Tourists’ motivations for engaging in Dark Tourism

Case Study of Apartheid memorials in South Africa

Bachelor Thesis for Obtaining the Degree

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Submitted to Camille Megelin

Barbara Deutsch

1011582

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Affidavit

I hereby affirm that this Bachelor’s Thesis represents my own written work and that I have used no sources and aids other than those indicated. All passages quoted from publications or paraphrased from these sources are properly cited and attributed.

The thesis was not submitted in the same or in a substantially similar version, not even partially, to another examination board and was not published elsewhere.

20.06.2014

Barbara Deutsch

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to present and identify the main motivations for tourists to engage in dark tourism. Dark tourism is a tourism phenomenon, which evolves around people being drawn to attractions that have a sombre historical past. These attractions are memorials of different kinds where tragedy, death and suffering have occurred. The definition of dark tourism is being presented at the beginning of this thesis. This study focuses on apartheid memorials in South Africa and will reveal the motivations of tourists behind their decisions to visit these memorials. A qualitative research method was used in this paper in order to gather valuable and multidimensional data. The method consists of personal, in-depth interviews with a diverse sample of ten respondents who have visited apartheid memorials was chosen. The interviews were conducted by the author herself and analysed thoroughly. The results are then presented and discussed clearly. The research shows that the apartheid memorials in South Africa enjoy a high importance for local and foreign tourists and are seen as an essential education feature. The primary results here presented are the facts that tourists choose to visit apartheid memorials out of educational, interest, empathy and curiosity reasons, which is explained in detail in the according chapter. This paper shows that generally introduced theories on motivations in dark tourism can be conveyed onto apartheid memorials and are therefore supported and underlined by this study.
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Figure 1: A dark Tourism Spectrum
1 Introduction

Taking a tour of the death camp of Auschwitz, visiting a graveyard of a famous celebrity like the Pere Lachaise cemetery in Paris, queuing to enter the 9/11 memorial in New York, calling on the ‘Killing Fields’ in Cambodia or visiting the Hiroshima Peace Museum in Japan. The paradox of many tourists visiting these sites every year has a name: Dark Tourism. The most attractive feature of these tourism sites is their negative, sometimes brutal, historic past. People have been engaging in this, actually long-existing but still new literary tourism phenomenon for years, most of them unconscious that their acts have a ‘dark’ and therefore rather negative connotation in tourism literature.

The topic of dark tourism is not a new phenomenon and has been explored to a certain extend in recent years. The subject of this thesis revolves around this paradox and more specifically around the motivations of tourists for engaging in ‘dark’ activities with the case study of apartheid memorials in South Africa. The reasons and motivations behind visiting apartheid memorials will be studied and brought to light.

Stone (2005) states that the theory behind dark tourism consumption continues to be poor, as is the empirical examination of tourists’ motives. Therefore to this day, the elements of dark tourism consumptions have not been defined clearly and are only being assumed. In 2009 Sharpley and Stone continuously mention the fact that dark tourism, as a topic itself, is under-researched. In the last years several authors (Stone 2005-2013, Sharpley 2005-2012, Lennon and Foley 2006, Dann 1998) have published their work about the diverse aspects of dark tourism. There is, nonetheless, still a gap within the explorative work of finding out the motivations of tourists for engaging in these dark activities. Especially in relation to the apartheid memorials in South Africa, not a lot of motivational investigation has been conducted to this point in time.

Particularly the motivational drivers involved in the concept and the research on dark tourists’ behaviour are insufficient and “Reader (2003) stresses the importance of understanding the motives of those engaged in the dark tourism practice” (Stone, 2005).
By introducing a case study, this thesis aims to conceptualize the understanding of the topic. The focus of the case study will be laid upon tourists’ motivations for visiting apartheid memorials in South Africa: Robben Island, the District Six with its museum in Cape Town and the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg. This specific research will be conducted by interviewing tourists who have previously visited one of these memorials. With semi-structured, personal interviews the author will obtained truthful and significant results.

This topic was chosen because the author believes that further studies on this subject can be contribute to better understanding of tourists’ behaviour. Also, due to the recent death of Nelson Mandela and the connected reappeared awareness of the history of South Africa and its people, the choice of apartheid memorials in South Africa as the case study also shows a relation to current events.

A previous study has been conducted partially on Robben Island as a prison heritage, conducted by Strange and Kempa in 2003. In this study the focus was put on Alcatraz and Robben Island as examples of historical prisons being converted into tourism attractions and therefore entering into the area of dark tourism. Ashworth (2004) conducted another study (published in Singh, 2004) about South Africa and the apartheid in relation to dark tourism. Nevertheless, the paper published by Ashworth (2004) is more concerned with the managerial part of the heritage than the tourists’ reasons of behaviour. Despite this fact, the author of this thesis used Ashworth’s work in the literature review to underline tourists’ motivations.

With this paper, however, the aim of this paper is to shed light onto the reasons of tourists for visiting apartheid memorials. Deeper emotional aspects will be evoked and presented. The author is convinced that this work will contribute to existing knowledge and help future authors to fully understand tourist’s motivations and the dark tourism phenomenon.

It is the author’s whish to further explore the motivations and feelings behind wanting to visit apartheid memorials in South Africa. The concept of dark tourism has been researched to a certain point and with this study the author would like to contribute to already existing theories and studies about dark tourism.
1.1 The research question

Stone (2006) again highlights that in order to understand the phenomenon of dark tourism it is essential to derive and examine the motives of ‘dark tourists’. “It is perhaps this fundamental requirement of ‘understanding the underside’ and extricating consumer motivation that is propelling the current dark tourism debate (Stone 2005a).” (Stone 2006: 146). The research question of this paper therefore is the following:

“What are the main motivations for tourists to visit Apartheid memorials?”

After highlighting the most important elements of existing literature by defining the concept of dark tourism, elucidating different aspects of dark tourism and displaying its importance and its appearances nowadays, the paper will continue to focus on motivation in tourism. The chapter on motivation in tourism will act as an introduction into the actual topic of tourists’ motivations in dark tourism. After explaining and highlighting the methodology used for this research paper, the author will be transcribing and evaluating the conducted interviews and present the result of this study. The results of the realised interviews will be the aid to answer the research question.
2 Literature Review

2.1 The concept of Dark Tourism

2.1.1 Definition

“Tourism is one of the ways in which we attempt to approach and understand otherness” (Willis, 2014: 18 citing Beth Clark).

Since people started to travel they have been drawn – for still partially unknown reasons – “towards sites, attractions or events that are somehow linked to negative historical events where death, violence, suffering or disaster played a major role” (Sharpley and Stone, 2009). As the name already suggests, ‘dark tourism’ is related to the activity of tourists, which is stimulated by an enthusiasm in the more sombre facets of human reality (Smith et al., 2010). The concept of travelling to and experiencing sites that are connected to death and the macabre is not new. Indeed, the origins of this phenomenon can be traced back to previous ages when in Roman times people swarmed into arenas to witness the gladiator fights or attend public executions during medieval ages (Stone, 2005). This is evidence for death-related tourism dating back to long before a name was put on the phenomenon. In 2005, Stone suitably described it as the “travel to sites of death and suffering” simply being “an old concept in a new world.”

And although existent for many years, this form of tourism has only been named and therefore been introduced in literature as ‘dark tourism’ in 1996 by Lennon and Foley. So, nevertheless its long history, it has only recently been attracting academic attention (Stone, 2009). Since then, several attempts have been made to label macabre-related tourism activity: Seaton introduced the term ‘thanatourism’ in 1996 and Blom called it ‘morbid tourism’ in 2000 (Stone, 2006).

In 1999, Seaton published five categories of places and activities, which comprise his thanatourism typology:

1. Attending “public death-in-process” (executions, airplane crashes)
2. Visiting places of mass deaths or individual deaths after their occurrence (Holocaust death camps)
3. Calling burial and memorial sites (war memorials, cemeteries)
4. Seeing actual proof or figurative portrayal of deaths at a different location than where it happened (monuments, museums)
5. Observing and/or attending re-enactments of death
   (Seaton 1999: 131 in Sather-Wagstaff, 2003:73)

The concept of dark tourism can be defined in various ways. Thanatourism, as dark tourism is also known, derives from the Greek and translated literally signifies “the personification of death” (Johnson, 2012). Dark tourism evolves around war, slavery and murder memorials. The sites in discussion are memorials for places where “tragedies and historically noteworthy death has occurred” and that still have an impact on our lives (Tarlow, 2011).

The place or site itself must posses certain characteristics to classify as a dark tourism attraction. Ashworth (2004) comes up with four main attributes an event itself must hold so that the possibility of successfully turning it into a tourism product is rather high. The first characteristic he mentioned is the fact that there must be a human perpetrator just as there must be a human victim. Only if these attributes are present people can identify themselves, or being identified by others, as perpetrators or victims. Secondly, it is important that the perpetrator took part in a conscious and intended action, whereas the victims need to be innocent and therefore not dominating their own situation. The fact that the victim is aware of the consciousness and intentions of the culprit makes the act a barbarity. The third characteristic Ashworth mentions is that atrocity entails exceptional seriousness or unusualness. The event needs to be so out of the ordinary - its anomaly is what catches the interest of the observer and converts regular cruelty into atrocity. “Fourthly, an atrocity is an event that is known and remembered which requires knowledge and memorability.” (Ashworth in Singh, 2004: 86).

2.1.2 Shades of Darkness

In his paper “A Dark Tourism Spectrum” (2006) Stone states that dark tourism supply cannot be analysed in a complete way unless the tourist behaviour and their
demand for dark tourism are recognized. Supply in dark tourism is given in a wide and distinct series, nevertheless a structured foundation of supplying attractions is necessary to assist in identifying and researching visitors’ motivation and experiences.

It has not been clearly stated to this point whether dark tourism is demand or supply driven; nevertheless previous work has been focused much more on the supply side. The demand side – the tourists’ motivations for visiting sites related to dark tourism – has only been explored to a certain extent. There has been little research about reasons and purposes supporting tourists’ desire to come upon such sites or experiences, the prospective ‘drivers’ of dark tourism (Sharpley, 2005).

Not all dark tourism attractions have the same level of ‘darkness’. Strange and Kempa (2003) first introduced a differentiation between ‘lighter’ and ‘darker’ tourism sites. They compared Alcatraz and Robben Island, both being former prisons that have been converted into tourism attractions, and even though both places have different histories, they share certain attributes. Nevertheless, Alcatraz is already being presented in a commercial and entertaining way, whereas Robben Island still holds on to its seriousness and maintains a higher level of political influence in its interpretation. Robben Island thus still focuses more on promoting education, honouring and remembrance. As a result, Robben Island is being perceived as a shade darker than Alcatraz (Stone, 2005: 150).

Seaton (1999) states that the supply of dark tourism is not solely directed by costumers’ tastes. These tastes are often affected by current media and marketing, but even more so, exposed to the political and cultural changes in society. He therefore concludes that the degrees of darkness given present in dark attractions can vary according to the display of new or old events (media, films, articles, news, etc.). Miles (2002 in Stone, 2006) continues to argue that in fact a paradigm for ‘darker’ and ‘lighter’ dark tourism sites and activities exists. He claims that there is an essential difference between attractions where death and torment actually occurred and sites that have a relation to death and torment. Hence, a differentiation prevails between visiting a holocaust death camp such as Auschwitz or Mauthausen, which would then be a darker experience compared to the visitation of a Memorial Site such as the Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C.
The following figure makes the spectrum of darkness more evident:

![Dark Tourism Spectrum](image)

Figure 1: A dark Tourism Spectrum (Stone, 2006)

This figure clearly shows the differences between darker and lighter tourism attractions. Sites that are of actual death are considered far more serious and darker than places, which solely display a relation to death. The darkest tourism sites are situated at an authentic location (where tragedy in fact occurred) and have a far lower touristic utility, and thus infrastructure, than their lighter counterpart. They also present a higher degree of educational purpose, are perceived as more authentic and focus on commemoration and conservation rather than commercialism. The darkest sites are usually also areas where recent tragedy has happened. The lighter tourist sites are places with better touristic infrastructure and generally their main purpose is the entertainment of people, which leads to a lower perceived authenticity by visitors.
The supply side of the dark tourism industry has been researched more intensively compared to the demand side. Stone (2006) has introduced different categories of supplied dark attractions and explained their ‘shade of darkness’. The ‘darkest’ ones, which in this spectrum are considered the most serious attractions, are without a doubt the death camps of genocide. In the middle of the scale prevail dark dungeons and resting places, whereas on the lightest side one can find dark fun factories. An example of such a dark fun factory would be the Dracula Park in Romania.

Since the supply side of dark tourism has been studied in abundance, the focus of this paper is put on the demand side of the topic – the tourists’ perception and perspective and their motivations and reasons for visiting dark attractions.

### 2.1.3 Dark Tourism Today

According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) tourism is one of the largest industries worldwide. The industry thrives and tourists are constantly looking for new trends, exciting ways of travel and different kinds of adrenaline rushes (Verma, 2013). Dark tourism evolved to being one of the latest trends, although it has been practiced for years. As the Tourism Society emphasizes the concept, the field of dark tourism has grown into becoming a thrilling and important topic for the tourism industry (Goeldner and Brent Ritchie, 2009). It is widely known, that tourism has experienced a remarkable growth in the last half century, which also led to dark tourism becoming widespread and diverse. Dark tourism is now extensively recognized as a form of tourism – and also as a promotional tool (Stone, 2009).

Up to a certain point, dark tourism might imply financial benefits to any place or attraction. The extent of these benefits highly depends on the commercialization of the singular tourist sites. It is important to mention that dark tourism, in most of its cases, includes an educational factor (Craig and Thompson, 2013).

Meanwhile, the media and popular travel guides such as the Lonely Planet series broadly use the term dark tourism. Even the online version of the Guardian has a button in its travel section for dark tourism where different articles (e.g. ‘Strange and unsettling: My daytrip to Chernobyl’) are provided (Willis, 2014). Articles like
that may or may not be controversial and shed light on the ethical component of the
topic of dark tourism, however this paper will not go into details on the ethical
aspect the phenomenon. Willis (2014) continues to cite another author, Lucy Lipper,
who defines the phenomenon as ‘tragic tourism’ and she conveys ambivalence
about memorials that on one hand try to keep the past struggle visible but on the
other hand subdue their history. Lipper (in Willis, 2014) furthermore states that
while visitors might be at ease when seeking out places that are faraway and
unfamiliar, it is far more difficult to affront past tragedy of suffering and violence
close to home.

One of the currently most known and popular dark tourism sites is Ground Zero in
New York: It attracted three and a half million visitors, which is almost twice as a
many people who visited the World Trade Centre platform before 9/11 (Blair, 2002).
Although the evident interest in dark tourism from the tourists’ perspective is given,
literature remains scarce and theoretically fragile and makes understanding this
phenomenon rather limited (Stone, 2009). Stone (2006: 146) continues with stating
that this limited knowledge makes it clear, that “no analysis of dark tourism supply
can be complete if tourist behaviour and demand for the dark tourism product are
not acknowledged.”
2.2 Motivation of Tourists

General motivation in tourism is a broad topic with many different facets and theories. Motivation of tourists can be drafted “as the sum of biological and sociocultural forces which energize and generate people’s behaviour” (Pearce in Lew et al., 2014: 45). The motivation arises from the desire of people to get away from their routine and daily life process. This mentioned desire for the unknown and unusual is therefore seen as a ‘push’ factor in the motivation process (Krippendorf, 1987 in Ritchie et al., 2003). Motivation is the most important driver for tourism demand but simultaneously also the most complicated component. Without motivation there would be no demand. Hence, tourism motivation is one of the most essential and fundamental elements in tourism. However, the insight in tourism motivation continues to be unclear (Sharpley, 2006). Krippendorf (in Sharpley, 2006) states, that most of the times tourists themselves do not know what triggers their desire to travel and therefore don’t recognize their motivations.

Motivation is one of the major influences on the conduct of tourists. Almost all arguments about motivation centre on the idea of fulfilling people’s needs (Hudson, 1999). This mentioned need is thus the starting point of tourist behaviour. Without the need there would not be any motivation, which in turn is the determination of the actual travel behaviour (Lubbe, 2003).

In order to comprehend motivation it is essential to identify people’s needs and find a way to fulfil those needs. Maslow introduced in 1943 the hierarchy of needs, which is known to be the foundation of all motivational theories. Even though it was initially realized for clinical psychology studies it has been used in further areas such as marketing, counselling and tourism (Hudson, 1999).

On the contrary to the push factors, there are also ‘pull’ motives, which are likely to define the location people choose as their destination of travel after they have experience the ‘push’ element (Ritchie, 2003). Sharpley (2006) continues with explaining that is it crucial to understand some fundamental principles about motivation in tourism:
• Motivation is not the same as demand. Demand for tourism is a result of motivation, which means that motivation can be seen as the tie between the need and the triggered behaviour (as stated further above).

• Motivation should not be related to the objective of the vacation, since the intent is typically a way of satisfying a specific need.

• The motivation ‘push’ (tourist’s needs) cannot be confounded with the motivation ‘pull’ (destination’s characteristics).

• Fundamentally, the study of tourism motivation occupies itself with researching the reasons why people feel the desire to be tourists to begin with; and how their various needs can be fulfilled by tourism experiences.

In 2008 Singh provided a spectrum of the main reasons for tourism and travel decisions, which are not clear motives in a behavioural context but rather groupings of drivers that have shared attributes. The first reasons Singh (2008) claimed, are motives revolving around business and work. Here, Sharpley (2006) introduced the work-tourism relationship. Terms like holidays, travel, tourism and leisure in general are opposite terms to work, business, meetings and stress. Work is thus a dominant motivational aspect since the “nature of work experience often determines the desired tourism experience” (Sharpley, 2006: 34). This relationship between work and tourism can be seen in three different forms: First of all, there is the concept of tourism being the antithesis of work where theories on inversion, regression and ludic behaviour play a relevant role. Secondly, tourism can be engaged in as an extension to work when businessmen and women may add extra days to their business trips. Thirdly, there is the concept of neutrality between work and tourism.

The second category Singh (2008) presented, studies physical and physiological motives, which include indoor and outdoor activities where sport is a means of relaxation and leisure. These motives also include travels and activities concerned with well being and health treatments such as fitness, massages and further therapeutic processes for body and soul. In general the main characteristic of this category is the resting and relaxing from everyday life stress, which may take place on a beach, by the lake or a mountain resort.
The third section is concerned with cultural and personal education motives. This section includes activities such as the participation in festivals, museums and theatre – either as a spectator, active actor or volunteer. It also entails the fulfilment of personal interests and thus taking part in courses and activities with intellectual and craft pursuits. Another part of cultural and personal education motives is the travel to places because of their cultural or natural heritage. Interpersonal and ethnic drivers are the subsequent motives Singh (2008) introduced. He explains how these motives revolve around the company and visitation of friends and relatives, the travels undertaken for social duty occasions such as weddings, birthdays, special family occasions, funerals etc. The author also mentions travels that include the visitation of one’s birthplace and the exploration of historical backgrounds.

The fourth category of motives considers entertainment, amusement and pleasure. This section regards any kind of spectator events, the visit to theme and amusement parks and all shopping activities that cannot be counted as routine behaviour.

The fifth and last motives are of religious nature, which include participation in any kind of pilgrimage as well as attending retreats for meditation.

The study of motivation is very complex and broad and therefore also difficult to transcribe to tourism and even harder to relate to dark tourism. As mentioned previously, sometimes tourists themselves are not aware of what their motivations are. It is therefore difficult to establish exact theories and conclusions. The next section of this thesis will try to make the understanding of tourists’ motivation for participating in dark tourism easier.
2.3 Motivations for Dark Tourism

It is challenging to state what exactly drives tourists to dark places where tragedy had happened. Unravelling dark tourism motivations can be difficult, as they can emerge as a mixture of veneration and thrill of coming into close contact with death (Ntunda, 2014). In the book “Research Themes for tourism” (2011) Robinson et al. dedicated a chapter to the topic of dark tourism and explored, among other categories, the motivations of visiting dark places. They also state that understanding visitors’ motivations is very complex and they result in a multitude of possible reasons.

2.3.1 A general framework

Dunkley (2005, in Robinson et al., 2011) presented a framework for understanding the diverse science of tourist’s motivations:

- Visiting sites such as graveyards and cemeteries for contemplation and possible spiritual and retrospective purposes
- Thrill and risk seeking in the way of reaching a site - such as the bull runs in Pamplona
- Affirmation and recognition of events that may have happened such as crime, disaster or murder
- Accuracy and the need to acknowledge the truth of the actual existence of a person or place
- Self-discovery and learning purposes
- Wanting to visit sites that have immortalized historic events, such as a place where an assassination happened (e.g. The apartment of John Lennon’s death) or important landmarks (Checkpoint Charlie at the Berlin wall)
- Convenience of visitation when located in famous city
- Curiosity in sites where disaster has only happened recently
- Religious reasons and purposes

Nonetheless Dunkley (2005) expresses that these categorizations, due to their descriptive nature, are suitable only for certain attractions, properties or sites and
can therefore not be classified as the solely motivators for tourist’s choice to undertake such travels (Brand and Platter in Papathanassis, 2011).

The understanding of tourist’s motivation to visit attractions connected to dark happenings is a complex act. Singh (2004) went as far as to compare the distinct concept of dark tourism with the acceptance of a new planet: The comprehension of the implicit reasons for tourists to visit dark sites can be as complicated as for astronomers to accept the existence of a new planet in the solar system which beforehand was thought to have been studied and understood abundantly.

Several authors have previously worked on identifying the factors behind dark tourists’ motivations. In 1998, Dann provided a number of possible influences such as the ‘fear of phantoms’ (where he addresses childlike fears), the pursuit for distinction/oddity or an elemental ‘bloodlust’. Additionally he identifies “nostalgia, the celebration of crime or deviance (...) and, at a more practical level, ‘dicing with death’ – that is undertaking journeys, or ‘holiday in hell’, that challenge tourists or heightens their sense of mortality” (Dann, 1998 cited in Sharpley and Stone, 2008: 15).

Willis (2014) described her own experience while being a dark tourist and states that it was not the sadness that emerged from visiting something extremely moving but the turmoil of not knowing how to react. Since Willis was alone the most part of her travels she realized how important it would have been to her to talk about the experiences.

However, all categories relate to exact places, attractions and activities and are primarily descriptive (Stone, 2005). White and Frew (2013) argue that some people like to satisfy their curiosity and fascination with the dark tourism concept in a socially adequate setting that also gives them the opportunity to built their own reflection of mortality. The authors quote Wilson (2004) who added that some visitors choose dark tourism attractions for simple macabre arousal and entertainment.
2.3.2 The fascination with Death

“Death has come to occupy a central place in society’s consciousness” (Craig and Thompson, 2012: 180). With this statement, the authors once again highlight the realization that curiosity and the attraction to death, which in some cases might be preoccupying, becomes a key driver for dark tourism. This motivation, though, is strongly influenced by the media that takes tragedies and suffering straight into our living rooms. Public’s fascination and their ‘craving’ gets nourished by the media – people are used to seeing death, displayed in a continuously more violent setting, on television and newspapers. Through this ‘feeding’, people’s interest and longing for violence, death and the macabre increased steadily. These statements unquestionably lead to the obvious: Where does this attraction in death and suffering come from? (Craig and Thompson, 2012).

Up to this day the drivers for engaging in dark tourism “vary from a simple morbid curiosity or a malicious indulgence in another person’s suffering, through schadenfreude (Seaton and Lennon 2004), to a collective sense of identity or survival ‘in the face of violent disruptions of collective life routines’ (Rojek 1997: 110).” (Stone, 2006)

Robinson et al. (2011) state the fact that no one has ever come back to let the living now what death and the afterlife are like. Therefore, the wish to get close to the place where death has occurred can be connected to the fear of the unknown and the desire to gather experience. Death is an inescapable component of everybody’s life journey and the reality that nobody knows what will happen afterwards triggers horror and fear. The visitation of sites where death has occurred gives tourists the possibility of experiencing some tangible pieces of death. Similarly, Sather-Wagstaff (2003) stated that thanatopsis is not only about the individual longing for getting in touch with death and the dead but it is rather about the process of coming to terms and accepting “death as a part of the life cycle” (2003: 73).

Seaton (1996, in Stone and Sharpley, 2008) suggests that thanatourism is the “travel dimension of thanatopsis”, established as “travel to a location wholly, or partially, motivated by the desire for actual or symbolic encounters with death, particularly, but not exclusively, violent death” (Seaton 1996:240 in Stone and Sharpley,
Seaton (1996 in Stone and Sharpley, 2008) also indicates that thanatourism is a paradox of human behaviour, which is defined by the motivations of tourists. Additionally, he claims that a ‘continuum of intensity’ exists according to the different reasons for seeking out a site and the degree to which the fascination of the tourists in death is general or related to an individual (Stone and Sharpley, 2008).

Although Seaton (1999) acknowledged that not in all cases death would be the only motivation for visiting such sites, he strictly persists that all of the previously mentioned activities are part of thanatourism and tourists are essentially compelled by the eagerness to confront death (Seaton 1999 in Sather-Wagstaff, 2003).

2.3.3 A deeper insight

Ashworth (2004) introduced four different arguments that place dark tourism in a familiar context. The first argument deals with people’s curiosity, which is one of the major drivers of human beings. It is triggered by a sensation of uncertainty in the brain and the human seeks to satisfy this feeling. People, and thus tourists, are fascinated by the unusual, unknown and unique, which leads to the conclusion that at least part of the curiosity for dark tourism attractions comes from the same motivations that leads people to acknowledge and remember the exceptional. The exceptional and unusual arouses and satisfies curiosity – which is not uncommon for the tourist but due to restrictions in his/her daily life, the sensation does not get experienced often. Curiosity comes to show at events such as a car accident or scenes of natural disasters, where some might consider it inappropriate to stop and stare. On a more socially acceptable level even circus shows and (extreme) sports with a lot of viewers may thrive in popularity due to the perceived possibility of a tragic event to happen.

The second argument Ashworth (2004) provides is the identity argument. Dark tourism can be often related to heritage tourism since a great number of attractions, considered being part of the dark tourism phenomenon, date back several years. They therefore often have a considerable historical significance other than just being popular for a tragic event itself. Heritage tourism is also known as ‘roots’ tourism, which implies – as the name already states – that tourists look for their past, try to
understand themselves and their history, find a piece of past life. Ashworth (2004) calls it self-understanding and self-identity and claims that since “much history has been unpleasant for many, it is not surprising that such a search almost inescapably reveals past atrocity with which the searcher can identify (…).” (Ashworth, 2004: 99). The drivers for this self-identifying may be of spiritual and reflective nature which can include pilgrimage to ‘pay respects’ to those who the visitor feels connected with.

Thirdly, the horror arguments come to light. Ashworth here relents and states that this argument might appear less acceptable since it implies that some people are attracted and fascinated by horrific incidences. The fact that people are entertained by suffering and tragedy of others may seem revolting. Nonetheless horror tourism is not a new occurrence. Fights between gladiators and Romans in the ancient arenas, Madame Tussaud’s ‘chamber of horror’ or also simple ghost rides for children at amusement parks are all examples that have been and are used for public entertainment. This connection between representations of violence and enjoyment may be an extreme way of a more common and socially acceptable appeal to the tragic. The intentional elicitation of feelings of enchantment and fear by voyeuristic contact with tragedy is not only a predominant product of many tourist attractions but is also present in literary work, folktales, art and lately again in film and television screenings. Hence, the relation between the tourist and a dark attraction can be just as entertaining as for the tourist to address any of the mentioned media – with exactly the same reason and the same moral loading. Not to forget, the emotional experiences a visitor might get from taking part in dark tourism activities can also be seen as the contrast of what happens in daily life. It may therefore offer a brief escape and tourists might encounter emotions that rarely come their way.

The fourth and last argument is the one that deals with empathy. It relies upon the ability of visitors to identify with the horrific stories of an attraction. This is much easier to receive with personified and widely known individuals, such as Nelson Mandela, than with substantial complex groups. The empathy argument could be seen as a more acceptable form of showing ones attraction to horror. Nevertheless,
the differentiation between acceptable empathetic interest and unacceptable voyeurism is blurred and difficult to draw or to communicate through description.

2.3.4 The emotional facet

Since motivational aspects also encompass an emotional facet, in 2005 Tarlow introduced four primary emotions that are part of “the dark tourist’s psychological state” (Stone, 2005: 114) when visiting dark attractions or engaging in dark activities. These emotions consist of a sense of insecurity, a sense of gratitude, feelings of humility and feelings of superiority. Furthermore, Rojek suggested in 1997 that the motives for the desires of tourists to visit dark attractions are connected to a sense of cultural and social integrity. Both authors have therefore started to suggest wider “socio-cultural, emotional and psychological concerns within dark tourism consumption” (Stone, 2005: 114).

Considering the facets of the phenomenon of dark tourism consumption and with it the tourists’ key motivations, one can argue that these fields are still not researched enough. It is certain that studies must be continued and existing work extended. Evidently, this is another reason why this thesis in particular focuses on exactly this issue and tries to further understand tourists’ reasons behind dark tourism consumption, which will contribute to answering the fundamental question of why tourists want to visit and engage in dark attractions, places and activities.
3 Case study

3.1 Apartheid Memorials

The range of dark tourism sites and attractions is as broad as human creativity. Our long and tragic history provides us with a lot of cruelty from which cases could be chosen. “The past is so full of acts of collective physical violence imposed on others by governments, ideologies and social groups that it is possible to interpret not only every battlefield and war museum but also every castle, ruler’s palace, cathedral, merchant’s house, country house, plantation or factory as an atrocity site” (Ashworth in Singh, 2004, p.86).

The case of the apartheid and Nelson Mandela’s history represents Ashworth’s previously mentioned characteristics. What happened to millions of black Africans during the oppression in their country is definitely considered an atrocity. The apartheid memorials capture visitors’ attention for different reasons. Getting a closer understanding of these reasons is what the author of this thesis is looking to accomplish.

Many tourists visit the cells in Robben Island where Nelson Mandela spent 18 years out of his 27 years in prison. Robben Island is where he fought for equality for his people, where he got beaten and humiliated and where he thought he would spend his last living hours.

Many tourists visit the District 6 Museum in Cape Town, located in the heart of the not-so-long-ago protests and civil wars in the Republic of South Africa. The museum provides a large number of visual materials in order to present to the visitors an authentic experience. There is a bench with the engraving, stating that only ‘European’ people are allowed to sit. There is a large banner attached to the museum’s ceiling on which hundreds of former residents of district six or their remaining family members have written their memories, thoughts and prayers. These attributes enhance the visitor’s understanding and empathy.

Many tourists visit the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg where one can plunge into an educational, yet emotional, journey of the apartheid history. After entering the museum by being assigned to one of the two corridors, separated according to
different skin colours, the museum offers a series of 22 exhibitions. These tell the story of racial discrimination and struggle and provide the visitors with an opportunity to ‘understand’ what had happened in the past and want to show that the country is now looking towards the future.

In South Africa, Apartheid memorials and museum such as the District 6 and its museum, the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg and Robben Island are among the most popular attractions of South Africa (Fisser and Ferreira, 2013).

3.1.1 Robben Island

Robben Island is most likely the most famous apartheid memorial in South Africa. It is also generally one of the most visited attractions, especially in the Cape Town area (Cape Town official tourism website www.capetowntravel.com). Robben Island is a place with long history of “where outcasts and rebel opponents (...) were abandoned and imprisoned”. During the apartheid it became the prison where the majority of male black politicians was held in the years between 1962 and 1991. (Buntman, 2003: 3)

Robben Island is internationally known as the prison where Nelson Mandela, Nobel laureate and former President of South Africa was held behind bars for 18 out of his 27 years spent in prison – until the fall of the apartheid in 1994. The island, as it was called during the apartheid, is now a place tourists can visit to experience first hand how life must have been like and relive former prisoners experiences. It is a previous place of sanction and incarceration that rose into becoming a popular tourist attraction as a former prison being transformed into a museum and heritage site (Strange and Kempa, 2003).

The island was used as a prison, a hospital for socially unacceptable groups, and a military base under several political leaders between the 17th and the 20th century. Robben Island has served for centuries as a place where to put undesired members of society (Fleminger, 2004). It became the symbol of the fight against apartheid and with the incarceration of political prisoners it developed into playing a major role in creating antiapartheid politics (Buntman, 2003). The buildings are testimonials of
how freedom and democracy overcame oppression and racism. All of the prisoners of Robben Island were black and mostly leaders of the African National Congress and Pan African Congress. The worldwide known and most celebrated prisoner was Nelson Mandela.

3.1.2 District Six

The District Six, formally named the Sixth Municipal District of Cape town, was established in 1867. It was founded as a community for everybody: freed slaves, merchants, artisans and many more, no matter their skin colour. It used to be a vibrant neighbourhood close to the city centre. However, by the beginning of the 20th century the marginalisation and separation begun and the first people to be removed from the area were black South Africans in 1901. Due to this turmoil and the ‘clearance’ of the area through city council it became a disliked ward of the city. Half a decade later, in 1966, it was announced a white area only and in 1982 there was no more evidence of the once lively neighbourhood. According to the official website of District Six, more than 60.000 people had to leave their homes involuntarily and were placed outside town in a sparse area suitably known as the Cape Flats. All their houses in District six were levelled to the ground.

To preserve the memories and horrifying experiences of the District-Six people and to keep their histories in honour, the District Six museum was founded in 1994 and, according to the official tourism website of Cape Town, is one of the most visited attractions of the country.

3.1.3 The Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg

The apartheid museum in Johannesburg offers visitors the opportunity to immerse themselves in the apartheid history of South Africa. Tourists take part in an emotional, still informative journey through the museum, starting in year 1948, when the apartheid was initiated until 1994; the year Nelson Mandela was elected president (Williams, 2007). Even though the museum does offer an insight into the White’s resistance to the apartheid, the main part of the exhibitions – as might be
expected – focuses on the oppression of the Black during those times. At the entrance of the museum the visitor is immediately confronted with the conditions that prevailed during the apartheid: two different entrances, one for white, one for black people, which is additionally marked with the racial symbol of apartheid (Soudien, 2012).

According to a former employee of the museum approximately 50% of visitors are from foreign countries, whereas the other half are South Africans (Interview Davy, 2003 in Urbsaitis, 2009). Apartheid memorials have deep roots in the concept of dark tourism and the revelations of motives of tourists behind their visitations are the aim of this thesis. In the following chapter the author will explain the methodology and the conducted study.
4 Methodology

4.1 The research method

The author of this thesis decided to use a qualitative research method to achieve a deep understanding of participant’s emotions and perceptions (Edmonds, 1999 in Coats and Ferguson, 2013). Since the aim of this paper is of explanatory nature the author decided to use semi-structured interviews as the research method. It is essential to grasp the sense for tourists’ decisions and to comprehend the reasons behind their attitudes and opinions, which leads to the conclusion that a qualitative interview is the best match (Saunders et al., 2009). With in depth, personal and semi-structured interviews, conducted over Skype, the author foresees to being able to reach inner emotions and thoughts. With this form of conducting research there is less risk of misunderstandings and confusion regarding questions, their intent and the way they are asked. Through semi-structured interviews the author has the opportunity to examine participants’ answers into great detail, if she feels the necessity to do so, or build further arguments upon the given statements (Saunders et al., 2009).

In this paper qualitative research is used, because it is the best method when the research outcomes need to meet high quality standards. Especially when focusing on human behaviour, qualitative research, in this case called “Motivation Research”, is essential. With this type of research the aim is set high to discover hidden triggers and desires of people. These underlying motivations can be best brought to light through in-depth interviews, which is why the author of this paper finds this method most adequate. By conducting personal interviews different motivational aspects can be analysed and the understanding of peoples’ behaviour may be improved (Kumar, 2008).

The main purpose of this thesis is to highlight and further understand why people are attracted by tragedy and suffering. Kothari (2004) introduced several strengths and weaknesses of personal interviews, of which the most important will be highlighted in the following paragraph: The first positive attribute is the fact that more information can be gathered and this in more detail and depth. Another benefit of personal interviews is the given flexibility and the possibility to
reconstruct questions. Many times the results of the interviewer’s study may be enhanced if the informant gets caught of guard and therefore provides the most spontaneous and authentic answers. A final aspect is the given ability of the conductor to adapt the language of the interview according to the participants and therewith avoid misinterpretation and confusion. Weak characteristics of personal interviews are the always remaining possibility of bias, either from the interviewer’s or the interviewee’s part. In special cases some respondents may be difficult to approach or to contact; also, this research method can be very time-consuming. Due to the ethical background of the topic at hand, it can lead to limitations when considering how sensitive the apartheid issue might be for certain participants. The apartheid has a far more important role for South African citizens – an importance that is difficult to comprehend from anybody who didn’t experience it first hand in the country. The most important attribute is nevertheless the high-involvement of the interviewer and the encouragement towards interviewees given by personal contact. By interacting with involved participants, the researcher will be able to enlighten the reasons behind the actions (Morgan, 1998 in Coats and Ferguson, 2013).

4.2 The data collection

Due to the mentioned lack of existing studies and the need to expand knowledge about the motives of tourists for participating in dark tourism activities, the aim of this study is to contribute to future research. Hence, with this study the author wants to deepen the understanding of the motivations of tourists for visiting dark places. The answers to questions on the reasons behind visiting attractions that emit suffering and disaster are being sought for and the evoked emotions therewith further understood. The goal of the author is to find truthful and honest answers through in-depth personal interviews. By engaging with participants in such a personal manner they are encouraged to talk freely about their thoughts and feelings.

The sample consists of 10 participants who have visited an apartheid memorial in South Africa in recent years and are willing to share their personal experiences. Candidates for this study were sought for through connections of friends and family and social media platforms. The chosen candidates have all visited an apartheid
memorial and are of different nationalities (Austrian, Italian, British, South African, French, German, American and Brazilian) and age groups, which is why they represent the best choice. The participants were chosen in order for the result to be overarching a large set of representative groups. Through the personal way of conduct, the author gives the participants the chance to take time and carefully evaluate their answers and leave space for discussions.

4.3 The implementation

Willis (2014) outlined several questions that have been left unanswered in existing literature: “Why are people attracted by dark pasts and tragedy? What is it that people hope to see and understand at such sites? What are the moral and ethical obligations incurred through belated ‘by standing’ and simulated engagement? There seemed to be a desire to connect, to be involved, to understand and to feel at these sites (...).” (Willis, 2014: 4)

The goal of this thesis is to find a deeper insight into motivations of people. To understand why they choose to visit these memorials and what kind of emotions are triggered. Is it pure curiosity, does it mainly have an educational background? Do people feel like it is their moral obligation to visit these sites when travelling to South Africa? Do visitors want to feel empathy and pay their respects? Are they just looking for a way of entertainment? The interviewer will be following these questions in order to obtain valuable result.

After conducting thorough research and getting an insight into previous studies and established theories realized on the topic in hand, the content of the interviews was structured accordingly. Since several authors, such as Dunkley 2005, Seaton 1996, Stone 2005, Sharpley 2006, etc. have mentioned various reasons for tourists wanting to visit dark attractions; in this thesis the focus will be on confirming and supporting or disconfirm their theories. The author will also be trying to uncover new motives.

The conducted interviews were recorded by the author and subsequently transcribed, analysed and the findings summarized. The analysis was realized by rewriting the interviews carefully and thoroughly. After reading the transcribed interviews with accuracy, the interviewer started to highlight certain patterns. These
were labelled according to their utterance: opinions, statements, specific terms or words, etc. Specific concepts were pointed out regarding the frequency in which they occur, the evoked surprise-effect they may have had or also if they related to previously mentioned theories and studies. After this coding process the author brought, to her best knowledge and understanding, the different codes together into categories. A connection between these categories were established, whence the results of the interviews were obtained. The results are being presented in a neutral manner and later discussed and interpreted in regard to the research question.

4.4 Sample and interviews

The author conducted all ten interviews over Skype and recorded them with a recording application. The interviews were then transcribed and analysed as described above.

The sample of the study consisted of 10 participants, which visited one of the three mentioned apartheid memorials above. The participants show different nationalities, age groups and education levels. Interviewees from European countries, such as Italy, Germany, France and Austria, the United States, Brazil and also from South Africa were included. By choosing this sample the author wanted to make sure a broad spectrum of opinions would be brought to light. It was also very important to include South African citizens to see how their perception does or does not vary from outside tourists. The age spectrum of the participants ranged from 22 to 57 years old and all participants achieved a high school diploma or higher.

The author herself carried out the interviews and all the participants gave their consent to being recorded and quoted further in in this paper. The interviewer started the interviews by introducing the participants to the topic at hand and therefore explaining the term dark tourism. The term was explained in order to give the participants an idea to what they are contributing to and what the study was about. During the interviews the conductor gained inside into the travel behaviour connected to the visitation of the apartheid memorials before engaging into the
main research question about the motivations and reasons behind the decision to visit the memorials. While interviewing the author also focused on evoked emotions and perception on the apartheid attractions in order to understand the participant’s feelings and reasoning to a farther extend.

The interview questions involved demographic information such as age, nationality and education status. The author asked whether the participant had previous knowledge about the apartheid memorials and whether they engaged in any research. Moreover, the respondents were answering questions concerning their intentions of visiting the memorials before travelling to South Africa. After these initial questions, the most important aspect of the interview was addressed: Why participants chose to visit the apartheid memorial. After hearing the first answers the author was trying to emerge deeper into the issue and hand and extract valuable information. At the point of satisfaction of the interviewer’s expectations, she continued with asking about the experience of the visitation, the importance of it and the perceived authenticity of the attractions. Since emotional aspects regarding the motivation theories were mentioned in the literature review, the author wanted to find out what the participants’ emotional impressions were like.

These were the main questions the participants answered during their interviews:

• Which apartheid memorial did you visit?
• Did you do any research beforehand?
• Was the apartheid memorial the reason you visited the country?
• Did you plan the visit before you left for South Africa or only once you were there?
• What would you think are the main reasons you visited the memorial?
• How was the experience? How did it make you feel?
• Would you visit the memorial again?
• Would you recommend it to friends and family?
• Did you perceive the memorial as authentic?

After conducting all 10 interviews the interviewer started with the analysis of the gathered date, the obtained results will be presented and discussed in the following chapter.
5 Results

5.1 Presentation of findings

The results of this study are presented in this section and discussed and interpreted at a later point in this paper. All of the interviewed respondents have answered the question about their familiarity with the term dark tourism negatively.

The main questions that were discussed during the interview were “What were the main reasons for you to visit the memorial? Why did you want to go?” After thoroughly analysing the conducted interviews the following results emerged: The majority of the participants of the study stated that the main reason for visiting the apartheid memorials was the fact that it appeared to be a ‘must’ when visiting South Africa. Despite this was one of the reasons that frequently emerged as the first answer to the question; there were several more motivations the author was able to discuss with the selected participants.

“If you are in Johannesburg it is a must to go see the museum.”  (Female, 34, interview 2)

“Because it is a main site to visit.” (Female, 22, interview 1)

“Because it is the most famous place in Cape Town related to the apartheid (...)”  
(Male, 26, interview 3)

For 8 out of 10 participants of the conducted investigation it was the urge to know more about South Africa’s history, and the therefore about the apartheid, that drove them to the mentioned memorials. All interviewees stated that they were interested in the topic of the apartheid; they wanted to gain further knowledge and get additional information of the places. It was evident that the desire to get a sense about ‘how it really was’ or ‘what it must have been like’ was one of the main thoughts of all participants.

“(…) to see and learn more about the history. I believe that if you visit the museum you can actually understand better what happened.” (Female, 34, interview 2)

“(…) to learn more about it and actually understand what happened in this country.”  
(Female, 23, interview 6)

“To get a sense of the situation and try to understand it somewhat further” (Female, 57, interview 7)
The participants mentioned how getting to know the country you are visiting and – in the case of South Africa – especially the history of the country is a main feature when travelling to an unknown place. Wanting to know more about the culture and the people should be implied in every journey, no matter what its nature is. Several respondents also highlighted a personal interest in the history of South Africa and Nelson Mandela and therefore wanting to feel a deeper understanding of the occurrences. A young female participant also stated that her special interest in the apartheid and Nelson Mandela as a personality drove her to visit South Africa.

“I am incredibly interested in Nelson Mandela and the history of the apartheid (...) and brought me to travel to South Africa specifically”. (Female, 30, interview 10)

“I wanted to go there to see how Mandela lived all those years in prison.” (Male, 51, interview 8)

“It was definitely out of personal interest in the apartheid.” (Female, 36, interview 5)

The uniqueness of the apartheid memorials and their connection to the whole country of South Africa and not just one or two single places is another reason why it is important to visit the memorials, according to some of the interviewees. Especially the unique nature of Robben Island is highlighted by one respondent and since the history is still so recent the participant felt like there is no other comparable place in the world for people to visit and get a feeling of what prisoners went through.

Further statements were made about how curiosity and empathy played a role for some respondents. When participants were encouraged to take more time to think soundly about what their motivations could have been apart from the desire to gain more information, curiosity was a term that was frequently mentioned. The implications of this statement will then be discussed in the next section of this paper.

“I guess some part of me was just plainly curious to see what it must have been like to live in those cells (...).” (Male, 51, interview 8)

“Another reason for me to go was probably just pure curiosity.” (Female, 57, interview 7)
Similar findings were made concerning empathy. When reinforced by the author and the on-going discussion a few respondents realized how empathy played a rather important role for their visits to the memorial. These participants highlighted that they were trying to ‘show that they care’. Since the history of the country is so unique, still new and not compromised to one single location, several of the participants felt like it would have been unjust and reprehensible if these sites had not been visited.

“I think if I wouldn’t have gone I had felt ignorant. I’d feel like I didn’t care about what people went through and wanted to ignore it. And that just doesn’t seem right.” (Female, 22, interview 1)

“One feels sorry. And somehow almost guilty for being white and enjoying all the possible privileges.” (Female, 57, interview 7)

Additional findings were made concerning even more emotional aspects like paying their respects, being thankful, commemorate. These attributes were mentioned by the two South African participants of the sample. The evident personal connection to the apartheid was strongly recognized. One participant stated how humble he felt when visiting Robben Island and how thankful he was to the people fighting for the free and democratic country he grew up and now lives in. Another respondent mentioned how she went to visit the District 6 museum out of personal interest in her grand parents’ history.

“I was very humbled, especially being a young who grew up in a free and democratic South Africa, I appreciate the sacrifices made by those who came before me”. (Male, 27, interview 4)

“(…) because my grandfather used to play rugby back in the day and his picture is displayed at the museum.” (Female, 25, interview 9)

Furthermore, several participants have mentioned the fact that they appreciate the apartheid memorials’ existence. They emphasize how important these sites are in order to commemorate the lives that have been lost, the battle that was fought and the great changes in human reasoning that was achieved. The apartheid is still a very recent struggle for the country but it is essential that the memorial sites are
preserved and maintained in order for them to contribute to future generation’s understanding.

“(…) nobody should ever forget what happened in this country (...) it is very important that these places exist and keep existing.” (Female, 57, interview 7)

The author of this paper also went further and included some secondary findings, which do not necessarily directly relate to the research questions but may help understanding visitors’ emotions and perception of the attractions better. All participants said they would most certainly recommend the apartheid memorials to friends and families, which implies a their expectations were met or even exceeded. Also, most of the respondents would visit the memorials a second time and two interviewees explicitly mentioned the desire to show Robben Island to younger ones. When asked about the perceived authenticity of the attractions most responses were positive and the memorials were perceived as rather authentic. The participants were aware of the touristic aspect of the sites nevertheless did not think of them as too commercialized or exploited.

Robben Island was perceive by some as very real and authentic while others thought the touristic attraction attribute were rather evident. The fact that former prisoners are now guides at Robben Island and explain facts and figures on the tours through the prison makes the experience very unique and credible. The emotions that participants experienced when visiting the memorials range from little concernment to overwhelming feelings. This can most certainly be attributed to the fact that the nature of the three apartheid memorials varies greatly. 8 out of 10 participants each only visited on of the memorials in discussion, which does not allow them to draw comparisons. The majority of the respondents felt a certain extent of shock, sadness and disbelieve. Despite the fact that most of the participants felt like the apartheid is something relatively distant and far from their personal lives, 9 out of 10 respondents stated that they were affected emotionally when visiting the memorials.

None of the participants travelled to the country only because of the apartheid memorials, although one participant stated that her interest in Nelson Mandela and his history influenced her travel decision greatly. Most of the respondents did know
about the memorials at their destination to a small degree. When asked if the visit to the memorial was planned beforehand or only once the participants had arrived to the country, the majority stated that they either only planned the visit after they had arrived or they came with the intention to visit the memorial but without a specifically planned date and time.
6 Discussion

The above displayed findings will now be discussed and interpreted. None of the participants were familiar with the term ‘dark tourism’. Tourists therefore do not engage in such a special aspect of tourism consciously and perceive the apartheid memorials as regular tourism attractions. According to the analysis of the conducted interview, tourists choose to visit the apartheid memorials in order to gain further knowledge. All participants point out the educational and informative factor implied in the visitation of the memorials as one of the first responses to the question about why they visited the sites. These answers support previously mentioned theories formed by Dunkley (2005) who stated, amongst other motivations, the learning purposes of visiting dark attractions. Here also the arguments of acknowledging the truth, the affirmation and the recognition of events should be added. According to this conducted study, educational reasons and the desire to gain more information seem to be the main reasons behind the visitations to dark attractions. This evidently results in the assumption that tourists emphasize on the educational facets of their journeys to a great extent. Entertainment is not solely the scope of leisure travels, since all participants stated they could not have imagined leaving the country without engaging in any cultural aspect of the apartheid.

6.1 An “ethical duty”

The second most stated reason for visiting the apartheid memorials is the fact that visitors stated it as ‘a must’ when visiting South Africa. Here one could argue that this applies to all touristic attractions around the world no matter their nature. Visiting the Louvre in Paris or the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin could also be seen as ‘must’ when travelling to those cities. Nonetheless, the apartheid memorials, apart from evidently being counted to the most popular tourist attractions in South Africa, have a deeper importance because of their history. The fact that they are memorials for the apartheid gives these attractions their dark characteristic. One can argue that this given reason is not necessarily contributing to the aim of this study, however it should be considered. Due to a certain perceived seriousness and significance of the apartheid memorials they cannot simply be compared to other attractions of non-dark nature. This can also be connected to the educational motives mentioned previously. There is a tie between visiting an unknown country and the desire to
learn about the history. Some participants also uttered the fact, that the location of the memorials is very convenient. The sites are easily accessible and centrally located. In the author’s opinion this is not a proper motivational aspect itself but could contribute to the decision making in case of uncertainty. Dunkley (2005) also introduced the convenience factor as being part of the reasons for visiting dark attractions. This statement is being supported by the results of this study. Nevertheless, it cannot be clearly stated that convenience is a major driver for visiting the memorial. In the case of the apartheid memorials, connected to the clearly mentioned importance of the sites by the respondents, the author claims that convenience does not count to being a relevant motivational driver.

Participants specify that it would be almost unethical to ignore apartheid memorials when visiting South Africa. As displayed in the result section above, several respondents declare that it is almost obligatory to visit a memorial in South Africa. Still, these statements imply a certain relevance, which leads to empathy. The statement of interviewee 1 highlights this very well, when she explained: “I think if I wouldn’t have gone I had felt ignorant. I’d feel like I didn’t care about what people went through and wanted to ignore it. And that just doesn’t seem right.” With this comment the connection to the argument of empathy is given.

### 6.2 Human traits

As mentioned earlier, after the participants had gained some trust and got involved more in the conversation they stated empathy and curiosity were also amongst the main motivations for visiting the apartheid memorials. The apartheid and Nelson Mandela enjoy a high historical significance, which for some participants were also relevant reasons to visit the memorials. Personal interest in Nelson Mandela as a famous individual was stated. Ashworth (2004) related this interest also to the empathy aspect of tourists’ motivations for visiting dark attractions. The realization of curiosity relates to the statement of Craig and Thompson (2012), who explain how curiosity and attraction to death have become key drivers for dark tourism. In the case of the apartheid memorials death does not play the central role, more so does suffering and oppression. Nonetheless, the author is sure these attributes can be seen as overlapping and therefore sharing their significance. The attribute of curiosity, which was also highlighted by Dunkley (2005), was mentioned several
times by participants. The interest in apartheid is certainly connected to a higher or lower degree of curiosity. Since various respondents stated how they had known about the apartheid before but still felt very distant from the occurrences it seems only natural they would be more curious about it when visiting the country of these happenings. The author believes that the theory, revealed by Ashworth (2004), how people seek the exceptional and unusual plays a major role in this aspect. The fact that people crave for unknown and extraordinary experiences seems to be a rather obvious characteristic connected to the desire to satisfy their curiosity. This revelation is also a good example for White and Frews (2013) statement, when they argued how people like to satisfy their curiosity and fascination with the dark tourism concept in a socially adequate setting.

6.3 The identity argument

The sample included two South African participants for whom the apartheid memorials play an even more important and personal role. Hence, the aspect of ‘root’ tourism and heritage tourism can be emphasized here. Both participants grew up with the confrontation of the apartheid and the constant stories about the experiences their relatives had made. For one respondent the district six had a very personal meaning since her relatives used to live in the district and she got told many stories about it. She visited the museum primarily because she knew a picture of her grandfather, a former rugby player, was being displayed at the museum. This personal relation to the apartheid memorials is part of the identity argument, Ashworth (2004) introduced in his studies. He claims that many dark tourism attractions have a historical significance, which is evident for apartheid memorials. The roots tourism implies that visitors look for their own past and history, and maybe for a certain connection, which can be also seen in this participant’s case. Ashworth (2004) also mentions that the identity argument entails visitors wanting to ‘pay their respects’. Both South African respondents stated how for them it was important to visit the memorials in order to pay their respects and thank all those people who sacrificed so much. A young female respondent said: “I think the least we, the young generation, can do is go see the places and somehow pay our respects and thank them for how far they have come”. The second South African citizen stated how humbled and thankful he felt when visiting Robben Island. These
cases show how historic roots can play a major role in dark tourism motivations. Nevertheless, one has to keep in mind that these arguments solely apply for people with South African relatives or for South Africans themselves.

6.4 Emotions

Another connection to emotions can be made at this point. The author previously quoted Tarlow (2005) when he introduced the main emotions, which influence the dark tourist's experience. Two of the four emotions the author stated were humility and a sense of gratitude. Tarlow's theory is therefore being supported by the findings of this study. Another emotion that was mentioned by the author was a sense of insecurity. Once can assume that since most of the participants claimed to have been feeling sad, shocked and not at ease when visiting the memorials that the aspect of insecurity is exposed here. The participants did not specifically state that experiencing these emotions influenced the decision of visiting the attractions. Nevertheless, the author of this thesis is convinced that it can be presumed that these foreseen emotions subconsciously did impact the decisions. This statement was made due to the fact that respondents were all familiar, some to a further extent than others, about the apartheid and the occurrences in South Africa. With this in mind, participants must have had certain expectations before visiting the memorials. Due to the seriousness of the topic no one could have imagined enjoying an amusing and humorous experience.

Previous authors of dark tourism related work have introduced several theories for the motivation of tourists. Some of these theories have been supported and confirmed with this study. Nonetheless, many authors argued that the fascination with death and the desire to feel closer to the afterlife are central motivations for visiting dark attraction. These affirmations were not supported in this study. Needless to say, because of the nature of two of the discussed memorials, the museums, these attractions should be taken out of context. They are not places where the presence and history of death prevails, although death is evidently displayed. Robben Island, on the other handy, is a location where severe suffering and death was on the order of every day. The apartheid is a very important issue, which goes far beyond Robben Island as a single place with individual deaths. The apartheid is a historical and social phenomenon that made world history. The extent
of its importance therefore concludes that the so-often-mentioned desire for close contact with death does not principally constitute the attraction of Robben Island. Robinson et al. (2011) stated how the wish to face the fear of the unknown and gather experiences related to death, can be motivations for visiting dark places. Seaton (1996) suggested that these visitations are connected to the desire for “actual or symbolic encounters with death” (Seaton, 1996: 240 in Stone and Sharpley 2008: 578). These propositions are better suitable for a different kind of dark tourism attractions – attractions where the actual death of people is the predominant aspect.
7 Conclusion

Dark tourism is a rather unknown and new phenomenon that has existed for years without conscious knowledge. The motivations cause for people to engage in dark tourism were studied previously and this paper contributed to better understanding of tourists’ behaviour – especially in relation to apartheid memorials. This can also contribute to better management of the attractions in discussion. Many different kinds of touristic sites can be categorized as being part of dark tourism, some with a lighter or darker shade of darkness. As found in literature and taking the result of this study into consideration it can be said that tourists do not consciously engage in dark tourism. The participants of the study, as well as many other individuals the author came across while working on this paper, have not known nor heard about the term. The term and its significance is present in literature and in professionals’ minds but not so in the common knowledge and vocabulary of the average tourist. Evidently, this is the experience that was made during the work on this thesis and cannot be generalized to a wide extent.

After thoroughly presenting and discussing the findings of this study, one can conclude that, according to this thesis, a certain amount of tourists who visit apartheid memorials do so because of genuine interest in South Africa’s history and have no malicious fascinating with death and suffering. This cannot be established as being true for the majority of the visitors since the study only consisted of 10 participants. Due to the fact that all respondents learned about the history of the apartheid at some point in their previous education or social settings, the educational aspect as a reason for the visits is strongly represented. This leads to the assumption that tourists nowadays are not only looking for entertainment but appreciate and like to emphasize educational elements when travelling abroad. The apartheid is perceived as a very important facet of history and therefore taken particularly seriously. It is therefore almost seen as a moral obligation to visit an apartheid memorial when travelling to South Africa.

In conclusion, to summarize the findings and answer the research question, this thesis brought to light various motivations that should be taken into consideration if further research is conducted. According to the results of this study, tourists choose
to visit apartheid memorials because of their historical significance and the desire for visitors to gain further information and knowledge. One of the main motivations is therefore of educational background. Further, participants claimed that they see it as a moral obligation to visit apartheid memorials when visiting South Africa. Another main motivation is the wish to show empathy and still ones curiosity. In case of South African participants, the search for identity connected to the term root tourism should most definitely mentioned.

The gathering of enough valuable data may have been negatively influenced by the explanation of the phenomenon before the interviews. Since the term has a negative connotation to it, respondents may have felt as if their actions of visiting dark tourism attractions entail some negative reflection. It was therefore not completely straightforward in obtaining the desired results and the participants needed some encouragement. Subsequently further information was secured: pure curiosity and empathy were found to be additional predominant drivers. Basic aspects of humanity are displayed. Visitors do not only like to see the apartheid memorials for their educational value but also seek an emotional satisfaction. The sample encompassed only two South African citizens but it was very evident that root tourism, the desire to connect to past individuals and to learn more about personal history, can be identified immediately when interviewing these individuals. With these findings several theories and statements of earlier authors were confirmed and further supported.

No connection could be established to the fascination of death and the desire of tourists’ to face their fear of the afterlife. These statements are most likely not
precisely suitable for the nature of the dark tourism attractions here in discussion. The author of this paper believes to have been able to further enlighten the understanding of tourists’ motivations, especially regarding the apartheid by introducing the main motivations for tourists to visit apartheid memorials.
8 Limitations, Recommendations and Implications

8.1 Limitations

Since the research method revolved around personal interviews, limitations were implied from the beginning. The sample, consisting of 10 interview partners, is rather small. The author of this thesis chose the most representative sample possible, selecting people from different age groups and nationalities. Nevertheless, the representative significance of the sample is only given to a certain degree, which leads to the conclusion that it is impossible to generalize the result.

The sample provides a better insight in people’s motivations concerned with dark tourism, in particular with apartheid memorials. The general results can be conveyed to mostly all other dark tourism attractions around the world, however some of the data extracted through this study is restricted to apartheid memorials. Needless to say, it is very complex indeed to level all the different dark tourism sites, which concludes that this limitation could not have been prevented. Just within this paper the study deals with three different sites that vary in nature, which causes further restrictions to the results. The author thinks to further understand what drives people; segmented research should be conducted on the different kinds of dark tourism attractions, which were mentioned in the literature review.

Due to the fact that personal interviews are very time consuming, it is a complex method to gain ideal and representative results. Also, the conductor encountered time-consuming difficulties with finding suitable appointments for the participants. It is essential to recall this time-consuming nature before starting the interviews and an effective time management is advisable. While conducting the interviews, the researcher came across some struggles to directly find valuable data. Participants had to be encouraged to utter their opinions, which according to the author of this thesis is connected to the perceived negative connotation of their visits since the term ‘dark tourism’ was explained beforehand. However, relevant data was gathered after more involvement with the participants. The conductor put extensive weight on not being biased and not to influence participants’ responses in any direction but this could most likely not have been prevented in all cases to a full extent.
8.2 Recommendations for further research

The phenomenon of dark tourism and the implied motivations of tourists is a rather complex matter. In order to learn more about the reasons of people visiting dark attractions, researcher should be focusing on the psychological facets of the argument at hand. The author of this thesis proposes to involve psychological analysis of respondent’s answers and behaviors in order to achieve highly valuable data. Motivations of people are in general a broad issue and related to dark tourism even more so. Future work should concentrate on trying to find out how motivations differ according to the nature of dark attractions in order to being able to predict tourists’ behavior better.
8.3 Implications for South Africa

The tourist attractions that have been discussed in this paper evidently count to being the most popular attractions in South Africa. Needless to say, all touristic infrastructures need proper management. Further research may lead to improved tourist service and apprehension, as well as have major contribution to the management of dark tourism attractions. The more managers know about the tourist behavior, the better the institutions can be organized according the needs. These needs may not always include a higher infrastructure but will often consist of simpler matters and the preservation of authentic attractions. One can argue, though, that suitable management is of even higher importance when concerned with dark tourism attractions, since the topic is rather complex. South Africa has a long history of suffering and violence but has come a long way up to this date and undergone many changes. The history of the country is a very important touristic aspect, which should always be kept in mind. Visitors count on being able to connect with the countries history, its culture and its people. It is therefore very important for the country to preserve the apartheid memorials not only for the South African citizens but also just as much for the tourists. With this paper the South African tourism board may have gathered further insight into tourists’ behaviours, their preferences and opinions and can therefore profit from it. The ‘new’ South Africa, which was only introduced in recent years, is moving forward from the apartheid and its successions. Nonetheless it is evident that the apartheid must not be forgotten and the memory kept alive not only for the country but also its tourists.
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Appendices

Appendix A

Interviews
Tourists’ motivations for engaging in Dark Tourism – Case Study: Apartheid memorials in South Africa

A...Author
P...Participant

All participants responded negatively when asked about their familiarity with the term dark tourism. It was therefore briefly explained to them at the beginning of each interview.

Interview 1 – female

A: Can you please state your age, nationality and current educational status?
P1: I am 22 years old, Austrian and recently obtained my bachelor degree.
A: Which apartheid memorial did you visit?
P1: I visited the apartheid museum in Johannesburg.
A: Did you know about the memorial before?
P1: Not specifically. I was pretty sure there was something but I didn’t know what exactly. Where or how it was. I mean I was sure there would have been some kind of apartheid memorial or reminder.
A: Was the motivation to visit the country because of the memorial itself?
P1: No but it was definitely something that we wanted to visit.
A: Did you do any research beforehand?
P1: We actually did a little bit. We planned the days we spent in Johannesburg before we left so we’d know what to do when.
A: So the visitation of the memorial was already planned before you left for your trip?
P1: Yes, definitely.
A: Why did you visit the memorial?
P: Because it is a main site. Well I guess it is part of the history and I was very interested in that and I wanted to see how it really was and maybe learn more details that one didn’t know before. It is listed as one of the main things to do in the region. The history of South Africa is well known and we all only learned about it from stories, books and various media outlets from a distance so being in the country and being in a place were it actually happened – and that definitely not a long time ago – it felt like a must to go see it.

A: Summarizing, it was to get to know the country you were in and the history of the country?

P1: Yes. I think if I wouldn’t have gone I’d feel ignorant. I’d feel like I didn’t care about what people went through and wanted to ignore it. And that just doesn’t seem right.

A: You mentioned ‘care’. Maybe you could further explain that feeling?

P1: I mean the apartheid is a very sad topic in history. We are used to humans doing horrible things but in South Africa it did not happen so long ago. So somehow it feels like people are still affected. Even though we live far away it still feels like a present issue. When travelling to Johannesburg it was obvious to me that I wanted to go see something related to the apartheid. And I think that is because one wants to keep it alive, to show the people there that just because now it is officially over it doesn't mean that nobody cares anymore.

A: Did you feel like you wanted to show people that their battles are not forgotten?

P1: Yes I think so. It might be stupid because nobody actually sees that I visit the museum and nobody will come up to me and say ‘hey thanks for coming to our museum’ but for me personally I had to visit it in order to be okay with myself. Well, I don’t know if this makes any sense…

A: No, that is good. Would you say it was out of empathy that you went? That you somehow wanted to show that you care?

P1: Yeah I guess one could say that.

A: How was the experience of visiting the museum? How did it make you feel?

P1: It was really shocking, I would say. Because of course you know the things and you know the facts and you know how people were treated and everything, but it is really different when you are actually treated like that. Because when you get your ticket you also get to be a ‘black’ or ‘white’ a person and then you have to walk
through different entrances and everything is different so you just really get to feel how it must have been since you were not allowed to go outside your course. You felt like asking ‘but why can’t I go?’ … I don’t know how to describe how it made me feel. I guess surprised… in a bad way.

A: Could you have imagined visiting South Africa without visiting an apartheid memorial?

P1: No way. The apartheid is such a big part of the country and the people have come very far. But visiting the museum was very important for me.

A: Did you perceive the memorial to be authentic?

P1: Yes, I had the feeling it was authentic. Of course you are put into situations that are not normal in a normal museum but that is the thing why you are going there and that’s what you want to see that.

A: If you had the choice to visit another museum, would you still have visited the apartheid museum? If so, why?

P1: I would have definitely chosen then apartheid museum because it is a unique feature of the country and the country suffered a unique history.

A: Would you recommend it to friends/family?

P1: Yes definitely.

A: Would you visit it again if travelling there a second time?

P1: Not necessarily. If I’d go with somebody who hasn’t been I would. On my own I probably wouldn’t since seeing it once was enough for me.

Interview 2 – female

A: Can you please state your age, nationality and current education status?

P2: I am 34 years old and from Brazil. I have a degree in law.

A: Thank you. Which apartheid memorial did you visit?

P2: I visited the apartheid museum in Johannesburg.

A: Did you know about the memorial before you went there?

P2: I did know about it before.

A: Did you plan the visit beforehand?
P2: Not necessarily explicitly planned it but I knew before that there was an apartheid museum in Johannesburg and it was clear to me that I’d want to go visit it.
A: Did you do any research beforehand? You knew it was there and you wanted to see it?
P2: Yes exactly. No research done. I only checked to see where it was located and how to get there.
A: What were the main reasons for you to visit this museum? If you just bluntly think about why you wanted to visit the museum?
P2: One reason was that one could say that if you are in Johannesburg it is a ‘must’ to go see the museum. Everyone recommends it and tells you to go visit it. And definitely also to see and learn more about the history. I believe that if you visit the museum you can actually understand better what happened. I only spent a few days in Johannesburg but it was great to have gotten the opportunity to visit the museum.
A: It was also for educational reasons, to know and learn more about the history of the apartheid?
P2: Yes.
A: If you think about it a little bit more, what else could have been a reason for you to go? Would you have visited the museum if it would have been located further out and be harder to reach? Considering you only spent a few days in the city...
P2: I am not sure. It would have required further planning. I mean it was very important to me to see and learn something about the apartheid but it was definitely a plus that it was located conveniently.
A: Anything else you can think of? Maybe in terms of emotions? Would you call your interest in the apartheid also curiosity?
P2: Yes maybe. I mean if I think about it, being curious doesn't seems appropriate. For such a topic. But I guess you could say I was curious to see what it must have been like.
A: Could you imagine visiting South Africa without regarding the apartheid at all?
P2: No, not really. So concerning your previous questions, I would have visited the museum anyways. But the location was a plus.
A: Would you visit the museum again if you’d go to Johannesburg another time?
P2: Yes I would.
A: Would you also recommend it to friends and family if they went on a vacation to South Africa?
P2: Yes definitely.
A: How did you feel inside the museum? How was the experience for you?
P2: It was good, but it is not a neutral museum like an art museum where you look at Van Gogh paintings. You definitely feel different because you know that there is real history behind it. One doesn’t feel 100% at ease inside because it is a dark place, like you called it. It was very interesting but I didn’t feel very comfortable. I think to say I felt glum would be the right description. The pictures and descriptions one can see and read inside make you feel glum.

Interview 3 - male

A: Can you shortly state your age, nationality and education status?
P3: I am 26 years old, French but living in Canada and I obtained a degree in engineering.
A: Which apartheid memorial did you visit?
P3: I visited Robben Island, twice.
A: Did you do any research before you went there?
P3: I didn’t do any research, I just went there. The organization I used to work for, they told me to go, since I was about to do an internship with them and they said that I’d need to know about the history of the country I wanted to work in.
A: So the main reason for to visit the memorial was job related?
P3: Yes it was. Was but not only. If they wouldn’t have sent me I would still have gone.
A: Why?
P3: Because I am very interested in the apartheid itself. It fascinated me how people could have treated other in the way they did. It is such an important history and I think everybody should be interested in it.
A: You said it fascinates you... Could you explain that further?
P3: Maybe fascination is the wrong word... I am not sure but the apartheid happened recently and it is so unthinkable that something like this went on until the middle of the 1990s. It is just so incredible.

A: Why did you go the second time you went?

P3: Actually the first time I went there was before. I was only 18 and my English was pretty bad and I didn't understand everything. So the second time I went (for my job) I wanted to go to understand everything better since my English had improved by then.

A: The first time you went as a tourist?

P3: Yes.

A: At that time, why did you decide to visit Robben Island?

P3: Because it is the most famous place in Cape Town related to the Apartheid since Nelson Mandela spent 20 years there. It has so much memory and history and I was told that the guides of Robben Island are former prisoners so I felt like they could really tell what happened and that's why I wanted to go.

A: When you first went, did you feel like it was a must to go?

P3: Yes definitely, since you are visiting an area where the history is still so 'new' and present you have to go. It is definitely unique and not the same as a typical museum in other places.

A: Did you like the memorial?

P3: Yes I did. It was very interesting since the place is so real and the guides were prisoners and it felt really authentic.

A: How did it make you feel to be there?

P3: Well, I was actually a little bit ashamed of us. Cause I felt like it was unbelievable how white people could do this for 50 or 60 years. Incredible. So I felt really bad and sad for the black and colored people.

A: Could you have imagined travelling to the Cape Town area without visiting Robben Island?

P3: Definitely not.

A: Would you recommend it to friends and family?

P3: Yes absolutely. I told my parents they have to visit it at some point.

A: The first time you went to Robben Island, did you plan the visit before you arrived to the country or only once you were there?
P3: Only after I had arrived.
A: Okay thank you very much for taking the time to answer my questions.

Interview 4 – male

A: Can you please state your name, age, education and nationality?
P4: I am 27 years old, South African, I have a bachelor degree in logistics management and I am working as management trainee.
A: You visited Robben Island, is that correct?
P4: Yes, in high school.
A: Did you go as a class?
P4: Yes.
A: So that was your main reason to go.
P4: Not necessarily. The trip wasn’t mandatory I chose to go.
A: Why did you choose to go?
P4: I think it is very important to go for anyone around the world but especially South Africans, to be exposed to where we come from as a country. Because here everyone is talking about the ‘new south Africa’ but this new South Africa has only been existing for 3 years. So since we are a country with dark history I think it is very important for us to understand what the implications of that are.
A: The question, whether you conducted any research beforehand is superfluous in this case.
P4: Yes. It is different for us South Africans. I got told about it since I was 5 years old and heard all about it. At home, school, everywhere. Which is another reason I really wanted to go. I grew up in Durban, which is quite a drive to Cape Town so it was a great opportunity to being able to go with school.
A: Would you go visit Robben Island again?
P4: Yeah I probably would if I would be accompanying anyone who hasn’t been like friends, families or anyone younger to support them but I wouldn’t go again just by myself.
A: Would you recommend it to anyone else who visits South Africa?
P4: Yes definitely. I think it is crucial to know the human story about Robben Island.
A: Why do you think people should go visit Robben Island?

P4: Apart from the obvious facts about the history and the things I have said before I would also say that there is no other place like it. There is no second Robben Island in this world and no other place that is comparable. It really is a unique place, which brings you a unique experience.

A: Do you think the experience of visiting Robben Island is real and authentic?

P4: I think it as real as it can be at this point. It is one of the main tourist attractions here but I mean prison is the real prison where it happened. It is Robben Island and it is a real prison and not a built place. I still think it has quite some commercial attributes but overall I still think it is quite authentic.

A: How did you feel when you were there?

P4: I was very humbled, especially being a young who grew up in a free and democratic South Africa, I appreciated the sacrifices made by those who came before me. But it was very brutal what black and coloured South Africans went through.

A: Would you also say you it was some kind of paying your respects or would that not fit your emotions?

P4: No, definitely. I was just thinking about a way to express that. To pay my respects.

Interview 5 - female

A: Can you please state and your nationality? And the highest educational diploma you have gotten so far?

P5: I am 36 years old, German and I have a nursing degree.

A: Which apartheid memorial did you visit?

P5: District 6 Museum

A: Did you know about the museum before you came to the country?

P5: No, I only started to inform myself once I was there.

A: Did you do any research before you actually went?
P5: You probably couldn't call it research but once we had decided that we wanted to visit the museum I did look the most important information up. The museum called our attention because of a bus tour we took around Cape Town and then we saw the former district six area which caught our attention and we wanted to know more about it.

A: What would you say were the main reasons for you to visit the museum?

P5: Because I wanted to know more about the apartheid. And since I have not heard too many good things about Robben Island – in my head it seemed too commercialized and touristy – I thought the district six museums would be a good alternative. This was the main reason I went. Because I did want to see an apartheid memorial but didn’t like Robben Island. It was definitely also out of personal interest for the history of the country. Curiosity. I wanted to know more about the country I stayed in.

A: Would you have chosen the district 6 museum even if there would have been another very special museum you could have only visited that day?

P5: Yes I would. Because for me it was very important that I see something about the apartheid and learn more about what happened.

A: Why was that so important to you?

P5: Because when you are in Cape Town the after effects of the apartheid are still visible. People expect everyone to live happily ever after just because the apartheid was officially ended. There are still many issues and struggles going on so it only seems right to visit an apartheid memorial when wanting to get to know the country.

A: Could you have imagined leaving South Africa without visiting any memorials related to the apartheid?

P5: Definitely not. As I said earlier, I am very interested in the history of South Africa and it was very important for me to learn more at the scene and not just from books.

A: Would you say the location of the district six museum attracts more visitors?

P5: Definitely. Since it is located in the city center everybody visiting Cape Town can go see it. And it is not very big. So you can spent a couple of hours inside and still use the rest of the day for other activities.

A: Would you recommend it to family and friends?
P5: Definitely. It is rather small as a museum, which is another reason why I think everyone should go see it. You don’t spend a full day in it so even if people would only be passing through it should be on their list.
A: Would you visit the museum again if you travelled to the country again?
P5: Yes I think so. It was very small so there is not that much to see but I would still go back since there was a lot of reading material, which one did not end up reading all. There are a lot of stories displayed and I know I didn't look at every single one... Yes, I think I would go back again.
A: How was the experience for you? How did feel being inside the museum? Was it different than visiting a normal art museum or would you say it did trigger some unique emotions?
P5: The atmosphere was definitely different. It was very quite and serious inside, which almost gave you a sense of depression. It wasn’t like you couldn’t have laughed inside but the ambiance was definitely silent and serious. There weren’t a lot of people, which made it even quieter. It is not comparable with a normal art museum since the atmosphere is very different.
A: Did you feel like the museum was authentic? And what was displayed seemed real?
P5: Yes definitely. The stories that were told made one realize how present and real this was for so many people while it was still rather far away for us. There was a little room displayed showing what it looked like before, all standardized. It felt really authentic to me.

Interview 6 - female

A: Can you please tell me how old you are, what nationality you are and what your highest reached diploma is?
P6: I am 23, Italian and I am currently doing an apprenticeship. So my highest diploma is from high school.
A: Which apartheid memorial did you visit?
P6: The apartheid museum in Johannesburg.
A: Did you know about the museum before you went to South Africa?
P6: No. Not at all. I was still in school then and I have heard about the term ‘apartheid’ but I did not know a lot about it. I never occupied myself with it.
A: So it was a rather spontaneous visitation?
P6: Exactly.
A: How come you visited the museum?
P6: I met two South African girls in Johannesburg and they wanted to show me around. We were actually on the way to see a township but since we passed the museum on our way we decided to go in first to get more information before going to the township.
A: Does that mean you went to get information on the story of the apartheid?
P6: Yes definitely. Since I really did not know a lot about it before I finally had the chance to learn more about it and actually understand what happened in this country.
A: Could you have imagined leaving South Africa without visiting any memorials related to the apartheid?
P6: I am not sure. Since I really didn’t know that much about the apartheid before I went to South Africa I didn’t realize how important and still ongoing its history was. But I would have definitely regretted once being back home it if I didn’t have visited the museum.
A: Would you recommend the museum to friends and family?
P6: Definitely. If you visit a country one should definitely want to know more about the history and the apartheid is a big topic, even to this day. So I would tell anybody to go visit it.
A: Would you visit the museum again?
P6: I would want to visit it again for sure. We did not spend too much time inside so I would definitely want to go again.
A: How would you describe the experience? How did it make you feel being inside? Was it just a normal museum visitation or was anything different?
P6: I have to say, for me it was almost like a normal museum. Of course there is a lot of shocking pictures, short films and stories you see and read but I still felt like it was very far away from me personally so I was not affected too much. For me it was difficult to actually imagining myself in that situation. Of course empathy came up
and I felt sad for what had happened to so many people but I still felt personally far away from all of it.

Interview 7 - female

A: Can you please state you age, nationality and highest educational diploma?
P7: I am 57 years old, Italian and I am a doctor.
A: Which apartheid memorial did you visit?
P7: I visited the district six museums in Cape Town.
A: Did you know about the museum before you arrived to South Africa?
P7: Yes. Since I always do some research, at least little bit, before I visit a new country I did know about it.
A: Did you plan your visit ahead? Did you know you were going to visit district six?
P7: Yes I did. I didn’t plan the exact date and time but it was rather clear to me that I would go visit it.
A: What were the main reasons you chose to visit district six?
P7: Information about the city and the apartheid. To get a sense of the situation and try to understand it somewhat further. We have heard so much about the apartheid but now I was actually in the country were the apartheid prevailed for so long. I think the reasons why I went were first of all to get more information, real information from a place where the apartheid actually exists. Also understanding – trying to understand a little bit. Nobody nowadays can sympathize with the leaders of apartheid.
A: If you think about it a little more... What could have influenced your choice?
P7: Another motive for me to go was probably curiosity. We have heard so much about it. I was of the same age as many of the people fighting these battles. Living in peaceful Europe. It was always so unimaginable what it must have been like. And even visiting the country where all of this happened doesn’t make it easier to understand. So many people have suffered. One feels sorry. And somehow almost guilty for being white and enjoying all the possible privileges.
A: Would you visit the museum again?
P7: I think I would visit it again since nobody should forget what happened in this country and which is also why it is very important that these places exist and stay there.
A: Could you have imagined leaving South Africa without visiting any memorials related to the apartheid?
P7: No.
A: Would you recommend the site to friends and family?
P7: Definitely.
A: How was the experience for you? How did it make you feel?
P7: Upset, shocked, sad, uneasy, bewildered. Especially because this is not something that happened a hundred years ago but it is still very recent. Many of the people one could see on the pictures are still alive.

Interview 8 – male

A: Can you please state your age, nationality and highest achieved diploma?
P8: I am 51 years old; from France I obtained a degree in finance.
A: Which apartheid memorial did you visit?
P8: Robben Island.
A: Did you know about Robben Island before you went to South Africa?
P8: Yes.
A: Did you plan on visiting it before you arrived to South Africa?
P8: Yes it was my intention to go.
A: Did you do any research before you went?
P8: I just went once I was there. I prefer not to read about new places I visit. I never do that since it is very important to me to get my own opinion about a place and not be influenced by things I read or hear before.
A: What were the main reasons for you to go there?
P8: I wanted to go there to see how Mandela lived all these years in prison. I think it is important to know what this country went through and I think Robben Island is a very good place to commemorate what had happened and keep the memory alive. I also think it is a must to see the place with your own eyes if you visit the Cape Town
area and try to understand a tiny, tiny bit what Mandela went through and how he lived. The cells were really small and one now cannot imagine anything like that at all.

A: Would you call that curiosity?
P8: Yes, absolutely. I guess some part of me was just plainly curious to see what it must have been like to live in those cells and still have the strength to keep on fighting for your believes for so many years.

A: Would you visit Robben Island again?
P8: Yes I think I would visit it again. Especially with younger ones since I think it is very important also for future generation to keep in mind and don’t forget what this country went through.

A: Would you also recommend it to anyone who visits South Africa?
P8: Yeah definitely. Actually I already recommended it to a friend who is now in South Africa.

A: Could you have imagined leaving South Africa without visiting any memorials related to the apartheid?
P8: No, definitely not.

A: How would you describe to experience of visiting it? How did it make you feel?
P8: It did affect me in some way, definitely. Because the guides who do the tours are former prisoners, which is a fact that makes the experience very real. Also there are letters on the wall one can read, which were written my incarcerated people and never sent to their families. These things were very hard to read and see and since the cells are so small you feel like one must go crazy in there.

A: Do you think it was very authentic or rather commercialized as a tourist attraction?
P8: Of course they make money with it but in my opinion it was still a very real place and I think everyone who has the chance should go see it.

Interview 9 – female

A: Can you please state your age, nationality and highest achieved education diploma?
P9: I am 25 years old, I have a postgraduate diploma in health and skincare therapy. And I am South African but currently live in Dubai.

A: Which apartheid memorial did you visit?


A: What would you say were the main reasons for you to visit these sites?

P9: My family moved to South Africa many generations ago. So for us the apartheid was very real. Obviously not so much for me as for my parents and grandparents but I always got told a lot of stories from the times. My grandparents would also tell me what district 6 was like before the apartheid and how lively the place was. The main reason for me to visit the district six museum is probably because my grandfather used to play rugby back in the day and his picture is displayed at the museum.

As for Robben Island... I went on a high school history trip to the island the first time I visited it. It must have be one of the most nostalgic places I have ever visited in my city.

A: For the district six museum you had very personal reasons and the Robben Island visit was education related, correct?

P9: Yes. But both of them have an educational background, which in my opinion is also very important. As I was born and raised in this country, this is my history too. The history of my people. I think the least we, the young generation, can do is go see the places and somehow pay our respect or thank them for how far they have come. And giving us the opportunity to grow up in a free South Africa. The places show how far we have come as a country but I think it also makes us realize that we still have a long way ahead of us.

A: When you say ‘paying your respects and thanking them’, would you connect those emotions to empathy?

P9: Yes of course. As I said before: this is my history.. these were my people.

A: Would you recommend the sites to others?

P9: Absolutely. I would tell anyone who came to Cape Town that it is a must to visit apartheid reminders. I mean we do live in a free country now but I think it is so very important to keep the history alive and not forget what we have been through.

A: Do you perceive the attractions as authentic? Would you say they still very are real?
P9: Yes. Of course Robben Island is an income for the city but that seems kind of obvious. Mandela’s cell is still the same and one can actually see and try to imagine what it must have been like.

A: How did the visitations make you feel?

P9: I don’t remember exactly but I do recall that visiting Robben Island was one of the most emotional experiences I have had. I think that is true for every South African person. It was very overwhelming.

Interview 10 - female

A: How old are you and where are you from?

P10: I am 30 years old and I am American.

A: What is the highest diploma you have gotten so far?

P10: I have a BBA diploma.

A: Which apartheid memorial did you visit?

P10: I visited Robben Island.

A: Did you know about the memorial before you went to SA?

P10: I briefly knew about it before I got there but probably from some tourism books, more so when I got to the country.

A: Once you decided that you wanted to visit the memorial did you do any research?

P10: I did a little bit of research. I have Nelson Mandela’s book but just skimmed through it.

A: Did you plan to visit the memorial at the beginning or was it a spontaneous visit?

P10: It was planned that I would visit but the actual day was not set from the beginning.

A: What would you say were the main reasons for you to visit it? Why did you go?

P10: I am incredibly interested in Nelson Mandela and the history of apartheid. That really interested me and brought me to travel to SA specifically. The pain and the oppression of people is something that I am interested in studying and working and also helping marginalized communities so knowing more about the history which is also quiet recent is very interested and important to me. I think I am generally interested in these dark places, like you called them earlier, in a way of the
holycaust, 9/11 etc. I find the system of the apartheid interesting, to see how people build a society around oppressing people and hate in general.
A: Would you call your interest fascination?
P10: Fascination seems to be a strong word but yeah I guess you could call it that.
A: Could you imagine visiting South Africa and not visiting any apartheid related memorial?
P10: Definitely not. Impossible.
A: If you would travel to SA again would you go visit Robben Island again?
P10: Yes, definitely.
A: Would you also recommend it to friends and family?
P10: Yes.
A: Did you feel like the place was authentic and real or did you have the impression it was rather touristic and commercialized?
P10: I felt like it was real. It is obviously a touristic place but the island itself hasn’t turned into anything other than it is and it wasn’t commercialized. Which is something I really appreciated.
A: How did it make you feel? How was the experience of visiting Robben Island?
P10: It was really sobering experience just to understand that Nelson Mandela, a man with abilities and desires and ideas, was kept their for so many years and was able to create huge political changes by his institutionalization there. I found it very fascinating and empowering in an incredible way, which you don’t get from reading books and such. And of course sad and sobering.