

CASE STUDY: LITERARY TOURISM IN VRHNIKA INSPIRED BY HERITAGE OF IVAN CANKAR

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Abstract One of the rural towns in Slovenia that is deeply characterised by literature is Vrhnika. This is where Ivan Cankar, the famous Slovenian author, spent his childhood. Nowadays, his legacy is present throughout Vrhnika, even in small things such as coffee, and the monument that is dedicated to him in the town centre. Vrhnika is also included in the Slovenian Writers' Trail. This chapter presents a case study researching literary tourism in Vrhnika and literary tourism products related to one of the greatest Slovenian authors.

Keywords:

literary heritage,
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products,
Ivan Cankar,
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1 Introduction

Ivan Cankar, who is widely regarded as the greatest of Slovenian writers, created the spatial triangle that delineates his extensive oeuvre fairly early in his writing career. The places that form the triangle are Vrhnika, Ljubljana and Vienna, where Cankar spent a lot of his time. It is safe to say that all of these places acquired “Cankaresque” features that reveal the author himself. In conjunction with the subjectivist experiencing of the world, objective reality in Cankar’s imagination reflected the writer’s own experiencing. Cankar’s youthful experiencing of Vrhnika (up to the age of 12) brought the writer to learn early on about the merciless decline of smaller craftsmen and about poverty. This knowledge imprinted deep into the writer’s memory. Nevertheless, Cankar had a lot of positive memories of his childhood, which is why he made frequent literary returns to Vrhnika, from which he drew inspiration for both joyous and sad stories (Kocijan, 1999, pp. 269 and 276). He wrote a number of classic works, such as *Hlapci* (Serfs), *Na klanecu* (On the Slope), *Moje življenje* (My Life), *Erotika* (Eroticism), and many more. Cankar’s work have marked Vrhnika considerably and contributed significantly to the development of tourism in the town. But, how well developed is literary tourism in Vrhnika? This is the research question we would like to answer in the case study, presented further on in this chapter that was inspired by the theme and research work for the final thesis by David Boršo (2021), supervised by Jasna Potočnik Topler.

2 Research

In addition to desk research, in June and July 2021, nine partially structured interviews with relevant stakeholders from the fields of tourism and culture active in the Municipality of Vrhnika were conducted for the purposes of this research. The analysis of the interviews showed that the respondents mostly agree that the level of tourism in general and cultural tourism in the municipality is solid; as was expected, however, they highlighted literary tourism as a type of tourism that plays the most important role in Vrhnika. Cankar is well known in Slovenia and, thanks to various translations, it is safe to say he is fairly well known abroad as well. Primary and high schools make sure pupils and students are thoroughly familiar with the author, as he is included in the school curricula. Some interviewees noted that a decline in the knowledge about Cankar has been identified, as he is starting to be omitted from the curricula. Mileva Blažič (2018, p. 380) points out that Cankar is

very much present in the Slovenian literary canon and therefore in the curricula as well. He is among the authors whose coverage is mandatory, and his sketch story *Bobi* is included among the mandatory texts in primary schools. Nevertheless, we can say that familiarisation with Cankar is excellent throughout Slovenia, as his works are topical even today. The 2018 Year of Cankar contributed significantly to improved recognisability and popularity of the writer. The Cankar Memorial House and all other literary tourism sites are visited mainly by school groups but are also extremely popular destinations for Slovenians living abroad. In view of the fact that children represent the majority of visitors, some of the interviewees pointed out that Cankar should be thoroughly adapted to children. Children at school come to learn about the difficult topics the author wrote about, which is why it is all the more important for teachers and tourism workers in Vrhnika to present Cankar in an interactive and adapted manner. Many respondents noted that literary heritage tourism could develop by increasingly including the actual memorial sites that were set up based on Cankar's life and body of work. Literary products and services should include, and connect with, experiences such as cuisine and, in the case of younger children, games.

The analysis also showed that all stakeholders active in culture and tourism work well with one another, which includes the Blagajana Tourist Association, the Cankar library, the Vrhnika Students Club, the Public Fund for Cultural Activities, the Municipality of Vrhnika and the Ivan Cankar Institute of Culture, Sports and Tourism as the most important and largest entity in tourism in the municipality.

Most interviewees believe that tourism products and services based on the literary legacy of Ivan Cankar possess multiple dimensions which could be further developed, transformed and supplemented in order to suit various target groups. It is essential that Vrhnika links its literary tourism with other tourism products and services, whereby forging connections is vital.

Further on, the most relevant results gathered from desk research and analysis of Cankar's works are presented.

3 Cankar's Vrhnika

Two major year-long literary events have taken place in Vrhnika under the title "The Year of Cankar". The first event unfolded in 1976 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Cankar's birth, while the second, in 2018, marked the 100th anniversary of the writer's passing. The Year of Cankar in 1976 involved many cultural events, exhibitions, concerts and similar celebrations. The municipal newspaper *Naš časopis* reported in late 1976 that the municipality has never before hosted such a splendid event (Oblak Milčinski, 2016, p. 86).

The municipality itself was marked to a much greater extent by the 2018 Year of Cankar, which commemorated the 100th anniversary of the writer's death through a number of events pertaining to literature, music, plays and the fine arts. The entire event took place under its very own logo, which symbolised a stylised white chrysanthemum (Oblak Milčinski, 2020a, p. 380). *Bela krizantema* (The White Chrysanthemum) is one of Cankar's works that was published in 1910 (Tominc, 2017, p. 11). The writer was a great admirer of this flower, which he bought on many occasions and often wore in the buttonhole of his jacket (Maleš, 1943, p. 16). In 2018, the Year of Cankar took place not only in Vrhnika, as many events to memorialise Cankar's passing were also organised in other places, such as Horjul, Cerknica, Ljubljana (Oblak Milčinski, 2020a, p. 410), Mostar, Sarajevo (Krašovec, 2018, p. 67) and Carinthia (Tominc, 2018a, p. 74). On this occasion, Vrhnika gained new infrastructure in the form of two tourist information panels that highlight tourism products and services relating to Ivan Cankar and the Ljubljanica River (Tominc, 2018b, p. 4). What is more, a bust of the writer was unveiled at the Ivan Cankar Military Barracks at Raskovec (Tominc, 2018c, p. 6). In addition to all these events, the Year of Cankar was observed through the publication of certain literary works, including Cankar's only collection of poetry under the title *Erotika* (Eroticism), which was originally published in 1899. The aim of the reprint was to come as close as possible to the 1899 original (Oblak Milčinski, 2020a, p. 408). In the same year, three books that present Cankar's works in comic book form were published, namely *Hlapec Jernej in pasja pravica* (The Bailiff Yerney and a Dog's Justice), *Moj lajf* (My Life) and *Hlapci – ko angeli omagajo* (The Serfs – When the Angels Get Weary) (ibid., p. 382). Cankarjev Dom, which also houses a cinema, premiered films entitled *Cankar* and *A Thousand Hours of Bitterness for a Single Hour of Joy*. Both films, which came out just in time for the 2018 Year of Cankar,

depict the life of the writer from Vrhnika (*ibid.*, p. 430). A series of different cultural events took place across the Municipality of Vrhnika, which took the opportunity to successfully develop its brand.

Vrhnika is also the venue of the annual festival that bears the author's surname: Cankarjada. As part of this festival, several theatrical and musical events organised by the Vrhnika Students Club unfold. In 2020, the traditional 25th Cankarjada took place. Every year, the festival hosts local and international creatives, with local drama groups coming increasingly to the forefront (ZIC, no date, ref. a). Featuring mainly plays, the festival honours Ivan Cankar's playwrighting oeuvre.

The Ivan Cankar Institute of Culture, Sports and Tourism is the largest tourism body in Vrhnika and carries out guided tours around the town. The literary and tourism products and services comprise two themed tours. One tour takes place in the Cankar Memorial House, while the other is named Cankar's Boyhood Trail. This means that the municipality features a themed trail on which people can set out by themselves. During a three-hour tour, tourists get to learn about and view as many as 17 noteworthy sights around Vrhnika. Although the themed trail tells the story of Cankar's early life when he was still living in Vrhnika, the expert guides also familiarise guests about the writer's later life and works (ZIC, no date, ref. b). Cankar's Boyhood Trail begins in front of the monument dedicated to him in the town centre and connects all eight places where the family lived after the fire of 1879, along with all the memorials relating to the writer's works. These include the school under the bridge, the Cankar Memorial House, the Holy Trinity Church and Cankarjev Laz (Cankars' plot, a piece of land owned by the writer's family until 1886), Drča Hill and Močilnik Springs (the best-known source of the River Ljubljanica), with a shrine dedicated to St. Anthony. The tour concludes in front of the Tourist Information Centre of the Ivan Cankar Institute (ZIC). This tourism product is adaptable, which means that organised groups that would like a guided tour can arrange a shorter viewing with fewer stops (ZIC, 2014). The price for a group of up to 30 led by one guide is EUR 30, while the price for groups of more than 30 and led by two guides is EUR 60. Each additional hour of tour guiding is EUR 20. The tour is also subject to a 30% additional payment if it is to be conducted in a foreign language. Discounts of 10% are available for groups of students, while groups of primary school pupils, high school students and disabled persons can get a 20% discount (ZIC, no date, ref. b). At these prices, tourists can not only view the

entire town in a relatively short time, along with all Cankar-related memorial sites, but can also learn about other characteristics of the area that are not, strictly speaking, the foundation of the tour, such as the spring of the Ljubljana River, surfaces with karst and wetland features, and many other interesting sights.

There are currently six active tourist guides entered in the register of the Ivan Cankar Institute, and all of them can be engaged for these two guided tours. We would especially like to mention the tour guide Damjan Debevec, who completed as many as 180 guided tours in 2019 (ZIC, no date, ref. c). A professional associate of the Ivan Cankar Institute, Debevec mostly conducts tours around Vrhnika and the Cankar Memorial House. His tours can be said to be one of the best examples of tourism practice in the municipality. The guide emulates Cankar in his appearance and expression. This means that he wears a suit and a hat, while the most prominent feature of his attire is Cankar's famous moustache. As is evident from an interview with Košmrlj and Zaletelj (2019), many Vrhnika residents, especially the younger generations, have warmly welcomed Debevec's depiction of Cankar. In fact, through his work, Debevec became the "new" Ivan Cankar. During the tour, Debevec speaks in a language spoken in Slovenia during Cankar's lifetime and often quotes the writer's works. His method of guiding contributes to the positive tourist experience of visiting groups.

Much more popular among the people living in this area is the hike entitled Following the Footsteps of Cankar's Mother, which is organised by several local organisations. The event traditionally takes place every year on 26 December, on which the Independence and Unity Day is celebrated in Slovenia. Every year, many residents of the Vrhnika and Horjul municipalities set out on the path, which starts in Vrzdenc, where Cankar's mother, Neža Pivk, was born, and ends in Vrhnika, where she and her family lived for most of her life. Along the 14-kilometre trail, people can view Vidmar's House, where the writer's mother was born, and continue through the village of Žažar all the way to Velika Ligojna and Vrhnika (Kavčič, 2019). The 2004 paper in which this trail was analysed by the year 4 students of the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana (with amendments provided in 2011 for the current publication in *Vrhniški razgledi*), mostly touches upon all of the cultural sights the hikers pass along the way and proposes options on how these sights might be developed further. Since but modest information is available about the trail, we gather that this is currently

not a stand-alone tourism product; rather, it is revived and relevant only on the mentioned national holiday when the official hike is organised.

At the Tourist Information Centre of the Ivan Cankar Institute of Culture, Sports and Tourism, many souvenirs relating to the author can be purchased. These include (ZIC, no date, ref. č):

- A sweet moustache – hand-crafted white or dark moustache-shaped chocolate on a stick.
- A wicker basket of dried pears with chocolate – chocolate-covered dried pears from the Passero Estate and Cankar’s sketch story bearing the same name (A Basket of Dried Pears).
- Cankar’s chocolate – chocolate with coffee from the Escobar Specialty Coffee Roasters.
- A cup featuring Cankar’s signature – a cup and saucer with a print motif of the writer’s signature.
- Coffee set – a packet of coffee named Cankar’s Cup of Coffee from the Escobar Specialty Coffee Roasters, Cankar’s chocolate and two cups featuring Cankar’s signature.
- The Ivan Cankar cup – a cup featuring the image of Ivan Cankar.
- Cankar’s cookies – plain or spelt biscuits in the shape of a moustache.
- A moustache-shaped cookie cutter.
- Cankar’s sketch stories – a collection of six sketch stories by Cankar (“Desetnica”, “Skodelica kave”, “Njena podoba”, “Pehar suhih hrušk”, “Naš laz” and “Pot do učenosti”).
- Cankar’s brandy – dried pear schnapps.
- Ivan Cankar pencil – the pencil bears an inscription “Ivan Cankar, mojster slovenske besede” (Ivan Cankar, a master of the Slovenian word).
- Vrhnika ballpoint pen – the pen bears an inscription “Vrhnika, prečuden kraj” (Vrhnika, a wondrous place!).
- A bag or box of chocolates – small chocolates wrapped in paper with a moustache print.
- Ivan Cankar notebook – a notebook featuring a reproduction of a woodblock print by Miha Maleš.

- Klanec board game – a board game on the topic of Ivan Cankar and his life.
- Cankar’s apron.
- Enamelled coffee pot – featuring an image from the Cup of Coffee sketch story.
- Cankar’s coffee – from the Escobar Specialty Coffee Roasters.
- Ivan Cankar silver coin.
- The Tourist Information Centre also sells literature about the writer (ZIC, no date, ref. d):
- Erotika (Eroticism) – a reprint of Cankar’s one collection of poems.
- Cankar in comic book form – a modern interpretation of three of Cankar’s works.
- Podobe iz življenja (Images from Life) – Cankar’s biography in comic book form.
- Cankarjev album (Cankar’s Album) – the writer’s life in pictures.

Both people who come to the area with Cankar-related tourist activities in their plans and those who stumble upon them by chance can have a “Cankaresque” experience at food and drinks establishments across the municipality. More and more establishments include Cankar’s coffee from the local Escobar Specialty Coffee Roasters in their permanent range of beverages. Cankar’s coffee is a house blend of Arabica coffees from three different regions, South America, Africa and Asia (Escobar, n. d.).

In addition to visiting the Cankarjev Hram restaurant, which is located within the municipality and bears the writer’s surname, visitors can sample many dishes that have been named after Cankar. At the Stara Kašča restaurant (no date), guests can order Cankar’s salad. At Guesthouse Bajc (no date), they can enjoy Cankar’s burger with veal. Cankarjev Hram (no date) serves as many as seven dishes named after Cankar. At the Kavarna Park café, visitors can indulge in Cankar’s cake and the Na klancu cake. In terms of restaurant food, we are noticing an issue in that the dishes named after Cankar don’t really reflect the food that should be associated with the writer’s life. Hamburgers and steaks were not traditional staples of the small town folk in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It should also be noted that, although bearing Cankar’s name, many dishes are in fact perfectly ordinary dishes that can be found anywhere else. A bright exception in this is coffee from the Escobar Specialty

Coffee Roasters (no date), which cultivates a positive attitude towards cultural heritage. Far from being just an original souvenir, this coffee is well-known throughout Slovenia, as it is being promoted at fairs across the country (Escobar, 2020).

A detailed research revealed that the Visit Vrhnika website (operating under the auspices of the Ivan Cankar Institute) states that Guesthouse Bajc and the restaurants Bistra, Pri Kranjcu and Cankarjev Hram provide dishes that originate from the period in which Ivan Cankar lived. The restaurants have devised the following two menus (ZIC, no date, ref. e).

Cankar's Lunch:

- sautéed potatoes,
- prešče (small loaves of bread that Cankar mentions in several of his works) and
- štruklji with prunes.

Cankar's Feast:

- beef soup with grated pasta called ribana kaša,
- potatoes seasoned with marjoram,
- roast veal,
- seasonal salad and
- štruklji with prunes.

A detailed analysis of the cuisine poses the question of why the above restaurants do not have Cankar's Lunch and Cankar's Feast included in their own menus. As it is, guests coming to a food establishment are not familiar with the cuisine available. These two menus can only be found on the Visit Vrhnika website. According to the website, the menus have to be ordered in advance.

As part of the tour, tourists can also view all the places where the Cankar family used to live, of which there are 10 in total. Debevec (2020) adds that two of these places no longer stand. The first site is the abandoned barns next to the Mantova restaurant, where the Cankars took refuge right after the fire (Dobrovoljc, 2018, p. 241). The second is Jelovšek's house, which stood right next to what is today known as Cankar's home. All of these houses feature memorial plaques with annotations about the key moments in the writer's life and the life of his family at that particular time. Plaques have also been set up at other memorial sites relating to the writer, such as Močilnik, the school under the bridge and elsewhere. The plaques were installed in 1976 upon the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Cankar's birth (Debevec, 2020). Today, there are 16 plaques in total, black with white and silver writing, without any graphical elements such as pictures, which makes them relatively empty and monotonous. They have been vandalised on several occasions but have always been repaired. Although showing signs of age, they are in adequate condition.

As regards general libraries, we can hardly speak of a literary tourism product, as the library building is primarily intended for the borrowing of library materials, education and various events rather than tourists. Some authors, however, such as Baleiro and Quinteiro (2018, p. 38), include visiting a library in the typology of literary tourism. As a literary tourist point of interest, the library called Cankarjeva Knjižnica Vrhnika is worth mentioning: it moved in 2015 to the former sewing facility of the Industrija usnja Vrhnika leather producer. The library's spaces are divided thematically, mostly in connection with Cankar. The room where visitors can read books and newspapers is called "Čitalnica pri Črnem orlu 1876" (The Reading Room Next to the Black Eagle Hotel 1876). In 1876, Jože Cankar, Ivan Cankar's father, helped found the very first reading room in Vrhnika. This is also the year Ivan Cankar was born (Oblak Japelj, 2014, p. 221). "Prečuden kraj" (A Wondrous Place) is the name of the local studies room, a space devoted to literature relating to Vrhnika and its surrounding area. This is also where Cankar's original publications and other editions are kept (ibid, p. 222). Many literary tourism materials can be found in the children's section. Planner Oblak Japelj (2014, p. 213) explains that she wanted to use these elements to bring the writer's life and work closer to the target audience, which generally regards the artist's works as too challenging. As an example, she depicted the Cankar Memorial House on Klanec, where children could learn about the author at an early age (ibid, p. 214). The model includes many literary features from Cankar's stories, such as the cupboard from which Cankar

stole dried pears (ibid, p. 213), a special table known as a *mentrğa*, which was used to prepare dough for bread and even for sleeping, and in which the writer himself played as a child, and a rebus story of Cankar's sketch stories depicted on the model of the house (ibid, p. 214). The literature department for younger primary school pupils is called "Enajsta šola pod mostom" (The School Under the Bridge), whereas "Realka 1888–1896" ('Realka' School 1888–1896) is intended for older primary school pupils and high school students (ibid, p. 216). This means that the youth department is divided into two sections that correlate with Ivan Cankar. Cankar's education in the school under the bridge in Vrhnika and in the "realka" school or Oberrealschule in Ljubljana is the equivalent of the education of children and young students in primary school and high school. As the architect worked for a construction company from Vrhnika, in which a lot of the work planned related to the local environment, she was able to draw on her knowledge of the local history for her work (ibid, p. 204). Such knowledge of the local culturological features proved to be essential when creating the new library, which attracts both active users and tourists interested in literature and history.

The works of many artists often reveal close ties with their local environment and home, as the creations depict their love for their homes and homeland. To understand authors and their works, knowing their homes and places of residence is vital, as they are often a decisive factor in forming the author's individual characteristics and mindset (Deu, 2008, p. 13). The Cankar family originates from and has mainly lived in Velika Ligojna, a village in the direct vicinity of Old Vrhnika. Ivan's grandfather sold the estate in Ligojna (Zadnik, 1993, p. 26) and bought the house on Klanec, No. 141, now No. 1, in 1834 with a purchase agreement. Back then, the structure was wooden, except for the brick base on which the house stood, and the hallway that served as a kitchen (Bernik, 2006, p. 234). The side of the old, green-windowed house leant against the hill's living rock. A rotating tin rooster adorned the ridge of the roof (year 4 students of the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, Ljubljana, 2011, p. 329). The thatched-roof house comprised a central space, a smaller room and an open-hearth kitchen known as *dimnica*. The south side of the house featured a wooden balcony called a *gank*, which was also where the toilet was. The house, measuring 48 square metres, was home to two generations of the Cankars, first the family of Jakob Cankar, who was married twice and fathered 21 children, and then the family of Jože Cankar, the writer's father, to whom Jakob left the house in 1871. In 1876, when Ivan Cankar

was born, his grandfather and his family still resided in the house, which means that as many as 12 people lived in this already cramped house at the same time. On 27 July 1879, the house was destroyed in a fire (Bernik, 2006, p. 234), which forced the Cankars to stay at many different houses around Vrhnika. In 1880, the estate was passed on to Marija Polanšek (ibid, p. 235), who in 1884 built a new, bigger house on the site of the fire. Over the years, the house remained the same despite being passed from one owner to another many times. In 1948, it was passed on to the Municipality of Vrhnika, which took efforts to turn it into a museum. The complete renovation work was managed by architect Marjan Mušič, who preserved the entire outer envelope of the building and reconstructed the interior based on written sources and the legacy of the Cankars. The house can be entered from the front. Next to the entrance, there is a hallway with the open-hearth kitchen and a smaller room called štibela (Deu, 2008, p. 38), which contains the writer's first printed books and a picture of his family tree. In this room, many mementoes relating to Ivan Cankar are displayed. The central space features furniture and small items that were owned by poor townspeople in the 19th and 20th centuries. The side room contains some of the writer's drawings and pictures along with pictures of his acquaintances. Deu (2008, p. 38) also mentions that the house was renovated again in the 1970s, which proves that efforts to preserve its museum quality are adequate.

The Cankars lost everything in the fire except a wall-clock, which no longer functioned. Cankar described the event in *Moje življenje* (My Life). "Here in this wondrous flame my memory is locked. It is no more... Suddenly my mother appears, quite small, quite tiny, not at all alarmed, only astonished, standing on the road, clutching under her arm an old wall-clock which had been stopped for ages and never chimed..." (Cankar, 1985b, p. 10).

To the right of the entrance to the Memorial House is a plaque, the kind that can be found at all the places where the Cankars lived around Vrhnika. To the left of the entrance there is a larger memorial panel featuring Cankar's motifs. The inscription on the panel provides a brief description of Cankar's life in both the Latin alphabet and Braille. This type of memorial plaque arrangement is very rare not only when it comes to monuments in Vrhnika, but also in Slovenia as a whole. Opposite the entrance, along the wall of the neighbouring house, there is a plaque intended to raise awareness about the Slovenian Writers' Trail, the Cankar Memorial House

being the seventy-first stop on it. At the back of the house there is a monument depicting Cankar's head on a mandoline slicer.

Both sculptures were created by Bojan Mavsar, who lives on Klanec, right next door (Hieng, 2016; Hieng, 2018). At the foot of the house, on its very foundations, there is another plaque, which was unveiled on 10 August 1930 (Globočnik, 2013, p. 155). The plaque was replaced upon the 30th anniversary of Cankar's passing (*ibid.*, p. 157). On Klanec, there are as many as 50 cornerstones depicting Cankar with a coffee pot and a cup of coffee. These were also made by sculptor Bojan Mavsar (Tominc, 2018e, p. 208).

With regard to the Cankar Memorial House, we often encounter a terminological issue among the masses. Many people call this building "Cankar's birth house", which is incorrect. Cankar's birth house burnt down in 1879. With the exception of the same location and certain artefacts, the house standing today on Klanec and bearing the number 1 has nothing in common with the writer's birth or life. The house in and of itself cannot be authentic, as it no longer exists. It is therefore important to educate people about the difference between a memorial house and one's birth house.

The Cankar family owned a small estate behind the Holy Trinity Church. Cankar described this estate in a sketch story entitled *Naš laz* (Our Plot). The place where their plot used to be still bears the name Cankarjev Laz and is part of the municipality's literary tourism sights. Tominc (*ibid.*) adds that the Cankarjeva knjižnica Vrhnika library organises an annual gathering at Cankar's plot. The event comprises a cultural programme with refreshments, including cherries and štrukeljci, which was typical fare at the close of a school year in Cankar's times.

Besides the Cankar Memorial House, the greatest and most prominent literary monument is the writer's monument set up at the junction of Tržaška, Ljubljanska and Sternanova Cesta and Cankar Square. Efforts to build the monument were initiated as early as 11 December 1918 in Ljubljana, immediately after Cankar's passing (Globočnik, 2013, p. 139). A committee was formed to organise the set-up of the monument and began collecting contributions, but the initiative dwindled after a few months. In 1919, a similar committee was established in Vrhnika and began to gradually collect contributions in January of the same year (*ibid.*, p. 140). A

larger sum was received by the committee only as the 10th anniversary of Cankar's death was approaching. In 1929, a competition was announced for draft monument designs. As the committee intended to unveil the monument already in July 1930, the deadline for the submission of drafts was only one month, which gave rise to a number of complaints, forcing the committee to extend the deadline by two months. As many as 21 drafts were submitted by nearly all young sculptors active at that time in Slovenia, including Karla Bulovec – Mrak, Lojze Dolinar, Ivan Jurkovič, Tine Kos, Tone Kralj and Nikolaj Pirnat. In November 1929, an exhibition of the sculptures submitted took place (ibid, p. 142), but the expert jury consisting of Rihard Jakopič, Matej Sternen, Jože Plečnik, France Stelé and Stanko Vurnik found that none of the drafts achieved the desired criteria. The draft entitled *Popotnik 2* (Traveller 2) by Lojze Dolinar was deemed to be the best by the jury, which nevertheless requested that certain improvements be made. The jury also proposed erecting the monument in front of the house of a powerful landowner Josip Lenarčič and not in front of the Kmetijska Posojilnica loan bank (ibid, p. 143). The committee, however, disagreed with the expert jury's decision and argued that the jury's role was of a consulting nature, not a decision-making one. The people's vote went to the work of Ivan Jurkovič called *Mislec* (The Thinker). As Jurkovič's work was among the first to be eliminated by the jury (ibid, p. 145), a jury member, Dr Vurnik, was greatly critical (ibid, p. 147) after the committee had confirmed the selection of "The Thinker". Many Vrhnika residents who personally knew the writer believed that Jurkovič depicted Cankar as he really was (ibid, p. 148). Newspapers reported on the locals agreeing with the motif. They wrote: "The people want to see Cankar in their midst as he really was, not as a handful of people imagine him to have been. Let the people decide!" (*Kakšen naj bo Cankarjev spomenik? (What should Cankar's monument be like?)*, 1929, p. 7), "This is Cankar, just as he was when he was alive!" (ibid) and "Yes, this is Ivan, this is exactly what he looked like! This was his gesture, sitting cross-legged, pensively gazing into the distance, supporting his head with his right hand, the left hand resting on his knee. This is his face, his living face!" (Šantel, 1930, p. 3). It was typical for Cankar to support his chin with his hand whenever he had a mental blockage while writing (Debeljak, 2018, p. 41). To depict the writer, Jurkovič used the main narrative aids, as the image presents a realistic depiction of Cankar and rejects a symbolic elevation of the subject as the most important Slovenian writer. The statue was cast in a foundry in Zagreb and placed in front of the former Kmetijska Posojilnica loan bank (today Deželna Banka Slovenije) (ibid, p. 151), as this is precisely where the butcher's logs stood,

where Cankar loved to play as a child. The writer described his experience of playing on butcher's logs in *Moje življenje* (My Life) (Cankar, 1985b, p. 53). The monument was ceremoniously unveiled on 10 August 1930. The event was attended by many people, with writer Fran Saleški Finžgar as the keynote speaker (Globočnik, 2013, p. 158).

In Slovenia's literary and cultural sphere, there are many accolades named after famous Slovenian literary figures, such as the Prešeren Award and the Borštnik Awards. As of 2020, the Cankar Award came into being. It is to be awarded annually, on 10 May, the day Ivan Cankar was born in Vrhnika. This is also the date on which the municipality observes its municipal holiday. The Cankar Award is bestowed on the author of the best playwrighting, essayistic, lyrical or storytelling work in a given year. In fine weather, the award ceremony takes place at Cankars' plot. If the weather conditions are not favourable, the ceremony is moved to Cankarjev Dom (Tominc, 2021, p. 5).

To finish off the analysis, we present other smaller, yet equally important monuments and memorials that have the potential to attract tourists interested in literature. These sights include a bench in front of the Holy Trinity Church, which is shaped like Cankar's moustache.

In addition to the Ivan Cankar Institute, the writer's name is included in the Ivan Cankar Military Barracks at Raskovec, the Ivana Cankar Primary School, and the main cultural and events venue, Cankarjev Dom. In front of the above-mentioned primary school, several fine arts panels were set up in 2018 featuring images of Cankar and motifs from his works. The panels have been painted by the young artists from seven Slovenian primary schools in cooperation with the local Vrhnika creatives (Osnovna šola Ivana Cankarja, 2018, p. 26).

Hieng (2020) writes that one of the latest acquisitions in literary tourism souvenirs relating to the author is an extraordinary, one metre-high cup set up at the park in front of the Tourist Information Centre of the Ivan Cankar Institute. The cup was created by the already mentioned local sculptor Bojan Mavsar, who designed it so that tourists could step into it and take a photo.

At the Močilnik Spring, where the Little Ljubljanica River (Mala Ljubljanica) originates from, there is a plaque with an excerpt from Cankar's work entitled *Brlinčkov Miha in Tičkov Grega* (Miha from the Brlinček Farm and Grega from the Tiček Farm). Another plaque is located by the shrine dedicated to St Anthony. Cankar loved going to Močilnik and his influence is still evident there. The Blagajana Tourist Association, in cooperation with the Cankarjeva Knjižnica Vrhnika library, has been organising readings of Cankar's texts at Močilnik for a number of years. The principal role of the reading, which takes place every Wednesday, is to criticise and protest against the poor management of the structure standing by the spring of the Ljubljanica River. Up until 2019, the facility served as an erotic wellness centre, which was not received well by the locals. In 2019, the building was passed on to the municipality, but the reading continues to this day as it has become a tradition. In addition to the protest note, the purpose of reading the writer's texts is to preserve his literary legacy.

4 Vrhnika in Cankar's Works

Cankar depicted Vrhnika in many of his works and turned to it for inspiration. In this respect, the collection entitled *Moje življenje* (My Life), published in 1920, deserves a particular mention. In this collection of autobiographical sketch stories, Cankar wrote down all of his memories of a childhood spent in Vrhnika up until his departure to the "Realka" in Ljubljana. His work is rich with narrative descriptions of Vrhnika and its surroundings.

Martin Kačur, published in 1906, is also noteworthy. In this novel, Cankar presents three stops made by Kačur: *Blatni dol*, *Zapolje* and *Laze*. All of these places reflect how the writer experienced Vrhnika in his early youth. The experiencing reflects the needs dictated by the mood of that particular adventure (*ibid.*, p. 271). From Kačur's tale, it's also possible to discern the teacher's first stop, the house (formerly an inn) of Fran Jurca that stands in the direct vicinity of the Ljubljanica River (Jurca, 2020, p. 237). The Bistra Castle restaurant is where an amorous episode is said to have taken place between the proprietor's daughter Minka and Kačur (Dobrovoljc, 2018, p. 233).

The following Vrhnika spots are featured in Cankar's works:

4.1 Klanec

Klanec, where the writer was born, is described in the novel bearing the same name, *Na klanecu* (On the Slope). Although it could not be said that Klanec itself was the main literary location, the novel provides many images of life in the village and in the square. The explanation that the actual place has evoked in the writer memories of the pain caused by social injustice makes sense. The novel includes other images of Vrhnika, such as the combination of Močilnik and the Pekel gorge in Borovnica (Francka's walk), a view of the Žalostna Gora hill near Preserje (Francka's run at the beginning of the book), as well as images of the Ljubljana Marshes (ibid., pp. 269 and 270).

4.2 Holy Trinity Church, Conversion of St. Paul Parish Church, and the Church of Saint Leonard

Before analysing the church buildings in the municipality, it is essential to understand Cankar's attitude towards religion. Kos (2018, p. 166) mentions a complex intertwining of Cankar's youthful freedom of thought and later-life Christianity. As a young writer, Cankar had a strong free-thinking character. He considered religion to be the greatest enemy to both humanity and individuals. His beliefs reached the pinnacle in 1908, when he was openly opposed to both the Church and religion. Cankar's perception of religion changed significantly in 1909, when he attended confession and received Communion in Sarajevo. The key turning point can be seen at the beginning of *Hlapci* (Serfs), which he wrote before 1909, and the ending he wrote after returning from Sarajevo. Although Cankar maintained an anti-clerical stance in his political lectures, Christian mystical motifs begin appearing increasingly after 1912, especially in *Moje življenje* (My Life), sketch stories about his mother and in *Podobe iz sanj* (Images from Dreams) (ibid., pp. 167–170).

There are two churches near the Cankar Memorial House, the Holy Trinity Church and the Church of St. Leonard. The Holy Trinity Church, located above Klanec, where Cankar was born and lived for the first few years of his childhood, is mentioned in Cankar's texts as many as twenty-eight times. The hill on which the church stands was imprinted in Cankar's memory, as the view of the church

accompanied the writer on his way back from Ljubljana along what is today known as Tržaška Cesta, the former “Imperial Road” (Dobrovoljc, 2018, p. 234). Even today, the church is visible from the motorway and Tržaška Cesta that runs parallel to it, already from Brezovica near Ljubljana.

His other experiences from walking the Vrhnika–Ljubljana route and back were depicted in sketch stories entitled *Mladost* (Youth), *Moje življenje* (My Life), *Večerne sence* (Evening Shadows), *Ottakring* and *Hoja v šolo* (Walking to School) (Kocijan, 1999, p. 270).

Cankar erected the most famous monument to this church with his last writing about it in the story entitled *Aleš iz Razora* (Aleš from the Furrow).

“... Oh Vrhnika, a blessed place! When darkness lies in your quiet lap, beautiful and mysterious dreams stir in Močilnik. Behind the great altar in the Holy Trinity Church, a buried lake booms; whoever lies on the cold stone, beneath that frightful skull behind the altar, hears the muffled song of the hidden lake, and when they rise, when they see this wondrous Vrhnika valley and this white sky above it, they ponder on the strangely silent tales no ear has heard and no eye has seen. White fog rises from Močilnik, winding, quivering and longing towards the sky, bringing a magnificent chalice of extraordinary secrets to the stars...” (Cankar, 1985a, p. 333).

By the foot of the hill on which the Holy Trinity Church stands, there is also the Church of St Leonard, only a few metres away from the Cankar Memorial House. The writer mentions it in his works as many as eighteen times (Dobrovoljc, 2018, p. 234).

The largest church, Conversion of St. Paul Parish Church, is mentioned by Cankar twenty-seven times. In 1884, Cankar was an altar boy. He reminisces about this period of life in *Moje življenje* (My Life), *Ministrant Jokec* (The Altar Boy Jokec) and *Greh* (Sin) (ibid.).

By the Holy Trinity Church, behind Tičnica (a small spruce forest), Cankar experienced strong love for Helena, who was, in his own words, his one true love. Here, Cankar wrote a cycle of poems entitled Helena (Kraigher, 1975, p. 12), which he later published in the collection *Erotika* (Eroticism). Kocijan (1999, p. 271) adds that the hill was also depicted in the sketch story with the same name, Tičnica.

4.3 Drča and Močilnik

Močilnik was Cankar's place of refuge, where he liked to go as a high school student to write and develop ideas for poems and novellas. The writer described Močilnik in a letter to his friend Avrelija Tomšič (Dobrovoljc, 2018, p. 323):

“There is my Tusculum, there, nothing bothers me! I hear nothing but birdsong, the humming of the water, with a ray of sunlight occasionally appearing on my table. Thoughts are piling up so fast that I scarcely know which one to attend to first.”

At Močilnik, below the shrine dedicated to St Anthony, there is a cave where, when Cankar was alive, a farm-hand supposedly lived because he was hounded by his jealous master. Cankar wrote about the farm-hand who lived in that cave for more than 40 years (Radics, 1900, p. 112) in a sketch story *Brlinčkov Miha* (Miha from the Brlinček Farm) and a novella *Smrt in pogreb Jakoba Nesreče* (The Death and Burial of Jakob Nesreča) (Dobrovoljc, 2018, p. 323).

4.4 The school under the bridge

Cankar began attending the folk school in Vrhnika in 1888. Although a good student, he did not like school. His memories of “the school under the bridge” were much fonder. He best described his experiences from school in a collection of sketch stories *Moje Življenje* (My Life) (Gabrovšek Homšak, 2006, p. 57). The school under the bridge was not a physical building intended to provide education to the children of Vrhnika; it was a place by the Ljubljanica River, under the bridge that stands there today and leads to the settlement of Verd. Milčinski (2020, p. 213) mentions that children gathered at the school under the bridge, Cankar amongst them, to play and explore the riverbank of the Ljubljanica, which was covered in waste at the time when Cankar spent time there. In the past, the expression was meant to be a caustic remark by the nearby locals for the people of Vrhnika; today, the idiom even has its

own definition in the Dictionary of Standard Slovenian Language and means gaining life experience outside school (ibid.). One time, Cankar nearly drowned in the river, but was saved by Jurca's farm-hand. In the epilogue to the sketch story, Cankar wrote (Golec, 2008, p. 44):

“If anyone has any objection to anything I have done in later life he should take it up with that farm-hand, not with me! School of my childhood, God be with you! It is with tenderness I think of you still, cradle of life and knowledge.” (Cankar, 1985b, p. 13)

4.5 Stari Maln

Stari Malen or Stari Maln is a place that has thrilled even Valvasor with its sudden outburst of water, a phenomenon typically seen in the Karst region, and proteus, an animal species that was not yet researched at that time. Today, a restored mill stands below the cottage at Stari Maln. According to Dobrovoljc (2018, p. 233), there was a wheel there even during Cankar's lifetime. The mill is featured in the sketch story *Vaški farizej* (The Village Pharisee) and is the subject of greater focus in the sketch story *Nina*.

“... From afar, I saw a solitary, half-dilapidated mill, and, as always when I caught sight of it, a mysterious dread washed over me. The mill hung high as if suspended over a chasm. From under it, a meager brook trickled into the hollow and nearly disappeared among the stones spread there. Up there, behind the mill, calm, dark water lay in a deep pool. I looked through the open window into the mill; a stifling, foul stench filled the dark room; the walls, the floor and the ceiling were all black, a half-rotted bench lay toppled over...” (Cankar, 1906, p. 10)

Continuing our path from Stari Maln towards Vrhnika, we are accompanied by the Bela brook all the way to the asphalt-covered parking lot. Cankar describes the gorge in the same sketch.

4.6 Cankars' plot

This plot of land was owned by the Cankars all until 1884, when they sold it. The writer remembered the land well and wrote about it in the sketch story entitled *Naš laz* (Our Plot). The land is located around 400 metres from the Holy Trinity Church, which stands in the direct vicinity of the Cankar Memorial House. In his sketch story, Cankar moved the plot an hour away from Vrhnika, to the foothill of the Ulovka/Uvlaka peak. He did this to emphasise the description of the difficult path to the plot and envelop it in deeper love (Dobrovoljc, 2018, p. 235).

Other images of Vrhnika that Cankar used in his works include: the Logatec–Vrhnika route and the lime tree-lined road in Logatec, depicted in the sketch story *Na večer* (In the Evening), Strmica on Zaplana is mentioned in the sketch story *Sestanek na Rušah* (Meeting in Ruše), the inn *Na Stari Šrangi* in Drenov Grič was depicted in the novella *Sosed Luka* (Neighbour Luka) (Kocijan, 1999, pp. 270–271), and the village of Vrzdenc was depicted in a sketch story bearing the same name (Oblak Milčinski, 2020b, p. 26).

Cankar depicted not only the landscape of Vrhnika, but also the fellow inhabitants. He knew the townspeople well and was able to delve deep into their mentality and way of thinking. Many of his literary characters were thus modelled after the people that lived in Vrhnika, including Aleš from the *Furrow*, the king of *Betajnova* and the bailiff *Yerney*, to name just a few. All these characters have in common that they discriminated against socially oppressed people. Connecting these findings, it is evident that these poor people are modelled after the people from the impoverished *Klanec*, where the writer was born (Dobrovoljc, 1959, p. 239).

It is clear from the analysis that the area of Vrhnika has left a significant mark on Cankar and affected his artistic creation, as he drew inspiration from many local places to create the literary landscape in his works. The writer's praise of Vrhnika deserves a special mention, especially the rich metaphorical description of the town at the beginning of the second chapter in the novella *Aleš iz Razora* (Aleš from the *Furrow*).

"Vrhnika, wonderful place! In soft nostalgia my heart yearns with thoughts of you. Who has seen you with watchful eyes, who has known you? They have passed by, seen your white roads and white houses, and gone on their way. But I have gazed into your face as at a beloved girl and now my heart is sick for you... By the plane below the forest, below the dark, mighty Raskovec, there sits a flock of pigeons; their white wings gleam in the sun. There's Vrhnika. Across the pine trees, across the firs, from the silent Karst, from the sea, the bora wind murmurs, bursts into the plane, stops, trembles, stunned and soothed by such beauty." (Cankar, 1985a, p. 270)

The mentioned works by Cankar are important especially in terms of further development of literary tourism in Vrhnika. *Moje življenje* (My Life), *Aleš iz Razora* (Aleš from the Furrow) and other texts are closely connected to Vrhnika. In *Moje življenje* and *Aleš iz Razora*, the literary location is logically and obviously set in the Vrhnika environment. Even non-professional readers can thus find and discover places Cankar describes in his works, without having to conduct any additional research or seek explanation. In other works, the presentation of literary locations is more complex, which means that readers tend not to immediately connect the location with Vrhnika (for example the Stari Maln mill in the sketch story *Nina*).

The works and spots mentioned in this paper may be of interest to visitors and tourists, as the writer depicted Vrhnika. Essentially, this is about getting to know the fictional world depicted by the writer. Tourists might find Cankar-related tourism products and services more interesting if they familiarised themselves with the memorial sites the author wrote about before coming to visit.

5 Research findings

In June and July 2021, nine partially structured interviews with relevant stakeholders from the fields of tourism and culture active in the Municipality of Vrhnika were conducted as part of this research. The analysis showed that the interviewees mostly agree that the level of tourism in general and cultural tourism in the municipality is solid; as was expected, however, they highlighted literary tourism as a type of tourism that plays the most important role in Vrhnika. Cankar is well known in Slovenia and, thanks to various translations, it's safe to say he is fairly well known abroad as well. Primary and high schools make sure pupils and students are thoroughly familiar with the author, as he is included in the school curricula. Some interviewees noted that a

decline in the knowledge about Cankar has been identified, as he is starting to be omitted from the curricula. Mileva Blažič (2018, p. 380) points out that Cankar is very much present in the Slovenian literary canon and therefore in the curricula as well. He is among the authors whose coverage is mandatory, and his sketch story *Bobi* is included among the mandatory texts in primary schools. Nevertheless, we can say that familiarisation with Cankar is excellent throughout Slovenia, as his works are topical even today. The 2018 Year of Cankar contributed significantly to improved recognisability and popularity of the writer. The Cankar Memorial House and all other literary tourism sites are visited mainly by school groups but are also extremely popular destinations for Slovenians living abroad. In view of the fact that children represent the majority of visitors, some of the interviewees pointed out that Cankar should be thoroughly adapted to children. Children at school come to learn about the difficult topics the author wrote about, which is why it is all the more important for teachers and tourism workers in Vrhnika to present Cankar in an interactive and adapted manner. Many respondents noted that literary heritage tourism could develop by increasingly including the actual memorial sites that were set up based on Cankar's life and body of work. Literary products and services should include, and connect with, experiences such as cuisine and, in the case of younger children, games.

The analysis also showed that all stakeholders active in culture and tourism work well with one another, which includes the Blagajana Tourist Association, the Cankar library, the Vrhnika Students Club, the Public Fund for Cultural Activities, the Municipality of Vrhnika and the Ivan Cankar Institute of Culture, Sports and Tourism as the most important and largest entity in tourism in the municipality.

Most interviewees believe that tourism products and services based on the literary legacy of Ivan Cankar possess multiple dimensions which could be further developed, transformed and supplemented in order to suit various target groups. It is essential that Vrhnika links its literary tourism with other tourism products and services, whereby forging connections is vital.

6 Conclusion

The research focusing on analysing literary tourism in the Municipality of Vrhnika, with emphasis on the literary legacy of writer and playwright Ivan Cankar, showed that Cankar's literary legacy is an extremely important part of the municipality's tourism products and services. Examples of successful tourism products include the Cankar Memorial House, Cankar's coffee from the Escobar Specialty Coffee Roasters and a guided tour named Cankar's Boyhood Trail. It can be concluded that literary tourism based on Ivan Cankar's literary heritage is the main tourist feature in the Municipality of Vrhnika, which, however, still has a lot of potential for further development. It is suggested that new attractive and interactive products, aiming primarily at the youth segment, are developed. Cankar-related literary tourism products can be included in both what the Municipality of Vrhnika has to offer and in the literary products and services of the entire Slovenia (for example, through pan-Slovenian reading of Cankar's texts). Despite the relative popularity of literary tourism in Slovenia, it should be noted that this area is yet to be adequately explored, which is why additional research is proposed, and along with that - the design of a literary tourism development strategy.

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