Inclusion of Dark Heritage in the Contemporary Tourist Offer of the City of Maribor

Katja Raušl, Boris Prevolšek, Marjetka Rangus
University of Maribor, Faculty of Tourism, Brežice, Slovenia
katja.rausl@student.um.si, boris.prevolsek@um.si, marjetka.rangus@um.si

Abstract Dark tourism is a form of tourism based on visiting places with a connection to death, violence, suffering, or natural disasters. Human fascination with death is not new, it has been present and observable since ancient times. Nowadays, numerous products of the entertainment industry rely on the theme of death as a driving force of humanity. In terms of modern dark tourism, we discuss a wide spectrum of motives behind this, which primarily come from a desire to encounter death, either staged or from a personal standpoint. In this research, we analysed how dark tourism developed through time and across the world, its role in the tourism offers of Slovenia, and what is the perception of dark tourism in the city of Maribor. Our focus is on several gruesome events that took place over the centuries of Maribor's rich history. In this case study, we analyse the stories based on these events, evaluate the spectrum of dark heritage according to theoretical models and suggest the development of new tourism products.

1   Introduction

Thanatourism, dark tourism, or morbid tourism are all different terms used to describe a form of tourism that has spread quickly in the past few years. This phenomenon is difficult to define, because it covers a wide array of tourism offers (Tarlow, 2007).

Foley and Lennon (1996) were the first authors to use the term "dark tourism", which first appeared in the *International Journal of Heritage*, and they defined this phenomenon based on events that force the visitor to doubt the present. They saw dark tourism as turning fear and doubt into a marketable product. We could also define dark tourism as visiting spaces, where tragedies or historically important deaths occurred in a way that influences the present. In the widest sense of the term, dark tourism encompasses visiting any of the places that have a connection with death – places of natural disasters, battlefronts, places of celebrity deaths, tombs, cemeteries, etc. (Tarlow, 2007).

Even though the interest in dark tourism has grown significantly recently, we cannot claim that this is a new phenomenon. Lennon and Seaton (2004) used gladiator games in Roman arenas, public executions in the Middle Ages, and visiting famous battlefronts as examples of the first occurrences of dark tourism, while Sharpley and Stone (2008) added pilgrimages to the list.

Dark tourism is therefore a phenomenon that is both new and old – it reaches to the very beginning of tourism as a form of travelling from one's place of residence with motives other than work and survival. There have been several studies of this conducted around the world, although to a much lesser extent in Slovenia. For this reason, we conducted detailed research on dark tourism in Slovenia, with a focus on the city of Maribor. We were especially curious about the following:

- What is the general opinion of dark tourism and dark heritage in Maribor?
- What kinds of dark heritage can we find in Maribor, and how is the identified dark heritage already included in the contemporary tourist offer of the city?
- How can we evaluate dark heritage in Maribor based on the model of the spectrum of dark tourism?

K. Raušl, B. Prevolšek, M. Rangus: Inclusion of Dark Heritage in the Contemporary Tourist Offer of the City of Maribor

179

We also wanted to know which parts of the dark heritage of Maribor also have the potential for inclusion in the contemporary tourist offer of the city.

1.1   Methodology

We used an interdisciplinary approach in this study. We studied the available scientific and other literature on dark tourism. We used a qualitative methodological approach, interpretation, and description. We gathered information from primary and secondary sources, books, and online sources. We gathered additional information by conducting field research in the city of Maribor, using the method of semi-structured interviews. Our interviewees were employees of Maribor Tourist Information Board, staff at Tourist Information Centres, curators of the Regional Museum of Maribor and the National Liberation Museum, and other relevant individuals – tourist guides, historians, and storytellers. We used content analysis (Seuring & Gold 2012) and summary analysis to examine the data, and then presented the findings.

2   Understanding the motives for dark tourism

There are many terms for the phenomenon that is dark tourism. What those names have in common is a description of places with connections to death, accidents, natural disasters, executions, violence, and suffering. Such tourist experiences give visitors a chance to get to know themselves on an interpersonal and intrapersonal level (Roth et al., 2015). Visiting places connected to death (murder scenes, battlefronts, cemeteries, tombs, churches, homes of dead celebrities, etc.) is an important part of a tourist experience in many destinations. Stone (2012) claims that the attraction of destinations related to death is very clear to tourists, and that dark tourism became much more widespread and diverse in the past half century, as the offers increased greatly and more and more destinations promoted themselves as dark ones. Stone (2010) states that the attraction of dark destinations lies in understanding of the self and mortality, or in identification of a visitor with the victims, called "Significant Other Dead". Despite this, the relationship between the motives for dark tourism and the experience of dark tourism is not yet fully explained. MacCannell (1976) claims the tourist experience comes from the symbolic meaning thus gained, whereas Wall and Xie (2005) add emotional elements and identify the process of tourist experience as searching for spiritual satisfaction and

symbolism. Guo et al. (2016) use the example of a demolished building after an earthquake – it has the role of an intimate, emotional space, where visitors can experience sympathy and the symbolism of the destination. Sharpley (2009) describes dark tourism destinations as a way of moral communication in contemporary society with moral implications, such as compassion, reliving an experience, feeling empathy, etc. Guo et al. (2016) describes dark tourism as a form of psychological consumption that offers the visitor desired and actual psychological outcomes that satisfy their emotional needs. It is a symbolic process of consumption that enables visitors to understand emotional and cognitive experiences through interacting with dark tourism products, regardless of whether the product is natural or manmade. We can explain this phenomenon as an interactive process between the tourist and 'space of death'' with shared characteristics to which we can attribute symbolical meanings. Current empirical research shows that visitors experience dark tourism in many ways (Guo et al., 2016; Podoshen, 2013; Seaton, 2009). Stone (2009) uses an example of the connection between a visitor to the London Dungeons and their own funeral, or the way visitors to Body Worlds exhibitions start thinking about their own bodies and health, and visitors to concentration camps relate the experience to their own mortality and that of their loved ones.

Based on his research, Stone (2010) created a model of the relationship between the dead and dark tourism to identify the main aspects of a visitor's view of a dark tourism destination.
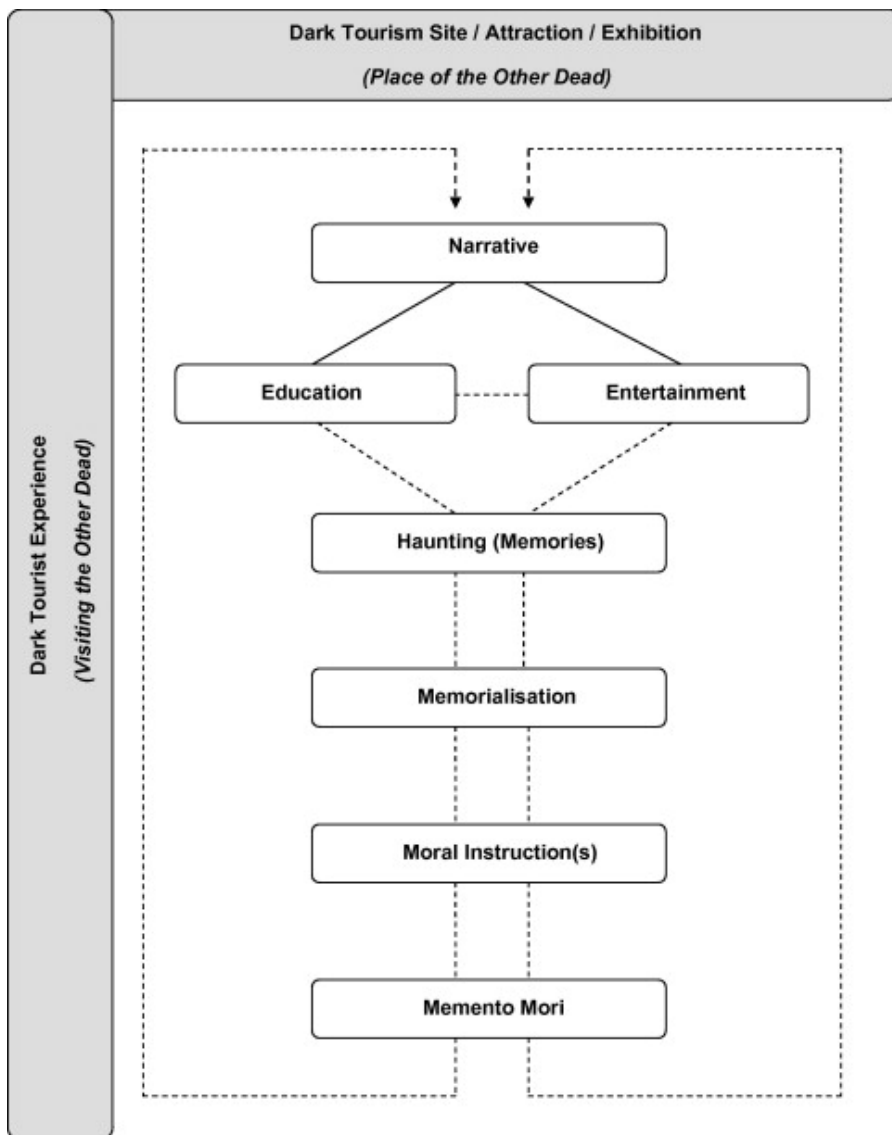
K. Raušl, B. Prevolšek, M. Rangus: Inclusion of Dark Heritage in the Contemporary Tourist Offer of the City of Maribor

181

Figure 1. Mediation model – the relationship between the dead and dark tourism
Source: Stone, 2010

According to Stone (2010), dark tourism is a form of mediation between the dead and the living. He produced the mediation model presented above and highlighted the following main points in understanding a visitor's view of a dark tourism destination:

a. Narrative

Telling the story through information is a key factor in the connection between the dead and the living. Offering information is the first step in the process of mediation, where death and suffering are presented and interpreted in the context of a tourist experience.

b. Education

One of the most important motives for and functions of dark tourism is education. Dark tourism destinations often use horror as a tool in an educational narrative, to introduce a different point of view to visitors.

c. Entertainment

Even though the connection between death and fun is not apparent right away, the phenomenon of dark tourism proves otherwise. The dead can thus communicate their presence and other historical events through the entertainment of current-day visitors.

d. Haunting (memories)

The restless dead can haunt or persecute people, and the memories of murder victims can haunt entire societies. High profile horrific events, past executions, and unsolved murders haunt (and in a way also entertain) society as well as individuals. Fear of death can also increase due to various events related to death and disasters.

e. Memorialization

Whereas restless death can haunt the imaginations of the living, it is memorialization that allows for "darker" dark tourism. Different ways of memorialization and remembrance are important in this context, and Stone (2010) divides memorialization into "first generation memories" (e.g., 9/11, which happened in recent times and is still present in the collective consciousness), "second generation memories" (e.g. the memories of our parents and grandparents, who remember the events of wars taking place in 20th century differently than other visitors) and "third

K. Raušl, B. Prevolšek, M. Rangus: Inclusion of Dark Heritage in the Contemporary Tourist Offer of the City of Maribor

183

generation memories", events for which all living connections are lost, such as those prior to 20th century.

f. Moral instruction

Dark tourism destinations have strategically placed taboo objects and use tragic stories to commercial ends, or they offer memorial stories, connecting the dead and the living. The result is those destinations exist on a wider economic spectrum, often as famous tourist attractions, and include ideas and representations that are close to popular culture (Williams & Stone, 2010). Some dark places include nihilistic stories of fear, death, horror, violence, and disease, presented in a vulgar, nearly parodical way, or they are presented in a sharp, strictly uncompromising, dark manner.

g. Memento mori

The last point in Stone's (2010) model elaborates on the long history of the Latin saying *memento mori* - remember you will die. In the history of romantic literature and art, this saying was often used along with motifs of death and mortality. Seaton (2009) claims this era was covertly sado-masochistic, as seen in the motifs of pleasure, fear, and horror visible in works of art, literature, and architecture from this era.

Stone (2006) defines different levels of dark tourism, going from darkest to lightest. Miles (in Stone, 2006) explains the key difference between places connected to death, and actual places of death. It is important to distinguish between places where a dark tourism offer was created and the places where a dark tourism offer happened by chance, because of direct connection to tragedies, accidents, and disasters. Stone (2006) states that dark tourism appears along a complicated and complex spectrum that includes various definitions. Therefore, he believes it is difficult to speak only of "dark" tourism, because there are several shades of dark, which are not constant and change according to current events, along with time and place. Miles (in Stone, 2006) claims these factors are the most important in the attempt at defining the shades of dark tourism (see Figure 2).
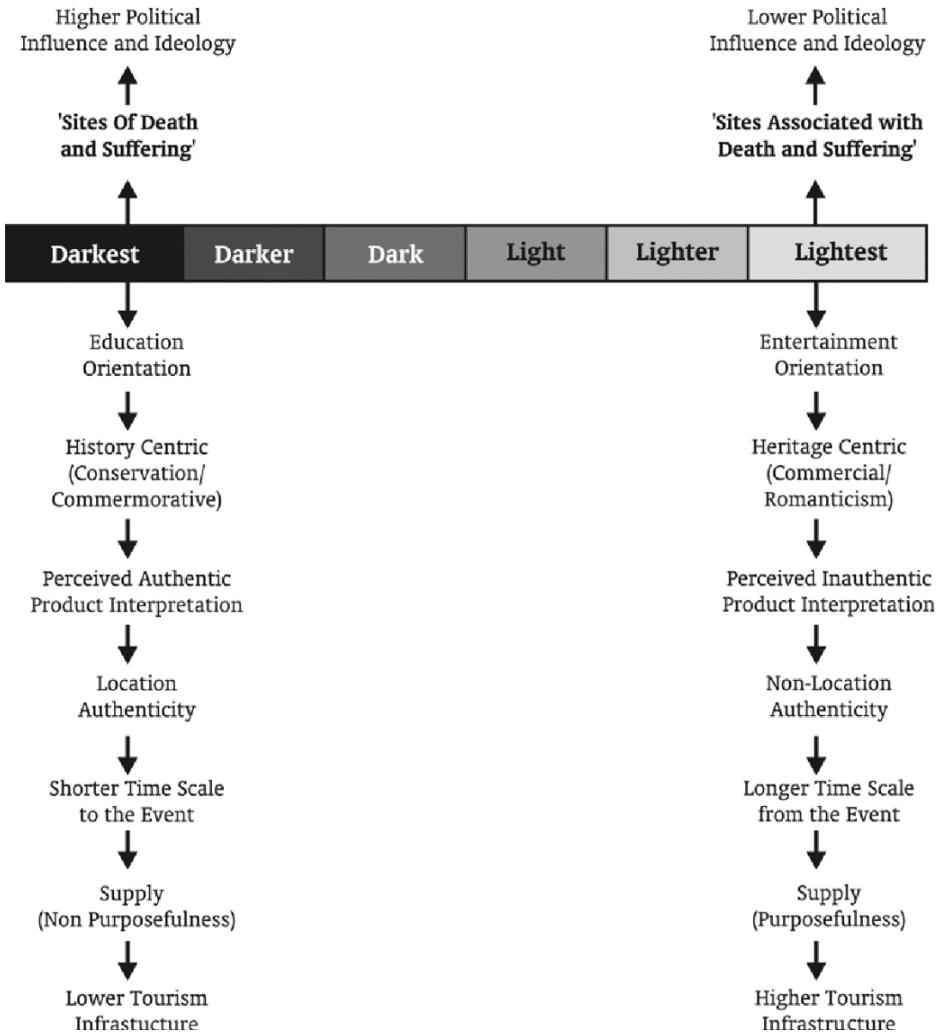
Figure 2 - spectrum of dark tourism
Source: Stone, 2006

2.1   Typology of dark tourism

The typology of dark tourism, as explained by Grafenauer and Kužnik (2015), will help us understand and define different categories of dark tourism in the city of Maribor.

K. Raušl, B. Prevolšek, M. Rangus: Inclusion of Dark Heritage in the Contemporary Tourist Offer of the City of Maribor

185

– **Cemetery tourism** entails visiting cemeteries, not only because of the people buried there, but also because of their rich cultural heritage. Cemeteries often mirror history, architecture, culture, and people (Pogrebno podjetje Maribor, n.d.).

– **War tourism** is visiting battlefronts and places of war and killings. It has grown exponentially in the past century, mainly due to the two world wars. Seaton (1999) defines war tourism as visiting places of armed conflict, either in the past or present.

– **Holocaust tourism** describes tourism related to visiting places of mass ethnic killings (the word holocaust was first used for the mass killings of Jewish people in the Second World War) and mass killings of any groups deemed "lesser", such as Romani people, homosexuals, and the disabled (Abrhám & Heřmanová, 2015).

– **Genocide tourism** is a super-category of holocaust tourism, and it describes visiting places associated with genocide, and this is one of the most extreme forms of dark tourism (Gahigana and Sharpley, 2014).

– **Communist tourism**, also called "red tourism", describes visiting places connected to communist regimes and their fall. It can be further divided into tourism related to Europe's communist heritage and Chinese red tourism (Caraba, 2011).

– **Prison tourism** describes visiting places that were once prisons, penitentiaries, and dungeons. Prison tourism is quite widespread nowadays, and there are over 100 prison museums such as those in Alcatraz (San Francisco), Robben Island (South Africa) and Fremantle (Australia) (Aslan, 2015).

– **Cold War and Iron Curtain tourism** started to evolve in the mid-1950's, when tourist agencies wanted to advertise tourism on the east side of the Iron Curtain (Bechmann Pedersen, 2018).

– **Natural disaster tourism** is a form of dark tourism that visits destinations damaged by natural disasters and traumatizing events, such as visiting flooded parts of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina (Gotham, 2007).

- **Nuclear tourism** describes visiting the sites of nuclear disasters. Among the most well-known destinations are Chernobyl (Ukraine) and Fukushima (Japan) (Berger, 2006).
- **Tourism of murderers and murder places** is visiting places where murders took place and places connected to mass murderers (Gibson, 2006).
- **Poverty tourism**, also known as "slum tourism", is visiting places of extreme poverty (Frenzel et al., 2015).
- **Terrorist tourism** is visiting sites of terrorist attacks, or countries with an imminent threat of terrorism (Cross, 2019).
- **Supernatural tourism** is visiting haunted houses and places, places where monsters, mythical creatures and aliens are alleged to have been seen, and all other sites of unexplained events (Haynes, 2016).
- **Witchcraft tourism** is visiting places connected with the large-scale killings of people (especially women) for alleged crimes against God and fraternizing with the Devil. (Grafenauer & Kužnik, 2015).
- **Accident tourism** is visiting site of accidents – car crashes, plane crashes, or work accidents (Foley & Lennon, 2000).
- **Dark entertainment tourism** combines dark elements with entertainment. One such example is the London Dungeons (Grafenauer & Kužnik, 2015).

3   Examples of dark tourism in Slovenia

Dark tourism is not widespread in Slovenia, but we have identified certain destinations which use dark heritage as an element of their tourist offer. Nearly all the products listed below focus on and teach about the First and the Second World Wars, and war tourism is currently the most common type of dark tourism in Slovenia.

- **Posočje peace trail (Pot miru v Posočju)** is a 230 km long trail running along the Slovenian-Italian border. On the trail there are several museums, cemeteries, ossuaries, and chapels. The most visited points are the Museum of Kobarid, Sabotin Peace Park, Kluže Fortress and the Church of the Holy Ghost Javorca (Pot miru od Alp do Jadrana, Soča valley, n.d.).

- **Hostel Celica (ex-prison hostel)** in Ljubljana has over 100 years of history as a military prison. Today it operates as a hostel with over 20 uniquely designed rooms (Hostel Celica, n.d.).
- **March Along the Barbed Wire (pot ob žici)** is a 32.5 km long trail around Ljubljana that symbolizes the barbed wire that surrounded the city until liberation in 1945 (Visit Ljubljana, 2012).
- **Žale Cemetery** in Ljubljana is especially significant because of it was designed by the Jože Plečnik (Pokopališče Žale, n.d.).
- **War History Park** is located in what used to be barracks in Pivka, and it presents entire newer war history of Slovenia (Park vojaške zgodovine Pivka, 2019).
- **Idrija War Museum** presents an exhibition on the First World War to Slovenia's War of Independence (Vojni muzej Idrija, n.d.).
- **The Museum of the Slovene Police** in Tacen holds exhibits from the beginning of police work in Slovenia (Slovenska policija, n.d.).

4   Presence of dark tourism in the city of Maribor

Dark tourism in Maribor is still quite an unexplored and undeveloped phenomenon. It cannot be found in the current tourist offer of the city, at least not under the name of dark tourism. That is why we thoroughly researched the existing tourist offer and presented the following elements that could be deemed "dark".

- **Pobrežje cemetery** has been in operation since 1879 and is a part of ASCE – the Association of Significant Cemeteries in Europe (Pogrebno podjetje Maribor, n.d.).
- **Dobrava cemetery** is a younger cemetery that includes a crematorium, memorial park, war graves and several monuments (Pogrebno podjetje Maribor, n.d.).
- **Maribor National Liberation Museum** is a historical museum that covers the events of the First and Second World Wars. It is located in the Scherbaum Mansion (Muzej narodne osvoboditve Maribor, n.d.).
- **Cona Tezno** is an industrial part of the city that also covers a labyrinth of underground tunnels that were built during the Second World War, in 1943, as a form of protection against aerial attacks (Cona Tezno, n.d.).

‒   **The War Museum of the Slovene Army** is located in the barracks on Engels
    Street. The collections tell the story and war on Slovenian territory and the
    development of the Slovene army (Vojaški muzej slovenske vojske, n.d.).

As noted above, we did not identify any products in the tourist offers in Maribor
that could be deemed explicitly dark. That is why we conducted this research using
semi-structured interviews, with a clearly defined sample of interviewees. This
research took place between February 7 and March 13, 2019. We contacted possible
participants via email or phone, and if they agreed decided on a time and place for
an interview. Interviews were conducted in two parts. In the first part, we inquired
about dark tourism in general, thoughts, motives, and personal beliefs. In the second
part, we focused on the active work of our participants in developing, operating, and
promoting dark tourism. We coded the gathered information and analysed the data
on three levels. First, we identified relevant codes from transcriptions of the
interviews. Second, we established a protocol for clustering the data and organized
the codes in clusters. This clustering was performed by two researchers, and after
clustering we compared both procedures and discussed any different evaluations.
Third, we analysed the clusters and interpreted the content of the interviews in the
context of previous research and the knowledge thus obtained.

The majority of our participants were familiar with dark tourism to some extent, and
agreed it is not morally wrong to use dark heritage in tourism, if it is presented with
respect to the victims, correctly according to the theme, and not as a way to profit
off the suffering of others. Understanding and accepting dark tourism is part of
having respect for cultural heritage and history, educating visitors on the connections
between the past and present.

This is a type of tourism that can strongly affect the emotions of visitors. Keeping
that in mind, several factors matter when it comes to offering dark tourism products,
such as the visitor's moral standpoint, values, emotional connection, identity, and so
on. Themes must be adapted to the different views of individual guests and
presented with compassion, consideration, and the intent to educate, and it is also
necessary to anticipate visitors' reactions and behaviours. We must understand a
visitor's motives for visiting dark destinations and offer a way to satisfy their needs
through getting to know dark heritage, based on curiosity, a thirst for knowledge,
remembrance, empathy, art, aesthetics, and relaxation. A contemporary tourist is

K. Raušl, B. Prevolšek, M. Rangus: Inclusion of Dark Heritage in the Contemporary Tourist Offer of the City of Maribor

189

taking a step back from classic forms of travel and constantly searches for something new, exciting, bizarre, mythic, mysterious, and unique.

The key to a well-rounded tourist offer is knowing what to offer to who in what way. Some visitors visit places of death because of a search for peace and calm, and in order to reflect, feelings which might not be clearly connected to such places at first glance. Other visitors desire to gain deeper understanding, get to know the dark side of a story, experience fear and horror. Only a tourist offer encompassing all these criteria can satisfy a wide spectrum of people, not only a "dark tourist".

The interviewees named several destinations where they visited attractions linked to death, such as cemeteries, war museums, witchcraft museums, castles, dungeons, crypts, tombs, churches, etc. They also named several dark sites in Maribor, such as the remains of the concentration camp Stalag XVIII-D in Melje, the cemeteries in Pobrežje and Drava, archaeological findings dating to the Roman era, mass graves on Pohorje and in Stražun forest, monuments, gravestones, ruins, the remains of war barracks, mortuary ruins, the main square's connection to witch trials (where there were once some gallows, pillory, cage, and wooden block).

The interviewees also helped us find the dark stories of Maribor relating to wars, murders, witchcraft, supernatural occurrences, natural disasters, diseases, and so on. We collected and summarized these stories in Table 1, below. We collected information about important people visiting (or attacking) Maribor, victims of accidents, stolen children during the Second World War, older war history, facing the plague, cholera and other diseases, along with witch trials and executions. These stories fell under different types of dark tourism, including (but not limited to) war tourism, prison tourism, witchcraft tourism, supernatural tourism, cemetery tourism, holocaust and genocide tourism.

We also asked our participants about segments of tourists interested in such stories. The answers varied, because every individual visitor has a personal moral standpoint, life experience and understanding of the world around them. That is why it is difficult to talk about a homogenous segment, because the type of product can apply to diverse groups of people. Some stories are appropriate for school students, some are suitable for younger children (e.g., those related to urban explorers), and some for older visitors who might be related to the victims. There are visitors driven by

curiosity, who are lovers of history, architecture, or alternative experiences. Another important factor in knowing the type of visitor is offering them relevant marketing channels. Nowadays we have available a wide array of possible resources, digital and analogue, that allow us to reach a wider audience. We can choose a communication channel based on what type of visitors we wish to attract. We can communicate with the younger population online, through social media, apps, interactive sites and more, and this is now happening in Maribor, with several apps and web platforms enabling visitors to get easily oriented in the city, booking attractions, tours, accommodation, and restaurants online, and so on. Another important aspect is informing tourists on the site itself, with posters, brochures, flyers, interactive boards, and easily available information. There are also the possibilities of television and radio shows for the purpose of educating the wider public and reaching older generations who might not be present on social media as much.

One problem is that the vast majority of (especially younger) local residents are not familiar with local history and stories, which are consequentially starting to be forgotten. To avoid this, we must offer products that work with the local people and present history in the correct way. Currently that is one of the reasons why we cannot talk about a huge demand for dark tourism, and why some of the interviewees expressed doubts that it could be an independent tourist product. The majority of interviewees see dark tourism as part of the existing offer, an addition to it, because there are currently not many hyper-focused dark tourists. In this context a wider audience must be targeted, and it is necessary to offer something diverse enough, but also specific enough, to satisfy as many visitors as possible.

We spoke about marketing as well, and the interviewees mentioned classic and digital campaigns, exhibitions, quality content and programs, workshops, lectures, themed tours, and the development of niche products. But the first step must be supplying employees with sufficient information to present alternative parts of the tourist offer.

Another problem occurs in the current upkeep of some of the dark destinations in Maribor. Many important historical sites are in state of disrepair and ruin, and are not maintained properly or renovated, but instead left to continue falling apart. There are currently some projects in action regarding the conservation of important

K. Raušl, B. Prevolšek, M. Rangus: Inclusion of Dark Heritage in the Contemporary Tourist Offer of the City of Maribor

191

parts of cultural heritage, but there is a long way to go in preserving and presenting centuries of rich history in Maribor.

5   The typology and stories of dark tourism in Maribor according to the identified dark heritage

In our field research, we were searching for authentic stories from Maribor's history and cultural heritage to identify the dark tourism potential of the city. We analysed the existing literature on different types of dark heritage and consulted professionals in interviews about the subject of our research. We categorized the identified elements of dark heritage into subcategories according to the available literature and examples from interviews. Below we described the preserved heritage (physical or written) and stories relating to it.

5.1   War heritage

Maribor has a turbulent war history that reaches far in the past, although records of Bulgarian attacks and several others are scarce or nearly non-existent. For to that reason, this chapter is focused on wars that are well documented. We divided war heritage in Maribor into older war history (up until the First World War) and newer war history (First and Second World Wars). We further described the events of the Second World War in the chapter on holocaust heritage.

Radovanović, Tomažič and Varl (1997) describe one of the worst attacks on Maribor in history. This event is still known as "the days of horror", and they took place in September 1532, when the Ottoman army returned through Maribor from an unsuccessful attack on Vienna. For three days, a hundred thousand strong army sieged the bridge and city wall, which was defended by around 200 people from Maribor. It turned out that the renovation of the city wall a few years earlier was a great idea, because the siege was unsuccessful. After three days, Suleiman the Magnificent called off the attack and ordered the building of a bridge in Bresternica, some three kilometres away from the city. The Ottomans spent an entire day and night crossing over the bridge and making their way to the city. They did not have the time to do a lot of damage upon reaching the city, however, because the imperial army was already at their feet, but they did manage to burn down several houses,

farms, and other buildings in their way. There is a story from that time about a brave tailor who saved Maribor from the Ottomans with his courageous action.

5.2   Second World War and holocaust heritage

The Second World War was a lot harder on Maribor than the First World War. Žnidarič (1997) describes the uncertainty of those living in Maribor in early April 1941. German scouting planes first appeared over the city on the 4th and 5th of April, and the uncertainty grew. German units attacked Yugoslavia on 6th of April 1941, and two days later, on April 8th, the German army made its way into Maribor. Adolf Hitler visited the city on April 26th, but his visit was short – it entailed viewing the ruined bridges (main and railway bridge), Slomšek square, then stopping at Maribor Castle, where he was ceremoniously greeted by Germans residing in Maribor. A few days later, another important day took place in Maribor – on April 29th, with the first action against the occupiers taking place on Volkmer Street, where people set two German cars on fire, marking the start of the fight for liberation (Žnidarič, 1997).

Heinrich Himmler issued an order on June 25th, 1942, declaring a strict punishment for everyone against the Reich, which included people of Maribor. He ordered the murder of all men and their guilty family members, put women in concentration camps and gathered the children in the region of old Reich (Hribar et al., 2002).

In early August 1942, two actions took place in which men from Slovene Styria were gathered and sent to concentration camps. The same thing was done to women, while children were ordered to under examinations by "racial inspectors". Some were sent to the barracks, but the "racially clean" had the privilege of additional inspections and adoptions into appropriate families. Ferenc (1968) states that sources claiming over 600 children were stolen at this time.

During the occupation, 29 bombing raids took place in Maribor, and a total of some 15,795 bombs were dropped, demolishing 47% of the buildings in the city and killing around 500 people. It is very likely the actual number was substantially higher, because information regarding the dead in these bombings is very scarce (Žnidarič, 1997).

K. Raušl, B. Prevolšek, M. Rangus: *Inclusion of Dark Heritage in the Contemporary Tourist Offer of the City of Maribor*

193

There are many things related to the Second World War today in Maribor, although many of the damaged buildings were demolished or renovated. Several monuments, memorial plates, tombstones, and the like were added after the war. In the context of specific war heritage, we can mention concentration camp Stalag XVIII-D in Melje, war bunkers on Pohorje and in Stražun forest, tunnels beneath Cona Tezno, the MC pekarna complex – army storage and bread bakery, and monuments on Pobrežje cemetery. There are some written records as well, especially a large collection of letters written by people before their executions. Those letters can be found in the publications *Poslovilna pisma za svobodo ustreljenih* (1965) and *Poslovilna pisma žrtev za svobodo* (1969).

5.3   Prison heritage

Behind the Europark shopping centre in Maribor lies a former youth penitentiary. The pentagonal building is currently in a bad condition, but in the times of Yugoslavia it was known as one of the most inhumane prisons in the country (Ratej, 2018). It was built in 1889 and accepted its first convicts ten years later. It was meant to house around 550 people, but it was not used to its full capacity until the Second World War. Exact information is hard to come by and the archives of the penitentiary are not available, only some writings about the convicts. The highest recorded number of convicts was 661, mostly convicted of spreading communist propaganda (Filipič, 1985). Ratej (2018) describes the inhumane conditions in the penitentiary, from unsuitable and rotting food, sleeping on hard ground without covers or blankets in cold cells, to bad hygiene and atrocious work conditions. Those were the reasons for several hunger strikes, and one in 1930 was well documented. The ordinary prisoners wanted the political prisoners to be moved to a different penitentiary, they wished to receive packages from their families, and enough heating and lighting. During these hunger strikes the prisoners were not treated well, and often fed by force. Usually, the prisoners would be put in a straitjacket and iron tongs were inserted in their mouths, to prevent them from closing. Then a rubber tube was put in their mouths, all the way to the stomach, and soup would be poured down the tube. That kind of force feeding was humiliating, painful and it always ended with vomiting, but it was repeated twice a day until the end of the hunger strike. This action ended with a moderate success, because the prisoners got different cells and books, and the lights could be kept on for longer. This was not the first

hunger strike, however, as the first documented one was in August 1927, and it ended unsuccessfully for the prisoners (Ratej, 2018)

Many important political persons were held in the penitentiary, among them Boris Kidrič and Josip Broz Tito. The yard of the penitentiary was also used for eight executions between 1923 and 1935. Those executions were not public, but newspapers published articles detailing the horrors happening behind the walls of the prison. They were the only ones who offered insight to the public, and they spared no gruesome detail.

5.4. Cemetery heritage

Cemetery heritage in Maribor goes a long way back, long before the two main cemeteries were established. Most of the cemeteries up until the second half of the 18th century were located around parish churches. The parish church of Maribor (today known as the Cathedral of Anton Martin Slomšek) was built in the early 12th century, along with the cemetery around it, for the residents of the city. Nearly 14,000 people were buried there between 1664 and 1783, when it was moved to the place that is known today as the stadium Ljudski vrt (Glaser, 2009). Glaser (2009) mentions several other cemeteries in Maribor:

− The Jewish cemetery, which, according to the beliefs of the religion should not be placed too close to the synagogue but was anyway because of the spatial limitations of the city. Due to the remains of the graves, historians assume this cemetery laid between the synagogue and the Jewish tower, on what is today known as the Jewish Square. There was another Jewish cemetery on the outer part of the city wall, and it was used until 1496, when Jews were exiled from the city by the order of Emperor Maximilian I (Kmetič, 2016).

− The Cemetery of Maltese Order of Knights in Melje used to be an outpost. In 13th century, the Church of St. Catherine was built there. According to legends, there was a deep dungeon under the church, and one of the monks was walled up alive there because of his relations with some winemaker. It is very likely there are several tombs underneath the church, where more important knights were buried. The cemetery surrounding the church was in use for nearly six centuries, and the remains of the church are still visible today (Kmetič, 2016).

− The protestant cemetery in Betnava was built because it was forbidden for people of this faith to be buried in Catholic cemeteries. Baron Herberstein of

Betnava offered a part of his estate for a cemetery, a house for a pastor, a school, and a church. The cemetery only lasted 12 years before anti-Protestant soldiers burned the walls surrounding the cemetery and some nearby buildings. The graves remained untouched, the wall was rebuilt, and the cemetery was in use (although in a limited scope) for another 27 years. The remains visible today are tombstones in the castle of Betnava (Kmetič, 2016).

− The Cemetery in Magdalenski Park, where the remains of mortuary are still visible today. This cemetery was closed in 1880, the same year that the Catholic cemetery was added to Pobrežje (Kmetič, 2016).

− Studenci cemetery between 1878 and 1941.

− The cemetery under Pekrska gorca.

− Scherbaum cemetery in Radvanje.

5.5   Witchcraft

Witch trials were widespread across Europe (and later America) between the 15th and 18th centuries. The exact timeframe is unknown, but the mass killings (usually of women) reached an all-time high in the 17th century in Slovenia. The mentality was very different back then, and the common people were unable to explain phenomena such as changes in the weather, diseases, mental illnesses, wars, and famine. The Church also had a huge influence and spread fear of the devil. It was an epidemic of superstition, and nobody was safe from it, because belief in the devil was almost more common than faith in God, and people were terrified also of the devil's helpers –witches. The first suspicions of witchcraft date to the ninth century, but it was a few centuries later that the fear of witches spread so much that the clergy (considered the educated part of the population) set the course for bloody and terrifying witch trials. They believed that witchcraft was based on a contract with the devil, and because the devil was seen as a man, it was only normal that he was worshipped by women, who also had intercourse with him.

The first "witch" was publicly burned in 1275 in southern France (Radovanović, 1997). The first documented witch trial in Maribor took place in 1546, and there are 45 more that were recorded over the course of the following 200 years, leading to 40 executions. During that time, Maribor was under the influence of the Reformation, and the provincial jailer was Jakob Bithner, an ex-soldier and

evangelical theologist. Bithner was the reason for most of the witch trials in Slovene Styria after 1580. In that same year, several women were condemned in Maribor, and after extensive torture they confessed to murders, riding the devil, poisonings, and cooking up storms. Because of their alleged crimes, they were sewn into bags and thrown in the River Drava, and were not burned at the stake because they did not have sex with the devil (Radovanovič, 1997). Witches also stirred the imaginations of storytellers, and it is not surprising there are several tales about them, all meant to frighten children. In those stories, passed on mostly orally, witches would often kidnap children (or adults), turn them into various animals and spirits, or do serious harm with their magic (Raušl, 2020).

5.6   Supernatural heritage – myths, fables, and legends

The River Drava has stirred the imagination of local people since time immemorial, as it used to be much more wild than it is today. We discovered several tales relating to the river, and stories connected to the supernatural. There are recurring characters in these, most often water beings, such as the River Man, sirens, mermaids, ghosts and the like (Haramija, 2011). Those stories usually describe the workings of higher forces, supernatural creatures, demons, and devils, and they are often closely intertwined with nature. The most well-known of those stories are Dravska roža (the flower of Drava), that tells the story of three sons of a woodcutter who met a bitter end because of a mean-spirited noblewoman; Dravski vodovnik (the River Man of Drava), that describes the unrequited love of the River Man's three daughters for rafter's sons; Kačja kraljica (Snake Queen), who lived on Maribor island with other snakes; and the story of Pekrska gorca (Pekre mountain), which was the work of the devil (Haramija, 2011; Tomažič, 1993; in Raušl, 2020).

5.7   Natural disaster heritage

Maribor has suffered several natural disasters through its long history, the worst of which was the Black Death, which killed many of its inhabitants. There are not many records regarding the plague, medicine, or doctors during this period, but we used all the available information in this study.

K. Raušl, B. Prevolšek, M. Rangus: Inclusion of Dark Heritage in the Contemporary Tourist Offer of the City of Maribor

197

According to the spectrum of dark tourism presented above, it is clear there are several shades of darkness to be found in Maribor. We gathered the stories and summarized them, then evaluated them based on the spectrum, presented by Stone (2006), identified the main characters, placed them in temporal and spatial frames, and added the corresponding type of dark tourism classification.

Table 1: Overview of dark stories, their summaries, and characters

Story	Spectrum	Characters	Time	Place	Summary	Dark tourism type
Tailor who saved Maribor	Light	Tailor, Ottomans	Ottoman invasions between 15th and 17th century	Maribor, city wall	In times of the Ottoman invasions, the brave tailor disguises himself as one of the Ottomans, so he can sneak undetected to the floodgate, open it and flood a defensive trench, thus drowning the attackers.	War tourism
Letters of the those executed for freedom	Darkest	Real people	2nd world war	Usually abroad, also Maribor, Melje	The real last letters of victims who were shot during and after Second World War.	Holocaust tourism
Last executions in Maribor	Darker	Real people, the murderers Ivan Lakner and Stanko Pančur	1935	Former male penitentiary	Real event describing the last death sentences by hanging in Maribor. Even though the executions were not public, they were seen by nearly 300 people.	Prison tourism
Buried alive	Darker	Real person, Avgust Kelnarič	April 17th, 1935	Pobrežje cemetery	The real tragedy of young Avgust Kelnarič, who was buried alive while digging a well. A 3-day rescue attempt was unsuccessful.	Accident tourism
Musician and the witches	Lighter	Musician, witches	/	/	In this tale, the witches kidnap a musician who must play for them the entire night while they dance.	Witchcraft tourism
Witch wife	Lighter	Witch, husband, servant boy	/	/	A cunning witch changes her servant boy into a horse every night and rides him to the dance, without the knowledge of her husband. In the end the servant boy gets a chance for revenge.	Witchcraft tourism
Water Man Gestrin	Lightest	the Water Man, timber rafters	/	River Drava	Gestrin is the protector of the Drava. To cross the river safely, one must give him gifts of gold.	Supernatural tourism
The River Man of Drava	Lighter	The River Man, sirens, rafter, rafter's sons	/	River Drava	The River Man lives in the Drava with his three daughters, the sirens, who fall in love with the rafter's three sons. But the water	Supernatural tourism

Story	Spectrum	Characters	Time	Place	Summary	Dark tourism type
					and the land are not a good match, and the story ends in tragedy.	
The flower of Drava	Lighter	Woodcutter, woodcutter's sons, noblewoman, dragon	/	River Drava, Maribor Island, Limbuš	The woodcutter's sons meet an evil noblewoman, who demands they bring her the flower of the Drava – a magical plant that grows at the bottom of the river.	Supernatural tourism
Snake queen	Lightest	Snake Queen, snakes, duchess	/	Maribor island, River Drava	The Snake Queen lives with her servant snakes on Maribor Island. Her treasure is a crown that the greedy duchess wants for herself.	Supernatural tourism
Pekrska gorca	Lightest	God, devil, St. Mary	/	Radvanje	Based on the legend of Pekre mountain, the creation of which is attributed to the devil, who threw a piece of Pohorje rock onto Maribor.	Supernatural tourism
Black death	Darker	Plague doctor Hannibal Bottinoni	17. century	Maribor	The real story of an Italian plague doctor who was so afraid of the disease he offered medical advice from horseback.	Natural disaster tourism

6   Conclusion

Based on our research, we have learned that Maribor and Slovenia have rich potential for dark tourism development, but until now it has not been explored in the city's tourism offer. There is a significant number of attractions with connections to dark heritage to be explored further, but it is important to present them in an appropriate manner. A key factor in developing dark tourism offers further is the cooperation of everyone involved in shaping the tourist offer in Maribor.

We answered the questions we asked at the beginning of this research and found that the general opinion of dark tourism is positive, people working in the tourism industry are mostly familiar with it and see it as an interesting part of the tourist offer in Maribor. We identified several types of dark heritage, including war heritage, holocaust heritage, prison heritage, cemetery heritage, witchcraft heritage, supernatural heritage, and natural disaster heritage. We found that these were already included in tourist offers to a lesser extent, mostly in guided city tours or museum exhibitions. We evaluated the dark heritage we found according to the spectrum of dark tourism, from darkest to lightest, and determined the potential for inclusion of dark heritage in the tourist offers of Maribor.

There is a lot of potential in dark tourism in Maribor that suggests several possible directions for further research. The logical next step would be researching the relationship between local inhabitants and dark tourism, how they view it, accept it, and add to it. We believe that the development of dark tourism in Maribor would lead to greater inclusion of local inhabitants into this sector. Individual inhabitants have unique, personal stories and experiences that could be included in the tourism offers, in a way that is mutually beneficial.

Additional research possibilities also include an in-depth market analysis, to give an idea of the actual interest of local and foreign visitors in current offers and the further development of dark tourism, in-depth research into visitor motives, marketing possibilities for the promotion of dark tourism, and defining the typology of a dark tourist.

K. Raušl, B. Prevolšek, M. Rangus: Inclusion of Dark Heritage in the Contemporary Tourist Offer of the City of Maribor

201

References

Abrhám, J. and Heřmanová, E. (2015). Holocaust tourism as a part of the dark tourism. *Czech Journal of Social Sciences. Business and Economics,4*(1), 16-34.

Aslan, S. (2015). Prison tourism as a form of tourism. *The journal of international social research, 8*(40), 600-608.

Bechmann Pedersen, S. (2018). Eastbound tourism in the Cold War: the history of the Swedish communist travel agency Folkturist*, Journal of Tourism History,10*(2), 130-145

Berger, J. (2006). Nuclear Tourism and the Manhattan Project. *The Columbia Journal of American Studies, 7,* 196-214.

Caraba, C. C. (2011). Communist heritage tourism and red tourism: concepts, development and problems. *Cinq Continents, 1*(1), 29-39.

Cona Tezno. (n.d.). Retrieved from www.conatezno.si, 21. 6. 2019.

Ferenc, T. (1968). *Nacistična raznarodovalna politika v Sloveniji v letih 1941 – 1945.* Maribor: Založba Obzorja.

Filipič, F. (1985). Politični zaporniki v moški kaznilnici v Mariboru med okupacijo. *Časopis za zgodovino in narodopisje, 56*(1), 30-65.

Foley, M. and Lennon, J. J. (1996). JFK and dark tourism: A fascination with assassination. *International Journal of Heritage Studies, 2*(4), 198-211.

Foley, M. and Lennon, J. J. (2000). *Dark tourism.* VB: Cengage Learning EMEA

Frenzel, F., Koens, K., Rogerson, C. M. and Steinbrink, M. (2015). Slum tourism: state of the art. *Tourism Review International, 18*(4), 237-252.

Gahigana, I. and Sharpley, R. (2014). Tourist experiences of genocide sites: The case of Rwanda. *Turisticko poslovanje,* (13), 61-78.

Gibson, D. C. (2006). The relationship between serial murder and the American tourism industry. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 20*(1), 45-60.

Glaser, E. (2009). Usoda nekaterih pokopališč v Mariboru skozi zgodovino zadnjega stoletja. V M. Glaser (ur.), *Mariborska pokopališča: v mozaiku časa in evropske kulture.* Maribor: Založba Pivec.

Gotham, K. F. (2007). Critical theory and Katrina: Disaster, spectacle and imminent critique. *City, 11*(1), 81-99.

Grafenauer, B. and Kužnik, L. (2015). Temačne zgodbe turističnih destinacij v svetu in na Slovenskem. V *Mednarodna konferenca o razvoju organizacijskih znanosti Portorož,* (str. 561-568

Guo, Y. R., Lu, S. J., Yan, B. J., Zhang, J., and Zhang, H. L. (2016). Investigating the motivation–experience relationship in a dark tourism space: A case study of the Beichuan earthquake relics, China. *Tourism Management,* (53), 108–121.

Haramija, D. (2011). *Mariborske vedute: pripovedke o Mariboru in okolici.* Maribor: Založba Pivec.

Haynes, E. D. (2016). *Paranormal tourism: study of economics and public policy.* Kansas, ZDA: College of Architecture, Planning & Design.

Hostel Celica. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.hostelcelica.com/sl/hostel-za-zapahi/, 12. 7. 2019.

Hribar, D., Kmecl, M. Orožim, J. and Štiglic, J. (2002). *Taboriščniki - ukradeni otroci : 60 letnica nacističnega genocida.* Ljubljana: Društvo taboriščnikov – ukradenih otrok Slovenije.

Kmetič, V. (22.5.2016). Prah si in v prah se povrneš. *Večer v nedeljo*, št. 113, str. 1213.

Lennon, J. J. and Seaton, A. V. (2004). Thanatourism in the early 21st century: moral panics, ulterior motives and alterior desires. V *New horizons in tourism: Strange experiences and stranger practices* (str. 63-82). VB: CABI.

MacCannell, D. (1976). *The tourist: A new theory of the leisure class.* New York, ZDA: Shocken Books.

Muzej narodne osvoboditve Maribor. (n.d.). Retrieved from www.mnom.si*,* 21.6.2018.

Park vojaške zgodovine Pivka. (2019). *Europa Truck-Trial.* Retrieved from https://www.parkvojaskezgodovine.si/dogodki/truck-trial/, 23. 7. 2019.

Podoshen, J. S. (2013). Dark tourism motivations: Simulation, emotional contagion entophographic comparison. *Tourism Management,* (35), 263-271.

Pogrebno podjetje Maribor. (n.d.). Retrieved from www.pp-mb.si, 12. 3. 2019.

Pokopališče Žale. (n.d.). *Virtualni ogled pokopališč.* Retrieved from
    www.zale.si/sl/vec_o_projektu_virtualni_ogled_pokopalisc/*,* 12. 6. 2019. *Pot miru od
    Alp do Jadrana.* (n.d.). Retrieved from www.potmiru.si, 12. 6. 2019.

Puff, R. G. (1999). *Maribor: njegova okolica, prebivalci in zgodovina.* Maribor: Založba Obzorja.

Radovanovič, S. (1997). *»Bog se usmili uboge grešne duše. Amen« Čarovniški procesi na slovenskem Štajerskem v
    letih 1546 – 1746.* Murska Sobota: Pomurska založba.

Radovanović, S., Tomažič, D. and Varl, V. (1997). *Mariborske in druge zgodbe.* Maribor: Založba Kapital.

Ratej, M. (8.12.2018). Drobovje mariborske kaznilnice. *Časnik Večer.* Retrieved from
    https://www.seniorji.info/drobovje-mariborske-kaznilnice-6622384, 3. 8. 2019.

Raušl, K. (2020). Vključevanje temačne dediščine v sodobno turistično ponudbo mestne občine
    Maribor. *Univerza v Mariboru*

Roth, B. E., Saren, M. A., and Tinson, J. S. (2015). Exploring the role of dark tourism in the creation
    of national identity of young Americans. *Journal of Marketing Management, 31*(7-8), 856-880.

Seuring, S. and Gold, S. (2012). Conducting content-analysis based literature reviews in supply chain
    management. Supply Chain Management. 17. 544-555.

Seaton, A. V. (1999). War and Thanatourism: Waterloo 1815 – 1914. *Annals of Tourism Research,* (26),
    130-154.

Seaton, A. V. (2009). Thanatourism and its discontents: An appraisal of a decade's work with some
    future issues and directions. V T. Jamal in M. Robinson (ur.) *The Sage Handbook of Tourism
    Studies* (str. 521-542). London, VB: SAGE Publications.

Sharpley, R. (2009). *Shedding light on dark tourism: an introduction. In: The Darker Side of Travel: The Theory
    and Practice of Dark Tourism. Aspects of Tourism* . Bristol, VB: Channel View Publications.

Sharpley, R. and Stone, P. (2008). Consuming dark tourism: A Thanatological Perspective. *Annals of
    Tourism Research, 35*(2), 574-595.

Slovenska policija. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.policija.si/o-slovenskipoliciji/zgodovina-in-
    razvoj-2, 23. 6. 2019.

Soča valley. (n.d.). Retrieved from www.socavalley.com*,* 12. 4. 2019.

Stone, P. (2012). Dark tourism and significant other death: Towards a model of mortality mediation.
    Annals of tourism research, 39(3), 1565-1587.

Tarlow, P. (2007). Dark tourism–the appealing 'dark'side of tourism and more. V *Niche tourism* (str. 47-
    58). VB: Routledge.

Visit Ljubljana. (2012). *Vodstvo po Žalah odslej v redni ponudbi ogledov.* Retrieved from
    www.visitljubljana.com/sl/pisma-iz-ljubljane/september-2012/vodstvo-pozalah-odslej-v-
    redni-ponudbi-ogledov/, 12. 6. 2019.

Vojaški muzej slovenske vojske. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.vojaskimuzej.si/, 25. 9. 2019.

Vojni muzej Idrija. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://vojni-muzej-idrija.weebly.com/, 19. 8. 2019.

Wall, G., and Xie, P. F. (2005). Authenticating ethnic tourism: Li dancers' perspectives. *Asia Pacific
    Journal of Tourism Research, 10*(1), 1–21.

Žnidarič, M. (1997). *Do pekla in nazaj: nacistična okupacija in narodnoosvobodilni boj v Mariboru.* Maribor:
    Muzej narodne osvoboditve Maribor.