

# Chapter 3

## Going to the Dark Sites With Intention: Construction of Niche Tourism

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### ABSTRACT

*This chapter discusses construction of niche tourism in postmodernism. It aims to give a flavour on how the arguments are presented. Utilising death sites and Voluntourism, coupled with proliferation of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) as backdrop, this chapter sets to the layer of dark tourism as the revelation and contemplation, it bridges the nexus between visiting the death sites and extreme poverty areas, and hospitality features as core essence attributed to authentic experience. This chapter thus is an agreement of the previous studies which suggest authentic experience derived from cool authenticity and existential authenticity. It would emerge as not only the answer for searching authentic experiences but also most importantly it could extend the niche tourism formation and deepen Voluntourism conceptualisation. Findings of this study provide practitioners in the tourism and hospitality industries with clues to position death sites and Voluntourism as premium market offerings. Eventually, some directions for future study are discussed.*

### INTRODUCTION

While virtual traumascapes and the roots of dark tourism indicate ‘describing facts’ associated with death and destruction to critically examining the designs that give meaning to historical and quasi-historical events e.g. death sites, Voluntourism

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revolves around the role of participation, social movements, and social networks. Voluntourism (also known as volunteer tourism) can be traced its roots in alternative and ecotourism (Wearing and McGehee, 2013b). In tourism experiences, both death sites and Voluntourism are attributed to darkness elements. They offer authentic experience through actively involved in global community activities and destruction past events. It is likely that individuals choose to participate because they wish to expand their activist identities into their leisure travel. Presumably, this would not only indicate construction of niche tourism in postmodernism but also would strengthen the need to be coexisted. Arguably, development and management of dark tourist sites focus on technology driven virtual traumascapes, and is also to knit together insights from various partial perspectives, derived from pure disciplines like psychology, sociology, and economics to applied fields like ecology, technology, and management studies. Considering postmodern world is looking for new existential identity and motivation, the branches of dark tourism i.e. visiting death sites and Voluntourism have emerged as the current state of tourism. In this sense, development and management of dark tourist sites and Voluntourism are likely about individuals choose to participate because they wish to expand their activist identities into their leisure travel.

Utilising death sites and Voluntourism, coupled with proliferation of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) as backdrop, this chapter sets to the layer of dark tourism as the revelation and contemplation, it bridges the nexus between visiting the death sites and extreme poverty areas, and hospitality features as core essence attributed to authentic experience. In other words, visitation to death sites and Voluntourism revolve around the spectrum of going to the dark sites with intention. Therefore, the statement that set as the research problem is how the proposed variables i.e. death sites and Voluntourism, and ICT could be attributed to Virtual Traumascapes and the Roots of Dark Tourism?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

As postmodern world is looking for new existential identity and motivation (Zotic, Alexandru & Dezsi, 2014), the branches of dark tourism i.e. visiting death sites and Voluntourism have emerged as the current state of tourism (Handayani, Ivanov & Korstanje, 2017). In this sense, visiting death sites and Voluntourism which embedded with tourism experience revolves around the role of participation, social movements, and social networks (McGehee & Santos, 2005). Further, in tourism experiences, it is likely that individuals choose to participate because

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