

**Editorial of Issue number 4 of *Tourism and Heritage Journal***

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This fourth issue of *Tourism and Heritage Journal* particularly focuses on dark literary tourism, and it comprises five carefully selected and reviewed papers on the recent and under-researched concept of dark literary tourism. This issue was inspired by the *International Symposium on dark literary tourism* held in December 2021, organised by Rita Baleiro (CiTUR Algarve – University of the Algarve) and Jordi Arcos-Pumarola (CETT - University of Barcelona), featuring academics from European universities who sought to explore the updates and representations of dark literary tourism. This issue contains one paper co-written by two scholars who participated in this international Symposium, but it extends beyond those contributors. Therefore, it brings together four papers from researchers who did not participate in the event, and their work is also proof of the growing interest in this sub-niche in the convergence of dark tourism and literary tourism.

Dark literary tourism refers to visits to dark places (*i.e.*, places associated with death and suffering) primarily motivated by fictional and non-fictional literary texts and/or literary writers' biographies. These visits might be inspired by Gothic literature (*e.g.*, Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*), detective-murder literature (*e.g.*, Agatha Christie's novels) and crime literature (*e.g.*, Stieg Larsson's Millennium Trilogy). Dark literary tours might also focus on the places where the plot of a novel unfolds or the authors' places (*i.e.*, where they lived, worked or got inspiration from). Examples of such places would be the Edgar Allan Poe House and Museum in Baltimore, or Raymond Chandler's Hollywood streets and surrounding environs, which have shaped his fiction. Some tours focus on the places associated with the characters of such literary fiction (*e.g.*, the Sherlock Holmes tour in London).

Up to now, European scholars have acknowledged and examined literary mediated dark tourism experiences and allocated various labels. One of those labels is 'Gothic tourism', which refers to visits to sites associated with Gothic aesthetics (*e.g.*, sites of ghost tourism, castles and monasteries, former prisons, scare attractions and festivals such as the biannual Whitby festival in England) (McEvoy, 2016). Another is 'crime fiction tourism', *i.e.*, tours inspired by this crime literature (Crane, 2019; van Es & Reijnders, 2015). Another is 'Holocaust fiction tourism' (Busby & Devereux, 2015), which describes the touring of sites associated with literary texts written by Holocaust victims or about this historical period. Still another expression of dark literary tourism is 'Dracula tourism', *i.e.*, visits to Transylvania motivated by Bram Stoker's novel (Hovi, 2014; Light, 2007; Light, 2012, 2017a, 2017b; Reijnders, 2011; Spooner, 2017). None of the above researchers uses the

label 'dark literary tourism', but they focus on its micro-niches attending to specific literary genres instead. Hence, in this special issue, we aim to explore the concept of dark literary tourism further, examine its definitions, products and experiences, and contribute to expanding the knowledge of this concept.

In this fourth issue, we publish articles that expand this line of research by approaching dark literary tourism from different perspectives. For instance, the first article related to the topic is titled *Gazing upon a fictional ghost town: Juan Rulfo's Comala and the convergence of dark tourism and literary tourism*, written by Mark Speakman and Alejandro Diaz Garay from the Universidad Autonoma de Guerrero (Mexico). In their article, the authors explore the literary tourists' experience when visiting the town of San Gabriel in Mexico. San Gabriel is a city that inspired Juan Rulfo to create the fictional location of Comala. The imaginative transformation of the tangible territory allows the authors to argue that there is a close relationship between literary and dark tourism in this case.

Samet Çevik from the Bandırma Onyedi Eylül University also analysed the motivations and experience of dark literary tourism in the article *A dark literary tourist at the end of life: Tezer Özlü*. Nevertheless, Çevik adopted a methodology based on qualitative textual analysis, exploring the travel book *Journey to the End of Life* by Tezer Özlü, where the author follows the travels of Kafka, Svevo and Pavese. Therefore, the article shows how relevant concepts such as empathy, quotidian and homage are in the context of the dark literary tourist experience.

Another paper that explores the dialogue between reality and fiction is the one published by Melanie Kay Smith from Budapest Metropolitan University and Titanilla Virág Tevely from the University of Sopron. Their article, titled *Blurring the boundaries between fact and fiction: serial killers in the context of dark tourism*, focuses on why serial killers (including the ones depicted in literature, film or TV series) generate interest in a tourism context. More concretely, the author analyses why tourists are interested in touring a destination related to the story of a serial killer.

Those papers show that imagination is a powerful actor in tourists' motivations and interests. This idea is explored in the article *Unravelling imaginative heritage: Understanding a city through its crime fiction*, written by Stijn Reijnders and Nicky van Es from the Erasmus University Rotterdam. By defining and applying the concept of imaginative heritage, the authors argue that the visualisation and valorisation of imaginative heritage require the interest of potential visitors, the active involvement of the media and tourism industry and local governments. Only through these destinations is it possible to create a tourism offer based on imaginative heritage capable of attracting fans and visitors.

In dark tourism, it is also relevant to pay attention to ethics since this niche deals with complex and sensitive topics. In this vein, the article *Holocaust tourism: education or exploitation?*, written by Amanda Dawson, Sinéad O'Leary and Noelle O'Connor from the Technological University of the Shannon, aims to analyse whether holocaust tourism can be seen as an educative experience or as exploitation. Thus, the article shows the educational potential of dark tourism experiences.

The articles in this special issue indicate the growing research interest in dark literary tourism. Besides, they are examples of the advancement of the broader fields of literary tourism and dark tourism from different and complementary perspectives and disciplines. We hope this special issue serves as a starting point for further research on this topic.

In addition to the articles about dark literary tourism, this issue includes three off-topic articles. The first is titled *Historic Hotel Buildings in Istanbul City*, by Orhan Yabancı from the Eskisehir Osmangazi University, which identifies and describes the historical backgrounds of historic hotel buildings in Istanbul. The second is *Wukro Medhane Alem: A Medieval Rock-hewn Church in Historic Gondar, Ethiopia*, written by Tsegaye Ebabey, which explores the historical and architectural heritage of Wukro Medhane Alem in Ethiopia. The last article is *Smart Museums: Definition and presentation of a smart management model for museums*, and Alba Pérez Ibanco, from CETT-UB, authors it. This paper focuses on the relationship between Smart and museum management, and proposes a model to foster the digital transformation of museums.

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