Chapter 7
Dark Tourism as a Form of Governmentality of Fear

Funda Çoban
Aksaray University, Turkey

ABSTRACT

Although dark tourism attracts many scholars from different backgrounds, there is no consensus about its definition. Yet still, it is possible to classify the discussions revolving around the definition issue: The first group focuses on the descriptive side of dark tourism in terms of "sudden death and disaster," while a second group gives priority to the existential dimension of the dark touristic interest in terms of "never-ending death and disaster." However, fear appears as a surrounding component of both approaches. At that point, this study questions the relationship between the rise of dark touristic interest since the 1990s and the notion of governmentality of fear. In this respect, the study attempts to make bridge between the existential context of dark tourism and its political dimension with the Foucauldian terms, especially by shedding light on dark tourism in terms of "biopower technology."

INTRODUCTION

Fear as an evolutionary emotion (Solomon, 2008) is one of the basic emotions to survive. Also, people are even delighted to feel fear to a certain extent. The horror movies or the amusement park facilities such as high-speed roller coaster are the concrete forms of this satisfaction embodied in popular culture. In this context, it is fair to assume that fear is a significant component of the contemporary social life shaped and diffused by it. On the other hand, dark tourism with its cultural and psychological, but also commercial aspects is distinctively related to the sociological dimension of fear because fear is one of the constitutive elements of dark tourism.

From this vein, the relationship between the ontology of dark tourism and the socio-political context of the fear has the capacity to explain why dark tourism has recently become an attractive sector. In other words, it is possible to make a connection between the fact that the dark tourism sector has started to develop since the 1990s -if its other historical forms are bracketed- and the idea that the fear is a substantial phenomenon which particularly has been constructing and reproducing Western societal order especially since the 1990s. However, in order to establish this relationship firmly, the scope of dark tourism must first be discussed, and then the nature of this scope in the West's fear culture should be investigated.

From this perspective, the study at hand opens up with a literature discussion on how to interpret dark tourism. Thus, different perspectives on dark tourism are traced to put the case clearly. Then, it is claimed that the constituent element of these debates, classified as epistemological and ontological ones, is fear. From this point of view, the following section of the study assesses fear as a governmental technique in the Foucaldian sense after tackling it with its ontological extensions. So, the section addresses the issue as a functional departure with its extreme politico-economic returns instead of assuming there is no connection between the development of dark tourism and the current political scene in the world. In this context, the leading questions of the section are what the breaking point causing the current age is called "age of fear" is and how this point has affected dark tourism to emerge as a separate sector. In parallel with these queries, the section deepens the main question how dark tourism plays a functional role for mobilizing, disciplining, and controlling the people. By using Stone's (2006) dark tourism classification, finally, the last section discursively analyses how the dark touristic spots run as a tool for governmentality of fear. Hence, the ultimate goal of the study is to review the definition problems of dark tourism by using a constituent element in addition to explaining the functions of fear through the political construction and production of contemporary society within a touristic realm. Thus, it is aimed to provide an interdisciplinary approach to the study of dark tourism as a political economic area.

BACKGROUND

In psychology, fear is considered as one of the basic emotions that enable the living beings to survive. However, it has a socially constructed dimension like other emotions. On the other hand, proposing fears can be socially constructed means that they are also manageable and routable. In this sense, fear can be assessed as a foundational component which connects dark tourism to (post) modern world at the intersection of psychology, sociology, and politics.

22 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/dark-tourism-as-a-form-of-governmentality-of-fear/185816

Related Content

The Creative Turn of the Wine Industry
Pasquale Sassoand Ludovico Solima (2018). *International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management in the Digital Age (pp. 36-47).*
www.irma-international.org/article/the-creative-turn-of-the-wine-industry/201105

Value Chain Mapping of Tourism in Birbhum
Debdip Khanand Sudatta Banerjee (2020). *International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management in the Digital Age (pp. 23-33).*
www.irma-international.org/article/value-chain-mapping-of-tourism-in-birbhum/259005

A Case Study on Customer Experiential Management at High Five Hotels Pvt. Ltd, Nashik
Sonali Gadekarand Sushil Gadekar (2015). *Hospitality, Travel, and Tourism: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications (pp. 1224-1227).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/a-case-study-on-customer-experiential-management-at-high-five-hotels-pvt-ltd-nashik/119274

Exploring the Role of Metaverse in Promoting Religious Tourism
Munir Ahmad, Muhammad Akramand Saadia Ureeb (2024). *Service Innovations in Tourism: Metaverse, Immersive Technologies, and Digital Twin (pp. 39-63).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/exploring-the-role-of-metaverse-in-promoting-religious-tourism/341641

The Ambivalences of Smart Cities
Lucia Santaellaand Luiz Felipe Napole (2022). *Handbook of Research on Urban Tourism, Viral Society, and the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic (pp. 87-100).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-ambivalences-of-smart-cities/311964