

LITERARY TOURISM IN TIMIȘ COUNTY

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***Abstract:** Literary tourism is a niche tourism within the wider field of cultural and heritage tourism. It refers to visits to author/writer-related places (birthplaces, gravesites / memorials, frequented places / hotel stays / homes / houses / performance spaces), fiction-related places, literary festival places, and book-shop villages. The authors attempt at clarifying issues such as the relationship between literature and tourism, key concepts, authenticity, rural economies, tourist experience, and literary tourism destinations in Timiș County.*

***Keywords:** literary tourism, Timiș County, locations, author / writer, authenticity, rural economy*

INTRODUCTION

According to Arcos-Pumarola, Marza & Llonch-Molina (2020), “literary tourism can be considered a niche within a niche [creative tourism] in the wider field of cultural and heritage tourism” (Figure x). Popular-media induced tourism or media-related tourism has several subcategories such as literary tourism, film(-induced) tourism (in which case, the films are, usually, based on fiction books), TV dramas / series tourism (in which case, the films are, in many cases, based on fiction books), etc.

Tourist experience is characterized (Hoppen, 2012, 27-29; Marin Diana et al, 2015; Marin Diana et al, 2013; Petroman I. et al, 2012; Petroman I. et al, 2010; Petroman I. et al, 2013; Petroman I. M. & Văduva Loredana, 2021) by authenticity (hot – which applies to aspects concerning the imagined world of tourist make-believe, produces emotions, and is attributable to fiction-related literary tourism; cool – which refers to buildings or sites where notable deeds that can be empirically demonstrated to have occurred have been performed and are attributable to author-related literary tourism),

intimacy / relationships, and the concept / notion of place (which plays an important role in fiction-related literary tourism because writers can define and redefine spaces through their works). From this perspective, there are several types of literary tourism (Hoppen, 2012, 14-17; Săniuță, Zbucnea & Hrib, 2022, 530-531) for which the authors provide examples from Timiș County (without Timișoara):

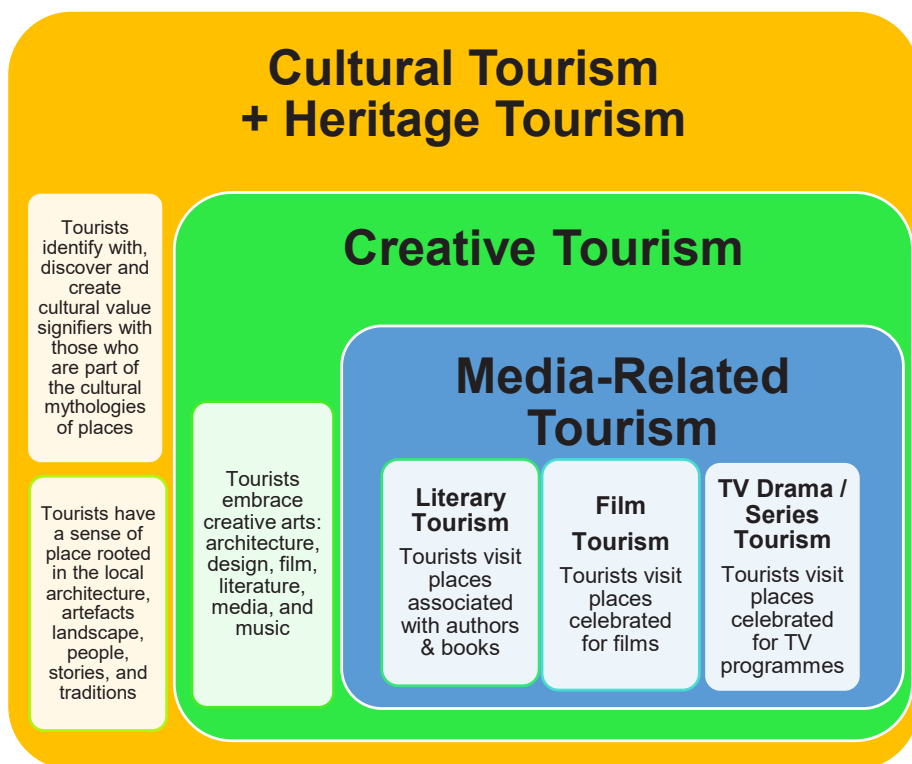


Figure 1. Place of literary tourism within the field of cultural and heritage tourism (after Hoppen, 2012, 13)

- Author-related literary tourism to: Authors' / writers' birthplaces, which are, rarely, the houses in which the written works have been created, with few exceptions; are different from writers' gravesites in that they do not provide the proof of the author's physical existence; are destinations of pilgrimages – e.g., Dimitrie Țichindeal (1775-1818), fabulist and translator born in Becicherecu Mic, Jenő Radisics (1856-1917), art historian born in Buziaș; Romulus Kácsér (1863-19119), journalist and newspaper editor born in Ciacova; Lipót Arizi (1801-1854), economic writer, and Henrik Szimonisz (1898-1972), journalist, newspaper editor, translator, and

writer born in Deta; István Hadobás (1918-?), journalist, playwright, and prose writer born in Făget; János Horváth (1894-1950), worker-poet born in Gătaia; Adolf Janoszky (1840-1898), banking and statistics writer, István Cselkó (1847-1930), agronomic writer, István Kaufman (1858-1944), editor and journalist, Antal Gokler (1859-1942), music and pedagogy writer, Sándor Kárpáti Kaufmann (1863-1921), editor and pedagogy writer, Tamás Marx (1871-1943), newspaper editor and pedagogy writer, Géza Treisz (1876-1947), newspaper editor and playwright, Gyula Golder (1882-1955), journalist, newspaper editor, and theatre critic, Gyula Bach (1889-1954), journalist, newspaper editor, translator, and writer, Ionathan X. Uranus (1909-1984), avant-garde writer, Emmerich Reichrath (1941-2006) – literary and theatre critic, German-language writer, editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Allgemeine Deutsche Zeitung für Rumänien* born in Jimbolia; Vasile Maniu (1824-1901), publicist and writer, Ion Popovici-Bănăţeanu (1869-1893), novelist, Elemér Jakabffy (1881-1963), journalist, János Giskalay (1888-1951), publisher and Zionist writer, István Sulyok (1891-1945), journalist and newspaper editor, Mária Neumann (1905-2003), mathematics writer, Sándor Bartha (1908-1992), natural sciences writer, Kálmán F. Rácz (1910-1980), translator and writer, Iosif Constantin Drăgan (1917-2008), writer, Árpád Péntek (1921-1993), ecclesiastical writer, Aristide Buhoiu (1938-2006), journalist and writer, Gheorghe Schwartz (b. 1945), writer, Graţielă Benga (b. 1972), essayist and literary critic born in Lugoj; György Szondy (1889-1961), writer born in Reçaş; Miklós Révai (1750-1807), linguist and poet, Guztáv Bierbrunner (1835-1907), ecclesiastical writer, Ödön Záray (1843-?), pedagogy writer, Viktor Gyözö Schreyer (1846-1937), editor and poet, Emilia Lungu-Puhallo (1853-1932), journalist, János Bari (1858-1922), agricultural writer, Aladár Jurkovic (1867-1893), journalist, playwright, and novelist, Géza Jeszenszky (1867-1927), journalist, Emil Madarász (1884-1962), journalist, poet, and writer, Ferenc Fenyves (1885-1935), editor and journalist, Imre Palló (1904-1981), journalist, Sándor Bisztray-Balku (1905-1983), mechanics writer, Elli Nikodemus (1923-1989), book editor and translator, Ion Hobana (1931-2011), anthologist, author, literary critic, literary theorist, and writer, Hans Dama (b. 1944), writer, Octavian Andronic (b. 1946), cartoonist and journalist, Werner Kremm (b. 1951), editor, publicist, and translator, Dusan Baiski (b. 1955), publicist and writer, and Marcel Tolcea (n. 1956), journalist and writer, born in Sânnicolau Mare – and require a lot of effort of one's imagination to be turned into a memorial; Authors' / writers' gravesites / memorials, which allow literary pilgrims to come as close to an admired author as they

would ever get – e.g., of Irén Pollák, newspaper author, in Deta, and Petre Stoica (1931-2009), poet, publicist, and translator, in Jimbolia; are premised on religious pilgrimage, a practice that has declined along with decreasing religious sensibility, replacing “the saint and his / her holy and healing places” by “the author and his / her native haunts;” are tangible signatures of a writer’s presence; gained increased interest in the mid-18th century along with growing interest in necro-tourism (the practice of visiting graves / graveyards in general); Authors’ / writers’ frequented places / hotel stays / homes / houses / performance spaces, e.g., the memorial houses of Dositej Obradović (1739/42–1811), translator and writer, in Ciacova, Dimitrie Țichindeal (1775-1818), fabulist and translator, in Becicherecu Mic, Traian Iancu (1923-1997), poet, in Făget, Sever Bocu (1874-1951), columnist and editor, in Jimbolia, Victor Vlad Delamarina, poet (1870-1896) in Lugoj, and Ion Popovici Banățeanu (1869-1893), writer, in Lugoj – which are the “creative space” where the writer’s works were conceived and realized; are the places that an author chose to live in (other than a birthplace), reflections of the author’s desires, interests, and ways to express himself / herself; are the places where the author lived; are visited due to a sense of nostalgia; are, probably, some of the most powerful tourism resources since they provide tangible connections between the “created” and the “creator,” which allows visitors to engage in diverse emotional experiences; offer a real sense of “behind the scenes,” as it is an intimate and authentic experience to be able to be where the author’s pen physically touched the paper; offer the promise of the author to re-enter the home at any point because, viewing the house of the author can be considered as an imaginative act to bring the dead author back to life once more; thus, one’s creative imagination contributes to the illusion of the dead author being just as present as are his / her books.

- Fiction-related literary tourism can be based on a known author with an accessible place associated with a fictional character, an anonymous author (whose name is lost or who is too distant in history), or an existing place presenting sufficient clues to be attributed to a fictional work; can ignite a better appreciation and understanding of literature as means of reflection and self-reflection; involves visits to “hyperreal” destinations, where there exists a link between fictional or mythical characters and their supposed actions in real locations (e.g., the lake in Botoșani County, Romania, made famous by Romanian poet Eminescu); involves visits to places where the real and the imagined merge, and that possess special meaning to visitors; and serves as portals to infinite realities;

- Literary festival-related tourism allows attendees some personal

interaction with authors, entertainers and/or celebrities, e.g., the National Poetry Festival in Făget; gives writers the chance to promote their readings, allowing tourists to hear the voice and see the persons behind the work, appearing in person, and presenting and explaining their work; identifies with the so-called “book towns” in rural tourism (Petroman I.M. et al, 2015; Popa Daniela et al, 2010; Rață Georgeta et al, 2013; Ristea I. et al, 2018; Văduva Loredana et al, 2018; Văduva Loredana & Petroman Cornelia, 2017) includes not only literature, but also audiobooks, films, TV documentaries, etc.

- Bookshop-related tourism refers to trailing around local bookshops to seek out titles related to the destination visited (antiquarian books, guide books, literary maps, literary tours, manuscripts, original papers, quality literary publications, rare books, etc.) or books written by local authors, and ends to be the domain of independent, small book retailers, which might specialise in certain literature genres.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The material used in this study consists in foreign literature on literary tourism. The literary destinations in Timiș County cities, towns, and communes have been documented during field work. The research methods used are the bibliographic method and the documentation method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Why Literary Tourism? The studies published in the last five years point out that literature, as a tourism attraction, can be observed in various forms – legacy of authors with their works, literary events, name of destinations, tourism attractions set in literary works, and other cultural products originating from literary stories – and can be realised as intentional building places, or places of fantasy / fiction, real places (Suyasa, 2019). According to Săniuță, Zbucnea & Hrib (2022), literary tourism can significantly contribute to the branding of places (e.g., Bran Castle and Bran Stoker’s Count Dracula; London and J. K. Rowling’s Harry Potter; Paris and George Simenon’s Commissaire Maigret) and generate positive benefits for both economic and social actors. Camboa Cabral & Pereira (2021) reflected on literature knowledge and tourism and concluded that literary tourists end by living their readings. Baleiro (2023) analysed TripAdvisor reviews of visitors’ experience of literary museums and identified the main themes of the reviews: attitude resulting from the experience (to read author’s books, to research the author), museum

organization (organisation and curatorship, other services, staff and guided tours, the building, e.g., the “Petre Stoica” Foundation Museum in Jimbolia), outside spatial experience, practical advice (tips for other visitors, tips for the museums’ management team), the author, the collection (non-permanent exhibitions, personal objects), visit experience (authenticity; disappointment; emotion; enjoyment; experiencing the place that inspired the author; experiencing the place where the book was set; feeling close to the author; imagination; learning about the author’s life, work, and historical context; magic; return to the past; surprise; tranquillity).

Literature and Tourism. Fairer-Wessels (2010) claimed that prescribed works of fiction have an impact on the potential travel behaviour of adolescents ranging from 17 to 19 years of age. According to Milheiro (2022) the relationship between tourism and literature relies on the assumption that the work and life of a writer can serve as a basis for the creation of itineraries and literary places capable of enhancing tourism, thus promoting an intercultural experience and the perpetuation of the memory of works and authors.

Key concepts in Literary Tourism. According to Quinteiro & Baleiro (2015), the key concepts in literary tourism are authenticity / simulacre, literary pilgrim (who voluntarily travels long distances with the main objectives of being where the author lived, wrote, died, and was buried; of experiencing, first-hand, a communion with the author he/she admires; of observing the author’s objects; of seeing what the author saw and felt; of sitting where the author sat; and of touching the author’s objects), literary site, and literary tourist (who can be informed; gives the trip greater emphasis not only in terms of expanding his cultural capital, but also his symbolic capital; has a less sentimental and more rational connection with literary places; is aware that the consumption of literature is a class differentiator; recognises works of art that most positively distinguish individuals; and reveals a deep knowledge of what is observed).

Literary Tourism and Authenticity. Jia (2009, 69) started, in his approach of the construction of literary tourism sites, from the concept of authenticity and its four types – constructive, existential, objective, and postmodern – and concluded that “the theory of constructive authenticity, which emphasizes the authenticity of toured objects as well as the tourist experience, is more likely to underpin the development of a literary tourism site as both fact and fiction are involved in literary tourism.” According to Fairer-Wessels (2010), as far as literary tourism is concerned, authenticity is related mainly to writers’ house-museum visits. However, the quest for authenticity to an imaginary place is more than challenging (Amey, 2015).

Literary Tourism and Rural Economies. According to Yiannakis & Davies (2011), literary tourism is critically important to the economic prosperity and social identity of rural areas, but an established literary canon, the geographical location of literary attractions, and the nature of literary attractions are critical to the successful development of literary tourism.

Literary Tourism and The Tourist Experience. According to Hoppen (2012, 4), tourist experience (which “involves meaning and [...] forms part of wider processes of cultural production a consumption”) is loosely linked to the concept of place and to authenticity. Baleiro, Viegas & Faria (2022, 3) claim that “tourist experience focuses on its constituent elements – tourism motivations and the meanings participants assign to their experiences after space interaction (a key element since tourism refers to seeking an experience of place or self in place).”

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis above allows the authors to draw the following conclusions:

- Literary tourism is a niche in cultural and heritage tourism;
- Literary tourism experiences are characterized by authenticity, intimacy, and place;
- Place determines the type of literary tourism;
- The type of literary tourism analysed in this paper refers to tourists / travellers / visitors visiting places associated with authors;
- Author-related literary tourism to authors' / writers' birthplaces is the best represented by over 50 authors / writers born in this county;
- Author-related literary tourism to authors' / writers' gravesites / memorials is less represented – only two cases;
- Author-related literary tourism to authors' / writers' frequented places / hotel stays / homes / houses / performance spaces is represented by six cases;
- There is no case of fiction-related literary tourism;
- There is a single case of literary festival-related tourism;
- There is no case of bookshop-related tourism;
- Literary tourism destinations could be better managed in Timiș County's cities, towns, communes, and villages based on the notes on the relationship between literature and tourism, the key concepts of literary tourism, the relationship between literary tourism and authenticity, rural economics, and tourist experience.

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