

EMOTIONAL LANGUAGE FOR IMAGE FORMATION AND MARKET SEGMENTATION IN DARK TOURISM DESTINATIONS: FINDINGS FROM TOUR OPERATORS' WEBSITES PROMOTING GALLIPOLI

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This study aims to understand the language patterns that are used on websites for influencing travelers to visit Gallipoli by analysing emotive language and categorising it according to different segmentations of Gallipoli visitors. Websites promoting Gallipoli were identified through Google. Wordle software was used for conducting a website content analysis. The results show that the language used in websites represents a commemorative experience. The findings suggest a good fit between the descriptive language used to represent the dark tourism destination attributes of Gallipoli and the emotive language used to motivate visitors to the site. Moreover, the imagery of thanatourism marketed online was categorised by emotive language to identify discreet market segments. However, as the emotive language used online can influence the visitors' expectations, it is suggested that the former may result in visitor dissatisfaction.

Keywords: *Gallipoli, websites, emotive language, visitor motivation*

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INTRODUCTION

Language, along with images, contributes significantly to the formation of the destination image, which in turn significantly support and influence the pre-trip decision making process of visitors. Both

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relations have been researched over considerable time. For example, Gunn (1988) suggested that destination image formation can be organic (internal) or induced (external). Destination marketing organisations (DMOs) and tour operators are two of the external forces which provide these induced images in an attempt to influence the decision making process of travellers. From the internal perspective, destination image formation is generally accepted as having cognitive and affective aspects (Echtner and Ritchie 1991). The cognitive side involves applying intellectual function (reasoning, understanding and/or knowledge) to assess known facts or attributes. On the other hand, the affective images are developed through emotions, values and feelings, which are then linked to travel motivations (Baloglu and Brinberg 1997). These two sides of the destination image can impact consumer behaviour in a number of ways including intention to visit, preference, intention to revisit (Tasci and Gartner 2007).

Numerous studies have explored the use of images to elicit destination image formation including: television commercials (Pan 2009), photography (Morgan and Pritchard 1998), and motion pictures (Kim and Richardson 2003). However, few studies have investigated the role of emotive language in affective image formation and its subsequent implications for marketing. Choi, Lehto and Morrison (2007) highlight that image formation research is becoming more complex particularly with respect to the web presence from the supply side. In an on-line environment where the messages proffered by destination-based, commercial interests have less influence and sway than the growing consumer-generated content provided and shared online by travellers (Sigala, Christou and Gretzel 2012). Consequently, this raises the question on how destinations can induce a desired image and/or change and reposition their image if the one promoted by travellers is undesirable.

The emerging field of thanatourism is not an exception from these trends and challenges. Thanatourism is the spiritual journey of tourists who wish to gaze upon sites of real and recreated death (Ozer, Ersoy and Tuzunkan 2012) and it is also referred to as Dark Tourism (Stone 2006). Therefore, destinations at the heart of thanatourism activities illicit strong feelings (affective images) that may override the cognitive image formation of destination attributes and facts. Despite this, there are few studies investigating the following chain of effects, i.e. the way thanatourism destinations are presented on-line and the role of the language used to present a thanatourism destination online in order to elicit an affective destination image formation, afford the visitor

motivation to experience the place and assist in visitors' segmentation. To explore the latter, this study uses Gallipoli as its study context, as it represents known and highly visited dark tourism destination that is also widely promoted on the Internet. To that end, the paper first analyses the concept and purposes of thanatourism and it then investigates the related literature discussing the role of emotions in decision-making processes. Later, the literature on thanatourism is used for presenting and analysing the case of Gallipoli. Finally, the study collects and analyses content used by operators to promote Gallipoli online in order to explore the use of emotive language in eliciting visitors' motivation and show how the latter can be used as a means of segmenting the potential market of visitors to Gallipoli.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Thanatourism

Seaton (1996) described thanatourism within the historical context of thanatopsis and explored motives that provoke thoughts or reflections of contemplating death, going back to the Middle Ages. Traveling to sites where thanatopsis takes place is also considered dark tourism. Accordingly, thanatourism is a combination of thanatopsis and dark tourism (Seaton 1996). Thanatourism also embodies "pilgrimage tourism" and "battlefield tourism" (Foley and Lennon 1996, Seaton 1996, Slade 2003, Stone 2006, Best 2007, Hall, Basarin and Lockstone-Binney 2010, Hede and Hall 2012). Battlefield tourism involves observing places where battles took place (Hall, et al. 2010) with studies exploring WWI battlefields of France (Dunkley, Morgan and Westwood 2011) to more recent sites of conflict such as Vietnam (Henderson 2000). A personal commitment and intention is seen in thanatourists (Lennon and Foley 2000, Dunkley, et al. 2011), while visitors to battlefields aim to commemorate significant dates that are associated with major events (Hall, et al. 2010). Seaton (1996) claimed pilgrimage is the highest form of thanatopsis, since it involves physical presence at a setting where death has occurred. Lennon & Foley (2000) added a psychological dimension to pilgrimage tourism by specifying that pilgrimage is not limited to a physical journey of participants, since the journey also includes a spiritual and reflective element. Adding to the value of tourism psychology, Hede and Hall (2012) noted that pilgrimage tourism evokes emotions and the journey is as much part of the pilgrimage as it is a visit to the destination.

Visits to battlefields can also have an ideological significance, which provides a meaning to people who visit them (Foley and Lennon 1996, Hyde and Harman 2011).

The work of Slade (2003) established that thanatourism can be defined according to the motivation of the visit. Slade discussed the importance of surveying people to ascertain the motivation of the visit. However, he argued that each visit may have a different reasoning behind it, and so, people visiting battlefields should not automatically be viewed as thanatourists. Seaton's (1996) definition of thanatourism is also based on motivational factors. A tourist's motive could be: a fascination of death; a desire to witness public enactments of death; a desire to witness sites of mass or individual deaths after they have occurred; a desire to visit war memorials and graveyards of the dead; a desire to travel to view material evidence, or a desire to travel as a simulation of death. Dunkley et al. (2011) also found a variety of motivating factors in their qualitative study of the battlefields of France from the WWI. Slade (2003) argued however, that people visiting dark sites have a better understanding of who they are and that they are not thanatouristically motivated. Wight (2005) identified two types of thanatourists based on a different emotional scale. The first group are the 'survivors'; this group of people carry a simple emotion of a memory, which may naturally disappear over time. The second group represent the general 'leisure' tourists who visit the site because they respond to supplier's marketing efforts. French et al. (2000) defined 'leisure' as quality time away from committed work. Hence, overall, the literature presents the visitor motivation as a common theme in this emerging field of thanatourism.

Role of Emotions in Decision Making

A theme emerging from the literature is that it is the emotional return that a thanatourism site provides to the visitors rather than the attributes of the site itself that is the motivation behind thanatourism consumption. A lack of attention has been afforded to the role of emotion and the consumption of tourism experiences and dark tourism experiences in particular (Stone and Sharpley 2008, Basarin 2011).

Burns and Neisner (2006) noted that emotions impact on our beliefs and guide us on how to behave to the world around us. Emotions act as a source of information, which then leads to forming an attitude (Palmer 2010). Emotions are important to explore, as they play a central role in our lives and in decision-making. The emotion of nostalgia is common among visitors of a heritage destination and is one shared by all ages.

Goulding (1999) discussed nostalgia as being more prevalent in those visitors who can personally relate to the past, feel alienated in the present and who lack social networks. 'Knowledge nostalgia' is a significant element of the heritage tourism experience with imagination also playing a vital role (Goulding 2000). The visitor prefers to use imagination as a source of escape so the experience becomes authentic. The connection between thanatourist motivation and emotions has not been extensively explored in the literature, although Stone and Sharpley (2008) suggested that 'dark tourism can potentially transform the seemingly meaningless into the meaningful through the commodification, explanations and representations of darkness that have impacted upon the collective self'.

Gallipoli as a Thanatourism Destination

The Gallipoli National Park has particular historical and cultural significance, which draws attention by visitors especially on Anzac Day, 25th April. Its cultural significance lies in the fact that Anzac Day in Australia is devoted to being a "national holiday" (Hall, et al. 2010). For the Australians especially, Gallipoli was the pivotal experience in the establishment of national identity. About a decade ago Yurtseven & Donmez (2005) identified growth in interest in tourism to Gallipoli. Later, Dore (2006) added that visitors to Gallipoli have steadily increased especially among young people, while recently authors (Ozer, et al. 2012) have also attempted to forecast visitation by Australians.

The visit to Gallipoli Peninsula for Anzac Day has been described as civil pilgrimage (Hede and Hall 2012) or secular pilgrimage (Hyde and Harman 2011). Australians and New Zealanders visiting Gallipoli feel that it is the place where their nations began (Seaton 1996, Hall, et al. 2010), and connected with nationhood and explaining what it means to be an Australian (Slade 2003, Scates 2007, Hall, et al. 2010, Basarin 2011, Hyde and Harman 2011, Cheal and Griffin 2013), although its significance as a dark tourism site is recognised more broadly (Stone and Sharpley 2008).

Some of the characteristics of visitors to Gallipoli profile travelers as majority being first time travellers, also there are more organised group visitors than alone. Additionally, there are three times more Australians travelling to Gallipoli than New Zealanders (Yurtseven and Donmez 2005). The majority of the respondents stay in Turkey for two weeks, while spending two days only in Gallipoli. Identifying the motivational characteristics of the Anzac visitors is thus important in order to achieve effective management of the site and a better quality of service in

Gallipoli (Yurtseven and Donmez 2005, Dore 2006). Studies indicate that the primary motivation for people visiting Gallipoli is based on commemoration, which is linked to remembering those who have died servicing their country (Slade 2003, Dore 2006, Basarin 2011, Hyde and Harman 2011, Cheal and Griffin 2013) and which suggests visiting Gallipoli as a spiritual journey. According to McKenna & Ward (2007), for the Australian pilgrims the importance in visiting Gallipoli as a battlefield site lies in the realisation of the many young lives that lost in the 1st World War. Hede & Hall's (2012) exploration of emotions indicates the arise of both positive and negative emotions when visiting Gallipoli. Joy arises as the most common emotion, while sadness follows to a lesser extent and is reflected through sorrow and sympathy for the Australians that died in 1915.

METHODOLOGY

Research Aims

This study aims to understand the language patterns used on websites for influencing travelers to visit Gallipoli by analysing emotive language and categorising it according to different segmentations of Gallipoli visitors. This aim is important because although the concept of dark tourism has attracted growing academic and media interest, there are few studies examining the different tourist types and their motives for visitation (Catalca and Yurtseven 2003). Coupled with the dramatic increase in visitor numbers to Gallipoli over the recent years (Ozer, et al. 2012), the urgency of the research aim is established.

Research Method

The methodology adopted for this study is website content analysis. Content analysis is a technique whereby the researcher analyses published documents produced for other purposes (Weber 1990, Altinay and Paraskevas 2008). Analysing text includes not only printed material but also pictures and other digital forms used in the form of communication (Veal 2006). Trends and patterns are examined in documents, the relationships of words are analysed and inferences made (Stemler 2001, Veal 2006, Altinay and Paraskevas 2008). Additionally, content analysis may present what is there and what is not (Carney 1972). Content analysis has been widely used in leisure and tourism studies (Malloy and Fennell 1998, Wan 2002, Peel and Steen 2007, Law, Qi and Buhalis 2010, Hede

and Hall 2012). Content analysis involves counting the number of occurrences of certain phrases, which tends to quantitative (Veal 2006). However, Sarantakos (2005) suggests that content analysis can be either quantitative or qualitative depending on its application. This process, which involves identifying a concept and then examining its existence in a set of documents, is described by Altinay and Paraskevas (2008) as 'conceptual' content analysis. During this process the researcher needs to decide whether the concept will be counted once or each time it appears.

Bloor and Bloor (2007) discuss context being an important part in the construction of meaning. Language and context are interrelated and together contribute to meaning. Moreover, it is advocated that it is important to understand the influences on the creation of meaning, whereby meaning making is based on the mind of the language users (Van Dijk 1997). Thus, studying the language patterns used in discourses can identify the intentions of the communicators and may reveal the cultural pattern of the independent visitor type (Weber 1990, Sarantakos 2005). When people engage in language they can be members of social categories, communities or cultures (Van Dijk 1997) and the interaction between language users reveals the roles each party plays. Usunier and Rouline (2010) also discussed the importance of a website communication style showing that different cultures have different understanding of the content. This suggests that the website content may influence consumer behaviour. Additional research in online marketing shows the role of images in providing websites particular attributes, and so, this research stream provides evidence of the need to use images for achieving differentiation (Phelan, Mills, Douglas and Aday 2013). Within the context of dark tourism and Gallipoli, discourse can also influence perceptions of dark sites (Wight 2005) and different contexts can evoke different emotions (Page and Mapstone 2010). Therefore text analysis with consideration to the roles of stakeholders within the tourism context was considered appropriate for this study. In this vein, this study utilises conceptual content analysis by categorising the frequency of the data (Stemler 2001). Words of potential interest are identified and then grouped according to their meaning (Weber 1990). Hede and Hall (2012) applied content analysis on 17 dairies that were obtained from the National Museum of Australia website, 'Anzac Pilgrims; Recent experiences at Gallipoli'.

The criteria that were used were based on travelers' emotions. The set categories included two dimensions of emotions; positive and negative. In each of these dimensions, three clusters were formed based on their association with the analysed text. For the positive dimension, the

emotional clusters were *Love, Joy* and *Surprise* and for the negative dimension, the emotional clusters were *Anger, Sadness* and *Fear*. A similar approach was adopted by Baloglu & Brinberg (1997) who evaluated 11 Mediterranean countries (including Turkey) as tourism destinations, by using 4 affective dimensions (pleasant: unpleasant, relaxing: distressing, arousing: sleepy, exciting: gloomy), which in turn categorised Turkey as ‘unpleasant’ and ‘distressing’ but acknowledged that potential visitors may still be aroused to visit.

Research Sample and Design

This study used information about Gallipoli that was published in tour operators' websites. Appropriate websites were identified by entering the following keywords or phrases into Google: ‘Gallipoli’, ‘Gallipoli tours’ & ‘Anzac Day tours’. Similar studies utilising this approach include: Choi et al (2007) content analysis of language and image presented on Macau websites; and Pan & Li (2011) who used Google Adwords for their study into ‘stereotypical’, ‘affective’ and ‘uniqueness’ image phrases of China.

The results were filtered using the following criteria: websites had to appear on the first page of the Google results, websites had to be Australian, New Zealand or Turkish based operators and websites had to include tours to Gallipoli any time of the year (not only to commemorate Anzac Day). The website retrieval was conducted in April 2010 and 21 websites were selected for the analysis. In November 2013, the same websites were used for collecting data and conducting a similar content analysis. Data collected in 2013 were compared to those collected in 2010 in order to monitor and measure any changes about the evolution of brand formation and visitors’ motivation in Gallipoli.

Applying Weber’s (1990) framework, words were then grouped according to their meaning within the specific situation (Gee 1999). This qualitative approach of text mining and applying expert judgement was also used in Choi et al’s (2007) study. In this study, Wordle is used to count the frequency of words appearing in one tour description for each of the 21 websites. Wordle is a software program, which counts the frequency of words that appear in a piece of text (McNaught and Lam 2010) and has already been applied in studies of content analysis, for example Nickerson (2010). Studies have already used Wordle as a research tool since its release (Lester and Robinson 2009, Meyer and Schroeder 2009).

One important limitation when applying content analysis is the lack of consistency during coding, which can lead to unreliability (Weber 1990, Sarantakos 2005). Another limitation noted by Altinay & Paraskevas (2008) is that only a limited amount of documents may be available. Additionally, large portions of text may be more difficult to code than words or smaller phrases, (Weber 1990, Malloy and Fennell 1998). During content analysis, researchers need to be on the Internet at approximately the same time to avoid widely different results (Wan 2002). Law et al (2010) identified that there has been limited research into tourism website evaluation and there are no current agreed upon standards, this presents a limitation in this research.

Findings

Given that the term ‘Anzac’ was used as a search criterion for websites it is not surprisingly that the word ‘Anzac’ yielded the most responses. While in 2011 Anzac was the top word used in websites, this word is still prominent in websites examined in 2013. The next most frequently used words found in websites’ content examined in 2011 were ‘service’, ‘battle’ or ‘battlefields’, ‘dawn’, ‘memorial’ (see Table 1). These are descriptive terms, which communicate destination attributes about Gallipoli as a destination. In contrast, the most frequent used words used in the same websites in 2013 were “Tours”, “Anzac”, “Gallipoli”, Day, “Istanbul” (Table 1).

Table 1. Frequency of word occurrence in websites examined in 2011 and 2013

2011		2013	
<i>Words</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Words</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Anzac	95	tour, tours	192
service, services	46	Anzac	170
battle battlefield	44	Gallipoli	105
Dawn	28	Day	94
memorials, memorial	21	Istanbul	84
museum	17	Service	73
cemetery, cemeteries	13	Turkey	64
war, warships	13	Memorial	34

historian, history	13	April	31
explore, exploring	12	sites	31
walk, walking	11	Dawn	27
commemoration, commemorative	10	Cove	24
national	10	2015	18
trenches	8	time	17
beach, beaches	8	travel	12
remembrance, remember	7	Battlefields	11
legend, legendary	6	cemetery	11
cruise, cruising	6	experience	11
tunnels	5	Troy	17
sacrifice, sacrificed	5	Turkish	11
ceremony	4	share	11
Moving	4	stay	10
campaign	3	beach	10
Landings	3	national	10
allies, ally	3		

Emotive related words were then identified to determine how Gallipoli is represented in website information sources. Word clusters were formed relating to historical interest, desire for learning, curiosity and remembrance (Dore 2006). The categorisation is based on clusters already defined by researchers, Catalca and Yurtseven (2003) and Dore (2006). A comparative analysis of the results was then undertaken (Tables 2 & 3). The clusters by Catalca and Yurtseven (2003) determine the level of motivation to participate in Anzac Day. The first group is the *Active Anzac Day Group*, this group reflects high motive level of attending Anzac day. The second group is the *Passive Anzac Day Group*, which has a lower motive level of participating in Anzac day festivities. The Active Anzac group also includes an extremely high level of motivation, which the researchers consider it as a separate category, the *Completely Active Anzac Group* (Catalca and Yurtseven 2003).

The second categorisation is based on Dore's (2006) clusters. The first group is *Commemoration*; this cluster links words that represent remembrance to those who have died in the service of their country. Additionally, words that describe historical interest and war related words are included in this category. The second cluster is *Information*.

Battlefields are often referred to as sites that educate (Dore 2006), so words that describe ‘knowledge seeking’ are included in this category. These words connect with visitors who want to learn about sites and the people who were involved in the Anzac battle. The third cluster is *exploration*. This cluster includes ‘action’ words as they relate to visitors who are curious and seek an authentic experience (Dore 2006). The fourth cluster is *Reflection*, which includes words that represent a ‘spiritual connection’ to the site. The final cluster is *leisure*. Words included in this category are ‘beach’, ‘relax’ and ‘scenery’.

The results show that the language used in the websites both in 2011 and 2013 represents a commemorative experience (Tables 2 & 3). The ‘Active Anzac’ cluster (Table 2) and the ‘Commemoration’ cluster (Table 3) have resulted with the highest usage of words.

Table 2. Categorisation of words based on Catalca & Yurtseven (2003)

Clusters	Words 2011	Words 2013
Commemoration	312	522
Information	37	48
Exploration	43	45
Reflection	16	84
Leisure	11	379
Total emotive words	419	1078

Table 3. Categorisation of words based on Dore (2006)

Clusters	Words 2011	Words 2013
Active Anzac Group	414	656
Passive Anzac group	30	424
Total emotive words	444	1080

DISCUSSION

A comparison of 2011 and 2013 took place to identify the most frequently cited words. Wordle was used for visualising the results of the words’ frequencies appearing in websites both in 2011 and 2013. The word “Gallipoli” appears to be more prominent in 2013. This may be due

to the centenary celebrations taking place in Gallipoli in 2015. The study found that Gallipoli is mainly represented as a commemorative tourism experience with the word Anzac being prominent, supporting Dore (2006) who argued that travel motivation to Gallipoli is mostly a commemorative experience. With “Anzac” being prominent word in the websites used in this study, the findings also support Catalca & Yurtseven (2003) who presented Gallipoli as a destination attracting travelers with high motivation to be part of the Anzac Dawn experience.

Additionally, there are more appearances of the word “tours” in 2013 compared to 2011. The Wordle analysis reflects that the most popular language theme in all websites is changing the theme from Dore’s *Commemoration* and Catalca and Yurtseven’s *Active Anzac Group* cluster segmentation towards a more leisure and excursion focus.

The tour operator websites analysed for this study continue to brand Gallipoli as a destination where the tourism will receive an “Anzac” related experience. However, this experience will have a cultural theme and will be combined with more leisure and entertainment. There are, however, implications from using this language. The use of the emotive language contributes to setting the visitors’ expectation of what the experience would be (commemorative, reflection) and this can result in visitor dissatisfaction if the experience does not meet the expectations. A study by Hall et al (2010) discusses elements during the Anzac commemorations that dissatisfied visitors, such as ‘transport’ to Anzac Cove. So, while the language contributes to expectations about a spiritual experience, the reality is that (particularly during Anzac week) there are thousands of tourist arrivals being transported to and from the site. Hall et al (2010) suggest that with a heavy focus on the Anzac ceremony, the effective management of the special event may continue to be negative.

The findings suggest a good fit between the descriptive language used to represent the dark tourism destination attributes of Gallipoli and the emotive language used to motivate visitors to the site. This supports Pan and Li’s (2011) findings which suggested that destinations could use niche phrases (combining stereotypical, affective and unique phrases) which expand the product offering for a destination. In the case of Gallipoli operators in this study, the findings support the contention that the use of emotive language contributes to the dark tourism destination image in the Australian market.

One limitation of the present research is the need to validate whether representation online fully meet target market’s needs. A new methodological approach should be applied to other markets (such as backpackers) in order to validate the existing research. Further qualitative

research into emotions as a source of information may validate existing thanatourism market segments and research in the areas of visitor “desires” is needed to assess the thanatouristic motivational experience while in Gallipoli. Satisfying the emotional needs of visitors is clearly very important (Catalca and Yurtseven 2003). ‘Nostalgia’ will play a much greater role in marketing especially among the older generation (Hudson 2010, Dunkley, et al. 2011). Using a segmentation variable in quantitative research such as ‘nostalgia’ could assist in better understanding the visitor motivation (Goulding 1999). Finally future research conducting additional testing of perceptions in other markets may also lead to the identification of new market segments.

CONCLUSION

The study has shown that the imagery of dark tourism marketed via websites can be categorised by emotive language to identify discreet market segments. This study contributes to the growing body of research into thanatourism and indicates that dark tourism products can be represented in websites using the relevant social discourse language to attract specific market segments. There are implications for further research into language linking brand with emotions (Palmer 2010). The study also explored the concept of battlefield tourism and pilgrimage tourism focusing on a cultural and nationalistic perspective. Turkey as a tourism destination has been previously examined by various studies; for example, Sönmez and Sirakaya (2002) explored affective image formation among the US respondents, but in that study Turkey was not perceived as a ‘dark tourism’ destination. This suggests that dark tourism destinations have the capacity to be culture specific. Unlike previous studies of image formation, which have taken the destination marketing organisations’ (DMO) perspective, this study explored image formation of a dark tourism destination by categorising emotive language used in tour operators’ websites for promoting the destination. Given that consumers of dark tourism are heavily reliant on the tour operators for creating their travel experiences, the aim of the study is worth examining.

With the 100th anniversary of Anzac Day approaching in 2015, there is a need for marketers connected with Gallipoli to clearly understand both the thanatourism market and how to effectively communicate with the segments of that market. The study suggests that Gallipoli tour operators currently use emotive language in their websites to attract cultural groups with broad interests whereby thanatourism may be one of the special interests. Tourists seek experiences, which are different to

everyday life; beaches, sunsets, different cultures and historical places are some of the experiences sought (Frost 2004, Best 2007). Websites carry a strong cultural element but also extend to enrich the tourism experience with leisure type tourist experiences and entertainment; this is because the ceremony that is organised at the site encourages a cultural exchange (Richards 1996). The findings imply that the use of language by marketers tends to strike a better balance between a thanatouristic experience and an overall cultural experience including a variety of attractions and tours. Ultimately, managing the ongoing sustainability of Gallipoli as a destination is important for those thanatourists who are motivated to visit it for the emotional and spiritual experience.

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