

# „Dark Tourism“ – Evaluation of Visitors Experience after Visiting Thanatological Tourist Attractions

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## Abstract

*Although thanatourism is a unique kind of tourism, whose history goes back to ancient times and the middle ages, literature on this touristic demand is still scarce, despite the fact that classification and categorization of thanatological tourist sites has existed for a certain number of years. Considering how the phenomenon of thanatourism, or „dark tourism“ has not been sufficiently explored in Croatia, and there is not enough literature to qualitatively research it, this study represents an attempt to come to a conclusion whether visits to a thanatouristic site contribute to a better understanding of the broader subject to which the tourist site is related, using qualitative methods. Reviewing published literature on the subject of „dark tourism“ and using the method of semistructured interviews on a sample of ten respondents of Croatian origin, we shall attempt to see whether thanatological tourist sites are a part of the cultural and historical heritage, whether a visit to a thanatological tourist site develops a desire to visit another tourist site with similar features, and whether there is a need for a more detailed study on the subject matter which initiated the making of a certain thanatological site. It would also be interesting to view the lucrative side of such sites, i.e. their economic potential. The purpose of this study is to highlight pointers of maintenance and preservation of existing sites or the formation of new ones, mainly on the grounds of former Yugoslavia, as an area of frequent conflicts of various ethnic groups.*

**Keywords:** *Thanatourism, tourist attraction, tourism anthropology, qualitative research, Croatian visitors*

## Introduction

The phenomenon of „dark tourism“ Stone (2006) has been present since ancient times when numerous spectators filled antique arenas and watched gladiator battles, as well as squares from the Middle Ages filled with spectators of mass executions. Also, according to Stone (2006), famous battlegrounds have attracted many visitors, motivated by what seem to be the same factors as visitors today consider when visiting and inspecting sites of suffering,

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mass executions, war horrors, public figure executions, dungeons, torture museums etc. MacCannell (1999) mentions the morgue, as a typical Parisienne tourist attraction of middle class citizens at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century. Also, another popular Parisienne attraction was an animal slaughterhouse.

Stone and Sharpley (2008) state that members of the western society facing death and suffering at a certain distance were conditioned by the very state of that society. Furthermore, Stone and Sharpley (2008) claim the motivation and experiences of visitors of thanatological tourist attractions are conditioned by socio-cultural environments in which the visitors find themselves in their everyday lives. Rieger considers (quoted in Krippendorf, 1986) tourists constantly looking for new experiences, out of fear of internal „emptiness“; how that emptiness is filled observing suffering and how the experience affect the visitors will be shown through the research.

Every thanatological tourist attraction is thematically predetermined by an event from history (i.e. various legends or imaginary content) and on its own, attracts visitors with various profiles. Kušen (2002) believes that tourist attractions are a magnet that runs the touristic system and determines the development of tourism in a destination. According to Jadrešić (2010), a touristic experience belongs in the socio-cultural need of the modern man and represents a long-term investment in the sense of acquiring knowledge of other cultures, experiences and other elements permanently imprinted in the memory of an individual. Hughes (2008) states that the lack of classic curator practice in destinations where thanatologically themed attractions can be found, brings the modern visitor to unexpected experiential paths.

It is recommended to research and evaluate the experiences of Croatian visitors of thanatological tourist attractions at certain parts of the world, that have been dealing with motivations and experiences of visitors of thanatological tourist attractions, most of which are from Anglo-Saxon countries. Also, it is interesting to look over the economic potential of such tourist attractions, in order to preserve the existing or form new ones, primarily on the former Yugoslavian territory. A qualitative research through semistructured interviews of Croatian visitors of thanatologic tourist attractions, in order to come to the realization what the experiences while visiting a thanatologically themed tourist attraction are, also whether that experience creates a need for another visit to the same or similarly themed attraction. Using research, it shall be attempted to show at which rate thanatological themes are incorporated in tourist attractions as well as being considered part of the cultural or historical heritage.

## **Classification and categorization of thanatological tourist attractions**

According to Kušen (2002) and his primary classification of tourist attractions, protected cultural-historic heritage, the culture of life and work as well as famous people and historic events are specially extricated. A detailed tourist classification of culturo-historic tourist attractions, according to Kušen (2002) classifies cemeteries, cemetery parks, memorial areas and structures, in the class of immovable monuments, characteristically independent of the theme of the event that initiated the making of a certain attraction. As opposed to Kušen, Dann additionally characterizes tourist attractions and para attractions through the subject of „dark tourism“ (quotes in Sharpley and Stone, 2009) into several areas as: dangerous places, haunted houses, fields of death, tours of torture and exhibits with thanatological themes. Thanatological tourist attractions are also possible to characterize considering their content and distance from the event itself that represents the tourist attraction's basis. Miles

states (quoted in Sharpley and Stone, 2006) how the area of Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp was *darker* as opposed to the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, in itself giving the tourist experience such a marker. This means that thanatologically themed tourist attractions can be differentiated through the intensity of the tourist experience after visiting such a tourist attraction itself, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1** A dark tourism spectrum (intensity of tourist experience)

	Sites of death and suffering	Sites associated with death and suffering
	Intensity of tourist experience	
Criterion	Darker	Lighter
Goal	Education	Entertainment
Purpose	Memorial site	Cultural heritage
Approach	Commemorative	Commercial
Authenticity	Real	Staged
Time-scale from the event	Shorter	Longer
Tourism infrastructure	Lower	Higher

Source: Stone (2006a) in Sharpley and Stone (2009)

## Dark tourism – in relevant literature

Thurnell-Read (2009) analyses experiences of young visitors of thanatological tourist attractions linked to the Holocaust. He chooses, as a geographical research area, the concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, near Krakow in Poland. The key questions to which the research tries to find answers are various motivational factors that initiated the visit to such a tourist attraction, descriptions of conduct in a place of mass executions as well as experiences after the visit. In order to receive answers to the questions, the research uses a qualitative method. The data is collected by method of semistructured interviews on a sample of eight respondents, male and female, between the ages of 18 and 24. The respondents are natives of America, Australia and Canada; all the interviews have been conducted in Krakow *in situ*. The conclusion to the research is that the visit to the tourist attraction was not a first, but secondary intention, a friend's or acquaintance's recommendation.

Hughes (2008) discusses facing the subject of genocide through tourist activities. The geographical research area is the ominous Tuol Sleng prison in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The starting point of the research is that the existing theory of dark tourism is not adequate in understanding the motivation, conduct and experiences of the visitors of such tourist attractions. The author believes that it is not enough to suggest that modern tourist are attracted to unconventional tourist attractions, merely for their nature differentiating them from socially acceptable ones. Hughes uses the qualitative method in the research. The data is collected through interviews on a sample of visitors of the Tuol Sleng museum. The size of the sample is not mentioned, but it is discernible that there are male and female visitors between the ages of twenty seven and fifty two years. Interestingly, some respondents have experienced a more prominent motivation to actively participate in non-government organizations, to help the injured, after visiting the museum. Also, some of the respondents have taken concrete humanitarian steps by donating clothes they have taken on the trip or voluntarily donated

blood in a local Cambodian hospital. Based on those results, it is possible to conclude how a visit to a thanatological tourist attraction of that kind significantly magnifies the feeling of empathy in a visitor. Hughes has, like Thurnell-Read (2009) limited herself to one thanatologically themed tourist attraction as well as a population sample with a tourist experience based solely on the visit to the above mentioned tourist attraction. Although the size of the sample is not precisely defined, we can assume that it is too small a sample of respondents, considering the number of quotes taken from the interview transcripts.

Stone (2006) discusses the concepts of touristic offers in the field of dark tourism. It is thought that thanatological tourist attraction can be differentiated according to the experience intensity, during and after the visit to such a tourist attraction. The starting point of such a research represents a concrete and all encompassing classification of tourist attractions, that will contribute to a better understanding of tourist offer and demand in the sphere of dark tourism. Also, it will give pointers for future research of tourist motivation and experience on this type of tourism. External sources of secondary data are a key basis for achieving results and the author is counting mainly on published studies on dark tourism (Seaton, 1996; Foley and Lennon, 1996; Miles, 2002; Rojek, 2003) etc. The assumption on differentiation of intensity of a tourist experience stems from Miles' study (2002), in which the author discusses on the big difference between associating death and suffering with a certain location and the location of the actual event. As an example, he uses comparison between the concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau near Krakow and the Holocaust – a memorial museum in Washington, and claims how the touristic experience in Auschwitz is far more intense than the one in Washington. Considering that, Stone classifies the touristic offer of dark tourism, taking into account the main characteristics of such a tourist product. Using the above mentioned parameters, Stone makes an additional differentiation of the touristic offer in a way that differs seven possible categories of touristic offers associated with dark tourism, and these are: fun factories, exhibits, dungeons, laying ground, sacrals (temples, altars), conflict areas and camps. Also, the author points out the possibility of different rates of intensity and motivation in visiting such tourist attractions.

Stone and Sharpley (2008) consider the deficit in scientific literature on offers thematically based on dark tourism. Even though in recent years the interest for such a theme is rising, the authors believe that the focus of the study is primarily the offer on thanatologically themed content, while paying demand little or no attention, using anthropological studies as a reference (MacCannell, 1989; Smith 1998), as well as studies on the area of dark tourism (Blom, 2000; Foley and Lennon, 2000; Rojek, 1993; Seaton, 1996; Seaton, 1999; Stone, 2005) etc. In order to gather as precise references as they can for future research, Stone and Sharpley explore ties between views on death from a socio-cultural standpoint of modern society and that same society's facing death, through a tourist activity in a thanatological surrounding. In order to achieve results, Stone and Sharpley use internal and external sources of secondary data, i.e. already published studies on the subject of dark tourism and anthropological tourism. Stone and Sharpley in the end believe how a visit to thanatological tourist attractions awakens in visitors a consciousness of value for one's own life, disregarding the fact that such attractions are primarily about death and dying, which in itself is an answer to a complex question of motivation, and pointers for researching touristic demand, as well.

The exhibit of plasticised body parts and cadavers named „Body Worlds“ is the subject of Stone's (2011) research, in which he analyses experiences from visitors of the mentioned exhibit in April 2009, in the O2 Arena, Greenwich, London. Stone bases the research on

the fact that there is not enough published studies on the subject of society's perception on death through a leisure activity, like exhibits facing them with their own mortality. The author conducts a qualitative research using the semistructured interview method and additionally uses the method of covertly observing the visitors of the exhibit. The sample consisted of seventeen adult respondents, eight male and nine female, from America, France, Poland and the United Kingdom. The study was conducted in London, *in situ*, from April 20 until April 22, 2009. The conclusion of the study was the mediation of exhibit offers related to thanatology with the facing of one's mortality at such exhibits or similar tourist attractions. As a control group in this study, the author mentions a small sample of respondents. Additionally, the study is designed in a way that does not encompass the whole area of dark tourism, only the experiences of visitors of a certain exhibit, in this case „Body Worlds“, London. As a recommendation for future studies, Stone mentions the perception of mortality in secular societies.

For the purpose of her Master's degree paper, Yuill (2003) explores the motivation of visitors of tourist attractions thematically linked to death and accidents. The study was conducted in the Holocaust museum in Houston, Texas, USA. The purpose of the study was separated into three parts, depending on type and achievement. Taking into account literature on psychoanalysis (Garwood, 1996), Yuill delves into a discussion on the survivors' guilt, which surfaces with participants as well as *post festum* viewers. Considering the limitations of today's studies on the subject, Yuill uses two methods of gathering primary data, using a focus group and a questionnaire, on a systematic sample of visitors of the Holocaust museum in Houston. The focus group was questioned in the Holocaust museum *in situ*, while the questionnaire was conducted via e-mail. The results of the study show that the main motivation of the visit to the museum was education and memories of historic events, as well as a confirmation of one's national identity. As for future studies, Yuill recommends a more in-depth analysis of motivation of visitors of thanatologically themed tourist attractions connected to the Holocaust, before these are compared to motivations to thanatologically themed tourist attractions connected to some other subject. The limitation of the study is the short time period in which it was conducted as well as the sample.

## Purpose of this study and research methods

The main purpose of this study is to test and see what the experiences are of tourists after a visit to thanatological tourist attractions, i.e. attractions associated with death, suffering and pain. The starting hypothesis of the study is that the experience of the visit is a cultural act; the experience of the visit to a thanatological tourist attraction adds to a better understanding of the general subject and generates a need for a repeated visit to the destination, as well as the notion that a visit to a thanatologically themed tourist attraction is determined by theme, not by the character of the attraction.

The answers resulted from semistructured interviews are one of the attempts of using a qualitative method of research to come to a conclusion whether visits to a thanatological tourist attraction contribute to a better understanding of the broader subject to which a certain thanatologically themed tourist attraction is connected and whether thanatological tourist attractions are part of the socio-cultural heritage. Also, the study will attempt to gain a structured view on a visit to a destination with thanatological attractions, especially to test whether such a visit generates the need for another visit where there is an attraction of such

characteristics. In addition to that, it will be attempted to show a possibility of generating the need for a visit to a tourist attraction connected to a certain theme, like the Holocaust in its basic and broader sense, wars and conflicts, various accidents with mass suffering and so on. An additional goal of the study is to come to a conclusion on the profitability of a thanatological tourist attraction at a certain location.

In order to ensure as reliable results and conclusions as possible as well as thorough hypotheses, a qualitative study, with elements of primary and secondary research was used. Also, the method of semistructured interviews on an appropriate sample was used for the needs of collecting data in the primary study.

All respondents are experienced travelers, with a rich touristic background, that have visited some thanatologically themed tourist attractions in certain parts of the world. The semistructured interview is similar to a conversation, and more flexible, allowing us to skip subjects and control the conversation, pointing it in the right direction, with some preparation beforehand, apart from the non-structured interview that does not require preparation and where there is the possibility of the respondent steering the course of the conversation away from the subject at hand (Fossey et al., 2002). The structured interview consists of asking closed questions and thereby limiting the possibility of adapting to the situation. In this study, the method of structured interviewing is not appropriate for getting qualitative data.

The semistructured interview consisted of nine questions. All the respondents were asked the same questions, and the average duration time of the interview was six minutes. The study was conducted in Zagreb, in Croatia. The conversations were taped with a digital voice recorder and later transcribed. The respondents are an appropriate sample, N=10, i.e. five male and five female respondents that have visited some thanatologically themed tourist attractions in certain parts of the world. The sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2** Sociodemographic characteristics of examinees of semistructured interview

Variable	Characteristics
Age	From 28 to 52 years
Sex	Five male and five female
Education	From high school diploma to Master of Arts
Country of origin	Croatia

Source: author's research

## Study limitations

Limitations in the primary study are foremost the geographic heritage of the respondents, the number of available respondents, the time needed to conduct the interviews and the limited budget for research. An additional limitation of the study, which surfaced during the process of interviewing, was the question on again visiting a thanatologically themed tourist attraction. That particular question was not precise enough, because the terms tourist destination and tourist attraction are, to most respondents, the same. This is the main reason why some of the answers were pointed toward tourist attractions and others to tourist destinations, disregarding the course of the conversation. Even though the interviews were conducted in an informal setting, a part of the respondents, i.e. the thirty-seven and below age

group admitted to feeling uncomfortable with the conversation being taped, even though they were forewarned about the taping as well as methods and goals of the interview. The result of the above mentioned are short answers and average duration of around six minutes per respondent, which also represents a certain limitation to the study of the subject. The main limitation in the secondary study was the insufficient number of published studies on the subject of experiences of tourist who have visited thanatologically themed tourist attractions.

## Study results

Using the method of semistructured interviews on an appropriate sample, ten visitors of thanatological attractions have been interviewed, who have visited the aforementioned on certain parts of the world. The interviews were conducted during December 2010 and January 2011 in Zagreb, *in situ*. The semistructured interview consisted of nine questions, i.e. three questions for every hypothesis. All ten respondents answered the same questions.

According to most respondents, the visit to a thanatological tourist attraction was motivated by cultural need. Several respondents have mentioned the fact how historic events like wars, mass executions and so on, severely influence the very culture of a nation, which means that the visits, thematically connected to such an event, were very much motivated by cultural needs.

The question whether the thanatological attraction was part of the touristic offer, all respondents have answered positively.

*Visiting a museum is, in my opinion, the highest form of culturally educating oneself. Of course, there is a moment of pure interest, depending on the theme – you're interested, but in my opinion, this is about cultural education. Apart from the fact that it's about the Holocaust, it's a vital part of history! (Spo, F, 39)*

Briefly, the study shows how thanatological themes are indeed part of tourist attractions and considered a vital part of the cultural or historic heritage. Kušen (2002) discusses a very broad theoretical approach in keeping track of cultural monuments. The existing classification by Kušen (2002) on the cultural-historic heritage includes memorial sites and buildings, like cemeteries, necropoli, historic sites and locations, buildings connected to historic figures and events etc. Seeing this, the question presents itself: are thanatological tourist attractions monuments of culture at the same time? This question was answered positively by most participants.

*If a monument of culture is a monument to history and victims and making sure it never happens again, then yes, because it represents the culture of a certain people, for it happened in their history and influenced them. (Sandra, F, 34)*

The visit to a thanatological tourist attraction can most definitely be considered an extraordinary touristic experience. Disregarding the motivation and previous knowledge on the subject that initiated the existence of such a tourist attraction, it can be considered that the visitors will better understand the events thematically connected to that attraction. Also, one of the elements of the study is the need to return to a broader destination from where

the certain attraction is situated. Taking this into account, the respondents were asked three questions that confirm or reject the hypothesis. The question whether the need to visit the tourist attraction stemmed from a search of a more in-depth analysis of the theme that has happened at that destination, was answered positively by all participants.

*Yes, it certainly does, I mean, after such a visit you have the need to further investigate what happened in that country, what is connected to that destination directly and altogether just investigate the history of this country and the cultural development in that state, at that time. (Boris, M, 30)*

When asked whether they would return to the destination, after visiting one, the respondents' answers differ from one another, according to the destination they have visited and their personal interest in it. If the destination is one of the world's metropolises, the return to that destination is imminent, disregarding the visited thanatological tourist attraction. Also, if the subject is closely related to a personal interest for further research or recommendations to others, the respondents would return to the same destination, i.e. same thanatological tourism attraction.

*Yes, I have the need to share it with someone and would love to go with someone and show someone all of that, and when you go for the second time – you have a chance to see things you may not have seen before, maybe because of the schedule, fatigue or something else. I think a second visit is a must, which I'm sure is not the case every museum, but this one is worth a second visit. (Spo, F, 39)*

A destination whose allure is simply the thanatological tourist attraction does not represent a targeted tourist destination that visitors would visit again. The reasons for this are the existence of other tourist attractions in the world (unrelated to the thanatological theme) and an insufficient offer of other touristic content in the vicinity of the destination. The relationship toward the subject, which is the basis for the making of a certain thanatological tourist attraction, is one of the key factors of intensity of the experience toward a certain tourist attraction. The question how their visit has affected their relationship toward the subject after the visit, as opposed to before, respondents have answered differently, depending on the type of attraction they have visited and the level of knowledge they had before the visit.

*In any case, I have more information now, and a more complete picture, I mean, it's one thing to read about it, and another to see or hear a million pieces of information from a tour guide. I would say I have a more complete picture now, as opposed to before. (Emil, M, 31)*

It is interesting to point out the experience of a female visitor to two attractions from recent history (World War II – Auschwitz-Birkenau, Oświęcim and the World Trade Center towers in New York), where much more attention was given to informing about the attraction with the more distant past, than the one whose creation witnessed in the last ten years.

*For Auschwitz, you get a much heavier feeling, because it wasn't „in our time“, it's a different time and you get a lot of information, and all of your previous knowledge comes together. Ground Zero we all watched „live“, so you get more of an „inside story“, but you know what happened and how it happened. (Saša, F, 42)*

In order to prove that the visit to the thanatological tourist attractions was based on the theme and not the character of the attraction, the respondents were asked three questions



related to coming to a decision on visiting and future leisure plans in the field of thanatourism. The question on what their reasons for visiting certain attractions were, most participants answered connecting the chance to visit the site while traveling somewhere else.

*Well, more or less coincidentally: the idea was to travel across Eastern Europe, for financial reasons, because it is considered to be cheaper than Western Europe. Once we got there, there were some things that were historically important, Chernobil and Auschwitz, who were reatively near. (Matija, M, 37)*

*By mere coincidence, while passing through. We found out that Dachau was there, just a few miles away, so we went to see it; we were traveling from Stuttgart. (Tajana, F, 31)*

The participants would return to the destination or tourist attraction if the subject of that attraction was of personal interest, or if the subject had an abundant tourist offer of other content, non-related to thanatological themes. The respondents who have not yet visited Auschwitz-Birkenau, and have the intention of visiting such an attraction, put this destination above all others. When it comes to the price the participants are willing to pay for a visit to a certain tourist attraction, the answers were from zero do fifty Euros, or on average, fifteen Euros. One participant said that if he were to decide to travel and visit an attraction that was far away from this current residence, the price would be irrelevant.

## Conclusion and recommendation for further research

Thanatological tourist attractions encompass attractions associated with death and suffering i.e. places of mass executions or war horror, executions of public figures, dungeons, museums of torture, cemeteries, grave sites of famous people etc. A primary and secondary study have been conducted in trying to find out whether the experience of visiting a thanatologically themed tourist attraction produces the need for another visit to the same or similar site. Also, the study shows in what measure the thanatological themes are considered a tourist attraction and whether they are considered a part of the cultural or historic heritage. The answers received using the method of semi-structured interviews show in what measure the experiences of visiting a thanatological tourist attraction contribute to a better understanding of the broader subject and to which a certain tourist attraction is connected, as well as whether thanatological attractions are part of the cultural or historic heritage. Also, the study through interviewing show the existence of the possibility that the thanatological theme of the destination generates the need to visit a destination geographically located in another area, with a tourist attraction of the same character. Furthermore, through interviews, we gain answers connected to the possibility of developing a need for visiting a tourist attraction that is of a unique theme, such as the Holocaust, in its basic and broader sense, wars and conflicts, various accidents with consequences of mass suffering and so on. As for the repeated visits, an additional goal of the study has an economic component, i.e. the information of disbursement of the thanatological tourist attraction at a certain destination. According to most participants, a visit to a thanatological tourist attraction was motivated by cultural need. Several respondents have said that historic events like wars, mass executions and such, significantly contribute to the culture of a certain people. The questions whether a thanatological attraction is part of the tourist destination and whether those attractions were also monuments of culture, most participants answered positively. Also, all

participants consider that a visit to a thanatological attraction develops a need for a more in-depth analysis of the subject that occurred at the destination. The research has shown that the visitors would return to the destination or attraction if the thanatologic theme that initiated the initial visit was a subject of personal interest. Also, the participants would return to the same destination if it has an abundant tourist offer of content unrelated to thanatological themes. If, however, the thanatological content were the only one at the destination, such a destination would not represent a targeted destination for the next several tourist travels. The effects of the experiences during the visit in effect to knowledge before and after differ, related to the type of attraction and the amount of data that one participant had received prior to the visit. The events the participants have not witnessed spark more attention during the informative period of the visit, as opposed to those in recent history. Like Thurnel-Read's (2009), this study shows how the visit to thanatologically themed tourist attractions was more „passer-by“, because such attractions are in offer with other tourist attractions of the area. This suggests a conclusion that the offer between thanatological tourist attraction doesn't represent a key factor in selecting a destination. The participants that have the intention of visiting a thanatological tourist attraction they have not visited before mostly consider visiting places of mass executions. The price Croatian participants would pay for a visit to a certain tourist attraction amounts to an average of fifteen Euros. It is important to point out one participant's answer, who stated that the price of the entrance ticket was not important if he were able to visit a certain thanatological attraction that was of personal interest at some time.

The participants from the study that Hughes (2008) mentioned believe how the experience of visiting an area in more recent history (e.g. twenty years ago) is much more intense than those from World War II, even though they have not personally participated in them. Some of the participants, after visiting Toul Sleng Museum in Cambodia have become motivated to actively participate in non-government organizations, while others have taken concrete measures on site, like donating clothes or gifts. Taking these results into consideration, it is possible to come to the conclusion that a visit to such a thanatological attraction raises the level of empathy within the visitor. Yuill (2003), in her Master's paper, presents this feeling of survivors' guilt as a motivational factor that awakens the value of one's life in the visitors, disregarding the fact that the attraction is, in fact, related to death and dying, which in itself is a complex question of motivation and thus give pointers for tourist offers. Furthermore, Stone (2011) concludes that the offer of exhibits related to thanatology mediates between facing one's own mortality and gives way for further research on the subject of perception of mortality in secular societies.

A significant number of thanatological tourist attractions have emerged as a result of ethnic conflicts. According to Giddens (2007), ethnic diversity gives way to social abundance and animosity between certain ethnic groups. The results of animosity are ethnic conflicts and genocide, like the Nazi Holocaust or Armenian genocide. After some time, in places of massive deaths, there emerge manumetal areas that, with time, become tourist attractions and where, for pleasing a certain touristic need, members of historically conflicted ethnic groups gather. Taking the above into consideration, as a recommendation for future research it is possible to suggest a qualitative research of ethnic groups who visit a certain thanatological tourist attraction, taking into account the ethnicity of one or the other. For example, the ratio between Bosnian and Serbian visitors of the Tunnel of Salvation in Sarajevo or the experiences of visitors of concentration camps and museums with a Holocaust theme, and considering ethnicity.

In his analysis of touristic observations, Urry (2002) states how a number of tourist professionals systematically undertake development measures to develop new objects for touristic observations. Taking into consideration recent history, several thanatological tourist attractions have emerged on the territory of former Yugoslavia, as well as a predisposition for certain object to become such attractions. This mainly refers to locations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Kosovo, where there have been many ethnic conflicts during the nineties. Foley and Lennon (2000) list several locations in Sarajvo, like the massacre of twelve civilians near the Cathedral, or Sniper Avenue, that create a business opportunity out of the tragedy of war in former Yugoslavia. The greater area of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo also represent a targeted market for visitors whose leisure motives are researching the life and work of some public figures. The results of this study show the willingness of visitors to giving an average amount of fifteen Euros per visit to a thanatological tourist attraction. According to Marušić and Prebežac (2004), the very development of tourism influences the economic advancement, especially in underdeveloped and developing countries, and as a recommendation for further research, it is possible to single out economic research of cost and revenue of existing thanatological tourist attractions in countries on the territory of former Yugoslavia.

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