Dark Heritage Tourism in the Iberian Peninsula

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Memories of Tragedy and Death

Edited by

Sara Cerqueira Pascoal, Laura Tallone
and Marco Furtado

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Section II

INTRODUCTION

Loosely defined by Stone (2006) as "the act of travel to sites associated with death, suffering and the seemingly macabre" (*apud* Sharpley, 2009, p. 10), dark tourism has received increasing scholarly attention since the publication of Tunbridge and Ashworth's seminal work, *Dissonant heritage – The management of the past as a resource in conflict* (1996). A cursory look at recent titles shows the exponential growth of dark tourism studies, particularly since the 2010s, as a substantial body of academic work has in fact been produced by researchers coming from a variety of fields, including tourism studies, cultural and heritage studies, geography, marketing, history, sociology, anthropology, psychology and many others. The maturity of the field is also reflected in the recent creation of niches or subgroups within the larger category of dark tourism studies, such as prison tourism and dark literary tourism, crime-based dark tourism, battlefield tourism, to mention but a few.

The growing interest in dark tourism has run parallel with the fairly recent multiplication of memorials around the world marking sites of tragedy, which seems to show that there is an ever-increasing will to remember in order to deal with collective tragedy and difficult heritage. From New York's 9/11 Memorial to the Iwate Tsunami Memorial in Japan, this "memorialisation spree" is closely related to a new "spectacularisation of death" (Jacobsen, 2016), in which the dead are given greater visibility and space within the public domain, as well as with the new, post-modern, role of museums as places of edutainment, whose renewed narratives define them as places of memory (Frew, 2018, p. 694).

These memorial monuments – sites of memory – may provide a place for the expression of individual and collective grief over traumatic events, such as wars, genocide or natural catastrophes. They may also help shape the collective identity of a group of people, strengthening their ties through shared acts of remembrance. But, most importantly, they are intended to play a social role in educating future generations by revealing the past, so that those atrocities may be prevented (*idem*, p. 695). Either by signalling the actual place where a tragic event took place (site of death) or by providing its symbolic representation (sites associated with death, like the

many museums of the Holocaust around the world), sites of memory seek to provide both closure and disclosure at the same time – closure opening the road to healing (and perhaps someday reconciliation?), disclosure so that memory may become history.

With their "fair share" of dissonant heritage and traumatic past, Portugal and Spain are no exceptions to this overall trend, and memorials are sometimes built while the actual memory of events is still fresh and wounds open, like the Atocha Station Memorial, inaugurated three years after the 2004 train bombings, the Monument to the Victims of the Coronavirus, installed in May 2020, also in Madrid, or the Memorial to the Meco Tragedy (this volume). In addition, both countries have begun to make amends with their colonial pasts, as well as to signal, though more timidly in the case of Spain, the visible traces of decades of dictatorship in the 20th century. A case in point is the former political prison of the Fort of Peniche (Portugal), whose conversion into a museum and site of memory is analysed in detail in this volume.

Despite the growing interest in dark tourism and the variety of interdisciplinary approaches to the subject, not much has been written about dark tourism sites in the Iberian Peninsula. In Spain, only fairly recently have scholars opened the debate, comparing, for instance, the high number of torture museums throughout the country and their conspicuous silence about political imprisonment and torture during the dictatorship (Otaola, 2022), or analysing initiatives towards the recovery, preservation and patrimonialisation of the historic memory of the Civil War (Acosta & Vila, 2016). In Portugal, the study of dark tourism has usually been conducted within marketing and managerial approaches (Liberato *et al*., 2018), especially in what concerns the potential of specific niches to stimulate visitation to less popular areas, namely cemetery tourism (Maia, 2019).

As constant reminders of the past, sites of memory are meant to integrate the heritage of a particular group or even of a whole nation. Heritage, however, has been described as the "deliberate selection from the past to satisfy present needs and demands" (Frew & White, 2013, p. 3). In other words, sites of memory involve some degree of interpretation of the past, a process by which heritage becomes meaningful for the visitor (Sharpley & Stone, 2009, p. 112). This interpretation process runs the risk of distorting or trivialising the past, jeopardising the authenticity of the site and its significance to visitors (*idem*), especially in the case of darker sites, like in memory of massacres or genocide. Moreover, "dissonant heritage" (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996) implies that contemporary readings of the

past inevitably disinherit those who may feel neglected or betrayed by the adopted narrative.

Another source of tension in connection with dark tourism sites is related to management issues. Dark tourism sites face the managerial dilemma of determining the acceptable degree of commoditisation of death and suffering, so that, on the one hand, they become real for the visitor, without, on the other, disrespecting the event and the memory of the victims represented. Usually voiced through the media, concerns about the moral ambiguities created by the use of some marketing strategies revolve around the risks of undermining the objectives initially set for the site (Bird, 2018, p. 646), whether historical, educational, political or other. These moral ambiguities are found at mainly two levels – that of the individual visitor (why is (s)he there?, what is the appropriate behaviour? What type of, if any, emotional engagement is expected?), and the collective level, as opening sites of memory to public visitation may be seen as an attempt to "create and maintain new moral frameworks" (Stone, 2009, p. 70), within which the events represented may be analysed and assessed, and their repetition prevented.

Dark tourism therefore develops along multiple lines of tension, most of them intersecting at sites of memory in ever-changing ways, as past events are re-signified through new readings. As pointed out by Nora (1989, p. 19), "lieux de memoire only exist because of their capacity for metamorphosis, an endless recycling of their meaning and an unpredictable proliferation of their ramifications".

This is briefly the background against which the texts making up this volume should be viewed, as it seeks to offer a collection of relevant essays dealing with different, from managerial to anthropological, aspects of this phenomenon in the Iberian Peninsula. Rather than an atlas or a tourist guide to dark sites, the following pages offer readers some perspectives about prevalent attitudes in Iberia in the face of death and suffering, as well about the ways in which past traumatic events have been memorialised or neglected.

This book is made up of two sections. The first section contains ten chapters, in which contributors explore the ideological readings that turn dark sites into places of dissonant heritage, making them meaningful for some visitors. The second section comprises seven brief cameos, or vignettes, dealing with a few small, sometimes neglected, features (a plaque, a tile panel, a sculpture…) punctuating the daily life of Portuguese cities.

The first section opens with an approach to "The ethical-legal and sustainable dimension of the dark tourism product within the Iberian context", by Victor Calderón Fajardo. The historical heritage of Spain and Portugal, marked by events that were to trigger the formation of a very particular idiosyncrasy – Franco in Spain and Salazar in Portugal –, established a way of life that inexorably has for decades conditioned the thinking and sensitivity towards dark tourism. Spain and Portugal have great dark resources to exploit, but so far, they have both continued to perpetuate, with few exceptions, a traditional tourist monoculture of sun and sand. In these two countries, the dark tourism product is not as extensively commercialised as in the United Kingdom or the United States, where dark tourism products cover all the "multiple shades" of the dark spectrum (Strange & Kempa, 2003, p. 388). There is no single reason for this, but rather multiple factors to take into account, such as repressive dictatorships (which did not dwell on tragedy, but tended to view violent death as either just punishment or patriotic necessity), the experiences of different generations, the subjectivity of the ethical component... It seems that a very clear historical-cultural component is necessary to justify this marketisation, and new variables such as the time frame and generational attitudes always come into play.

As far as sustainability is concerned, dark tourism in Spain and Portugal could achieve certain transforming effects in the territory, ranging from avoiding depopulation, high seasonality and labour instability, to the rehabilitation of historical and cultural heritage or better quality of employment. This first chapter begins with a terminological review of the term "dark tourism" and of its ramifications, with the aim of unifying the subject in order to understand its particular characteristics. It continues with the economic importance of the business of dark tourism in the world, with specific examples and figures, an aspect that confirms the importance of this type of tourism, which has yet much room to grow in the Iberian context. It closes with ethical, legal and sustainable considerations, the transforming effects of this typology on the territory, and a concrete example of the design and use of a dark tourism product.

In the next chapter, "Exploring dark literary tourism in difficult heritage: Chão Bom Resistance Museum", Rita Baleiro and Adriana Coelho-Florent elaborate on the concept of dark literary tourism to propose a new interpretation of the Chão Bom Resistance Museum in Tarrafal (Cape Verde). This museum is located on the premises of the former Portuguese Chão Bom Concentration Camp, a deposit for dissidents of António Salazar's dictatorship (1933-1974). This chapter suggests experiences of dark literary tourism at the site as a strategy to stimulate remembrance

education and critical reflection on Portugal's colonial past, to address gaps in the Portuguese and former African colonies' collective memory, to build a common Portuguese-speaking imaginary and to help create and reshape new meanings regarding social and political narratives.

In "Exhibiting atrocities in the land of sunshine: Revisiting the legacy of the Portuguese Estado Novo in the former Peniche prison", the editors of this volume use the dissonant/difficult heritage theory to study the process of memorialisation undergone by the Fortress of Peniche for tourist, educational, and political purposes. The chapter also raises concerns about the potential impact of dark tourism on the ways this legacy is interpreted today. In this vein, the authors first examine the Fortress of Peniche as an example of dissonant heritage within the context of penal tourism, outlining its history and significance, then address the construction of the discourse dealing with the traumatic memory as represented by the fortress as prison. By seeking to correct and fill gaps in the Portuguese collective memory through the incorporation of this heritage into the musealised space, the preservation and display of these individual stories may represent public recognition of historical injustices – a vital step to break and overcome historical silences.

The fourth chapter deals with another case of dissonant heritage, this time in the small town of Ponte de Lima, northern Portugal. In "Turning the dark into tourism – a case study of Ponte de Lima's Old Prison Tower", Marco Furtado and José Carlos Loureiro focus their attention on the history of the building, now incorporated into the city's old wall, since it started operating as a prison, depicting its evolution and the inhumane and cruel conditions in which prisoners were held. Further ahead in their chapter, the authors analyse the importance of keeping the identity of the memorial monument, as well as of understanding whether the memory of those who suffered there has completely vanished, as today's building – the local tourist office – promotes the pleasures one can experience in this small, picturesque town in the Minho region.

The starting point of the next chapter, "The sublime tourist experience: the case of African slaves in Lagos", by Sílvia Quinteiro, Maria José Marques and Marco Sousa Santos, deals with one of the most traumatic historic events in the Iberian Peninsula: the trafficking of African slaves. The authors begin by providing an overview of the slave routes and places of disembarkation and trade in Iberia, to then focus their attention on the port of Lagos, in the Algarve. They also make note of the vestiges of that heritage and detail which of them and how they were transformed into tourist

attractions. Bearing in mind Edmund Burke's idea of the sublime and Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection, the chapter tries to demonstrate how introducing literary texts into dark tourism experiences can enrich cultural knowledge, by furthering and intensifying the tourist experience, as the tourist is led to come nearer Burke's definition of the sublime experience.

In the next chapter, "Calçada das Carquejeiras in Porto: *locus amoenus* of a silent drama", Vítor Teixeira takes us on a travel to the steep and uneven Calçada or Rampa das Carquejeiras in Porto, formerly known as Rampa da Corticeira, a place of difficult and dramatic memories. It was here that female workers, known as *carquejeiras,* carried their heavy loads uphill on their backs from the boats coming along the Douro River. This chapter recalls the location, its past, the human condition revealed in each existential drama, as it unfolds before the visitor. The drama of the poverty-ridden *carquejeiras* is only understood once the visitor has found the location, either by chance or as part of another route. The surroundings, as well as the memory, contribute to build the site's character and shape the history of the city, by calling forth the anonymous representations of the resilient, silent women known as the *carquejeiras* of Porto, condemned to a life of slavery.

The following chapter proposes a discussion on the architectural and cultural significance of Portuguese cemeteries, namely those situated in Porto. Reflecting on their symbolic meaning and historical value, Dilge Erdener Kildir and Sara Cerqueira Pascoal try to examine the recent trends of cemeteries as tourist attractions, suggesting that these trends replicate a new perspective on death. As argued by Jacobsen (2016), Ariès's "forbidden death" (1988) has been replaced by "spectacular death," in which death, dying, and mourning have become increasingly spectral.

The macabre Portuguese heritage is approached in two different chapters, Laura Tallone's "Closing the open grave: religious visitors at the dark site of Santinho de Beire", and Sara Pascoal's "Looking at Death in the eyes: Portuguese chapels of bones and thanatourism".

The first one deals with interpretations of the sacred in relation to a dark religious site in Beire, northern Portugal, where a naturally mummified body is the object of widespread worship in a small chapel or shrine next to the local cemetery. Unlike other, better-known cases of apparently incorrupt bodies in Portugal, the size and relative seclusion of Beire have kept the site almost "uncontaminated" by secular visitors, which provides an opportunity to explore the intersections between dark and religious tourism, as both types of tourism may share a spiritual, introspective component. The

examination is focused on how the presence of an actual corpse and of an open grave weighs on the contemplation of death and human frailty, as well as on the process of dealing with personal grief, negative life events and existential crises.

The second addresses the heritage of Portuguese bone chapels. Although the oldest and most famous is found in Évora, Portugal has a total of nine bone chapels, most of them in the country's south. The author proposes a reflection and discussion on this heritage as a symbol of a specific macabre tradition predominant in southern Portugal. These chapels are rooted in the attitudes toward death prevalent in Baroque culture from the 16th to the 18th century. Firstly, a historical and contextual framework is provided, in order to better understand how the awareness of *vanitas* or *memento mori* in these chapels coincided with an obsession with death in a culture that tended more toward faith than reason. This will be especially true in the case of Portugal, where the Inquisition and the period following the Council of Trento gave rise to a Baroque *pietas* lust. Finally, contemporary dark tourism trends are discussed, including renewed interest in macabre themes driven by a rise in demand for cultural tourism, as well as the strategies used by Portuguese municipalities and Destination Management Organisations to promote dark tourism destinations.

The section concludes with Pedro Andrade's proposal for a "Dark Heritage Pedia: an augmented research encyclopaedia for a virtual sociological museum on the insatiable/unsafe/insane society". As the author contends, contemporaneity is being put upside down, after the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation. Multiple social indicators seem to announce a new paradigm in society, emerging from the ruins of a simultaneously local and global war. It is therefore urgent to provide some democratic and critical tools for understanding such unprecedented world and times. In other words, insatiable economies must be countered by inclusive ecologies, and unsafe policies should be questioned by critical politics. As insane ideologies are already being fought by intelligent and creative cultures of global and local sharing, the essay aims to contribute for such (de)reconstruction of society and knowledge, through critical instruments such as the *Dark Heritage Pedia*, a research encyclopaedia developed within a virtual sociological museum. More specifically, one of the paedia sections is suggested, with some case studies on dark heritage and war tourism, enriched with examples, such as Aljube prison/dark museum, and the war in Ukraine as depicted through a war museum at a street in Kiev, and via the Russia War Crimes House.

Section two comprises short cameos, or vignettes, mainly developed by students and recent graduates from the Master's Programme in Intercultural Studies for Business, lectured at ISCAP-P.PORTO – Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto. Resulting from a variety of activities carried out by students in the ambit of their curricula, these cameos are in fact very short case studies, understood as "investigations of singularities, leading to [fuzzy] generalisations on the basis of which predictions can be made" (Laviosa & Falco, 2022, p. 478), with enormous potential to encourage analytical, critical thinking by students, which is one of the main transversal skills to be developed throughout higher education (European Education Area, n.d.). The book is also an opportunity to show, and give voice to, the scientific production of junior researchers, some of them taking their first steps in dark tourism studies. As higher-education teachers and researchers at ISCAP's CEI – Centro de Estudos Interculturais, we have observed the appeal of dark tourism studies for students and young graduates alike, as well as the potential of the field to aggregate a number of different approaches, thus allowing junior researchers to better define the course of their own research interests.

In Portugal, a country with close ties to the sea and the rivers giving life to its cities, history has been abundant in tragedies related to water. Whether in the remote past or more recently, the traumatic events studied by Ana Silva, Bárbara de Sá, Inês Fonseca, Inês Pinto and Ricardo Oliveira are all closely connected to waterscapes, dealing with the ways in which those tragedies have affected individual lives or entire communities. Crime-based tourism is approached by Isabel Seabra, who describes the locations of one of the most notorious Portuguese serial killers. Finally, Rita Mota analyses the musealisation of a former prison in the city of Porto.

The research conducted throughout the following pages may provide new angles through which life and death can be understood, revealing the relationships and consequences of the processes that mediate memorialisation, difficult heritage, consumerism and the tourist experience. In addition, this volume appears at a pivotal moment in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, against the background of the Ukrainian conflict and the shadow of a global economic recession in the horizon, reflecting on how tourist managers, researchers, academics, policy makers and local communities can mobilise, transition and adapt to cultural tourism fluctuations, and simultaneously mitigate the negative impacts of global crises. It proposes to seize the opportunity to help create new business opportunities in two countries where "sun and sand" tourism has traditionally prevailed.

Accounting for 17% of all foreign visits to Spain (Anuario de Estadísticas Culturales, 2022, p. 33), cultural tourism in that country is almost consolidated. On the other hand, Portugal's current high profile is gradually turning the country into one of the world's leading destinations for quality and cultural tourism. In this view, the book offers a fresh perspective on high quality tourism as a powerful tool for decentralisation, articulation, insertion and empowerment of communities. It may inspire further studies, research projects and initiatives paving the way for that empowerment and for investment in tourism. In spite of the local scope of the sites included in this volume, managers and policy makers may find here examples of practices with the potential to be replicated anywhere in the world, with a high impact at collective and social levels, as well as on business and multiple fields of study, research and education.

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Sara Cerqueira Pascoal, Laura Tallone, Marco Furtado
December 2022

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SECTION I

CHAPTER 1

ETHICAL-LEGAL AND SUSTAINABLE DIMENSION OF THE DARK TOURISM PRODUCT IN THE IBERIAN CONTEXT

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1. Introduction

For years, the lack of uniformity regarding the term dark tourism in the scientific literature has not allowed for major in-depth studies until relatively recently. One of the problems in dark tourism research, shared by all researchers in the past few decades, has been the complexity of discerning and identifying what exactly belongs in dark tourism. For example: is a visit to a concentration camp dark tourism, cultural tourism, or both?

Consequently, an important issue lies in demarcating the subject matter to break it down into sub-themes. Over the last few years, several authors have agreed on a definition of dark tourism, or thanatourism (a term taking its root from the Greek, *thanatos*, which means "dead" or "death"). Dark tourism involves visiting scenes of war, cemeteries, prisons, concentration camps, catacombs, murder sites, serial killers' houses, scenes of paranormal phenomena and other man-made disasters, which are, inevitably, associated with death (Stone, 2006; Braithwaite & Lee, 2006; Stone & Sharpley, 2008; Biran *et al.*, 2011; Kang *et al.*, 2012; Light, 2017; Yan *et al.*, 2016).

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This typology has been used as a general umbrella term for any form of tourism that is related to death, suffering, atrocities or crimes. Dark tourism is not new, it has existed for centuries and is an integral part of history, usually used as an instrument to naturalise death (Stone, 2005). It dates back to Antiquity, in the form of pilgrimages to sites of religious and mystical importance (Collins-Kreiner, 2016). However, the most cited example of dark tourism is to be found in 17th-century England, when gatherings were organised to witness public executions. Subsequently, interest in dark tourism grew, and in the 18th and 19th centuries, visits to the Paris morgues or travel to witness deaths at the guillotine became popular in France (Stone, 2006).

The historical heritage of Spain and Portugal is marked by events that triggered the formation of a very particular idiosyncrasy. Their recent dark history goes from becoming colonial superpowers that exploited and traded in slaves, to ultraconservative states with dictatorships based on semi-fascist regimes, inspired by German and Italian totalitarianism, with strong political and economic repression, until the 1970s.

Franco in Spain and Salazar in Portugal established a way of life that for 40 years inexorably conditioned attitudes and sensitivities towards dark tourism. This historical legacy has greatly influenced later generations, who have stigmatised dark tourism, and generated taboos and prejudices about this type of tourism. In truth, memories related to sites associated with the dictatorships have often given rise to collective feelings of shame. However, attempts to remove or erase the symbols and iconography of Franco or Salazar have not always been consensual, and have brought back old confrontations, showing that the wounds of the past are not fully closed.

On the other hand, the ethical, legal and sustainable dimensions of dark tourism products have never been approached, despite their tremendous commercial potential, as shown in recent decades in countries such as the United Kingdom or the United States. The scarcity of specific reference studies on the dark resources of the Spanish and Portuguese markets is the main obstacle in the investigation, as few have tried to evaluate the attitudes of these societies towards the opportunities to further develop this industry and/or the circumstances in which this development may be conducted.

This chapter begins with a terminological review of the term "dark tourism" and its ramifications, to unify the subject in order to get to know its particular characteristics and be able to extrapolate it to new lines of research. Next, emphasis is placed on the importance of the economic

business of dark tourism in the world, with concrete examples and figures, an aspect that shows the importance of this type of tourism, which is yet to emerge in the Iberian context. Finally, the chapter closes with the ethical, legal and sustainable lines, and the transforming effects of this typology in the territory. In addition, an appendix shows a concrete example of the creation of a dark tourism product.

2. Terminology Review

A terminological review of dark tourism must cover almost three decades, from its origin as a concept/typology in 1993 to the year 2021, when it became intensely popular. The aim is to bring together the diverse terminology in order to establish some consensus. The inability to define what exactly dark tourism is has generated an initial multiplicity of conceptual terms, creating a false impression of heterogeneity within the activity, and leading to a difficulty in finding a more homogeneous classificatory consensus in order to determine whether they are analogous concepts (*i.e.*, morbid tourism, graveyard visits or atrocity tourism) or derivations of dark tourism.

Once this conceptual inventory has been carried out, the definition of dark tourism proposed by Stone (2006) is taken as the most complete and accurate, as it provides the backbone for all the others. Stone actually recovers previous research, namely that of Seaton (1996), Dann (2000), Lennon & Foley (2000), and identifies two key elements at the heart of dark tourism, tourism and death. Dark tourism is not conceivable without a component directly related to death.

More specifically, Stone (2005) speaks for the first time of relevant tourist attractions related to death, interest in dark destinations and the commodification of the macabre tourism product. Such a concept seems to quickly derive into a rising tourism typology called dark tourism (*idem*). For Light (2017), however, both dark tourism and thanatourism are not very distinct forms of tourism, which he associates with a form of heritage tourism.

Others consider thanatourism to be tourism to globally recognised memorial sites (Mionel, 2019), or to sites primarily associated with death (*i.e.*, the St. Francis Bone Chapel in Évora, Portugal) and disaster (Johnston & Maderlaryz, 2016).

Other authors, such as Ashworth (2008), focus on the experience and consider that dark tourism takes place where the tourist's experience has a "dark" emotional component, such as pain, death, horror or grief (for example, the Torture Museum of the Holy Inquisition in Toledo, Spain), resulting from the infliction of violence. Such sites are not generally associated with a voluntary entertainment experience. More recent interpretations of the term dark tourism frame it as tourism concerned with encountering spaces of death or calamity, or places with political or historical significance (*i.e.*, the 11M bombing memorial in Madrid, Spain) and continue to shock the living (Stone, 2016).

Table 1: Semantic analysis of dark tourism and its ramifications

Terms	Authors
Black Spots	(Rojek,1993)
Dark Tourism	(Foley & Lennon, 1996)
Milking the Macabre	(Dann, 1994)
Thanatourism	(Seaton,1996)
Holocaust Tourism	(Ashworth, 2002); (Beech, 2009)
Battlefield Tourism	(Smith, 1998)
Morbid Tourism	(Bloom, 2000)
Graveyard Visits	(Seaton, 2002)
Atrocity Tourism	(Ashworth, 2002)
Grief Tourism	(O'Neill, 2002); (Trotta, 2006)
Prison Tourism	(Strange & Kempa, 2003)
Suicide Tourism	(Dyer, 2003)
Fright Tourism	(Bristow & Newman, 2005)
Nostalgia Tourism	(Stone & Sharpley, 2008)
Genocide Tourism	(Beech, 2009)
Disaster Tourism	(Miller, 2008); (Van Hoving, Wallis, Docrat & De Vries, 2010).
Difficult Heritage	(Logan & Reeves, 2011)
Atomic Tourism	(Tufnell, 2012)
Sadness Tourism	(Kurnaz, Çeken & Kiliç, 2013)
Conflict Heritage Tourism	(Mansfeld & Korman, 2015)
Dystopian Dark Tourism	(Podoshen, Venkatesh, Wallin, Andrzejewski & Jin, 2015)
Paid Masochism	(Straton, 2016)

Source: own elaboration based on the terms put forward by the authors.

3. The Dark Tourism Business

Experiential travel and travel related to dark locations are innovative elements in the recent tourism industry. They may represent a new way of assimilating history, culture and social needs (O'Shaughnessy, 1991).

However, the commercialisation of dark tourism products is still very incipient, with no relevant antecedents in the Mediterranean culture. On the other hand, it is also worth noting that dark tourism is a clear and growing innovation in the field of travel, satisfying unmet needs. Although the supply of this type of product in Spain and Portugal is growing, it is still far from what can be found in other countries such as the United Kingdom or the United States.

There seems to be a clear correlation between the marketing of dark sites and their volume of visitors. Table 2 shows the dark sites receiving the highest number of annual visitors in millions, as well as an estimate of their annual gross revenues in millions of euros. These gross results are obtained by multiplying the number of visitors by the amounts paid as admission fees. In the case of Auschwitz, admission fees for guided tours (60 zlotys ≈ €13.2) generate around 33.6 million euros each year.
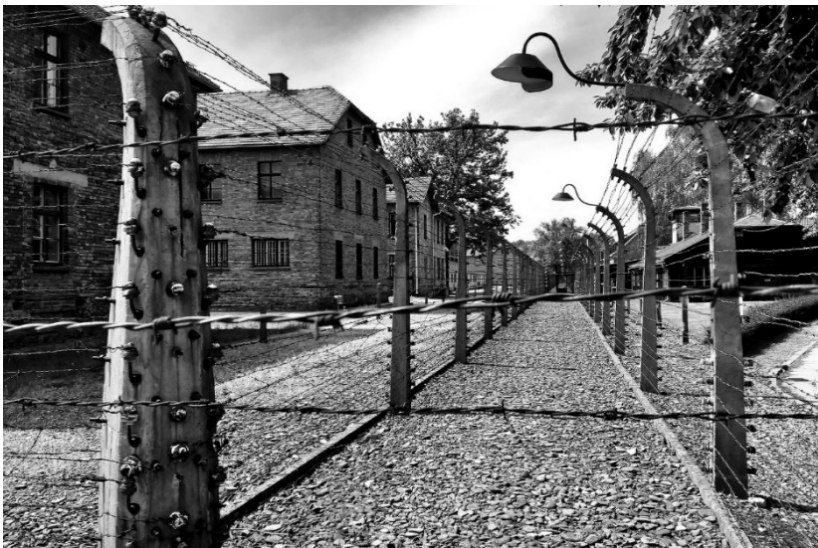

Fig. 1.1: Auschwitz Concentration Camp (photo credit: John Ondreasz - Pixabay).

The hypermedia era is part of the new marketing and segmentation strategies. Therefore, it appears as an indispensable tool for the dark tourism business to evolve and transform itself in the new market, specifically within the philosophy of the new experiential travel. In addition, the dissemination of information is carried out in a circular, rather than linear way, and customers turn into *prosumers*, who contribute to the keep this type of tourism alive (Kotler, 2010; Ayala, 2015).

When marketing these dark sites, visual and informational content receive specific treatment. Official websites maintain a delicately chosen tone, images and the information provided help generate a solemn and sometimes even sinister halo. The promotion of these sites is often supported by strong historical content to prevent the visitor and the consumer from considering them as something frivolous. On the other hand, however, managerial aspects are sometimes neglected, as there may be a widespread feeling of shame in the countries containing these sites, especially when the media contribute to powerful marketing campaigns that stress the more frivolous aspects of necrotourism.
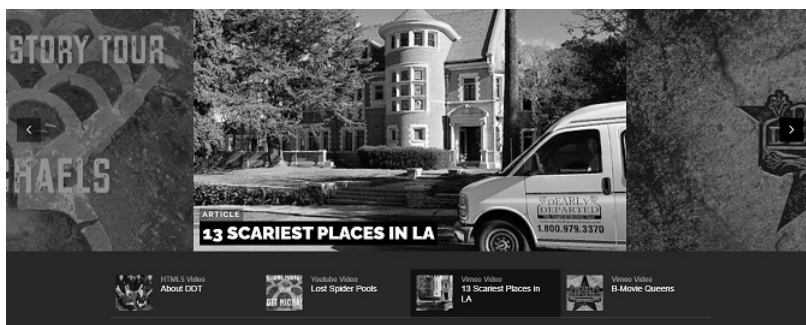

Fig. 1.2: Screenshot of a website offering dark tourism routes in the United States (source: https://dearlydepartedtours.com).

A case in point is the treatment given to tragic episodes, such as the Puerto Hurraco massacre and the Alcàsser crimes in Spain, or the disappearance of Madeleine McCann in Portugal. Equivalent episodes in other countries, such as the routes of serial killers like the Charles Manson tour through Beverly Hills, are marketed without any pressure to justify the tourist product by means of historical or cultural references (Calderón-Fajardo, 2020).

Table 2: Gross revenues in millions of euros per year to the most visited dark sites

Top 6 Dark sites	Millions of visitors per year	Annual gross revenues in millions of euros	Sources
The National 9/11 Museum "Ground Zero" New York, USA.			9/11 Memorial Museum (www.911memorial.org/)
The ancient city of Pompeii, Naples, Italy.	3.4	47.6	Pompeii Sites (http://pompeiisites.org/en/)
Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Museum, Krakow, Poland.	2.3	33.6	Auschwitz-Birkenau (http://auschwitz.org/en/)
Alcatraz Prison, San Francisco, USA.	1.6	(Tour included)	Alcatraz Island National Park Service (www.nps.gov/alca/index.htm)
The Berlin Wall, the Checkpoint Museum *Charlie*, Berlin, Germany...	1.1	15.95	Mauer Museum Haus Am Checkpoint Charlie (www.mauermuseum.de/en/start/)
The Catacombs of Paris, France.	0.8	11.2	The catacombs of Paris (www.catacombes.paris.fr)

Sources: Specific Dark-Tourism portal and data from the official websites mentioned above. Own elaboration.

4. The Ethical-Legal Approach to the Creation of Dark Tourism Products

> Ethics is the branch of philosophy that studies human conduct, right and wrong, good and evil, morality, virtue, happiness and duty (Fieser, 2003).

The boundaries of what is politically, morally or ethically acceptable have never been clear in any practice. In some cases, there is an unquestioning acceptance by society, while there is draconian rejection in others.

Deciding what is right or wrong is not an easy task, made even more complex due to the historical heritage of Portugal and Spain – a violent civil war, forty years of dictatorship and a number of still unresolved political conflicts arising from past suffering. The question of what is ethical and unethical is fundamentally cultural. The Holy Week in Spain and Portugal, for instance, is a multitudinous act that may perfectly be considered dark tourism, as it is a theatrical representation based on the suffering and death of a religious character. The stigma therefore seems to be generated, to a large extent, by a given interpretation of death. Death is slowly becoming naturalised, but it is still a much visceral subject in the Iberian Peninsula.

It is however necessary to establish some legal approach to support the future practice of dark tourism in Spain, for example. To this end, it would be easy to establish that any activity going against the dignity of the human being, trivialising or exalting certain sites or events (using their appeal as tourist attractions), exceeds the autonomy of private will as regulated by law. The law contains an ethical-public dimension, and the commercialisation of goods and services that violate human dignity is consequently legally forbidden.

Aitor Zurimendi Isla, professor of commercial law in the University of the Basque Country, clarifies (private communication) that, despite this legal limitation, dark tourism products like dark routes in the public space do not require any special permits, except for general authorisations issued by the local authorities, such as those of the autonomous regions or city councils. In addition, European regulations also require those administrative requisites to respect freedom of enterprise and not constitute an obstacle, limitation or barrier to the exercise of a business activity.

Administrative requirements must always be proportionate to the pursual of public interest, and authorisation cannot be denied arbitrarily. In other words, the administration cannot argue ethical issues, as ethical compliance is not a requirement. If any local authority denies the authorisation to develop a dark tourism activity, this denial should be objectively justified, proving which current requirements are or are not met.

Objectively, authorisation could only be denied on the grounds of failure to comply with the established requirements that guarantee that the public interest is protected. In the case of a dark product, if public and real data are provided, and no harassment, falsehood or denigratory data are included, no legal arguments can be used to prevent the development of the activity, not

even by the victims' families – it is true and public information, so no illicit activity is being conducted.

For certain routes, however, like those including cemeteries, administrations have the right to restrict or prevent visitation, due to the special treatment these places receive as final resting places. In these cases, it would be logical to deny or restrict the activity, since the defence of the collective interest prevails. Regarding routes featuring murder sites in public places, the administration cannot deny authorisation, as the current regulations apply under the same conditions as those of any other route, and the administration cannot raise ethical concerns.

Another interesting nuance in the law is that of attacking the dignity of the human being, as it is debatable whether certain dark tourism activities could be considered an attack or that they trivialise certain events. For example, the Auschwitz concentration camp, Ground Zero or Chernobyl are clear examples of dark tourism marketed and sustained with historical, academic or commemorative arguments, without being considered, in any case, places that violate human dignity.

On the other hand, when we talk about the ethical component in the law, a number of other aspects should be considered. Although ethics is a highly debatable issue, subject to multiple interpretations, the discussion may be influenced by different factors, like the purpose and intended target of the dark product. Displaying crime-related sites to specialists or specialised students may, while still qualifying as dark tourism, not raise the same ethical issues as a site open to the general public.

On April 25, 2015, the 41st anniversary of the 1974 April Revolution, Portugal inaugurated the Aljube Resistance and Freedom Museum by reconverting a former prison[2] in the Alfama area of Lisbon, dedicated to the history and memory of the fight against the dictatorship, for freedom and democracy. In Spain, however, a project like Salamanca's Centro Documental de la Memoria Histórica is still the object of much controversy, its funding and use still at the mercy of rapidly changing political wills.

There have been several opportunities and/or attempts in Spain to create something similar to the Aljube Resistance and Freedom Museum in Lisbon. A project has been put forward to reconvert the Provisional Prison

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[2] It was the place of detention where political prisoners were tortured during the regime of Oliveira Salazar. Between 16th and 17th centuries, the building contained an ecclesiastical prison, and in the 19th century it was used as a women's prison.

of Madrid[3], built during Franco's regime, popularly known as the Carabanchel prison, into a museum of historical memory. Unfortunately, this recent traumatic event in Spanish history is still neglected, as the political risks of stirring old wounds makes many leaders uncomfortable.

Another, very controversial, dark tourist site in Spain is found in Valle de los Caídos (Valley of the Fallen), a monumental complex made up of a basilica, an abbey and a 150-methre-tall cross, where the dictator Francisco Franco was buried until October 24 2019[4], along with 33,833 combatants from both sides of the Civil War.

Compliance with Spain's Historical Memory Law, which seeks to recognise and extend the rights of those who suffered persecution or violence during the Civil War and the dictatorship that followed, has never been easy. Spain, with 3000 documented graves[5], is one of the countries with the highest number of mass graves – this fact does not go unnoticed when it comes to assessing, inventorying, developing, marketing or exploiting dark tourism.

The historical and/or cultural elements are therefore the axes marking the boundaries between what is considered acceptable or not, though another aspect to take into account in the analysis is the time frame, which often determines the entry of a dark site in the sphere of entertainment. The more distant in time, the more likely for a site to be trivialised and lose its sombre nature.

Finally, the prejudice against dark tourism may also be generational (Fig. 1.3). As argued in a previous work (Calderón-Fajardo, 2020), the Silent Generation (1930-1948) and the Baby Boom Generation (1949-1968) have stigmatised dark tourism more than Generation X (1969-1980), Generation Y Millennials (1981-1993) and Generation Z (1994-2010). The latter in particular, thanks to hyperconnectivity and the culture of digital natives, understand dark tourism as a curious tourism typology without negative connotations attached to it. For older generations, however, old taboos and stigmas still hold.

Daniel García, a thanatopractor interviewed by Calderón-Fajardo (2020), considers that everything must be understood in its time and context. In

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[3] It held many political prisoners and social prisoners (mainly homosexuals) during Franco's dictatorship.
[4] On this date, it was moved to the cemetery of Mingorrubio (Madrid).
[5] Between 2000 and 2018, 740 mass graves were opened and over 9,000 bodies were recovered (Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica, 2015).