# WAR - THE NEW (IN)NORMALITY AND DARK TOURISM

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**Abstract:**  In the introductory part of the paper, in the context of the new present, a brief overview of the direct impact of the war in Ukraine on tourism of both parties to the conflict is given, which once again empirically confirms that war is the antithesis of tourism and is capable of completely destroying it, as well as everything else that gets in its way. It also looks at some of the basic factors behind the slowdown and disruption of tourism development in the context of the general geopolitical situation and the global "clash of civilizations," as well as possible short- and long-term scenarios in Europe and the world. However, the focus of the analysis is not the war in Ukraine per se, but rather an attempt to test the provocative thesis that "war and tourism have certain similarities and interpenetrate each other." Indeed, if one thinks deeper and broader, beyond the usual theoretical frameworks and well-trodden empirical paths, certain analogies can be identified, as well as market niches for which war in particular is a key tourist attraction. With this in mind, the following arguments are analyzed in turn in support of this arguable thesis: mobility of tourists and soldiers; interruption of the usual path and rhythm of everyday life; intrusion of surprise, unpredictability and improvisation into life; "conquest" of new territories; war as total adventure; killing and destruction without end; fascination with foreign and own death; the heaviest form of dark tourist spectacle; motives of visitors, observers, and volunteers; morbid curiosity, madness, and pathological desire to kill; patriotic, masculine-erotic self-affirmation; and the intensity of danger in war zones.

**Keywords:** war, dark tourism, motives, consequences

## Introduction

In the context of considering the "new present of global tourism" in the next decade, the war in Ukraine suddenly appeared as the main issue, along with global warming and drought, as an abnormal historical event with long-term negative

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effects. The causes and goals of the conflict are still not entirely clear. One of the possible explanations is that it is a "clash of civilizations" (Huntington, 2000), but this theory falls short in this particular case, since Russia and Ukraine belong to the same civilizational and racial corpus. Another theory, according to which there are cyclical periods when a dominant world power in decline (the U.S.) wants to suppress other emerging great powers (China and Russia), seems more likely. Then the conditions are in place to start a war to change the world order and establish its own dominance. In this sense, Harari (2009) assumes that as soon as states consider war inevitable, they reinforce the army, enter into an increasingly rapid arms race, reject compromise in any conflict, and suspect gestures of goodwill as traps. The outbreak of war is thus guaranteed. In this case, Russia fired the first shot because it has long been arming and preparing for war, waiting for the right time and place. However, in the absence of a universal ideology (such as communism), according to Harari, Russia propagates its own civilization, conservatism, nationalism, traditional values, and superior moral order as a universal counter to the liberal, permissive, and "decadent" West. A number of similarly authoritarian states rally around this ideology. Ukraine, a large country of 44 million people, was targeted because, in Moscow's view, it did not want to be included in the circle of these countries, but was too close to the European Union and the NATO pact, so it was declared a Nazi state and a potential threat. Therefore, a preemptive war, i.e., a "special operation," was launched with the aim of allegedly "denazifying" a sovereign country, replacing its legitimate government, and annexing large parts of the east of the country. Given that the entire West has sided with Ukraine economically, politically, and militarily, the duration of the war, its cost, and its outcome are uncertain.

However, the focus of the analysis here is not on the causes of the war, but on its consequences for tourism. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the impact of the war in Ukraine on tourism movements within Europe and beyond. Given the catastrophic impact of any war on tourism, it is necessary to provide a brief overview of the short- and long-term impact of the war in Ukraine on tourism movements in relation to the immediate belligerents, Europe, and the rest of the world: Russia is among the top ten producers of global tourism demand, with tourism-related foreign exchange outflows of about $14 billion. Due to the flight ban, direct access to European airports is already impossible (with the exception of Belgrade and Istanbul). If the announced complete ban on Russian tourists entering Europe comes into effect, it will lead to a significant drop in tourism revenues in many European countries, as well as a detour of these flows to other destinations. However, the number of Russian tourists and revenues in some of their favorite destinations such as Cuba, Indonesia, Thailand, Turkey, Maldives, Seychelles, Mexico, Sri Lanka, Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, Cyprus, Greece, etc. have already decreased significantly. The flow

of foreign tourists to Russia has decreased drastically and will continue to decrease as long as the war continues. Tourists from Ukraine have almost disappeared from the map of international tourism, turning overnight into millions of unfortunate refugees (mostly women and children) seeking asylum in Poland and Western countries. Cases have been reported of a few Ukrainian tourists verbally clashing with Russian tourists at certain destinations. Due to the state of war, general danger and destruction of cities and civilian buildings, welcoming tourism in Ukraine has almost completely disappeared, with the exception of so-called high-level "political tourism" when representatives of some Western countries and the UN come to Kyiv, Lviv and Odesa to provide moral and material support to Ukraine in the struggle to liberate the occupied territories. After the war, Ukraine is likely to become an attractive destination for tourists from the West and other countries. The fans of "dark tourism" who want to see all the destroyed and ruined cities and buildings (Mariupol, Kramatorsk, Nikolaev) will probably appear first. They will soon be followed by the mass tourists who want to see the preserved cities (Odesa, Lviv and Kiev), which they have reported daily in the mass media, as well as other natural and created attractions. Europe is also indirectly affected, because due to the fear of war and the relative proximity of Ukraine in the minds of potential tourists, as well as the large number of refugees in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe, the number of tourists from Western European countries, the United States, as well as from the rest of the world has decreased significantly, especially in Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. . Finally, this war has worldwide economic, political, and even tourist consequences. Already, the restrictions imposed on Russian airlines and the ban on overflights of European airspace, as well as Russian retaliatory measures, are having a negative impact on global air traffic, lengthening flight times, and increasing ticket prices. Higher fuel prices will further increase the cost of air travel. This will deal a severe blow to traveler confidence and affect disposable travel budgets (discretionary income), which will impact the gradual decline in demand. Given the many unknowns, it is difficult at this point to predict all the possible negative consequences for global tourism. If the war continues (in conjunction with global warming, drying up of rivers and lakes, spread of new mutations of mad cow disease and various other epidemics), the whole world and even the most developed Western countries may be plunged into a deeper and deeper environmental and economic crisis (inflation, Recession), which will inevitably lead to social upheaval and general political instability, both in the world and in underdeveloped countries, which may be on the verge of famine and the outbreak of mass uprisings. In this context, tourism will certainly not be a priority for the impoverished population, so it can be said that the medium- and long-term prospects for the development of global tourism are very unfavorable, unless there is a quick end to the war in Ukraine, the withdrawal of Russian troops from the

occupied territories and the conclusion of a stable peace agreement, the restoration of economic, transport and political relations between the West and Russia, which is unlikely from today's point of view. Some analysts even do not rule out a long-term simmering "Third World War" without the use of nuclear weapons, in which tourism will coexist geographically asymmetrically and temporally in parallel, adapt to the situation, become a nuisance, or die out altogether in certain countries.

## Similarities and interpenetration of war and tourism

War and tourism seem to be incompatible phenomena. It is not easy to see the connection between destruction, violence, mass killings of soldiers and civilians, and war crimes and recreational and hedonistic activities when travelling to foreign countries. In fact, common sense and experience suggest that these two phenomena are strictly separated, that is, that modern mass tourism strictly avoids zones of violence in order to ensure maximum safety and satisfaction in the places where visitors spend their vacations. Theoretically and practically, therefore, tourism and war appear as opposing categories, they represent the antithesis of each other, where tourism does not threaten the development of war, but war prevents the very existence of tourism in conflict zones. Tourists want to enjoy safety and comfort and avoid exposing themselves to danger and risking their lives in war zones. Warriors go to war for ideological, national or religious motives and do not think of engaging in tourism.

But just as nothing in life is black or white, just as every ying contains a grain of yang and vice versa, so too it can be said that the relationship between tourism and war, both in theory and in practice, is not so clear-cut and firm. In this context, the astute observation of Bora Ćosić (1970), who linked tourism, adventure, and war, is very relevant: "Both war and vacation prohibit the habitual, well-rehearsed way of life and, in return, offer many surprises, irregularities, and improvisations. War and vacation cooperate fully with the inversions of all forms of existence, which are hardly recognizable in vacation or war. Not only do you no longer go to school or work on a fixed schedule, but the other rhythms of life generally change. It is common to say that one is going away (to war, on vacation), which gives the impression that one is going into a new, extraordinary space that is meant for the occasion. There, as in a reserve, having left (ordinary) life or, more precisely, having stepped out of it, we get the opportunity to express all our essayistic abilities, breaking through a particular way of existence that is not guaranteed by anything: while in war we cannot be sure not only how the battle will turn out, but not even whether we will survive it, in vacation no one can provide us with a plan and a strict schedule of our schedule (and this is our intention). Released from the capital integrity

of everyday life, we find ourselves here, in both cases, in a radically new situation which, even at the price of the greatest dangers (trench warfare on the one hand or breakneck alpinist excursion on the other), preserves the general tone and freedom of a Sunday afternoon. This circumstance of liberation from life at the expense of an almost artificially created situation explains the young men's unrestrained entry into the war as a kind of exciting and dangerous journey, which cannot always and only be explained by the degree of their social consciousness and patriotic courage. Vacation - War thus becomes a kind of blank space, a blank page, a notebook without rows and columns, where any initiative and invention is possible. Vacation - War betrays the social timetable only in the outlines of a planned disorder, within which I can exhaust all forms of my improvised, essayistic behavior, for the sake of such a one. Personalities with a special tendency to an indeterminate and in many ways creative attitude to reality, with an aversion to a strictly predetermined and planned future, showing during war leave an abundance of new, witty and capital creative solutions, survive on their return to the established schedule (peacetime situations and established work activities) something like a personal defect, the lack of ability to cope even in conditions surmountable even for the most average people."

Taking the above into account, a whole series of common features of war and tourism can be identified. First and foremost is mobility, for both tourists and warriors travel somewhere, leave their homes, and intend to return, only in the case of the latter this is much less likely. Tourists, by definition, travel to see landscapes, nature, cultural and historical heritage, but also to pursue various activities such as swimming, skiing, sightseeing, shopping or sex. In contrast, the mission of soldiers is to conquer territories, kill enemy soldiers, destroy nature, cultural and historical heritage, infrastructure, industry and cities along the way. The conquering soldiers, riding on their tanks, in combat vehicles or trucks, have the opportunity to see something of the beauty of a foreign country on the way, they see half-destroyed churches, palaces, museums, galleries, opera houses, as well as ordinary homes, and occasionally they have the opportunity to stop somewhere, have something to eat or drink, or look at an intact monumental building, an ancient temple, cathedral or monastery. All of this, in a sense, puts them in the position of observers who, like tourists, view the landscape before them, whole or destroyed. Moreover, according to Ćosić, war and tourism interrupt the usual everyday life, the rhythms of life generally change, and life is full of surprises, unpredictability and improvisation.

**War as total adventure - killing and destroying without end**

War can be considered a special form of "adventure travel." In a sense, it is a continuation of "hunting tourism," however, in this case, the hunter-warrior

receives "permission" from society "to kill" other people, i.e., those who are designated as enemies. In this sense, Washburn and Lankester (1968) are quite clear: "Until recently, war was equated with hunting" Other people were simply the most dangerous prey. War has been of too great importance in human history to have been anything but a pleasure to the men who engaged in it. Only in recent times, with all the changes in the nature and conditions of war, has war been questioned as a normal part of national politics or as a recognised path to social glory" In this context, Freud (2001) believes that:

*"Towards the death of another, a stranger and an enemy, we adopt radically different attitudes than to our own death: The death of another suit us...The original man was a passionate creature, more ferocious and malignant than many other animals. He loved to kill as if it were in the nature of things. There is no instinctive aversion to bloodshed in us: We are the descendants of an endless line of murderers. The lust for murder is in our blood, and we may soon discover it elsewhere. In our unconsciously today we are still a gang of murderers. In our secret thoughts we eliminate everyone who stands in our way, anyone who has offended or hurt us. The softened cry of "Damn him!" which so often escapes our lips, and which, actually means "Let death take him!", to our unconscious it is extremely serious. Yes, our unconscious kills even for trifles. It is very fortunate that all these evil desires have no power. Otherwise mankind would have perished long ago; neither the best nor the wisest men and the loveliest and most virtuous women would no longer exist. No, let's not fool ourselves anymore, we are still murderers, just like our ancestors were in the original community"...*

War frees us from all cultural strata and makes the original man reappear among them, it forces us again to let ourselves be made heroes who do not believe in our own death, it marks our enemies as strangers (Russian propaganda discourse on the alleged "denazification of Ukraine") whose death must be brought about or wished for, and advises us to put our loved ones on the other side of death. He thus renders our entire cultural attitude toward death untenable." Numerous wars, cruel tortures, mass and individual murders across human history confirm Freud's position.

## Playing with the death of others and one′s own

War is a dangerous gamble, a game with high stakes and risks. Kayoa (1979) also writes about this within the framework of "game theory" applied to society and history. The author believes that unlike the complementary pair agon - alea, which prevails in modern civilised societies, there is always a danger that the repressed regressive principles of mimicry - ilinx will emerge at a certain moment, especially

in times of war. Although they are suppressed in modern society, they will probably never be finally annihilated in man. Since they are constantly present in the dark areas of the human subconscious, they represent the human monster that can be released at any moment. In normal times, as Kayoa points out, they only appear to be cooled down, domesticated, as evidenced by the abundance of various phenomena that are subdued and harmless. And yet their driving force remains strong enough to whip the crowd into a monstrous frenzy at any moment. History provides us with many such strange and terrifying examples, from the Crusades to the Nazi crimes of the Third Reich and the Stalinist purges to the monstrous public executions in the Islamic State or the bombing of civilians in Ukraine. All this points to the possibility of a complete reversal of the prevailing system of values and moral principles, their negation and temporary abolition. A civilizational order, which was thought to be the only possible one, is replaced by a completely different, inverted order, which can be called anti-civilizational. It can also function "normally" for a long time and be accepted by the majority of the manipulated masses, such as fascism, Nazism and Stalinism, but also numerous other populist and authoritarian systems based on the cult of personality.

## The heaviest form of dark tourism

War tourism has boomed in Western countries in the last decade. It is attracting increasing numbers of curious adventurers and wealthy travelers to areas where armed conflicts are being fought. Against this backdrop, war tourism can be placed within the broader category of adventure tourism, which includes individual and organized travel (package arrangements) to war zones and countries where political crises and armed conflicts are taking place. This is also, as Brones (2014) suggests, specifically "dark tourism." Travel to war zones and other areas associated with death has become so common that efforts to study the phenomenon academically have been institutionalized (The Dark Tourism Institute). A team of experts has launched a five-year project to study the impact of war tourism on cultural attractions around the world. This type of tourism does not only refer to war zones, as "modern dark tourism" is also associated with places where suffering and death once occurred. For tourists, these places were later turned into memorials such as battlefields, camps, dungeons, prisons, cemeteries, etc. Although the exact number of these tourists cannot be determined, it can be stated that adventure tourism in a broader sense, which includes travel to politically unstable and conflict-ridden areas, is experiencing strong growth. Over the past decade, there have been an increasing number of specialized travel agencies catering to the needs of the market segment looking for exciting and risky trips to dangerous parts of the world. For example,

in 2010, tourist trips to Baghdad cost up to $40,000, and in 2014 there was also a significant increase in war tourism to Israel, Syria, Iraq (at a cost of $3,500 to $20,000 for a trip of 5 to 14 days) and Ukraine (priced from £50 to £400). For most people, it seems absurd and illogical to associate the aforementioned active war zones with the concept of tourism and vacation, as a combination of the incompatible, i.e., a morally unacceptable activity that trivializes human tragedy and reduces it to an entertaining spectacle. In this context, the aforementioned morbid voyeurism of certain groups of tourists who take selfies, photos of destroyed buildings and houses, columns of refugees, wounded or corpses, is particularly critical. Images have already appeared in various media of Israeli tourists making themselves comfortable on plastic chairs and watching the bombardment of Gaza from afar like a theatrical performance, often taking photos with their cell phones.

In this context, certain forms of tourism, such as "crisis tourism," can offer interested visitors a glimpse of the ruins (half-destroyed buildings from the civil war in Beirut are tourist attractions), i.e. they can even make it possible to witness the destruction of war on the spot, to observe how districts and cities are turned into ruins (the destruction of Grozny in Chechnya or Aleppo in Syria, Mariupol or the Azov Steelworks in Ukraine), which few people are interested in for understandable reasons. After the end of the destruction of war and the removal of the immediate danger, there remain numerous "fresh ruins" that attract certain categories of tourists (the appeal of "ruin esthetics"). However, since ruins do not last forever because they are cleared, reconstructed, or new buildings are erected in their place as part of the reconstruction process, tourists crowd to visit the destroyed sites before they are rebuilt. The famous Point Zero - the site in New York where the "twin towers," i.e., the World Trade Center (WTC), collapsed in a terrorist attack - was a major temporary tourist attraction until the ruins were cleared to make way for the Memorial Center and new buildings nearby. However, there are also places where certain objects are left in a half-destroyed state as a kind of memorial and tribute to the victims, i.e., as a reminder of the war so that such a thing never happens again. Chernobyl has also become a major tourist attraction in Ukraine, the popularity of which has been boosted by the HBO-produced television series of the same name. Chernobyl is a prime example of "dark tourism," where visitors can see destroyed and abandoned buildings on the territory of an entire city, the surrounding irradiated nature, and the actual core of the accident - a nuclear power plant buried in a concrete sarcophagus. Finally, there are some "fresh" ruins left in Belgrade after the bombing of NATO in 1999. Some buildings have already been rebuilt or demolished, while two large General Staff buildings remain in a ruinous state, as they were immediately after the bombing. These half-destroyed buildings are visited by foreign tourists coming to Belgrade: "Admittedly, it also happens that tourists visit for a few days on their

way to Western European countries. Often, though not necessarily organized and accompanied by a guide, they visit the relics of the bombing and even call a cab to take them directly from the hotel to the destroyed buildings" ("Politika," August 6, 2004). In this sense, Belgrade may be attractive as the only capital in Europe that was bombed after World War II. A propaganda slogan could be "Visit the ruins of Belgrade before they are gone" In this sense, perhaps some of the buildings should be left in a semi-destroyed state, as the cities mentioned above have done. This would constitute a permanent reminder of the bombing, a dramatic memorial to the victims, but also a special "dark tourist attraction".

## Motives of the visitors and observers

Critics wonder why people behave this way. Why do some tourists want to spend their vacations in dangerous areas with armed conflicts? To most "normal people" this behaviour seems "sick," "twisted," and "immoral." Therefore, the question arises about the hidden psychological causes, i.e. the inner motives of people who decide to go on such risky trips. There are various answers to this, such as.: pure curiosity, pathological voyeurism; the desire to see war with one's own eyes, first hand, and not through the media; the desire to communicate with people involved in conflict; the desire to experience war personally; Self-affirmation and social validation (posting photos, clips, and war anecdotes on social media for all friends and acquaintances to see); a dark game with death; escaping the monotony of everyday life and seeking adventure and excitement; collecting war memorabilia and souvenirs, etc.

Since ancient times, people have attached epic significance to wars as "major events in collective and individual history." Conflicts changed borders and played an important role in (re)shaping numerous countries and changing national culture through cross-cultural contact (forced acculturation). Wars are firmly linked to collective psychology as factors shaping history and mythology, and represent deeply rooted symbols in various cultures that serve as important tools for the construction of social identity. War is also an important "time marker," so that populations often divide history into periods "before," "during," or "after" the war. Moreover, identifying individual motives and demystifying such activities can help illuminate the psychological aspects of this type of tourism. Occasional accounts of the adventures of war tourists usually point to voyeuristic motives and morbid curiosity about thrills. Foley and Lennon examined the phenomenon of travellers being attracted to regions and places where "inhumane events" take place. They believe the motives are fueled by media coverage of armed conflict and people's desire to see with their own eyes, photograph, and experience war events in person.

There is also a symbiosis between attractions and visitors, whether in death camps, places where celebrities have died or been buried, or in war zones where conflicts are being fought.

Despite the tragic consequences of the great world wars and numerous national, regional, and local armed conflicts, there are still people who are fascinated by wars and weapons of mass destruction. However, since today we live in a "consumer society" where everything is commercialized, even war events are turned into commodities (market for specific services) that are sold with a reasonable price to interested market segments and niches. Considering that armed conflicts are constantly taking place somewhere in the world, it is clear that the supply does not lack a corresponding range of products that can satisfy the growing demand. Wars, of course, have a negative impact on general tourism, but at the same time they promote "war tourism", which includes nationalistic, emotional, military, political and religious dimensions. Travel agencies that organize trips to war zones, as well as tourists who participate in such trips, are often criticized by the media, which accuse them of engaging in ethically highly unacceptable activities. The moral condemnation of this practice refers to the fact that tourists spend large financial resources to travel to war zones with the aim of observing and photographing the suffering of the local population. This is a kind of morbid voyeurism that ultimately aims to take one's own pictures in the war zone and post them on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, as well as to describe one's own experiences and war situations in order to achieve a certain form of public self-affirmation, i.e. recognition and admiration by friends, acquaintances and followers on social networks.

## Motives of war volunteers

In the study of "dark tourism," warriors whose motives are unrelated to any religion or ideology have gone relatively unnoticed. Their motives are purely personal and related to the need to satisfy aggressive urges that are socially unacceptable at home, including the desire to kill other people. In this sense, Lesle (2000) poses the question, "Do volunteers go to war solely to fight for their ideals or beliefs in foreign lands, or do they have a desire to have an adventure?" The author believes that this second assertion may seem "ridiculous or even insulting," but that there is nonetheless a strange connection between war and tourism. Considering the growing popularity of war tourism, it is obvious that there is a "secret connection" between these two opposing phenomena, especially when it comes to war volunteers who come to war zones from all over the world. There is no doubt that most of these people come for certain political, patriotic, ideological or religious reasons. But are there other, hidden and less moral motivations? One of the possible reasons to go

to war is the desire for adventure, which is constantly promoted by the mass media. Research has shown that excessive media exposure to war photos and videos, war and documentary films, reports, daily news, video games, and the like desensitizes (numbs) people to violence. Moreover, now more than ever, war has become an exciting media spectacle that captures the public's attention. Faced with such scenes, some people can no longer remain seated in their comfortable armchairs and sofas, but want to be on the scene themselves, to become personally involved in the war, either as observers or as participants. In this way, they feel they are participating directly in the most important world events, living a more intense and exciting life than their compatriots sitting at home in their slippers. This longing is especially present among young people on the fringes of society who live a monotonous, sedentary life in the suburbs of Western metropolises. They are bored at home, they do not have a job, they do not find meaning and their own identity in daily life. They also do not have sufficient financial resources for expensive travel and tourist arrangements to remote and exotic destinations, nor the ability to pay for organized tourist trips to war zones. Against this background, it can be assumed, and there is certain empirical evidence, that a certain number of young people use an ideology, religion, or other "socially acceptable reason" to disguise their true motives, which are curiosity and the desire for extreme adventure to satisfy some of their dark, long-suppressed intimate needs (desire for violence, killing, rape, robbery) that are acceptable and desirable in war. It is true, says Čolović (1994), that a normal person can participate in war atrocities only if other members of his community decide to do so and encourage each other. But everyone participates of his own accord. Everyone has an unconscious subjective motivation to do so. This is indicated by some real-world cases. Bennett (2013), for example, lists several cases, of which I pick out one that is most telling.

It is about a group of American teenagers who, inspired by media reports, travelled to Syria in search of an adventure. They wanted to personally experience this war, which involves extreme jihadists, foreign volunteers, an army loyal to the Assad regime, soldiers from various allied countries, numerous journalists, reporters, photographers, and so on. The motive was also the desire to prove to themselves and others that they are able to enter and get out of the vortex of war, only on the way they mentioned humanitarian reasons related to helping the local population. By the way, one of the young men, who comes from a Catholic family, converted to Islam on the second day of his stay in Syria. They also wanted to fight and shoot, but their superiors in the rebel brigades did not allow them to do so. One of the young men was also photographed kneeling with his hands in the air while an insurgent allegedly pointed his Kalashnikov at him. Under that picture, which he posted on Facebook, he wrote the following message, "I think this is a good postcard to send home." Upon

their return to America, these young men eventually devoted themselves to public appearances to convince the public that the rebels were in fact the "good guys" But one of these adventurers eventually admitted, "I hate to say it, but it was almost like war tourism." The fact that the rebels did not give them weapons to fight and shoot robbed this trip of its real meaning, which was to engage in war activities, which was their greatest desire, regardless of the humanitarian aspects they occasionally mentioned. All in all, this war trip seems to have been a dangerous boy's game that did not quite fulfil the wishes of the self-proclaimed warriors, but ended happily as everyone returned home safe and sound.

### Curiosity, madness or desire to kill?

In both cases presented, tourism is cited as the main motive or justification for travelling to war zones. The Japanese photographer considers himself safer than the others because he is "just a tourist," and the American young men, upon returning from the trip, admit that all the motives they mentioned earlier served to disguise the main motive: "It was all like war tourism." Idle young men, bored at home, looking for excitement, war games, a challenge to prove their own courage and manhood, usually join this kind of "tourist war adventure" as volunteers. However, the same people who are seemingly peaceful and harmless in peacetime can become callous torturers, brutal murderers and robbers overnight under war conditions. Man is already motivated enough for war by his unconscious aggressiveness directed against external objects, for otherwise he risks imploding and becoming a self-destructive force. It is not just a matter of lifting the ban on robbery, torture and killing. A person can always desire to lift this prohibition. He has, as Freud (1956) says, "the need to satisfy his aggressiveness at the expense of his fellow men ... to torture and kill them" A soldier generally does not perceive killing as the realisation of a long-awaited freedom, as the satisfaction of a hidden desire, but sees it as a task, a sacrifice, a heroic act. In war, the aggressiveness accumulated in each individual is no longer antisocial because it is directed against objects outside the society to which it belongs. Love of one's own is fatally inseparable from hatred of others. The mythical valorization of our warlike aspirations and the deification of the leader imply the satanization of the enemy, which decisively opens the way to the violation of the prohibition of killing. Satanizing the enemy means, in fact, excluding him from the human world, so that the laws governing human relations are no longer applicable to him. On the contrary, his elimination becomes a highly valued act of courage. Thank you to the dehumanisation of the enemy, the war against him becomes much more than a patriotic duty, because it appears the embodiment of the danger that threatens us as human beings, so that our resistance acquires the meaning of a struggle for

universal humanistic values. The general tendency to reduce the enemy to the level of "Nazis," "savage beasts," "monsters," "barbarians," or "zombies" reveals not only the intention to humiliate them. There is something else in it, the pursuit and destruction of opponents in whom there is nothing human, become heroic deeds of mythical heroes, saviours of humanity, fulfilling the task received from the highest moral authorities, that is, the task in accordance with the superego. Separated from the blind power of the animal, according to Bataille, war has developed a cruelty of which the animal is not capable. Of particular note is that after battle, often followed by the killing of the enemy, prisoners are usually tortured. These cruelties are what is specifically human about war. Countless mutilations of still living victims, cruel behaviour, merciless torture of prisoners, sexual experiences and humiliations made suicide more acceptable than going into slavery.

## Patriotic male erotic adventure

The mythology of war as an exclusively masculine and patriotic adventure, in which the lives of others (the lives of hated enemies) are mercilessly destroyed, but in which one's own life is also at stake at every moment, is always accompanied by a strong, complementary erotic dimension. It involves erotic adventures with other women, the conquest and rape of enemy women as a source of special sadistic and vengeful pleasure, the symbolic or real rape of captured soldiers as a climax of humiliation and degradation. For certain groups of people, therefore, war can be primarily an "erotic trip," analogous to sex tourism but spiced with the constant presence of violence and death. To illustrate the interpenetration of Eros and Thanatos on a war trip, we do not have to go far back in time, nor beyond the region in which we live, as the civil wars in Croatia and Bosnia offer numerous examples. In this sense, Čolović (1994) points out in "The Warrior's Brothel" that war is "sexy." This extravagant idea, which he believes became unusually popular during the war in Croatia, became a common site for the representation and interpretation of this war. Until yesterday, Eros and Thanatos were the heroes of scientific debates about the paradoxes of human nature, and today they are in the arsenal of popular scholarship, along with the signs of the zodiac... Man was born in the sign of Eros - Thanatos. That is why hatred is sweet. That is why death is irresistible... We believe that man finds his erotic account, happiness and dark pleasure in destruction and slaughter. Nenad Čanak, who was forcibly mobilized and spent some time at the front, wrote roughly similar thoughts in his diary:

*"We watched some bad movie on television, American graduates, cars and Coca-Cola. Volunteer Ljuba (refugee from Osijek) says: - Change this shit, it's not for us. Punishing and killing is for the army. - We switch to some kung fu. Chastising and killing. I have never heard a more concise and complete explanation of the thanatos-eros principle of these areas" (Vreme, December 23, 1991).*

However, the idea that the army consists of a group of lovers of "fighting and killing" is not only the fruit of pacifist irony and argumentation, but also quite acceptable for war propaganda. Participation in the fire of war is readily presented by nationalist propaganda as a masculine affirmation, because the appeal to participation in combat with this erotic argument, i.e. incentive, proves more acceptable and effective than the appeal to the values of heroism and patriotism and their contrast to the immoral cowardice and national callousness of the "traitors to the country." . War is offered as a kind of great "brothel." The erotic wonders of the war couple will forever be denied to mama's boys, pacifists, and deserters, and according to the logic of the erotic argumentation of this kind of war propaganda, it is a big question whether they will ever become the first men. The man is the man with the gun. This is a lesson that sexual neophytes should understand, young men on the cusp of a man's world that is just ripe for guns and women. Those unfortunate enough to have come to this age during the tepid peacetime finally have the opportunity to enrich their pale peacetime experience with real experience that is only possible under arms in color. More specifically, on the eve of color. This is the moment when sexual excitement takes on a particularly dramatic intensity, if Nebojša Jevrić, the Dubrovnik besieger and journalist, is to be believed, who told the readers of "Duga" magazine, among other war stories, a war love story: "The best fucking is before the battle," he says. In the beginning like this. Brutally, in English. Then in a more moderate translation, "Love is best before the battle." Before, but also after, because later he says: "Fucking after the battle is nothing worse"...". In another situation, the author and protagonist of this story feels the crossed fingers of Eros and Thanatos: in the risky mining of mines. "Only old lechers will understand" - says Jevrić - "a mine, if you mine it, is like mining women" (Duga, December 23, 1991).

## The intensity of the danger in war zones

When it comes to "war tourism", it is very important to make a risk assessment from the tourist's point of view. In this sense, some authors (Baldwin 2011 and Piekarz, 2014) deal with the typology of the intensity of danger, ranging from "very hot" to "cold". Very hot war tourism is closely related to "thanatos" or "dark" tourism. It includes travel to sites of killing, violence, and destruction,

including war zones, sites of mass killings, and war crimes. These are still active conflict areas with high levels of instability and conflict throughout the country or in specific parts of it. There is a very dangerous war situation or a constant threat of terrorist attacks (Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Ukraine). Hot war tourism includes visiting the tragic consequences of war such as destroyed buildings, skeletons of people and animals. It also involves some risk, especially considering the remains of unexploded mines and bombs. These are people who want to see the aftermath of war while the conflict areas are still hot, and their motivations range from morbid curiosity to a desire to broaden and enrich their own life experience in this way. Cold War tourism involves the process of gradual cooling and commercialization of war zones and sites. Here the danger is non-existent or minimal, and war veterans and their families whose purpose is commemoration and pilgrimage (Cambodia, Vietnam, Bosnia, Kuwait) often appear as visitors. Thus, the most radical form of "dark tourism" is "very hot war tourism," that is, travel to countries and regions where armed conflicts are taking place. Some travel there just to "observe," wanting to see the suffering, the mutilations, the refugee columns and camps, the dying and the corpses up close and with their own eyes.

However, there is also a small "market niche" of those who feel the need to actively "participate" in combat, who want to temporarily assume the role of a warrior, regardless of the costs and risks. War is a phenomenon of total death, combining the destruction of objects, buildings, and entire cities, the death of domestic and wild animals (whether they suffer from bombs and explosions, or are slaughtered en masse to feed the population and the army), killing the enemy, watching other people die en masse, and finally, increased risk to one's own life and possible death. Moreover, war is also a specific journey outside the usual space and time, which brings it closer to tourism. Although the boundaries between war and tourism may seem permeable and blurred, they cannot be equated, as there are also significant differences. Since the tourism industry cannot offer its customers legal opportunities to participate in armed conflict, shoot live flesh, and kill people, as hunting tourism does when it offers the killing of animals, people who want to do so must find the black market for these services and other illegal ways and means. First of all, they cannot and will not declare themselves as tourists. Most often they are presented as "war volunteers," but they can also be placed in the additional category of "tourist-warriors." This is about volunteers fighting in a war that is not just their own. Although political, ideological, or religious motives may be at the forefront, they can only be a convenient and "socially acceptable" justification for the male adventure, which includes activities ranging from pure curiosity and voyeuristic pleasure to robbery, rape, learning, and killing. The Spanish Civil War of 1936 is a good example, but the involvement of foreign states in more recent conflicts such as Bosnia, Libya, Iraq, and Syria can also

be used as parallels. In this context, Sontag (2004) believes that there are warriors whose motives and behaviour resemble those of tourists: "Those directly involved in wars and armed conflicts may occasionally engage in behaviour that resembles that of tourists." Photographing combatants in war is not a new phenomenon, but the increasingly easy way to take photos (cell phones) has contributed to a flood of unfocused images. Combatants are also filming an act of violence that they see as another wartime attraction that they want to immortalise and remember. At the same time, they treat the killed and slaughtered victims the way hunters treat killed wild animals, which is completely unacceptable from an ethical perspective.

## Conclusion

Tourism and war are thus an asymmetrical pair of opposites, in which war excludes and destroys tourism, while tourism, as a weaker element, is unable to interrupt or end war. As we have seen, however, the dividing line is not always so clear and sharp in practice. Indeed, certain common features link war and tourism, which on the one hand gives tourists room to experience war as a spectacle and adventure, while soldiers can occasionally force war travel through new territories, liberated or conquered countries, to be perceived as a kind of tourism (the American soldiers who liberated Italy and France from German occupation were usually in Europe for the first time, which allowed them to see completely different cultures from their own, as well as different landscapes, art, architecture, cities, and people). A similar phenomenon occurs in all other wars, from the conquests in ancient Rome to the recent Russian conquest of parts of Ukraine. This latest war is certainly not good for mass tourism, which began to recover successfully after the Corona virus and experienced a boom this year. Now its growth is being slowed or halted again because of the war, and it will take a long time to recover, as an end to the war and a lasting peace agreement are not yet in sight. There will probably be only a handful of pathologically curious or adventurous tourists who are interested in the dark side of war tourism, as mentioned above. They are willing to risk their own lives to experience the ultimate thrill of near mass destruction and collective death.

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