

LITERARY TOURISM IN KRŠKO: EXPLORING THE FAMOUS SCHOLAR JANEZ VAJKARD VALVASOR AND HIS HOUSE IN KRŠKO

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Abstract Literary Tourism is one of the global tourism types on the market, which has its different patterns. This paper is based on secondary data and information about Literary Tourism, and it examines the city of Krško and the role of its most famous literary figure, the great scholar Janez Vajkard Valvasor (1641 - 1693). Krško is a town situated in eastern Slovenia, most recognisable because of its Nuclear Power Plant, literary places and figures such as Janez Vajkard Valvasor, Josipina Hočevar and Vladimir Štoviček. The paper explores Literary Tourism, its connection to Krško, and Janez Vajkard Valvasor as an important literary figure who lived and died in this area. The paper concludes with a discussion based on a personal travel experience through the literary places of the city of Krško.

Keywords:
tourism,
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walking
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Introduction

Because of pandemic tourism of the present day, political, economic, social and cultural aspects of people's lives are influenced multinationally. Literary Tourism is described as one of the global tourism types on the market, which has its unique different patterns. In literature, we often come across the term tourism development. "Tourism development is commonly described as a mix which helps to create new jobs, provide people with better income and develop the local infrastructure". In reality it is an outcome of motivations, which are connected to the recognition and interest of artists and literary figures who are known for their work. Because many countries have defined tours or travels to famous places, or places named after literary figures, and also to support well known artists connected with their past life, literary career, birth and burial places, but, most importantly, to increase the tourists' interests to visit their countries. A good example of Literary Tourism in the Tourism industry can be the Kafka touristic tour, which includes travelling to Prague, which encourages tourists to visit the cafes and squares, where the famous author lived, passed and reposed (Bidaki & Hosseini, 2014).

The purpose of this paper is to examine, define and understand the term Literary Tourism and its connection to the city of Krško and its famous scholar Janez Vajkard Valvasor. The first Section of the paper describes the literature on Literary Tourism and its connection to Krško. The second Section provides an overview of the literary figure, specifically Janez Vajkard Valvasor and the last months/years of his life in the city of Krško. The third Section describes the scholar's house in Krško, which provided information and data for discussions and descriptions for our tour. Finally, the fourth Section describes our personal travel experience to the city of Krško, the museum and the scholar's house (today the Mencinger house), where we discussed and talked about our feelings, experience and the whole picture of the walking tour.

Methodology and literature review

This paper is based mostly on secondary data and information about Literary Tourism, the city of Krško and its literary figure Janez Vajkard Valvasor. It analyses how the city of Krško is connected to Literary Tourism, and the role of the famous scholar Janez Vajkard Valvasor. In addition to our research of secondary online data,

brochures, professional and scientific literature, we combined it with fieldwork (a walking tour with a local Tour Guide) in the house of Valvasor (today the Mencinger house), and the local city museum of Krško, but first we have to explain the term Literary Tourism. The term Literary Tourism is analysed by examining the existing literature. Further on, we examined the city of Krško and its connection to Literary Tourism, the scholar Janez Vajkar Valvasor and his house in Krško. Once these themes were explored, we discussed and compared our walking tour and presented our field experience.

What is literary tourism and its connection to Krško?

Literary Tourism is a subcategory of Cultural Tourism that examines the study of places that are connected with literary works and the lives of literary figures. It has developed as a religious pilgrimage, but today we can talk about several types of Literary Tourism. Literary tourist places are divided as places connected to literary works or narratives which are related to the lives of the authors. Literary Tourism is also divided between visits to monuments, graves, home towns, literary landscapes and fantasy lands (Jurinčič, 2016, p. 248). Smith, Macleod and Hart Robertson (2010, p. 108) describe Literary Tourism as a Tourism activity, motivated by interest in a literary destination, heritage, literary setting, creation, or in an author. Literary tourists love to visit burial sites, museums, birthplaces, literary trails and other sites connected with authors or their creations. According to Bidaki and Hosseini (2014), Literary Tourism is very popular nowadays, especially places with a long precedence and cultural background. Based on the researches and studies of our trip advisor, the first global literary tourism destination is London, followed by New York, Paris, San Francisco, Rome and also Italy. At least one well known writer lived in all of the before mentioned large cities, which are happy not only because they have presented their famous literary figures, but also because they gained a reputation and economic benefits.

Even in Slovenia we come across Literary Tourism, which is developing, but data related to scholarly research is still underdeveloped. In Slovenia many homes of known poets and writers are becoming popular tourism attractions, because every region of Slovenia has its own famous literary site, place or figure (Topler, 2016, p. 131). Even in the city of Krško, we come across Literary Tourism. Krško is a town situated in eastern Slovenia, most recognisable because of its Nuclear Power Plant.

According to the Tourist Information Centre Krško (w. d.), there were some important personalities moving around the Krško area, such as the famous scholar Janez Vajkard Valvasor, philanthropist and businesswoman Josipina Hočvar, and the academic sculptor and medalist Vladimir Štoviček.

Who was Janez Vajkard Valvasor and how is he connected to Krško?

Janez Vajkard Valvasor (1641 - 1693) was a Carniolan Baron, histographer, geographer, naturalist, technician and collector, who lived in the Austrian province of Carniola (Kranjska, part of Slovenia today). He was a soldier and a commander, but also he was a great patriot and, by conviction, a Carniolan. He published many books and papers; his greatest work was the *Glory of the Duchy of Carniola*, or in the slovene language *Slava Vojvodine Kranjske* (Lajovic, 1993, p. 89). After a successful research but financially unsuccessful period of his life, Janez Vajkard Valvasor chose Krško as his place of residence, the city where his wife's relatives owned land. Krško was less lovely than Ljubljana, but still a good starting point for travelling west or east and further work (Černelič Krošelj, 2014). He was the twelfth of seventeen children and he was baptised in the church of Saint Nikolai on May 28. With his remaining money, he bought a townhouse in Krško, where he spent the last months of his life (Kamniško-komendski biografski leksikon, w. d.). Janez Vajkard (Johann Weichard, in german) was born in May 1641 in Ljubljana, and he died in September or October of 1693 in Krško (Kumprej, 2017). The date of his death and place still remain open, but the most solid findings are connected to the house in Krško (Boris, 2014).

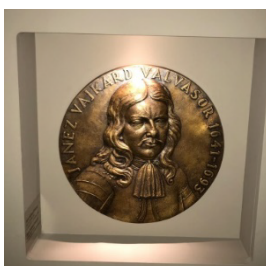


Figure 1: Janez Vajkard Valvasor (1641 – 1693)

Source: Majerič, January 2020.

The house where Valvasor spent his last months/years of life – the true and false house of Valvasor in Krško:

The Valvasor House stands on the edge of Krško along the Sevnica – Krško road. The house is 162 metres above sea level, followed by the Trška gora hill, and on the left bank of the Sava river is the village Sremič. To the north – west of the building is the late – baroque church of Saint Ghost (Sv. Duh), and in the south – west stands the baroque house where the lawyer Janez Mencinger lived. Today, the house is a part of the Valvasor complex, including the Jarnovič and Kaplanova houses. The complex has undergone a major renovation, during which the Valvasor house was renovated and returned to its original glory. The Valvasor complex now includes the Tourist Information Centre, the office of the regional unit of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, the office of the Public Fund for Cultural Activities, the youth centre and the city cafe. The upper floors were used for the collection dedicated to the work of sculptor and medalist Vladimir Štoviček and the Iconothec Valvasorian (Iconotheca Valvasoriana). In it, they also attempted to present Valvasor's life with his personal objects (Lukić, 2010). For many years the people of Krško were convinced that Janez Vajkard Valvasor lived in the Valvasor house, but that was not true. Doctor Golec (2013) made a new discovery, and proved that the information was false, since Valvasor lived in the southern part of the later double Mencinger house.

The Mencinger house is one of the most important and oldest built houses in the town of Krško. It is named after the writer, lawyer and politician Janez Mencinger. Today, the house has the title Cesta krških žrtev 2, and inside it had two united houses which were named Krško 37 and 38 around 1930. Research on the life and inhabitants of the house is still active, but we know more about the inhabitants of the southern part of the house. During the research and finding of the true home of Valvasor in Krško, they added the house Krško 37 to the home of the famous scholar. After the death of Janez Vajkard Valvasor in 1693, his wife and relatives still lived there. The old widow sold the house in 1706, to Janez Krstnik Kamnikar (Černelič Krošelj and Železnik, 2013).



Figure 2: The Mencinger house (Mencingerjeva hiša)

Source: Majerič, January 2020.

Travel experience to Valvasor house and Mencinger house (real/false house) and the conclusion:

In the last part of this paper we decided to combine secondary data with a personal field – travel experience of the city of Krško and the mentioned real and false houses of the famous literary figure Janez Vajkard Valvasor. At the start, we decided to visit the first mentioned Valvasor house, where we experienced the life, work, hobbies and death of the famous scholar, with the help of a local Tour Guide. At the beginning, we had a dialogue with the positive Tour Guide about Literary Tourism in Krško and Janez Vajkard Valvasor. After a successful and pleasant discussion, she led us into the so-called Valvasor house. There, we entered into the Valvasor room, which included an office or cabinet of the scholar, a table and a place to read, a book closet, where all his books, maps, charts and other objects were stored, a showcase with his book collection, a table with copper engravings of Valvasor, and

a dressing room equipped with the fashion designs in the era that Valvasor lived in. Valvasor was a person who wanted to know everything. The Tour Guide also presented to us his most known and important work, a book with the title 'The glory of the Duchy of Carniola (Slava Vojvodine Kranjske). During the examination of the translated famous Valvasor book (a replica), we had to wear white gloves, which were brought to us by the Tour Guide. Later, we tried on some clothes, a wide lower part of a dress and a corset, which was worn by women in his time. The Tour Guide provided us with plenty of useful information and data during our tour in the Valvasor house. Her voice was calm and her appearance was positive, she also talked very comfortably with a lot of excitement, to attract our attention. We continued our walking tour to the souvenir shop, which disappointed us, because there were no items connected to Valvasor. We expected some magnets, pencils, mugs or anything similar, but instead we took some of the brochures and leaflet materials. We thought that our walking tour had come to an end, but it had not, since we went across the street to the Mencinger house, the real home of the famous scholar. The house had parts of building materials from the time of Valvasor (eg. the foundations of the house), and many researches were made about the real last home of Valvasor. We found out that, according to Dr. Golec, the Mencinger house represents the last home of Valvasor and his ancestors. The Tour Guide showed us the other parts of the house which, today, are galleries representing many different time periods. During the tour we noticed a cafe (Valvasor cafe), which had, unfortunately, according to the Tour Guide's information, been closed for the last two months.

To conclude our walking tour experience, we believe that Krško has a lot of potential in Literary Tourism. Krško has an interesting past full of important literary figures, graves, places, cultural heritage sites and other literary attractions. Literary Tourism will not only help to promote the destination, but also help by promoting authors, figures, writers, their works and influence on local Tour Guides and their knowledge about Literary Tourism in Krško.

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