued with identities codified in historical episodes, ideological values, or cultural personalities that are publicly remembered in those particular street plaques. Taken together, these individual loci of toponymic memory are structured into a systematic mnemonic assemblage. The street nomenclature emerging as the totality of these street names thus constitute institutions of memory that express the mnemonic tradition cultivated by a particular political community.¹¹

Besides the sociology of memory, in constructing a conceptual framework for making sense of street names and urban nomenclature, I draw on another strand of scholarship developed in human (social and cultural) geography. Geographers who embrace the "critical turn" in their discipline and shape the interdisciplinary field of "critical place-names studies" (or critical toponymies)

7 Parlamentul României, *Legea nr. 238/2010 privind declararea zilei de 15 ianuarie Ziua Culturii Naționale*, Monitorul Oficial, Partea I, nr. 831 din 13 decembrie 2010.

8 Florina Iliș, *Viețile paralele: roman* (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 2012); Florin Chirculescu, *Solomonarul. Romanul unei revoluții fără început și sfârșit* (Bucharest: Nemira, 2022).

9 On the power of banal commemorations, see Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1995).

10 Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, edited, translated, and with an introduction by Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," *Representations*, 26 (Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory; 1989): 7–24.

11 Eviatar Zerubavel, "Social Memories: Steps to a Sociology of the Past," *Qualitative Sociology*, 18 (1996): 283–99; Eviatar Zerubavel, *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

have made the connection between names, space, and power clear.¹² These scholars fully acknowledged Nora's insight that street names, as loci of memory, codify historical remembrances, but were keen to point out that street names are also a toponymic means of appropriating space by inscribing the ideological and memorial ethos cherished by a community into the territory. What comes out of this intersection between the power-laden acts of naming places with meaningful names drawn from a community's repertoire of historical experiences and ideological worldview is the constitution of "memorial landscapes."¹³ When employed as toponymic instruments of marking the landscape with the memories and values legitimizing the political authorities, street names are a powerful means of producing symbolic space and structuring it into a political geography of public memory.¹⁴

This article combines approaches developed in these various fields that emerged in the social and spatial sciences—political sociology of memory and critical place-names studies—to examine the toponymic posterity of Mihai Eminescu as a memorial landscape. The existing scholarship addressing the question of street names is largely dedicated to charting the politics of street renaming, especially in the historical context of a significant shift in the structure of power that governs society.¹⁵ It is thus unsurprising to find that systematic reviews of the literature established that most studies on the topic explore the patterns of street renaming made in the immediate aftermath of regime change.¹⁶ From a geographical perspective, the coverage of these articles reveals several "toponymic hotspots."¹⁷ In this regard, most research is focused

12 Lawrence D. Berg and Jani Vuolteenaho (eds), *Critical Toponymies: The Contested Politics of Place Naming* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009); Reuben Rose-Redwood, Derek Alderman, and Maoz Azaryahu, "Geographies of Toponymic Inscription: New Directions in Critical Place-name Studies," *Progress in Human Geography*, 34, no. 4 (2010): 453–70; Reuben Rose-Redwood, Derek Alderman, and Maoz Azaryahu (eds), *The Political Life of Urban Streetscapes: Naming, Politics, and Place* (London: Routledge, 2018).

13 Owen J. Dwyer and Derek H. Alderman, "Memorial Landscapes: Analytic Questions and Metaphors," *GeoJournal*, 73 (2008): 165–78.

14 Kenneth E. Foote and Maoz Azaryahu, "Toward a Geography of Memory: Geographical Dimensions of Public Memory and Commemoration," *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, 35, no. 1 (1007): 125–44.

15 Maoz Azaryahu, "German Reunification and the Politics of Street Names: The Case of East Berlin," *Political Geography*, 16, no. 6 (1997): 479–93; Duncan Light, "Street Names in Bucharest, 1990–1997: Exploring the Modern Historical Geographies of Post-socialist Change," *Journal of Historical Geography*, 30, no. 1 (2004): 154–72; Mihai S. Rusu, "Political Patterning of Urban Namescapes and Post-socialist Toponymic Change: A Quantitative Analysis of Three Romanian Cities," *Cities*, 103 (2020): 102773, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2020.102773>.

16 Mihai S. Rusu, "Street Naming Practices: A Systematic Review of Urban Toponymic Scholarship," *Onoma: Journal of the International Council of Onomastic Sciences*, 56 (2021): 269–92.

17 Frédéric Giraut and Myriam Houssay-Holzschuch, "Place Naming as Dispositif: Toward a Theoretical Framework," *Geopolitics*, 21, no. 1 (2016): 1–21.

on the situation in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, and, secondly, in the Middle East and North Africa, where street renaming was investigated in the political contexts of decommunization and decolonization respectively.¹⁸

Less documented in the literature is the spatial memorialization of particular public figures. Most of the existing studies are focused on slain political figures and civil rights leaders, such as John F. Kennedy (the 35th president of the United States shot dead in 1963), Martin Luther King, Jr. (murdered in 1968), and Yitzhak Rabin (the fifth prime minister of Israel assassinated in 1995).¹⁹ In a seminal analysis, Roger W. Stump examined in a comparative fashion the parallel memorialization of J.F.K. and M.L.K. He showed that, although from a strict quantitative perspective, the posthumous memories of the two slain public figures were on numerical par, there were far more schools than streets named to honor the legacy of the slain president, while King's memory was inscribed predominantly in the streetscape. This memorial disparity is accounted for in terms of the hortatory function fulfilled by a school name (which expresses the intrinsic connection between the person thus commemorated and the values cultivated within that community), while "naming a street after an individual is less likely to carry such a connotation."²⁰ While the author is right to emphasize that schools are more important bearers of social values than streets, it is also important not to fall into the trap of a false dichotomy; street names are themselves powerful codifications of the values enshrined within a community.

By far the most scholarly attention has been devoted to the politics of (re) naming a place after Martin Luther King, Jr. The works of Derek H. Alderman have set in motion a research program within social and political geography. Articulating a theoretical understanding of street naming as a "memorial arena" in which various collective actors, driven by divergent interests, confront each other in order to inscribe into the landscape their own symbols, Alderman concluded that "M.L.K. streets are located in generally poorer areas of the

18 Rusu, "Street Naming Practices," 278.

19 Maoz Azaryahu, "Rabin's Road: The Politics of Toponymic Commemoration of Yitzhak Rabin in Israel," *Political Geography*, 31, no. 2 (2012): 73–82. On the situation of street names in Romania, see Mihai S. Rusu, "Mapping the Political Toponymy of Educational Namespaces: A Quantitative Analysis of Romanian School Names," *Political Geography*, 72 (2019): 87–98.

20 Roger W. Stump, "Toponymic Commemoration of National Figures: The Cases of Kennedy and King," *Names: A Journal of Onomastics*, 36, no 3–4 (1988): 203–16. On street names as "memorial arenas," see Derek H. Alderman, "Street Names as Memorial Arenas: The Reputational Politics of Commemorating Martin Luther King Jr in a Georgia County," in *Critical Toponymies: The Contested Politics of Place Naming*, eds Lawrence D. Berg and Jani Vuolteenaho (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 179–97.

city.”²¹ Within the inner geographies of the cities and towns, a contentious issue between the proponents of memorializing M.L.K. (generally African-American activists) and their opponents (White business owners backed by White supremacists) was where to locate the street name. While the latter insisted on a politics of confinement within the boundaries of black neighborhoods, the former pleaded for the importance of renaming “prominent thoroughfares that cut through business districts and unite white and black communities” after King.²² Subsequent research has further documented the quantitative scope of streets named after M.L.K. (which rose from 483 in 1996 to 777 in 2007 to more than 900 in 2015) and the regional patterns of their spatial distribution (with around 80 per cent of them located in southeastern states), and reassessed the argument that naming poorer streets after King produces racialized spaces of economic marginality and symbolic segregation.²³

Scarce literature has been devoted to writers, poets, and other men (and women) of letters.²⁴ Noteworthy exceptions in this regard are Udo O.H. Jung’s works, which explored the toponymic geographies of the British literary canon. His efforts at mapping the “canon on the streets” revealed that there are more streets named after John Milton and Lord Byron (633 and 424 respectively) than those honoring William Shakespeare, who occupies a modest fifth place with 261 thoroughfares named after him in the United Kingdom.²⁵ Milton is also more popular than Shakespeare internationally, with his name “cropping up on street signs around the world nearly four times more than Shakespeare’s.”²⁶ Another piece in the scarce landscape of toponymic scholarship is Péter Hajdu’s study in which he charted the memory of national literature in the capital city of Hungary, Budapest. The article shows how the celebration of the men of letters

21 Derek H. Alderman, “A Street Fit for a King: Naming Places and Commemoration in the American South,” *The Professional Geographer*, 54, no. 4 (2000): 672–84.

22 Alderman, “A Street Fit for a King,” 673.

23 Matthew L. Mitchelson, Derek H. Alderman, and E. Jeffrey Popke, “Branded: The Economic Geographies of Streets Named in Honor of Reverend Dr Martin Luther King, Jr.,” *Social Science Quarterly*, 88, no. 1 (2007): 120–45; Sweta Tiwari and Shrinidhi Ambinakudige, “Streetscapes and Stereotyping: Streets Named after Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Geographies of Racial Identity,” *GeoJournal*, 87 (2022): 921–34.

24 Females are significantly underrepresented in public monuments, street names, and other public means of commemoration. On the gendered politics of street names, see Dolores Gutierrez-Mora and Daniel Oto-Peralias, “Gendered Cities: Studying Urban Gender Bias through Street Names,” *Environment and Planning B: Urban Analytics and City Science*, 49, no. 6 (2022): 1792–809; Mihai S. Rusu, “Gendering Urban Namespaces: The Gender Politics of Street Names in an Eastern European City,” *Names: A Journal of Onomastics*, 70, no. 2 (2022): 11–25.

25 Udo O.H. Jung, “Shakespeare, Milton und ein Kanon von der Straße,” *AAA: Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik*, 32, no. 2 (2007): 285–300.

26 Udo O.H. Jung, “The Afterlives of Shakespeare and Milton on the Streets of the English-speaking World,” *English Today*, 27, no. 3 (2011): 68–70.

in the cultural geography of Budapest (no woman was included in the collection of writers)—and especially the national poet, Sándor Petőfi—was embroiled in the nation-making process in late nineteenth-century Hungary.²⁷

The protagonist of this article is the national poet of Romania. The following section discusses Mihai Eminescu as an iconic symbol of Romanian national identity, before detailing the methodological outlines characterizing the research. It contributes to the literature on memory studies and political geography by providing a first endeavor to employ regression analysis to toponymic data concerning the spatial distribution of streets named after a public figure. The analyses will statistically model the geographical variance of Mihai Eminescu's commemorative landscape. In addition, they will highlight the factors underpinning the geography of memory regarding Eminescu's spatial inscription in street nomenclatures as a symbol of Romania's national identity.

Eminescu as Romania's iconic symbol

Due to its peculiar history of territorial fragmentation and a sequenced process of national development and state-building, Romania arguably lacks an undisputable political "founding father."²⁸ No Romanian statesman has reached the mythical status of Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898) for Germany and Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–1882) for Italy, around whom memorial cults have been constructed and whose political personas came to concentrate the national identities of their respective countries.²⁹

Bismarck and Garibaldi's Romanian counterpart, Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1820–1875), was overthrown shortly after he was elected, in 1859, to rule the United Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, which later became the Principality of Romania.³⁰ Closer to this role of "founding father" came King Carol I, who ruled modern Romania from his appointment as prince in 1866 until his death in 1914. However, despite the political accomplishments under his rule (independence from the Ottoman empire in 1877, the proclamation of the kingdom in 1881, the political construction of statehood), King Carol I's German ethnicity kept him from being completely embraced as a "Romanian" ruler. This

27 Péter Hajdu, "The Memory of National Literature in Budapest City Centre," *Neohelicon*, 41 (2014): 43–50.

28 Keith Hitchins, *The Romanians, 1774–1866* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Keith Hitchins, *Rumania, 1866–1947* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

29 Robert Gerwarth and Lucy Riall, "Fathers of the Nation? Bismarck, Garibaldi and the Cult of Memory in Germany and Italy," *European History Quarterly*, 39, no. 3 (2009): 388–413.

30 Valeriu Stan, *Alexandru Ioan Cuza* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1984).

ambivalent identity surfaced in the critical moment, when Carol I refused to join the First World War against the central powers (dominated by Germany and Austria-Hungary) in order to claim Transylvania. Romania entered the war only after Carol I's death and fought on the side of the allied powers. In the aftermath of the war, when Transylvania was incorporated into the Romanian kingdom, Ferdinand I was crowned as "King of All Romanians" in a ceremony held in Alba Iulia in 1922. Nevertheless, as with his uncle Carol I, Ferdinand I retained, in the eyes of many Romanians, an aura of ethnic foreignness.

Since the symbols of Romanian statehood were personified in the monarchs and the royal family, who were ethnically non-Romanians, a messianic figure that could capture the national imagination could hardly come from state politics. The deficit of founding father figures from the political realm was compensated by resorting to cultural personalities. It was in this particular context of nation-state building and the need for an integrative symbol that Mihai Eminescu (1850–1889) would emerge as the messianic figure of Romanian culture, be crowned Romania's national poet, and become the ultimate icon of Romanians' national identity.

A brief biographical account is due at this point. Eminescu's short and intense life story started in northern Moldova where he was born Mihail Eminovici. He was born in Botoșani in 1850 in a petty noble family, although controversies remain regarding the exact location of his birth. His father sent him to secondary school in Cernăuți, in the province of Bukovina, which was then part of the Austrian Empire. The young Eminovici skipped classes to work as a prompter for a Romanian theater troupe, with whom he toured through Transylvanian cities (Brașov and Sibiu). He was later employed by the National Theatre in Bucharest where he worked as a professional prompter and copyist. When he enrolled at the University of Vienna in 1869, he had already made a name for himself as a poet. His first poetry was published in 1866 by a Transylvanian magazine under the name Mihail Eminescu, which Romanianized his nominal identity by dropping the Slavonic ending written on his birth certificate.

After failing to complete his university studies at Vienna and Berlin, Eminescu returned to Romania and settled in Iași, where he became involved with conservative intellectuals. It was in Iași that Eminescu discovered his journalistic vocation. Here, he started writing political articles and social commentaries for a local newspaper, an activity which he continued after moving to Bucharest in 1877, where he was the editor of the Conservative Party's official mouthpiece, *Timpul* [The Time]. In this capacity, Eminescu stood out as an increasingly reactionary public intellectual, who articulated a

conservative discourse suffused with sharp criticism of liberalism, antisemitic ranging, and xenophobic rants.³¹

In 1883, at the age of 33, he was struck by mental illness, which abruptly put an end to his intellectual activity. His poetic writings, gathered under the title *Poesii* [Poems], were published at the end of that same year. This would be the sole volume published during Eminescu's lifetime. For the rest of his short life, Eminescu was in and out of asylums and on and off psychiatric treatments. He died in a sanatorium on 15 June 1889, aged 39.³²

Mihai Eminescu's memorial posterity survived his brief life. Eminescu's canonization process began anathemously, as, at the time of death, his poetry was already featured in schoolbooks.³³ However, although the bases of what would later evolve into a full-blown cultural myth of the national poet were set, the process of cult construction gained momentum posthumously. In Bucharest—Romania's capital and also the place of his untimely death—a street was named to perpetuate his memory immediately after his death, in 1889.³⁴ Meanwhile, in his birth town of Botoșani, Eminescu's memory was immortalized by being cast into a bronze bust that was unveiled in 1890. Since these two inaugural gestures of spatial memorialization—the street named after him in Bucharest and the public monument erected in his honor in Botoșani—memorial artifacts dedicated to Romania's national poet have been placed across the country. Equally important, although Eminescu's memorial cult peaked in Greater Romania during the interwar period, all succeeding political regimes, including the communist regime of “popular democracy,” appropriated the legacy of Eminescu and instrumentalized his memory for regime legitimacy.³⁵

Hypothesis

In this article I assess the empirical validity of a generic assertion underpinned by three specific hypotheses. My overarching conjecture is that Mihai Eminescu's memorial landscape in Romania is characterized by spatial homogeneity. It

31 Alex Drace-Francis, *The Traditions of Invention: Romanian Ethnic and Social Stereotypes in Historical Context* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 159–85.

32 George Călinescu, *Viața lui Mihai Eminescu* (Bucharest: Cultura Românească, 1932); Dumitru Murărașu, *Mihai Eminescu: viața și opera* (Bucharest: Editura Eminescu, 1983).

33 Mircea Anghelescu, “Eminescu în manualele școlare” [Eminescu in School Textbooks], in *Cazul Eminescu: polemici, atitudini, reacții din presa anului 1998* [The Eminescu Case: Debates, Attitudes, Reactions from Mass Media in 1998], ed. Cezar Paul-Bădescu (Pitești: Editura Paralela 45, 1999), 151–64.

34 *Familia*, Anul XXV, no. 34, 20 August 1889, 408.

35 Boia, *Mihai Eminescu*, 128–85.

claims that the geographical distribution of Eminescu's street names is rather homogenous and thus relatively insensitive to historical regions and other factors. This general hypothesis is theoretically grounded in Eminescu's cultural status as national poet, which means that Eminescu should act as an integrative symbol of Romanian national identity throughout the territory.

This broad assertion can be properly assessed in terms of three distinct aspects—regions, hierarchy, and presence—from which to derive specific hypotheses. The first of these is related to the *regionality* of Eminescu's memorial posterity. As a cultural icon of national identity, it is expected that Eminescu's memorial legacy be rather equally distributed within the country's territory. Stated formally, the first specific hypothesis can be spelled out as follows: given Mihai Eminescu's status as national symbol, his memorial immortalization through street names is not sensitive to regional particularities (H1).

The second specific hypothesis (H2) examines the geopolitics of memory in relation to urban hierarchy. It explores the presence of Mihai Eminescu in a locality's street nomenclature in connection to that locality's *importance* as an urban center. The latter characteristic—an urban center's importance—is conceived of in terms of three further aspects: history, administrative status, and size. Based on the same theoretical considerations, this second hypothesis states that the probability of having a street named after Eminescu does not vary by a locality's age (H2.1), administrative rank (H2.2), and size (H2.3).

The third hypothesis revolves around *presence*, that is, either Eminescu's personal relationship with a particular locality (physical presence documented through a direct biographic contact) or the symbolic presence of Eminescu in a locality in the form of a material and toponymic artifact (public monument and the names of schools or other cultural institutions). Resorting to the same theoretical argument that highlight Eminescu as a binding symbol at the national level, it is expected that streets named after Mihai Eminescu feature in the nomenclatures of urban localities in Romania irrespective of Eminescu's biographic and/or symbolic presence in those places (H3).

Method

Data

Eminescu's memorial posterity is recorded in a wealth of media, from banknotes, philately, schoolbooks and documentaries, to medals and monuments. For the purpose of reconstructing the commemorative landscape

of Romania's national poet, this research focuses exclusively on what could be called the *static artifacts of memory* consisting of place names and public monuments. Consequently, all the mobile artifacts that produce a highly dynamic—and, therefore, arguably unchartable—system of social practices through which Mihai Eminescu is kept relevant in the community's collective memory (e.g. banknotes, stamps, books) were excluded from the analytical purview of this study.

The empirical material utilized in this research consists of five data collections, all of which were compiled by the author of this study:

- 1) The complete street nomenclature of all the 319 localities classified as having an urban status in Romania. This dataset, comprising a total of 49,459 street names, was examined for identifying all the thoroughfares named after Mihai Eminescu;³⁶
- 2) The complete collection of school names existing in the Romanian educational system. This dataset, a total of 19,552 educational units (including kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, high schools, and postsecondary schools), was analyzed to determine the schools bearing the name of Eminescu;³⁷
- 3) The register of cultural institutions (theaters, museums, libraries, cultural centers, houses of culture) named after Mihai Eminescu. This register of institutional toponymy dedicated to Eminescu was compiled manually, after systematic inquiries made into both published and online sources;
- 4) The inventory of public monuments representing Mihai Eminescu existing on the territory of Romania. The dataset includes all the material artifacts of memory—busts and statues—and was constructed manually after thorough examination of written sources and systematic inquiries of online materials;
- 5) The list of places visited by Mihai Eminescu during his lifetime. This list of localities and itineraries was also compiled manually, after consulting some of the most authoritative biographies of Mihai Eminescu.³⁸

36 Mihai S. Rusu, "Modeling Toponymic Change: A Multilevel Analysis of Street Renaming in Postsocialist Romania," *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, 1114, no. 3 (2024): 591–609.

37 Rusu, "Mapping the Political Toponymy of Educational Namescapes," 89.

38 Călinescu, *Viața lui Mihai Eminescu*; Murărașu, *Mihai Eminescu*.

Measurements

Dependent variable

The dependent variable examined in this study is whether an urban locality from Romania has a thoroughfare named after the national poet Mihai Eminescu. Although there are several cities where Eminescu is commemorated in the street nomenclature more than once (e.g. in Iași there is a square and a street dedicated to him, and in Botoșani Eminescu is honored through assigning his name to a boulevard and a street), I decided to measure this variable dichotomously (0 = no street named after Eminescu; 1 = at least a street named after Eminescu).

Independent variables

The analysis relies on three clusters of independent variables that are employed to assess the set of hypotheses formulated in this research. A first group consists of geographic data regarding the location of each locality. While *historical region* (nominal variable) locates the cities within broader areas with rather diffuse borders, shaped by the ebbs and flows of power and political history, *geographical coordinates* provide a numerical, quantitative measurement of the same location.

A second group of variables measure aspects regarding the locality's historical and administrative characteristics, as well as the size of its street network. *Urban status* refers to the period when the settlement underwent urbanization and was therefore recognized as a town. The variable is measured both qualitatively, through an ordinal scale ranging from premodern city to postsocialist town, and quantitatively, through a numerical variable regarding the exact year of achieving urban status. The *administrative ranking* was established based on the official status legally confined to each locality, which ranges from town, to municipality, to county residence. The *street network size* calculated for each locality provides an additional, quantitative measure of the importance of the localities within the Romanian urban system.

The third and final category groups together variables that measure Mihai Eminescu's presence in each locality through a series of dichotomous variables. *Biographic contact* establishes if Eminescu has physically been in that particular place during his lifetime. *Public monument* considers if the locality memorializes the legacy of Romania's national poet in various material artifacts (busts, statues, or other types of monuments). In addition to material artifacts, *institutional toponymy* determines whether the locality attributed nominal artifacts

through which to immortalize the memory of Mihai Eminescu in the names of public institutions such as schools, theaters, museums, and cultural centers.

Analytical strategy

In assessing the three hypotheses underpinning this research, a series of multilinear logistic regression model analyses will be conducted in which the above-mentioned independent variables will be used as predictors. The overall objectives of the regression analyses are 1) to model statistically the probability of the dependent variable of having the value 0 or 1 (that is, of a locality having a thoroughfare named after Mihai Eminescu or not) as well as 2) to establish the statistical impact exerted by each of the independent variables (predictors) introduced in the model. Such an analytical approach will permit one to assess the empirical adequacy of the hypotheses set out in this research. The approach based on statistical modeling through logistic regression analyses will be supplemented with visual analyses of spatial data. For statistical modeling, the data will be analyzed using SPSS version 26, whereas for generating the geographical visualizations, the geographic information system software QGIS 3.12-București will be employed.

Results

General overview: charting Mihai Eminescu's geography of memory
Romania is organized into 3,228 territorial-administrative units (UATs), including the 41 counties and the six sectors of the capital city. Of the 3,171 localities existing in Romania in 2022 (most of which are rural settlements with unnamed streetscapes), 319 are urban settlements.³⁹ Out of this total (which constitutes the statistical "population" of this study), a thoroughfare commemorating Mihai Eminescu exists in 210 of them. This means that a street named after Mihai Eminescu features in roughly two-thirds of Romanian towns and cities (65.8 per cent).

39 Direcția Generală Administrație Publică. Numărul și clasificarea UAT-urilor și sectoarelor din România. Ministerul Dezvoltării, Lucrărilor Publice și Administrației, 2021, http://www.dpfb.mdrap.ro/nr_uat-uri.html, accessed 5 February 2023.

Overall, in the Romanian urban street nomenclature there are 221 toponyms dedicated to the national poet. The difference between 221 toponyms and 210 localities is due to the fact that there are several places which have immortalized Eminescu's memory in multiple arteries. In Filiași (Dolj county, Oltenia) there are three such odonyms: a street, an alley, and a cul-de-sac (*fundătură*). Other places commemorate Eminescu twice in their street nomenclature: for instance, in his native town of Botoșani, there is both a boulevard and a street named after him, while in Iași Eminescu's name is inscribed in a central square as well as in a street. In Bucharest Eminescu's toponymic memory is inscribed on a street and an entrance. Similar situations are also found in Bârlad (Vaslui county), Comănești (Bacău county), Fălticeni (Suceava county), Pașcani (Iași county), Râmnicu Sărat (Buzău county), and Tecuci (Galați county).

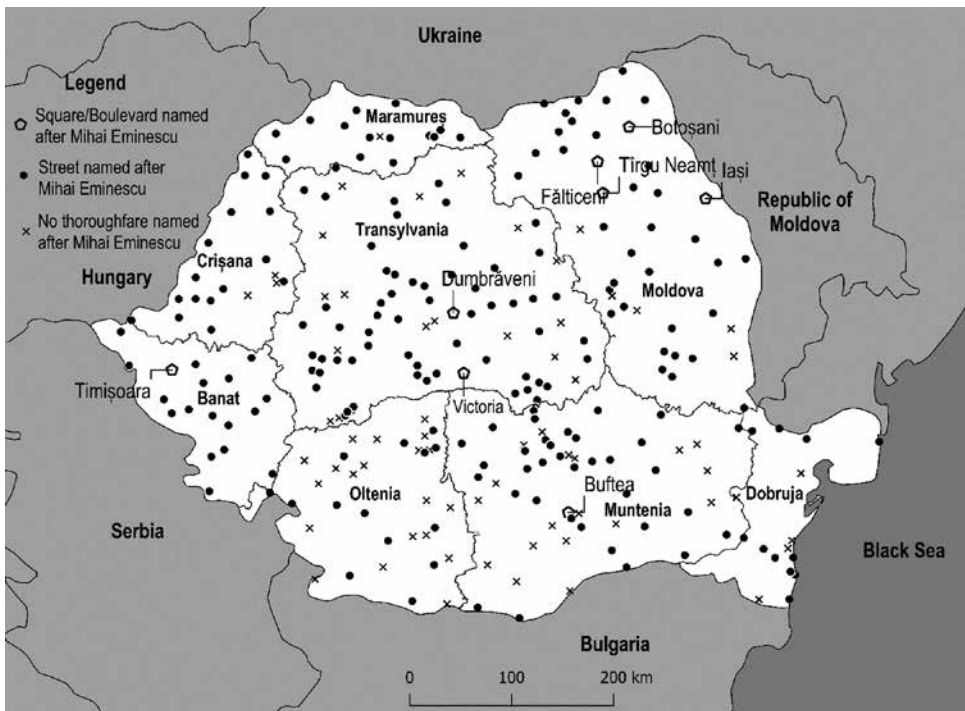


Fig. 1: The commemorative streetscape of Mihai Eminescu in Romania.

As displayed in Fig. 1, which provides a visual representation of Eminescu's commemorative streetscape in Romanian urban localities, streets named after the national poet are distributed in towns and cities all across the country's territory. There is no historical region that doesn't memorialize his name in

the street nomenclature. However, significant regional differences become discernible when shifting the analysis from a visual mapping to a statistical register.

Table 1: Regional distribution of Mihai Eminescu thoroughfares.

Historical region		Is there a thoroughfare named after Mihai Eminescu in the town's street nomenclature?		Total
		Yes	No	
Banat-Crișana	N	26	2	28
	%	92.9	7.1	100.0
Dobruja	N	11	5	16
	%	68.8	31.2	100.0
Maramureș	N	14	5	19
	%	73.7	26.3	100.0
Moldova	N	38	17	55
	%	69.1	30.9	100.0
Muntenia	N	40	31	71
	%	56.3	43.7	100.0
Oltenia	N	11	24	35
	%	31.4	68.6	100.0
Transylvania	N	70	25	95
	%	73.7	26.3	100.0
Romania (total)	N	210	109	319
	%	65.8	34.2	100.0

Table 1 reveals the full extent of these regional differences in the spatial memorialization of Mihai Eminescu at the level of urban street nomenclature. Statistical data indicate that this national commemorative landscape is divided into regions of memory that vary substantially in terms of the extent to which Eminescu's memory is inscribed into the streetscape of each urban locality. In this regard, it is puzzling to find out that Eminescu's toponymic artifacts are more present in the northwestern parts of the country (Banat-Crișana, Maramureș, and Transylvania) than in his native land of Moldova. Equally intriguing is the relatively low and scarce presence of such memorial artifacts in Muntenia and Oltenia, respectively, which are the regions with the fewest Eminescu street names.

Street names represent only one layer of a country's *commemorative namescape*, with it being part of the national memorial landscape (which also

includes public monuments such as shrines, tombstones, busts, and statues). In addition to street names, Eminescu's memorial posterity was immortalized in an array of other place names as well as in material artifacts scattered across the country. In Romania there are 56 schools bearing his name, which makes Eminescu the most popular eponym within the national schooling system, just as he is in the national street nomenclature. Besides schools, there are dozens of other public institutions that perpetuate his memory: theaters (e.g. The National Theatre "Mihai Eminescu" Timișoara), libraries (e.g. "Mihai Eminescu" Central University Library Iași), museums (e.g. "Mihai Eminescu" Museum Iași), cultural centers (e.g. "Mihai Eminescu" Cultural Center Bucharest), and houses of culture (e.g. "Mihai Eminescu" House of Culture Târgu Mureș) (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2: Institutional toponymy, public monuments, and places visited by Mihai Eminescu.

The first monument erected to honor the memory of Mihai Eminescu was unveiled in 1890 in Botoșani, one year after his untimely death. Since then, more than a hundred busts and a dozen statues have been placed across the country.

Beyond the state borders of Romania, monuments of Eminescu also exist in the Republic of Moldova, where he is also the national poet. As a material symbol of ethnic identity, busts of Eminescu were inaugurated by several Romanian diasporic communities that live in Ukraine (Northern Bukovina) and Serbia (Timok Valley). The Romanian state authorities have also erected monuments of Eminescu in various places around the world (Budapest, Vienna, Paris, New York, Havana, etc.) as part of their diplomatic efforts in promoting Romanian culture abroad.

As displayed in Fig. 2, which documents the geographical distribution of Eminescu's institutional toponymy and public monuments, a dense cluster of memorial artifacts is found in Moldova, especially around his native hometown of Botoșani, while another, rather loose cluster is dispersed throughout Transylvania. Echoing the situation discussed earlier regarding the spatialization of street names, Eminescu's memorial presence is smaller than in Muntenia and particularly in Oltenia. The reasons for these highly uneven geographies of memory will be addressed in the discussion section, following the presentation of the regression analysis results.

Regression analyses: modeling Eminescu's presence in urban streetscapes

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics of the variables introduced in the regression models, while the results of the two logistic regression analyses (exponentiated coefficients and Wald statistics) are provided in Table 3. The full regression models, including the Beta coefficients, standard errors, and the exact values of statistical significance (p -values) are appended as supplementary materials at the end of this article.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of the variables ($N = 319$).

Variables	N	%	M	SD	Min.–Max.
<i>Dependent variables</i>					
Street named after Mihai Eminescu	319	100	0.66	0.475	0–1
<i>Independent variables</i>					
Historical region					
Banat-Crișana	28	8.8	.	.	.
Dobruja	16	5.0	.	.	.
Maramureș	19	6.0	.	.	.
Moldova	55	17.2	.	.	.
Muntenia	71	22.3	.	.	.

Variables	N	%	M	SD	Min.–Max.
Oltenia	35	11.0	.	.	.
Transylvania	95	29.8	.	.	.
Total	319	100	.	.	.
Geographical coordinates					
Longitude (East)	319	100	24.8844	1.89856	20.62–29.65
Latitude (North)	319	100	45.8101	1.13635	43.66–48.19
Urban status (ordinal)					
< 1800: Premodern city	86	27.0	.	.	.
1801–1914: Modern city	25	7.8	.	.	.
1915–1947: Interwar city	19	6.0	.	.	.
1948–1967: Postwar town	53	16.6	.	.	.
1968–1989: Socialist town	77	24.1	.	.	.
> 1990: Postsocialist town	59	18.5	.	.	.
Total	319	100.0	.	.	.
Urban status (numerical)					
Year of achieving urban status	319	100	1802.65	292.586	-260–2006
Administrative ranking					
Town	217	68.0	.	.	.
Municipality	61	19.1	.	.	.
County residence	41	12.9	.	.	.
Total	319	100.0	.	.	.
Streetscape characteristics					
Street network size	319	100	156.33	321.979	4–4941
Eminescu's urban presence					
Biographic contact	319	0.09	0.292	0	1
Public monument	319	0.25	0.432	0	1
Institutional toponymy	319	0.15	0.355	0	1

The results of the two logistic regression models constructed to verify the hypotheses formulated in this article are provided in Table 3. Model 1 utilized mainly qualitative variables (nominal–e.g. historical region, and ordinal–e.g. a locality's administrative ranking), whereas Model 2 resorted to quantitative measurements of the same or alternative variables.

Table 3: Logistic regression models on the presence of a Mihai Eminescu street.

Variables	Model 1	Model 2
Historical region		
Banat-Crişana	32.723*** (15.039)	. (.)
Dobruja	0.413 (1.380)	. (.)
Maramureş	8.158** (7.575)	. (.)
Moldova	2.991* (5.237)	. (.)
Muntenia (ref.)	1*** (36.625)	. (.)
Oltenia	0.249* (5.237)	. (.)
Transylvania	3.101** (6.180)	. (.)
Geographical coordinates		
Longitude (East)	. (.)	0.840* (5.080)
Latitude (North)	. (.)	1.498*** (10.150)
Urban status (ordinal)		
< 1800: Premodern city (ref.)	1*** (39.826)	. (.)
1801–1914: Modern city	2.273 (0.925)	. (.)
1915–1947: Interwar city	2.816 (1.095)	. (.)
1948–1967: Postwar town	0.269* (3.958)	. (.)
1968–1989: Socialist town	0.186** (6.810)	. (.)
> 1990: Postsocialist town	0.034*** (22.048)	. (.)

Variables	Model 1	Model 2
Urban status (numerical)		
Year of achieving urban status	. (.)	0.997** (6.868)
Administrative ranking		
Town (ref.)	1 (1.800)	1 (2.655)
Municipality	0.900 (0.031)	1.691 (1.119)
County residence	0.263 (1.599)	0.441 (0.744)
Streetscape characteristics		
Street network size	1.012*** (13.535)	1.011*** (14.907)
Eminescu's urban presence		
Biographic contact	0.556 (0.356)	0.640 (0.264)
Public monument	1.373 (0.267)	1.158 (0.090)
Institutional toponymy	0.193** (6.330)	0.608 (0.761)
Constant	1.570*** (0.379)	0.000 (1.987)
No. of observations	319	319
Cox & Snell R-square	0.389	0.246
Nagelkerke R-square	0.538	0.340

Note: Exponentiated coefficients Exp(B); Wald statistics in parentheses.

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

The models' coefficients of determination denoted by the pseudo-R squared values indicate that both logistic regression models explain a rather consistent percentage of the variance of the dependent variable, ranging from 34.0 per cent to 53.8 per cent (Nagelkerke R-Square). These values suggest a good statistical fit between the models and the empirical data, especially for Model 1, which employs mainly qualitative variables (nominal and ordinal) for predicting the values of the outcome variable.

In light of the results in the two logistic regression analyses, it is now possible to assess the validity of the three hypotheses advanced in this study. The first explored the regionality of Eminescu's memorial posterity and expected to find little regional differences in the spatial memorialization of Romania's national poet, considering his status as an integrative symbol of Romanian identity and culture.

The hypothesis of a spatial homogeneity of Eminescu's urban street names across Romanian towns and cities is invalidated in both models. While controlling for the influence exerted by all the other predictors introduced in the analysis, Model 1 reveals statistically significant differences between Romania's historical regions. Taking Muntenia (Greater Wallachia) as analytical reference, the exponentiated coefficients indicate that in Banat-Crișana, Maramureș, and Transylvania, the likelihood of an urban locality having a street named after Mihai Eminescu is much higher (32, 8, and three times, respectively).

Similar regional differences are to be found between Muntenia and Moldova. Compared to the former, one is three-times more likely to come across a thoroughfare dedicated to Eminescu in a town in Moldova than in the urban street namespace of a Muntenian locality. While Dobruja does not differ in a statistically significant manner from Muntenia in this regard, in Oltenia (Lesser Wallachia), the likelihood of a town commemorating Eminescu in its street nomenclature is the least (specifically, in Oltenia, the odds are 75 per cent lower compared to Muntenia).

A similar picture emerges by swapping "historical region" with the "geographical coordinates" of each of the 319 localities included in the analysis. The results presented in Model 2 show that both longitude and latitude are statistically significant predictors. This means that the likelihood of a locality having a street named after Eminescu increases as we move towards the north and the west of the country. Taken together, these findings indicate a north-western axis of memory which structures Mihai Eminescu's commemorative geography at the level of urban street nomenclature.

The second hypothesis holds that streets named after Eminescu should also be equally distributed along localities' urban importance. Consequently, thoroughfares honoring Eminescu should not be more present in those localities which occupy higher positions within Romania's urban system, that is, which have historical prestige given their older urban status, are administrative centers, and are larger in size. The results obtained after conducting the two logistic regression models generally reject this hypothesis: while controlling for all the other predictors, the older a city is the more likely that it will have a street named after Mihai Eminescu.

Model 1 indicates a clear historical breaking point: towns that achieved urban status after the Second World War (especially after 1947, when Romania became a communist “people’s republic”) are significantly less likely to have a thoroughfare dedicated to Eminescu in comparison to older cities. The results obtained in Model 2 underscore this relationship between urban age and Eminescu’s toponymic presence: an increase of one year in achieving urban status is associated with a decreased probability of 0.3 per cent of having a street named after Eminescu. This means that a century of urban history between two towns means a decreased probability, by 30 per cent, that the newer town has a street named after Eminescu.

If urban age (which is an indicator of a city’s historical prestige) is taken into account, the administrative ranking of the localities does not constitute a statistically significant predictor in either model. On the other hand, urban size does matter: the results obtained in both regression models show that the larger a city’s street network (which is highly correlated with population and area size), the greater the probability of finding a street honoring Eminescu in that city. Each additional street brings an increased probability of 1 per cent of a town having a thoroughfare commemorating Eminescu.

Lastly, regarding Mihai Eminescu’s urban presence, the regression results show that both biographic contact with a locality and the existence of a public monument hailing the memory of the national poet do not exert a statistically significant influence on the probability of a town having a street named after him. On the other hand, Model 1 (but not Model 2) highlights that the existence of an institution (e.g. school, theater, library, museum, cultural center, etc.) is associated with a lower likelihood of memorializing Eminescu in the street nomenclature of that locality.

Discussion and conclusions

In Romania’s pantheon of canonical figures, Mihai Eminescu occupies an uncontested position. As the “national poet,” his memory was inscribed well beyond the literary realm. As this article demonstrated, the memory of Eminescu was spatialized in various material and symbolic artifacts, such as public monuments and place names. In charting Mihai Eminescu’s memorial landscape, particular attention was given to the rather unobtrusive, but symbolically powerful and all-pervasive, street nomenclature.

What emerges from charting Eminescu’s memorial landscape as toponymically inscribed in the place names and public monuments across Romania’s

urban localities is an *uneven geography of memory*. This finding goes against what was initially theorized in this article, which anticipated a rather homogeneous memorial landscape. The uneven geography of Eminescu's memory is especially visible in urban street names, which—and this is the concluding claim I will discuss in the remainder of this paper—is structured by three main factors: 1) regional heterogeneity; 2) urban historicity; and 3) memorial impersonality.

Contrary to what was expected—that Eminescu street names would be evenly distributed along the territory—what the results uncovered was an uneven memorial namescape. Instead of a uniform distribution, statistical analyses revealed regional concentrations of toponymic remembrance (in Banat-Crișana, Maramureș, Transylvania, and Moldova) and geographical regions characterized by scarce memorialization in the urban street nomenclature (Oltenia and some parts of Muntenia). This regionality of Eminescu's toponymic memory may be due to two distinct factors: a) Eminescu's peculiar birthplace and b) his role in the historical geopolitics of Romania's state-making during the twentieth century.

That a large concentration of Eminescu's artifacts (both toponymy, including street names, and public monuments) are located in Moldova and particularly around Botoșani can be accounted for by biographical details. Eminescu's birthplace and childhood were linked to Botoșani and Ipotești, while his student life and early career began in Iași. In Transylvania and the Partium regions (Banat, Crișana, and Maramureș) bordering Hungary, what explains Eminescu's increased memorialization is political as opposed to biographical. Until the Treaty of Trianon (4 June 1920), when they became part of Romania, these regions belonged to the Kingdom of Hungary, itself embedded within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. After they were incorporated into the expanded state boundaries of the Kingdom of Romania, Transylvania and the Partium regions were subjected to a process of Romanianization. This ethnically contentious process unfolded in local administration, state universities, and other cultural institutions.⁴⁰ But it also included a symbolic dimension, which covered the Romanianization of the public landscape.⁴¹ Mihai Eminescu's name was instrumental in this latter regard, as the name of the national poet was widely used to rename the streets formerly bearing Hungarian and Austrian names in Transylvania. In this regard, (re)naming streets after Mihai Eminescu constituted an ethnically driven toponymic means of Romanianizing the

40 Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building, and Ethnic Struggle, 1918–1930* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995).

41 Mihai S. Rusu, "Shifting Urban Namescapes: Street Name Politics and Toponymic Change in a Romanian(ised) City," *Journal of Historical Geography*, 65 (2019): 48–58.

symbolic landscape of the newly incorporated regions in the aftermath of the First World War.

This heterogeneous landscape of Eminescu's memory is further shaped by *urban historicity*: older and larger cities are usually the urban settings where the toponymic memory of Eminescu is emplaced in the streetscape. This finding points to a stratification of memory, structured by urban importance when it comes to the toponymic commemoration of Mihai Eminescu. While the national poet is invariably memorialized in large urban centers (which are usually also the older and larger cities), his memory is lacking in smaller and newer towns urbanized after the administrative reform of 1968.

Lastly, Eminescu's spatialized namespace is defined by *memorial impersonality*: considering all the other factors, the biographical presence of Eminescu in a certain locality does not increase the likelihood of finding a street dedicated to the national poet in that particular town or city. Nor is his memorial presence in the form of a public monument or cultural/institutional toponymy associated with a street named after him. This seems to suggest that, at least in the smaller towns, Eminescu's toponymic posterity is spatially inscribed independently of other forms of commemoration.

In one of the most famous poems dedicated to him—"Longing for Eminescu" [*Dor de Eminescu*]—Adrian Păunescu wrote, "He is Moldova's son / And Muntenia's nephew, / The entire Transylvania adopted him, / Eminescu is everywhere."⁴² Statistical analyses of the spatialization of toponymic data indicate that Eminescu is, roughly speaking, everywhere. Street names honoring Romania's national poet are found scattered across the territory and spread in all the four corners of the country. It also shows, with an Orwellian ironic jest, that this "everywhereness" of Eminescu's memorial posterity in street nomenclatures is not quite uniform. Although Eminescu is everywhere—as the lyrics go—not all regions of memory are created equal in terms of Eminescu's spatial memorialization. Above all, what this article has shown is that Eminescu's toponymic everywhereness in Romania's street namespace—contrary to cultural expectations—is structured into an unequal geography of memory.

The quantitative approach employed in this research is not without its methodological shortcomings. Quantification and statistical analysis of spatial data are powerful tools for highlighting empirical regularities and patterns of influences between various variables. They are, nevertheless, blind to

42 Adrian Păunescu, "Dor de Eminescu" [Longing for Eminescu], *Flacăra. Săptămânal editat de Frontul Democrației și Unității Socialiste*, 32 (1983): 24. The original lyrics are: "El Moldovei îi e fiul / Și Munteniei nepot, / L-a-nfiat întreg Ardealul, / Eminescu-i peste tot."

particularities concerning the multiple contexts of commemoration: issues regarding the various repertoire of motives and interests for which local authorities choose to commemorate Eminescu in their street nomenclature, as well as questions regarding who decides when and how a particular street receives a name elude the methodological net of the quantitative approach in this study. Another limitation consists of not taking into consideration the shifting political regimes of memory in Romania's modern history which have shaped, in different ways and forms, Eminescu's memorialization within the streetscape and beyond. Further inquiries should attempt to overcome these methodological limitations by combining the statistical precision of quantitative analyses with the sensitivity for the local culture and historical context provided by qualitative approaches focused on the particularities surrounding specific case studies of naming streets after Mihai Eminescu.

Supplementary materials

Appendix 1: Logistic regression Model 1 (full model with categorical variables)

Predictor	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Historical region					
Banat-Crişana	3.448	0.899	15.039	0.000	32.723
Dobruja	-0.885	0.754	1.380	0.240	0.413
Maramureş	2.099	0.763	7.575	0.006	8.158
Moldova	1.096	0.533	4.226	0.040	2.991
Muntenia (ref.)	.	.	35.692	0.000	.
Oltenia	-1.391	0.608	5.237	0.022	0.249
Transylvania	1.132	0.455	6.180	0.013	3.101
Urban status					
< 1800: Premodern city (ref.)	.	.	39.826	0.000	.
1801–1914: Modern city	0.821	0.854	0.925	0.336	2.273
1915–1947: Interwar city	1.035	0.989	1.095	0.295	2.816
1948–1967: Postwar town	-1.313	0.660	3.958	0.047	0.269
1968–1989: Socialist town	-1.682	0.645	6.810	0.009	0.186
> 1990: Postsocialist town	-3.375	0.719	22.048	0.000	0.034
Administrative ranking					
Town (ref.)	.	.	1.800	0.407	.
Municipality	-0.105	0.598	0.031	0.861	0.900
County residence	-1.337	1.057	1.599	0.206	0.263
Streetscape characteristics					
Street network size	0.012	0.003	13.535	0.000	1.012
Mihai Eminescu and the city					
Biographic contact	-0.587	0.983	0.356	0.551	0.556
Public monument	0.317	0.614	0.267	0.606	1.373
Institutional toponymy	-1.753	0.697	6.330	0.012	0.173
Constant	0.451	0.773	0.379	0.538	1.570
No. of cases			319		
Cox & Snell R-Square			0.389		
Nagelkerke R-Square			0.538		

Note: B = unstandardized regression coefficients; S.E. = standard errors, Wald = Wald Chi-Squared Test for logistic regression; Sig. = Value of statistical significance; Exp(B) = the exponentiation of the B coefficient, that is, odds ratio.

Appendix 2: Logistic regression Model 2 (full model with numerical variables)

Predictor	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Geographical coordinates (locality)					
Longitude (East)	-0.174	0.077	5.080	0.024	0.840
Latitude (North)	0.404	0.127	10.150	0.001	1.498
Urban status (city)					
Year of urban status	-0.003	0.001	6.868	0.009	0.997
Administrative ranking					
Town (ref.)	.	.	2.665	0.265	.
Municipality	0.525	0.497	1.119	0.290	1.691
County residence	-0.820	0.950	0.744	0.388	0.441
Streetscape characteristics					
Street network size	0.011	0.003	14.907	0.000	1.011
Mihai Eminescu and the city					
Biographic contact	-0.446	0.869	0.264	0.608	0.640
Public monument	0.146	0.489	0.090	0.765	1.158
Institutional toponymy	-0.498	0.571	0.761	0.383	0.608
Constant	-9.254	6.565	1.987	0.159	0.000
No. of cases			319		
Cox & Snell R-Square			0.246		
Nagelkerke R-Square			0.340		

Note: B = unstandardized regression coefficients; S.E. = standard errors, Wald = Wald Chi-Squared Test for logistic regression; Sig. = Value of statistical significance; Exp(B) = the exponentiation of the B coefficient, that is, odds ratio.