Virtual Traumascapes and Exploring the Roots of Dark Tourism

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Chapter 4

On the Use of Qualitative Comparative Analysis to Identify the Bright Spots in Dark Tourism

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ABSTRACT

As Haiti lacks visitor attractions, the development of an authentic event programme is going to be an essential part of the on-going tourism strategy. Culturally rich events are part of the appeal of a destination and can be cost efficient to organise. Furthermore it is well documented that planned events have the ability to improve national pride in small developing countries. From our findings we have highlighted the fact that Voodoo has helped the Haitian people to maintain its true nature and culture and now offer economic development options to the destination. The development of voodoo events will enhance Haiti's tourism and provide opportunities for locals to embrace their cultural heritage and come to terms with their past. That said, unless the 'blind spots' of the destination are removed, there is no empirical evidence to confirm that tourism will bring prosperity to Haiti nor that voodoo can play a significant role in the country's tourism sector.

INTRODUCTION

The term 'dark tourism' was first coined by Lennon and Foley (2000) to define the relationship between dark tourism attractions and a specific interest in death, the macabre and the paranormal. Other academics such as Seaton (1996) have referred to this activity as 'thanatourism', 'morbid tourism' and 'black spots'. These terms have been used to describe a fascination for travelling to places where death or tragedy has occurred. As for Dalton (2015), he outlines how dark tourism sites are typically places of genocide and mass murders, locations where terrorist's acts have been executed or places where basic human rights have been violated. Based on the above interpretations of dark tourism, it becomes difficult to imagine that something positive can be worked out from this activity, and hence our research question: What are the bright spots of dark tourism? With this as background, the objective of this book chapter is to provide evidence that when an activity, product or service, as a key component of the daily life of locals, is used for tourism purpose, the activity, product or service is likely to be sustainable. The findings of this paper can be helpful for DMOs as they can influence destination marketing strategies in terms of products to be developed. Also, the findings of this book chapter helps to develop an understanding on the tourism industry which has often been blamed for the commodification of heritage sold to tourists as products and services (Park, 2014). To some extent, we are going to challenge Park (2014) statement. This book chapter covers both end of research spectrum: 'There are two types of research that can be considered. At one end of the spectrum is pure research, which is undertaken only to gain a better understanding of an issue with no other purpose than intellectual curiosity. At the other end of the spectrum is applied research. This research is undertaken specifically to offer a solution to a practical issue' (Fox, Gouthro, Morakabati & Brackstone, 2014: 9). In order to achieve our objectives, a qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) will be adopted. This approach is mainly used to study four issues: Internal organisational process; organisational external environment; overlap within and between organisational environments and finally promoting a methodological alternative (Kan, Adegbite, El Omari & Abdellatif, 2016). This book chapter falls into all four categories. Still regarding the methodology, Haiti, a post-colonial, post-conflict and post-disaster destination (Séraphin, Butcher & Korstanje, 2016) which also a well is known destination for Voodoo (Séraphin & Nolan, 2014), will be utilised as a case study. From a structural point of view, the chapter is going to be largely but not exclusively inspired by Kan, Adegbite, El Omari & Abdellatif (2016), a methodological paper that focuses on Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA).

Table 1. Anatomy of dark tourism

Lennon and Foley	1996	Death / Macabre / Paranormal
Seaton	1996	Tragedy
Daams	2007	Educational experience
Stone	2007	Education / entertainment
Bowman & Pezzulo	2010	Reflection on mortality
Garcia	2012	Ethics
Dalton	2015	Genocide / mass murders / terrorist acts / violation of human rights
Korstanje	2017	Tourism / Culture

Source: The author (adapted from various sources)

ANATOMY OF INVESTIGATED TOURISM PHENOMENON: VOODOO AND DARK TOURISM

Dark Tourism

Dark tourism is not a new phenomenon. According to Stone and Sharpley (2008), it refers to travel and experience of places, sites, attractions or events linked in one way or another with death, suffering, violence or disaster. Despite increasing academic attention paid to dark tourism, understanding of the concept remains limited, particularly with respect to its perception in tourism. Table 1 below, provides some information on how dark tourism is perceived:

Despite the fact dark tourism is an aggregate of different area, Table 1, shows an evolution in the way dark tourism is perceived. Daams (2007, cited in Niemelä, 2010, [Online]) describes how educational experiences are one of the key motives for attending these types of events. He outlines how visiting death and disaster sites can raise awareness of historical events and prompt the visitor to understand the world in more clarity – ultimately creating an educational experience (cited in Niemelä, 2010, [Online], p. 16). Likewise, Stone (2010) describes how dark tourism genocide sites such as Auschwitz allow visitors to learn about the history on the conditions under which individuals were tortured to death. Whilst the educational aspect of dark tourism is apparent, Bowman and Pezzullo (2010) describe another major motivation related to the contemplation of death. They posit that sites like Auschwitz enable people to come to terms with the fragility of life. A further reason attributed to this form of tourism is related to the entertainment factors. In this respect, Stone (2010) proposes the London Dungeons as an attraction utilised in the form of entertainment to exploit death and the deceased. Bowman and Pezzullo (2010) also describe how visits to dark tourism attractions can encourage a person to reflect on

their own mortality. However, there is an ethical issue related to dark tourism. Stone (2007) describes how travelling to destinations where people are known to have suffered or passed can raise issues relating to exploitation for business, education or entertainment purposes. As a result, Garcia (2012) describes how the sensitive nature of dark tourism attractions poses many challenges to practitioners. To this, Rachel Noble, a representative of the charity Tourism Concern, suggests that sites associated with dark attributes should be avoided for numerous, ethical reasons. She describes how tourists visiting counties which have suffered in any way, whether this be through natural disaster or genocide, should contemplate the appropriateness of this (cited in Stokes, 2015 [Online]). However, other dark tourism attractions such as museums are considered to provide the experience and education in a more sophisticated manner (cited in Stokes, 2015 [Online]).

Voodoo (in Haiti)

This sub-section identifies articles and book chapters on dark tourism using *Academia*, *ResearchGate* and *Google Scholar* as database. The sample comprises 26 entries from aggregate databases. To obtain these 26 entries, the study used 'Voodoo' 'Haiti' as the two keywords and only considered research with the two keywords in their title. The results are as follow (Table 2):

Voodoo is mainly viewed as a religion and to a lesser extent, as a cultural elements; as a political and tourism tool and finally as a cure in medicine. Based on Park's (2014) definition, voodoo can be considered as a form of cultural heritage. As explained by Séraphin and Nolan (2014) in: '*Voodoo in Haiti: A Religious Ceremony at the Service of the 'Houngan' Called 'Tourism,'* voodoo is derived from the West African religion Vodun and was developed (almost solely) in Haiti by the imported African slaves. The religion was used a means to cope with the degradations of slavery including being forced to convert to Christianity and to speak Créole. Voodoo became a way for the slaves to keep a connection with their African roots and also to retain some of their humanity (Damoison & Dalembert, 2003). It also helped slaves to resist their master's cultural oppression (Saint-Louis, 2000) and to adapt to their new environment. Modern voodoo is said to have derived from a mixture of the master's religion and African Vodun (Metraux, 1958). As a religion, voodoo is based on the belief in a *Grand Maître*, a Great Master or Creator, as well as several *loa* or spirits. The practise of voodoo involves ritual celebrations led by a *Houngan* or priest. Metraux (1958) explains that a good Houngan should be able to perform many roles: priest, healer, fortune teller, exerciser and entertainer. And as such it can be argued that as a religion, voodoo is perfectible. This flexibility, combined with the origins of voodoo (a means to survive difficult conditions) – demonstrates that voodoo is perfectly able to adapt to its environment and the needs of the market

Table 2. Anatomy of voodoo

Grenier	2002	Culture
Potter	2010	Culture
Hebblethwaite	2015	Culture
Largey	2006	Culture
Williams	1969	Culture
Rippmann	**2000**	Medicine
Gustafson	1990	Medicine
Laguerre	**2016**	Politics
Garrisson	2000	Politics
Trouillot	1991	Politics
Rotberg	1990	Politics
Feguson & Laguerre	1990	Politics
Armitage	**2014**	Religion
Gobin	2012	Religion
Clark	2009	Religion
McGee	2008	Religion
Louis	2007	Religion
Taylor	2004	Religion
Glazier, Leland & Richards	1993	Religion
Matsua	1992	Religion
Homiak	1991	Religion
Hicks	1982	Religion
Bourguignon	1970	Religion
Carrasco	2015	Religion
Séraphin & Nolan	2014	Tourism
Goldberg	1983	Tourism

Source: The authors (adapted from various sources)

without losing its authenticity. Thomson (2004) explains that when he visited Haiti in 1990, he witnessed many voodoo ceremonies being staged for tourists at hotels 'Friday night in the Oloffson [hotel]) was traditionally the night for a voodoo extravaganza carefully choreographed by (...) the showgirls' (Thomson, 2004:46). During this decade Haiti received few tourists because of the political and economic situation of the country (Séraphin, 2013ab) but voodoo ceremonies were successfully staged for those who were desirable of it. Although the hotel environment may have staged the authenticity of the ritual, the Houngan were content to perform and the

visitors pleased to watch. This commercialisation of voodoo described by Thomson (2004) in *Bonjour Blanc, a journey through Haiti,* has highlighted the importance of involving the locals in the tourism sector as they have contributed to the visitor experience (Séraphin, 2013c). As voodoo is an integral part of the Haitian culture, sharing with visitors can also contribute to a better self-awareness, understanding and acceptance of this heritage. From the above, it is clear that the role of Voodoo has changed throughout the years.

Can we come to the conclusion that dark tourism and Voodoo (as a form of dark tourism) are both moving away from the dark pain and suffering to something brighter, enjoyable and profitable?

METHODOLOGY

Multi Criteria Decision Analysis

Botti and Peypoch (2013: 109) explain that 'MCDA is a general term for methods providing a quantitative approach to support decision making in problems involving several criteria and choices'. Botti and Peypoch (2013:108) also propose that what tourists are doing when selecting a destination for their holidays: 'Tourists who wish to enjoy a satisfying experience try to select one destination from a set of *n* possible alternatives and on the basis of *m* criteria'. A MCDA could therefore be considered as a method falling under Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA).

Taking the example of countries economic performance, Vis, Woldendorp and Keman (2007) pointed out a few research gaps in the field of QCA: First of all, they are very limited. Second, most comparative analyses research rely or a single case study. This approach is not rigorous as 'studying single cases hardly help to discern best practices' (Vis et al, 2007: 532). As a result, Vis et al (2007) are promoting the fuzzy-set theory combined with ideal type analysis as a potential solution to address the lack of good practice in terms of comparative analysis. 'This approach provides more precise information on the case under investigation (...) and is easily interpretable (Vis et al, 2007: 537). As for Stokke (2007), he completes the list of advantages of using qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) by adding the fact that this technique can help the investigator to consider more cases than he would usual do. For instance, Chang, Tseng and Woodside (2013) used this technique to analyse 645 self-administered questionnaires. For Ordanini, Parasuraman and Rubera (2013), QCA makes better sense of the data in research contexts. To the list of benefits of this method can be added achieving accuracy and generalisation (Woodside and Baxter, 2013),

it is more informative and structured (Loane, Bell & McNaughton, 2006). Last but not least, this method can be applied to a variety of areas like education (Schneider, Bentrop & Paunescu, 2010); health (Chang, Tseng & Woodside, 2013); ICT (Loane & Bell, 2006); hospitality (Ordanini, Parasuraman and Rubera, 2013), in B2B context (Woodside & Baxter, 2013), countries economic performance (Vis, 2007), politics (Stokke, 2007) to name a few. If Ordanini & Parasuraman (2013) introduced QCA into a luxury hotel context to investigate how customers' perceptions of new service attribute influence adoption intentions in order to evidence that QCA can help make better sense of the data in research contexts, it is however very important to highlight the fact, QCA is not the only research technique advocating the use of more than one source of information or data. The ELECTRE method developed by Ritchie and Crouch, 2003 (cited in Botti & Peypoch, 2013) integrates all the relevant factors that might typify the competitiveness of a destination, namely: Core resources and attractors; supporting factors and resources; destination management; destination policy, planning and development; qualifying and amplifying determinants. (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003 cited in Botti & Peypoch, 2013). This method is one of the most cited in academic research related to tourism (Botti & Peypoch, 2013). The ELECTRE method is part of a more general term for method providing support for decision making in problem involving several criteria and choices, namely Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (Botti & Peypoch, 2013). Still in a tourism marketing context, Séraphin, Gowreesunkar and Ambaye (2016) used the Blakeley Model (2007), a multi-criteria model to determine the blind spots of Haiti as a tourist destination. Séraphin, Ambaye, Gowreesunkar and Bonnardel (2016) also developed a multi-criteria model for Destination Marketing Organisation to determine the right color for their logo. Woodside and Baxter (2013) in their quest to achieving accuracy and therefore the possibility to generalise results, pointed out that Case Study Research (CSR), degrees-of-freedom analysis (DFA), fs/QCA and decision system analysis (DSA) are tool helping to achieving excellence in the quality of results. It is legitimate to wonder whether MCDA can reach this level of accuracy. Woodside and Baxter (2013) used DSA in a context where manufacturers, distributors and customers were involved in the decision. In other words, many stakeholders involved in decision making. To some extent, this tool presents many similarities with MCDA. We can also come to the conclusion that QCA, a method theorized by John Stuart Mill in 1843 and popularised by Ragin in 1987 (Kan, Adegbite, El Omari & Abdellatif, 2016) and used in many sectors opened the door to many other approaches, stream of thoughts and more importantly, accurate and precise research tool. Among these are the Blakeley Model (2007) mentioned earlier in this sub-section.

ABOUT THE BLAKELEY MODEL AND ITS APPLICATIONS

There are many barriers to learning, some of which are systemic (e.g. lack of opportunity, a culture that does not support learning, lack of exposure to environmental change) and some rooted in individual psychology such as cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) or Freudian defense mechanisms (Illeris, 2009). When an individual (or system) fails to learn, representations and understandings of reality no longer function effectively as changes that have taken place in the environment fail to be incorporated into the learner's mental representations of the world (Barr, Stimpert & Huff, 1992).

There is a general consensus that people defend themselves against learning when the content of that learning is in some way uncomfortable or threatening to the self. Failure to learn then results in blind spots which can be defined as 'a regular tendency to repress, distort, dismiss or fail to notice information, views or ideas in a particular area that results in…[failure] to learn, change or grow in responses to changes in that area' (Blakeley, 2007: 6).

There are many models of learning in adulthood (Mezirow, 1990; Argyris, 1976; Schön, 1983) but the one elaborated on here is Blakeley's, which places the issues of 'blind spots' and defense mechanisms as central to the understanding of learning process (Blakeley, 2007). Learning, according to this model, comprises four key processes: paying attention to a cue, experiencing emotions, sense-making and generating behavior in a way that results in new or changed beliefs, behavior or emotional orientations (such as increased self-confidence or openness to change). Learning only results when the individual notices new and different cues, or makes sense of cues in a way that generates new constructs, beliefs, emotions or behavior. When individuals pay attention to familiar cues, experience emotions, make sense and take action in ways that involve no change, then they are in the comfort zone, drawing on existing knowledge and skills in order to survive and achieve goals within the environment. When they pay attention to new cues, learn new emotions in relation to cues (e.g. increasing self-confidence in relation to a skill), make sense in ways that expand understanding and change behavior, they step outside of the comfort zone and into the learning zone; here they start to experience a range of emotions, depending on how novel the learning is, or how threatening it is to the self. If people do not step outside the comfort zone and engage with these emotions however, they do not learn. The greater the ability to do this, the greater the learning that takes place. This then contributes towards the expansion of cognitive, emotional and behavioral resources that enable learners to adapt and be ready for the complex, changing world in which they live.

Because the Haitians have no dreams or hopes and they live with past memories (Wagner, 2015), 'emotions' and 'change of emotions' are problematic. The same can be said for 'action' and 'change of behavior' as the leaders don't care about the well-being of their people. Subsequently nothing has been done to improve their standard of living, resulting in a population for whom basic needs are not fulfilled (Wagner, 2015). As a result, this situation has led to a 'brain-drain' (Wagner 2015) and it has been very difficult for Haiti to keep up with all the changes in the tourism industry and in other sectors. For instance, informality of businesses is still a norm in Haiti (Wagner, 2015). Based on this analysis, it is obvious that Haiti as a destination has remained in its comfort zone (Maguire 2014; Thomson, 2004). The population is a key ingredient to the success of the tourism industry as a sector. But, because the Haitian population is faced with unfavorable living conditions, quite understandably they have other concerns than welcoming tourists. Haiti is not ready for the tourism industry yet (Darwling-Carter, 2010).

The Blakeley model applied to Haiti revealed that the problem of the tourism industry goes beyond tourism management skills. It is first of all a human issue that needs to be addressed (the primary needs of the locals need to be met); the human aspect needs to be fixed (a sense of community needs to be developed and the locals need to be able to dream); and finally, Haiti needs visionary leaders (the right context needs to be put in place and the 'yes, we can spirit' encouraged). It is the improvement of the well-being of Haitians that is going to lead to the improvement of the performance of Haiti as a destination (Séraphin, Gowreesunkar & Ambaye, 2016)

The Blakeley Model Applied to Dark Tourism (Voodoo) in Haiti to Identify the Bright Spot of Dark Tourism

The deductive method seeks to draw valid conclusions from initial premises. It follows the logic of syllogy (Hammond & Wellington, 2013:40). Therefore, if the blind spot is all about a context that stop people to be able to release their full potential and also a context where there is a discrepancy between how a destination perceive itself and how potential visitors perceive this destination, the bright spot can therefore be a context that facilitate people self-actualisation and where the view of visitors and locals are similar about a destination. This latest approach is to be related to interpretivism 'which takes the world as capable of multiple interpretations and seeks to uncover the meaning that human beings invest in social activity' (Hammond & Wellington, 2013:120). In post-colonial, post-conflict and post-disaster destinations like Haiti, Séraphin, Butcher and Korstanje (2016) highlighted the importance of education of tourists at pre-visit stage as a way to remove blind spots and potentially improve the negative perception of visitors about a particular destination. Based on a deductive approach, we can also come to the conclusion that education contribute

to identify and shed light on the bright spots. Can Voodoo be considered as an education tool? If the answer is 'yes', Voodoo could be considered as a bright spot in the economic, social development of Haiti and above all could give potential visitors a better understanding of the destination and its history and change their negative perception. Thus, using the information about Voodoo provided in section 2, we understand that Voodoo is actually quite 'bright' always supported by an interesting story of life. Voodoo helped Haitian people to maintain a sense of unity; maintain their African roots; to free themselves and making history by becoming the first black republic in the world. Because of the negative image of Haiti (Séraphin et al, 2016a,b) tourists do not really know and therefore understand the importance of this religion in Haiti. This leads to the conclusion that Voodoo can be an even brighter spot when it is made visible.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Voodoo as a form of dark tourism presents many bright spots that are hidden by blind spots. This situation explains why Voodoo is still not a driver for tourism development in Haiti. Also, concerns about the impacts of tourism on local culture could explain why Voodoo has not really been pushed forward as a tourism product. Tourism offers destinations an opportunity for economic diversification (Holden, 2013), and experiences and products to tourists (Page, 2013). However, because of touristic practice, ethics and moral concerns have become prominent topics. The environmental impacts of the industry and implications for developing societies are some of the key focus. Subsequently, many ethical codes and code of conducts have been developed like the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism adopted in 1999 with the objective of minimising the negative impact of tourism on the environment and on cultural heritage while maximising the benefits of tourism in promoting sustainable development and poverty alleviation as well as understanding among nations (Edgell & Swanson, 2013), and a number of alternative forms of tourism (responsible tourism; pro-poor tourism; fair trade in tourism; volunteer tourism; reality tours; transnational solidarity activism) have been developed in an attempt to reduce the negative impacts of the industry and more importantly to ensure that good is being done (Lovelock & Lovelock, 2013). Alongside these initiatives, many definitions of sustainable tourism have been developed. In this book chapter we adopt the one developed by East Carolina University's Centre for Sustainable Tourism: 'Sustainable tourism contributes to a balanced and healthy economy by generating tourism-related jobs, revenues and taxes while protecting and enhancing the destination's social, cultural, historical, natural, and built resources for the enjoyment and well-being of both residents and visitors' (Edgell Sr & Swanson, 2013: 149). As a results of all

the information provided in this sub-section, we come to the interim conclusion that non-purpose tourism products and activities (like Voodoo) which we define as: 'any activity which main purpose is deeply rooted into the local livelihood therefore not purposely designed and created for tourism but that can be used and experienced also by visitors, with an in fine objective to enhance the tourist experience while positively impacting on the locals at various levels', are the most sustainable form of tourism as they benefit the tourists and the locals. Taking the example of street-food, Bellia, Pilato and Séraphin (2016) provide evidence that non-purpose tourism products and activities are sustainable. Street-food is a common way of eating in emerging countries (or destinations) like Africa, Asia and Latin America (Kowalczyk, 2014; Marras, 2014 cited in Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition). Beyond being a way of eating, street-food is also an entrepreneurial and social activity that provides employment (street food vendors) to a huge percentage of the population in emerging countries (Fellow & Hilmi, 2011). Street-food can also be a tourism tool. Studies show that food represents an attraction in its own right, as tourists are more interested to experience authenticity (Tinker, 1997; Kowalczyk, 2014). Indeed, food (taste, ingredient, accompaniment, preparation, form of serving the dish and the way of consuming the dish), is an important motivator that push people to travel the world. Food and tourism are therefore inextricably linked, given that eating is a physical necessity for every tourist and food and beverage in tourism do generate substantial revenues (Hjalger and Richards, 2002).

Following this compelling information explaining why street could be considered as a non-purpose tourism product and activity but also a sustainable activity, we come to the same conclusion about Voodoo in Haiti (Séraphin, 2017). However, it is also important to highlight the fact that 'authenticity is regarded as the most important criterion for the development of heritage tourism' (Xie & Wall, 2003 in Park, 2014: 62). Dark tourism can therefore play an important role in heritage tourism in Haiti while maintaining the authenticity of the product.

CONCLUSION

As Haiti lacks visitor attractions, the development of an authentic event programme is going to be an essential part of the on-going tourism strategy (Séraphin & Nolan, 2014). Culturally rich events are part of the appeal of a destination and can be cost efficient to organise. Furthermore it is well documented that planned events have the ability to improve national pride in small developing countries (O'Toole, 2011). From our findings, we come to the conclusion that Voodoo has helped Haitian people to maintain their cultural authenticity and now offer economic development options to the destination. The development of voodoo events may enhance Haiti's

tourism and provide opportunities for locals to embrace their cultural heritage and come to terms with their past (Séraphin & Nolan, 2014). That said, unless the 'blind spots' of the destination are removed, there is no empirical evidence to confirm that tourism will bring prosperity to Haiti (Séraphin et al., 2016) nor that voodoo can play a significant role in the country's tourism sector (Séraphin & Nolan, 2014).

FUTURE RESEARCH

After applying the cointegration theory to the Haitian context, Dupont (2009) came to the conclusion that this destination should focus first on developing the condition of leaving of its people before thinking about tourism development as it is the reduction of poverty that is going to trigger the development of tourism and not the other way round. Future research (empirical and conceptual) could therefore be directed towards the investigation of real potential economic impacts of Voodoo with focus on the prerequisites that would make it an effective agent of development for Haiti and destinations with a similar profile.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Blind Spot: Failure to learn then results in blind spots which can be defined as 'a regular tendency to repress, distort, dismiss or fail to notice information, views or ideas in a particular area that results in…[failure] to learn, change or grow in responses to changes in that area' (Blakeley, 2007: 6).

Dark Tourism: Seaton (1996) have referred to this activity as 'thanatourism', 'morbid tourism' and 'black spots' used to describe a fascination for travelling to places where death or tragedy has occurred.

Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA): This approach is mainly used to study four issues: Internal organisational process; organisational external environment; overlap within and between organisational environments and finally promoting a methodological alternative.