

The Appeal and Acceptability of Necroheritage Tourism

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Abstract

Necroheritage is a cultural asset that is defined by its association with death. Necrotourism, often considered a subset of both dark tourism and cultural tourism, is focused on areas like cemeteries, crypts, catacombs, and death festivals. Tourists have many different reasons and motivations for their interest in the wide variety of different necroheritages. Local residents also have opinions on what type of necroheritage is acceptable as a tourism product. This thesis aims to reveal what types of necroheritage attract tourists, and also what types of necroheritage locals deem appropriate for tourists to enjoy. With these objectives in mind, a quantitative research method was used with an online survey of 132 diverse respondents. The findings show that “heritage” and “unique” oriented necrotourism sites hold larger appeal for tourists, while “gloom” oriented sites are not as desirable. Locals were found to be generally open to death festivals, historical tombs, and cemeteries at touristic locations, with some hesitancy exhibited at burial grounds still being used in modern day.

Keywords: necrotourism, necroheritage, death festivals

Resumo

O necropatrimônio é um bem cultural que se define pela sua associação com a morte. O necroturismo, muitas vezes considerado um subconjunto do turismo sombrio e do turismo cultural, é focado em áreas como cemitérios, criptas, catacumbas e festivais da morte. Os turistas têm diversas razões e motivações para seu interesse na grande variedade de diferentes necropatrimônios. Os moradores locais também têm opiniões sobre que tipo de necropatrimônio é aceitável como produto turístico. Esta dissertação tem como objetivo revelar que tipos de necropatrimônio atraem turistas, e também que tipos de necropatrimônio os moradores consideram apropriados para os turistas usufruírem. Com esses objetivos em mente, métodos de pesquisa quantitativos e qualitativos foram usados junto com uma pesquisa online respondida por 132 participantes. Os resultados mostram que os locais de necroturismo orientados para o “patrimônio” e “único” têm maior apelo para os turistas, enquanto os locais orientados para o “macabro” não são tão desejáveis. Verificou-se que os moradores geralmente estão abertos a festivais da morte, túmulos históricos e cemitérios em locais turísticos, com alguma hesitação exibida em relação a cemitérios ainda usados para funerais nos dias atuais.

Palavras-chave: necroturismo, necropatrimônio, festivais da morte

1. Introduction

Death is a universal connecting force between all humanity, and in many ways between all life because it is one of the few things in the world that every living thing will experience. Death is a mysterious reality to every person, as is their relationship to the dead. Because of this, heritage which deals with death is very powerful. It is ever-presently connected to family, spirituality, and culture. Death heritage further assumes many forms throughout different parts of the world. “The process of living inevitably brings the cessation of life, but death as a concept is an intellectual construction that can vary from society to society and era to era” (Koudounaris, 2011, p. 11). These different versions can be somber, mournful, peaceful, beautiful, transcendent, and even life-affirming. Death heritage encompasses how burial processes and burial rights occur in different societies (Light, 2017; Tanaś, 2004; Goody and Poppy, 1994). Death heritage exhibits what type of architecture and artwork is used to commemorate lost loved ones (Mionel, 2020; Frihammer and Silverman, 2017). Traditions, many based on superstition or belief in the afterlife, take form as intangible death heritage. These create specific rituals for the dead, some of these developing into festivals, holidays, and celebrations known beyond just the confines of the region (Wu *et al.*, 2014; Mysyk and Morales Cano, 2018). All of these iterations are necroheritage, specifically heritage associated with death and its cultural complexity.

For this reason, people from all across the globe are fascinated with this type of heritage. Death sites have been historically sought after for centuries, with tombs like the Great Pyramids of Giza and the Taj Mahal still being incredibly famous tourist attractions to this day (Seaton, 2015). Many studies in recent years had aimed at trying to understand the motivations of death tourism, noting that a range of interests and reasons appear. These vary from a general curiosity, a desire to learn about cultural heritage, a spiritual or religious pilgrimage, or an interest in funerary design and sculpture (Ivanova and Light, 2017; Rugg, 2021). Necroheritage also has an important distinction from some other ‘lighter dark’ heritage sites. That being that it is also valued as important and even sacred in some places to the locals (Bowman and Pezzullo, 2009). This local perspective is understudied but vital to how necroheritage is cared for, represented, and managed. Some locals find necrosapes to be entirely inappropriate for tourism (Cahyanto *et al.*, 2013). Some regions see death festivals as a way to share their culture and traditions with

other peoples (Mysyk and Morales Cano, 2018). Some locals even see their necroheritage as a way to teach important lessons to the world (Wu *et al.*, 2014). This study aims at understanding both sides of this relationship to death heritage. Why is it important for some people as tourists, and how do local people feel about their own death heritage being a source of interest for others?

This thesis is an approach to understanding what forms of death heritage appeal to tourists. Looking at what type of heritage tourists see as specifically interesting, and what characteristics and aspects embody a desirable necrotourism site.

Along with this, the thesis also concerns the local opinion of death heritage. Are these types of heritages, traditions, customs, and rituals appropriate as a tourism product? Are locals only open to certain types of death heritage being visited?

In looking to examine how these two groups interact with necroheritage, the thesis aims to distinguish the specific forms of cultural death heritage. This allows necroheritage's distinction between dark heritage that is sometimes associated with disaster or 'grievous' deaths, disaster, and extraordinary tragedy as is the case with dark tourism sites like genocide sites, battlefields, and earthquake memorials (Stone, 2006; Seaton, 1996) This study aims to focus on necroheritage which is often described as a form of lighter dark tourism, as it falls into the category of dark cultural heritage at times (Bowman and Pezzullo, 2009; Hartman, 2014). But the focus will not be on heritage that concerns 'terrible' acts or how tragic phenomena occurred, but rather heritage acknowledging the everyday and natural reality of death.

The main objectives of the research are the following;

RO1: To understand the different motivations and interests that draw tourists to necroheritage

RO2: To distinguish why certain types of necroheritage are more appealing to tourists than others.

RO3: To understand how locals feel about their necroheritage as a tourism product

To achieve the stated objectives, two research questions were established

RQ1: What type of necroheritage interests tourists?

RQ2: How comfortable are locals with tourists visiting their necroheritage?

The study is structured as follows; the literature review examines different types of necroheritage, the definition of necrotourism, tourist motivations in necrotourism, and local sentiments towards necroheritage as a tourism product. The methodology chosen is an online survey using image elicitation, open answer, and linear scale questions to focus on the research questions. The results are then evaluated using coding and IBM-SPSS data analysis. Finally, the research is connected to previous findings and current theory, practical implications, confounding factors of the research, and future research suggested.

2. Literature review

2.1 Types of Necroheritage

Frihammer and Silverman (2017) outlined the different ways that death can be interpreted by societies throughout the world. One of these perspectives begins with looking at death as a medical and even rational situation. “Death can be defeated by a healthy lifestyle and medical care - a perspective that ultimately attaches a taboo to the inevitability of death” (Frihammer and Silveramn, 2017, p.5). Along with this taboo, death is also an emotional domain. Humans associate death as a deep source of feeling which affects all areas of society from family to friends to the community at large. Another outlook, in some ways opposite of the previous medical perspective, is a postmodern reaction, where mortality is deconstructed and rehearsed in different rituals practices and features of culture. Having death present in holidays, decorations, religious practices, brings mortality to the forefront of everyday life in this approach. This leads to death becoming part of an individual’s lifestyle and cultural identity. “Death rituals might celebrate life or death, and they might serve to distil fears and superstitions into a single time period and event, thereby dissipating their power to instill fear or dread” (Hackley and Hackley, 2015, p.93). This postmodern outlook leads to the heritagization of death as part of the human condition (Seaton, 2002).

It is important to initially outline the different varieties of death heritage. There is a large range of what can be considered necroheritage, but some of the first things that come to mind include funerary sites like cemeteries or graveyards (Torres, 2022: Tarrés Chomorro, 2018). Though sometimes unrecognized, Necroscapes arise out of the obvious need by societies to have a place to put the dead, but also as a means of recognizing and remembering individuals who have passed (Dancausa Millán *et al.*, 2019). Whilst achieving both of these goals, cemeteries and graveyards become “an anthropogenic and a socio-cultural resource (the organisation and way of life of social groups, cultural heritage), a material culture resource (an architectural and urban planning monument, an archaeological monument), a historical resource (a historical relic, national memorial site), a tourism resource (of educational, aesthetic, didactic and national significance), and a religious resource” (Tanaś, 2004, p.72).

A cemetery begins with its primary function of burial. This function can vary greatly based on the cultural principles of each location and different traditions. Affected heavily by religion but also by the natural terrain (Torres, 2022). The cemetery then becomes an important preservation of heritage and a way to pass information to future generations. Providing historical lessons and interpretation along with the dead that are residing there. A necroscape often has attributes of a park or garden as well. Featuring strong associations of landscaping and botany, whether those be plants growing in the cemetery or flowers that have been left at the graves. Cemeteries can have very drastic differentiations in adornments based on the regions of the world (Tarrés Chomorro, 2018).

The distinct features of burial grounds vary further than just decoration. The ornamentation can be symbolic of differences in religion, remembrance customs, and folk culture, like with the Merry Cemeteries painted wooden crosses reflecting it's Christian roots (Curşeu and Pop-Curşeu, 2011). Goody and Poppy (1994) examine the differences in European and the Anglo-American cemetery styles. Italian cemeteries may feature extensive floral designs. This can even be seen throughout English cemeteries. "Indeed, that difference was dramatically illustrated by the experience of an American friend whose children were playing in a cemetery near Florence. There they found an undecorated grave, so they took flowers from the others in order to cover its nakedness. In America, such a generous action would be uncalled for" (Goody and Poppy, 1994, p.147) The unique feature at hand is the routine decoration of cemeteries in Italy and England, however special occasion or holiday decoration of cemeteries is obviously a trait shared with *Día de Los Muertos* and All Souls Day (Brandes, 2009; Torres, 2020). Goodie and Poppy focus on how this is greatly different from an Anglo-American perspective. The Presbyterian Church is influenced greatly by Scottish tradition for example, so it discourages displays or excessive floral tributes as the 'splendor of God' should be the focus above these things. Something as simple as decoration creates a vast difference in how the heritage feels and appears.

Goody and Poppy's research goes on to discuss burial rights and practices, with particular focus on the idea of the cult of bones. "the cult of the bones of the dead than was involved in the earlier reverence given to the relics of saints. That cult was more than a question of the commemoration of the dead or of the memento mori....for the bones themselves, whether those of ancestors or of

the anonymous dead” (Poppy and Goody, 1994, p.160). The cult of bones stressed attention to the display and reverence of the human remains, in particular bones. This could include skulls of dead monks stored in monasteries, or the bones put on display in ossuaries throughout Europe, but one of the more famous occurrences happened after the need for replacement of bones in 1780 in Paris. these bones were displayed in large quarries under the city, known famously as the catacombs of Paris ever since.

The Parisian catacombs are not the only heritage associated with the ‘cult of bones.’ The legacy of charnel houses in Europe can be identified with the legacy of Christianity in the continent. Before Christianity’s rise, the act of cremation was more common amongst other religious groups. But early Christianity brought with it the belief that “the presence of the body itself was necessary to ensure an afterlife” (Koudounaris, 2011, p. 18) As more individuals desired to be buried on consecrated ground too, the space available in church graveyards became less and less. But as individuals desired these religious grounds for the purpose of being under the protection of the saints, “the solution for an effective means of secondary disposal was to establish within the church or cemetery a bone house, or *carnarium*” (Koudounaris, 2011, p. 19). These charnel houses grew and aged into artistically and geometrically crafted collections of bones throughout Europe. As the ossuaries grew and developed, these large collections of human bones became associated with a spiritual connection to the souls of the dead. Some of this belief in the bone’s connection to the dead pertained to cultist groups or smaller religions , but some of it was sanctioned by the Catholic Church itself. “Ossuaries that functioned as chapels were often dedicated to the service of the souls in purgatory” (Koudounaris, 2011, p.130). These bone chapels were especially sought after on All Saints’ Day and All Souls Day as a place designated for prayer for those who have departed and in particular those in limbo. Some of these charnel houses became commemorative sites, intended either to honor individuals who had died in a war or to warn individuals about the dangers of rebellion, religious deviance, or disaster. Fifty of these charnel house sites are in Catholic locations of Europe and four are in Protestant locations in England. Ossuaries can be found at many of these religious sites in Europe such as the bone chapels (Capelas dos Ossos) in Portugal. There are other collections of bones though like military ossuaries and the memorial ossuary at the killing fields of Cambodia. These are all

forms of necroheritage as well, the latter two memorial sites being explicitly dark heritage in addition (Koudounaris, 2011).

The need to relocate bodies and find new places for the dead has been a common problem for centuries now in the European continent. However this geographic limitation is not the same in the United States which has a different idea about the reverence given to resting places. The ample amount of available burial space leads a stronger cultural view of exhumation as tampering with mortal remains, and thus seen as disrespectful at times. This provides a strong example of the differences observed in the types of burial grounds, but also the cultural perceptions people from these different places hold which are reflected in how their necrosapes are arranged (Goody and Poppy, 1994). Further specializations of necrosapes emerge throughout the world too, such as military cemeteries (for soldiers, set up by military forces), cemeteries for victims of terror (those killed in grievous circumstances or genocide) City necropolises ('Cities of the dead' which emerged in France and Portugal in the 19th century, Such as the Père-Lachaise or Alto de São João (Bazaraite *et al.*, 2019)), and symbolic cemeteries (ex. the tomb of the unknown soldier, where the message is meant to be more relevant than any individual that may be buried there. With some not even having dead bodies present at the site. (Tanaś, 2004)).

Death rituals constitute an important part of culture as well, however some researchers disagree with the idea of defining ritual simply as intangible heritage. Hafstein (2018) warns that an understudied, superficial understanding of cultural heritage "poses a danger in an era in which the modern boundaries between the cultural field, the political field, and the market are blurring" (Hafstein, 2018, p.16). Though some research identifies the use of the term 'heritage' as one that increases historical awareness; some associate it with the tourist industry in particular, and some further identify it as a cultural logic of capitalism. This makes something like intangible cultural heritage especially hard for all research to agree upon, but many death rituals and death festivals are at the very least cultural features which have a relationship with the idea of heritage.

One of those cultural features, which represents a potential form of necroheritage, emerges from death rituals carried out by various cultures. In anthropological studies, a death ritual is a specific

form considered by some as intangible heritage. This relates to the earlier category of interacting with death where one might reflect upon mortality or the briefness of life and make experiencing or acknowledging death part of a routine interaction (Frihammer and Silverman, 2017). Death festivals are specific personification of such rituals and are meant to celebrate life and death, placate fears and superstitions, downplay the powerful sense of dread that might loom over the idea of dying, and reflect local tradition and myth. (Hackley and Hackley, 2015). There are different varieties of Asian death rituals which involve burning paper and goods. Western and African death rituals which can emphasize gift giving and feasting, And even the more festive almost carnival-esque celebrations like *Día de Los Muertos*, and some forms of its counterpart All Souls' Day. Further death festivals include the Japanese Obon festival, South Korean Chuseok, Chinese Qingming festival (Lau, 2004; Hackley and Hackley, 2015, p.92).

Hungry Ghost Festival in particular is an enduring feature throughout eastern and southeastern Asia. In Hackley and Hackley's (2015) research they looked at this death ritual in particular. This festival, known for its religious and folk symbolism, represents the consequences of earthly desire. The Festival focused on the living surrendering worldly possessions to be consumed by the dead in the afterlife. Paper burning is the most traditional but often covered with Chinese characters or pictures of things that the living attribute to earthly desires and not spiritual wholeness. “. Hungry ghost festivals, then, can entail various ritual practices, some of which are intimately connected to consumption. There can be feasting, music, trading, gift- giving, and many involve the ritual burning of paper offerings in the form of imitation money, or paper models of branded goods such as watches, cars, handbags, mobile phones” (Hackley and Hackley, 2015, p. 96). Hungry Ghost festival is a form of identity and place association in many Asian countries: China, Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, etc. (Tan, 2020). Based on the Buddhist traditions in Hungry Ghost, the dead are perceived as ever present with the living. These dead may be malintentioned if they are tormented, they may be benign, or they may be contented ancestors who bring blessings to their descendants. The tradition of Hungry Ghost Festival is focused on the tormented souls that are held in malice by earthly desires. Thus this festival is meant to enable the lost souls to become content and benign ancestors through the different offerings (Chan, 2019).

Hackley and Hackley (2015) identified how Buddhism and Taoism explicitly affect death rituals because their view of death is a natural evolution on the wheel of life. Chan (2019) claims that the Buddhist spiritual tradition contrasts with western death rituals focusing on funeral rights and enabling the living to come to terms with the loss of those dear to them. However, some research also exhibits how closely related death rituals and festivals are across cultures. Lévi-Strauss (2016) discusses one of the most popular festivals that originally surrounded the idea of death, being Christmas. This idea in particular revolves around the feast of Saint Nicholas, a tradition that existed before the attachment of Christianity to the holiday. This feast still held the idea of giving presents to children, however, the idea was associated with giving gifts to the dead to placate their souls and send them back to the afterlife. The dead would return to either torment or elicit some response from the living throughout the autumn, and the feast at the winter solstice was a celebration of the dead being sent back until the next year. “Principal stages are: the return of the dead ; threatening and persecutory conduct on their part; the establishment of a *modus Vivendi* with the living, which consists of an exchange of services and presents; the triumph of life on Christmas, when the dead, showered with gifts , leave the living in peace until the following autumn” (Lévi-Strauss, 2016, p.18). Interestingly the Anglo-Saxon countries went on to split this phenomenon into two forms with Halloween, where the children will tester and extort treats from adults representing the dead, and Christmas were the adults give presents to the children to placate them. This concept of giving gifts to the dead to satisfy them until the next year comes around is very much intertwined with the same idea that exists with hungry ghost festival. With this research showing that some death festivals and rituals have many commonalities despite the fact that they occur in very different locations.

The Hungry Ghost festival occurs on the seventh lunar month of the Chinese calendar. This is because the mythology states this is the time when the veil between the afterlife and the living world is the thinnest. Because of this belief there are several other superstitions accompanying this month including not going out at nighttime but also not swimming. “The taboos of the ghost month (the seventh month of the lunar calendar), which include not swimming and not going out at night, are widely known” (Chan, 2019, p. 283). But this thin veil belief also means, the hungry ghosts are able to escape from hell and roam in the mortal world. This belief is one that is shared with many other death festivals around the world,

acknowledging a certain time of year in which the dead can interact with the living, Mainly associated with the seasons of autumn to winter. (Wu *et al.*, 2014; Koudarnis, 2011; Lévi-Strauss, 2016; Brandes, 2009).

Another classical piece of research on death rituals and celebrations was done by Malinowski (1916). their research observed the Trobriand Islands and the death traditions surrounding the *Baloma* (the main form of a dead person's spirit), and the feast in which these spirits returned to accompany the living for the evening before being sent back at the end of the night. "They return in a body from Tuma to their own village, where preparations are made to receive them, where special platforms are erected to accommodate them, and where customary gifts are offered to them, and whence, after the full moon is over, they are ceremonially but unceremoniously driven away." (Malinowski, 1916, p. 370). This feast draws many comparisons to other death festivals such as Hungry Ghost and the Feast of Saint Nicholas as well (Chan, 2019; Lévi-Strauss, 2016).

The most well-known death and remembrance festival in the world is *Día de los Muertos*. This Mexican form of All Saints day and All Souls day is recognized worldwide for its flamboyant decoration of altars and graves with flowers and candles, sugar skull candies, choreographed performances, and folk culture representations; all done to honor the deceased. There are many facets of *Día de los Muertos* that have similar sentiments to death like anywhere else in the world, including grieving and lamentation, however Brandes (2009) draws to attention an almost casual attitude towards death with the recognition of its inevitability. The holiday is just as famous for its mourning as it is for its dark humor throughout local Mexican newspapers. It has very unique celebratory qualities as a death festival as well, "apart from its undisputed status as a major mortuary ritual . The day of the dead has over the course of my history been transformed into an ostentatious display of art, poetry, and creative energy. The ultimate paradox is that the very holiday responsible for producing a stereotype of a stoic Mexican, who longs for death, is actually a powerful affirmation of life and creativity" (Brandes, 2009, p.6). Beyond just celebration, commemoration, and creativity, *Día de los Muertos* identifies death as an equalizer of power as all individuals from all walks of life ultimately will meet the same fate (Brandes, 2009).

Though this holiday bears liturgical resemblance to All Saints day and All Souls day, much of the identifying qualities that inspire the creative, decorative, and celebratory aspects are folk practices where the point of origin is in debate amongst researchers. Some native tribes, such as the Aztec Nahua, even celebrate a third day to honor those who died accidental deaths or were murdered, sometimes referred to as 'El Día de los Matados.' However regardless of origin and variations, these traits are strong identity-affirming factors for Mexicans, and people of Mexican descent who live outside of the country (Brandes, 2009). As death festivals are a powerful representation of culture and identity, this is a way for people living away from their home countries to unite and identify with their culture (Tan, 2020; Lau, 2004).

2.2 Defining Necrotourism

Necrotourism is a term that is sometimes considered a subsidiary of dark tourism and sometimes considered synonymous with death heritage tourism. It is often times associated specifically with cemeteries as heritage tourism. "Called "necrotourism," or cemetery tourism, this practice is a subsegment of dark tourism that is becoming increasingly important. Necrotourism is where tourists can walk the corridors of graveyards to discover the artistic, architectural, historical and scenic heritage treasured by cemeteries" (Milian *et al.*, 2021, p.3). Necrotourism is associated in particular with the heritage of death.

Death's association with tourism has become a focal point in the most recent decades because of fascination with dark tourism. Bowman and Pezzulo (2009) emphasize how broad the term dark tourism is overall, with the phrase being 'fashionable' and intending to simplify a dynamic and multifaceted phenomenon. Though others claim necrotourism is an entirely separate from darker forms of tourism at times, recommending "that the approach and classification of dark sites should be made taking into account the quality/intensity of the feelings they provide." (Mionel, 2020, p. 3). Frihammer and Silverman (2017) identify this interesting in western society given the documented reticence toward discussing mortality, often associating concepts of death with anxiety. It makes it all the more interesting and extraordinary that death can be transformed into an attractive destination for visitors. Koudounaris corroborates this point, "In western culture the lines separating the living and the dead underwent a fundamental shift during the Enlightenment. The triumph of modern concepts of individualism

and exaltation of private ownership over older concepts of corporate Ness and community further changed our attitudes towards death The dead were slowly exiled, with death increasingly seen as an impassable barrier that precluded interaction with those on the other side” (Koudounaris, 2011, p.13). However, Koudounaris’s (2011) research also contrasts the point about the west that Frihammer and Silverman make, showing how charnel houses were revered as sacred sites and sought after for the purpose of communion with the dead on a spiritual level in the western world. The ambivalence of feelings toward death and significance of death itself, then creates a complex relationship between a sacred and profane worldview where the tourist gaze challenges the reverence and care that might be expected for a space connected with death. Some places where this touristic beguilement and admiration are accompanied with mourning include famous cemeteries throughout the world such as Hollywood forever in Los Angeles, Père-Lachaise in Paris, and La Recoleta in Buenos Aires (Frihammer and Silverman, 2017).

Though the idea of necrotourism has become trendy according to some research, Seaton (1996) claims that it has always been a feature of travel and tourism in general. “Death is the one heritage that everyone shares and it has been an element of tourism longer than any other form of heritage” (Seaton, 1996, p.234) Some of the earliest forms of tourism were necro tourism in the form of pilgrimage and spiritual journeys to famous tombs and spiritually significant cemeteries (Seaton, 2002). These visits all involved commemoration, but also thanatopsis, or contemplation of death. Thanatopsis was foregrounded in the Christian culture of Western Europe in many ways. This concept includes all the forms of symbolic interpretation and how the concept of death is communicated to individuals in their societies. An example of a thanatopic display is the ‘dance of death’, a symbolism of memento mori that was presented as a partly fleshed skeleton that carried away people to the afterlife. This representation was seen throughout books, paintings, and even works of art within churches, reminding people of their own mortality. Traveling to locations of martyrdom or the internment of saints was one of the earliest forms of thanatopic travel.

This idea of thanatourism represented travel motivated by fascination with death or symbolic encounters with death, not exclusively violent death though. Thanatourism can also be person specific too, as with all the visitors to Lenin’s tomb in Russia (Seaton, 2015). But Seaton goes on

to argue that the purest form of thanatourism is travel motivated specifically by reflecting on death with no specific person or persons involved. This is different from traditional commemoration to one dead figure or figures, in which the motivations live with the traveler's knowledge of the dead or specific connection with the dead individual.

However, necrotourism is not necessarily synonymous with thanatourism.

Rugg (2021) argues that travel to a cemetery is "rarely 'about' death. There has been recent recognition of funerary heritage as a largely overlooked but important aspect of cultural expression" (Rugg, 2021, p. 52), and the draw of a cemetery or any famous necroscape might be truly aesthetically based. This can have almost nothing to do with reflecting upon death and its significance for one's lifetime. Rugg sees necrotourism's association with dark tourism as ultimately unhelpful because it carries with a negative connotation. Thus it hinders the respect of these sites as cultural routes of tourism and historical preservation. However other researchers posit that the demand present in the dark or necrotouristic sites shows some death related motivation always, even if only subconscious. "The demand oriented approach follows the hidden assumption that the presence of tourists at death-related sites reflects at least some degree of thanatouristic motives" (Biren, *et al.* 2011, p.822).

With the varying opinions on necrotourism, there come different evaluations from different sites. With some research focusing on tourism as self-gratification, necrotourism is seen as a "little more than facilitated rubber-necking." (Rugg, 2021, p. 50)). There's further concern that allowing cemeteries to develop into tourism destinations has a risk of exaggerating stereotypical folklore for the purpose of the tourist's entertainment in contrast to authenticity. This would highlight unique necrosapes and specialized burial practices as exotic oddities. Seeking to emphasize elements of extreme difference, as opposed to a commonality of death and mourning amongst mankind, is not conducive to a global community.

Rugg's research additionally leads to concerns about the integrity of the heritage with heavy visitor foot traffic. This is a common concern for any historical site, but it is specifically potent in the case of necroheritage with death having a high emotional correlation. This can cause individuals to be even more sensitive to detrimental effects on these locations. People raise

concerns in particular with cemetery tourism with question like: are those who live in the region visitors? Are individual visitors a problem? who has personal reasons for being there? What are the interests of organized groups seeking to consume the heritage? (Rugg, 2021). Mionel (2020) acknowledges general criticism of dark tourism to be about cemeteries as explicit places to mourn the deceased, as opposed to somewhere meant to be fun. There is an incompatibility with the festivities of visitors seeking amusement and grieving people remembering their loved ones. There is further a present assumption that stakeholder communities have or should have direct rights in deciding how their funerary culture is presented and interpreted. In particular, when those sites are still used for burial in the modern day.

2.3 Tourist Motivations

Tourist motivations in necrotourism are not always straightforward. As Rugg (2021) stated before, tourists' desires are not tied exclusively to an interest in death and can be entirely separate. Motivations concentrated specifically on architecture at necrosapes can stand on their own, as can interest specifically in death festivals. (Mionel, 2020; Light, 2017). There is research suggesting these can have an underlying or subconscious draw to death itself from the tourist, though this doesn't mean it is explicit.

The motivation in and of itself is a very extensive area which is multifaceted and multidimensional. This in particular can be interesting from the perspective of a tourist, as something draws them to escape their routine life. Necrotourist are shown to have several motivators. One unique motivation is the need for individual identity through remembrance. As acting upon remembrance of those who have died is part of reflecting upon the self (Wu *et al.*, 2014). Another general motivator is the interest and the outcome of death, which can be an example of thanatopsis. This involves the psychological desire to meditate on an afterlife or the finiteness of life, sometimes even expected as a moral requirement (Biran *et al.*, 2011).

Bhati's (et al., 2021) research focused on motivators within the realms of death tourism with young, Asian travelers. They found 5 major factors: experience, history, education, culture + identity, and remembrance. Regarding their interest in traveling to a dark tourism or death tourism location, the largest number of respondents said they were neither willing nor unwilling

with 39%. 10% said they were strongly unwilling. 19% said they were unwilling. 27% claimed to be willing. And only 5% were strongly willing. This shows a less than enthusiastic reaction to the phenomenon, however the amount that fell into the willing category was slightly more than the amount in the unwilling. The respondents made a point to say they would be more open to visiting museums and historical sites rather than actual sites of death or burial grounds. The main deterrents were for personal fears, religious reasons, or a desire to avoid sadness, but ultimately only 25% of respondents showed a concern for religious reasons or superstitions (Bhati *et al.*, 2021).

Iliey (2021) reconfirms a fixation on this as a major motive in much of the earlier literature surrounding dark tourism. But this research further confirms that a morbid curiosity is not an exclusive motive, emphasizing the concepts of remembrance, overall understanding, and learning. Light (2017) argues that tourists with a specific proclivity for death or a uniquely uncommon occurrence. ‘In fact, ‘true’ dark tourism or thanatourism - in which people travel because of a specific interest in (or desire for an encounter with) death, may actually be quite rare” (Light, 2017, p. 287). The study even finds that some claimed that the motivations for visiting sites of death are almost identical with sites of heritage. This idea is connected with ‘lighter’ dark tourism sites which necroheritage is often considered.

Motivation on basis of spirituality versus secularism is one where literature tends to disagree. Collins-Kreiner (2016) brings forth the comparison of dark tourism with pilgrimage. Saying that both cases can be seen as an example of emotional desire and seeking extraordinary experiences the go beyond the more common touristic goals of relaxation and spectacle. Both of these groups for example have subconscious motivations and subconscious interests which are hard to follow. Both groups tend to have strong emotions associated with travel before and after the experience. Though this observation can be seen as something that other researchers would disagree with, stating that spirituality or belief in higher forces is not necessarily as quintessential to dark tourism as with religious tourism (Seaton, 2015).

Looking at a direct example with the *Día de Los Muertos* festival, the visitors had individual goals in mind when coming to the necrotourism heritage celebration. This event is known for celebration, for decoration, and for a unique cultural experience as Brandes (2009) explained in their research. The features of festivity and ornamentation are reflected in the motivations of the majority of visitors. The visitors stated direct interest in viewing alters to see the traditional floral decorations and exhibits of remembrance to family and also to experience the local Huequechula culture (Mysyk and Morales Cano, 2018). Beyond these two most popular reasons the other reasons included thinking about human mortality, experiencing something new, thinking about death and dying, and paying respects to those who have passed.

There is also a differentiation in the responses of the Mexican tourists and foreign tourists. Foreign tourists were less likely to expand upon their decisions and their motivations especially in regard to thinking about mortality and death. However, several Mexican tourists elaborated on their motivations. They stated that *Día de Los Muertos* is a beautiful way for families to remember loved ones, some stating the inevitability and natural aspect of death, some stating life may be finite but there's no reason to view death as something negative just because of that. The research points to this as not merely a fascination with death but more an interest in learning about death's meaning (Sharply, 2005; Mysyk and Morales Cano, 2018).

Visitor association and motivations were also noted at the Merry Cemetery in Săpânța, Romania. In Mionel's (2020) research on (not so) dark tourism, they had tourists discuss the first things associated with the Merry Cemetery that drew them to visit. This research notes that the initial major motivations for many dark tourists is educational desire along with opportunity and curiosity. But because of the cemetery's particular folk art and heritage connection, the motivations of traditional dark tourism do not necessarily align with it as necroheritage.

The visitors' associations and interests for the Merry Cemetery were folk culture with an overwhelming 67.6%, followed by an association with tourism as a must-see location with 18.9%, then a distant third is death is 6.3%, finally religion at 4.1%. Though it is a prominent necroheritage location, the main motivation was heritage and aesthetics through the folk art.

When visitors were asked what aspects describe the cemetery best, the main answer was commemoration with 72.4%.

Overall, the full extent of the study when compared with other researchers such as Light (2017), found the respondent's motivations to be concerned with history and culture 30.6%, simply curious 17.6%, and 10% considered it a must-see place that could not be missed. 9% claimed that its status as a place of national identity was one of their big motivations as well. Specifically interesting, only 4.5% the survey tourist said their main reason was to see a place associated with death.

2.4 Local Sentiments

Local feelings concerning necroheritage are one of the areas that research has been less thorough with. There's been limited amounts of studies looking into different varieties of necroheritage and how local people feel when this intimate part of their culture becomes a tourism product. The studies which have breached this subject have noted that one of the more controversial heritage sites is the cemetery. In a study done in a rural Indonesia, the residents were happy to use photographs to show tourists potential places they could visit in the town. One of the only places that they did not take photos of was the graveyard. When locals were asked about this, they said it's a very important area for families. They also didn't see any reason the tourist would be drawn to visit the town's cemetery. "I have no idea why I did not take pictures of cemetery ... [laugh] I pass it everyday ... and yes it is important to me. My father was buried there ... [long pause], but who wants to visit a cemetery anyway?" (Cahyanto *et al.*, 2013, p.742). This touches on one of the major points of locals' opinions with necrotourism, which is the confusion over interest in such a site in the first place.

Death festivals are also met with complex feelings on their development as a tourism product, though seemingly more embraced by the local community for this purpose than cemeteries are (Dancausa Millán *et al.*, 2019). One Japanese cultural organizer discussed the importance of the Obon, or Toro-Nagashi, festival. Obon festival is a historical event that has occurred throughout Japan for centuries (Fujii, 1982). The Hiroshima Toro-Nagashi festival is a specific iteration of

Obon that takes place in commemoration of the bombing victims of 1945. This festival plays an important role in the tourism development by providing visitors with a unique and evolutionary experience. One where locals are often proud to share a peace movement at a historical site with them (Wu *et al.*, 2014). Hiroshima's paper lantern floating festival began in the mid-20th century to remember those who were lost to the bomb. So locals feel when it is represented as a tourist destination, it is a way to show the resilience of the city of Hiroshima and also a way to educate and instill important messages to be shared throughout the world. Local residents shared that they desired for the city to be perceived as a cheerful and peaceful place. They even went further to say that they interpreted the festival as relevant to peace promotion throughout the world.

Locals in Huaquechula's *Día de Los Muertos* festival shared a similar sentiment of wanting to convey certain ideas onto visitors. Residents of the city discussed how some tourists come to reflect on heritage and not so much on death. However, from the local perspective, if they reflect on death it might very well be a good thing, "I'd like to hear that, everywhere, they had the same awareness of awaiting a loved one" (Mysyk and Morales Cano, 2018. P.114). There is a lot of support in the education orientation for tourists, however there are also problems with some locals and the perceived authenticity of the event when it becomes a tourism focus. Locals discussed the bittersweet feelings of celebration and loss and criticized the entertainment orientation that leads to misinformation given to visitors. This version of *Día de Los Muertos* emphasizes spectacle over remembrance, and exuberance over acknowledging the preciousness of life (Mysyk and Morales Cano, 2018).

This is a problem that residents are encountering in Hong Kong with its Hungry Ghost Festival. The Chaozhou Hungry Ghost Festival has been promoted in the Hong Kong community since 2015 (Chan, 2019). Like other forms of the Hungry Ghost Festival, it aims to commemorate ancestors and pacify wandering spirits. It features decorations and alters paper offerings being burned, bamboo structures, ritual chanting, and excessive amount of different types of foods including peanut pastries, green bean buns, and sugar towers. These features have been exaggerated in some peoples' estimation as the festival has continued going on. The reason being that it is attempting to draw more and more visitors as opposed to prioritizing authenticity to its initial purpose, which was perhaps less celebratory and more religiously oriented. Examples of

this include educational games that are set up for people to play, vibrant decoration, and an organizational base of wealthier businessmen. This is different from the religious rituals, blessings, purification, prayer, and organization by grassroots communities that were previously part of Chaozhou. For this reason, locals are claiming that they are trying to make the festival appear less ‘spooky’ and also less religious to appeal to a more generalized audience. “Religious elements of the Hungry Ghosts Festival, such as the purification of the local community and praying for the peace of wandering spirits, were downplayed in the Cultural Festival. This minimizing of the religious dimension is intended to attract wider participation from the general public” (Chan, 2019, p. 294). Doing so takes out some of the authentic aspects of the cultural death festival in and of itself.

As one might expect, this leads to a mixed view of local opinions. Some see the messaging behind necroheritage as an important one to share with people who are interested in learning about it. But directly on the oppositional end, many see these places as important and sacred to locals and not meant for the entertainment of visitors. And even when a touristic presence is acceptable in small amounts, large adjustments for the benefit of the tourists and not authenticity, can lead to a loss of both tangible and intangible necroheritage if not tended to carefully.

3. Methodology

For the research method, a survey was developed to target peoples' impressions and interest in necroheritage and their opinions on their local necroheritage as a touristic product. Because of the large amount of different types of necroheritage that the research would cover, and the desire for the experiences of people from many different places, an online survey was one of the more direct ways to achieve this. A survey gives the opportunity to get the impressions of people on their interest as a visitor to a place as well as their opinions on their own local heritage too. To make sure there was an analyzable amount of data the goal was to achieve at least 120 survey respondents. In addition, the survey would have open answer questions in which the respondents would type their answers out and scale questions in which the respondents would rank (1-5) how they felt. This offered a mix of qualitative and quantitative data.

The survey began with demographic information asking each participant if they were willing to engage in this research 'yes' or 'no.' They were asked what country they were from. What their age was. What their gender was, and their frequency of travel each year.

- 46.2% of respondents were from the United States
- 4.6% were from Italy
- 4.6% from France
- 4.6% from Germany
- All other countries had less than 4% of the overall percentage, but the countries included were Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Denmark, England, Ghana, Greece, Indonesia, India, Iran, Luxembourg, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, and Zimbabwe

14.6 % of respondents were between 18-24 years of age. 62.3% were 25-34. 10.8% were 35-44. 9.2% were 45-64. 3.1% were >64.

65.4% of respondents were female. 33.1% of respondents were male. 1.5% of respondents were non-binary.

The largest portion of respondents traveled 3 to 4 times a year, 40.8%.

The survey was conducted over a period of 1.5 months during July and August of 2022.

3.1 Survey Format and Coding

After the first page of demographic information, the survey had three principal sections.

The first section of the survey beyond the demographics focused on photos (Appendix A) of different necroheritage examples. This was intended to be a photo elicitation method. Photo elicitation is acknowledged to bring out the respondents values, attitudes, and beliefs, but it is also “believed that context-specific photographs could show indescribable attributes of people, objects, situations, and phenomena; subtle or unnoticed relationships; and the various dimensions of ways of knowing” (Richard and Lahman, 2015, p.6). Two of the pictures were necroscapes, cemeteries, and graveyards that have touristic interest; two were touristic sites associated with death and bones (a charnel house and a catacomb); and two photos of death festivals. Each respondent was then asked to give an open answer response of three words they associated with the photo, and also rank their scale of interest (1-5) in visiting this site or event from ‘not interested’ to ‘very interested.’

The second section of the survey asked respondents what they hope to learn or experience at necrotourism sites in an open answer question. It then asked them to rank their level of interest in visiting three principal types of necroheritage (cemeteries, death festivals, crypts/ossuaries)

The third section was focused on how respondents felt concerning necrotourism in their local region. This section asked what type of necroheritage was in their local region, what they hoped tourists would learn from their local necroheritage, and to rank their comfort with tourists

visiting those same three principal types of necroheritage (cemeteries, death festivals, crypts/ossuaries).

A coding strategy was used to encompass all the responses into categories. “Raw data can be very interesting to look at, yet they do not help the reader to understand the social world under scrutiny, and the way the participants view it, unless such data have been systematically analysed to illuminate an existent situation” (Basit, 2003, p.144). Every response was coded, with the majority of questions yielding fewer than 10% of responses in a miscellaneous category.

The same coding strategy was implemented for all open answer questions:

Step 1 - Record the first 25% of responses from each open answer question.

Step 2 - Group these first responses into categories according to if they are the same word , the same form of a word, a synonym , or a closely related word.

Step 3 - Isolate any groups from Step 2 that have lower than 5 entries in the category , and see if they can be combined with any other existing category/code.

Step 4 - The codes were then converted to quantitative data in terms of what percent of responses corresponded with each.

After obtaining the coding, and obtaining the levels of interest of each image, an analysis of the different categories was analyzed within each image. A one-way ANOVA analysis by IBM SPSS was used to examine and compare the means of each different category for their interests in visiting them. The goal of this analysis was to see if people who associated specific concepts were generally more interested in visiting cemeteries, death festivals, and crypts/ossuaries overall; also to see if an association showed a great difference in interest of any individual questions or types of necroheritage.

4. Results:

4.1. Photo Elicitation and Interest

The codes for the image associations were identified as the following;

Description – A definition or direct description of the photo. Since the survey question asked for 2 to 3 words in response to the picture, some individuals merely listed exactly what they were seeing in the picture. So examples within the first few photos of necroscapes, included ‘cemetery,’ ‘tombstone,’ ‘grave.’ Later photos of the festivals would list such things as ‘dancers,’ ‘lanterns,’ and ‘lights.’ The catacombs and charnel house pictures often produced the response of ‘bones’ or ‘crypt.’ This code identifies anything that is an item that can clearly be identified in the picture itself. So these were not concepts that the respondent thought of or associated, as much as just listed from the photo itself. Many respondents also tried to identify the location of the necroheritage by either naming a country, city, or specific location. So any attempts at location whether correct or incorrect were also categorized here, as they were also an attempt to simply state a direct feature of the image.

Aesthetics - All compliments, remarks, and focuses about how the site or event looked. The most common responses were ‘beautiful,’ ‘artistic,’ ‘pretty,’ ‘architectural.’ Some other comments were made about general way it appeared such as ‘showy’ or ‘gothic.’

Heritage - Related to people writing directly the word ‘heritage’ very often in responses, but also in regards to terms like ‘culture’ or ‘tradition’. This category was mainly for isolating when the respondent was trying to say something about the image representing cultural value, whether intangible or tangible.

Spirituality - Developed from responses like ‘catholic,’ ‘faith,’ ‘beliefs,’ and ‘soul.’ This category is meant to isolate responses associated with a belief system, the idea of a higher power, or the concept of an afterlife. These responses were very common as many of the sites have

religious elements, in particular Christian elements amongst the cemeteries and the European charnel house. Spiritual concepts and ideas were also associated with the festivals as well.

Gloom - was generally undesirable feelings associated with the image, such as 'dark,' 'empty,' 'spooky,' 'scary,' 'maudlin.' Most of the responses to this were some form of fear or unsettling emotion that the respondent felt when looking at the picture. Though there are also ones that had to do with sadness and grief like 'mourning' and 'sorrow,' and other ones that had to do with the feeling of disgust such as 'grotesque.'

Tranquility - Calm feelings or ideas associated with the photo. Ex: 'peaceful,' 'meditation,' 'serene,' 'solemn.' These were commonly associated with a sentiment of quiet, inactivity, and pleasant relaxation. This category occurred in many of the different images, which was one of the more surprising realizations from the research.

Remembrance and human connection - This category was about recognizing the dead or loved ones who have passed. Ex: 'respect,' 'reverence,' 'tribute,' 'commemoration,' 'homage,' 'community.' This category occurred when the respondent was attempting to explain how the image was a method of connecting to people who had passed or to people still living. It is a specifically interpersonal category, in that everyone who mentioned a **Remembrance** response was talking about relating to other people, either living or dead.

Unique - Examples like 'eclectic,' 'quirky,' 'interesting,' 'curious,' 'different.' This category was specifically about things that stood out as special in either a positive or a negative way. So some people would list things as weird or bazaar in their nature while other people would list them as interesting and special in their disposition, but anything that was trying to identify the content of the image as different from other things was coded into this category.

Joy - Exemplified by the answers 'festive,' 'welcoming,' 'jovial,' 'lively,' 'happy,' 'celebration.' This was a category that is associated with generally desirable feelings, and thus the oppositional category to **Gloom**. It is associated with emotions of happiness, invigoration, celebration, and festivity. These type of answers were expected especially for the more exuberant and

flamboyantly styled festival images, but were revealed to be associated with some of the other photos as well.

Miscellaneous - Words inappropriate for the previous categories.

A final category of 'death' was considered as well, because some respondents would mention death itself as well as life or afterlife. This shows thoughts about the concept of death and dying and the mortality of human life. However these responses were not common enough to warrant an individual category amongst any of the images.

The first image shows a picture of La Recoleta cemetery in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The respondents gave 278 words to describe this picture;

25.89% were *Description*.

16.9% were *Aesthetics*.

16.55% were *Heritage*.

11.15% of responses were *Spirituality*.

8.27% of responses were *Gloom*.

4.68% of responses were *Tranquility*.

2.88% of responses were *Unique*.

2.16% of responses were *Remembrance*.

There was no statistical relevance to *Joy* responses as only one response out of all 278 was recorded.

7.19% of responses were *Miscellaneous*

The next image showed another cemetery, the Merry Cemetery in Săpânța, Romania, known for its folk art graves. Of the 304 responses;

16.12% were *Description*

25.33% were *Aesthetics*

16.45% were *Heritage*

7.89% were *Spirituality*

Gloom was statistically irrelevant with only two responses

1.32% were *Tranquility*

4.28% were *Remembrance*.

13.82% were *Unique*

4.61% were *Joy*

9.54% were *Miscellaneous*

The third image was of Capela dos Ossos in Évora, Portugal. Of the 302 responses;

22.9% were *Description*

8.28% were *Aesthetics*

14.19% were *Heritage*

19.21% were *Spirituality*

16.23% were *Gloom*

4.64% were *Tranquility*

Remembrance was statistically irrelevant.

1.99% were *Unique*

1.66% were *Joy*

10.93% were *Miscellaneous*

The 4th image was of a *Día de Los Muertos* celebration in Oaxaca, Mexico. Of the 308 responses;

23.05% were *Description*

8.44% were *Aesthetics*

18.51% were *Heritage*

Spirituality, *Gloom*, and *Tranquility* were all statistically irrelevant.

4.87% were *Remembrance*

4.55% were *Unique*

31.17% were *Joy*

8.44% were *Miscellaneous*

The fifth image was of the Obon remembrance festival in Hiroshima, Japan. Of the 283 responses;

18.73% were *Description*

11.67% were *Aesthetics*

4.59% were *Heritage*

2.47% were *Spirituality*

1.41% were *Gloom*

33.22% were *Tranquility*

11.31% were *Remembrance*

3.18% were *Unique*

7.07% were *Joy*

6.36% were *Miscellaneous*

The sixth and final image on the survey was of the Catacombs in Paris, France. Of the 282 responses;

22.7% were *Description*

2.13% were *Aesthetics*

10.64% were *Heritage*

Spirituality was statistically irrelevant

40.78% were *Gloom*

Tranquility and *Remembrance* were statistically irrelevant

8.16% were *Unique*

1.06% were *Joy*

13.12% were *Miscellaneous*

After providing 2 to 3 words about each image, each responded was immediately asked afterwards to rank their interest in visiting the location or the event. The question was provided with a scale of 1 to 5, one being ‘uninterested’ and 5 being ‘very interested.’

The response to the 1st image of La Recoleta was neither an interested or very interested overall. Most respondents (33.8%) felt entirely neutral with a rank of 3 out of 5. The descriptions of the image that people gave did not point to any specific mentality about the site either, with most being just descriptions of things that are listed. *Aesthetics* and *Heritage* were strongly mentioned, but the site was not as heavily associated with an emotional response as some of the other images were.

1B. How interested are you in visiting this location?

130 responses

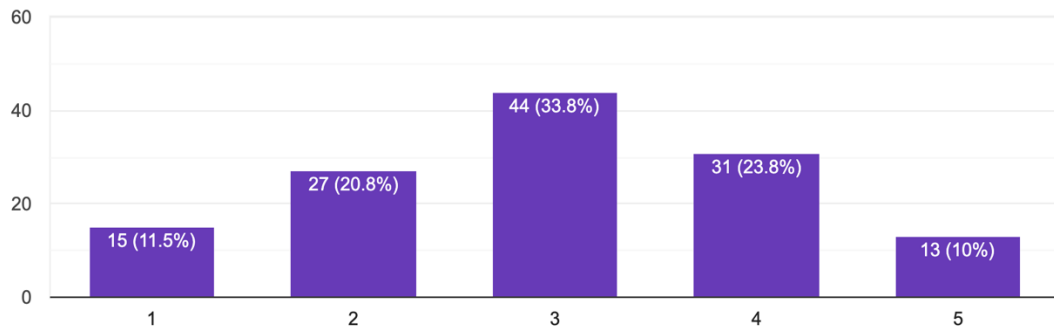


Fig. 1: Visitation Interest from La Recoleta Image

The 2nd picture of the Merry Cemetery had more favorable interest with most respondents (34.1%) choosing a rank of 4, indicating general interested. Overall, more than 50% of responses marked either interested or very interested with a rank of 55%. This image had a very similar response to the first image in terms of *Heritage* correlation. However, it has a higher proportion of people focusing on its aesthetics, especially describing it as colorful and artistic, in contrast to the image of the first cemetery. It is notable that this image was more heavily associated with ideas of uniqueness and differentness than the first image.

2B. How interested are you in visiting this location in the image?

129 responses

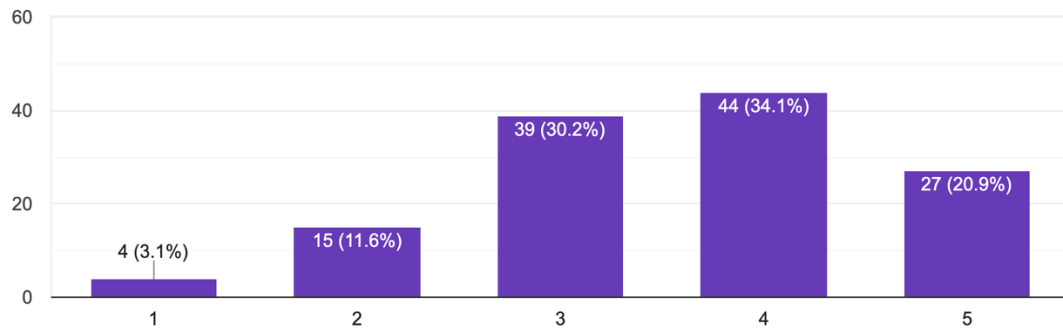


Fig. 2: Visitation Interest from Merry Cemetery Image

Interest in the 3rd image of Capela dos Ossos was mostly centered around the middle tier, with a rank of 3 (30.2%) of respondents. It did not have a majority showing interest in it overall, however it neither had a majority expressing explicit disinterest either. Most of the responses were direct descriptions, which is an interesting quality it shares with the lukewarm responses to La Recoleta's image. Its most noted responses were in 'spirituality,' which is to be expected with regard to the religious nature of the chapel, but then 'gloom' as well. Many fearful and uncomfortable emotions were written down with the vision of the skulls and bones seen in the image. The interest level here is very similar to La Recoleta's image, with slightly more people showing high interest, but not nearly as many interested people as the second image.

3B. How interested are you in visiting this location?

129 responses

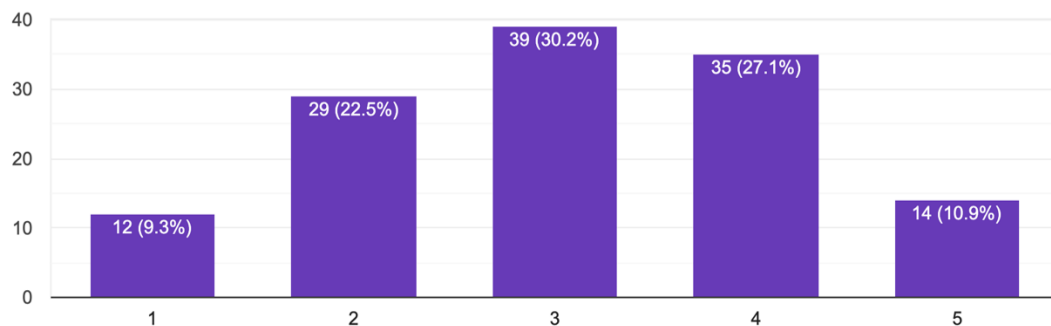


Fig. 3: Visitation Interest from Capela dos Ossos Image

The 4th image was of the *Día de Los Muertos* celebration. This image invoked the most interest out of all of the photos with 46.2% of respondents being very interested, and 77.7% being above a rank of 3 in terms of interest. This was the first image correlated directly with an emotional response. The highest percentage of respondents associating it with positive emotion or *Joy*. One of the most common responses to the picture was concerning celebration, festivity, and generally exuberant human feelings. The next most common were descriptions of the image, but intangible heritage regarding rituals and traditions was a close 3rd place. This image shows more motion and is also one of the few images that features people within it. This factor may account for some of the variety the responses elicited.

4B. How interested are you in visiting this event?

130 responses

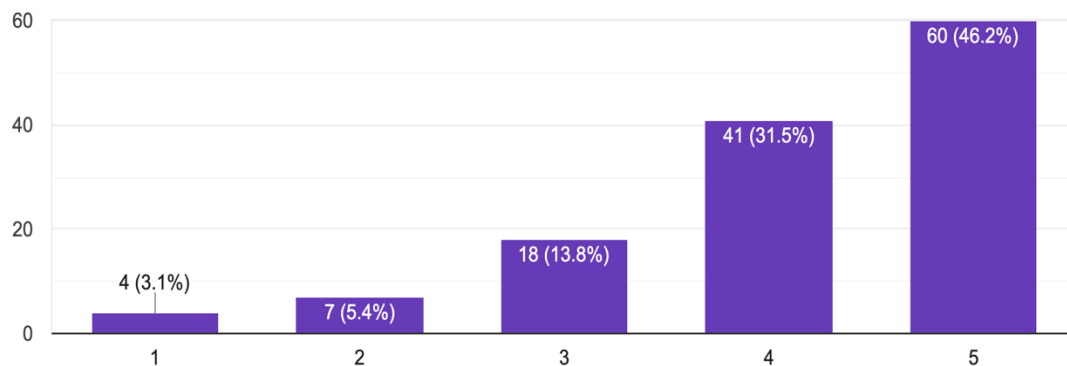


Fig. 4: Visitation Interest from *Día de los Muertos* Image

The 5th image of Obon festival also had a large amount of interest though. 43.1% were very interested in visiting this event. 76.9% were interested overall. In the fewest amount of people, only two respondents in total marked uninterested for this event. Though the broad associations with this image were very different from the previous festival of *Día de Los Muertos*, the highest amount of responses (33.22%) were about *Tranquility*. Responses focusing on peace, calmness, relaxation were frequently recorded. And although it was very common to have *Description* of the image and comments about *Aesthetics*, this image had the most correlation with the idea of

Remembrance and community out of all the photos. With 11.31% associating the image with some form of honoring the dead or feeling connected to others around you, this category was more than double the associations made with **Remembrance** in any other picture. The notable responses here are the overwhelming idea of calm, but also a much stronger association with human connection.

5B. How interested are you in visiting this event?

130 responses

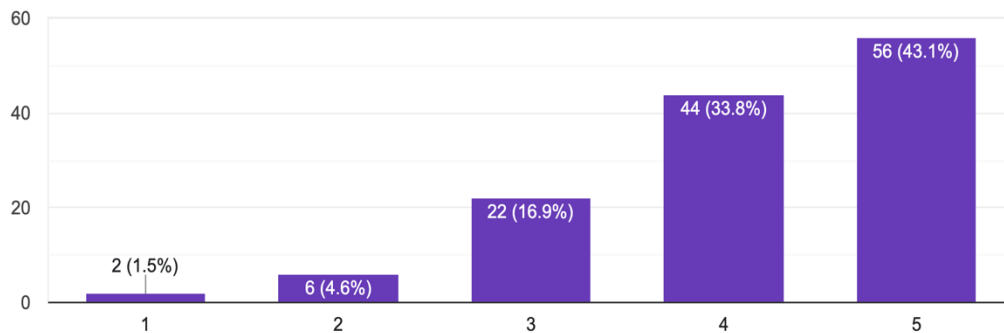


Fig. 5: Visitation Interest from Obon Festival Image

The 6th image of the catacombs was the most polarizing of all the images in terms of interest, with its largest categories being a rank of 4 for somewhat interested, and a rank of 2 for slightly uninterested. 39.2% of respondents overall were below the middle rank in their level of interest. 43.1% were above the middle rank in their level of interest. So this image inspired mixed feelings amongst the respondents overall, which can be seen in the responses too. This image is also the most heavily associated with the concept of **Gloom** (40.87%). Many negative emotions associated with fear most commonly, but also sadness, were used in describing this picture. The second most, at nearly half the number of responses **Gloom**, was **Description** of the image at 22.7%. The next most represented was **Miscellaneous** with 13.12% of which many respondents said unconventional things, perhaps in response to a feeling of shock from the image. The fourth most mentioned was **Heritage** at 10.64%. Because of the darker underground nature of the catacombs, this image inspired thoughts associated this way. With the skulls/bones so clearly visible, people tended to have a stronger emotional words that they wrote down.

6B. How interested are you in visiting this site?

130 responses

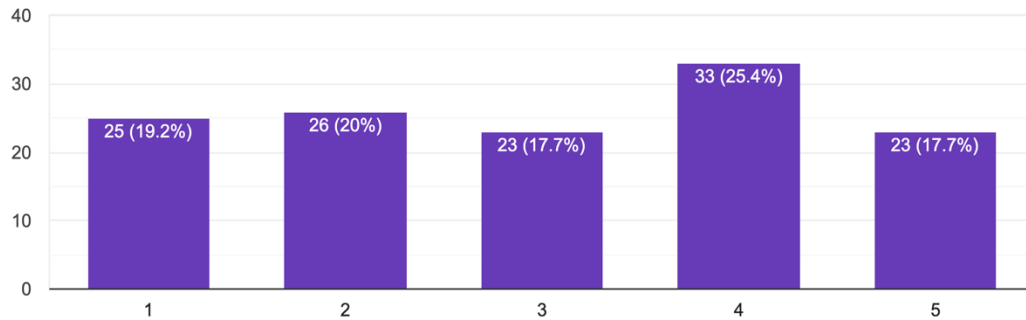


Fig. 6: Visitation Interest from Paris Catacombs Image

4.2 Analysis of Image Words Associations and Interests

The one-Way ANOVA from IBM-SPSS Was used to analyze the means of respondents who fell into each code against their interest in visiting the location.

The categories of *Description* and *Miscellaneous* were removed from this analysis, as they did not show a clear perspective of the image association. The individual responses were than reviewed making sure that each was allocated to the remaining categories that they focused on, being *Aesthetics*, *Heritage.*, *Spirituality*, *Gloom*, *Tranquility*, *Remembrance*, *Uniqueness*, or *Joy*. Each was analyzed for its mean level of interest in each photo using the one-way ANOVA.

For La Recoleta image, the highest mean was respondents focused on *Heritage* (M=3.62, SD=1.24). The lowest mean level of interest was respondents that focused on *Gloom* (M=2.46, SD=.967). Doing a multiple comparisons analysis using Tukey HSD in the SPS system under the ANOVA, The difference in these two means of *Heritage* and *Gloom* was significant at the level of .05.

La Recoleta Interest

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
<i>Aesthetic</i>	17	3.41	.795	.193
<i>Heritage</i>	21	3.62	1.244	.271
<i>Spiritual</i>	12	2.5	1	.289
<i>Gloom</i>	13	2.46	.967	.268
<i>Tranquility</i>	8	3.13	1.246	.441
<i>Remembrance</i>	2	3	1.414	1.0
<i>Uniqueness</i>	3	4	.00	.00
<i>Total</i>	76	3.14	1.128	.129

Table 1: Means of Recoleta Interest

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Recoleta Interest

Tukey HSD

		Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig
<i>Heritage</i>	<i>Aesthetic</i>	.207	.343	.996
	<i>Spiritual</i>	1.119	.396	.064
	<i>Gloom*</i>	1.158*	.387	.040
	<i>Tranquility</i>	.494	.450	.916
	<i>Remembrance</i>	.619	.785	.985

	<i>Unique</i>	-.381	.649	.997
<i>Gloom</i>	<i>Aesthetic</i>	.207	.387	.192
	<i>Heritage*</i>	-1.158*	.371	.040
	<i>Spiritual</i>	-.038	.421	1.0
	<i>Tranquility</i>	-.663	.472	.797
	<i>Remembrance</i>	-.538	.798	.994
	<i>Unique</i>	-1.54	.673	.266

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 2: Comparative Means of Recoleta Interest

In analyzing the Merry cemetery image responses using the same methods, the largest mean level of interest was in *Unique* responses (M=4.00, SD=0.89). The lowest mean level of interest was *Gloom* (M=2.00) but it was not viewed as statistically reliable as only 1 response was recorded in *Gloom*. The next lowest mean was ‘Joy’(M=3.43, SD=0.98). No mean difference was deemed significant in these responses.

The Capela dos Ossos/Évora image was analyzed in the same way. The largest mean level of interest was *Unique* (M=4.17, SD=0.98). The lowest mean level of interest was *Gloom* (M=2.73, SD=1.13). No mean difference was deemed significant in these responses.

The *Día de Los Muertos* image was analyzed in the same way. The highest mean was tranquility (M=5.00) but was deemed statistically non-viable with only 1 response. *Heritage* was the next highest mean of level of interest (M=4.31, SD=0.93). The lowest main level of interest was *Aesthetics* (M=3.90, SD=1.10). All the means amongst this image were generally higher than the other images. No mean difference was deemed significant in these responses.

The Obon Festival image was analyzed in the same way. The highest main level of interest was *Spirituality* (M=4.67, SD=0.58). The lowest mean level of interest was *Unique* (M=3.33, SD=2.08). No mean difference was deemed significant in these responses.

The Paris Catacombs image was analyzed in the same way. The highest mean level of interest was *Unique* (M=3.75, SD=0.97). The second highest mean level of interest was *Heritage* (M=3.72, SD=1.23). The lowest mean level of interest was *Gloom* (M=2.48, SD=1.37). Upon performing multiple comparisons using Tukey HSD, The main difference of *Unique* to *Gloom* was significant at the 0.05 level. The main difference of *Heritage* to *Gloom* was also significant at the 0.05 level.

Paris Catacombs Interest

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
<i>Aesthetic</i>	4	2.5	1.915	.957
<i>Heritage</i>	18	3.72	1.227	.289
<i>Gloom</i>	61	2.48	1.374	.176
<i>Uniqueness</i>	20	3.75	.967	.216
<i>Total</i>	103	2.94	1.420	.140

Table 3: Means of Catacombs Interest

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Recoleta Interest

Tukey HSD

		Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig
<i>Aesthetic</i>	<i>Heritage</i>	-1.22	.719	.329
	<i>Gloom</i>	.025	.672	1.0
	<i>Unique</i>	.125	.713	.302
<i>Heritage</i>	<i>Aesthetic</i>	1.22	.719	.329
	<i>Gloom*</i>	1.257*	.349	.003
	<i>Unique</i>	-.028	.423	1.0
<i>Gloom</i>	<i>Aesthetic</i>	-.025	.672	1.0
	<i>Heritage*</i>	-1.247*	.349	.003
	<i>Unique*</i>	-1.275*	.335	.001
<i>Unique</i>	<i>Aesthetic</i>	1.25	.713	.302
	<i>Heritage</i>	.028	.423	1.0
	<i>Gloom*</i>	1.275*	.335	.001

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4: Comparative Means of Catacomb Interest

In terms of significance amongst the individual images the only ones that showed significant mean differences were La Recoleta and The Catacombs. Both suits significant mean difference between *Heritage* and *Gloom*. The catacombs in addition showed a significant mean difference in *Unique* and *Gloom*.

The overall means for each category throughout all the images are of interest as well. This shows the overall main level of interest whenever responding associated in image with any of these specific categories.

Aesthetics with an overall mean of 3.59 – Present in all 6 image responses

Heritage with an overall mean of 3.79 – present in all 6 image responses

Spirituality with an overall mean of 3.38 – present in 4 image responses

Gloom with an overall mean of 2.56 – present in 3 image responses

Tranquility with an overall mean of 3.61 – present in 4 image responses

Remembrance with an overall mean 3.48 – present in 4 image responses

Unique with an overall mean of 3.91 – present in all 6 image responses

Joy with an overall mean a 3.9 – present in 3 image responses

4.3 Visitor Motivations and Distinct Interest in Specific Necroheritage

In the next section of the survey the respondents were asked to answer the following questions.

- How interested are you in visiting a graveyard or cemetery? (Scale of 1-5)
- How interested are you in visiting a festival/Holiday about death and remembrance? (Scale of 1-5)
- How interested are you in visiting a historical crypt or catacomb? (Scale of 1-5)
- Is there something you hope to learn or experience at one of these sites?

The first three questions in the section were a scale ranking of 1 to 5 one being not interested and 5 being very interested. The final question was open answer.

The ranking of interest in visiting a graveyard or cemetery showed the least interest overall. Only 41.6% of respondents ranked at 4 or 5 in terms of interest.

The festival or holiday showed the most overall interest. 69.3% of respondents showed an interest level of a 4 or 5. Only 2.3% of respondents selected fully not interested.

Are the results for catacomb or crypt were mostly similar to the results for graveyard with slightly more interest. 46.9% of respondents rent and interest in the 4 or 5 range.

The initial data shows a significantly higher interest in festivals or holidays about death in remembrance than the other Necroheritages asked about in the survey.

Regarding the respondents hopes for learning and experiences at the necroheritage sites and events, the answers were then read through and coded in a similar manner to how the previous open answer questions were. The first 25% of responses were written down, and categories were created. Those codes were then checked going through all the responses, And finally each response was assigned one of these codes based on the nature of the response.

The following categories were developed:

Death Practices of Other Cultures – this category regarded the interest of the individual to learn about how other cultures treat death. Things commonly mentioned a monks respondents the phone to this category worry about traditions, commemorations, perceptions about death and afterlife. There was also interesting understanding how death was handled in terms of burial and how people honor their loved ones after they have passed away. This category is specifically concerned with learning about other cultures that are different from your own in present day.

History - this category regards an interest in learning about the history of the place where the Necroheritage is. What occurred there in the past few centuries. What people are buried in these places are commemorated by these festivals. Who were they and what type of live said they have before they were died and found their final resting place here or we're honored in this festival. This category is not necessarily connected with understanding the current and present circumstance of a culture, but having interest in what has already happened in the past.

Reflection on Mortality - this category was for individuals who showed an interest in self-reflection, and intrapersonal goal to achieve. These respondents were interested in contemplating mortality, contemplating life and how death affects it, and “coming to peace with death.” Respondents in this category showed a specific interest in learning about themselves as opposing to learning about other people or other information.

Beauty- This category was concerned with experiencing beautiful architecture, beautiful art, and beautiful imagery in general. People amongst this category were interested in cemeteries with unique aesthetics and architecture, and were interested in seeing grand spectacle or design associated with different necroheritage areas.

The overwhelming amount of responses fell in the ***Death Practices of Other Cultures*** category with 58.93%. The next highest answer was ***History*** with 29.46% of responses. ***Reflection*** had 8.01% of responses. ***Beauty*** had 3.57% of responses.

4.4 Analysis of Visitor Motivations and Distinct Interest

These categories were then analyzed using the one-way ANOVA by IBM SPSS, to see if the means of any of these categories had any statistical relevance in comparison to the others. This was to note if the perspective, or ambitions of someone interested in necroheritage affects their level of interest in visiting different necroheritage sites. Beauty was not considered a large enough group to provide relevance, so it was not included in the ANOVA.

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Necroheritage Interest

Tukey HSD

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Interest in Visiting a Crypt	Learning about traditions of others	56	3.07	1.219	.163
	History or Dead Individuals	35	3.4	1.035	.175
	Reflecting on Mortality	7	4.0	1.155	.436
	Total	98	3.26	1.169	.118
Interest in Visiting a Festival	Learning about traditions of others	56	4.07	.970	.130
	History or Dead Individuals	35	3.77	1.165	.197
	Reflecting on Mortality	7	3.86	1.215	.459
	Total	98	3.95	1.059	.123
Interest in Visiting a Graveyard	Learning about traditions of others	56	2.91	.920	.221
	History or Dead Individuals	35	3.34	1.305	.481
	Reflecting on Mortality	7	3.57	1.272	.112
	Total	98	3.11	1.111	.112

Table 5: Means of General Necroheritage Interest

The ANOVA did not produce any main differences that were of statistical relevance.

Although, some noted statistics were that the group with the highest mean value for interest in visiting a cemetery (M=3.57,SD=1.27) and for visiting a crypt or catacomb(M=4,SD=1.16) was the *Reflection on Mortality* category.

The group with the highest mean interest in visiting a death festival or holiday (M=4.07, SD=0.97)was *Death Practices of Other Cultures*, though this group also had the lowest interest in visiting a cemetery (M=2.91, SD=0.92).

The overall means for level of interest in all three of these types of necroheritage were;

Death Practices of Other Cultures had an overall mean of 3.35

History had an overall mean of 3.5

Reflection on Mortality had an overall mean of 3.81

4.5 Locals' Feelings and Comfort with Necrotourism in Their Region

The final section of the survey was regarding the opinions the respondents had to Necro tourism in their local regions. They were asked the following questions:

- In your local regions what are some places or events dedicated to remembering the dead or acknowledging death? (Open answer)
- Is there something you hope tourist will learn or experience one of the sites? (Open answer)
- How comfortable would you be with tourist visiting a cemetery or graveyard in your region? (Scale 1-5, not comfortable - totally comfortable)

- How comfortable would you be with tourist visiting a festival/holiday about death in your region? (Scale 1-5, not comfortable - totally comfortable)
- How comfortable would you be with tourist visiting a crypt or catacomb in your region? (Scale 1-5, not comfortable - totally comfortable)

The main open answer that was analyzed in the section was regarding what the local hopes tourist would learn or experience at these sites. The first 25% of these responses were looked at and then coded accordingly. The codes are as follows:

Connections to the Dead – this category is in regard to the hopes the local has that visitors will remember their ancestors, or feel connected to people who have already died. Respondents in this category mentioned “never forgetting loved ones,” “remembering ancestors,” and “acknowledging all the people who came before us.” This category is the one most focused on human connection, particularly with people that the locals or the visitors have known directly.

Information about Local Culture- in this category of the locals hoped that the Necroheritage could teach tourist about local cultures and traditions. Respondents in this category focused on the Necroheritage being an opportunity to share more information about their region and where they’re from with visitors.

Dangers of the Past- this category was concerned with warning the visitor about things that have happened before in human history that should not be repeated. Respondents in this category mentioned the Necroheritage in their local regions having to do with issues like genocide, colonization, slavery, war. With some of their Necroheritage sites being associated directly with these things, their hope was that visitors take away important lessons and remember that humanity is capable of terrible things.

Reflection on Mortality - this category is similar to the same category and hopes for learning experience when visiting. It focuses on the local desiring tourists to celebrate life and think about the fact that they will one day die. This is in hopes that the tourist finds a sense of peace from this, or sense of respect and peace from the self reflection.

4.6 Analysis of Local Feelings and Comfort with Necrotourism

For analysis, a one-way ANOVA using IBM SPSS was used to identify if there was any statistical relevance of the difference of means.

Based on the means of these different hopes by locals for tourists, no statistical relevance was identified in the mean difference.

Multiple Comparisons
Dependent Variable: Local Comfort
Tukey HSD

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Interest in Visiting a Crypt	Connection to the Dead	11	4.27	1.009	.304
	Dangers of Humanity	17	4.35	.996	.242
	Local Cultural Info	34	4.12	1.225	.210
	Reflecting on Mortality	11	4.09	.944	.285
	Total	73	4.19	1.089	.127
Interest in Visiting a Festival	Connection to the Dead	11	4.27	.786	.237
	Dangers of Humanity	17	4.41	1.064	.258
	Local Cultural Info	34	4.47	.788	.135

	Reflecting on Mortality	11	4.36	.809	.244
	Total	73	4.41	.847	.099
Interest in Visiting a Graveyard	Connection to the Dead	11	4.45	.820	.247
	Dangers of Humanity	17	4.18	1.286	.312
	Local Cultural Info	34	4.56	.705	.121
	Reflecting on Mortality	11	4.55	.688	.207
	Total	73	4.45	.883	.103

Table 6: Means of Locals' Comfort with Tourists and Necroheritage

The means of every category for this analysis was above 4.00. A big reason for this is the responses were generally high in terms of local comfort with tourists visiting these different locations.

For local feelings about tourist visiting a cemetery, 74.6% of respondents marked a 4 or 5 in terms of their comfort level. Meaning almost 3/4 of respondents felt comfort with tourists at local necrosapes.

How comfortable would you be with tourists visiting a cemetery or graveyard in your region?

130 responses

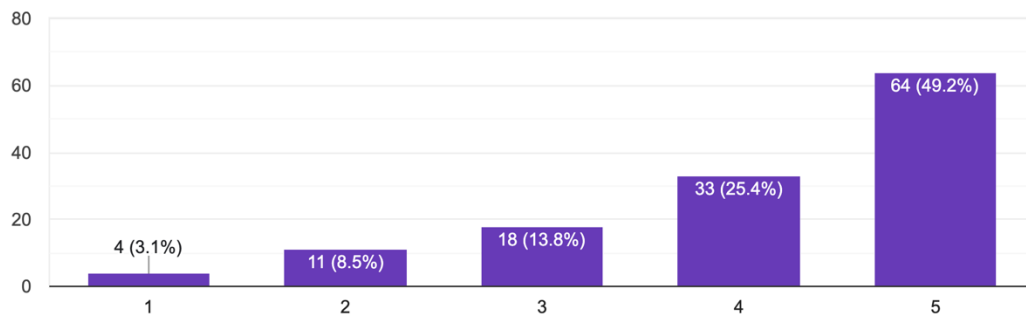


Fig. 7: Local Comfort with Tourists at Cemeteries

For local feelings on a death festival or holiday, 81.6% of respondents marked totally comfortable or comfortable.

How comfortable would you be with tourists visiting a festival/holiday about death and remembrance in your region or country?

130 responses

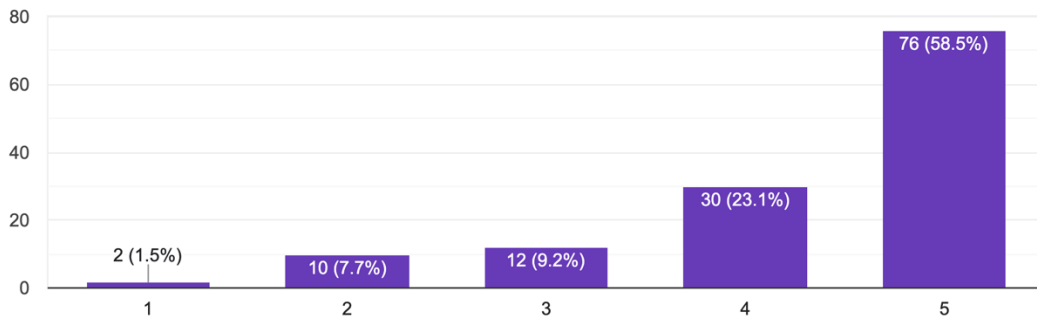


Fig. 8: Local Comfort with Tourists at Death Festivals

For local comfort on tourists at a crypt or catacomb, 79.3% of locals felt comfortable with tourist visiting.

How comfortable would you be with tourists visiting a historical crypt, catacomb, or charnel house (a place that holds bones) in your region or country?

130 responses

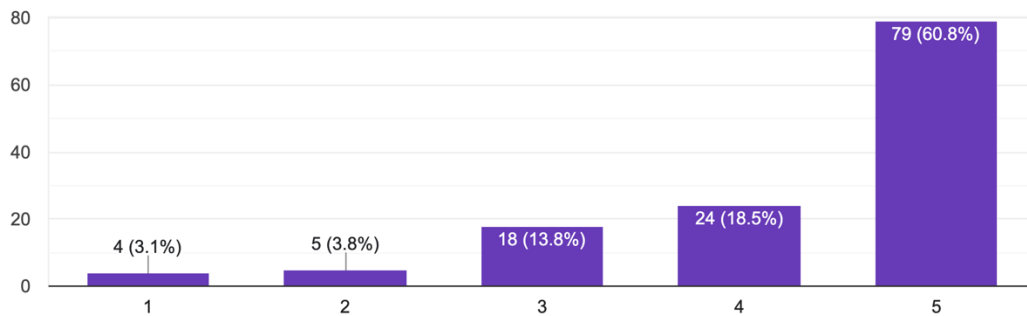


Fig. 9: Local Comfort with Tourists at Crypts of Charnel Houses

Even though the scale questions revealed most respondents felt comfortable with tourist at all necroheritage sites, the final questions of the survey offered the respondents a chance to comment about reasons tourist should or should not visit these places. This left some respondents with very specific examples of why tourist could interfere with local necroheritage. One stated

“Some of the cemeteries are still used actively to bury people. I think the cemetery should be protected so that mourners can go there in solitude. Only cemeteries the house tombs from people who died long ago should be open to visitors.”

This comment specifically marks a difference in opinion on necroheritage to the still used locally for active burials, as opposed to necroheritage which is seen as more historical and not as relevant in modern day. Another response states

“If tourists have the necessary respect for the dead and locals, they can visit all the places“

A comment like this to notes that the acceptability of a tourist is entirely dependent upon the responsibility and respect of that individual, which obviously cannot always be guaranteed. Another respondent emphasized that some necroheritage has spiritual associations as well.

“If locals believe that the spaces are too sacred and should not be visited, tourists should respect that”

These responses showed that there were respondents who had very specific reasons for why people should not visit cemeteries and graveyards in particular.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Main Conclusion

In conclusion, we will look at how the data addressed the research questions that I had initially.

RQ1: What type of necroheritage interests tourists?

A variety of information was gathered in regards to the interest of tourist with necro heritage, however upon analysis the statistically relevant information regarded a higher interest insights with a strong association of heritage in contrast to an association of gloom. Since it was exhibited that respondents who associated the images of the sites with concepts surrounding tradition, culture, rituals, societal features, showed a mean interest higher than that of many other groups, while also having enough respondents to deem this information statistically relevant. When it was compared with respondents who associated the same images with feelings of fear, dissatisfaction, mourning, unease, it was shown to be statistically relevant. This specific difference in the means for heritage association and gloom associated occurred individually in two different images, La Recoleta Cemetery and the Parisian catacombs.

Furthermore, one image also showed a statistically significant difference in the means for *Unique* and *Gloom*. Showing that respondents who associated an image with ideas of differentness, bizarreness, weirdness, eclectic-ness, were shown to have a much higher mean interest then gloom for the final image of the Parisian catacombs.

The coding and interest levels of what tourist “hope to learn or experience” at a necroheritage site were interesting, but unfortunately upon analysis did not show a statistical significance that merits any final conclusions to be made. Though the group with hopes of *Reflection on Mortality* showed interesting statistical possibility, it was overall too small of a group to make any conclusions from with only seven respondents.

RQ1: How comfortable are locals with tourists visiting their necroheritage?

In regards to the second research question, there were interesting trends observed. Some of these trends broke the research expectations and previous research on local opinions of necroheritage, as all three forms investigated (cemeteries, death festivals, and crypts/ossuaries) seemed to have similar levels and trends to how interested tourists were in visiting. There were interesting open responses regarding what locals would want tourists to learn from these locations. However upon the analysis of the data, none were deemed statistically significant enough to draw any definitive conclusions.

That being said, there was once again an interesting lean to locals who hoped tourists would *Reflect on Mortality*. But overall, there was no large statistical difference in any of the categories because respondents generally felt comfortable with tourist visiting all of the necroheritage sites that were asked about.

5.2 Theoretical Contributions

In comparing to past research, it is acknowledged that heritage focus is seen as more desirable for tourist than focus on morbidity. This is particularly confirmed in Mionel (2020) research on Merry Cemetery and its “not so dark” dark tourism. Visitors to this necroscape, associated it primarily with folk culture when asked about their initial thoughts. Less than 6.3% of respondents associated it with morbidity of any kind, less than 1/10 the amount that associated with folk culture. In addition, they saw the aspects describing it best as commemoration. Respondents for this research associated this image with aesthetics and heritage. The aesthetics often included comments on the art of the Merry Cemetery, which can also be connected to heritage association as well. The results of this thesis found commemoration and remembrance to be not as commonly associated with the image. Uniqueness and differentness were more common comments that people made.

Overall the statistical significance wasn't comparing heritage association with gloom association. This is corroborated with Light (2017) and their research on motivation. Finding that his largest

portion of respondents' motivations were concerned with history and culture. Mysyk and Morales Cano (2018) also noted how visitors seek to reflect on mortality, which was exhibited in our results as well although without statistical significance as heritage focus was found to be.

In regard to local's sentiments, The residents did not find cemeteries to be as much of an inappropriate tourism product as previous research has noted. The previous research has been light in this area, but numerous studies found that individuals saw burial grounds as important areas per family (Cahyanto et al., 2013). The open answer in the final questions of this thesis survey did exhibit some people writing down reservations in the same manner though. Though this was not necessarily reflected in the responses as a whole.

Respondents as exhibited a desire for tourists to reflect on mortality. This result Was seen with locals in Mexico regarding the day of the dead festival (Mysyk and Morales Cano, 2018). This same sentiment, as well as the hope to share cultural information is found in my research in the previous researches as well.

One of the more interesting responses in local feelings was the desire for tourists to remember the dangers of humanity. this is something that is often exhibited at dark heritage sites that have to do with grievous deaths and the terrors of humanity. (Ivanova and Light, 2018)(Lewis et al., 2021), But it was very interesting that some of the necrosapes respondents listed in their local regions were dedicated to memorializing soldiers and drawing attention to war. This finding is shared with the research regarding Obon, Toro-Nagashi festival in Japan, where one of the greatest hopes the locals had for tourists to learn was regarding peace in the value of human life , as one of the most famous iterations of this festival takes place in Hiroshima, Japan (Wu et al., 2014).

The greatest display relevant theoretical contribution that aligns with previous research is that heritage associations, either direct or subconscious, draw more interest than associations with gloom and morbidity. The looser implications state that locals and visitors both see necro heritage as a conduit for experiencing new culture and history and offering self-reflection on mortality and the dangers of mankind.

5.3 Practical Contributions

In a direct sense, this means necroheritage can be a more viable tourism product if it emphasizes its cultural, and traditional sense. If heritage is treated with a morbid approach, it may draw certain types of tourists but it will not have as universal love and appeal if this is a tourism marketing strategy for a particular region.

Practically, it also shows the death festivals maybe a more sought after form of necroheritage, whilst necroscapes are defended by individuals with more specific reasons as to why they should not be visited by tourists. So if tourism managers are able to work directly with local residents, they will be able to identify which necroheritages are too intimate for casual visitation. They can also identify what necro heritage locals believe is important so that visitors get a authentic form of cultural information, can think back on dangerous humanity is capable of, can self reflect on mortality, but can also use all this information for a hopeful and appreciative outlook on life going forward.

5.4 Limitations to Research/Confounding Factors

There are limiting factors present in research such as this; the demographics of the survey takers, the photo selected for the photo elicitation methodology, and the individual coding methods used to convert the qualitative data into quantitative.

The demographics did have a diverse array of countries represented, however since almost half of all the survey takers were from the United states it does provide a bias. The next highest groups after the United States were also all groups from Western Europe, which leaves demographics from Asia, Africa, and South America the most obviously underrepresented. many of the respondents who wrote in concerns they had about tourists visiting cemeteries were from outside of the United States and Western Europe. this could be an indicator that the data would have reflected differently had the survey respondents had equally distributed demographics throughout the world.

Further confounding factors include how the photos selected can lead the survey respondents to specific words or ideas. This is always going to be a factor in photo elicitation methodology, though it still needs to be acknowledged but different photos of the same location can lead to very different responses. The same is true with coding, a different researcher doing different types of coding for the responses given can lead to different outcomes as well. An online survey additionally, doesn't give as rich a picture of tourists and locals impressions as in person interviews or an in person survey would. Even though it allows for a wider distribution method.

5.5 Future Research Suggested

Some of the more interesting revelations, that may not have produced statistical significance for this research, would make excellent focuses for future studies.

The common association of tranquility as a concept attached to necroheritage is an interesting phenomenon. This would prove to find a unique type of tourist, that has some interest in areas that fall under dark tourism but also has interest in meditative and relaxing destinations. These are not two groups that commonly overlap in the tourism industry. But some of the necro heritage exhibited showed a strong correlation with this concept of peacefulness and tranquility and also still held a strong definition as a necro heritage site.

Another interesting outcome that was underrepresented in this research but would be a very intriguing focus of future research is on the motivation for reflecting upon mortality. This was seen in responses for the tourist motivations, but also in what the locals would like to share with visitors through their death heritage. This is intriguing as it appeared on both open answer questions.

It would also be very telling to have more research concerning local opinions on burial grounds and cemeteries as necrotourism sites. This research revealed the respondents generally felt comfortable with it, but it would have much more rich information if the research were carried out focusing on specific cemeteries. Particularly, ones that are either well known for tourism interest or regarded as a sacred or special destination.

Finally, one of the most interesting potential furtherings of this research would be delving deeper into death festivals as a tourism product and cultural heritage. The images of the death festivals had unique responses in contrast to the other forms of necroheritage, with strong associations of joy and peacefulness respectively. They were also the images respondents said they were most interested in visiting. Respondents further said they would be more interested in visiting a death festival rather than a cemetery or a crypt, catacomb, or charnel house. Furthermore, this was also the necroheritage which respondents said they would be most comfortable with as a tourism product in their local regions. Considering all this information together, death festivals are seen as a very desirable and interesting type of necroheritage that many people may be interested in visiting as a tourist.

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Appendix A

Copy of The Appeal and Acceptability of Necrotourism

This is a survey conducted on the impressions of death-related heritage as a tourism product. It is meant to see how individuals feel about visiting places and events associated with death, but also how they feel about tourists coming to their local death heritage sites as well.

This is an anonymous survey that should take only a few minutes. Thank you in advance for your participation in this study.

Don't hesitate to ask any questions if needed.

rex_walker@iscte-iul.pt

* Required

1. You agree to participate in this survey? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No

General Information

2. What country are you from? *

3. What is your age? *

Mark only one oval.

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-64

>65

4. What is your gender? *

Mark only one oval.

Man

Woman

Non-binary

Prefer not to say

5. How often do you travel? *

Mark only one oval.

Never

1-2 times in a year

3-4 times in a year

5-10 times in a year

>10 times in a year

Your Impressions of Death Heritage Examples

6. 1A. Write 2-3 words that come to mind when looking at this image



7. 1B. How interested are you in visiting this location?

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Not Interested Very Interested

8. 2A. Write 2-3 words that come to mind when looking at this image



9. 2B. How interested are you in visiting this location in the image?

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Not Interested Very Interested

10. 3A. Write 2-3 words that come to mind when looking at this image



11. 3B. How interested are you in visiting this location?

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Not Interested Very Interested

12. 4A. Write 2-3 words that come to mind when looking at this image



13. 4B. How interested are you in visiting this event?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Interested

14. 5A. Write 2-3 words that come to mind when looking at this image



15. 5B. How interested are you in visiting this event?

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Not Interested Very Interested

16. 6A. Write 2-3 words that come to mind when looking at this image



17. 6B. How interested are you in visiting this site?

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Not Interested Very Interested

18. How interested are you in visiting a graveyard or a cemetery?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Interested

19. How interested are you in visiting a festival/holiday about death and remembrance?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Interested

20. How interested are you in visiting a historical crypt, catacomb, or charnel house (a place that holds bones)?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Interested

21. Is there something you hope to learn or experience at one of these sites?

26. How comfortable would you be with tourists visiting a historical crypt, catacomb, or chanel house (a place that holds bones) in your region or country?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Comfortable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Totally Comfortable

27. In your region, what are some reasons tourists should visit these sites or events?
(Mark all that apply)

Check all that apply.

- Tourists experience local customs and culture
- Tourists reflect of human mortality
- Tourists pay their respects to the dead
- Tourists can practice their faith or pray at these sites
- It provides the local region a source of income
- Other: _____

28. In your region, what are some reasons tourists should not visit these sites or events? (Mark all that apply)

Check all that apply.

- These spaces are too sacred or respected for tourism
- These spaces are principally for locals
- These spaces could be damaged easily
- Other: _____

25. How comfortable would you be with tourists visiting a festival/holiday about death and remembrance in your region or country?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Comfortable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Totally Comfortable

22. In your local region, what are some places or events dedicated to remembering the dead or acknowledging the reality of death?

23. In your region, is there something you hope tourists will learn or experience at one of these sites?

24. How comfortable would you be with tourists visiting a cemetery or graveyard in your region?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Comfortable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Totally Comfortable