



DARK TOURISM AS ACCESSIBLE NATURE TOURISM FOR EVERYONE

Assoc. prof. dr. REGINA NAVICKIENĖ
Assoc. prof. dr. RŪTA MEIŠTĖ
Kolping University of Applied Sciences, Lithuania

CONCEPT OF DARK TOURISM

- **Tourism** is probably the most versatile activity that promotes communication, deepens knowledge, provides recreation, familiarizes, and develops empathy, and more.
- By meeting the different **needs of tourists**, researchers and practitioners analyse the situation in the tourism market, create new types of niche tourism that can be accessible to everyone.
- **Dark tourism** - in terms of content, is a universal tourism that encourages to participate, because it raises interest in the past, history and most importantly lets gain new experiences.



CONCEPT OF DARK TOURISM

- New senses allow us differently understand the world around us.
- **Dark tourism** is still on its way to the heart of the science and tourists as its phenomenon only began at the end of XX century, but already joins everyone.
- The term **Dark Tourism** appeared in academic literature in 1996. It is used to describe trips, which are related to death, terrible accidents, sadness and pain (Lennon and Foley, 1996).



DEFINITION OF DARK TOURISM

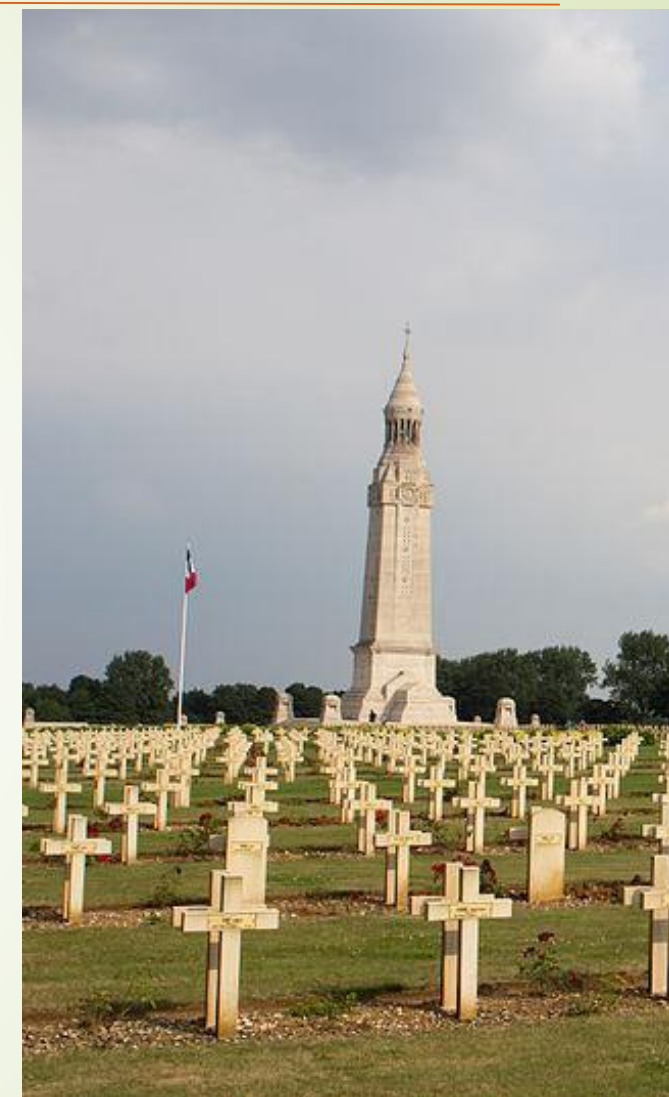
- It is **places associated with death and pain**. Tourists want to know about the pain of the past and then forget it (Silverman and Fairchild, 2007).
- It is **travels**, which are dedicated to visit places which are **historically associated with death** (Lennon and Foley, 1996).
- It is **dark history** (Wigth and Lennon, 2007).
- In academic literature **dark tourism** is also called '**Black Tourism**' or '**Dark Pots**'.



PLACES OF DARK TOURISM

Places of dark tourism are divided into primary and secondary (Smith, 1998; Foley and Lennon, 2000):

- **Primary places:** holocaust and death places of famous people;
- **Secondary places:** commemoration places.



6

SUBCATEGORIES OF DARK TOURISM



7

STONE'S RAINBOW OF DARK TOURISM

- **Rainbow** is not a real existing object in the sky, but the optical phenomenon, and its vision depends on the position of the observer and the Sun.
- Dark tourism has many shades: from the darkest to the lightest.

Darkest

Darker

Dark

Light

Lighter

Lightest

HOLOCAUST TOURISM

- Concentration camps.



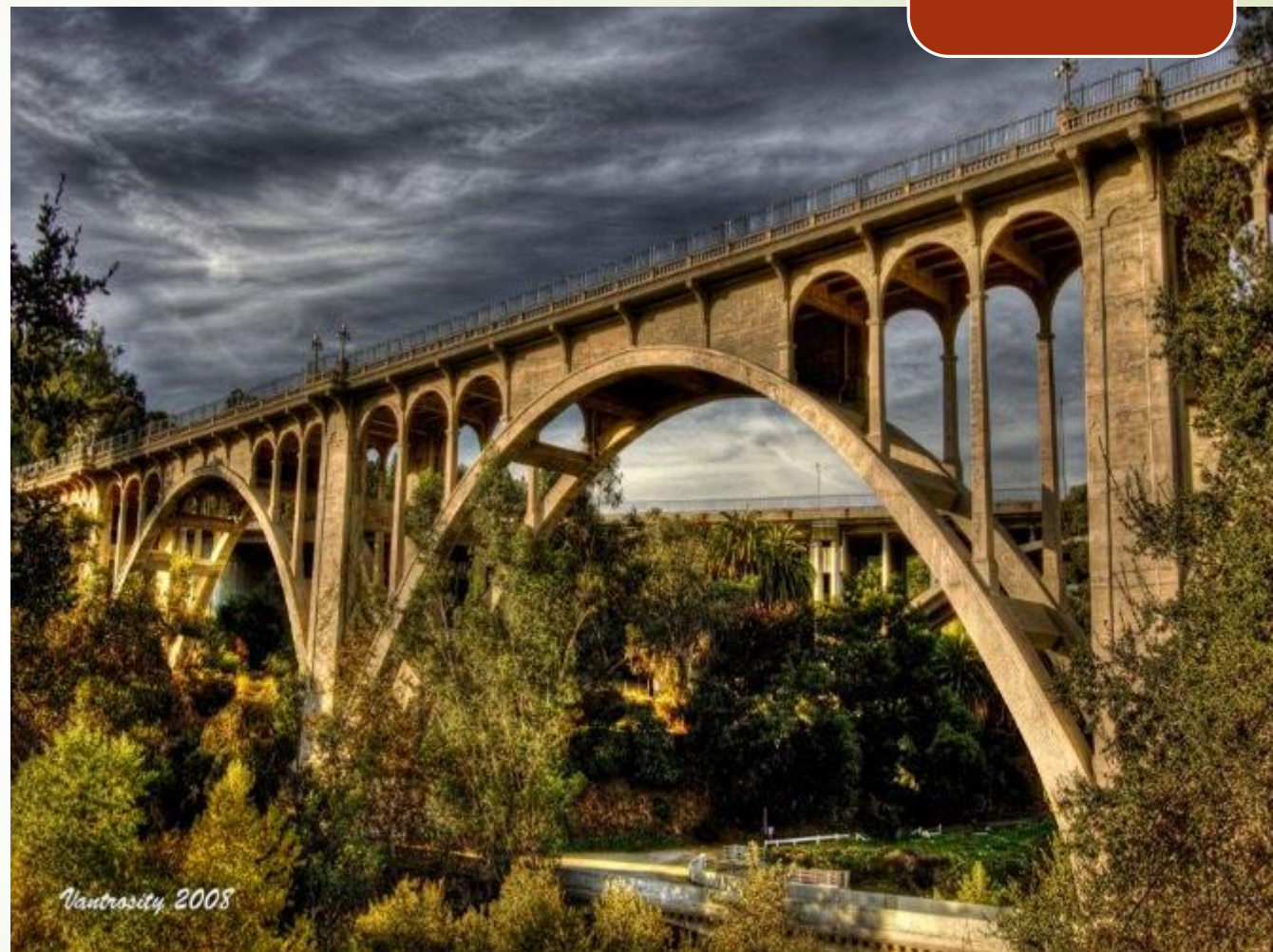
WAR PLACES

- The tragic events in the areas of war.
- Tourists flock to visit concentration camps, famous battle sites, cemeteries.



SUICIDE PLACES

- Tours to the places where people commit suicide (tall buildings, gorges, and the countries where euthanasia is legal).



Darker
shade

11

POVERTY AREAS: SLUMS (IN BRASIL, IN INDIA)



Dark
shade



POST DISASTER AREAS

- Earthquakes, tsunamis, fires, volcanic eruptions, floods, atomic bomb explosions (Hiroshima, Nagasaki).



13

BLACK POLITICS

- Places where human has no rights (North Korea, Maydan Ukraine)



ENDANGERED PLACES

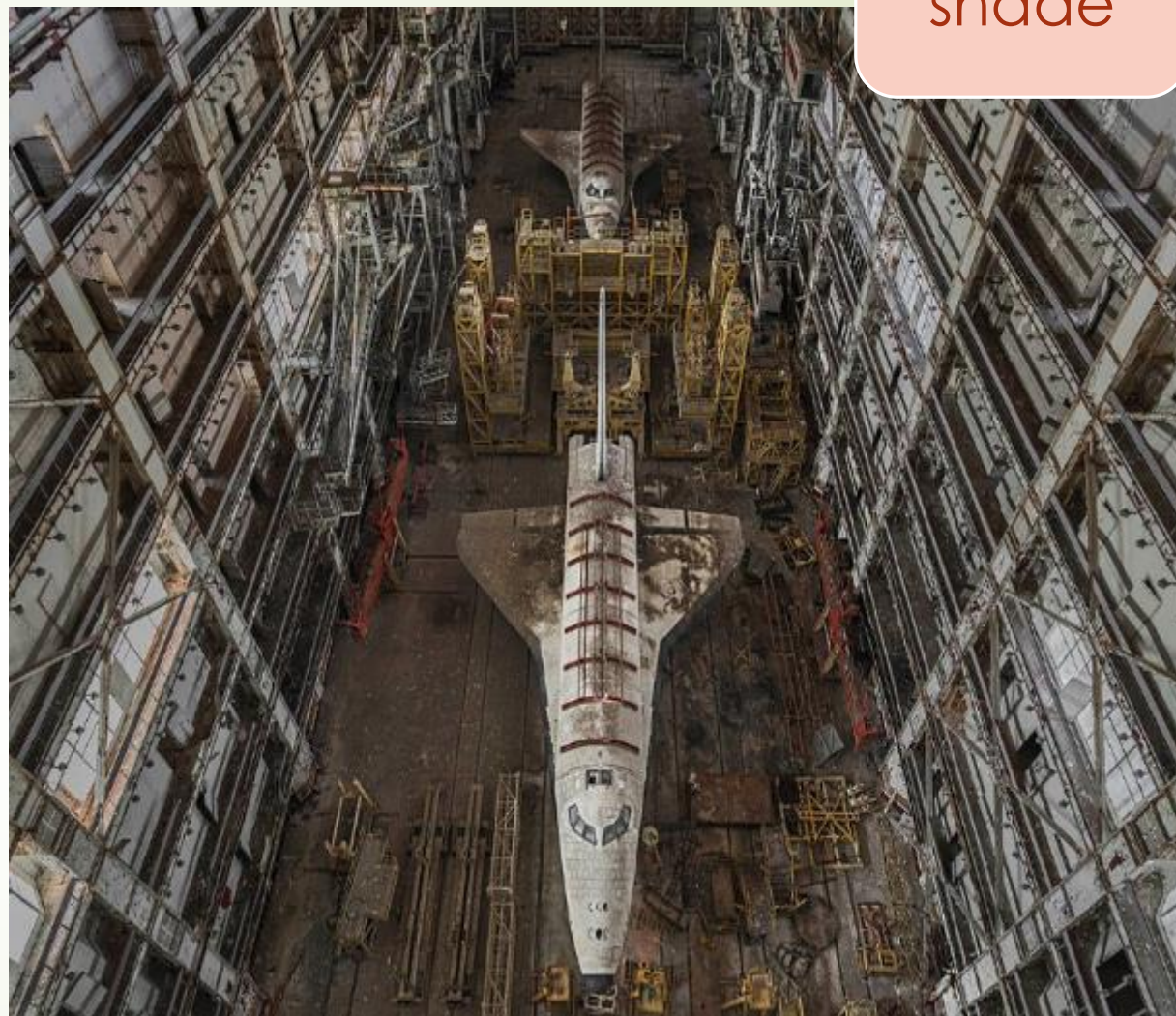
- Places on the edge of the extinction:
Antarctica glaciers, the Jordan River (water level is dropping), Venice (water level is dropping a few millimeters every year).



15

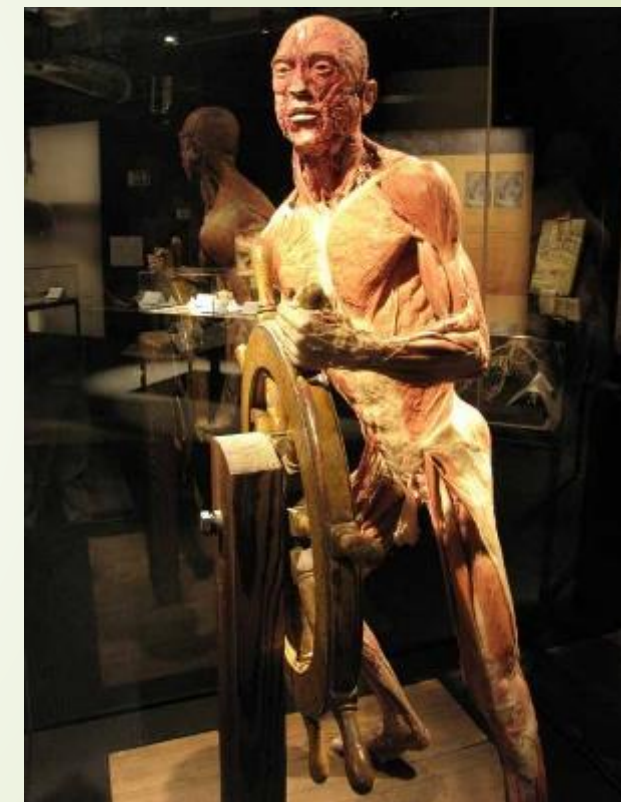
ILLEGAL TOURISM

- Visiting forbidden places, searching for the treasure, smuggling exotic animals.



BLACK ART

- Exhibitions, concerts which are related with killings, disasters, pain, sadness. This subcategory of dark tourism has a strong educational value: there is one exhibition of human body, where tourists are shown dead people in order to understand the anatomy of the body.



CEMETERY TOURISM

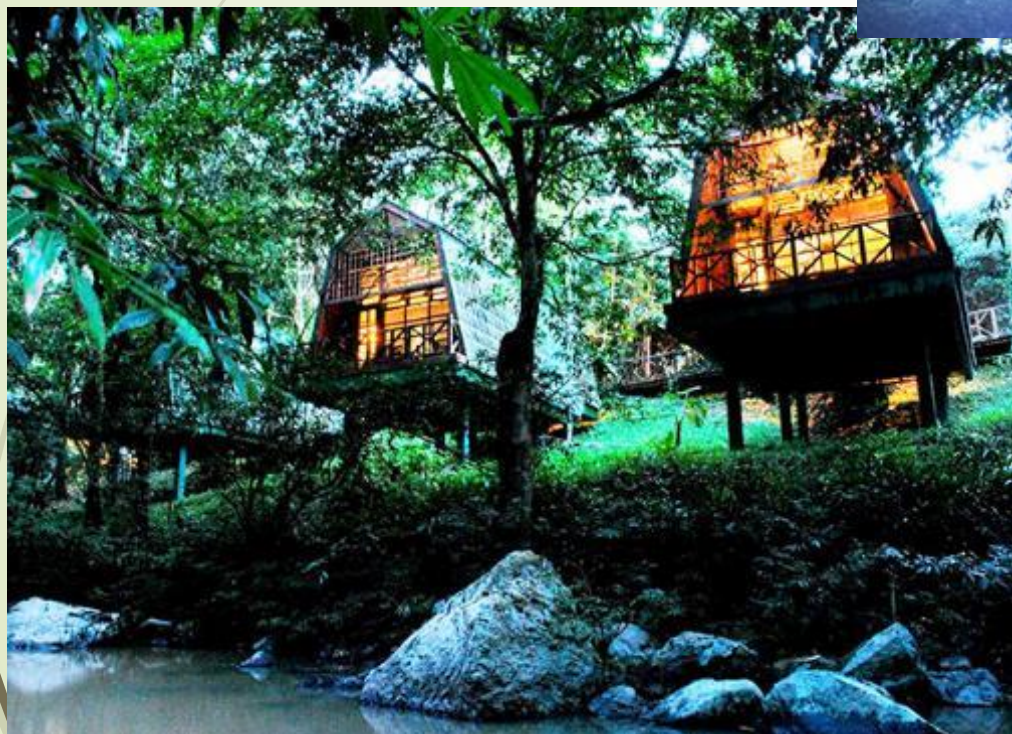
The type of tourism when tourists visit cemeteries, where famous people are buried. At the top of Novodevichi cemetery in Moscow is the monument to actor Nikulin, and a monument to the first monkey astronaut in the United States and so on.



18

NIGHT TOURS

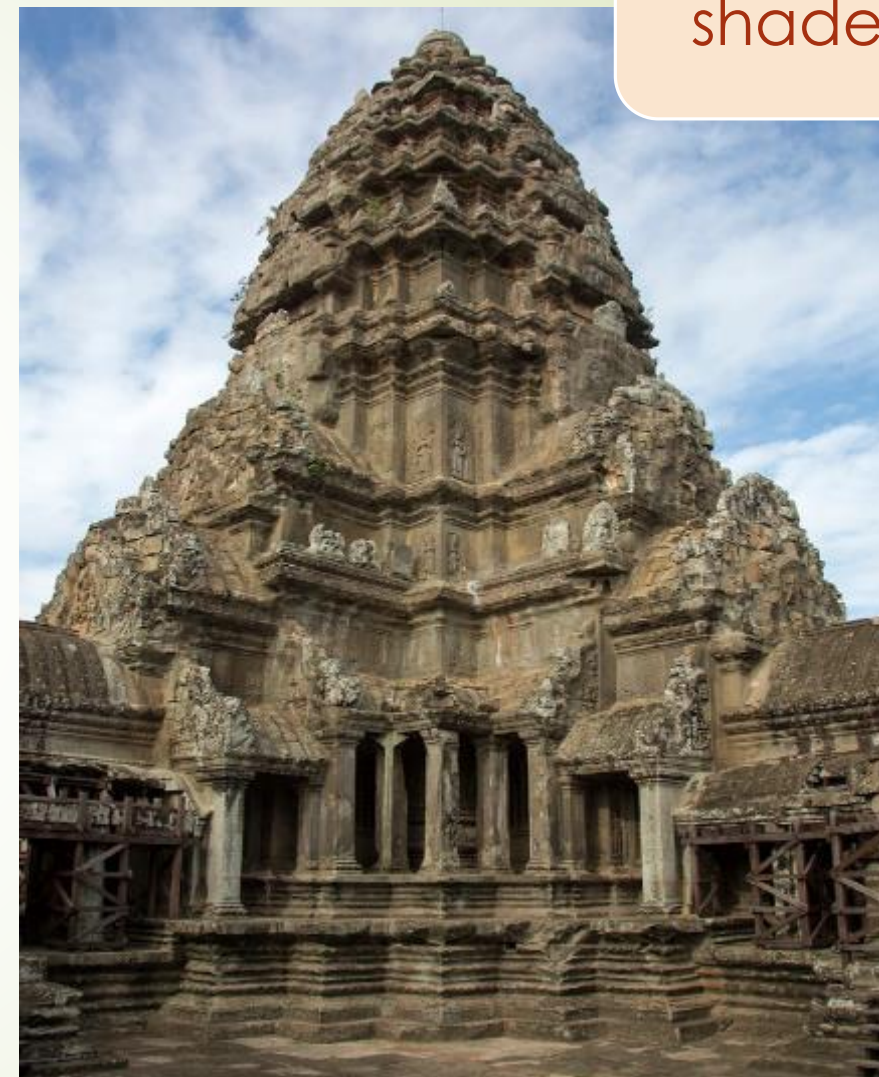
- Stargazing, jungle trips, night safari.



19

MYSTICAL PLACES

- Tours to haunted places, to sorcerers and shamans spots and hideouts.



DARK TOURISM OBJECTS IN LITHUANIA



21

MUSEUM OF OCCUPATIONS AND FREEDOM FIGHTS (KGB MUSEUM IN VILNIUS)

- There is an isolator in which people, who did not fit to be as proper soviets, were imprisoned from autumn of 1940 till 1987. An exposition takes place in the room of death sentences where all notes of imprisoned people remain.



HIKING THROUGH SWAMPS

These are the secret roads through the swamps that were built in the 13-15 centuries to escape the enemy. Today it is a popular tourist attraction - an activity where you can learn a lot about nature and experience indelible emotions.



THE NINTH FORT OF KAUNAS FORTRESS. THE PLACE OF MASS MURDER

- The primary purpose of Ninth Fort was the fortress of Kaunas, but during the war this fortress was transformed into the concentration camp. Gestapo shot 10 thousand of Jews, threw them to the ditches nearby forts or burned them on the fire where more than 500 bodies were put.



ETERNAL FLAME (KAUNAS)

- In 1934, here is equipped stone altar of the Eternal Flame, altar which consists of stones from all the regions and counties of Lithuania.
- The altar was decorated with Latin saying "quod Redde debes" (Give you need to give).



ACID FOREST IN NIDA: human-bird-tree

In the most beautiful corner of Lithuania, Nida settled birds cormorants, whose stools burn the trees with acid and they die.



ACID FOREST IN NIDA: human–bird–tree

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=izQO5AsL8HE>

Here is a short video, how it looks like in reality. In 2019, a film was created that received prestigious awards at film festivals and explores the HUMAN - BIRD - TREE triangle with the idea that everyone has the right to live.



LITHUANIAN ALPS - GYPSUM MOUNTAINS IN KĖDAINIAI

White phosphogypsum mountains - a unique phenomenon not only in Lithuania, but also in the Baltic States. Mountains began to pour in the fertilizer factory since 1968. Currently, phosphogypsum is accumulated in over 21 million tons.



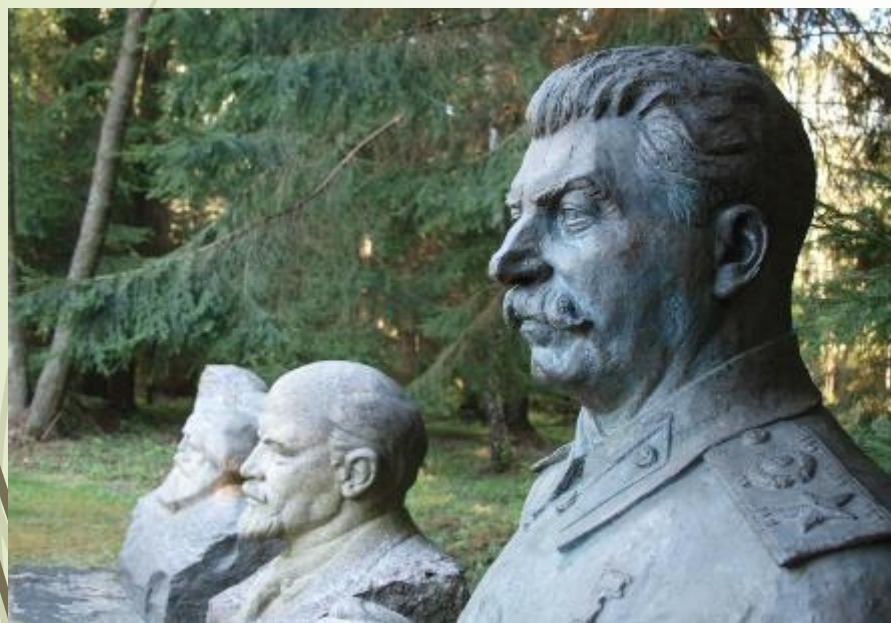
LITHUANIAN ALPS - PHOSPHOGYPSUM MOUNTAINS IN KĖDAINIAI

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Op9K3Mx0U-4>
- Here is a short video about gypsum mountains.



GRŪTAS PARK (DRUSKININKAI)

- Lithuania is a well-known place, and more widely known as 'Stalin's World' in the world. The park is full of Soviet sculptures and breathtaking details that remind of a cruel life in the gulag. The entire park occupies about 20 hectares.



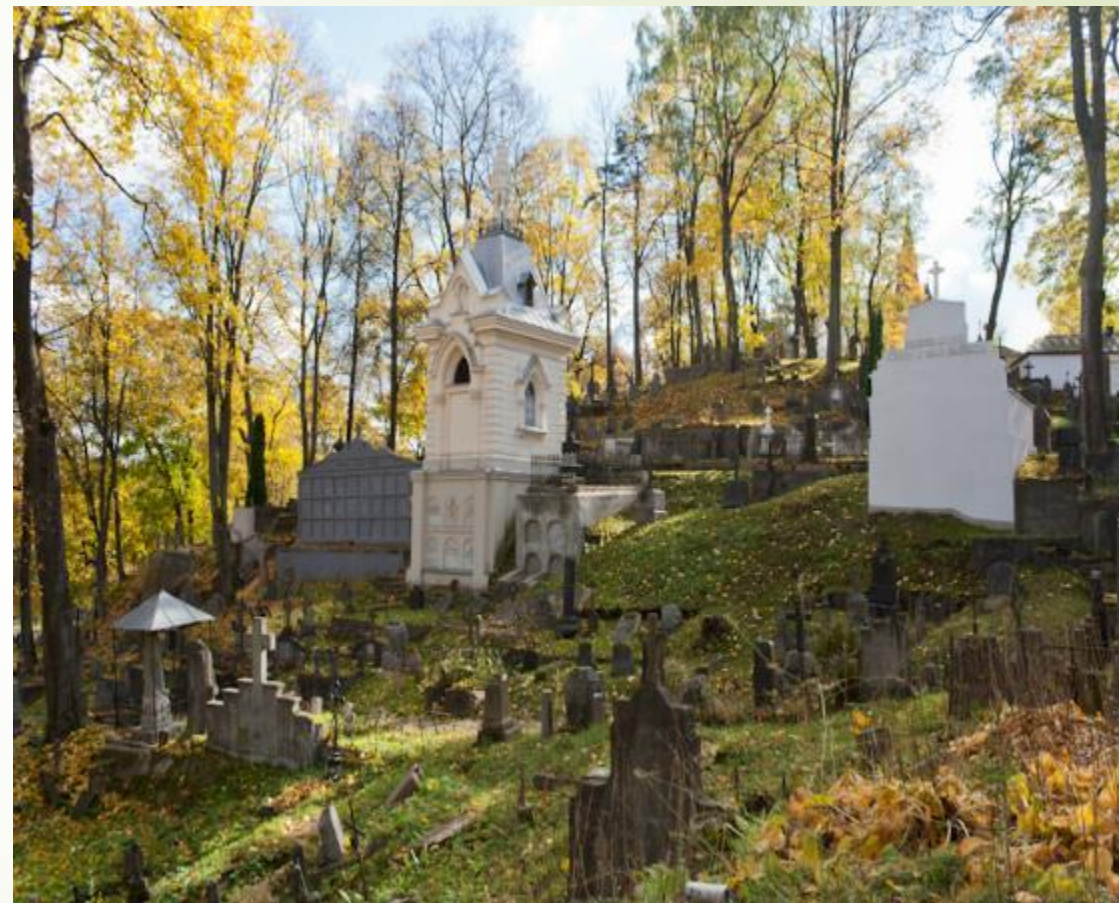
UNDERGROUND OF VILNIUS CATHEDRAL

- There are 27 crypts of various depths and sizes, and 20 famous people who are buried in 20 crypts below the cathedral.



RASA CEMETERY (VILNIUS)

- Rasa is the oldest cemetery in Vilnius, founded in 1801. Firstly the columbarium was built in the cemetery, then the neo-Gothic cemetery chapel. The rebel streets divide the cemetery into two parts: the Old and New Death.



PLOT UNDERGROUND MISSILE BASE (PLUNGĖ REGION)

- USSR Armed Forces Rocket Base (1960-63). The nuclear weapons: ballistic missile R-12U with 2 megaton thermonuclear charge was stored in the mine.
- In summer 1978, the US intelligence services became aware of the location of the base, armored vehicles were removed from the base and USSR soldiers left. Now the Cold War Museum is located in that base.



33

THEATRICAL EXCURSION 'SURVIVAL IN THE SOVIET UNION'

For almost 13 years, tourists are dark entertainers who can actually feel humiliation, lack of opinion, full obedience to government decisions.



VISITING DUMPS

A tour of the abandoned barracks in Šančiai, Kaunas. The initiators of the rubbish companies want to show excess consumption, turning into garbage hills and polluting the whole planet.



NIGHT STAR OBSERVATION IN MOLÉTAI

A unique museum that can be visited throughout the day and the museum staff is not surprised by the request to show the stars on the day, because this is a possibility in the cinema hall - dark tourism literally.



36

NIGHT DIVING

Polar settlement underwater in Moletai, Luokesa lake. You can also dive at Klaipeda, where you can find sunken ships during World War II. Diving is dark tourism because underwater is almost always used by spotlights, the water hides its beauty.



KAUNAS MUSEUM OF THE BLIND

- The Kaunas Museum for the Blind was opened in 2005. It was the first museum for the blind in the Baltic States and one of the first in Eastern Europe.
- The museum is located in the catacombs underneath St. Michael the Archangel Church. The exhibits can be perceived through sound, smells, and touch.



GENERALISATION

- Interest in dark tourism is fast growing niche tourism nowadays. People are interested not only in the history, night tours, but also in endangered nature. Visiting these places they think, how to stop it and save the nature. Many tourists often come to the objects of dark tourism to put their life in perspective.





Thank you for your attention!

14. Penkios šturpiausios pasaulio vietos. Informacinis portalas Delfi. Žiūrėta 2013, spalio 12, adresu: <http://www.delfi.lt/gyvenimas/laisvalaikis/penkios-siurpiausios-pasaulio-vietos.d?id=24055536>
15. Pickard P. (2012). Dark tourism. Lonely Planet. Žiūrėta, 2013, spalio 9 d., adresu: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/france/paris/travel-tips-and-articles/76150>
16. Požemiai. Vilniaus arkikatedra. Žiūrėta 2013, spalio 12, adresu: <http://www.katedra.lt/pozemiai/>
17. Rasų kapinės. Vilniaus TIC. Žiūrėta 2013, spalio 13, adresu: <http://www.vilnius-tourism.lt/turizmas/lankytinos-vietos/idiomos-vietos/rasu-kapines/>
18. Rojek C. (1993). *Ways of Seeing-Modern Transformations in Leisure and Travel*. London: Macmillan.
19. Rugsėjo 11-oji – Žymė. 15min.lt internetinė svetainė. Žiūrėta 2013, spalio 13, adresu: <http://www.15min.lt/zyme/rugsejo-11-oji>
20. Sharpley R., Stone P. (2009). *The Darker Side of Travel: The Theory and Practise of Dark Tourism*. Salisbury: Short Run Press Ltd.
21. Silverman H., Fairchild D. (2007). *Cultural Heritage and Human Rights*. New York: Springer Science + Business Media, Inc.
22. Smith V. L. (1998). War and thanatourism: An American ethnography. *Annals of Tourism Research*. No. 1 (25), p. 202-227.
23. Stone P. (2006). A Dark Tourism Spectrum: towards a typology of death and macabre related tourist sites, attractions and exhibitions. *Tourism: An Interdisciplinary International Journal* No. (2) 54, p.145-160.
24. Top 10 Dar Tourism Destinations. Vacation Ideas. Žiūrėta 2013, spalio 9, adresu: <http://www.vacationideas.me/travel-tips/top-10-dark-tourism-destinations/>
25. Valstybinis turizmo departamentas. (2011). Lietuva. Išsaugotos tradicijos. Kelionės po kultūros objektus. Leidinys.
26. Wight C., Lennon J. (2007). Selective Interpretation and Eclectic Human Heritage in Lithuania. *Tourism Management*. No. 2(28) p. 519-529.