

A DISPLAY OF AUTHENTIC LITERARY TOURISM IN MARIBOR: THE CASE OF THE POET AND GENERAL RUDOLF MAISTER

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Abstract Literary Tourism is one of the fastest growing forms of Tourism, so we investigated it in relation to authenticity. In the theoretical part, we conducted a literature review, where we were introduced to Literary Tourism and authenticity, in connection with the city of Maribor, and poet and General Rudolf Maister. Considering that Maister's birthplace and place of creation is not Maribor, we determined how Literary Tourism could be authentic there, so we established a literary route for monuments and objects named after him. We also took part in the research, and found that it is characterised by an approach of existential authenticity, since each person in the group experienced it on an individual level in their own way.

Keywords:

literary
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Introduction

Literary Tourism

We talk about Literary Tourism when authors or their literature become so popular that people feel a connection to places associated with them (home, town, home or grave), or to the heroes represented in their literature. Visiting such places allows literary enthusiasts to interact with authors, and who admire them by seeing or touching objects or memories that are tied to the authors (Hoppen, Brown, & Fyall, 2013, p. 37). Throughout history, Tourism and literature have been linked closely. The first literary-inspired visits were linked to the earliest forms of travel, such as the Grand Tour. A key event in organised Literary Tourism was David Garrick's Stratford Jubilee in 1769 (MacLeod, Shelley and Morrison, 2018, p. 389). Literary Tourism, however, comes not only from literary works, but also from the perspective of getting to know the author's life. In this way, readers become pilgrims, as they visit their hometown, and see a place that inspired a poem or book, or pay homage to a public monument (Agarwal and Shaw, 2017, p. 17).

Literary Tourism is linked closely to location (Jurinčić, 2016, p. 249). Literature defines two main types of literary places: Places in real life – related to writers' lives (for example, places of birth, selected places of residence, graves) and imaginary places related to written works (Hoppen et al., 2013, p. 41). Today it is possible to visit many places that are related to Literary Tourism. Often, literature related sites have been used to promote destinations, such as Shakespeare's Stratford, the Brontës' Yorkshire, Hardy's Wessex, Wordsworth's Lake District, Scott-land or Dickens' London (Hoppen et al., 2013, p. 37). Visitors, when visiting places of literary value, evoke memories that relate to the author or literary work, and to the circumstances in which they acted as readers or listeners. Emotions and imagination play an important role in recognising literary places, since the visitor does not look at the place objectively, but from the point of view of interpretation. Without interpretation, a tourist-literary destination would lose much of its value (Jurinčić, 2016, p. 251).

Authenticity in Literary Tourism

Ever since the concept of authenticity was popularised, its usefulness has also been questioned. It is considered that objects and society can only be authentic if they have been created without the help of modern materials and have not been modified. Authenticity as a term also has many variations used in the literature. Cohen (1988) describes this as a word used to describe something real and which has become a socially constructed concept where the criteria for authenticity are subjective and different for each individual. Therefore, it varies with tourists and their perspectives (Agarwal and Shaw, 2017, p. 169, 170).

Wang (1999, p. 352–360) identified 3 approaches to authenticity, namely:

An objective approach can be defined in cases where the source of an artifact is undoubtedly determined, which means that the object possesses some individuality and uniqueness, an essence that is lost when we try to replicate the object. This is confused when we try to put the objective definition of authenticity in another context, for example, as a measure of the authenticity of a culture.

The constructive approach works on the constructivist art, which upgrades objectivity so that it does not give importance to the object being viewed by the tourist, but to the construction around the object.

Existential authenticity is an experience experienced by the individual at the individual level. This can also be linked to the fact that what people say is authentic is also authentic. This authenticity moves away from the object of viewing, and is located within the tourist him/herself and during interactions with other people.

Rudolf Maister, a poet and General

After the end of World War I (after the collapse of »Avstro–Ogrska«), Rudolf Maister played a major role in Styria and Carinthia in the shaping the new borders and State of the SHS (the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs). His life was connected with books, and, therefore, with literature, poetry and also artistic creation. His birthplace was Kamnik, where visitors of the museum can read, listen

to recitals and tunes from the poetry collections of »Poezije« and »Kitica mojih« (Medobčinski muzej Kamnik, 2020).

Not only did Maister work in Kamnik, but he left important traces in Maribor, where he is buried. At the end of World War I, the Maribor City Council declared the annexation of Maribor to the Republic of German Austria. General Maister did not agree with this, so he set up a Slovenian army consisting of 4,000 soldiers and 200 officers. On the night of November 23, 1918, they then disarmed a green guard of »Maribor Germans« and liberated Maribor. This day was, in 2005, proclaimed as the Maister's Day, which is celebrated by the Slovenes in memory of this event (Maribor24.si, 2019).

Poetry had been an important thing in Maister's life since he was a young man. When he was in 5th grade, he published his poems in the »Ljubljanska večernica«. Later on, his poems were published in the »Ljubljanski zvon« and »Slovenski narod«. He was also a member of »Zadruga«, bringing together writers of the modern era such as Ivan Cankar, Dragotin Kette, Josip Murn Aleksandrov and Oton Župančič. He dedicated to his fiancé Marica Sterger in 1904, the poetry collection of »Poezije« and, in 1929, his collection "Kitica mojih" was published (M.K., 29. 3. 2014).

Being the birthplace of Rudolf Maister in Kamnik and the place he lived, we wondered if we could create a trail in Maribor that would be in the way of Literary Tourism and be authentic. We were also interested in what form of authenticity, according to Wang, could be defined as the path of Literary Tourism that we had founded and also pursued.

Methodology

We began our research by first finding points on the Tourism Maribor–Pohorje website that would make sense as a literary route, which we later named "*Following the footsteps of the poet and General Rudolf Maister in Maribor*". We decided to include the outskirts of the City park with the Monument dedicated to the fighters for the northern border, the General Maister Square with the Monument of Rudolf Maister, a tour of the city centre with the vehicle "Maister" and a pub »Pri Maistru« near Slomšek Square. Later, with a group of four people, we went after the designed trail. For information about the sights, we used the »Visit Maribor« mobile app, which is

a free tourist guide to the old town of Maribor. The app contains photo descriptions and a tourist map.

We took the formed trail on December 16, 2019 at 11 a.m., at City Park on Maistrova Street, where the Monument to fighters for the northern border is located (Figure 1). The Monument to fighters for the northern border was erected in 1958, and is the work of the Slovenian sculptor Drago Tršar. The monument is a relief with a group of men with weapons, with Rudolf Maister in the middle. On the back of the monument is the following inscription: »*Borcem za severno mejo, 1918, 1919, ob 40-letnici osvoboditve Maribora 1958*« (Statues Vanderkrogt, b. d.).



Figure 1: The monument to fighters for the northern border

Source: Senekovič, 16. 12. 2019

We continued our trail to General Rudolf Maister Square. General Maister's Square is marked by a fountain, a monument to General Rudolf Maister (Figure 2), and a monument to Anton Tomšič and the 1. Gymnasium Maribor. Near the square are located Maribor Castle and the Municipality of Maribor.

First, we walked around the square and felt the beat of the gymnasium and the pre-holiday atmosphere from Freedom Square, where the stands were set up. The air smelled of mulled wine and tea.

The monument to General Rudolf Maister was erected in 1987, and the square was renamed 6 years later to Rudolf Maister Square. There is a linden tree by the monument, which was planted when Slovenia declared its independence in 1991, and a bottle with a document describing the event is buried in the ground (Google Play, 2020).



Figure 2: The monument to General Rudolf Maister

Source: Senekovič, 16. 12. 2019

Later, we called the driver of the urban vehicle "Maister" (Figure 3), who picked us up at Castle Square and took us through the city streets of Maribor, past sights such as the castle, Leon Štukelj Square, Gosposka Street, Main Square with a plague column, Slomšek Square, where a church and statue dedicated to Anton Martin Slomšek and the Slovenian National Theatre Maribor are. The Maister electric mini-vehicle drives through the pedestrian area in the centre of Maribor and accommodates 6 passengers at a time. It is also interesting that the transportation is free of charge and it drives around the old town. The driver was very friendly, and he shared with us information we did not find on the app. We have never seen any city centre with this kind of vehicle with friends, so this experience was truly special and unique.



Figure 3: Electrical vehicle "Maister"

Source: Senekovič, 16. 12. 2019

The driver dropped us off at Slomšek Square, from where we headed to the "Pri Mastru" pub, where we ended up enjoying a pleasant discovery of the city centre. The Maister Brewery (under the style of Maister Brewery from Kamnik), as shared by the waiter who served us, with the opening in 2019, linked Maribor and Kamnik. There are 8 types of beer available in the pub (Figure 4), in different glass sizes. The interior of the bar has a rustic style and was never empty during our visit. People talked about everyday things with a glass of beer, at that time the talks were about jobs and the coming holidays.



Figure 4: List of beers at pub "Pri Mastru"

Source: Senekovič, 16. 12. 2019

Results and discussion

At the beginning we wondered if we could create such a trail that would be based on Literary Tourism and leave an authentic experience. We have introduced 3 forms of authentication:

Objectivity approach: Authenticity is a property of an object and can be determined objectively.

Constructivism approach: Authenticity is relative, so it is the result of negotiating views and interests; tradition is also invention.

Existential authenticity: Authenticity is the property of the observer – the tourist and his experiences, where he can be "himself".

The results show that we can create a literary tourist route that is interesting, not because the author would live and create there, but because he left important traces there. We made the trip and checked if it was also interesting in personal experience and not just on paper. We have also found that, as students of Tourism, we can design an attractive literary path with several important elements (sights, pubs, vehicles). After passing the impressions, my friends and I realised that we had experienced an existential form of authenticity.

We rejected the objective form of authenticity because we nevertheless believe that this form would be appropriate for the birthplace of General Maister himself, since the birthplace with the museum is located there, and we only looked at monuments and objects named after Maister (a Monument to fallen fighters for the northern border, General Maister Square, Maister vehicle and pub »Pri Maistru«).

We have also overlooked the constructive form of authenticity, since we believe that we see objects or locations as they are, so there is no construction around them that distracts from the objects themselves.

We found out that we have experienced an existential form of authenticity, as each of us has experienced it in our own way. This experience was also authentic to us, as we always felt that we were following in the footsteps of General Maister and his stories. We also interacted with other people, such as the driver of the Maister vehicle and the waiter at the Pri Maistru pub, who talked about Maribor, Maister and the pub.

In the framework of the article we have found that, in the development of Literary Tourism, several aspects have to be taken into account, in our case authenticity. Everyone can experience authenticity differently. When designing the trail, we identified three aspects of authenticity, and asked whether the literary trail along the Maister in Maribor was objective, constructive or existential in terms of authenticity, and found that, from our point of view, it was existential, since each gained his own impressions and experience.

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