

ATOMIC TOURISM SUBTYPE OF DARK TOURISM

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Abstract. Atomic or nuclear tourism is a subtype of dark tourism, being seen as a form of tourism in which the nuclear tourist visits sites related to war or nuclear disasters. Promotional documents show that this form of tourism, a subtype of dark tourism, is becoming increasingly popular, although traveling and visiting these sites is not cheap, as they are located in isolated areas. The economic benefits obtained from this tourist activity, by tourism operators, play an important role in promoting this type of tourism, but it is necessary to find solutions for these uninhabitable locations, which have become unprofitable after disasters or stopping tests with nuclear weapons. From a strictly tourist point of view, the list of atomic/nuclear tourist objectives is long and among the most diverse, generating as many representative subtypes of atomic tourism, related to atomic events that took place in these places that have become international tourist destinations.

Key words: dark tourism, atomic, forms, resources

INTRODUCTION

Urban tourism is a form of modern tourism, in which all tourist services are provided in urban settlements by tourism companies, both for residents and for tourists who stop in areas with tourist vocations, for certain purposes [13,17]:

- cultural;
- business;
- visits to relatives.

The advantages of practicing any form of tourism in different areas, is that it contributes to [4,11,16]:

- elaboration of tourist products and brands;
- regeneration of the economy in areas with tourist vocations;
- efficient use of local human resources;
- efficient use of natural and anthropic resources by improving the flow of information, destination management, use of the best management in critical areas;
- diversification of tourism subtypes through the emergence of niche, business, dark, event, ecotourism, farm tourism subtypes.

Dark tourism or thanaturism practiced in different destinations with vocation means in addition to visiting places that intentionally or unintentionally offer representations of suffering, war disasters, atomic accidents or related to death [15,18]:

- the act of traveling to visit places, attractions, exhibitions representing death, intentional or accidental disaster, suffering or macabre scenes on the subject;
- the journey associated with tragedy, disaster or death;
- visiting areas where tragedies have occurred intentionally or unintentionally, or someone important from a historical point of view has died and which continues to have an impact on our lives;
- searching for places of disasters to relive the events associated with death, suffering;
- religious pilgrimages made for emotional and spiritual reasons to places associated with nuclear disasters, death and war violence.

This type of tourism is still the subject of heated debates in the media and is the subject of academic discourses for the development of rural areas with such resources in terms of:

- the consumption of dark tourism with its niche forms including atomic or nuclear tourism, adventure tourism;
- the typology of consumers of such forms of niche tourism;
- the role of practicing these subtypes of tourism on the development of local economies and the creation of new jobs;
- the motivation of tourism consumers to practice dark tourism with its forms.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Because it is not yet clear whether dark tourism with its subtypes is becoming more widespread worldwide and more popular due to the growing number of dark resources or due to the growing demand for thanaturism from consumers inspired or not by literary sources, media or offers of travel agencies, in this scientific approach we have analyzed the dark resources and new subtypes, which by promoting them to contribute to the regeneration of economies that have suffered from disasters. Although dark tourism can have independent forms, such as atomic tourism for example, but also forms that overlap with other forms of historical cultural tourism, answers must be found if these places are visited out of respect for their significance or out of curiosity to contemplate the disasters, the macabre or the morbid, or to recall the facts that caused these disasters and what is the role of market players in increasing demand and consumption.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Atomic or nuclear tourism as well as existential tourism can be defined as follows:

- subtype of dark tourism which consists in looking for places of disasters for reliving the events associated with death, suffering [18]
- a relatively recent form of tourism in which visitors travel to significant places which marked the US nuclear test in July 1945 [4,5,8,11]:
- form of tourism associated with tragedy, disaster or death in urban or rural areas [3,17];
- a form of consumer tourism of destruction, war or nuclear disaster [13,14].

The resources for practicing this form of niche tourism are represented by:

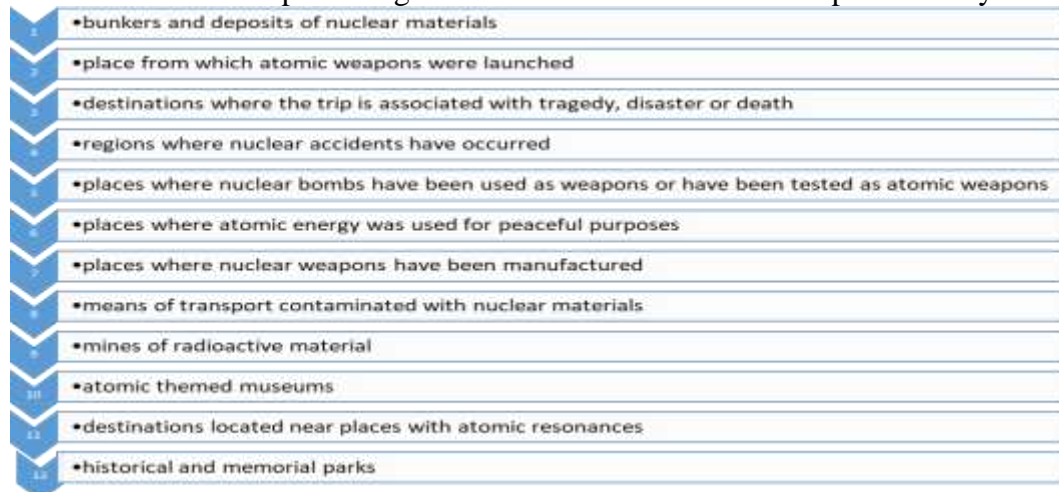


Figure 1. Resources for practicing atomic/nuclear tourism

Given the theme of this subtype of tourism, dark tourism is considered as a form of destruction service in which the consumer of nuclear tourism visits and contemplates related sites:

- nuclear war;
- the intended nuclear disaster;
- to relive the events they witnessed;
- nuclear test sites;
- of nuclear accidents.

Today in these destinations it is found the transition from tragedy to adventure, adventure tourism, and promotional materials highlighting the popularity of this form of tourism. The economic benefits obtained from this activity play an important role in promoting by:

- governments of this type of tourism;
- finding solutions for these uninhabitable destinations that have become unprofitable after stopping of nuclear weapons tests;
- reducing the risk of tourist contamination.

Some authors [12,14,15] emphasize that the nuclear landscape erases the line between ruin and penitence, between the sublime and everyday life, between the visible and the invisible, when resources are well marketed through destination marketing. In this sense we can talk about an iconography:

- all images related to a specific theme, period, issue, destination, location [16];
- nuclear science in post-Cold War culture, which aims to interpret symbols, allegorical figures, emblems [19].

In this context, we notice that the emphasis is put on the so-called nuclear aesthetics, meaning affirmation, negotiation and contestation through the circulation of ideological texts - meaning exactly what happens in atomic/nuclear tourist destinations, which makes the "greening" of all events related to nuclear field, changing the original destination of places related to atomic/nuclear events or "conventionalizing" events and/or places with atomic/nuclear resonance by emphasizing the bravery and superiority of military forces. Closer to the present day, other terms have been used to characterize the specifics of atomic tourism:

- revisited apocalypse;
- interpretative authenticity;
- cultural or political discourse;
- economics experience;
- mythology;
- atomic obsession and atomic bomb [18];
- representation of the unrepresentable;
- sublime technical;
- technological sublime [2];
- pornography of the ruins [6];
- nuclear journalism [9];
- nuclear geography [1];
- sublime atomic [10].

Atomic/nuclear tourism can have the following subtypes depending on the existing resources and the causes that generated the event and location:

1. atomic disaster tourism. The most commented atomic/nuclear event is the Chernobyl disaster about which researchers talk about the "fantasy and fear" that inspires the existing ruins and the perception of catastrophe. The issue [6,7] of informality and survival in the nuclear landscape is raised, in the context in which the state does not pay for

the provision of social benefits and services in a geographical area. Visiting Chernobyl now allows tourists to change:

- the usual way of looking at the world [11];
- to address the issue of atomic tourism from a legal perspective [13] in order to provide comprehensive regulations for the safety of radioactive waste and nuclear installations;

Atomic disaster tourism includes the following subtypes:

- a..atomic tourism dedicated to nuclear-themed museums in the USA [3]
- b. Atomic tourism in the U.S. nuclear desert [12];
- c. atomic tourism carried out in the communities affected by atomic/nuclear events [1];
- d. atomic tourism specific to the anthropogenic era in which atomic energy was created [5]

From a strictly tourist point of view, the list of atomic/nuclear tourist objectives is long and among the most diverse. The following are the most representative resources related to atomic/nuclear disasters:

- bunkers: Greenbrier, West Virginia S.U.A., Kelvedon Hatch, UK, Diefenbunker Carp, Canada;
- nuclear material depots: Radioactive Waste Landfill, Carlsbad, New Mexico, U.S.A. and RT-23/SS-24 Missile Depot, Pobuzke, Ukraine;
- places from which atomic weapons were launched: Tinian Runway, Mariana Islands;

2. Accidental atomic tourism:

- a. places where nuclear accidents took place: Nuclear Power Plant, Chernobyl, Ukraine;
- b. places where accidents took place due to natural disasters: Central Nuclear Power Plant, Fukushima, Japan, Affected by the 2011 Earthquake.
- c. technical accidents: Three Mile Island Nuclear Power Plant, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, USA, where the nuclear reactor partially melted;

3. atomic/nuclear tourism in places related to war:

- a. places where atomic bombs were used: Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan;
- b. atomic weapons testing sites: Lop Nur Nuclear Test Base, China, Army Nuclear Test Range, Pokhran, India, Nuclear Test Range, New Mexico, U.S.A., Nuclear Test Range, Hanford, Washington, S.U.A.

4. atomic tourism where nuclear energy has been used for peaceful purposes:

- a. places where nuclear energy has been used for peaceful purposes: Forest Carson National, New Mexico, USA, where an underground nuclear detonation took place, a program for the use of nuclear explosions in the extraction of natural gas by fracturing;
- b. places where nuclear weapons have been manufactured and tested;
- c. radioactive material mines. Radium Port, Canada, uranium mine area;
- d. atomic-themed museums: Visitor Center, Windscale, Great Britain, operated until 1992. The Three Mile Island Visitor Center, Middletown, Pennsylvania, USA, which educates the public through exhibitions and video presentations, the use of the Atomic Bomb, Nagasaki, Japan, located in the Nagasaki Peace Park, is dedicated to documentation the atomic bombing of the city in 1945.

e. cities located near atomic resonance sites: Las Vegas,

The U.S., dubbed the "Atomic City," which drew tourists to the Desert Inn Hotel, where "bomb parties" were held in the Panoramic Room from which detonations in the Nevada Desert could be watched.

f. educational historical parks: Manhattan Project National Historical Park, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, USA, where visitors can take a partial tour of the structures associated with the Manhattan Project. Rocket State Historic Site, North Dakota, USA, where visitors can take guided tours to learn about the daily lives of people who monitored Rocket State Historic Site rockets and launch control operations.

g. memorial parks: Peace Memorial Park, Hiroshima, Japan, where is found Genbaku Dome, the ruin of the former Palace of Industrial Promotion of Hiroshima Prefecture, which became a UNESCO World Heritage Site and serves as a memorial to the more than 140,000 people who died during atomic bombing, Peace Park, Nagasaki, Japan, commemorating the atomic bombing of the city.

CONCLUSIONS

Atomic or nuclear tourism is a subtype of dark tourism that consists of searching for places of disaster, to relive the events associated with death, suffering, where atomic tourists travel to places that have marked, nuclear tests and disasters have occurred. This subtype of dark tourism is considered today as a form of consumer service of destruction in which the consumer of nuclear tourism visits and contemplates sites related to nuclear war, the intentional nuclear disaster, relives the events he witnessed. To these destinations the transition is noted from tragedy to adventure, adventure tourism, promotional materials highlighting the popularity of this form of tourism, the economic benefits obtained and the role it plays in promoting governments, which seek solutions to recover these destinations and reduce risks of pollution the tourists. Atomic/nuclear tourism practiced by niche tourists, at different destinations it can have several subtypes depending on the location, the existing resources visited and the causes that generated the nuclear events.

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