

The Appeal of Dark Tourism in Malta

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This research explores the appeal of dark tourism and identifies factors behind why tourists may want to visit 'dark' sites and hear stories relating to crime, sex, murder and tragedies. Also, the study defines local episodes of dark history and identifies sites within the Maltese islands that can support dark tourism.

The study was conducted through qualitative research and the data was collected by examining books and journals. Further research was gathered by three interviews with people associated with various aspects of dark tourism in Malta.

The results of the study address the researcher's belief that there is ample opportunity for specific types of dark tourism tours around Malta of various kinds, and identify which would engage the most interest, and for which reasons.

The study suggests there is ample opportunity to hold tours relating to the criminal and tragic history of individuals within the Maltese islands, which will serve not only to entertain the public but to further educate them on the crimes and misdemeanours from the nation's past.

This research therefore concludes that there is significant potential for Malta to market itself as a dark tourism destination and cater for people interested in darker episodes of history.

Keywords

dark tourism, dark history, crime, murder

Declaration of Authenticity



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Declaration:

I hereby declare that this research study is based on the outcome of my own research. I, as the author, declare that this research study is my own composition which has not been previously produced for any other qualification. The research study was conducted under the supervision of James Sultana.

26 December 2022

Date

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1. Introduction

People have long been attracted 'to places or events associated in one way or another with death, disaster and suffering' and there are increasing numbers of people 'keen to promote or profit from dark events as tourist attractions'. (Sharpley, 2009 p. 5)

This phenomenon of dark tourism has become popular enough to be subjected to academic study and is also covered by the mainstream media, which highlights people visiting a specific site relating to a particular dark event, usually resulting in death. Few other forms of tourism are covered in the same way (Light, 2017).

Examples of literature covering dark tourism will be highlighted in this study, along with sources demonstrating various types of this phenomenon, the origins of the dark tourist and their varied motivations. Interviews with three people well-acquainted with the dark tourism industry and associated histories in Malta will also feature, and their testimonies will help shape suggestions for the future dark tourism industry in Malta.

Modern dark tourism has a significant presence on the internet. A Google search for that term today results in about 185,000,000 results - a significant increase from when the same search was conducted in 2016 and produced almost four million results. (Light, 2017)

Malta's long association with war and conflict makes it ripe for dark tourism, and as a result it has various dark locations such as museums relating to the Great Siege of 1565 and World War II, as well as catacombs, temples, dungeons and prisons. There seems great potential to market the Maltese islands specifically to those visitors interested in dark history, and therefore potentially dark tourism.

This research will explore further opportunities for dark tourism in Malta and will identify examples of local attractions for so-called dark tourists.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Defining Dark Tourism

The term dark tourism originates from an academic paper which describes this phenomenon as 'the presentation and consumption (by visitors) of real and commodified death and disaster sites' (Lennon and Foley, 1996, p. 198). Those authors further describe this phenomenon as 'the visitation to any site associated with death, disaster and tragedy in the twentieth century for remembrance, education or entertainment'. (Foley, Lennon, 1997 p. 155)

Foley and Lennon (2010) stated how, as part of the dark tourism definition, global communications must broadcast details of a particular dark incident at a specific site, which then generates interest among the public, therefore fuelling a market for dark tourism. But according to Light (2017, p. 278) these interpretations of dark tourism are 'narrower than is often recognised' because they require such sites to involve incidents of atrocity, disaster and death that occurred within living memory.

According to Stone (2006 p. 146) the term dark, as applied within the term dark tourism, refers to 'a sense of apparent disturbing practices and morbid products (and experiences) within the tourism domain'. Therefore, dark tourism can be defined as 'the act of travel to sites associated with death, suffering and the seemingly macabre' (Stone, 2006 p. 146)

According to Sharpley (2009), people have been drawn to sites linked to some incidence of death, disaster, violence or suffering, for as long as they have been able to travel. For example, Boorstin (1964) suggests the first-ever guided tour in England was an organised journey in 1838 to take the people of the town of Wadebridge by a special train to nearby Bodmin, to witness the hanging of two murderers.

Seaton (1996) says there has been long been a connection between travel and death, something rooted in established behaviours of thanatopsis - the contemplation of death. Dark tourism is the 'travel dimension of thanatopsis' (Seaton, 1996, p. 240) and can therefore be named as the term thanatourism.

Thanatourism is defined as travel to a place by a traveller wholly, or partially, driven to experience actual or symbolic encounters with death. It is a behavioural trait, defined by the motive of the person travelling, rather than a definition of the travel destination. In its purest form thanatourism is that type of travel motivated solely by the fascination with death, regardless of whose death it was. At the 'weaker' end of the definition is travel by people who

knew the deceased at a particular location i.e. visiting the site where someone they knew died or is commemorated. (Seaton, 1996).

Given that dark tourism deals frequently with death and the macabre, scholars have raised concerns about the propriety and acceptability of presenting death-associated sites for profit and tourism. There has also been 'moral panic' surrounding this issue, particularly from the media. (Light, 2017)

According to Foley and Lennon (1996), the commodification of death and torture sites could sanitise or even distort tragic historical events. Tourists visiting genocide sites, particularly those without a personal connection to the tragedy, can be regarded by some as 'intruders in a national process of grieving, learning, memorialisation, political reconciliation and social reconstruction'. (Beech, 2009, p. 223)

Tourism to sites of atrocities 'may anaesthetise rather than sensitise visitors, and increased contact with horror and suffering may make it more normal or acceptable, rather than shocking and unacceptable'. (Ashworth and Hartmann, 2005, p. 12) However, despite academic and media coverage, the ethical debate surrounding dark tourism and commodification of dark sites has been 'inconclusive... with little attempt to develop models of best practice or produce guidelines for practitioners'. (Light, 2017, p. 283)

2.2 Classifying Dark Tourism Sites and Experiences

Dark tourism's complex and diverse nature means that the term by itself is too broad and does not reflect the different levels of dark tourism experience being offered by suppliers. (Stone, 2006)

Miles (2002) suggests there is a distinction between *dark* and *darker* tourism, saying there can be a different understanding of the 'macabre and morose' between different sites. He further suggests there are vital differences between sites associated *with* death and suffering, and sites that are *of* death and suffering.

2.2.1 The Dark Tourism Spectrum

Research by Stone (2006) into dark tourism, its different nuances, aims and influences across differing sites, has resulted in the idea of a *spectrum of supply*, covering potential *shades of darkness* relating to any kind of dark tourism attraction.

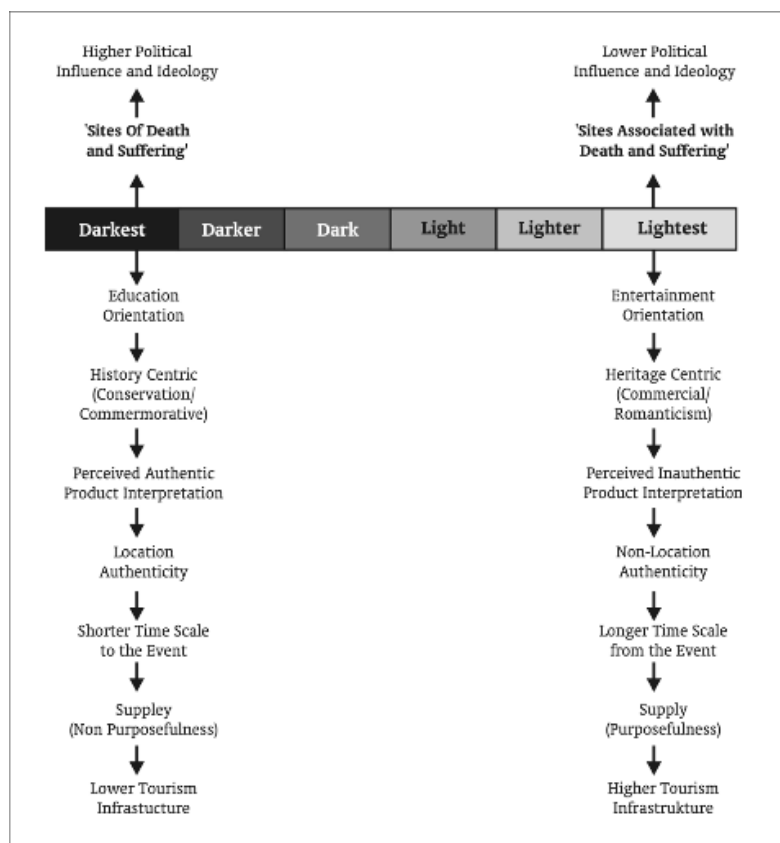


Figure 2. Source: Stone (2006) pg 151

As seen in Figure 2, the range of this spectrum of supply moves from *darkest* to *lightest*. The idea of the darkest tourism sites is those which retain a higher sphere of political influence, with an educational aspect and with an authentic location i.e. at the site of the event in question. Whereas the lightest differentiates from this by being orientated more towards

entertainment, with a more advanced infrastructure for tourism and a more commercial focus.

Using this spectrum as a guide, we can now examine the different kinds of dark tourism experiences available.

2.2.1.1 Dark Fun Factories

These are sites, tours and attractions focused on entertainment and commercial profit. They represent macabre events, historical or otherwise, and death either real or fictional, within a socially acceptable environment. (Fonseca, Seabra and Silva, 2016)

Such an example is the London Dungeon, which portrays gruesome yet family-friendly exhibits covering the Black Death plague or the serial killer Jack the Ripper, while having a strong commercial focus. Such sites offer a sanitized experience and are not regarded as offering an authentic dark tourism experience. Therefore they sit on the lightest part of the dark tourism spectrum. (Stone, 2006)

2.2.1.2 Dark Exhibitions

Dark Exhibitions offer products related to death, often with a commemorative, educational and reflective message, usually at sites with some tourism infrastructure and commercial focus. (Minić, 2012)

An example would be the Catacombe dei Cappucini in Palermo, Italy. From 1599 until 1920, hundreds of bodies from the local community were mummified and placed on its walls, in what has been dubbed a 'human library'. Such sites can be placed on the darker part of the spectrum. (Stone, 2006)

2.2.1.3 Dark Dungeons

Sites that were once prisons and courthouses, and which discuss past justice systems, are known as Dark Dungeons. One example is the National Justice Museum in Nottingham UK, comprising of former court and prison buildings used between the 1780s and 1980s. (Stone, 2006)

Such sites possess both dark and light elements and therefore occupy the centre-ground of the spectrum. They also combine education with entertainment and education and possess

a fairly high amount of tourism infrastructure and commercialism. (Dimoska and Koceski, 2010)

2.2.1.4 Dark Resting Places

This type of supply focuses on the cemetery or grave markers for specific people as potentially viable products for dark tourism. A prominent example of a Dark Resting Place is the Père Lachaise Cemetery in Paris, the burial site of many famous people and which receives more than three million visitors annually. (Cimetière Père Lachaise, 2022)

Cemeteries are a history-centred, commemorative product which provokes conversation on the nature of life and mortality. They can be placed at the centre of the 'dark tourism spectrum' as they contain both dark and light aspects. (Stone, 2006)

2.2.1.5 Dark Shrines

These sites focus on the act of remembrance for those who recently died. An example would be the gates of Kensington Palace, which became a focal point after Diana, Princess of Wales was killed in 1997. (Niemelä, 2010)

Because most Dark Shrines are intended to commemorate someone's death, they tend to not have tourism infrastructure and are temporary. Because they occur at sites linked to a very recent death, they are placed in the darker portion of the dark tourism spectrum. (Stone, 2006)

2.2.1.6 Dark Conflict Sites

Dark Conflict Sites revolve around battlefields and their associated wars. These sites focus on educational and commemorative aspects of their associated stories, which can include re-enactments by volunteer history enthusiasts. They are situated at the lighter end of the 'dark tourism spectrum'. (Stone, 2006)

Because the battles featured on these sites are not, or barely, within living memory, it is deemed acceptable to romanticise and even commodify these violent events. One example is the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific, the location of the battle of Guadalcanal. (Fonseca, Seabra and Silva, 2016)

2.2.1.7 Dark Camps of Genocide

This represents sites and places which have genocide, atrocity and catastrophe as the main theme. A notable example is Auschwitz in Poland, where some six million people were killed during the Holocaust in World War II. This site usually has more than two million visitors a year. (Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, 2022)

Dark Camps of Genocide are designed to both educate and commemorate and are located at the site of the acts of atrocity. Given the extreme nature of the industrialised killings and the sheer number of victims, such sites occupy the darkest section of the spectrum. (Stone, 2006)

2.3 Dark Tourism in Malta

Malta has a long and rich history, having endured various conflicts over many centuries. The country has also been colonised many times, creating a legacy of history, architecture and culture. Several tour operators and tours are currently available in Malta that tap into this historical legacy, covering what can be termed as dark tourism, or certainly at least dark history topics.

There is a wealth of material published in Malta covering local crimes and misdemeanours, which is suitable for dark tourism tours, particularly ones held in the capital city Valletta.

Books by the author Eddie Attard focus on crimes committed around the Maltese islands. *Murder in Malta* (Attard, 2009) contains many stories suitable for a crime tour, particularly in Valletta.

For all kinds of crimes dating from the time of the Knights of St John, *Kissing the Gallows* (Zammit, 2016) covers murder, robbery and theft between 1600 and 1798.

Death and tragedy do not always come about because of criminal acts, as sometimes they occur through misadventure. One such story is the Carnival Crush of 1823, covered in detail in *Bizarre Malta* (Vella and Gatt, 2018) This book contains other unusual stories from the capital's distant past, suitable for a dark tour.

Aside from crime, immoral behaviour from the distant past is an entertaining topic, and good examples of this are found in *Magdalene Nuns and Penitent Prostitutes* (Muscat, 2013) which carries the exploits of former prostitutes who entered that convent. As Muscat

explains, the nuns did not always leave their previous lives behind, and such stories will provide entertainment on a tour covering more gossipy elements of Valletta's history.

These texts are among several dealing with darker topics in Malta to have been published in the last few years, covering prostitution, life in bars and clubs in Valletta's notorious Strait Street, and sexual misdeeds of the Knights of St John among others. This increase in such literature points to growing interest in darker topics in Malta.

Much of the material contained within these texts could be used on dark tourism tours. This study will now build on this material by interviewing experts who know the darker history of the Maltese islands, as well as the experience of dealing with dark tourists.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The methodology employed was that of qualitative research. According to Labuschagne (2003), qualitative research methods usually generate detailed data on small numbers of people and specific cases. Qualitative data also provides 'depth and detail through direct quotation and careful description of situations, events, interactions and observed behaviours' (Labuschagne, 2003, p. 100)

For these reasons, a qualitative methodology was a more appropriate method for this research because it allowed the interviewees to offer their specific expertise and experience on the topic of dark tourism in Malta, and the motivations of those who might attend tours and sites relating to this phenomenon.

This method comprised of interviews with people familiar with either dark tourism or the criminal history of Malta.

Therefore, tapping into this depth of knowledge from people who deal directly with the topic of dark tourism, to harvest their expertise and experience, is a more fruitful method than employing a quantitative approach, such as a questionnaire of the public.

3.2 Interview Subjects

The interviewees were:

- Subject A, who holds ghost walks in Malta and has been a guide for 15 years.
- Subject B, who is an academic lecturer in dark tourism.
- Subject C, who has written extensively on the topic of crime in Malta.

Subject A was chosen because they have direct experience with tours appealing to dark tourists. Subject B has expertise in dark tourism, having studied the topic and connected with similar academics abroad. Subject C's material is exactly the kind that is found in crime-themed tours, giving value to their opinion on the topic of dark tourism locally.

3.3 Limitations

This study had several limitations, the most significant of which was the 5,000-word limit, meaning only a small number of focused issues could be tackled. The subjects covered to some degree in this study do warrant more in-depth research to further tackle the issues raised.

However, it was extremely important to adopt conciseness and discuss only the most pertinent issues, to keep the study in focus and within the word limit. This also restricted the research in the number of interviewees and the number of questions asked – these limitations meant the research had to focus on certain aspects to keep within the pre-assigned parameters. Finally, since the researcher reads only English, the source material was limited to publications in that language.

3.4 Ethical considerations

All interviewees were aware of the purposes of the interview and their testimonies have been anonymised, so their identities would not be revealed. Their participation was voluntary and no physical or psychological harm was reported to have been caused because of their interviews.

4. Results, Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Malta's Dark Tourists

Subject A, who has held ghost walks in Malta since 2007, says some participants attend their local tours in the hope of a brush with the supernatural and having a sensory experience. Subject A has also guided self-proclaimed groups of psychics from the UK around Malta. Esoteric groups from the US have also visited Malta and attended ghost walks here.

Subject A suggests ghost walks are a popular social event, with people bringing a partner with them as a birthday gift, and can also be enjoyable for a couple out on a date. Groups of women have attended ghost walks together as a social event experience. The demographic for these walks tends to be mainly locals or ex-pats, not foreigners, in the 30–40-year bracket, although sometimes teenagers interested in the paranormal do attend.

Subject B says Malta has much to offer the dark tourist. They make a distinction between 'dark historical episodes' and 'dark tourism'. To be tourism, a 'dark' experience must become tangible; the tourist needs to experience something, whether a building, a remain or a re-enactment for example.

Subject B says not all dark episodes in history are tangible, and we do not always have places or remains related to those episodes. However, dark tourism relies on dark historical episodes. Also, not all people that visit places associated with dark tourism are necessarily dark tourists, so the latter term must be used carefully.

4.2 Prime Locations

While Subject A runs ghost walks and mystery tours in several locations around Malta, they believe the Three Cities are a prime site collectively for dark tourism. This is due to their association with the owner of the Bir Mula Heritage Museum where, it is claimed, supernatural events have also occurred in a house that is several hundred years old. Also, to their knowledge, tours of Bormla are not being held by other guides, which increases the opportunity for them to create a niche in that location.

Subject A suggests people enjoy entering a building such as Bir Mula during a walking tour, rather than just walking around the streets. They suggest people like to go into a residence and connect with the place and its stories, particularly on a ghost walk or mystery walk.

According to Subject B, Malta is 'full' of dark tourism sites. For example, the Mdina Dungeons which was a real dungeon. There are also prison sites - in Valletta, there are the prisons of Palazzo Castellania which were formerly the law courts and Fort St Elmo which was used as a prison. In Birgu there are the prison dungeons of the Palace of the Inquisitor. In the Citadella in Gozo, there are old prisons which tourists can enter.

Subject B also says there are plenty of dark tourism sites relating to battles or wars around Malta. These relate to the Great Siege and the Second World War, such as Fort St Elmo and Fort St Angelo. There are also museums like the Malta at War Museum or the Inquisitor's Palace.

Cemeteries are also mentioned by Subject B, who highlights the 'very interesting' Msida Bastion in Floriana, the Ta' Braxia in Pieta, and the Turkish Cemetery in Marsa as potential dark tourism locations.

Both Subjects A and B mentioned the Addolorata cemetery in Paola as a site of 'dark' interest. Subject A says they receive occasional requests for tours in this cemetery and suggests there is great potential for tours relating to its architecture and the graves of famous people from Malta's history. However, tours are usually not allowed at the cemetery by the authorities.

4.3 Malta's Dark Tourism Potential

Tour company Colour My Travel organise a South Valletta Ghost Tour, a Mdina Ghost Tour and a Birgu Ghost Tour. There are also regular tours relating to ghost stories in locations such as Valletta, Mdina and Birgu organised by the Ghost Walks Malta guide. An event held in July 2022 by Heritage Malta saw actors play out the life of Betta Caloiro, a convicted heretic who died in a prison cell at the Inquisitor's Palace, after being convicted of having an intimate relationship with the devil.

Having Heritage Malta, the national agency for cultural heritage, organise an event, even one on the lightest part of the dark tourism spectrum, helps to bring that niche into the public's consciousness. However, these are not part of an overall strategy for dark tourism in Malta and only organised sporadically. Neither Visit Malta, the official tourism body for the islands, nor Heritage Malta mentions dark tourism on their respective websites.

Many of these tours are held in Valletta. Figures from Eurostat show that in 2021, more than half of tourist accommodation was booked in Valletta (Zammit 2022) which further increases that location's attractiveness as a location for dark tourism tours.

During their interview, Subject A said an advantage of the Maltese islands is that many historical events have occurred in a small area, so the country's history is densely packed together. As a result, it is logistically easier to move tourists and clients between various dark history locations.

Subject A suggested organising a conference on dark tourism locally, attended by scholars from abroad to discuss the subject and to include an analysis of local sites, such as the Inquisitor's Palace. This would also give a boost to Malta's dark tourism scene from an international perspective.

This echoes the testimony of Subject B, who suggests the creation of a nationally organised setup to help those who want to offer dark tourism experiences to market their offerings better, working within a holistic framework. They also suggest having more education and creating more understanding of dark tourism. Taboos and other issues must be tackled, they said, as otherwise there will always be suspicion and reluctance to get involved by the stakeholders and the public.

According to Subject B, there needs to be political will to develop Malta as a dark tourism location. By this, they mean policymaking by the relevant tourism authorities, who need to 'take dark tourism seriously and adopt a position on it'. This is necessary because fragmentation of this niche's offerings and letting individual guides or tour operators do their sporadic tours or events, 'will not work in the long run'.

This last point was also raised by Subject A, who said having a network of guides working together to promote this niche would result in a better, wider dark tourism experience around Malta. This collaboration, they said, would also help in providing different languages on dark tourism tours, instead of them only being conducted in English.

Both Subjects A and B mentioned how the marketing and promotion of dark tourism in Malta was vital if interest in this niche, particularly from tourists, was to be maintained and to see growth.

Subject A has previously promoted their ghost walks and dark tourism tours to local companies, especially iGaming ones who have budgets to spend on team-building activities. Their pitch to the companies was that a ghost walk is an attractive way to introduce Malta to foreigners who have come to work here while participating in an event that can seem like an adventure and be somewhat different to other team-building activities.

According to Subject B, to have a successful marketing campaign on this niche, Malta's tourism authorities need to be fully on board with the idea of promoting the island as a dark tourism destination. They add that any policy and eventual marketing campaign should always consider how dark tourism is also niche tourism.

Subject C is a Maltese author who has written extensively about crime. They said there are many crime enthusiasts among the public, who retain a fascination with past crimes. They also indicate that at least 60% of those who buy their books are female – they are unsure why females seem more interested in crime literature than males.

Given the appetite for the large number of true crime books Subject C has written, they believe a dark history tour, focusing on true crime in places such as Valletta and Birgu, would prove very popular. On this point, they agree with the experiences and opinions of both Subjects A and B.

4.4 Ethical Considerations

Subject B says ethical issues exist for every type of tourism but suggests caution is required with regard to dark tourism, because it involves the marketing of sacred places like cemeteries and churches, or religious events like Good Friday, as tourism destinations for people interested in dark tourism.

Subject B points out that dark tourism is already taboo to some, and the name itself is understood by many people – erroneously – as something sinister, related to the occult. This means the way the itineraries are presented is crucial. Otherwise, local sensitivities, but also those of tourists, can be hurt.

Subject B also states it is essential to understand what can be presented during such a tour and what cannot be shown, whether taking photos of the sites is allowed, whether selfies are going to offend anyone, and other such considerations. Shall we let tourists visit Addolorata, the country's main cemetery which is still in use? Or shall we just allow visits to cemeteries

that are no longer active, like the Msida Bastion Historic Garden? Is it acceptable to take tourists to churches to see their death-related art? These are examples of the ethical issues one needs to keep in mind, according to Subject B.

4.5 Discussion

The research suggests there is a genuine need for a comprehensive dark tourism strategy in Malta, one which incorporates different elements of the niche and that can consistently plan and promote dark-themed events locally.

The suggestion of having a dark tourism conference would attract attention to this niche in Malta, as well as highlight local experiences. Bringing dark tourism expertise to the island - e.g. academics, tourist guides and museum managers from dark tourism attractions abroad - would assist the local industry in improving their skillsets and approaches to delivering a quality product in Malta.

Many people are unsure of exactly what dark tourism is and may well be unaware that Malta has sites catering for this niche, so anything bringing attention to it locally will benefit that part of Malta's tourism industry.

The conference suggestion complements the idea of a nationally organised setup for dark tourism, to improve the local experience. Without broad organisation and planning, local dark tourism will remain ad-hoc and events will be held separately by individual guides or companies, outside of a defined framework that could advance the quality and scope for both guides and tourists. Having a joined-up approach will result in a better experience for all.

According to (Lennon 2017), crimes of abduction, murder and killing exert a strong pull on travellers. There is a large amount of published research in Malta on various kinds of crime – including, but not limited to, murder, theft, robbery and other behaviours deemed to be unacceptable by the Roman Catholic church, which includes incidents of witchcraft. Therefore regular crime tours around the Grand Harbour area carry great potential and would echo tours found in other countries, such as the Jack the Ripper tours in London.

Stone and Sharpley (2008) say dark tourism experiences are methods by which people can confront death and their mortality and are a mechanism to reduce the fear and anxiety stemming from the death of themselves and their loved ones. These are universal themes that can be applied locally, not least through the ghost walks and potential visits to the many historic cemeteries found in Malta.

An important step towards achieving this would be to build up confidence between the guiding community and the authorities who manage cemetery sites, so an understanding can be reached about how to respectfully manage regular access to the resting places of the dead, which include the recently deceased.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The research shows there is a sustained interest in dark tourism within the Maltese islands. This is demonstrable through the wealth of source material directly relating to periods of Maltese history, and the creation, by local guides and tour operators, of several tours covering some type of dark tourism aspect.

As indicated by local experts, many sites around the Maltese islands have a dark history. Apart from forts, prisons and museums, there are also urban environments with a long history of recorded crime and misdemeanour, which will be ripe for dark tours of various types.

However, the execution of tours which relate to aspects of dark tourism and, to use a broader classification, dark periods of history, remain occasional and sporadic in Malta. This is despite there being enough appetite both locally and from abroad for dark tourism events of various kinds.

There is great untapped potential to market the darker elements of Maltese history, to commodify and market a larger number of more frequent dark tourism events across a range of urban locations and heritage sites, while maintaining ethical considerations regarding sensitive sites and topics of death and crime.

5.2 Recommendations

This study recommends a Malta Tourism Authority campaign to promote the dark tourism aspects of the Maltese islands. This would include sites, attractions and museums about the Great Siege, WWII and ghost walks incorporating local myths and legends.

Also recommended is a sustained campaign by Heritage Malta for regular dark tourism events on its sites, in the vein of its Betta Caloiro event at the Inquisitor's Palace in Birgu, and its dark history tour of Fort St Angelo, both held in 2022.

There should also be a dark tourism conference in Malta, to allow scholars, tourist guides and location managers, both local and from abroad. The conference should debate the ethics of the kinds of dark tourism, the best ways to market a dark tourism site, the different types of dark tourists, and the potential for crime, punishment and local legends to be

presented for tourists, among other topics. Best practices in promoting and managing dark tourism events should also be on the agenda.

An investment in training local guides in different aspects of dark history stories is also recommended. Further studies could include surveys of tourists to Malta to ascertain their appetite for dark tourism and dark history stories, and to gather their opinions on relevant sites and experiences offered in the Maltese islands.

A final recommendation would be for further research into the appeal of dark tourism in Malta, to explore the potential for nurturing and expanding this niche into a sustained attraction for tourists in Malta, for the benefit of the local tourism economy.

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7. Appendices

7.1 Questions for Interviewees

Subject A:

1. Who are the kinds of people who attend your ghost walks?
2. What are their motivations for coming on your walks
3. Which are the best sites for dark tourism in Malta?
4. What potential do the Maltese islands have for dark tourism?

Subject B:

1. What can Malta offer dark tourists, those visitors attracted to darker historical episodes?
2. Which sites within the Maltese islands are particularly suitable for dark tourists?
3. How can Malta develop and market itself as a dark tourism destination?
4. Does dark tourism have the potential to become a tourism product in its own right, rather than be integrated within a wider itinerary?
5. Are there any ethical issues regarding dark tourism locally?

Subject C:

1. Given the interest from the public in true crime stories, how popular might a dark history tour of Valletta be?

7.2 Long Essay Tour Itinerary

My long essay tour took place during the day of assessment but would usually take place in the evening, during the dark.

The tour is a walking tour around Valletta with easy access to all the streets, apart from two sections where there are a good number of steps. However, an alternative route around the steps could be managed if required.

The locations for the tour are as follows:

Piazza de Valette – Introduction in front of De Valette's statue

St John's Square

St John's Street – Corner Pillory and Nelson's Hook

St John's Street – Ta' Giezu Church main entrance

St Ursula Street – back entrance to Ta' Giezu Church

Merchant Street – Banca Giuratale

Merchant Street, corner of St Christopher's Street

St Dominic's Street, corner of St Frederick Street

Republic Street, corner of Old Hospital Street

Grand Master's Palace