

Chapter 12

Virtual Dark Tourism: The Role of Sound Branding and Augmented Reality for Death Sites

Bintang Handayani

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3324-7486>

Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata Bali Internasional, Denpasar, Indonesia

Maximiliano E. Korstanje

University of Palermo, Buenos Aires, Argentina

ABSTRACT

This study looks at some primary points in the discourse of virtual dark tourism (VDT) formation. Derived from the spectrum of sound branding (SB), virtual reality (VR), coupled with augmented reality (AR), the case is used as a tool to support the claims of VDT. Findings suggest viewpoints for making death sites exclusive, and offer valuable clues to the design of VDT formation as an option to include death sites as market offerings of dark tourism. Guided by social constructionist research philosophy, coupled with semiology and compositional interpretation, the analysis offers valuable clues to position sites built around the narratives of death. Not only does it verify elements of unique and emotional selling propositions in the typology of death sites, but it also signifies the emerging state of the art on the nexus between VDT and SB. Specifically, dark themed songs coupled AR are used as tourism drivers for designing Trunyan Cemetery, Bali. Overall, this review shows preliminary designs for prototype death sites. Several issues and directions for future research are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Visits to death site denotes their importance in people's lives. They are a great unifier, not only for those who are grieving but also for those who have similar shared values. This study looks at some primary points in the discourse of Sound Branding (SB), Virtual Reality (VR) coupled with Augmented Reality (AR), as tools to support the claims of Virtual Dark Tourism (VDT). VDT, derived from VR, could

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-2469-5.ch012

be designed not only for AR but could also be enriched by the role of SB, e.g. specific music-related sadness or dark-themed songs. Despite tourism studies combining Dark Tourism development with the proliferation of Information Communication Technology (ICT), much remains to be explored in the case of VDT. For instance, studies on AR and VR in the tourism destination and mobile phone context have been reported (see Cheong, 1995; Julier, Lanzagorta, Baillot, Rosenblum, Feiner, Hollerer & Sestito, 2000; Vlahakis, Karigiannis, Tsotros, Gounaris, Almeida, Stricker & Ioannidis, 2001; Fritz, Susperregui & Linaza, 2005; Marimon, Sarasua, Carrasco, Álvarez, Montesa, Adamek et al., 2010; Kounavis, Kasimati & Zamani, 2012; Yovcheva, Buhalis & Gatzidis, 2012; Linaza, Marimón, Carrasco, Álvarez, Montesa, Aguilar & Diez, 2012; Han, Jung & Gibson, 2013; Tussyadiah, Wang & Jia, 2017; Tussyadiah, 2017). In line with this, research suggesting that certain types of music could evoke emotion are also discussed (e.g. Huron, 2011; Seider, Shiota, Whanlen & Levenson, 2010; Zentner, Grandjean & Schere, 2008; Davis, 1997; Herscovitch & Post, 1996; Gabrielsson & Lindstrom, 1993; George, Ketter, Parekh, Lane, Jacobs, Mason, Wahby, Kasl & Ostfeld, 1987; Frey, 1985). In addition, rituals of genres surrounding death in Bali also remain under-explored; to date record the literature merely includes the work of Bakan (1999). Despite Bakan's exploration of these issues, much remains to be done, especially in the case of the nexus between rituals of genres surrounding death in Bali and VDT. In this sense, the current state of the art of the nexus among variables of VDT formation, derived from VR and AR and coupled with the spectrum of SB, are under-explored, especially in the context of death sites in emerging countries, e.g. in Bali, Indonesia.

Inspired by the specific study on how AR apps were used in the movie *The Dark Knight Rises* (i.e. *The Dark Knight Rises Z+*), making people feel as if they are in the movie themselves (Gonzalez, 2013), this study aims to scrutinise the role of SB and AR in the development of death sites.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The roles of SB and AR in the Trunyan Cemetery, Bali provide the context of the study. This context not only signifies unique selling and emotional propositions, but the topographic characteristics, embedded in pre-history, also investigate the ritual of Bali Aga tribes in dealing with death. Dead bodies in this ritual are not buried; instead they lie beneath the *Teru Menyan* trees, the foundation of emerging theories that suggest a shifting spectrum from tourists visiting sites of natural beauty to the current mood of those who appreciate Dark Tourism, i.e. have a strong interest in visiting death sites. Applied research recognises Dark Tourism as a social expression which has recently emerged, where tourists are attracted by others' deaths and/or traumatic events. Death is the key factor in this attraction (Foley & Lennon, 1996; Seaton, 1996; Miles, 2002; Strange & Kempa, 2003; Wight, 2006; Stone, 2006; Jamal & Lelo, 2011; Robb, 2009; Stone & Sharpley, 2008; Sharpley, 2005; Stone, 2012; Kang, Scott, Lee & Ballantyne, 2012; Handayani, Ivanov & Korstanje, 2017). The attention given by scholars to Dark Tourism is significant, although the manipulation of sounds and music to cause specific effects in visitors' minds remains uninvestigated. Research into the development of death sites, especially for VDT, remains to be developed. Visits to death sites could be considered as a great unifier of those who are grieving and those with shared values (Handayani, Ivanov & Korstanje, 2017; Handayani & George, 2017a). However, the market segment for visiting death sites, especially in the context Bali's Trunyan Cemetery, remains limited. Arguably, VDT may a niche market for Destination Marketing Management (DMM) to develop, making death sites available to those without the resources or ability to visit in person (Abe, 2018), given

19 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/virtual-dark-tourism/251044

Related Content

Digital Heritage Systems: The ARCO Evaluation

Stella Sylaiou, Martin White and Fotis Liarokapis (2015). *Hospitality, Travel, and Tourism: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 503-527).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/digital-heritage-systems/119233

Key Planning Factors for Deploying Ubiquitous Wi-Fi Networks in Hotels

Galen R. Collins (2017). *International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management in the Digital Age* (pp. 18-31).

www.irma-international.org/article/key-planning-factors-for-deploying-ubiquitous-wi-fi-networks-in-hotels/189742

Customer-Perceived Value of Medical Tourism

Eunhee Sung and Wilson Ozuem (2015). *Current Issues and Emerging Trends in Medical Tourism* (pp. 58-78).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/customer-perceived-value-of-medical-tourism/133637

Considerations for Stakeholders of Medical Tourism: A Comprehensive Examination

Nitya Saxena (2020). *Global Developments in Healthcare and Medical Tourism* (pp. 23-37).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/considerations-for-stakeholders-of-medical-tourism/241396

Local Accommodation Establishments' Strategies in Social Media

Rui Costa, Gorete Dinis and Raquel Seabra (2020). *Handbook of Research on Social Media Applications for the Tourism and Hospitality Sector* (pp. 334-348).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/local-accommodation-establishments-strategies-in-social-media/246387