YEAR 2019-2020

BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT: Degree Thesis

SEMESTER: 8th

TITLE OF ASSIGNMENT: Dark Tourism Attractiveness Scan Model in Lleida

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Abstract

The purpose of this research paper is to explore the Dark Tourism situation in Lleida. Dark Tourism is a phenomenon and study which has been explored by a very limited number of academics. Dark Tourism is tourism that revolves around people visiting attractions that have a relation with history as well as associations with death, suffering and tragedy but it also has aspects of heritage tourism. Dark tourism locations have a very high history value. Moreover, people are visiting such sites now more than ever as digital streaming content has a tremendous influence on us but especially the young generation. People are driven to seeing Dark Tourism content especially on Netflix and HBO, where they have Dark Tourism related content such as movies and series. Furthermore, there are various definitions of Dark Tourism by several different academics such as Lennon & Foley, Stone, Sharpley, Bowman and Pezzullo, Biran and Poria as well as others Dark Tourism enthusiasts which are explored in the beginning of the paper. This study is a continuity of the Dark Tourism research in Catalonia series. There has been research done in the provinces of Barcelona and Tarragona. This research paper uses the Dark Tourism Attractiveness Scan Model developed by Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas in 2020 for the Tarragona province to apply it the province of Lleida. This model focuses on exploring and detecting the Dark Tourism potential products in the geographical area of Lleida. Lastly, this research paper provides deep insights and exploration of Dark Tourism as well as introducing Lleida as a Dark Tourism destination for possibility of new tourism business opportunities in one of the four provinces of Catalonia, Lleida.

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Acknowledgements

First of all, we would like to deeply thank Dr. Xavier Puertas Montoro, our degree thesis supervisor and professor of the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management Sant Ignasi (HTSI), for giving us support and advice throughout the process. Thanks to his expertise and devotion for the topic, the ultimate result has changed from an idea into a properly degree thesis.

In addition, we want to express our gratefulness to the members of the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management Sant Ignasi, for not only help us to learn and discover the tourism industry, but for being inspiring to us too.

We are gratified to all participants of our degree thesis as we acknowledge that we are living in a difficult situation, and any help has been sincerely welcomed.

Lastly, families and friends' support has been a key for us to keep motivated and encouraged and not letting us crack even when things got complicated.

Thank you,

Sonia Harjani and Olga Lomero

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context of research

As one of Philip R. Stone (2005)'s article's title suggests 'Dark Tourism: an old concept in a new world' that Dark Tourism is not a new concept, it has been studied and researched and enjoyed from centuries now. Dark Tourism, as termed by Lennon and Foley (2000), the attraction of death and disaster. As stated by Philip R. Stone (2005) that travelling to touristic sites of macabre, death and disaster is becoming a widespread cultural activity within contemporary society. Basically, from enjoying family picnics on battle sites or purchasing souvenirs of genocide at Ground Zero, to allowing children to experience past lives of unfortunate inmates at the Bodmin Jail Centre, are all illustrations of death, macabre and disaster.

Dark tourism has been around for years and there is no stop to it because it is here to stay and grow as Stone (2005) has explained that there are is always a bigger number of death-related visitor sites, attractions and exhibitions, often trading under remembrance, education, entertainment, which attract people who are eager to consume real and commodified death.

As further explained by Stone (2005), that in academic literature, there have been frequent references to specific destinations such as the Sixth Floor in Dallas, Texas (Foley and Lennon, 1996) or to forms of tourism, such as visits to graveyards (Seaton, 2002) and celebrity death sites (Alderman, 2002), holocaust tourism (Turnbridge and Ashworth, 1996), prison tourism (Strange and Kempa, 2003), or slavery-heritage tourism (Dann and Seaton, 2001) and such a versatility in Dark Tourism shows that there are huge amounts of sites to supply to the growing demand around the world.

Dark Tourism has been in constant research phase and recently a discovery of the growing interest of families visiting Dark Tourism sites has been a brought light to a new concept in the research of Dark Tourism.

Dark tourism has been growing and as Stone (2009) explains that the spread and popularity of the dark tourism concept is mostly because media which has enabled to standardize the desire of tourists, who want to engage themselves in experiences and travel to such attractions that bring them closer to death and closer to Dark Tourism attractions. Dark tourism is growing so widely

around the world as well as the digital world. There have been movies related to dark tourism such as 'The Grief Tourist' where a boy obsesses over the hobby that has been part of his DNA since he was a young boy: grief tourism - the act of travelling with the intent to visit places of tragedy or disaster. In this modern-digital era, Netflix, as mentioned on the Netflix website, Netflix is a streaming service that allows our members to watch a wide variety of award-winning TV shows, movies, documentaries, and more on thousands of internet-connected devices, they have recently released a series which is very closely related to Dark Tourism which are: Dark Tourist (2018) and as mentioned on Netflix, it is a series of the journey from a nuclear lake to a haunted forest, journalist David Farrier visits unusual -- and often macabre -- tourism spots around the world. Also, on HBO (Home Box Office) which also streams movies and series has recently released a series called Chernobyl (2019) which as HBO mentions, it is a miniseries dramatizing the events surrounding the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear accident, as told through the stories of the brave men and women who made incredible sacrifices to save Europe from unimaginable disaster.

The focal points of this research will be to contribute to the growth and awareness of Dark Tourism in Catalonia, to be specific; it will be in Lleida to continue the investigation of Dark Tourism in different towns and provinces of Catalonia. There will be a creation of a new model of attractiveness that will help the small province of Catalonia just like the one in Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas (2020) research *Dark Tourism Attractiveness Scan Model*, in Lleida to detect and develop more the potential dark tourism products and routes to explore dark tourism possibilities to contribute the major to generate the interest of the nationals and international influx of tourists further and to take it to another dimension than what it is now. This research paper will contribute to increasing the awareness of this emerging tourism phenomenon by enriching the existing knowledge and further helping researchers in future studies.

1.2 Identification of research problem

The choice of undertaking this degree thesis' topic is made due to the rise of awareness of dark tourism, as a tourism typology in the tourism sector.

Some research has been done in emblematic sites of Europe. Thomas P. Thurnell-Read (2016) stressed the importance of how in the twentieth century, sites which represent a big meaning towards the past and have macabre or dark facets of history, are more appealing to tourists. He argues that one of these tourist attractions is Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Broadening the expansion of dark tourism, Kempa & Strange (2003) argued that Alcatraz and Robben Island in the USA exemplifies how dark tourism can be advertised, displayed and consumed, becoming that way in a tourism product.

From another point of view, Sheshenina (2019) studied the ethical dilemmas that dark tourism could provoke on tourists in Russia, and what issues could emerge from dark tourism.

Previous studies have focused on determining which tourism products are offered in the province of Tarragona (Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas, 2020) and how cemeteries of Barcelona could represent a strong tourism product of dark tourism (Cisa & Grau, 2018). Therefore, there is a gap in the research of this tourism typology on the province of Lleida.

As a consequence, the main objective of this thesis is to carry out the Scan Model on the province of Lleida, in order to identify feasible tourism products and itineraries. To facilitate this aim, 4 main objectives have been written. Thanks to them, the research is guided by some concrete actions, and eventually the process is eased by the establishment of those objectives.

1.3 Originality and contribution to knowledge

This paper essentially contributes to update dark tourism, as it is a recent trend which has been emerging for the last decades, and recently in a high pace (Seaton, 2009). Consequently, media has taken advantage of this new trend (Stone, 2006).

Dark Tourist, exemplifies how integrated on society is becoming this trend. The series expresses the desire and curiosity of a journalist to investigate and visit symbolic places related to death, war areas or others affected by natural disasters.

Nevertheless, in the field of dark tourism, little has been studied. Research of dark tourism itself is the main focus of research, developed by some authors: Foley & Lennon (1996), Stone (2006, 2009, 2012) or Puertas (2007) leaving little space for study focusing on concrete regions influenced by dark tourism.

However, Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas (2020) deepened a little on the field, by establishing a model to identify potential tourism products of dark tourism in a particular region. They created the model, and implemented it on the province of Tarragona.

Establishing the Scan Model on the province of Lleida appears to be a fascinating area of study, since it is a region of Catalonia which could contribute a lot to the dark tourism.

1.4 Aim & objectives

The main aim of this thesis is to apply the Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas' method in the province of Lleida, previously implemented in the province of Tarragona, in order to determine the possible tourism products which dark tourism can offer to potential tourists.

In the following table, the 4 objectives of this thesis are exposed:

Working title	Dark tourism proposals and products in Lleida
Research objectives	1. Check the possibilities of this province, applying the Research Scan Model created by Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas (2020) 2. Situate the important examples detected within the province. 3. Evaluate the possible impact on the visitors and promoters residents. 4. Propose different routes for domestic and international tourism.

Figure 1. Identification of the research's objectives and aims. Own creation based on *Dark Tourism Attractiveness Scan Model* (Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas (2020)

First of all, it is rooted in necessity to evaluate if the province of the study meets the requirements established by Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas' method, and if that being the case, implement the Research Scan Model. Secondly, some dark tourist sites in the province need to be identified, in order to apply the Research Scan Model on them. Furthermore, the third objective assesses how residents perceive this possible influx of dark tourists in their living area, and with which impression visitors leave the tourist site. Finally, once the previous steps are carried out, it will be the time to develop several itineraries for domestic and international tourists, which appeal for them, by creating a possible route in this province.

1.5 Structure of the study

The degree thesis research paper consists of five very clear chapters exploring Dark Tourism.

In Chapter one, there is a general introduction to Dark Tourism and thesis including the general context of research, the identification of the research problem, its originality and contribution to the existing knowledge and the aim and the main objectives to be investigated and covered.

Chapter two will be a very essential part of the research paper. It consists of the literature review which will include a summary of the literature, the past and current state of the research of Dark Tourism. The literature review also consists of the literature map which identifies the main topics of Dark Tourism that this research paper will explore and some of the main authors who have contributed to the thesis paper. The conceptual framework of the literature review focuses on the theories of Dark Tourism. To explore the Dark Tourism attractiveness model and theories, the research paper will be exploring and referring to several articles by some of the popular authors known in Dark Tourism. The paper will be exploring "Seven Dark Suppliers" which shows the different typologies of Dark Tourism and "Dark Tourism Spectrum" which explores the various degrees of intensity of the dark in Dark Tourism, both developed by Stone (2006).

Furthermore, Chapter three develops an effective methodology as well as the best methods which are used to address the research problem and the thesis' questions which will be identified throughout the paper. The thesis paper, in the section of methods, includes the overall research design, the data collection techniques and research instruments as well as the research context and participants and lastly the data analysis and ethical forms.

In Chapter four, which shows the findings and discussion, it is developed the analysis of the data collected and the methods used when exploring Dark Tourism attractiveness in a very specific part of Catalonia named Lleida. This chapter explores Lleida as a tourist destination but more specifically as a dark tourism destination. This part also explores Lleida most dark touristic attractions and all the products and routes that are provided.

Finally, Chapter five is the concluding chapter which consists of the conclusions and recommendations regarding on our research on Dark Tourism as a research paper and the limitations that had been encountered during the research for the thesis degree paper on an overall basis.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review chapter focuses on doing investigation on the past and current research on the topic of dark tourism. This paper aims to apply an existing method in the province of Lleida, the Scan Model. It was created in the research of Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas (2020), therefore, the literature on dark tourism has already been written.

Hence, the objective of the following literature review is to do a brief and general discussion on dark tourism, and update new aspects that have emerged in relation to the topic, since the investigation done by Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas (2020). As a result, it is expected that the length of this chapter will be reduced in comparison to what normally is considered for an appropriate literature review.

2.1. Definitions, theories and authors

Dark Tourism is a growing field of research and industry in the tourism and hospitality business. Ever since Dark Tourism has come to light and has been recognised by many well-known authors in the field, they have created their own definitions and theories of Dark Tourism according to their vision, knowledge and investigation on Dark Tourism. Over time, there have been many different definitions and theories of Dark Tourism and all of them have had an aim to be better, clearer and more specific in comparison to the previous definitions.

The two very important names when it comes to Dark Tourism, Foley and Lennon (1996), they were the ones to introducing and describing dark tourism as a phenomenon which shows the consumption of real and commodified death and disaster sites.

Since then, as stated in the article *'Benefits of visiting a 'dark tourism' site: The case of Jeju April 3rd Peace Park, Korea'* that the Dark Tourism defined and phenomenon that is well known, and investigated under a range of definitions including dark tourism (Foley & Lennon, 1996), thanatourism (Seaton, 1996), black spot tourism (Rojek, 1993), atrocity heritage tourism (Turnbridge & Ashworth, 1996), and morbid tourism (Blom, 2000).

Lennon and Foley wrote a book in 2000 called *Dark Tourism: The Attraction of Death and Disaster,* where they redefined Dark Tourism taking into consideration the modern world, they stated that global communication technologies are characteristics in the events which are associated with a dark

tourism product as well as the ones that are present in the representation of the events for the visitors at the site itself.

Stone and Sharpley (2008) have talked about dark tourism as the interest of tourists visit sites, attractions or events that are linked in any way with death, disaster or violence, whether they did visit them on purpose or just because they were passing by.

On the other hand, there are authors who object the usage of the term Dark Tourism such as Bowman and Pezzullo (2010) states that there are various labels that have been given to several of this tourism niche [Dark Tourism]: for example, 'negative sightseeing' (MacCannell, 1989), 'Black Spots tourism' (Rojek, 1993), 'tragic tourism' (Lippard, 1999), 'thanatourism' (Seaton, 1996), and 'grief tourism' (O'Neill, 2002; Trotta, 2006). They further state that the most known name, 'dark tourism' was first used and discovered by Lennon and Foley to explain the important shift in the way in which all the grotesque atrocities are being explored and looked after by those who offer these kinds of tourism products. Now, 'dark tourism' is a term widely used and known and it has been and is continuing to be used in academic touristic discourses, academic conferences, universities, amongst dark tourism researchers and online forums. Eventually, they all concluded that the term dark tourism will be used regardless of the language one may be using; hence it did not admit translations to other languages.

Furthermore, Sharpley (2005) rightly notes that the dark tourism literature continues to be diverse and theoretically delicate. Similarly, Keil (2005) argues that the dark tourism phenomenon has so far been poorly described and that it lacks a theoretical relationship to wider studies of violence and death.

Bowman and Pezzullo (2010) state their opinion on the Dark Tourism term and explain that dark tourism has a lot of negative connotations and they suggest that it may be time to abandon the term 'dark tourism' as it may present an impediment to detailed and circumstantial analyses of tourist sites and performances. They explain that they aim to recover an academic space for themselves as well as other academics who do not wish to use such a label to classify their research. Bowman and Pezzullo (2010) express their disagreement with the term 'dark tourism' because this type of tourism is so wide and has many concepts and aspects which cannot be labelled with just one term and

especially a term which have negative connotations to it. They see beyond the term; they see the wide range of tourism within just that one term.

Dark Tourism enthusiasts such as Biran, Poria & Oren (2011) also mention that the meaning of dark in the western cultures has a negative connotation and they also hint that dark tourism is not an appropriate tourism classification at all, and it is instead simply a subsection of heritage tourism. Jamal and Leo (2011) object to overuse of the term Dark Tourism. Isaac and Cakmak (2014) state that the term dark tourism should be replaced by a 'site associated with death and suffering'. Also in the 1st Dark Tourism Symposium in Holland University Applied Sciences of Amsterdam, Karel Werder, P. Stone & X. Puertas (2013) considered that the heritage term is very wide.

To summarise, the definitions and theories of all the recognised authors in this field, be it a newcomer or someone who has been dedicating their life to dark tourism, they all have created, tweaked, specified or simplified the definitions of dark tourism throughout these years. All these definitions and theories of dark tourism are widely related to tourism which show and let the tourist experience the following: disasters, grief, sites of horror, atrocities, massacres and terrorism. As said by several dark tourism enthusiasts, dark tourism is basically associated to visiting places associated with deaths such as visiting sites of mass execution, battlefields, genocide related places which evoke feelings such as sadness, anger, fear, remembrance of the past as well as grief and respect for the ones who lost their lives.

2.2. The origins and current state of Dark Tourism

Dark tourism has a very long history which we will explore through the works of the Dark Tourism professionals and we will further see how they saw the trend of Dark Tourism coming to light in the modern world and these centuries. There is a growing trend to develop the dark touristic places for the experiences of the people and commercial exploration.

As A. Craig Wight (2006) suggests that the origins of academic analysis and interest into dark tourism may have arisen out of the work of Tunbridge and Ashworth, Dwork and Van Pelt and Lennon and Foley. Wight (2006) explains that these authors have explored some destinations and their authenticity of the past and the visitor experience at 'dark' heritage sites.

As Stone (2005) has mentioned that tourists have been drawn to battlefield sites, places of execution, tombs and other related sites for a very long time. Also, Seaton (1996) has investigated that dark tourism dates back from the Middle Ages at least. Dale and Robinson (2011) establish that the practice of dark tourism dates back as far as the Eleventh Century.

Wight (2006) further explains that dark tourism is not just a western concept because there has been some research done in the past into dark heritages in non-western countries such as Vietnam, Cambodia, Japan and Africa.

As stated in the article 'History of Dark Tourism' written by Rudi Hartmann, John Lennon, Daniel P. Reynolds, Alan Rice, Adam T. Rosenbaum & Philip R. Stone (2018), explain that it may be unpleasant to visit cemeteries, crash sites, and death camps but people have been visiting these sites from centuries and still are and will in the future. Many dark tourism professionals have been attempting to explain this fascination with the macabre and morbid since the mid-1990s. Throughout the article they have talked about how ancient trips to the Roman Coliseum and medieval pilgrimages to locations of martyrdom had dark undertones.

The present state of Dark Tourism is very experiential, very varied types of experiences but also educational and emotional as Henderson (2000) and Lennon & Foley (2000) state that Dark Tourism offers an educational as well as emotional tourism experience which convey important messages related to acquiring knowledge of past events. As stated by Natalija Minić (2012) that Dark Tourism is becoming very popular in a time when tourists have new needs and interests.

Dark Tourism is an old concept but a new trend in the market nowadays but also this type of product isn't for everyone as Minić (2012) sheds light on the idea that Dark tourism is a very selective and special interest tourism which has different and special tourist motivations.

As there is now a big demand of dark tourism, it is not enough to only be selling a dark tourism product, much more than that is needed because the tourists as stated by Minić (2012) that the tour operators modify their supply and with their creativity they are trying to meet market needs. Minić (2012) further explains that a path through history is a way of discovering new 'dark' tourism destinations but it all depends on promotion and without good promotion of cultural as well as historical values for tourism, the tour operators lose a lot.

Also, Minić (2012) states that the countries with a lot of dark tourism sites usually have a very significant historical background which is very valued by the tourists. This field has many opportunities in the global tourism market because this is a type of tourism which is in close contact with the human factor. There can be tourists who are interested in 'dark tourism' destinations because of the subject such as earthquakes, tsunami or the Chernobyl fallout.

Stone (2005) states that it hasn't been so long since dark tourism has become a widespread and more popular. He explains that while it remains unclear whether the proliferation of dark tourism is because of an increased supply of attractions and sites, or whether consumers are demanding more and more of the macabre and death related touristic sites.

Currently, the growing interest of dark tourism has also grown by the series and documentaries on the internet. Netflix, being a world widely international platform, showcases the documentary called 'The Dark Tourist' and the series on HBO called 'Chernobyl' has evoked an interest in people to visit dark tourism sites.

South China Morning Post posted an article in 2020 explain that Dark Tourism has been popularised by the documentary and series, and especially thanks to the Netflix series 'Dark Tourist' which was released last year, in 2019. The now popular culture of visiting some of the well-known Dark Tourism sites such as Chernobyl, this is due to the HBO miniseries which is about the 1986 nuclear power plant explosion. Travel companies have seen an increase of 30-40 per cent visitors visiting Chernobyl site. Moreover, Hitwise posted an article called 'Chernobyl: The Impact of TV on Dark Tourism' which states that with the rise of interest within the travel sector on the Dark Tourism site, Chernobyl, some key questions and searches have been raised such as: Is it safe to visit Chernobyl?, Where can you visit in Chernobyl?. Hitwise also states that dark tourism is rising all over the world, in all destination where there are dark tourism sites because of the new series, television releases which is impacting very positively on the dark tourism industry.

To conclude, dark tourism has been around for centuries and people have been involved in many of the dark tourism activities and have given it different names. Dark tourism has had a very long history; it has many roots as we can see in the literature. Stone (2005) states that travelling to experience the events of the past associated with death, pain or suffering is not a new phenomenon. Religious pilgrimages have attracted people to sites related to death and violence for centuries and be it for emotional or spiritual reasons, tourists have long been drawn, intentionally or

unintentionally, to death related attractions. Nowadays, there is big demand and supply for dark tourists and there is a big variety throughout the world of dark tourism sites and the growth has been raised by the series and documentaries in the market.

2.3. Effects on residents

Recently, Dark Tourism has been a new trend in the tourism industry although it is an old concept in a new world (Sharpley, 2005). Being a new worldwide trend in the tourism industry, it is likely that the locals of the dark tourism sites have an opinion about the rise in dark tourism. The perspective of the residents is very important because they are the ones who have probably have been involved in the process from when the place became a dark tourism site or have watched their loved ones be involved in when the place became a dark tourism site. There are two opinions of the locals of the dark tourism sites which we will explore. Their perspective will show us the reality of living around the dark tourism sites.

As explained in the article, 'Resident Attitudes toward Dark Tourism, a Perspective of Place-based Identity Motives' written by Suosheng Wang, Shengrong Chen, Honggang Xu (2017) that disasters have a negative effect on survivors, psychologically. But about how their post-disaster needs will be met research is still very limited. After a disaster, the local people are usually put in a painful or uncomfortable situation. As Uzzell (1989) explains that on one hand, with one's hometown being turned into a site of tragic disaster, constant reminders of the site will prevent them from moving forward and on the other hand, in the transition from a place of past disaster to turning that place as a dark tourism destination, death is presented as 'entertainment'. It is evident that the residents have to deal with a lot of emotional pain seeing the death and tragedy sites turn into some form of tourism for the visitors.

Wang, Chen and Xu (2017) have further also explained that Dark Tourism plays a important role in empowering and stimulating the community and they have explained that for the local residents in order to make a living, only two options are left for them to choose from after the disaster has been done which is to become a migrant worker in other cities, or to be a Dark Tourism 'entertainer' in their hometown.

To give an example of a particular place, Bowman and Pezzullo (2010) explains that New Orleans was a very famous and an international tourist destination until the summer of 2005. In the summer of 2005, there were two hurricanes, a flood, two tornados and an appalling government response to

these disasters transformed the city. Once the tourism resumed, it integrated stories of death and loss into the tourism industry of New Orleans. It is controversial but the tours of the stories of the disasters of New Orleans generated revenues, jobs and publicity and gave the residents hope and a way of earning.

To conclude, sometimes living near a dark tourism site is much more difficult than living in a touristic site which has mass tourism because in the dark tourism places where visitors come to visit from all around the world to dig deep into the history, it is devastating for the locals to see that because it may be that for them, it is not only a tourism site, it has emotional connection and many memories related to that tourism site which they may be do not want to recall but have to everyday because of the tourism impact on these sites.

2.3. Typologies of dark tourism

Inside dark tourism, there can be specified different tourism typologies, which will be best aligned with the profile of the tourist (Stone, 2006; Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas, 2020).

Stone (2006) defined 7 dark tourism attractions which he named Seven Dark Suppliers for the dark tourism product, which are: dark fun factories, dark exhibitions, dark dungeon, dark resting places, dark shrine, dark conflict sites and dark camps of genocide. Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas (2020), described each one of the seven dark tourism attractions, and provided us with some examples.

It is presented below a table which relates the dark tourism typology with a definition, its purpose, the nature and one example, based on Seaton (2006) and Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas (2020):

NAME	WHAT IS IT	PURPOSE	NATURE	EXAMPLE
DARK FUN FACTORIES	Entertainment places offering spectacles and activities related to death or macabre events	Commercial and economic	With intention	Dracula Park, near Bucharest
DARK EXHIBITIONS	Places located far from the real	Educational, commemorative	With intention	Smithsonian Museum, in

	death place, which offers varied products	and instructional		Washington DC
DARK DUNGEON	Places related to old justice codes, such as prisons	Commercial, entertainment and educational	Without intention	Galleries of Justice, in Nottingham
DARK RESTING PLACES	Places such as cemeteries or graveyards	Commemorative, commercial and entertainment	Without intention	Cemetery, in Paris
DARK SHRINE	Places for remembrance and respect, for somebody who recently passed away	Commemorative	Events at the beginning, but after it, it is with intention	Floral edifice around Kensington Palace, when Princess Diana died
DARK CONFLICT SITES	Places in which war or battlefields took place	Educational and commemorative	Without intention	Battle of Guadalcanal, in Guadalcanal
DARK CAMPS OF GENOCIDE	Places in which genocide, atrocity or catastrophe occurred	Educational and commemorative	Without intention	Auschwitz-Birkenau, in Poland

Figure 2. Own creation of a summary table of *Dark Tourism Attractiveness Scan Model* (Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas (2020)

2.4. Dark tourism spectrum

A dark intensity framework issued to be essential to have (Strange and Kempa, 2003; Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas (2020), bearing in mind the complexity which dark tourism sites have, and the different perceptions that they generate (Stone, 2006). After analyzing two penal institutions, Alcatraz and Robben Island, Strange and Kempa (2003) concluded that cultural and political factors

could influence on them, and as a result, one could be understood as *'shade more serious'* than the other.

Indeed, there had been previously research on the matter. Miles (2002) claimed the existence of a *'darker-lighter tourism paradigm',* in which there could be seen a differentiation between the grades of darkness that a place related to death had. To determine this spectrum, Miles argued that some factors were more influential such as spatial affinity, level of suffering or temporal dimension.

Taking the reference of the dark tourism typologies previously mentioned of Stone's Dark Tourism Spectrum (2006), below it could be seen a table which relates the level of darkness that the typology has, and some information about the typology (focus, infrastructure, location and authenticity perceived):

TYPOLOGY	INFRASTRUCTURE	LOCATION	AUTHENTICITY PERCEIVED	DARKNESS' LEVEL
DARK FUN FACTORIES	Highly developed	Far from death event	Low	Lightest
DARK CONFLICT SITES	Increasing in development	Close to death event	Medium	
				Lighter
DARK RESTING PLACES	Increasing in development	In-site (cemeteries) but not directly to death event	Medium	
				Light
DARK DUNGEONS	Highly developed	In-site (prisons)	High	

		but not directly to death event		Dark
DARK EXHIBITIONS	Medium developed	Far from death event	Medium-high	
				Darker
DARK SHRINES	Low developed	Close to death event	High	
				Darkest
DARK CAMPS OF GENOCIDE	Low developed	In death event	High	

Figure 3. Own adaptation of *Dark Tourism Attractiveness Scan Model* (Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas 2020)

2.5. Motivation & Ethics of Tourists

According to different authors, the desire to experience dark tourism differs. There can be detected several purposes of engaging on dark tourism.

Some of these reasons appeared thanks to new technologies, such as media. Lennon and Foley (2000) and Stone (2006) argued that media recently started showing interest towards this tourism typology. When people started being bombarded with information, the likelihood of boosting their interest towards what they are watching is easily increased. Therefore, one could argue that since it is a trend, people wishes to experience it.

Looking from another perspective, Collins-Kreiner (2016) stated that dark tourism is somehow linked to the phenomenon of pilgrimage, and argued that in both circumstances the desire of undertaking the experience is to cause a change in tourists' lives and add a valuable event on it.

Wu, H and Cheng, C (2018) conducted a study with which they were able to determine 7 motives that drive tourist to experience dark tourism: participation, innovation, experiential risk, experiential

memorability, experiential satisfaction, experiential trust, and experiential involvement of dark tourism sites.

Participation

Participation concerns the act of involving tourists in sharing their perceptions and ideas, in order to better construct dark tourism and the services provided (Che Wu, H and Cheng, C, 2018). As dark tourism is a tourism typology recently originated, tourists' suggestions happen to represent a powerful tool to enhance and help dark tourism correctly grow.

Innovation

The concept of innovation can be defined as designing and creating a new and unique product or service in order to content clients and at the same time, boost the market share (Che Wu, H and Cheng, C, 2018). That is how dark tourism contributes to this driver, as a way to differentiate a site from the expected sites to which tourists would go (Che Wu, H and Cheng, C, 2018).

Experiential risk

Schiffman, O'Cass, Paladino, and Carlson (2014) alleged that experiential risk refers to the ambiguity tourists feel when they are living an experience of dark tourism and they cannot anticipate which consequences may have on their lives. This driver ought to have special attention on it, since it can turn into a disadvantage to the tourism site.

Experiential memorability

Amberber (2007) defines this motivation as the safeguarding of impressions, in order to add it to the own experience record. On the same line, Stone (2012) asserted that dark tourism helps one's own self to counterbalance the effect of mortality. In this sense, experiential memorability may assist those people afraid of death.

Experiential satisfaction

Che Wu, H and Cheng, C (2018) defined this concept as the level of contentedness that tourists have once the dark tourism's experience is over; representing the general effect on them.

Experiential trust

Referring to Wu, H. C., & Cheng, C. (2018), experiential site would be considered as the achieved range of satisfaction, so that tourists are contented and in turn, their loyalty is gained as a consequence.

Experiential involvement

According to Wu, H. C., & Cheng, C. (2018), experiential involvement appears during the experience of visiting a dark tourism site and truly engaging on it. Eventually, it is the final aim of an experience, to truly immerse on it.

Still, Seaton (2009) asserts that motivation on dark tourists is of little attention to researchers, as they focus more on understanding this new phenomenon, rather than its impulse.

2.6. Literature map

On this section, it is going to be created a literature map, which consists of a graph that identifies the main topics addressed on the literature review, and it relates these topics with the most important authors on the matter.

In this case, the literature map of Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas (2020) has been taken as a reference since this paper just aims at implementing the Scan Model made by them, not to make a research on dark tourism. Consequently, the length of the literature map will be shorter, and the similarity with Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas (2020) will exist.

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                    ┌──────────────────┐
                    │  DARK TOURISM    │
                    └──────────────────┘
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Definitions, theories and origins	Typologies and spectrum	Motivation, ethics and effects on residents
ROJEK, C. (1993) FOLEY, M. & LENNON, J. (1996); SEATON, AV. (1996); BLOM, C. (2000); TARLOW, P. (2005); WIGHT, C. (2005) STONE, P. (2005; 2006); SHARPLEY, R. (2009); MINIC, N. (2012); SHESHENINA, P. (2019); PUERTAS, X. & ROMANO, P. & ZACCARIA, A. (2020);	MILLER, T. & BASOGLU, M. (1992); SEATON, AV. (1996); MILES, W. (2002); STRANGE, C. & KEMPA, M. (2003); STONE, P. (2006); PUERTAS, X. & ROMANO, P. & ZACCARIA, A. (2020);	MILLER, T. & BASOGLU, M. (1992); COLLINS- KREINER, N. (2016); WANG, S. & CHEN, S. & XU, H. (2017); SHESHENINA, P. (2019);

Figure 4. Literature map. Own creation

2.7. Conceptual map

The conceptual map's main objective is to identify the literature review's main theories, concepts and topics that this research paper has used in order to develop the research of the Dark Tourism attractiveness Scan Model.
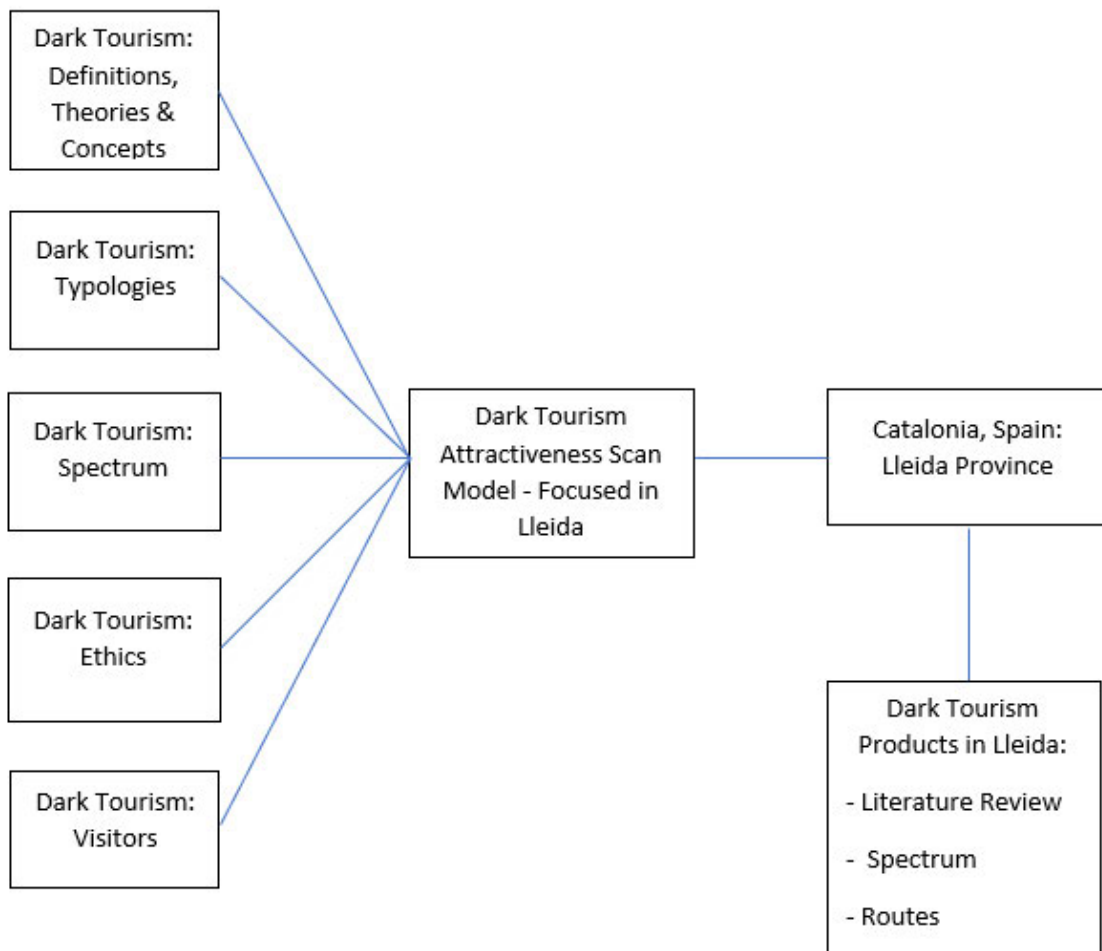

Figure 5. Conceptual map. Own creation

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overall Research Design

As it has been mentioned before, this paper is based on the study carried out by Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas in 2020. In that they created and implemented the Scan Model to eventually determine products and routes in the province of Tarragona.

Since one of the first objectives is to implement the Scan Model in Lleida, the methodology to follow in this study will be the same as in the Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas, in 2020. Therefore, this section is expected to be reduced in length as it has cove.

Regarding the HTSI University normative of degree thesis on regulations and norms, it is stated that they can be empirical or conceptual. In this research, both approaches and the applied research are going to be applied. This degree thesis has characteristics of a conceptual research since it examines what other authors have said regarding the topic of dark tourism. Characteristics of empirical research are found as it makes further comment on dark tourism, and it can also be considered as an applied research, as it general aim is to apply an already existing method into a region.

HTSI University normative of degree thesis on regulations and norms makes also a distinction whether they follow a deductive or inductive approach, and if their research philosophy is positivism or phenomenology. As for the approach, it is inductive because the start point is a Scan Model and the final point is determining whether dark tourism is present in the region of Lleida. According to the research philosophy, it follows positivism as it is used quantitative method (surveys) and it is phenomenology since it is used qualitative method (interviews).

In relation to the methods used in this thesis, it covers both quantitative and qualitative ones. On the one hand, the quantitative method focuses on measuring how relationships are affected between variables. On this, there is primary data, coming from interviews and surveys to people associated to the subject of study, and secondary data, which is the final output of the content investigations. On the other hand, the qualitative method intends to comprehend how the atmosphere where the study is carried out is, and there is only secondary data, due to lack of time.

Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas (2020) asserted that qualitative method is undertaken because it provides a more humanistic perspective that can give essential details to better interpret the reality that it is being examined.

According to Olabuénaga (2012), there are 5 methods which can be used in a research for gathering information: experiment, survey, observation, deep interview and content analysis. He argued that before undertaking the method, first it is essential to determine the objective, type and general style.

In this paper, it is expected to apply 3 of the previous methods. Firstly, a profound interview with professionals of the tourism and accommodation sector. This profile of people is selected as they will have the ability to significantly to the questions asked. The interviews will be based on a conversation with open questions, done to some of those professionals (Olabuénaga, 2012). This method will provide us with more detail information regarding the matter on a specific region and a more professional perception of the situation. Secondly, it is going to be applied the survey method, in which systematic and close questions will be asked to participants, in a structured way (Olabuénaga, 2012). In this case, there will be two types of surveys: one aim to be answered by potential visitors to dark tourism places in the region of Lleida, and another one to people living in the area of Lleida. Before applying the method, it has been done a pilot study to test whether participants would understand the questions. After obtaining a positive result, it means that the method is understandable, and it is adequate to apply it.

Lastly, the method used will be content analysis which consists of reading certain information and interpreting it. In this case, the content analysed has been DMOs' websites of Lleida, in order to obtain reliable statistical information. The web pages have been *Patronat de Turisme de la Diputació de Lleida, Aralleida* and *Turisme de Lleida*.

3.2 Data collection techniques and research instruments

In this section it is going to be described the data collection techniques, the instruments applied on them and how are they related to the objectives previously established. Puertas (2013) acknowledged the relationship among the methodology, objectives and content. Taking into account this statement, below can be found a table which connects these aspects of the thesis' concepts: it is

briefly mentioned the general aim of the thesis and for each specific thesis' objective, content and methodology is associated.

GENERAL AIM	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	CONTENT	METHODOLOGY - TOOLS
Implement the Scan Model in the province of Lleida and determine possible routes	1. Check the possibilities of this province, applying the Research Scan Model create by Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas (2020).	Application of the theories in order to verify that the Scan Model can be established in the region of Lleida.	Data collection and Scan Model.
	2. Situate the important examples detected within the province.	Application of the Scan Model's methodology in Lleida, so as to recognize dark tourism examples there.	Data collection, interviews and surveys.
	3. Evaluate the possible impact on the visitors and promoters residents.	Discover how dark tourism can affect people living in the region of Lleida.	Surveys and interview
	4. Propose different routes for domestic and international tourism.	Application of the Scan Model's methodology to establish possible unknown routes of dark tourism.	Application of the Scan Model's methodology.

Figure 6. Own elaboration from *Dark Tourism Attractiveness Scan Model* (Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas 2020)

Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas (2020) analyzed the region of Tarragona and selected some categories of the Seven developed by Stone (2006). In this paper, it is going to be analyzed the same categories as they did: dark fun factories, dark resting places, dark shrines, dark exhibitions, dark conflict sites and dark camps of genocide.

Dark fun factories

In this category the main target of tourists are people willing to attend entertainment spectacles or activities related to death. Consequently, they are placed in the slightest degree of the dark tourism Spectrum as they are regarded as less authentic. Hence, the infrastructure needed is considerable, since its nature is with intention.

Dark Resting places

This category has a nature without intention, as they are places to commemorate those who passed away. Dark resting places usually relate to cemeteries or graveyards. The position in Dark Tourism Spectrum is in the middle, as it contains both light and dark elements.

Dark shrines

Dark shrine is a category with only a purpose of commemoration to those who passed away. They are special because at the beginning they have a nature of events, but after time, they become with intention nature. That is because they are places to remember those recently gone. They are created quickly, just after death, and it usually brings lots of people to the place. Therefore, media gets very interesting in these events and creates quite repercussion.

Dark conflict sites

Dark conflict site is a category of a nature of without intention which offers educational and commemorative purposes, being places where war happened. Although they first did not get tourists in the area, more and more people are becoming interested and consequently, it require more infrastructure to this category.

Dark camps of genocide

Dark camps of genocide are places without intention, meaning that they were not created for tourism purposes but recently they are attracting visitors. The reason behind is of educational and

commemorative purposes, as they are places where atrocity happened. As they are real places, the position in the Dark Tourism Spectrum is on the darkest edges. More importantly, they are the most powerful category as the way of remembering and recreating what happened by being in the place itself is very high.

When having selected the adequate dark tourism typologies, determining the nature of the attraction can potential bring more information to the study (Puertas, 2013). He proposes five types of nature that a tourism product can be identified with: natural, with intention, without intention, events and cultural context.

3.3 Research context and participants

The scanning methodology will be applied in the four following provinces of Catalonia; Barcelona, Tarragona, Girona and Lleida. These provinces are being explored to discover the most suitable application of the Dark Tourism attractiveness scan model where the exploration of potential products and services are shown.

As of now, the two provinces of Catalonia, Barcelona and Tarragona have been researched and explored as Dark Tourism destinations which have historical background of Dark Tourism sites as well as products and services. Regarding the province of Girona, it will be explored in another occasion. As mentioned before, this research paper will be scanning the Dark Tourism attractiveness scan model in Lleida.

The data of the participants is gathered by surveys where each participant has provided very useful information regarding dark tourism in Lleida. The participants will be Lleida locals or people that have lived in Lleida or are very well rooted from Lleida.

The methodology of the questions in the surveys will be close ended and open-ended questions in order to compare the answers and see clear opinions and comments of the locals in Lleida in regards to Dark Tourism:

- Do you know about Dark Tourism?
- Do you know that Dark Tourism is a new trend?
- Have you thought of promoting Dark Tourism?
- Do you think that in the future the people will come for the dark tourism in Lleida?

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- Do you think that Dark Tourism will contribute to give your destination a better perception?

3.4 Ethical considerations

This research paper provides the ethical considerations as they help to support the findings of the readings and to draw effective and realistic conclusions to support the degree thesis. The ethical considerations are very crucial because the respondents should be carefully informed about the research paper and the aim of the research. The participants will be having all the freedom to provide us with their honest opinion and be anonymous if they wish to.

To carry out the ethical considerations, the participants have been asked to give their consent in participation for this research paper and to publish the results in the thesis through the 'consent forms', which consists of a questionnaire sent to the participants prior to the interview arrangement which clearly shows the signature of the interview and this also shows that the hotels have given their consent and authority to publish the results.

CHAPTER 4. FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

Regarding the findings compile, it is the aim now to present the structure of this part of the paper. Firstly, there is a deep analysis to verify that Lleida is a destination by meeting the 10 'As' for places to become a destination (Morrison, 2013). In order to validate Lleida as a destination, information collected in the two types of surveys and interviews is used, as well as information gathered in the website of the DMOs of Lleida. Moreover, there is one: *Càtedra de Turisme d'Interior i de Muntanya*, which had been tremendously interesting as they carried out the Annual Statistic Directory of Tourism and Leisure in Lleida 2017-2018 (last version existing).

Secondly, it is created an interesting catalogue of dark tourism sites and products in Lleida according to *Seven Dark Suppliers* (Stone, 2008) and *Dark tourism typologies* (Cisa & Grau, 2018). After that, it has been analyzed these products and sites of dark tourism to their darkness' level according to the *Dark Tourism Spectrum Framework* (Stone, 2006).

Before getting into a deeper findings' analysis, it is of relevance to clarify that the pandemic of Covid-19 has altered the amount of feedback obtained. In the case of the residents' surveys, the minimum of number of surveys (40) have not been reached. Therefore, it is acknowledged that these surveys are not significant and will have an illustrative character instead. As for the interviews with hotels, even though it has been tried to reach 37 hotels of different parts of the region in Lleida, so that to identify if perceptions change depending on the location, only two hotels gave response to the petition to collaborate in the degree thesis. Because of the Covid-19 situation, the interviews were undertaken through audio-visual methods, and the consent form's acceptation has been verbal.

4.1 Recognize a tourism destination

As it has been mentioned during this research, the paper aims to establish the existing Scan model in the region of Lleida, as it has already been carried out in the area of Barcelona and Tarragona; all of them regions of Catalonia – Spain.

The province of Lleida is located in the west-north part of Catalonia, whose popularity comes from the amazing mountains it has: not only for skiing, but for other activities such as hiking, canoeing…. for adventurous and sport tourists. Due to the investment that recently has been done in infrastructures, with the arrival of the high-speed train (AVE), tourism has been quite benefited.

According to the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE),* the population of the province is of 434,930 inhabitants (2019). Lleida is formed by 14 *comarques* (what in English would be called districts) which are: Alt Urgell, Alta Ribagorça, Berguedà, Cerdanya, Garrigues, Noguera, Pallars Jussà, Pallars Sobirà, Pla d'Urgell, Segarra, Segrià, Solsonès, Urgell and Val d'Aran. There are 2 other *comarques*, Berguedà and Cerdanya with special cases. Berguedà can be considered as a *comarca* of Lleida because one town (Gòsol) belongs administratively to Lleida. Cerdanya is divided into two parts: Alta Cerdanya, belonging to the French region of Llenguadoc-Roselló, and Baixa Cerdanya divided into the provinces of Girona and Lleida.

Figure 7. *Comarques* of Lleida (Minerales' website, n.d.)

The capital of the region is Lleida. In addition to this classification, Lleida's DMO decided to split up the region into 3 areas, which are: Pirineus, Terres de l'Ebre and Val d'Aran.

One characteristic that makes this region essential for the country is that there is the border with France and Andorra. Indeed, it is a strategic city as it is located in the middle between Barcelona and Madrid, two of the most important cities in Spain.

In order to verify that the region of Lleida can be understood as a dark tourism destination, several sources of information have been gathered. On the one hand, interviewers of the hospitality sector have given their view about the issue, surveys among potential visitors and surveys carried out among residents in the region. On the other hand, the webpage of Lleida's DMOs appeared to be very profitable for the amount of information provided.

In the following section, it would be analysed how the region of Lleida accomplishes the attributes that Morrison established for a tourism destination (Morrison, 2013).

Awareness

With reference to the awareness, during this paper it has been exposed that dark tourism is an emerging type of tourism, which is every time more gaining tourists (Seaton, 2009).

From surveys and interviews undertaken, it is discovered that people are not quite aware of dark tourism in Lleida. Regarding its residents, only 32% of interviewers answered that they previously have heard about dark tourism and the reason for its knowledge were family and friends in most cases. Therefore, word of mouth is how residents discover dark tourism. Their second way of getting to know this tourism was TV series, a trend pointed out by (Stone, 2009). From the point of view of interviewees, they acknowledge the existence of dark tourism, but they conclude that in Lleida it is not only common, but neither promoted.

All participants have recognized the region of Lleida, however, not all of them associate this area with a dark tourism place to explore.

On the other hand, participants were asked about the potential precedence of dark tourists to the region of Lleida, only 8.7% bet for international ones. Therefore, it could be seen that residents of the area do not perceive that Lleida can be a powerful dark tourism site (as it could be for sport tourism, for instance).

Indeed, as in the *Annual Statistic Directory of Tourism and Leisure in Lleida for 2017-2018.* done by the *Patronat de Turisme de la Diputació de Lleida*¸ the great majority of visitors (89.65%) contributes to the domestic tourism and only 10.35% for international tourists.

To sum up, it could be expounding that awareness degree is low, especially in residents because they are not aware of the potential that the region could offer to tourists in dark tourism. Consequently, if residents themselves do not know the region's potential, it will be difficult to promote.

Attractiveness

The region of Lleida stands out for its beauty in the landscape, a perfect place to do trekking, hiking or nature sports. When analysing whether dark sites would appeal and be an attraction for tourists, only 32% of participants believed that the province has the potential to offer attractiveness sites of dark tourism.

Nevertheless, interviewees reckoned that Lleida perhaps has dark tourism sites, however, unknown for population. One interviewee gave the example of *Trincheras,* a place in which soldiers used to hide while war was happening. Still, the interviewee felt a little bit reluctant of the potential that the area can offer; not enough to attract flows of tourists to his *comarca.* Another interviewee argued

that Lleida did not have these tourism sites (or at least have not known about it) and did not think that the region had potential to be a reference in what dark tourism concerns.

What strikes the most is that when asked to potential tourists whether they would be interested in visiting a dark tourism site, almost half of participants were willing to (48%, as represented in the following graph). However, when they were asked if they would be interested in exploring these places by doing a travel whose main aim was dark tourism, participants interesting was lowered to 39.7%

Figure 8. Graph from surveys to potential tourists. Own creation

Nonetheless, in a survey carried out by *Càtedra de Turisme d'Interior i de Muntanya* asking for the motives for travelling to Lleida, the option of dark tourism purposes was not even offered (although some alleging *others* may refer to dark tourism, it is not specified in the document). The major purpose resulting is visiting family or friends, doing cultural tourism and visiting natural spaces.

Regardless of the motivations of visitors, in 2018 *Càtedra de Turisme d'Interior i de Muntanya* did a study in which they realized that the Lleida had undergone an increase of travellers in the region. That means that the region is a destination more and more appealing to tourists.
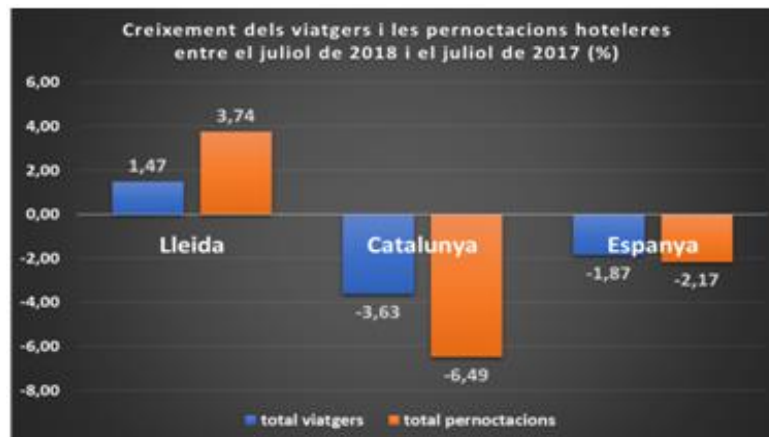
Figure 9. Increase of travellers in Lleida (Càtedra de Turisme de Lleida, 2018)

To conclude, it is found that residents themselves are not aware of how much attractive the region for dark tourists can be, even though there is attractiveness. It is also detected that tourists are interested in visiting these sites, although not inclined to do a trip whose only motive is dark tourism.
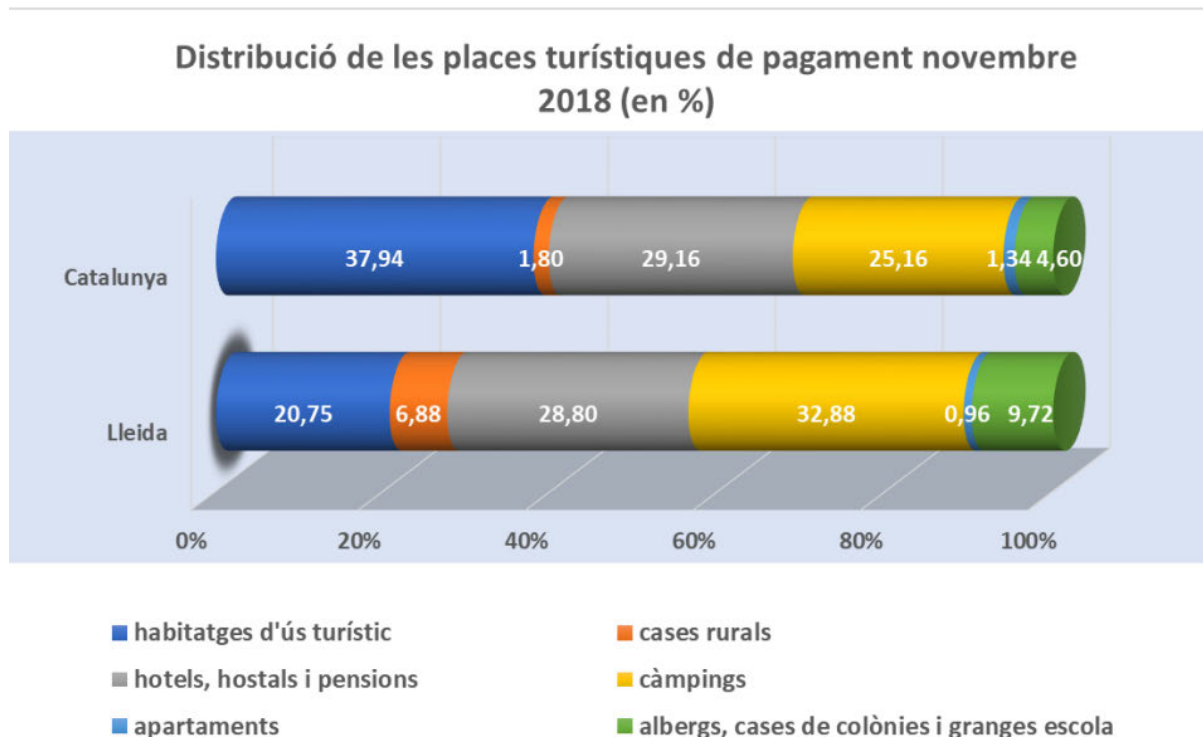
Availability

With reference to this attribute, the offer made consists of hotels, camping and rural tourism (IDESCAT, 2019). In the DMOs' webpage, the offer is more specified: hotels and hostels, rural houses, camping, accommodation of touristic use, touristic' apartments, youth installations and shelter and inn. For each type of accommodation, one can identify where they are located in the region are.

Consequently, the DMO wishes to help tourists when deciding on their travelling accommodation, either by first selecting the accommodation type and then looking for it in the different *comarques,* or by choosing first the *comarca* and then discovering what type of accommodation offers. That being said, in the *Annual Statistic Directory of Tourism and Leisure in Lleida for 2017-2018* (*Càtedra de Turisme d'Interior I de Muntanya, 2019)*, it was added 2nd residences as a way of touristic accommodation.

From the just mentioned report, it is shown a study which analysed the offer of touristic accommodation in the 3 areas, and concluded by stating that 48.4% of the accommodation in the region was in Pirineus, 34.3% for Terres de l'Ebre and 17.3% for Val d'Aran (according to its classification of the region).

Getting deeper in the accommodation type, what predominates the most in the province are 3-star hotels, not very luxurious or with many facilities. That is because the target persona who usually visits the province is a sport tourist who wants to be in touch with nature, and the category of the hotel is not a priority when choosing accommodation. Indeed, in the Annual Statistic Directory report (2019), it is displayed the accommodation offer of Lleida versus Catalunya, and what stands out the most is that the percentage of camping is higher in Lleida (32.88%) than in Catalunya (25.16%), as well as for shelters (9.72% in Lleida, whereas 4.60% in Catalunya).

Distribució de les places turístiques de pagament novembre 2018 (en %)

	habitatges d'ús turístic	cases rurals	hotels, hostals i pensions	càmpings	apartaments	albergs, cases de colònies i granges escola
Catalunya	37,94	1,80	29,16	25,16	1,34	4,60
Lleida	20,75	6,88	28,80	32,88	0,96	9,72

Figure 10. Distribution of touristic holidays in 2018 (Càtedra de Turisme d'Interior i de Muntanya, 2019)

Access

The options to reach the province and move within it are to be more developed. Some investments have recently been made, such as the arrival of the high-speed train AVE to the city of Lleida. It has been a tremendous advance in the communication system as it is a line that can connect Madrid to Paris. Therefore, DMO's effort has been made not only to promote domestic tourism but international one too.

That being said, more efforts should be made. Although the capital has been connected, the province lacks a transportation system within it because there is no train line connecting the southest part (Terres de l'Ebre) to the highest (Val d'Aran).

The highway transportation system appears to be the most consistent means of transport because of its possibilities. The roads AP-2 and A-2 connect Madrid to Barcelona, going through other cities such as Zaragoza or Guadalajara. Among the region, one can find the A-14 road which connects the capital Lleida to France (going through Vielha) and allows going to Huesca, the C-1313 road that connects the capital to Andorra and C-240 and C-230 that connects to Tarragona and Valencia Autonomous Community.

Figure 11. Highway transportation system in Lleida (Turismedelleida website, n.d.)

Air transportation is also present, however, in small proportion. There is the Alguaire airport, located 15km away from the capital. According to its website, there are only 6 companies operating: Air Nostrum, Iberia, Jet2.com, Fly, QualityTravel Experten and Neilson. Hence, the influx of tourists is much reduced.

Its mainly use is for charter flights for people willing to ski. Therefore, the travel includes the flight, the transportation up to the ski slopes and the accommodation. The tour operators co-work with QualityTravel and Neilson airlines, bringing tourists from United Kingdom. AirNostrum is the airline responsible for the influx of tourists from the Balearic Islands.

The 6th March came out a news in the newspaper Europapress, which stated that investors were willing to invest 5.5 million € in the Alguaire Airport in order to turn it into a hangar. The underlying objective is to give an added value to the airport of innovation, formation and industriality. Hence, it will become a hub airport which will generate dynamism and local employment.

From the inputs gathered in the interviews, one interviewee identified a clear necessity that the province had: accessibility. From his point of view, dark tourism was a very interesting offer to suggest to his guests, however, he felt he could not suggest it because accessibility was not good enough in order to promote this tourism type.

As a conclusion, the best means of transport is through road, because of the possibilities of connection to other cities. This factor contributes to the domestic tourism, rather than international tourists, because the only way for coming is by car, passing France or Andorra. Therefore, the expectancy of international tourists is only by French people or Andorrian.

Appearance

As for the perceptions that tourists have when visiting Lleida, most of them are enchanted. For this attribute, it is founded very profitable and valuable. Interviewees agreed on one thing, and it is that all tourists when leaving their hotels said: *I didn't think it would be so beautiful, I couldn't image how much Lleida could offer to us…*

Therefore, although at first sight it is not a place where tourists will be prone to visit, those who visit end fascinated about its wonderfulness.

It is worth mentioning that this appearance is increased when talking about sport and nature tourism, since Lleida is a point of reference for sports, such as ski, or doing mountain climbing. Hence, it is a very appealing destination to sports or nature tourists.

When asked in a survey to potential tourists if they were appealed to explore dark tourism sites, almost half of the participants (48%) were interested in visiting them. This means, that even though the type of tourists Lleida receives is of sports or nature, there are people willing to do dark tourism. Here the efforts needed to be focuses on promotion and communication, so more people know about these dark tourism offers.

Activities

The whole province of Lleida offers a wide range of activities. In the website of its DMO, it is observed a section called *What to do*, in which one can find activities classified by groups: sports, routes, culture, gastronomy and nature.

As it is a region very powerful and known for its landscapes, DMO knows and bets high for the routes' offer. Specifically, in the section of routes, different types of them are suggested such as gastronomic, BTT, natural, cultural, hiking and with GPS.
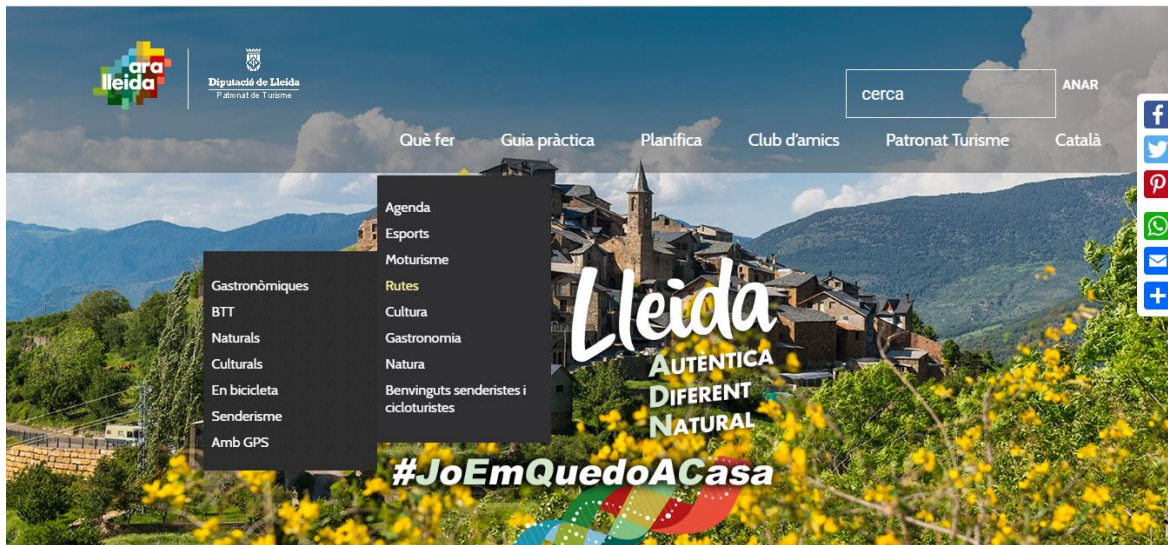
Figure 12. Website of DMO *Aralleida* (n.d.)

In this same webpage there is a section called Practical Guide, a space in which tourists can analyze which activities and experiences can offer each specific *comarca*. That means that there is a hard work from the DMOs to really help and guide tourists when making their choosing.

From the interviews, it is found that there are people travelling to Lleida to whom the visit's main purpose is historical tourism, doing escorted tours. Indeed, dark tourism sites can be promoted and be the same sometimes as historical and cultural tourism sites.

However, there is no section or even mentioned some activity related to the dark tourism. For instance, visiting *trincheras*, doing Jewish routes coming from the Pyrenees…

To conclude, as discovered from interviews and surveys, there are some activities to do regarding dark tourism, but if the DMO does not promote and make efforts on its communication channel, tourists will not be aware of the potential the region has in dark tourism.

Assurance

Regarding the attribute of assurance, it surpasses tourists' expectations. From interviews, information has been proved that tourists did not expect that the region could offer that much. Still,

this information does not include dark tourism, as people interviewed had hardly ever received dark tourists.

Appreciation

From *Pla Estratègic de Turisme del Pirineu i les Terres de l'Ebre 19-22* it is highlighted the *human capital* of the region, in terms of inhabitants of Lleida sharing their culture and idiosyncrasy. That is an attribute which recently becomes more valuable for tourists, as nowadays there is persona who is really curious for the local essence.

From the interviews conducted, one interviewee highlighted the delight that tourists feel when leaving the region. This positive surprise in tourists comes from the beautifulness of the region, and also from the hospitality of the locals.

Action

All actions that are being taken for the tourism in Lleida are developed by Catolonia's Tourism Board and the *Patronat de Turisme de la Diputació de Lleida*. They have split the province into three areas: *Terres de Lleida*, *Pirineus* and Val d'Aran.

The Strategic Plan of Lleida really focuses on getting to know what is local, so the essence of the province while bearing in mind sustainability. This plan is set for 3 years (from 2019 to 2022), which will take place in 4 phases: current situation analysis, diagnosis, model definition and strategies and action lines definition, monitoring and control. There is also a reference made to the Sustainable Development Goals, and the intention to be more sustainable in their actions regarding the economy, heritage or cultural fields. Its vision is to position itself as a quality destination, ecological, responsible and innovative. However, there is no mention in the report of the Strategic Plan to acknowledge new tourism types emerging, hence no recognition to dark tourism.

Furthermore, the webpage is very straightforward, easily to operate and it is shown in several languages: Catalan, Spanish, English, French, German and Russian. This means that it is trying to target these markets.

Accountability

Regarding the accountability, the province of Lleida has three main organisations or DMOs. OTL (*Observatori Turístic de Lleida*) is the organization in charge of the assessment and evaluation of the supply and demand that the region receives. It will be the one responsible for doing research on dark tourism in the area and see if it is a viable option for the region. However, there are neither reports nor information talking about the matter.

Aside from this organization, *Patronat de Turisme de la Diputació de Lleida* is responsible for the tourism promotion of its areas in the different communication channels, assessing companies and towns and promote the active presence in the tourism market. Also, they had been carrying out reports, such as the one that has been mentioned during this chapter: the *Annual Statistic Directory of Tourism and Leisure in Lleida for 2017-2018.* It has been done alongside with the organization *Càtedra de Turisme d'Interior I Muntanya,* an initiative created by the last organization, whose aim is to provide qualitative and quantitative information regarding tourism in the region.

4.2 Catalogue of dark tourism products in Lleida

During the methodology part of the report, it has been shown that the Dark Tourism typologies on which the catalogue will be built are the 'Dark Fun Factories', 'Dark Resting Places', 'Dark Shrines', 'Dark Conflict Sites' and 'Dark Camps of Genocide'. These are the typologies that are shown and analysed in the Attractiveness Scan Model in Tarragona by Romano and Zaccaria (2019) but unfortunately one of the typologies, 'Dark Shrines' was not detected in the province of Lleida which is connected to the history of Lleida and its dark tourism aspects. In this section of the report, the main highlights of existing and potential dark tourism products in province of Lleida are presented which are very closely linked with the vivid history in Lleida and this shows that every destination has a character which marks a valued difference.

Dark fun factories
The earliest concept of a modern escape room was "True Dungeon". It had many of the same elements that people associate with escape rooms today which is all about a live-action and team based game where the players explore a physical space and solve mental and physical puzzles to accomplish a goal in a specific amount of limited time.

The modern escape room was first designed and launched in Japan, Asia. It soon became very popular and expanded to other countries and it soon became very successful and a trendy entertainment for people of ages and this soon became popular internationally and it is shown as in November 2019, there were over 50,000 escape rooms worldwide.

Following the trend of Escape Rooms all around the world, Lleida also introduced some Escape Rooms. The two that are very closely related to Dark Tourism are *The Bunker Escape* and *Trauma Factory.* These escape rooms produce a lot of different feelings and emotions in people while playing it and after. People go through very intense adrenaline rush, they have survival fear, they are confused, and their minds are fully activated as they are multitasking, discovering clues and solving puzzles.

These escape rooms are created for entertainment purposes which allows us to place these three escape rooms of Lleida in the lightest degree of Dark Tourism Spectrum.

Dark Resting Places

Cemeteries are very important part of culture and history of any destination and especially in Lleida as there is a small monument in the St. Joseph department in the cemetery of Lleida as a tribute to the victims of the bombings in 1937 and 1938.

Raine (2013) identifies cemeteries as a place for the mourners and pilgrims which they interpret as devotion, the morbidly curious and thrill seekers which they further interpret as a experience, the information seekers and hobbyists which they interpret as a discovery and sightseers, retreaters and passive recreationists which they interpret as incidental activities. Her research and views explain that the greater the personal connection with the cemetery, the greater and darker the tourist to visit that cemetery.

The website that is dedicated to exploring and providing their audience the history of the cemeteries around the world, *Entre Piedras y Cipreses,* they explain that the cemetery has a trapezoidal perimeter and it is surrounded by tall cypresses. Also, just behind the Franco monolith in the Lleida cemetery is the monument built in 2005 in memory of the shot victims. It is a kind of stone wall with two entrances, in the middle of which we find a glass urn with the earth from the old wall of the cemetery where some of the victims were shot. This necropolis also has a broad example of funerary

art, both in its sculptures and in its pantheons and graves, niches and columbarium, all located in the midst of magnificent gardens.

In the Cemetery of Lleida there are 4 spaces with graves, dignified in 2010. The bombing pit used before and after the war. It was the grave of the cemetery where people without resources were buried. There are 254 victims of the bombings. The military grave, with an undetermined number of remains. There were 354 bodies that were transferred to the Valle de los Caídos. Trenches of the old Department of San Miguel and San José and San Miguel. 145 bodies were transferred to *Valle de los Caídos*. In this space is the grave of the 545 victims of the Francoist repression. Trench of the 550 victims of revolutionary violence.

This is one of the most important Cemeteries in Lleida as well as the one with a very rich history dating back to the Spanish Civil War Era.

Dark Conflict Sites

Due to the "Battle of the Ebro", Lleida is one of the provinces in Catalonia that was very affected by the battles of the Spanish Civil War in the years 1937-1938. The following route gives a clear knowledge of the *'Battle of the Ebro'* & *'Battle of Segre'*. The route shows various Dark Conflict Sites as well as explains the history of the Spanish Civil War.

Route:

This route is all about the Battle of Segre, also known as the Battle of Balaguer, is the collective name of series of battles that took place along Segre River between 1937-1938, during the Spanish Civil War.

Below, there is an explanation of each place which is included in the route and it shows the importance of the place as well as its relationship with the history of Lleida of the important battles.

These small towns are organised in a geographical sequence, they all are very close to each other, all the way starting from the north of Lleida to the south.

Camarasa:

During the Spanish Civil War, specifically during the Battle of Segre, the so-called battle of electricity took place. The control of the Camarasa and Tremp plants were very important for the war since they generated part of the electricity supply for the city of Barcelona and to all its industrial work.

During the month of April 1938, the electrical stations fell into the hands of the Francoists as they were advancing and occupying Camarasa and Tremp.

Sant Llorenc de Montgai:

On the way to the capital city of Lleida, this village, Sant Llorenç de Montgai is found. This is a small town in Lleida, and it is a place where hundreds of war fighters from both sides had died during the Spanish Civil War. There were battles within the town as well as in the outskirts of the town.

Gerb:

This small town in the province of Lleida, located next to the Segre river between the towns of Balaguer and Sant Llorenc¸ de Montgai, which was conquered by the Francoists at the beginning of April 1938 after their irresistible advance through the Aragonese lands. So, part of its population hid in a water well in Gerb.

Also, it is important to talk about the Necropolis of La Colomina which is a burial area that technically is classified as an incineration mound and it dates all the way to the Bronze Age, between 850 BC and 650 BC. There are more than forty burial mounds containing funerary urns.

Balaguer:

During the Spanish Civil War, the battle of Balaguer took place between May 22 and 28, 1938. In it, the Republic attempted to counterattack and eliminate a national bridgehead, succeeding in the second attempt. The Santo Cristo sanctuary was also used as a prison for a time, as was the Gothic church of Santa María.

Moreover, Pla d'Almatà is one of the reference places in Catalonia to study the Islamic presence in the territory during the Middle Ages. Pla d'Almatà which is a large area located close to the Santo Cristo sanctuary. In this site is the origin of Balaguer and the remains of a fully consolidated city that had its splendour in the 11th century. It is the largest Andalusian period site preserved in Catalonia and one of the main sites in ancient Al-Andalus. It is the original nucleus of the city of Balaguer and one of its main neighbourhoods, although it was born as a military camp at the time of the Islamic conquest, in the 8th century.

Likewise, Museu de la Noguera is an archaeological museum showing the influence that the Arab world had on the region that today we know as Catalonia. Created in 1983 to manage the local archaeological heritage via the old Museu Municipal de Balaguer, the Museu de la Noguera since 1995. So, the main function of the Museu de la Noguera is to be an interpretation centre promoting information from the battle and to publicise this medieval heritage and the Muslim footprint left in Catalonia.

Also, in late April and early May 1938, the Franco's army built an observatory known as El Bombo inside the remains of an old fourteenth-century tower attached to the wall. It was the place of command and observatory of the Francoist artillery and had a prominent role along with the auxiliary observatories.

Vilanova de la Barca:

This is a small town in the province of Lleida, located next to the Segre river. During the Francoist advances of March-April 38 by Aragon and Catalonia, it was furiously bombarded by its aviation from day 2 of this last month, which is why it was practically uninhabited for nine months.

Lleida:

The Civil Guards had to concentrate on Lleida only which lead to the disobedience of the public orders. The Civil War in Lleida left images of shock and memories that are hardly easy to erase, especially after the bombardment of the city on 2 November 1937. There were no military targets to beat, but the bombs were directed against the civilian population. Many women and children waiting at the entrance of a market, in addition to about fifty children and some schoolteachers, were among the victims. Five months later, in late March 1938, Lleida was bombed once again. On 3 April of that year, Franco's soldiers victoriously entered the city.

Seros:

This is the town of the province of Lleida, located next to the Segre river, which was occupied by the Francoists on March 29, 1938. They managed to install here a bridge head in a semicircle of 600 meters radius, in which they even placed a flamethrower, so that its trenches reached the highest hills and at some points they were only 50 meters from the Republicans.

La Granja d'Escarp:

During the war it served as a barracks for a republican battalion of dynamiters. Moroccan troops from the Francoist army arrived in the vicinity of these lands on March 26, 1938

Les Borges Blanques:

On December 25, 38 and January 1, 39, it was bombed by Franco's aviation, resulting in the damage to numerous buildings. The town was captured by Italian troops on January 5 after a tough battle.

La Granadella:

During the final period of the war, this town became an outstanding republican military plaza. There was a school of commissioners in it, and a brigade that participated in the battle of the Ebro was also installed. On December 24, 38, shortly after the Francoist offensive on Catalunya began, it was bombarded with impunity despite the sirens and anti-aircraft defending it. The houses were the most affected, and the commissioner's school received a direct impact. It was approximately three o'clock in the afternoon, the time when classes began, which led to the death of twelve attending students plus two girls trying to take refuge in the building. Later, the Francoists attacked the Granadella, which was defended to death by its defenders. Most of the population had taken refuge in neighbouring caves.

Dark camps of genocide

When discussing Dark Camps of Genocide sites in Lleida, Seu Vella is very important to this spectrum. As explained in the *Turo Seu Vella website*, "Seu Vella" is the old cathedral of Lleida. It has been defined as one of the best artistic productions of the 13th century Catalan architecture and, by extension, of European medieval architecture, the Seu Vella is a singular cathedral that leaves no one indifferent. Its architecture shares the limelight with high quality carvings that are preserved in capitals, cornices, corbels, portals, etc. The substantial remains of preserved mural paintings or the chapels built by prominent families or distinguished church members reflect a prestigious building with a splendid past.

The Seu Vella cathedral is also steeped in history, as it became an important artistic centre and the visual reference of a rich, extensive and powerful diocese. Sobriety, grandeur and magnificence are some of its attributes.

At the end of April 1938, the Seu Vella, which was still functioning as a military barracks, was also used as a concentration camp and classification of prisoners waiting to be evacuated to Franco's rear-guard. This camp and prison located in the "Main Castle" ceased to function as such in August 1940. Seu Nova is inside Seu Vella and during the Spanish Civil War, it was a prison.

Seu Vella as well as Seu Nova are pieces of art that have had a history with the battles in Lleida, which have suffered and have turned into concentration camps which categorises them in this typology of Dark Tourism.

Below, it can be found the proposal of catalogue of dark tourism products in the province of Lleida, from the lightest level of darkness to the highest.
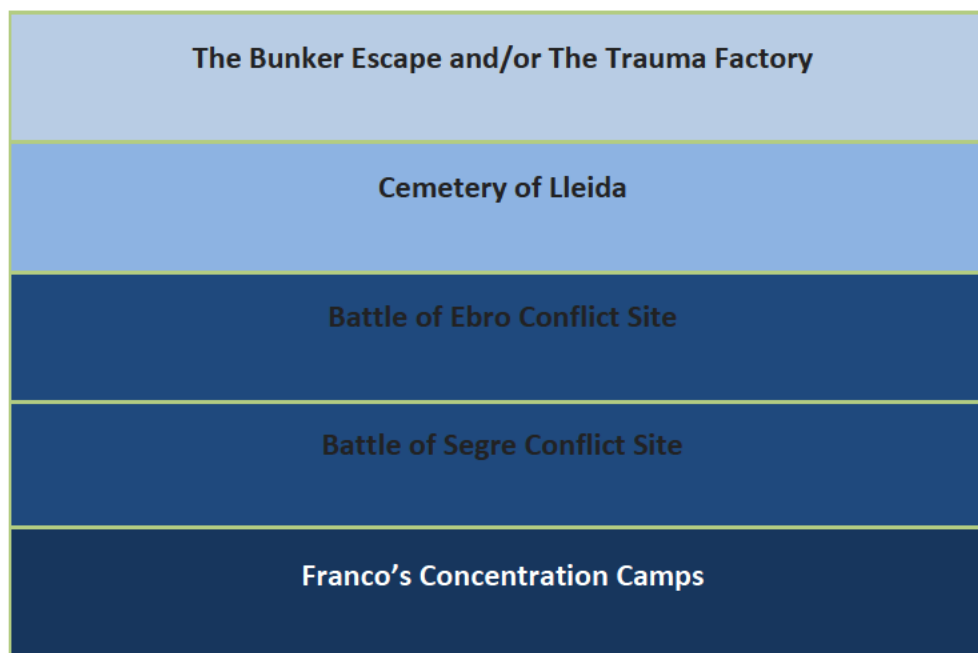
Figure 13. Own creation based on *Dark Tourism Attractiveness Scan Model* (Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas, 2020)

4.3. Dark Tourism Spectrum Framework

After implementing the "Dark Spectrum Framework" tool (Stone, 2006) in the province of Lleida and developing a catalogue of existing and potential Dark Tourism attractions there, it is important to set a table with information of each attraction (e.g. Name, Place, Year, Typology, degree of darkness and brief description) that has been created.

Name	The Bunker Escape
Place	Granyena de les Garrigues, Lleida
Year	2018
DT Typologies	Dark Fun Factories
DT Spectrum Framework	LIGHT – LIGHTEST
Tourism Nature	With Intention
Description	An escape room in Lleida where the clients play in teams and enjoy the experience

Figure 14. The Bunker Escape in Granyena de les Garrigues (Tripadvisor, 2020)

Name	Trauma Factory – Manoir Escape House
Place	Alcanó, Lleida
Year	2018
DT Typologies	Dark Fun Factories
DT Spectrum Framework	LIGHT – LIGHTEST
Tourism Nature	With Intention
Description	An escape room which allows the clients to experience trauma through the game.

Figure 15. Manoir Escape House in Alcanó (Riddlebeaters' website, 2019)

Name	Cemetery of Lleida
Place	Lleida
Year	Century. XIX
DT Typologies	Dark Resting Places
DT Spectrum Framework	LIGHT - DARK
Tourism Nature	Without Intention; Cultural Context; Nature
Description	A beautiful cemetery in Lleida with history from centuries.

Figure 16. Cemetery of Lleida (*Entre piedras y cipreses* website, 2017)

Name	River Segre
Place	Lleida
Year	It was born on the northern slope of Pico del Segre, in the French municipality of Llo.
DT Typologies	Dark Conflict Sites
DT Spectrum Framework	DARK - DARKER
Tourism Nature	Without Intention; Cultural Context; Natural
Description	The beautiful River Segre relates to most of the history of Lleida

Figure 17. River Segre (El Guía Local website, n.d.)

Name	Camarasa hydroelectric plant
Place	Camarasa, Lleida
Year	1937-1938
DT Typologies	Dark Conflict Sites
DT Spectrum Framework	DARK - DARKER
Tourism Nature	Without Intention; Cultural Context; Natural
Description	The hydroelectric plant in Camarasa which fell in the hands of Franco

Figure 18. Camarassa Hydroelectric Plant (Endesa website, n.d.)

Name	Sant Llorenç de Montgai
Place	Sant Llorenç de Montgai, Lleida
Year	1937-1938
DT Typologies	Dark Conflict Sites
DT Spectrum Framework	DARK - DARKER
Tourism Nature	Without Intention; Cultural Context
Description	A wonderful town in Lleida with a lot of tranquility

Figure 19. Sant Llorenç de Montgai (Picoseuropa website, n.d.)

Name	Necropolis of the Colomina
Place	Gerb, Lleida
Year	Bronze Age
DT Typologies	Dark Conflict Sites
DT Spectrum Framework	DARK - DARKER
Tourism Nature	Without Intention; Cultural Context; Natural
Description	Necropolis of the Colomina is a site that dates back to the Bronze Age

Figure 20. Necropolis of the Colomina in Gerb (Serradelmontsec website, n.d.)

Name	Santo Cristo Sanctuary
Place	Balaguer, Lleida
Year	Century XVII - Century XX
DT Typologies	Dark Conflict Sites
DT Spectrum Framework	DARK - DARKER
Tourism Nature	Without Intention; Cultural Context; Natural
Description	A beautiful Sanctuary of Santo Cristo situated in Balaguer.

Figure 21. Santo Cristo Sanctuary in Balaguer (7accents website, n.d.)

Name	Santa Maria Church
Place	Balaguer, Lleida
Year	Centuries XIV - XVI
DT Typologies	Dark Conflict Sites
DT Spectrum Framework	DARK - DARKER
Tourism Nature	Without Intention; Cultural Context; Natural
Description	A lovely gothic church of Santa Maria situated in Balaguer.

Figure 22. Santa Maria Church in Balaguer (Wikipedia, 2007)

Name	Pla d'Almatà
Place	Balaguer, Lleida
Year	11th century
DT Typologies	Dark Conflict Sites
DT Spectrum Framework	DARK - DARKER
Tourism Nature	Without Intention; Cultural Context; Natural
Description	A site in Balaguer which has Islamic history

Figure 23. Pla d'Almatà in Balaguer (GuiaBalaguer website, n.d.)

Name	Museu de la Noguera
Place	Balaguer, Lleida
Year	1983
DT Typologies	Dark Conflict Sites
DT Spectrum Framework	DARK - DARKER
Tourism Nature	With Intention; Cultural Context;
Description	A museum in Balaguer which has Islamic history

Figure 24. Museum of La Noguera in Balaguer (*Agència Catalana del Patrimoni,* n.d.)

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MANAGEMENT
SANT IGNASI

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Name	El Bombo Observatory
Place	Balaguer, Lleida
Year	1938
DT Typologies	Dark Conflict Sites
DT Spectrum Framework	DARK - DARKER
Tourism Nature	With Intention; Cultural Context
Description	An observatory built by Franco's army during the Spanish Civil War.

Figure 25. El Bombo Observatory in Balaguer (Balaguer website, n.d.)

Name	Vilanova de la Barca
Place	Vilanova de la Barca, Lleida
Year	1937-1938
DT Typologies	Dark Conflict Sites
DT Spectrum Framework	DARK - DARKER
Tourism Nature	Without Intention; Cultural Context;
Description	A town in Lleida which was furiously bombarded during By Francoists

Figure 26. Vilanova de la Barca (Vilanova de la Barca website, n.d.)

Name	Seros
Place	Seros, Lleida
Year	1937-1938
DT Typologies	Dark Conflict Sites
DT Spectrum Framework	DARK - DARKER
Tourism Nature	Without Intention; Cultural Context;
Description	A very small town in Lleida, Seros, which also suffered during the Spanish Civil War.

Figure 27. Seros (Wikipedia, 2008)

Name	La Granja d'Escarp
Place	La Granja d'Escarp, Lleida
Year	1937-1938
DT Typologies	Dark Conflict Sites
DT Spectrum Framework	DARK - DARKER
Tourism Nature	Without Intention; Cultural Context;
Description	La Granja d'Escarp is a town that the Francoist army arrived in the vicinity of these lands

Figure 28. La Granja d'Escarp (Enciclopedia.cat website, n.d.)

Name	Les Borges Blanques
Place	Les Borges Blanques, Lleida
Year	1937-1938
DT Typologies	Dark Conflict Sites
DT Spectrum Framework	DARK - DARKER
Tourism Nature	Without Intention; Cultural Context;
Description	This lovely town was bombed by Franco's aviation

Figure 29. Les Borges Blanques (Mcperspectives blog, 2011)

Name	La Granadella
Place	La Granadella, Lleida
Year	1937-1938
DT Typologies	Dark Conflict Sites
DT Spectrum Framework	DARK - DARKER
Tourism Nature	Without Intention; Cultural Context
Description	The Francoists attacked the Granadella and it served as a Military plaza as well during the Spanish Civil War.

Figure 30. La Granadella (La Granadella website, n.d.)

Name	Seu Vella
Place	Lleida
Year	13th Century
DT Typologies	Dark Camps of Genocide
DT Spectrum Framework	DARKER-DARKEST
Tourism Nature	Without Intention; Cultural Context
Description	It is one of the best artistic production of the 13th century Catalan history

Figure 31. Seu Vella in Lleida (*LonelyPlanet* website, 2017)

4.4. Proposition of a Dark Tourism Route in Lleida

Once it has been assessed dark tourism product in the region of Lleida, it is time to develop two routes which include some of them. These routes are just proposals; possible routes for which it is acknowledged that they are incomplete and in order to fill them, DMOs of each town would need to collaborate.

One of the most points of this paper is to create the structure of a route that can be very much completed to eventually obtain a definitive product.

Some dark tourism sites have been assembled into two different routes: Spanish Civil War route in the south of Lleida and Spanish Civil war route through river Segre. Not all tourism sites previously mentioned have been included as they did not fit into the route's theme, and a common theme did not make sense for the sites remaining.

The first route, Spanish Civil War route in the south of Lleida, is focused on the southern part. It is expected to do it using roads, as it comprises the capital (Lleida) and two small nearby towns called *Alcanó* and *Granyena de les Garrigues*. The route consists of doing two escape rooms, visiting the Cemetery of Lleida and *La Seu Vella*. In the following photograph, it can be seen how close the sites are and the arrows show the direction to follow. This route is expected to be done from the south to the north.
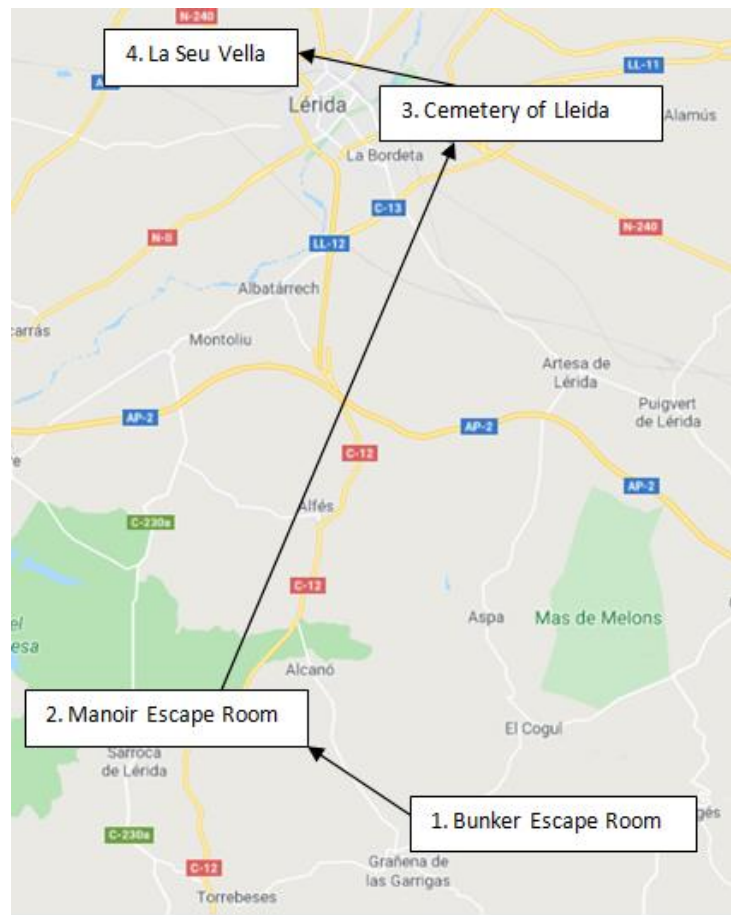
Figure 32. Route's map of Spanish Civil War route in the south of Lleida. Own creation

The second route, Spanish Civil war route through river Segre, goes from the northern town to the southern one and it is also expected to do it on road because of the accessibility. This route consists of visiting several towns which went harshly through the Spanish Civil war.

As the figure below shows, the path starts in *Camarasa*, visiting the hydroelectric plant. In the second place, it continues to *Sant Llorenç de Montgai* to to meander around town and its outskirts. After that, the route goes to *Gerb*, a beautiful town where residents used to hide during the war when attacks came. The next stop is *Balaguer*, which has a wide variety of sites to visit, such as Pla d'Almatà, Museum La Noguera or El Bombo Observatory. *Vilanova de la Barca* is the following stop, a town quite air-bombarded during the war. After that, the route arrives to the capital, *Lleida*, where tourists can contemplate the damages that left the war in the city. The next stops, *Serós*, *La Granja d'Escarp*, *La Granadella and Les Borges Blanques*, are towns in which visitors will grasp how disastrous was the Spanish Civil war among this region.

Figure 33. Spanish Civil war route through river Segre's map. Own creation

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSIONS

This is the final chapter of the degree thesis research on Dark Tourism in Lleida. This closing chapter includes the conclusions which sum up the analysis and research shown throughout this report as well as the creation of a route of Dark Tourism in the province of Lleida.

Lastly, some recommendations are suggested for the future researchers on the Dark Tourism topic. This chapter also explains the limitations that were encountered during the creation of this degree thesis and this will allow future researchers to the possibility to explore them in depth and fill the gap.

5.1. Conclusions

As explained throughout the degree thesis that Dark Tourism is an old concept which has been researched on and explored throughout the years by some of the very known academics in the Dark Tourism world such as Lennon & Foley, Philip Stone, Richard Sharpley and others. Dark Tourism has been trending in the recent years as people have started to gain knowledge about it through attractive sites which are unpleasant to visit but tourist are willing to visit these places now more than ever but most importantly people have recently discovered the Dark Tourism concept and places through the digital streaming content.

This research's main goal is to contribute to the limited academic knowledge of one of the most interesting types of tourism, Dark Tourism and to replicate the Dark Tourism Attractiveness Scan Model which was created for the province of Tarragona (Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas, 2020) in Catalonia's province of Lleida to explore and show the potential of services and products of this kind of tourism in Lleida. While researching on Dark Tourism, the thesis also explores the recent academics and their perception of Dark Tourism as well as the new ideas and criticism on the subject.

Moreover, through the creation of the Dark Tourism attractiveness scan model for Lleida, this information has contributed to the identification of potential Dark Tourism potential products in the geographic area within Catalonia.

Throughout the thesis, there is an exploration of a variety of ideas of Dark Tourism. Dark Tourism is a topic which has a very varied description which the academics have been exploring throughout the years. Understanding and exploring the phenomenon was very crucial to this research as it provided useful contribution while developing Dark Tourism potential products in Lleida.

Furthermore, the thesis did a analysis of the literature review which explored and set a context of the situation of Dark Tourism and aided in the understanding of a old concept yet a new age tourism trend which is here to stay by analysing the roots and growth of Dark Tourism over the years.

The thesis incorporates the *'10 As of a Successful Tourism Destination'* (Morrison, 2013) as well as the '*Dark Tourism Spectrum Framework*' (Stone, 2006) which enabled the development of the creation of the Dark Tourism Attractiveness Scan Model for the province of Lleida, in Catalonia and the proposal of potential products as well as Dark Tourism routes in Lleida.

The thesis has done a very deep analysis of the research of Dark Tourism in Lleida thesis topic. The thesis has answered all the research questions and fulfilled the objectives of the paper which contributes to the knowledge of the academic literature of Dark Tourism in Catalonia.

The thesis has explored the knowledge on Dark Tourism which was provided by all the Dark Tourism enthusiast and academics as well as the current state of Dark Tourism, nationally in Catalonia as well as internationally.

Lastly, the creation of this innovative methodology, the *Dark Tourism Attractiveness Scan Model,* this enabled the exploration of the geographic area of Lleida but this model could be applied to all the tourism destination areas in the world, and this will be very useful to show the potential visitors a new and a very unique as well as a new age touristic reason to visit a destination.

5.2. Recommendations

After having carried out this research, it can be confirmed that dark tourism has limitations, and for facing them, some recommendations are now to be exposed. The most relevant ones are communication, marketing and awareness.

The first one is to greatly increase the communication channels, not only to promote it to potential tourists, but among residents too. It has been discovered that residents (hoteliers included) are not aware of the potential that the region has to offer. It has great importance as they are a powerful source to transmit information to tourists. Hence, awareness is also an essential aspect to strengthen so that this communication can be effectively reached.

Consequently, pedagogy of dark tourism among residents could be of tremendous benefit as they would understand and verify that this region could offer potential tourism to dark tourists, and if they understand, communication will be easier.

What is definitely true is that major efforts to enhance communication channels and marketing are needed by DMOs. They are the ones promoting the region, and one example in the case of Lleida could be to add the proposed route in their website and in the Strategic Plan 19-22 they have created.

Furthermore, investment should be made on marketing campaigns, and taking advantage of the emerging trend on TV series such as mentioned (Stone, 2006).

5.3. Limitations and Further Research

5.3.1. Limitations

As Stone (2009) argued, dark tourism suffers from limitations even though in the last years it has gained recognition. Since it is an emerging tourism type, there is still space to further research and theory on the topic which may be the cause to the scarce data collection (Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas 2020).

On the other hand, this paper has suffered from a major limitation which has been the pandemic of Covid-19. For this reason, interviews and surveys have been affected in terms of results, as they have been much less than what we expected. Regarding the surveys for residents, they have been taken into account as illustrative and not significant, as the minimum number of surveys was not reached. As for the interviews, answers were only from 2 hoteliers, in spite of sending requests to 37 hotels. Because of time limitations, it has been done a major analysis of Lleida region, suggesting dark tourism sites of major interests, acknowledging there exists more sites that could be related to dark tourism phenomenon.

5.3.2. Further Research

During the last years dark tourism has been gaining awareness among population and potential tourists, apart from starting to be a trend among the Tourism Industry. As it has been repeated during the paper, the objective was to implement a previous established Scan Model in the region of

Lleida, because Zaccaria, Romano & Puertas in 2020 implemented it in the region of Tarragona, and in Cisa and Grau in 2018 did a research on dark tourism in Barcelona.

Now further research should be focused on analysing the last province remaining in Catalunya, which is Girona, and after that, do a research upon the area of Catalunya, to see if it is a feasible and potential area offering dark tourism.

Furthermore, in the specific area of Lleida, efforts are needed to do a deeper research to detect necessities on communication of dark tourism and pedagogy among residents.

At the same time, the route proposed on this paper could completely covered in terms of experts and the towns' DMOs making the last adjustments or addition of sites in order to have the product finished.

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Appendix 4. Survey to residents

Dark tourism

Somos dos alumnas de 4° de Grado en Gestión Turística y Hotelera de la Universidad Ramon Llull. Estamos realizando el trabajo de fin de grado sobre Dark Tourism en Lleida, y nos gustaría contar con su colaboración.

A continuación, encontrará una pequeña encuesta sobre la percepción que tienen los residentes en relación a este tipo de tipo de turismo en su región. Dicha encuesta es totalmente anónima, con una duración de menos de 5 minutos.
Respondiendo al cuestionario acepta que los datos sean utilizados para una posterior investigación y ninguna información suya será mencionada durante el trabajo.

1. ¿Usted es...? *

○ Hombre

○ Mujer

○ Otro: _____

2. ¿En qué franja de edad se encuentra? *

○ 18-30

○ 31-45

○ 46-60

○ 61 o más

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3. ¿Había oído hablar previamente de Dark Tourism? *

○ Sí

○ No

○ NS/NC

4. ¿A través de qué canal ha conocido este tipo de turismo? Si conoce alguna serie de TV, indíquelo en otro.

☐ Visitantes

☐ Medios de comunicación

☐ Ayuntamiento/Oficina de turismo

☐ Familiares/Amigos

☐ Series de televisión

☐ Otro:

5. ¿Le parece beneficiosa para la región de Lleida una propuesta basada en Dark Tourism?

○ Sí

○ No

○ NS/NC

6. ¿Cree que la provincia de Lleida tiene potencial para convertirse en región de referencia de Dark Tourism?

○ Sí

○ No

○ NS/NC

7. ¿Qué procedencia sería la más habitual en los turistas de Dark Tourism en la región de Lleida?

○ Nacionales

○ Internacionales

○ Igual de nacionales que de internacionales

○ NS/NC

8. ¿Conoce algún atractivo turístico de la región de Lleida que pudiera incluirse en este tipo de turismo? Si fuera así, nómbrelo en la casilla de otro.

☐ Sí

☐ No

☐ NS/NC

☐ Otro: _____

9. ¿Estaría dispuesto a participar en una propuesta de Dark Tourism?

○ Sí

○ No

○ NS/NC

Appendix 5. Survey to potential visitors

Dark Tourism

Somos dos alumnas de 4º del Grado en Gestión Turística y Hotelera de la Universidad Ramon Llull. Estamos realizando el trabajo de fin de grado sobre Dark Tourism en Lleida, y nos gustaría contar con su colaboración.

A continuación, encontrará una pequeña encuesta sobre la percepción de los turistas potenciales en la región de Lleida. Dicha encuesta es totalmente anónima, con una duración de menos de 5 minutos.

Respondiendo al cuestionario acepta que los datos sean utilizados para una posterior investigación y ninguna información suya será mencionada durante el trabajo.

1. ¿Usted es...? *

○ Hombre

○ Mujer

○ Otro: _____

2. ¿En qué franja de edad se encuentra? *

○ 18-30

○ 31-45

○ 46-60

○ 61 o más

3. ¿Había oído hablar previamente de Dark Tourism? *

○ Sí

○ No

○ NS/NC

4. En caso afirmativo, ¿cómo conoció este tipo de turismo? Si indica RRSS o plataforma en línea, indique cuales en la casilla de otro.

☐ Conocimiento personal e interés

☐ Escuela/Universidad/Estudios

☐ Familiares/Amigos

☐ Redes Sociales

☐ Plataforma en línea o servicio de VOD por streaming

☐ Otro: _____

5. ¿Estaría interesado en explorar sitios relacionados con este tipo de turismo?

○ Sí

○ No

○ NS/NC

6. ¿Conoce Cataluña – España? *

○ Sí

○ No

○ NS/NC

7. ¿Conoce algún sitio de Dark tourism en Cataluña – España? Si es así, nómbrelo en la casilla de otro. *

☐ Sí

☐ No

☐ NS/NC

☐ Otro: _____

8. ¿Viajaría a una región específica en Cataluña-España para ver sitios de este tipo de turismo?

○ Sí

○ No

○ NS/NC

9. ¿Cree que Dark tourism tiene potencial y futuro?

○ Sí

○ No

○ NS/NC

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Appendix 6. Results from Survey to residents

1. ¿Usted es...?

25 respuestas

● Hombre
● Mujer
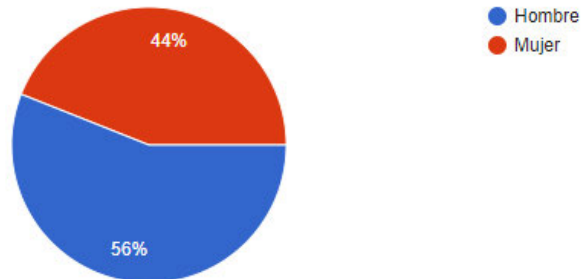
2. ¿En qué franja de edad se encuentra?

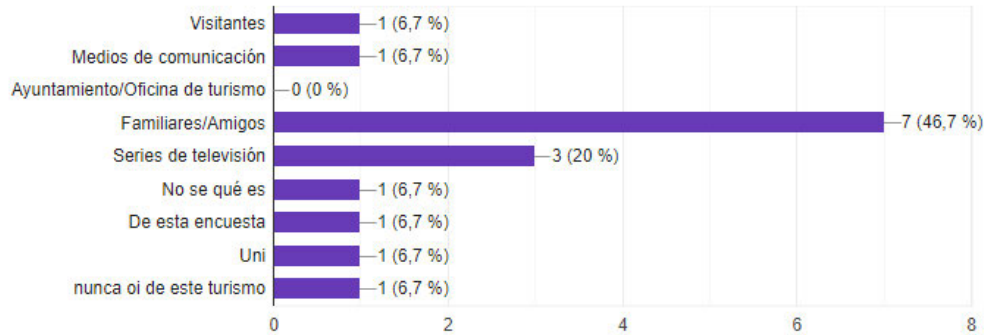25 respuestas

● 18-30
● 31-45
● 46-60
● 61 o más
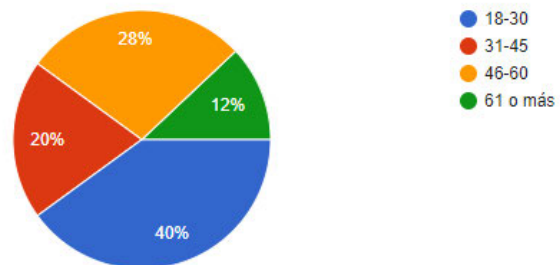
3. ¿Había oído hablar previamente de Dark Tourism?

25 respuestas
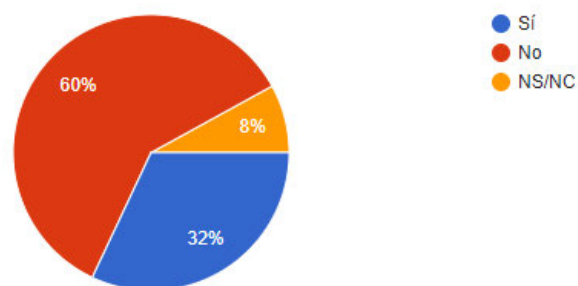
● Sí
● No
● NS/NC

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4. ¿A través de qué canal ha conocido este tipo de turismo? Si conoce alguna serie de TV, indíquelo en otro.

15 respuestas

| Categoría	Valor
Visitantes	1 (6,7 %)
Medios de comunicación	1 (6,7 %)
Ayuntamiento/Oficina de turismo	0 (0 %)
Familiares/Amigos	7 (46,7 %)
Series de televisión	3 (20 %)
No se qué es	1 (6,7 %)
De esta encuesta	1 (6,7 %)
Uni	1 (6,7 %)
nunca oi de este turismo	1 (6,7 %)

5. ¿Le parece beneficiosa para la región de Lleida una propuesta basada en Dark Tourism?

23 respuestas

- Sí — 30,4%
- No — 21,7%
- NS/NC — 47,8%
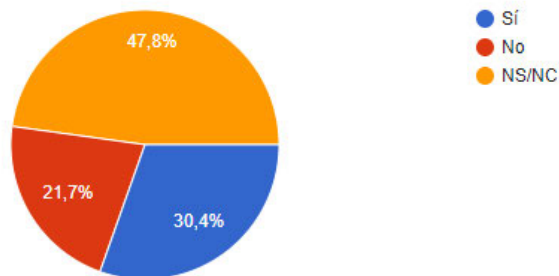
6. ¿Cree que la provincia de Lleida tiene potencial para convertirse en región de referencia de Dark Tourism?

23 respuestas

- Sí — 30,4%
- No — 26,1%
- NS/NC — 43,5%
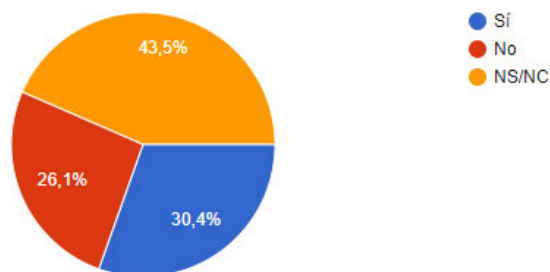
7. ¿Qué procedencia sería la más habitual en los turistas de Dark Tourism en la región de Lleida?

23 respuestas
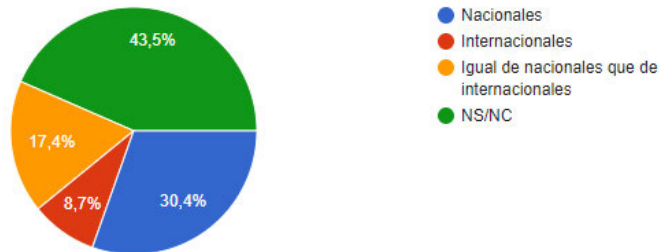
- Nacionales
- Internacionales
- Igual de nacionales que de internacionales
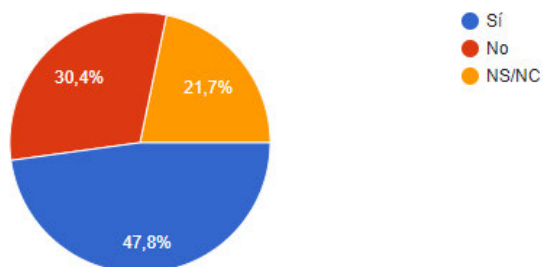- NS/NC

43,5%
17,4%
8,7%
30,4%

8. ¿Conoce algún atractivo turístico de la región de Lleida que pudiera incluirse en este tipo de turismo? Si fuera así, nómbrelo en la casilla de otro.

22 respuestas

Sí	6 (27,3 %)
No	10 (45,5 %)
NS/NC	5 (22,7 %)
Monument a les víctimes del Liceu Escol…	1 (4,5 %)
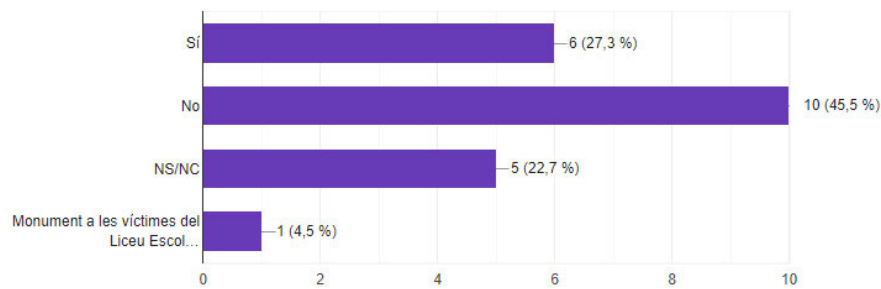
9. ¿Estaría dispuesto a participar en una propuesta de Dark Tourism?

23 respuestas

- Sí
- No
- NS/NC

30,4%
21,7%
47,8%

Appendix 7. Results from surveys to potential visitors

1. ¿Usted es...?

82 respuestas

- Hombre
- Mujer

76,8%

23,2%
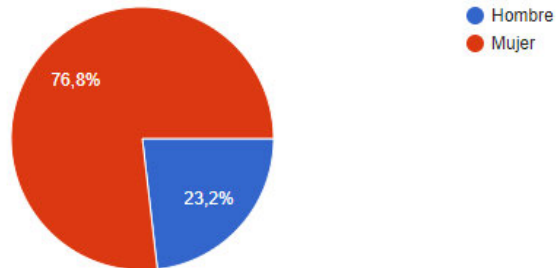
2. ¿En qué franja de edad se encuentra?

82 respuestas

- 18-30
- 31-45
- 46-60
- 61 o más

45,1%

8,5%

43,9%
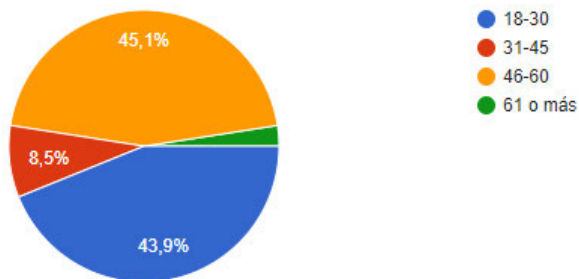
3. ¿Había oído hablar previamente de Dark Tourism?
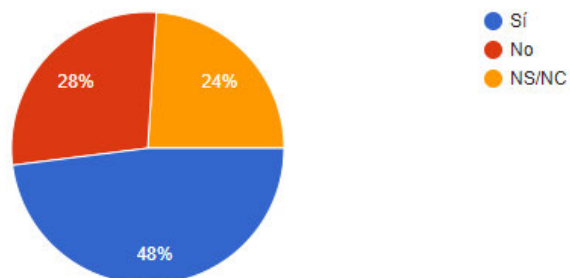
82 respuestas
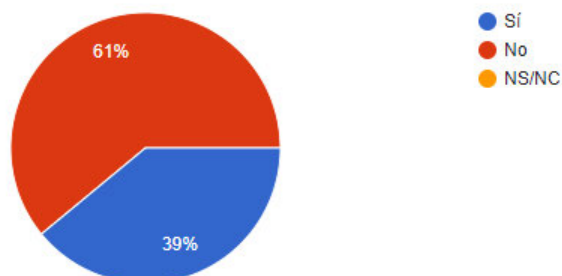
- Sí
- No
- NS/NC

61%

39%

4. En caso afirmativo, ¿cómo conoció este tipo de turismo? Si indica RRSS o plataforma en línea, indique cuales en la casilla de otro.
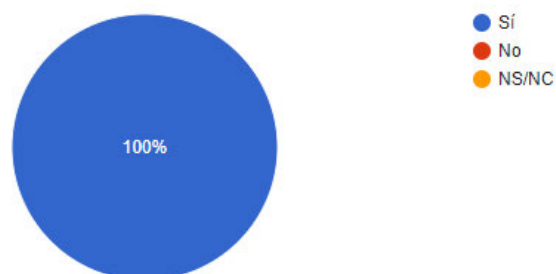
37 respuestas
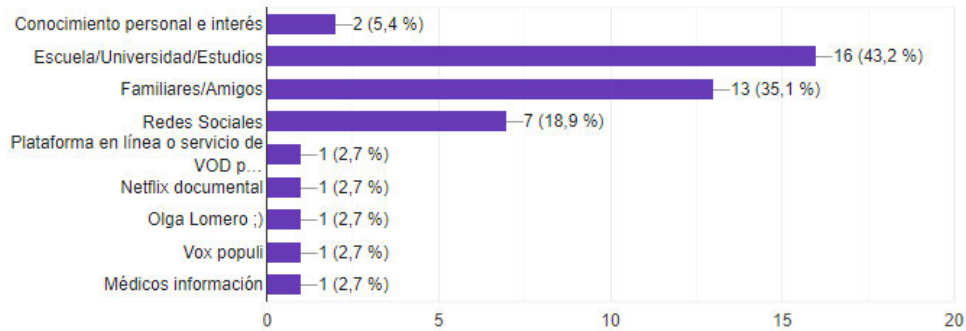
5. ¿Estaría interesado en explorar sitios relacionados con este tipo de turismo?
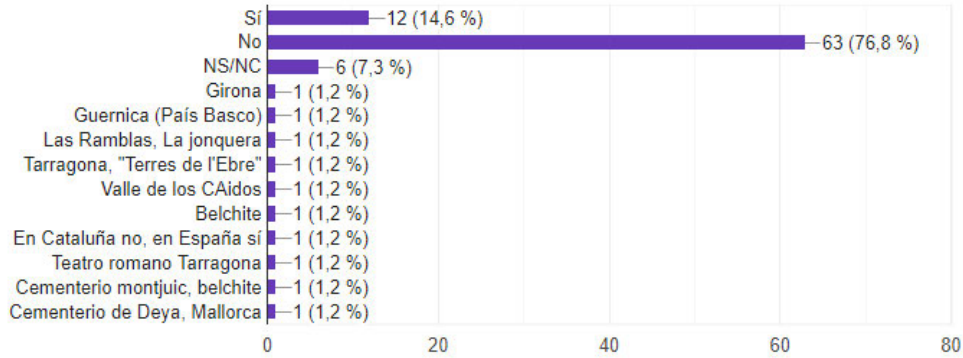
75 respuestas

6. ¿Conoce Cataluña - España?

82 respuestas

101

7. ¿Conoce algún sitio de Dark tourism en Cataluña - España? Si es así, nómbrelo en la casilla de otro.

82 respuestas

Categoría	Valor
Sí	12 (14,6 %)
No	63 (76,8 %)
NS/NC	6 (7,3 %)
Girona	1 (1,2 %)
Guernica (País Basco)	1 (1,2 %)
Las Ramblas, La Jonquera	1 (1,2 %)
Tarragona, "Terres de l'Ebre"	1 (1,2 %)
Valle de los CAidos	1 (1,2 %)
Belchite	1 (1,2 %)
En Cataluña no, en España sí	1 (1,2 %)
Teatro romano Tarragona	1 (1,2 %)
Cementerio montjuic, belchite	1 (1,2 %)
Cementerio de Deya, Mallorca	1 (1,2 %)

8. ¿Viajaría a una región específica en Cataluña-España para ver sitios de este tipo de turismo?

78 respuestas

- Sí
- No
- NS/NC

Sí 39,7%
No 29,5%
NS/NC 30,8%
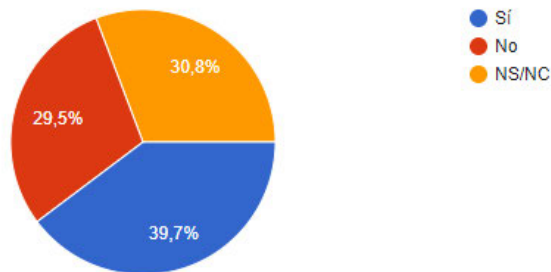
9. ¿Cree que Dark tourism tiene potencial y futuro?

79 respuestas

- Sí
- No
- NS/NC

Sí 39,2%
No 12,7%
NS/NC 48,1%