

THE HOLOCAUST AND DARK TOURISM

by

CRAIG JANGULA

B.A., The University of British Columbia, 2004

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(European Studies)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April 2006

© Craig Jangula, 2006

Abstract

There are many different topics that continue to be explored in the vast field of "Holocaust Studies." In dealing with any segment of history there is always an intersection where various disciplines such as politics, history, philosophy and ethics seem to collide. This is especially true in the recently defined area of "Dark Tourism." Dark Tourism takes a closer look at why people travel to sites of death and disaster, and examines the complex historical, political, ethical and moral rationale behind these developments. There are seemingly endless dark places that people travel to such as, the Anne Frank House, Vimy Ridge, the Somme, the D-Day beaches, Gettysburg, and the Channel Islands. In more recent years, sites such as the Dakota apartments (where John Lennon was shot), Oklahoma City and Ground Zero have also become centers of Dark Tourism.

It seems that the popularity of traveling to these types of places is increasing. With this in mind, researchers have become interested in studying this Dark Tourism phenomenon. Arguably some of the "darkest" of the dark sites people currently travel to are sites associated with the Holocaust. The severity of the Holocaust often makes it stand out as a candidate for special consideration within the broader field of "Tourism Studies" or even "Dark Tourism Studies" for that matter.

The central purpose of this thesis is to explore how these dark Holocaust sites became tourist venues. This thesis will explore the contests over the right to interpret, ethical and moral dilemmas and the emerging dynamics of the commercialization and marketing of Holocaust sites as tourist venues. Hence, this thesis will chronicle and present these emotionally-charged and unresolved issues, and highlight the Dark Tourism dilemmas that threaten to become unsolvable.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
Figures.....	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
Chapter 1: Background: The Popularization of the Holocaust.....	1
Chapter 2: The Emergence of Dark Tourism.....	16
Chapter 3: Dark Tourism in Dachau.....	25
Chapter 4: Krakow and Auschwitz: A Region of Dark Tourism.....	40
Chapter 5: Conclusion.....	54
Bibliography.....	60

Figures

Figure 1.1: Annual number of visitors to dark sites.....	15
Figure 3.1: Graph showing number of German and foreign visitors to Dachau.....	30
Figure 3.2: Graph comparing number of visits to popular German tourist sites.....	32
Figure 3.3: Old directional sign at Dachau train station.....	34
Figure 3.4: New directional sign at Dachau train station.....	34
Figure 3.5: New tourist signs at Dachau memorial.....	35
Figure 3.6: New tourist signs (restaurant advertisements) at Dachau memorial.....	36
Figure 3.7: Restaurants and advertisements near entrance to Dachau memorial.....	38
Figure 4.1: Holocaust tour in Krakow.....	44
Figure 4.2: Holocaust tour bus companies in Krakow.....	46

Acknowledgements

First and foremost I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Richard Menkis for his help and advice in writing this thesis. Topics on the Holocaust are heavy to be sure and Dr. Menkis efforts are fully noted, and appreciated. I would also like to thank Dr. Steven Taubeneck for coming on board as a second reader and agreeing to do so late in the process.

I would also like to acknowledge some people from my past. My interest in history was officially ignited by Robert Doll, my high school history teacher who enlightened my imagination and had me addicted to a particular question, "why." Another force of enlightenment was, and continues to be, Dr. Robert Stoddard. Dr. Stoddard ("Rob" as I have been forced into calling him) is the best professor I have ever had. I have always thought highly of Rob and I am most grateful for the world he exposed to me those three years in my undergrad and beyond. He continues to be a positive influence on me and many others as an academic advisor, but, more importantly, as a friend. In this context I also want to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Sima Godfrey, the founder of the Institute for European Studies who continues to spoil us by creating and exposing those in the Institute to a rich academic environment and a well-stocked tray of the coolest sweets in academia. I must also acknowledge Lufthansa Airlines and their scholarship program for the free flights which enabled me to research this topic in Germany and Poland.

Lastly, I want to thank the closest and most important people in my life: my family. Without the help of my parents, Larry and Jeanette, and the constant support of my brother Todd, none of these enriching experiences would have occurred. I continue to hold all of them in high esteem and I carry them with me wherever I go and in whatever I do.

CHAPTER ONE

Background: The Popularization of the Holocaust

How should one remember the Holocaust? This has been and continues to be an important issue for Holocaust historians and survivors alike. Although the Holocaust was not widely known or discussed in the immediate post-World War II period, after the revelations of the Eichmann trial and subsequent survivor testimonials, people worldwide have increasingly become more aware of Nazi persecution, especially the persecution and extermination of Jews. This awareness has increased over the past few decades as the international community has become more interested in the history of the Holocaust in the wake of books such as the *Diary of Anne Frank* (1947) and popular movies such as *Schindler's List* (1993) and *The Pianist* (2002). This new interest has redirected literary trends within popular culture and has spawned the emergence of Dark Tourism: visitors who travel to Holocaust sites of death and disaster. Clearly, the public is interested, perhaps often fascinated, with the Holocaust. In this thesis I explore and chronicle the literature that has been produced to meet the public's desire to increase their knowledge of the Holocaust and how literature contributed to the popularization of the Holocaust. In doing so, I highlight specific themes and developments within various genres of literature that has contributed to the popularization of the Holocaust. Furthermore, I investigate the effects of Dark Tourism at three Holocaust sites and explore in greater detail how the Holocaust legacy has been transmitted through culture and tourism. Moreover, I explore how the Holocaust is addressed within popular culture and within the tourist sector of the German and Polish economies, outlining and addressing some problematic developments.

This thesis chronicles the popularization of the Holocaust and the ever-changing transmission of the Holocaust legacy.

Before the Eichmann Trial

In the first few decades after the liberation of the concentration and death camps, little was publicly known about the atrocities that had unfolded during the Nazi era, and few large-scale educational efforts were made to inform people about what had transpired in these camps. The Concentration Camp network started in 1933 with the opening of Dachau and, by some historians' accounts, the Nazis "eventually had over 10,000 core and satellite camps spread across occupied Europe" (Burleigh 166). Yet remarkably, Western audiences remained largely oblivious to this phenomenon, and to the Nazi genocide that occurred in these camps and in the extermination camps. The general public failed to comprehend what transpired in the camps until the early 1960s (Novick 103). There were a few brief stories in major US newspapers in April 1945, and a few short films were made, including a short documentary on Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp of the "piles of rotting bodies." Soon after this documentary was made, however, the camp was burned (to kill bacteria and lice) and the story, like many other genocide-related stories, faded out of the news (Zelizer 143). The Holocaust tragedy was hardly acknowledged in the aftermath of the war as the media turned their attention to the Nuremberg trials and the escalation of the Cold War. Some of the first literary accounts of the Holocaust were written in the late 1940's and early 1950's. Among the first books was Marie Syrkin's *Blessed Is The Match* (1947), followed by Joseph Tenenbaum's *Underground* (1952), and Izhak Zuckerman's edited collection *The Fighting Ghettos*

(1952). For some reason, none of these Holocaust accounts seemed to have an impact on the consciousness of Western, especially American, minds (Kushner 245). In short, these early works were not commercial successes. With the exceptions of the *Diary of Anne Frank* (published in English in 1957 by Doubleday) and John Hersey's *The Wall* (1950), American publishers did not sense a profitable market for Holocaust literature until after the Eichmann trial.¹

By most accounts, the Holocaust did not appear in public consciousness until May 1960 when Prime Minister Ben-Gurion of Israel announced that Israeli agents had caught Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann in Argentina (Dwork and Van Pelt, 2002, 380). With the media spotlight on Jerusalem for the trial, many commentators from a variety of backgrounds and professions covered the trial and gave insight into the proceedings. Among these commentators was the celebrated Holocaust historian Raul Hilberg (who in many respects defined the Holocaust historian before there were Holocaust historians), who released his masterpiece *The Destruction of European Jewry* in 1961. Eichmann's subsequent trial unfolded with hundreds of persecuted Jews giving their testimony of the atrocities committed during the Holocaust. The trial was widely followed, especially in the United States, where Hannah Arendt covered the trial in Jerusalem for the *New Yorker*. Suddenly, the Holocaust came out of the shadows and into mainstream consciousness in the Western world and beyond. Arendt turned her coverage into a five-part series published in the *New Yorker* titled *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, and soon after converted the series into book form (Sachar 839-840). The fascination with the

¹ The *Diary of Anne Frank* published in 1947 in Dutch as *Het Achterhuis (The Secret Annex)*, was something of an exception (in terms of capturing people's interest). Eventually her diary was published in English and became a huge success. Since 1957 her diary has been translated into 67 languages and is now thought to be one of the most widely read books in the world.

Holocaust had begun and the seeds of the popularization of the Holocaust were sown as Western audiences developed a curiosity and fascination with the Holocaust.

Post-Trial publications

As the Eichmann trial unfolded, “The Holocaust” became more widely known and fiction and non-fiction, as well as increased academic scholarship, capitalized on the opportunity to publish books on the subject and advance people’s knowledge of the events. Soon after Eichmann’s trial, publishers released book after book to try and satisfy a “new” Western—especially American—fascination with the Holocaust. Some of the first books include: Edward Wallant’s *The Pawnbroker* (1962), Jacob Robinson’s *And The Crooked Shall Be Made Straight* (1965), Richard Ellman’s pseudo-documentary *The 28th Day of Elul* (1967), Saul Bellow’s *Mr. Sammler’s Planet* (1972) and Arthur Cohen’s *In the Days of Simon Stern* (1973). Despite all these attempts to capitalize on the receptiveness of the American public, the biggest breakthrough in Holocaust literature came from an Auschwitz survivor, Elie Wiesel, whose 1956 autobiography *Un di Velt Hut Geshvign* (*And the World Remained Silent*) was translated into French and then into English in September 1960 as *Night*. The book was released only four months after the Israeli Prime Minister, Ben-Gurion, “electrified his nation and the world” with the announcement of Eichmann’s capture (Sachar 839). Wiesel’s testimony fascinated his readers and had them craving for more. This interest led to two “spin-off” novels, *Dawn* (1961) and *The Accident* (1962), which were followed by additional books every decade. Wiesel himself was somewhat bemused when in a 1977 speech he mentioned that Holocaust “theme[s] evoked some sacred awe in literature” (Wiesel 9). Publisher after

publisher ensured that this “sacred awe” effectively “created the genre of Holocaust memoir in Europe and the USA” (Clendinnen 44). Clearly, the American public’s fascination with the Holocaust contributed to the creation of what some academics, most notably Norman Finkelstein, would later call a “Holocaust industry,” an industry that enabled some individuals and publishers to promote, or as Finkelstein claims, to capitalize and *exploit* the public’s fascination with the Holocaust. Although I disagree with many of the additional assertions made by Finkelstein, such as the use of the Holocaust by “Jewish Elites,” I recognise the importance of his efforts to chronicle the development of Holocaust literature. Finkelstein does document and chronicle how Holocaust literature became a source for financial gain and commercialisation in the United States and Western Europe. Clearly, a variety of literary texts from differing genres and viewpoints was a foundation for the popularization of the Holocaust and in the aftermath of the Eichmann trial publishers released numerous books to try and satisfy the intense public interest in the Holocaust. In doing so, various publishers, perhaps unknowingly, initiated and perpetuated the commercialisation of the Holocaust.

European literary and documentary efforts in the 1960s

During the 1960s, there was a second explosion in the publication of Holocaust literature. The epicentre of the explosion was in Western Europe, especially in Germany where a younger generation of Germans confronted their parents’ generation regarding that country’s Nazi past. Literary publications and accounts of the Holocaust included a large body of non-academic literature that tried to give a younger generation of Europeans, especially Germans, answers and insights into the Nazi genocide (Doneson

15). As such, European texts played a major role in forming the public's collective memory of the Holocaust tragedy. This interest continued to grow and in turn created something of a market for authors to write fictional accounts of the Holocaust, transmitting the tragedy within a new realm and genre. Within this genre "new" collective memories of the Holocaust emerged. In Western Europe, these literary confrontations with the past started in the late 1950s, intensified in the early 1960s during the Eichmann trial, and continued to be of interest throughout the 1970s and beyond (Friedlander 6). Some of the most notable European writers who have written on the Holocaust include, but are certainly not limited to, Heinrich Böll, Alfred Andersch, Alexander Kluge, Martin Walser, Günter Grass, Siegfried Lenz, and Uwe Johnson. The list also includes Rolf Hochhuth and Peter Weiss, both of whom have tried to balance authentic documentary material—which was limited in the postwar era—with fictionalization, a mixture that was often "unconvincing" to many historians, survivors and cultural critics (Friedlander 6). Most, if not all, of the aforementioned authors have thus been criticized for "problems of aestheticization or the need for an indirect approach that may be symbolically meaningful yet produces a soothing effect" (Friedlander 6). Furthermore, it was judged that this desire to write fictional accounts of the Holocaust made it difficult, if not impossible, to balance authentic historical accounts with the tendency on the part of the writer to incorporate his/her own yearning(s) for creativity and interpretation.

This intersection, where history collides with fictional accounts and a public that is fascinated with the Holocaust, has become a "well-spring for imaginative thought" (Hoffman 191) and has formed the basis for additional accounts and additional Holocaust

books. In short, the “well-spring for imaginative thought” has fuelled additional fictional accounts as well as an increased number of academic books that analyse these developments and contribute to differing genres of Holocaust texts. All of the aforementioned literary developments have contributed to constantly growing, yet differing bodies of literature that confronts the Holocaust.

As European writers responded to the demand for literature that authentically confronted the past, other authors simply tried to meet the perceived “need” and so-called “market.” This development was especially true in the latter 1970s after the series of Speer memoirs, which added to the “Hitler Wave” of the 1970s, featured best-selling Hitler biographies. The studies of Hitler were based more on “ambiguous attraction and possible nostalgia than a true [German] desire to come to terms with the past” (Friedlander 7). The fascination with Hitler—the main advocate for the destruction of European Jewry—and the legacy created in confronting the past within popular culture often re-shapes and in many ways popularizes this troubling chapter of European history.

The interest in Hitler, or more specifically, the interest in what Hitler inflicted on European Jews, has also attracted the attention of filmmakers seeking to promote a greater understanding of the Holocaust and the troubled twentieth century in general. Throughout the 1980s, also known as the “New German Cinema” era, filmmakers sought to capture, retell and exploit Germany’s interest in its Nazi past. Arguably the most notable films that attempt to do this are Peter Lilienthat’s *David*, Volker Schlöndorff’s *Tin Drum* (which is based on the Günter Grass novel), Rainer Werner Fassbinder’s *Lili Marleen*, and Hans Jürgen Syberberg’s *Hitler, a Film from Germany* (Friedlander 7). During the 1980s, European filmmakers also capitalised on the opportunity to release

telecasted documentaries and films on very selective aspects of the Third Reich and the Holocaust. Some of the documentaries, such as Syberberg's, have been described as "hybridized versions of documentaries in formats usually associated with fiction... [and constitute] a complicated set of relations among traumatic event, memory, and imagination" (LaCapra, 1998, 108). Goldschläger criticizes these pseudo-documentaries as follows:

There are many questions to be asked about film representations of the Holocaust and their historical value... Since they [documentaries] use the same medium as fiction features and they are often shown in the same format in theaters... They are often interwoven with fictional stories and thus confuse the issues... they interfere in the separation of genres and thus understanding (Goldschläger 160).

In short, even documentaries on the Holocaust can be problematic. Since they have been shown in theatres to large audiences, many documentaries have also contributed to the popularization of the Holocaust, and helped inform audiences or at least reminded the audience of this troubling chapter in the Western worlds recent past. Perhaps the most known and hence most popular enterprise of the 1980s was a touring stage production of Anne Frank that travelled Germany, retelling the fascinating and tragic story of the young Dutch girl living in Amsterdam when the Nazis invaded. Clearly, European writers, film producers, and playwrights have contributed to the popularization of the Holocaust alongside their American counterparts.

North American textbooks and educational efforts

The popularization of the Holocaust in Europe took place simultaneously with, and often in conjunction with the popularization of the Holocaust in the United States. In the years following the Eichmann trial, and especially after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war,

“American Jews launched a major effort to ‘sensitize’ their Gentile fellow citizens to the magnitude of the Nazi genocide” (Sachar 845). In short, American Jews tried to educate their fellow citizens to the Holocaust tragedy. This was done by public awareness campaigns, political lobbying and the erecting of monuments and Holocaust education centres across America. National and local Jewish organizations worked in concert to prepare lesson plans and film materials. These materials were used in the secondary school systems of the East Coast and major cities across the county. During this period educators were able to capitalise on the hundreds of individual and collective Holocaust accounts that were being translated into English by descendants of Holocaust survivors. These valuable accounts had to be translated into English since most younger Jews living in the United States were less familiar with their parents’ native languages, especially Hebrew and Yiddish (Horowitz 4).

Complementing these popular texts were film documentaries. By the late 1960s, there were over three hundred film and television documentaries produced for various institutions and so-called “awareness days” (Sachar 845), which were accompanied in the academic profession by a “veritable tidal wave of scholarship” (Locke 169). By 1979 there was a Presidential commission on the Holocaust that considered the creation of a National Holocaust Remembrance Day and a National Holocaust Museum in Washington DC. By the mid-1980s, the former initiative became a reality and the latter initiative was also approved, pending the acceptance of a suitable location. Throughout the 1980s, Holocaust education centers were built across America (and eventually across Europe) with public and private funds. One of the best known centers is the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles. The Center came into operation because of the efforts of New

York native Rabbi Marvin Hier. Using the “mobilizing techniques of Madison Avenue merchandising and Hollywood glitz, Hier recruited for his enterprise such show-business personalities as Elizabeth Taylor and Frank Sinatra in a high-pressure huckstering campaign to endow the centre’s memorial activities...and other media events” (Sachar 846). These educational endeavours often used and promoted fictional books, written for profit in the private market sector. As this process continued the Holocaust became more “popular” in that many Americans reflected on and became interested in learning more about the tragedy. During this time some academics complained that the majority of the aforementioned books educated American students about the whole of Jewish history through the lens of the Holocaust, not through the lens of Jewish history (Young, 1988, 187). In this light, what some commentators call the “Holocaust Enterprise” capitalized by attaching itself to educational efforts to confront the Holocaust. Publishers would release anything related to the Holocaust, including books with a questionable educative content in order to “cash in” on the popularity of Holocaust books. Controversies observed and addressed by academia sparked additional debates and additional books on the use of Holocaust material. These latter books contributed to different genres of Holocaust texts. All of these books were important tools in informing people of the magnitude of the Holocaust.

Authenticity concerns and controversies regarding popular books

These efforts to popularise the Holocaust within popular culture be it film, literature or playwrights, have been applauded by some and denounced by others. Some academics consider that popularization amounts to the “exploitation of Jewish suffering.”

One of the academics who is most upset by the emergence of a Holocaust industry, or at least the orientation of the current Holocaust industry, is Norman Finkelstein. Finkelstein is a practicing Jew whose late parents were Holocaust survivors. He has heavily criticized many of the aforementioned books and authors (not to mention academics) for their message and the “profits” that publishers seek in producing various books on the tragedy that befell his parents and his community. Finkelstein points out that there are now Holocaust imposters who preach “Holocaust dogmas” that are not authentic accounts of Nazi genocide. These accounts are usually fake and often promote an unrealistic or “Hollywood Holocaust,” something that Finkelstein and others are deeply troubled with (Finkelstein 55).

One of the most striking examples of this literature is the book *The Painted Bird* written by Jerzy Kosinski and apparently praised by Elie Wiesel as “one of the best” indictments of the Holocaust era that was “written with deep sincerity and sensitivity” (Finkelstein 55-56). *The Painted Bird* became a “staple” Holocaust book widely used as part of high school and college reading curricula in America. Moreover, the book became a best seller, an award winner and was subsequently translated into numerous languages (LaCapra, 2001, 31-35). Kosinski profited from the Holocaust. However, and perhaps worse, Kosinski was not a survivor of the Holocaust as he claimed but a Polish peasant who lived with his parents throughout the war in rural Poland. He was exposed in the 1990s as an imposter after he was investigated by a newsweekly in Switzerland and is accused of falsifying all of the horrors he “witnessed” as a child (Jones 84).

Kosinski is not the only author to fake his credentials as a survivor and exploit the Holocaust to profit from the tragedy. One of the more famous examples of such

exploitation is a slim book released in 1996 called *Fragments: Memories of a Wartime Childhood* written by Binjamin Wilkomirski. Wilkomirski's book won the National Jewish Book Award in 1996 over Wiesel's *All Rivers Run to the Sea* and Alfred Kazin's *Writing Was Everything*. In late October 1996, Jonathan Kozol of *The Nation* described Wilkomirski's book as "so profoundly moving, so morally important and free from literary artifice of any kind at all that I wondered if I even had the right to try and offer praise" (Kozol 24). Kozol's review was followed by Julie Salamon's January 1997 *New York Times Book Review*, which stated that the book was an "extraordinary memoir...recall[ing] the Holocaust with the powerful immediacy of innocence, injecting well-documented events with fresh terror and poignancy" (Salamon 9). Soon after these reviews, Wilkomirski won the Jewish Quarterly Literary Prize in Britain and the Prix Mémoire de la Shoah in France, in addition to the National Jewish Book Award that he received in 1996 (Weissman 212). This is, however, the second most famous case of a "Holocaust Hoax." The book became a basic Holocaust text, a bestseller and an award winner that was translated into several languages and widely distributed among high school and college classes as part of the curricula. The events after the release of the book are almost identical to the events that followed the release of Kosinski's book *The Painted Bird*, because just like Kosinski, eventually Wilkomirski was exposed as a Holocaust imposter (LaCapra, 2001, 32). Wilkomirski's book was pulled in October 1999, when his German publisher withdrew the book from bookstores and announced publicly that Wilkomirski was not a Jewish orphan but a Swiss-born man named Bruno Dösessecker. One month later the book was also removed from American bookstores as well, this time by Dösessecker's American publisher. Until the recall, this fallacious book

sat alongside credible books in countless bookstores across Europe and North America. Although these developments infuriated some onlookers, and contributed to what some critics view as “the crass commercialisation” of the Holocaust the books were read by an audience eager to learn more about the Holocaust (Berger 142). Therefore, even books that have been stripped of their credibility have been absorbed by eager and curious audiences, and have thus contributed to the popularization of the Holocaust.

Finkelstein’s latest book, *The Holocaust Industry: Reflections on the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering* (Second Edition 2003), goes on to criticize additional authors and personalities in what Finkelstein calls the “American Jewish elites” and their dubious contributions to the Holocaust industry (Finkelstein 13-36). Finkelstein has also heavily criticized the popular author Daniel Goldhagen for his portrayal of the Holocaust in his book *Hitler’s Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (1996). Goldhagen’s book was heavily applauded by the *New York Times* and *Time*. The book has sold over half a million copies and is slated for translation into thirteen languages (Finkelstein 63). It is also the first scholarly “study of the Shoah to have gained the status of international bestseller” (Bartov 33). Finkelstein feels that the national media and “American Jewish elites” have promoted Goldhagen’s book ensuring the widespread popularity of the book. According to Finkelstein, Goldhagen’s popular book has somehow become the “national” or “American” view of the Holocaust. Part of the reason this happened, in Finkelstein’s opinion, is because numerous journals printed favourable reviews of Goldhagen’s books and thus promoted his version of the Holocaust without consulting or being historians themselves. This version of the Holocaust is unacceptable however to many prominent Holocaust historians, such as Yehuda Bauer,

director of Yad Vashem and lecturer at Hebrew University, whose own “standard Holocaust text, [also] used widely throughout North American college campuses” (Zimmerman 3) stands in stark contrast to Goldhagen’s research that many find problematic and incomplete (Finkelstein 64).

Goldhagen is not the only author to be criticized for writing Holocaust texts that have become very popular, yet contain accounts of the Holocaust that are simplistic or incomplete. Additional criticisms have been levied by academics such as Peter Novick towards various authors. Novick has criticized numerous authors, including the survivor-author Elie Wiesel, for “sacralization of the Holocaust” and turning the Holocaust into something of a “mystery religion” (Novick 200-1, 211-12). Finkelstein also takes issue with Elie Wiesel’s standard fee of \$25,000 plus a “chauffeured limousine” to lecture about the “secrets” of Auschwitz (Finkelstein 45). Perhaps these aforementioned attacks lead to more publicity and hence more readership and scholarship of the various Holocaust texts. What remains clear is that the Holocaust has become a popular interest of many and literary efforts have been able to inform people of the Holocaust and advance their knowledge of the tragedy. This ongoing process continues as a variety of genres continue to contribute to the popularization of the Holocaust. The manner in which the process continues to unfold has ultimately contributed to the commercialisation of many Holocaust texts.

As the Holocaust became more widely known, largely through literary efforts, curious tourists started to visit numerous sites of the Holocaust. In the modern era of mass travel it clearly became easier for people to visit these places. In fact, with the

collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe in 1989 it became possible for tourists to visit practically all of the dark sites of the Holocaust as the following figure illustrates:

Site	Visitors per year
Auschwitz (Poland)	750,000
Dachau (Germany)	900,000
The Anne Frank House (Amsterdam)	600,000
Majdanek (Poland)	300,000

Figure 1: Estimated numbers of annual visitors since 1993 (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 28)

As the table above confirms, thousands of people visit various Holocaust sites throughout Europe every year. Without doubt many of these visits are the result of a Western public that is inevitably curious about the Holocaust. As chronicled above, the generations that grew up after World War Two learned about the Holocaust through a variety of books, movies and plays. Moreover, millions of young people in the Western world learned about the Holocaust while in school. All of these factors have undoubtedly contributed to people's knowledge of the Holocaust and a curiosity to visit some of the sites.

CHAPTER TWO

The Emergence of Dark Tourism

Modernity and Dark Tourism

Dark Tourism is a recently developed term although it is not a new phenomenon. Dark Tourism dates back as far as the Middle Ages when pilgrims travelled to sites associated with religious martyrdom to view relics and tombs of saints. Dark Tourism was also in effect during the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 when nobility watched the warfare in comfort from a safe distance. The first known Dark Tourist site in North America is probably Manassas—an early battlefield of the American Civil War—which was sold the next day as a visitor attraction site (Lennon, 2005, 1). In more recent times, Ground Zero in New York has also become a site of Dark Tourism after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

Although Dark Tourism dates back to the Middle Ages, the term and academic study of Dark Tourism are recent. Tourism, or more precisely the “traditional” academic study of tourism is often defined as “both a focus of study and of policy and is associated with the project of modernity. Discussions of its development, promotion, impact, and significance” have been measured for several decades, however, as mentioned above, the academic study of Dark Tourism is very recent (Lennon and Foley, 1999, 46). Two academics in the field of tourism research who are widely acknowledged for their original contributions to what eventually would be called “Dark Tourism” are A.V. Seaton who coined the term *Thanatourism* and Chris Rojek who developed the concept

of *Black Spots*. In "*Thanatourism*" Seaton commented on "travel to a location wholly, or partially, motivated by desire for actual or symbolic encounters with death" (Seaton 131). In "*Black Spots*" Rojek observes the development of tourist enterprises in and around "sites in which celebrities or large numbers of people have met with sudden and violent death" (Rojek, 1993, 136). Both professors laid the groundwork for the advancement for the study of Dark Tourism by highlighting the public's curiosity with sites of death and suffering (Seaton 131) and the commercial development of these sites (Rojek, 1993, 136-137). However, the academics who currently lead the field in Dark Tourism research are Professors John Lennon and Malcolm Foley who coined the term "Dark Tourism" in 1996. In 2000, after four years of researching Dark Tourist sites around the world, the two released their groundbreaking book *Dark Tourism: The Attraction to Death and Disaster*. The book has been reprinted three times and is considered to be the most thorough investigation of the Dark Tourism phenomenon.

Although Dark Tourism was evident in the past it was not definitively labelled until the late twentieth and early part of the twenty-first century. Even though Lennon and Foley have used the research of Rojek and Seaton as their theoretical starting point, their research in Dark Tourism signals "a fundamental shift in the way in which death, disaster and atrocity are being handled by those who offer associated tourism 'products'" (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 3). Their research shows that "Dark Tourism" is "both a product of the circumstances of the late modern world and a significant influence upon these circumstances" (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 3). The theoretical framework of "modernity" has had an impact on the orientation of Dark Tourism. Without going into greater detail about what modernity is or is not, most scholars looking into Dark Tourism

incorporate a definition of modernity that includes the tenets of “raised nationality, progress and the general shift to prominence over anxiety, doubt and the particular” (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 21). Modernity also contains elements of industrialisation, rational planning and bureaucracy within its political infrastructure (Rojek and Urry, 1997, 3). It is inside this theoretical context that academics conduct their investigations of Dark Tourism.

Within this theoretical framework of “modernity” researchers continue to give “major consideration to instances of Dark Tourism [and explore] the way in which some sites have explored the anxieties and doubts inherent in modernity [and] have become tourism venues (and some have not), how these sites have been managed and the manner in which events associated with them have been ‘staged’” (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 22-23). In doing so, many bypass the contentious issue of whether or not the some of the sites “use” tourism as their “sole, or even primary object (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 23). A variety of “tourists” from differing backgrounds contribute to the “tourism” and popularisation of dark Holocaust sites. Dark Tourism explores these interactions within the context of the modern “tourist sector.”

The individual visitor’s motives for travelling to these sites range considerably. Some tourists go to the sites to reflect, some are survivors or descendants of survivors/victims while others are researchers (historians etc). Many are simply curious tourists who have made an impulsive decision to visit one of sites. Regardless of the varying motives for visiting a dark site of the Holocaust, most researchers exploring Dark Tourism treat the visitors as “tourists” whose visits are “touristic.” In short, there is no

special category to differentiate the visitors as pilgrims, sightseers, co-religionists; most scholars treat these Holocaust site visitors as tourists engaging in Dark Tourism.

Attraction vs. genocide monument

Two terms often associated with the study of Dark Tourism are “memorials” and “genocide monuments” (also commonly known as Holocaust monuments). For clarification, former Holocaust sites are referred to as memorials, while the sculptures built to commemorate victims are usually called genocide monuments or Holocaust monuments. An example of a genocide monument would be the unknown prisoner sculpture at the Dachau memorial. At the present time there are many unresolved debates within academia and beyond regarding issues of interpretation, memory and authenticity at dark sites. For instance the signage, displays, information booths, literature, language and languages used at the sites are often criticized for shortfalls in adequately explaining the terrors and sorrow of life in the camps. Here researchers must differentiate between what is a dark site, (the site itself) and the memorials and monuments dedicated to the victims of the sites. Many researchers looking into Dark Tourism focus on the sites themselves and tend to give less consideration to the monuments built to commemorate the victims. However, there are some researchers such as Peter Carrier whose research is only based on monuments and their relationship to collective memories. At present there is lively debate regarding the role of “popular” or well-known Holocaust monuments and the importance or non-importance of including these monuments in one’s research of Dark Tourism. An example would be the recently completed Holocaust memorial in Berlin. The monument stands to acknowledge a grisly time in Germany’s history but not

to commemorate a specific Holocaust site. It is unclear how this specific monument represents collective memories of the country's past. Clearly, at some level Holocaust monuments are important to the study of Dark Tourism because they are observed by the tourist at the site. Leaving aside some of these debates about the role of the monument many scholars have concluded, as has Carrier, that Holocaust monuments serve to:

symbolically integrate the victimised 'other' into narratives of official memory cultures, [even though the monuments] only indirectly point towards the perpetrators, it is unlikely that the monuments alone will enable such critical narratives to penetrate individual self-perceptions and thereby bridge the gap between public commemorations and private recollection of the Second World War (Carrier 29).

As Peter Carrier argues, the modern Holocaust monument is "more than just a monument, for it is the product of debate over the meaning of the past, and symbolises the memory of Jewish victims alongside other major memorial sites such as the Topography of Terror, the Neue Wache, the Memorial of German resistance, the House of the Wannsee Conference and the New Jewish Museum..." (Carrier 29). These important debates, regarding the role and importance of what is constructed within a dark site, in this case monuments, takes place alongside other debates regarding what is, and what is not ethical within a former dark site. There has always been considerable local and international debate on the "role" of these monuments as well as their use or perhaps misuse by local authorities (Haider and Marckhgott 104). These ongoing discussions are less important factors to consider when documenting and chronicling the commercialized Dark Tourism trade. Nonetheless, researchers undertaking a critical evaluation of the popularisation of the Holocaust and the phenomenon of Dark Tourism conduct their

research aware of these ongoing debates regarding the role of monuments and definitions of dark sites.

Before discussing Dark Tourism in greater detail it is important to reflect and discuss the environment in which Dark Tourism exists and some of the different agencies that help perpetuate either directly or indirectly this phenomenon that confirms the popularisation of the Holocaust. There are numerous stakeholders involved in determining the orientation of memorial sites. The most obvious groups are the victims, followed by local and regional authorities who often fund and direct operations at the memorials. Looking at the correlation between the authorities responsible for the commemorative and educative aspects as well as for maintaining the sites, researchers must probe the visible and hidden relationships between site managers and local development. For example, the interaction between private enterprises, local government and the staff at the Dachau memorial exemplifies how the actions of one agency can have an effect on the actions of another. By observing the interactions of different agencies at various Holocaust sites one can draw conclusions as to the nature of the relationship and determine how agencies exist to support one another, or if each agency acts independently from one another. When two or more agencies work in conjunction there are several different scenarios that can arise. If both agencies are working for each other's advancement and benefit they exist within the confines of a mutually beneficial relationship. However, if the actions of one agency reflect poorly on another agency the relationship between the two is parasitic and destructive. Occasionally, the relationship between the two agencies is synchronic and synchronically destructive to both parties. These relationships between the different agencies are important because the agencies are

responsible for controlling historical interpretation. The memorial site managers, local government agencies (that often monitor and oversee the memorial site managers) and victims' groups have a large role to play and are responsible for linking popular sites such as Auschwitz and Dachau to commemoration of these dark places.

The management agencies in both of these sites are granted legal and legislative authority to manage these sites, as well as the ties between local residents and visitors. As Caroline Strange notes, in many of these dark sites "relationships between commemorative agents change as political, social and economic environments evolve, and as new actors become involved" (Strange 88). In the "modern information age" where the Holocaust is a well-known event, the role of the so-called "official" commemorative agencies is challenged and complemented by external groups who seek to transmit the legacy of these sites through different medias. Works of popular culture such as movies and literature re-enact or attempt to re-enact history and these works compete with the "official" agencies in Germany and Poland who have been given what probably amounts to an infinite mandate to commemorate the sites. These managerial agencies face additional "competition" in orchestrating commemoration from organised commemorative agents abroad who transmit the legacy of the Holocaust within religious, cultural and commercial realms. The opportunity to re-create or retransmit the commemorative aspects of the dark sites or to "parasitize" the relationship between the agencies is made easier by the religious, humanistic and historic relevance of the site that can easily, perhaps too easily, be linked to commercial opportunities (Strange 88-92). The ability of agencies abroad to "compete" with the official local agencies is enhanced because the Holocaust itself is internationally known; its significance already widely

comprehended by people and cultures across the globe and in this sense it is not simply “domestic” history and the tourism site is not just a domestic historical site but an international site with international relevance.

Researchers looking into the phenomenon of Dark Tourism undertake a critical examination of the agencies, official and otherwise who are responsible for managing these sites, and their role in managing or contributing to the visitors’ experience. How do these agencies confront issues of commercialisation, exploitation, interpretation, reflection, education and authenticity within an appropriate, or at least acceptable moral and ethical framework? Here the managing authorities have a difficult job to perform in order to provide an accepted interpretation (usually an accepted interpretation as far as survivors, victims, victim’s relatives and historians are concerned) with balancing the concerns of local residents, entrepreneurs, politicians, historians and visitors. As such, the orientation and commemorative task of the site managers is complemented and challenged by additional external and domestic agencies that reflect a varied cross section of political, religious and cultural groups. All of these groups seem to hold a stake in the commemorative process. It is within this environment of competing commemorative agencies that researchers conduct their investigations and chronicle the factors and developments that contribute to Dark Tourism.

As mentioned above, Dark Tourism has only recently become an area of academic interest. For many reasons, some of which still remain unclear, tourists travel to sites associated with war, assassination, genocide and other tragic, dark, events. Clearly, Holocaust sites are among the most visited Dark Tourism sites. Researchers studying Dark Tourism often examine tourists’ motives for visiting these sites and the

environment in which these visits take place. Are these visits for remembrance, are they educative, reflective, or are the visits some form of ghoulish, dark entertainment? Many visitors travel to the dark sites of the Holocaust including “reverential pilgrims, ghoulish sightseers, innocent school groups, and curious backpackers to sites and memorials of absolute barbarism” (Miles, 2001, 11). As such, the thousands of annual visitors reflect and exemplify how Holocaust sites have become popular tourist destinations. It is important to look closely at the relationship between entrepreneurs (unofficial but yet increasingly important agencies) and how they interact with official agencies sponsored by the city, local government or both. These joint relationships are partially responsible for transmitting the legacy of the Holocaust. The increase in commercialisation of the Holocaust, especially at specific sites, is important to understanding the changing transmission of the Holocaust legacy and how the Holocaust is absorbed and comprehended.

CHAPTER THREE

Dark Tourism in Dachau

Of the three aforementioned “popular” dark sites, Dachau is a fitting place to start an investigation of Dark Tourism. Dachau was opened in 1933 by the SS commander and temporary police chief of Munich, Heinrich Himmler. Contrary to some of the pamphlets that the City of Dachau publishes which state that the Camp was built “*close* to the market town of Dachau” (City of Dachau “Sightseeing” pamphlet) it was actually enthusiastically annexed into the city on April 1, 1939 after almost six years of lobbying by the City Council and mayor to have Dachau Concentration Camp incorporated into the city. At the time, city officials hoped that once the Camp was incorporated into the city, Dachau would receive much-needed funds from the Bavarian State and beyond (Richard 114-115). The much-hoped-for economic spin-off never materialised; if anything the Camp perpetuated a housing shortage as additional SS men and their families were transferred into Dachau as the war progressed. The incorporated Camp probably hurt the local economy more than it helped since few locals were able to find any employment within the Camp. As a result, Dachau City Hall and numerous Dachau mayors since the end of the World War Two have bemoaned the decision to have the Camp annexed into the city and have tried to distance themselves from the Camp and former Camp officials.

In 1947 City Hall started regaining authority and limited decision-making powers from the allied forces. During the transition between 1947 and 1950 Dachau City Hall

and City Council sought to distance themselves and occasionally tried to obstruct the ambitions of the Camp's survivors and memorial-seeking community. At the same time that the City was distancing itself from the Camp, American soldiers were leading mandatory tours of sites such as Buchenwald and Dachau to the civilians who lived near the Camps. These tours were highly emotional and confirmed for the Germans the atrocities that had taken place in their name (Engelhardt 88-89). It was felt by many of the survivors that the tours should continue indefinitely to honour the victims and confirm that the genocide did happen. By the late 1940s few, if any, locals could claim they were ignorant of the atrocities committed in the Camp during the war years. The mandatory tours ensured that all people concerned with the future orientation of the Camp (survivors, locals, politicians) were well informed and *should* have been sensitive to the memorial-seeking community representing a variety of survivors from the liberated Camp.

Although members of City Hall were well informed about the atrocities committed in the Camp, the actions of City Hall in the postwar era ensured a strained relationship between the city, the "KZ-Betreuungsstelle," (Concentration Camp Care Center established in 1945), the "*Comité International de Dachau* (CID)" (a survivors' group founded by inmates when Dachau was still in operation as a Concentration Camp) and an inter-religious group of survivors seeking a "Befreiungsdenkmal" (Liberation Memorial). Using language eerily reminiscent of the recent Nazi past, in April 1948 the local Bavarian *Landtag* proposed turning the former Camp into a "work Camp for anti-social elements [...as a place] to re-educate workshy [sic] elements into people willing to work" (Engelhardt 99). Without the political capital needed to carry out such a scheme,

the Bavarian *Landtag* backtracked and turned Dachau Concentration Camp into “Wohnsiedlung Dachau-Ost” (East Dachau Housing Center) to accommodate refugees in April 1948. Soon after, the Bavarian *Landtag* constructed “industrial enterprises, shops, restaurants, cinemas, a school for children,” all of which altered the site (Engelhardt 99).

In the months and years after the liberation the relationship between the City, local government and the memorial community started to sour as a result of the direction that City Hall was taking in the late 1940s. In general, the “memorial-seeking community” represented a cross section of several survivor organizations with the support of various religious groups and, in particular, US and British military chaplains and soldiers who lobbied American and German authorities to build a memorial. There were numerous incidents where survivors sought to build a memorial, yet in basically every case the local authorities vetoed, delayed or simply ignored their requests. In 1950 the memorial community sought and gained the support of the German Jew, Philip Auerbach. At the time, Auerbach was the Commissioner for Racial, Religious and Political Persecutees and he used his influence to convince Fritz Koelle, a former inmate and persecuted art professor who specialised in building “proletariat sculptures” to build a sculpture commemorating the victims. Koelle’s first proposed sculptures were condemned by locals and especially local artists who forced him to rethink his piece. His early proposals were often criticized for being “miserable and flat” (Engelhardt 100). In the end, Koelle created a sculpture labelled “The Unknown Prisoner.” On the base of the sculpture Koelle inscribed: “To honor the dead and to warn the living” (Musiol 380). Despite vociferous opposition from Dachau City Hall, on April 30, 1950 the sculpture was installed adjacent to the Camp’s crematorium, accompanied by a new pamphlet

outlining the background to the monument. After additional calls for the opening of a memorial after mass graves were discovered during construction projects in the spring of 1950, the Bavarian government finally agreed to fund both a “Pantheon for Dachau” and a “memory hall” so survivors could hold commemoration ceremonies in a “worthy” memorial site. This development took almost twenty years to materialise (Distel 21).

Although the opening of the crematorium helped ensure that memorial and commemoration activities would be able to take place in Dachau, commentators continued to argue that the “memorial site” was still not developed enough and that City Hall was partially responsible. At a time when other German jurisdictions were engaged in confronting their recent past, Dachau City Hall was criticised by many onlookers and victims for being slow in confronting the recent past in Dachau. Some of the heaviest criticisms were levied by Bavarian Catholics, many of whom were former inmates at the Camp. Many of these former inmates represented or were involved with various religious groups and were united in their determination that Germans reflect on the recent Nazi past and address the past on a spiritual level by seeking religious advice that could possibly offer redemption. In general, they wanted Germans to reflect on the denial of human rights and the crimes against humanity. To aid these efforts there were numerous inter-religious conferences held to spearhead reflection and some sort of repentance as well as possible forgiveness. While on one of these “atonement missions” the wife of a British Captain, Mrs. Cheshire, mentioned the following to her German friend Dr.

Johannes Neuhäusler the Auxiliary Bishop of Munich in 1960:

We are very disappointed at the present state of the Concentration Camp at Dachau. I have been in all the other Concentration Camps in Germany and Austria and I have found none in so deplorable a state as that of Dachau. It is so lacking in respect for suffering and death; there is no

memorial to remind men...no monument of compassionate remembrance for the victims of godless assaults (Neuhäusler 70).

Apparently Neuhäusler concurred. He mentioned the efforts of Father Roth who in consultation with additional organisations and individuals “endeavoured to build a religious monument on the site of so much suffering and such terrible deaths, in order to free it from the deplorable ‘carnival atmosphere’ and to substitute a place of silence and recollection, of prayer and atonement for this ‘rendezvous for tourists’” (Neuhäusler 70). Clearly, unresolved issues regarding the orientation of the Camp and the inability to transform the Camp from a refugee center (that temporarily altered the true identity of the Camp) into a proper memorial that could accommodate the growing number of visitors (many of whom were former inmates) caused tremendous tension. In this atmosphere it was difficult to halt the growing Dark Tourism trade that was in embryo in the early 1960s.

Local authors and editors shared Neuhäusler’s sentiments and they continued to argue that the memorial site failed to “fulfill its mission or [did] so only rather badly” (Engelhardt 102). Many voices were growing impatient that an indifferent City Hall ignored an understaffed and underfinanced memorial site that was unable to fulfil any mandate to commemorate the victims properly. In this environment, the memorial site management was unable to stop or investigate accusations that controversial developments were taking place within the Camp and Camp vicinity such as the “tour company” started by a former inmate who sold brochures to visitors and gave guided tours of the site for a fee. To many of the survivors this development amounted to an unethical “selling of their suffering.” The Camp became a “source of resentment” and

the focus of debate for both the pro-memorial and anti-memorial forces (Engelhardt 102). In this environment both forces were forced to acknowledge and respond to the developing Dark Tourism phenomenon as the revelations and bickering over the future of Dachau started to attract additional local and international attention to Dachau, a site that was only a quasi-memorial site in the early 1950s.

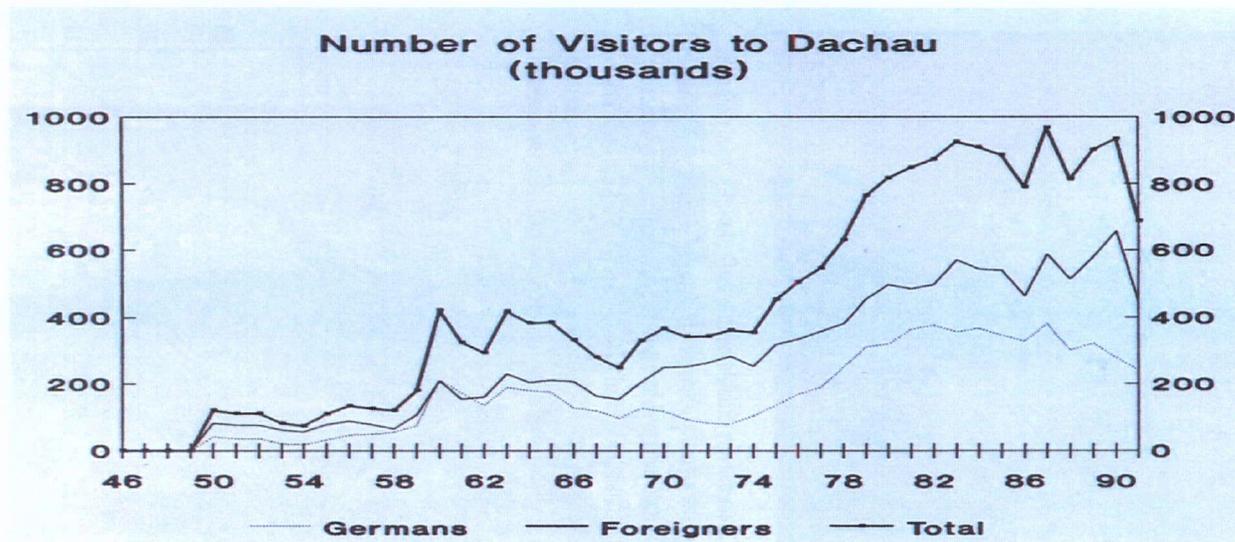


Figure 1: Graph of the Number of foreign and German visitors to the Dachau memorial site, 1951-91 (Marcuse 73).

By the tenth anniversary of the liberation of Dachau many Bavarian politicians, including the mayor, made public their views that the Camp should be destroyed and/or closed (Engelhardt 102-103). However, despite the public plea, many who lived near the Camp had seen their businesses flourish as a result of the “touristic character” of the former Concentration Camp and disagreed. Before the tenth anniversary of the liberation, in fact, in 1952, a local newspaper published an article entitled “Memorial Place (Gedächtnisstätte) or Tourist Attraction?” (Nordpress-Standard1). The author was probably the first to acknowledge and document—and perhaps to lament—the reality of the Dark Tourism phenomenon in Dachau:

Today this site of terror has become a worldwide known point of attraction for the international tourist business with the character of a museum of which many people live—souvenir-sellers and porters, restaurant owners and taxi drivers.... Thus instead of stimulating inner reflection and self-examination this place became a site of desire for show and sensation. Even the—in any event—artistically very dubious memorial of the unknown Concentration Camp inmate cannot mislead about this. Besides, the visitors of the grounds, among whom there is a striking amount of American soldiers, very often lack any respect. They film, photograph and chat, as if they were in a zoological garden or a waxworks and not a memorial site for the suffering and dying of innocent people (Nordpress-Standard 1).

Even in its infancy, the Dachau Concentration Camp was criticized, in fact attacked, for the commercial aspects associated with visits to the Camp. The author of the newspaper article also took issue with the manner in which the memorial was run. For him, Dachau was being run as if it was simply just another tourist attraction—such as a waxworks—without adequate acknowledgement that the site was a place of suffering and death. The article laments the commercial aspects of commemoration that were dwarfing the educational opportunities at the former Concentration Camp. The article further points out numerous commercial and business enterprises that were complicit, or at the very least, indifferent, to the commodification process they were contributing to. By doing so, these businesses established a precedent of ignoring and being insensitive to the concerns of the survivors and the directors of the memorial. Clearly, the author of the article was disgusted with the way in which locals in Dachau conducted themselves in the emerging Dark Tourism phenomenon at Dachau.

Such developments also illustrate the poor relationship between the city of Dachau, regional authorities and the Dachau memorial groups. Early post-war responses to the Camp's role strained the cooperation that would have helped ensure an appropriate, well-funded memorial site orchestrated between the city that annexed the Concentration

Camp into its boundaries and the cross-section of survivors seeking a memorial. In this sour environment the groups were unable to respond appropriately to the Dark Tourism phenomenon that was growing in the late 1950s. The following figure exemplifies the growing popularity of the memorial Camp during this time:

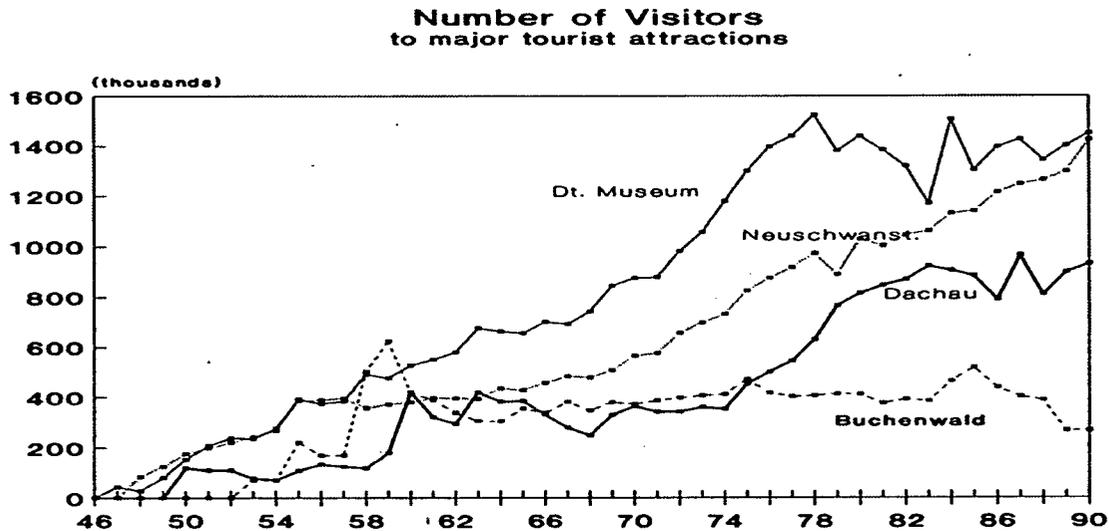


Figure 2: Graph comparing the number of visitors to Buchenwald (in East Germany), Dachau, and two main Bavarian tourist destinations, the German Museum in Munich and Neuschwanstein castle, 1946-90 (Marcuse 74).

From the 1950s onwards there were additional tourist-driven enterprises in and around Dachau that sought to capitalize on the public interest in the oldest Nazi Camp.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s the only bus that transported tourists from the town to the Camp was a city-owned bus that departed each hour. The bus was painted red and was smothered in advertising for tourists to read (Marcuse 337). Incidentally, that particular bus travelled down the road to the site that was named Sudetenlandstrasse, after the Nazi annexation of Czechoslovakia. This scenic bus tour became yet another stakeholder in the commercialized “Dark Tourism” industry in and around the Camp.

In recent years, the situation has not significantly changed. The widespread commercialization of the site continues, and, if anything, has increased (Engelhardt 117). It is not only locals who have sought to profit from the marketing of Dachau. A former Mayor, Lorenz Reitmeier, through the local tourist office, had tried to market the city of Dachau. In 1993, the mayor had a sign built at the entrance to Dachau Concentration Camp inviting visitors to "Visit Dachau, the 1200 year old artist's center with its castle and surrounding park, offering a splendid view of the country" (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 64). The advertising and signage installed by Mayor Reitmeier outraged many survivors as well as visitors who did not want the educational aspects of the memorial site to be diminished by advertising (Marcuse 337). By installing the advertisements that promoted the City of Dachau the Mayor used the "popularity" of the Concentration Camp for a purpose that was not educational and certainly did not contribute nor promote "inner reflection." Eventually a disgruntled visitor scrawled "HAVE YOU NO SHAME?" in both English and German, and the sign was removed, but not before Dachau authorities, and Mayor Reitmeier in particular, were accused of capitalizing on the Holocaust tragedy.

The incident of the sign fuelled new debates about the use of signage and advertising as issued by the mayor and/or City Council. Without consistent guidelines regarding signage in the vicinity of the Camp, both the city of the Dachau (including the tourist office) and private business continued to install signs that promoted the Dark Tourism industry that flourished at the Dachau Concentration Camp (see photos below). This is evident in the developments that have taken place regarding the advertising and private sponsorship of tourist attractions by the city of Dachau and private business.

Looking at city-issued maps and lists of city attractions at Dachau's main train station, one sees the evolution of the advertising of Dachau's tourist sites, of which the Camp easily remains the most popular attraction.



Figure 3: Old Directional sign at main train station in Dachau in 1995. Notice the lack of “attractions” and a lack of sponsorship/advertising on the sign (Marcuse (photo) 78).



Figure 4: New Directional Sign with updated “attractions” sponsored by McDonald's and City of Dachau. One of the six “attractions” is Dachau Concentration Camp in the upper right corner.

In addition to the updated signs at the main train station, Dachau City Hall has also updated their signage at the Concentration Camp site. The recently installed signs at the Camp—bigger than the sign of the memorial site itself—match the strictly-tourist inspired signs that visitors will discover in the city center of Dachau. While looking at the new sign near the main entrance to the memorial, tourists can use the sign issued by the city to locate restaurants, services, and other “attractions” in the city. They can also take the “shuttle bus free of charge from the concentration Camp memorial site to the historic town center and back” (City of Dachau shuttle bus/ Altstadt pamphlet). The city-installed signage encourages visitors to buy goods and services in Dachau. It also helps visitors locate the restaurants and other commercial enterprises that were built close to the Camp.





Figure 5 (previous page) and 6: New signs issued by City of Dachau at the memorial site. Notice interacting signs and lists of businesses, attractions and restaurants.

The signage incidents at Dachau are not the only developments that alarmed survivors and social commentators in the 1990s. In 1993, *McDonald's* was at the center of a controversy for giving out flyers in German and English in the parking lot of the memorial to promote their new restaurant that was built close to the Camp. This gesture provoked an immediate uproar. One of the most vocal groups to respond was a Christian lobby group based in Oceanside, California called *Shalom International*. Shalom International was founded in 1979 by a Christian theologian who was dismayed with deep-rooted Christian anti-Semitism. The founder, Frank Eiklor, wanted Christian churches to confront anti-Semitism and support and “defend Jewish people and the Jewish nation of Israel from hate” (Eiklor 1). As a self-professed “watchdog” of hate, their organization was furious with *McDonald's* for building a restaurant in the immediate vicinity of the Camp and then distributing flyers encouraging tourists to eat at

the restaurant. The organization's anger over the incident resulted in a public Campaign against the restaurant: "That *McDonald's* has chosen to exploit and trivialize and cash in on the Holocaust, is why we have created 10,000 bumper stickers that say: 'Dachau Death Camp is not Disneyland, Boycott *McDonald's*'" (Kunst 1). Despite the criticism *McDonald's* went ahead with the restaurant and, once it was opened the restaurant again distributed flyers in German and in English at the memorial parking lot against the wishes of Shalom International and the wishes of the director of the memorial. Furthermore, *McDonald's* continued to install advertising near the Camp and has installed advertisements at every directional sign on the roads leading to the Camp. It almost looks like *McDonald's* is the "official" sponsor of the Camp site because the directional indication almost always has the twin arches logo on the sign or at least in the immediate vicinity of the directional signs pointing tourists in the direction of the Camp. Yet again, the tourist industry—in which *McDonald's* plays an important part here—capitalises on and tries to stimulate tourist interest in the first Concentration Camp.

Although *McDonald's* was the most noteworthy business to be criticized for inappropriate contribution to Dark Tourism, its actions would probably not have been possible without the "contributions" made by previous entrepreneurs at the memorial site. As mentioned above, Mayor Reitmeier ensured that advertising would be allowed near the memorial when he directed City Hall to build the large sign marketing Dachau. In 1985 Mayor Reitmeier also convinced the memorial site to allow him to distribute free city tourist brochures within the Camp. Reitmeier and the City of Dachau were well informed that over 800,000 visitors (from at least 35 countries) came to visit the concentration Camp each year and he relished the opportunity to capitalize on their

tourist dollars (Stadt Dachau: Eine Stadt stellt sich vor [tourist pamphlet]). He once mentioned that it was one of the “highpoints in his Campaign to promote the ‘other Dachau’” (Marcuse, photo 69). The memorial site authorities were in a difficult position to stop the Mayor since they themselves sold postcards from the crematorium to tourists throughout the 1960s. Eventually additional actors and organizations would also try and market themselves to the tourists travelling to the former Concentration Camp site. These various businesses promoted the Holocaust because they stood to gain financially from the concentration Camp as a tourist site.



Figures 7-10: Developments and advertisements near the entrance to the memorial site. Note the controversial McDonald's top right.

Entrepreneurial developments throughout the 1960s-1990s thus generated the often unchecked growth of Dark Tourism in Dachau. The manner in which these

developments occurred shocked many onlookers yet has gone unnoticed by others. The wishes of survivors that a memorial site at the first Nazi Concentration Camp promote inner reflection and education continues to be challenged by a Dark Tourism phenomenon that remains largely uncontrolled.

CHAPTER FOUR

Krakow and Auschwitz: A Region of Dark Tourism

There are many visible signs of Dark Tourism both in Poland and in Germany. Without doubt one of the most cited and criticised Dark Tourist sites is the city of Krakow, Poland. One of the first things visitors to Krakow notice are the many references to the Holocaust and sites of Jewish suffering. Most of these references come in the form of tour advertisements to the former Jewish section of the city called Kazimierz. The Dark Tourism phenomenon became more apparent in 1993 after Stephen Spielberg released his popular film, *Schindler's List*. In many ways the 1993 film forced people to revisit this troubling chapter of twentieth century history, and ignited people's interest in travelling to Krakow to see the former Jewish section of the city. This Hollywood-inspired tourism has, to a degree, led to the emergence of what some consider petty "Schindler tourism." Economic activity has indeed flourished in the aftermath of the film (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 64). Many observers were troubled when tourism to Krakow peaked between 1993-95 and were suspicious of tourists' motives for travelling to Krakow and the outskirts of Auschwitz to explore where the movie was filmed (Cole 1). Their fears were made all the more acute when many tourists seemed more interested in the disused film sets for the Schindler production than in the "remaining cluster of synagogues [and] cemeteries" in Krakow (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 64). In fact, in 1994-95 there was a "Schindler tour" to show people the disused film sets, a tour that did not even stop at Auschwitz, Birkenau or Kazimierz. For many observers, this development amounts to no less than the exploitation of Jewish suffering and death under the Nazis.

Whereas interest in what transpired in the historic sites is to be welcomed, the ways in which these sites are now operated, including the tour-driven “Schindler tours” infuriates many survivors who are deeply concerned that their brethren’s death and horror is treated as a commodity, on sale to tourists. This is the ultimate insult, and one of the clearest examples of the unethical alliance between local commercial interests and Dark Tourism.

Every major tourist site or point of reference in Krakow—from John Paul II Airport to the tourist-saturated medieval town square—has advertisements featuring tour guides that proudly offer tours to see the “locations from Schindler’s List” and the old Jewish section of Krakow (Krakow Bike Tour). In 2005, there were more tours than I was able to count yet basically every tour company featured some form of “Schindler tour,” a tour which allows the tourist to “retrace Schindler’s List” (see, for example Krakow Tours: Point Tours and Travel). Some tours simply take the tourist on the “perfect route [for] the Schindler’s List production...and the trendy location of the buildings that witnessed shocking Holocaust history” (Cool Tour Company). These tours (often very crude ones) offer little if any educational component but offer a great deal of “attractions,” including the place Spielberg stayed while filming, where his studio was, and which streets he visited when he first arrived in Krakow and started looking for potential filming areas in Kazimierz. The famous stop-off points on Schindler tours are, as one might expect, settings for the film. On my own particular tour I was shown where a girl hid from Nazi oppressors, not in real life but in the film, and where scenes were filmed at the Oskar Schindler factory, a place that was a huge highlight for the tour guides and the tourists alike. Although my particular tour stopped at or near other historical points of interest, little beyond the film was discussed. An important

educational opportunity was lost, as was, one might argue, the moral and pedagogical responsibility of the organizers.

As my own tour progressed one could not help but notice all the additional tour guides offering similar “Schindler tours.” Some are easy to spot in their small golf carts with large promotional advertisements. Others are less noticeable since there are numerous small, local entrepreneurs who take small groups throughout the district of Kazimierz and speak a variety of languages. It is easy to observe that as these tours walk through Kamieroz very few guides take the time to stop and talk about the mainstays of the former community, such as the major synagogues, local personalities, local history and the many unique Jewish shops and former centers. For many tourists the film is the reality, the re-enactment is the real history (Karpf 27). In this respect, most Schindler tours dwarf and neglect the former Jewish community in favour of showing the visitor sites that are more closely associated with projected popular film culture rather than lived history (Shandler 162). Clearly, these tours exemplify “popular” attraction tourism and little more.

The effects of *Schindler's List* are still being felt in Krakow and debate continues regarding the ramifications of Dark Tourism and the transmission of the Holocaust legacy. Perhaps one of the best summaries of how *Schindler's List* has fuelled Dark Tourism in general and “*Schindler's List* tourism” and a so-called “*Schindler's List* Effect” in particular is expressed by Tim Cole:

That this film [*Schindler's List*] has attained the status of reality in its own right, can be seen in the current popularity of ‘*Schindler's List* tours’ of the site of the Krakow Ghetto and nearby Plaszow labour camp...And while Spielberg filmed his movie there because that is where ghetto was, for the ‘*Schindler's List* tourists’ it is the film location—rather than the ghetto—that is being visited, because the virtual reality of Spielberg’s

'Holocaust' is more real than the 'Holocaust' of history. It is that blurring of image and reality that has led to an outpouring of critical comments on Spielberg's movie and the subsequent '*Schindler's List* Effect' (Cole 75).

Without entering the numerous debates about the merits or shortcomings of the film, it has clearly made Krakow a popular Holocaust and Dark Tourism destination (for a thorough investigation of the many debates and criticisms of the film one should consult "Spielberg's Holocaust: Critical Perspectives on *Schindler's List*" by Yosefa Loshitzky). Undoubtedly, the film competes with the "official history" and has played a major role in shaping Holocaust memory to a generation who did not experience the Holocaust era firsthand. By focusing heavily on the film site, a site of historical "re-enactment," the more significant Holocaust sites in Krakow and the vicinity of the city are reduced for the visitor seeking to find the Holocaust they learned about by watching Spielberg's film. Unintentional as the phenomenon may be, the film thus laid the foundation for the further commodification of the Holocaust era, especially in Krakow.

As one conducts Dark Tourism research in Krakow it is impossible to ignore an additional tour that complements and perhaps rivals the "Schindler tours"—day tours to nearby Auschwitz. Countless tours to Auschwitz are advertised throughout Krakow, particularly in the main tourist areas. There are also many private individuals who offer quick trips to the visitor; it is nearly impossible to speculate how many of these enterprises may be in existence. Most taxi drivers will happily take a visitor to Auschwitz for roughly 60 Euros. Most tour companies from the shady to the more professional allow the visitor no more than two hours, barely enough time to cover Auschwitz and definitely not enough time to view Auschwitz *and* Birkenau (Auschwitz II), the major execution site roughly two kilometres away from Auschwitz I. It has long

been argued that the day trip from Krakow to Auschwitz is more of a “curiosity trip” than an educational endeavour, a trip that is usually made on impulse rather than a genuine attempt to reflect on the significance and magnitude of the Holocaust (Dwork and Van Pelt, 1994, 242). Under these circumstances, it is hard to identify the “educational” component day tours to Auschwitz. Like the Schindler tours, these tours seem to be more spectacle, an excursion often taken to check off an inevitable local attraction rather than to confront the horrors of the recent past.

It would be difficult for a tourist in Krakow not to get caught up in the “buzz” about going to Auschwitz. There are advertisements for nearby Auschwitz all over the city. Many talk about the tour as if it is the centerpiece of local entertainment. Many signs invite the visitor, in fact encourage the visitor, by saying things like “The Site of the Greatest Mass Murder in Human History... Tours Depart Daily!” This kind of “marketing” entices the visitor not to “miss out” on such an “attraction.” Many of these advertisements “sell” their tours around popular Holocaust imagery. For instance the “Unlimited Travel Center” offers the following:



Figure 1 (previous page): Holocaust tour with use of Holocaust Imagery. Itinerary printed below. Note the “highlights” of the tour.

GUIDED TOURS TO:
AUSCHWITZ- BIRKENAU
DEATH CAMPS

EVERY DAY
FROM YOUR HOSTEL
AT 9:30 a.m.

SIGN UP AT THE RECEPTION

THE PRICE for the tour (100zl) INCLUDES:

- Transport to and from **Auschwitz-Birkenau**
- Professional English-Speaking guide** provided by the museum
- Visiting the exhibition and structure of Auschwitz I
- Visiting the area of Auschwitz II (Birkenau) as well as the Barracks, loading ramp and the remnants of the gas chambers and the crematories

THE ENTIRE TOUR WILL LAST APPROX. 6 HOURS

This particular tour is advertised alongside other Polish attractions such as the Wieliczka Salt Mine and local breweries. Both sites are advertised beside each other simply as tourist sites without much to differentiate between them. The Auschwitz tour invokes familiar Holocaust sites such as the “barracks, loading ramps, gas chambers and crematories” in its advertising campaign. Between the Schindler tour and the energetic guides hoping to make money off the “excitement” of taking people to Auschwitz on a quick tour, death and horror have been reduced to popular commodities on sale to tourists, many of whom are engaging in and supporting Dark Tourism in Krakow.

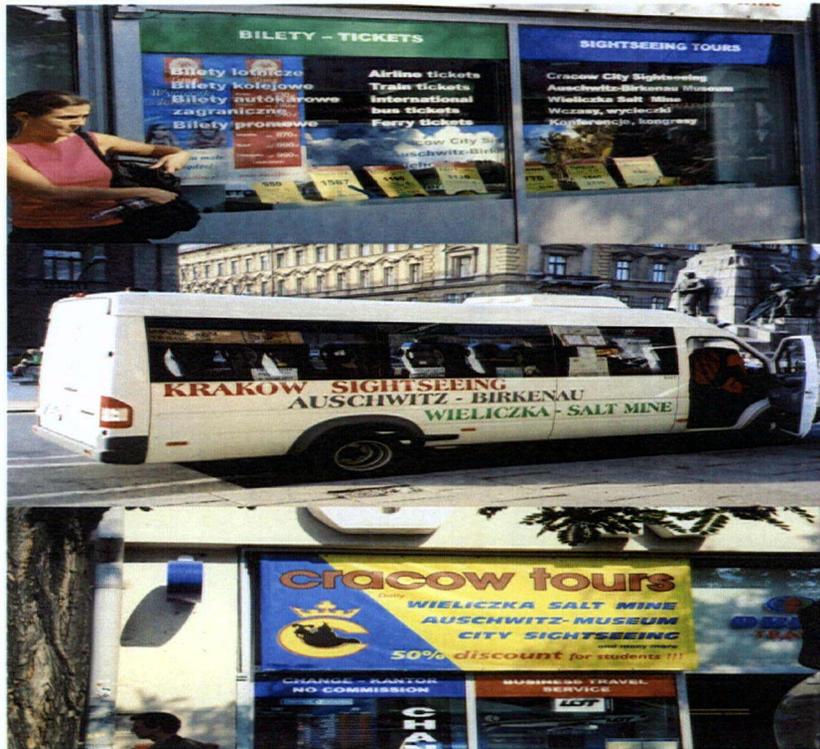


Figure 2: Random tour bus companies offering day trips to Auschwitz

There are additional instances of Dark Tourism in Krakow. In addition to the tour guides, there are numerous souvenir sellers who have entrenched themselves throughout the Jewish district of Kazimierz. These vendors sell everything from film to other common travel items; however, their main “products” are history related items, many with a *Schindler’s List* and/or Holocaust theme. Interestingly enough, many private vendors sell the same items one would find in one of the local educational Jewish centers and synagogues—such as local history books—but almost always at a higher price. Many of these items focus though on *Schindler*-related themes which the education centers do not sell. A common example would be a Spielberg picture or postcard, usually of him filming the movie. There are several private outlets that try and blend Holocaust related books *and* tours that retrace *Schindler’s List*. Nonetheless, all of the vendors in the area feature a wide variety of postcards, books, music, statues, paintings, wooden

carvings, and other Jewish and Holocaust related items. Even the non-Holocaust specific items seem to have been “put on the map” by the tourists who came to Kazimierz curious or fascinated by past Holocaust related events within the district of Kazimierz. This situation confirms yet again the existence of a flourishing consumer and market-driven Dark Tourism trade in Krakow.

Dark Tourism in Auschwitz

In other Polish jurisdictions observers can find additional instances of Dark Tourism. This is especially true in the small Polish Village of Oswiecim roughly 33 miles west of Krakow. Few people recognize the importance of Oswiecim unless of course it is referred to by its German name, *Auschwitz*. Going to Auschwitz is an undertaking that is arguably more emotional than going to the other dark sites. As the researcher and historian William F.S. Miles recently wrote, Dark Tourism in Auschwitz is the darkest of dark tourism:

When you visit the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. (USHMM), you are engaging in what specialists call “dark tourism”—travel to a site associated with atrocity or public tragedy. But you are not *at* the scene of the crime. When you enter a former concentration camp in Europe that has been converted into a museum, then you are going a step beyond. Call it “darker tourism” (Miles, 2005, 11).

Despite the sixty years that have elapsed since the liberation, the task of “traveling to the most infamous extermination camp over railway tracks might be too virtual a method of

conveyance” for many researchers trying to discover more about the Dark Tourism phenomenon in Oswiecim (Miles, 2001, 11). The modern railway lines often travel the same routes used to transport former prisoners, an uncomfortable experience for most researchers. Once in Oswiecim one encounters a plethora of activities and enterprises that confirm the flourishing Dark Tourism trade in arguably the most infamous former Nazi concentration camp.

Critics of Dark Tourism repeatedly cite Oswiecim for engaging in and supporting the less ethical aspects of the tourism industry that flourishes off the “popularity” of the camp. Auschwitz is arguably the best known dark site of the Holocaust and probably the most known dark site in the World. Plans for the memorialization of Auschwitz were discussed by several prisoners while interned at the camp before liberation. However, the first formal request for a museum was made by the Auschwitz survivor Alfred Fiderkiewicz in December 1945 (Engelhardt 160-161). A permanent exhibition was opened in June 1946 and soon afterwards a Soviet-inspired Polish government passed an act that officially established the “State Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau... on the site of the former Nazi concentration camp” (Engelhardt 162). The museum was entrusted with a mandate to commemorate “Polish martyrdom” in the Second World War. Over time the museum recruited some former inmates who had organized themselves in 1954 as the International Auschwitz Committee (IAC). Although many of the members were Jewish they were encouraged to identify themselves as “resistance fighters and socialists” (Young, 1993, 130). The Holocaust had yet to be “discovered” or acknowledged in the mid-1940s but the site was becoming a popular ideological tool in the escalating Cold

War as the postwar Polish government popularised the site to try and score an ideological advantage (Hilberg 21).

For most of the Cold War, Poland was governed by an alliance of communists and socialists that had very little support and was “kept in power by the bayonets of Soviet forces” (Bauer 71). As mentioned above, the Soviet-inspired Polish government was not prepared to recognize Polish Holocaust sites as places of “Jewish” tragedy. This, despite the fact that, as historian Jon Bridgman asserts, “Ninety-five percent of the Jews who came into the clutches of the SS were dead by May 1945” (Bridgman 14). Until the 1990s the Polish authorities refused to issue any sort of commemoration plaques at Auschwitz that acknowledged this largely Jewish tragedy (Milton 130). Until the installation of updated signage in 1993 Polish authorities maintained a false inscription (in twenty different languages) at Birkenau that “four million people suffered and died here at the hands of the Nazi murders between the years 1940 and 1945” (Cole 99-100). Aside from the numbers being grossly inaccurate (the more accepted number is 1.5 million [Gilbert 147]), the authorities used the site, and specifically the false signage at the site, to reinforce the notion that the Communists were ideologically “superior” to the Fascists to ignore the underlying truth that the site was the center of Jewish death and horror, not the “triumph” of so-called “humane” Communists in their “great and noble” struggle over the Fascists (Klier 289). Clearly, the Soviet- inspired Polish government “exploited” the tragedy to try and gain an ideological advantage during the Cold War. However, the Polish government also attracted sharp criticism abroad. As the west would discover after the Eichmann trial, Auschwitz was the primary execution site of

European Jewry. The former concentration camp was thus used first as an ideological tool in the Cold War.

Although the Soviet bias at Auschwitz was revised after 1993, Dark Tourism continues to popularize the Holocaust, but again at the expense of historical authenticity. To “make it easier” for tourists, many of the artefacts from Birkenau have been relocated to Auschwitz I, including part of the crematoria and other items such as hair, confiscated glasses, clothes, suitcases, etc. To some degree this gives Auschwitz a “new identity and ‘blurs’ the location of the actual site of mass execution” (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 58). More generally, the display of the camps poses additional problems considering that:

Interpretation of such elemental sites of European history continually has to be managed with care. Its relationship to tourism and potential appearance as skeptical and entertainment are problematic. This situation becomes acute particularly when offered to a tourist public who are inevitably curious about suffering, horror and death. Horror and death have become established commodities, on sale to tourists who have an enduring appetite for the darkest elements of human history (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 58).

The rearrangement of historical sites—especially Nazi genocide centers—is difficult for survivors to accept. In this case, the lure of accessibility for tourists has been deemed more important than historical authenticity. The museum at Auschwitz I has thus “re-presented the past...for the present” (Lang 100).

Signage and commodification are not the only issues debated in the present orientation of Auschwitz. An additional emotionally-charged issue has been (and continues to be) the “boundaries issue,” that is, how the traditional boundaries of the camps have been allowed to change to accommodate tourists and economic enterprises. Generally speaking, many of the more notorious camps, such as Auschwitz, have been added to the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Sites under the direction of victims

groups such as the International Auschwitz Committee (IAC) which occasionally stalls, or restricts the transformation of the camps' boundaries. Developments within Auschwitz-Birkenau sparked debate regarding traditional and current camp boundaries and planned residential and commercial expansions that were slated to be developed within or in the immediate vicinity of the camp. In many of what were the forty sub-camps that formed part of the Auschwitz-Birkenau system, camps such as Oswiecim-Brzezinka and Monowice (Buna), these restrictions have been relaxed and land has been sold off or leased for economic purposes. In fact, ninety percent of the buildings on the site—all of which have been erected for economic reasons—have been built since 1945 (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 50) a testament to the ongoing development. As such, historical authenticity has been lost as former camp boundaries either disappear completely or diminish in size. This is especially noticeable in Auschwitz I which has been altered in order to accommodate tourists and to house Polish Army officers and low-income residents. Few tourists ever notice that part of the current multi-use entry building is actually the former Auschwitz I prisoners reception center. In this facility, victims were “systemically registered, tattooed, surrendered their valuables, undressed, shaved, showered, and were left to dress in the regulation stripped uniform of incarceration” (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 52). The commodification process has transformed this former prisoner reception center into a tourist reception center that incorporates a post office, restaurant, cafeteria, currency exchange, cinema, retail outlets, hotel and a conference room, most of which cater to tourists (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 51). Regardless of whether these re-developments always serve the tourist or not, they

confirm the commercialisation of Dark Sites, a process that is difficult to halt considering the lax restrictions that allowed redevelopment in many of Auschwitz's sub-camps.

There is widespread disgust among many survivors who are appalled at how Auschwitz-Birkenau is "managed." Some survivors, including Elie Wiesel and Primo Levi have questioned the ability of Auschwitz-Birkenau to serve as a "place of remembrance" especially when tourists confront the site on the "prescribed half-day excursion" (Bergoffen 37). For many visitors their trip to Auschwitz-Birkenau is even less than the "prescribed half-day excursion" since many groups "rush through" on a ninety-minute tour without being debriefed, and without being asked to be respectful of what transpired at the camps (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 61). When the authors John Lennon and Malcolm Foley travelled to Poland to do research on their book "Dark Tourism," they were appalled to witness the following events:

[the] commodification of the process of visiting the camp became clear. Groups of school children were taking pictures of each other, parents were photographing their children at the gates of Birkenau and, indeed, school parties were sitting on the ruins of the crematorium eating sandwiches. One is also aware that the tourists follow a relatively short itinerary of approximately 90 minutes if they are part of an organized party. (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 61).

These speed tours are problematic, especially when coupled with the emergence of commercial activity, within the boundary of the camp, within former boundaries, and at the current (and historical) main entrance to Auschwitz I. There are currently numerous private retail outlets, both on the grounds and in the vicinity, that sell a variety of items to tourists and locals alike. Auschwitz has become an "attraction" that has "swelled visitor numbers and catalyzed economic activity" as vendors now sell everything from hot dogs, books, postcards, film, pottery and other such "souvenirs" (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 63).

Although officials at the camp do not feel that they are involved in running a “mass-tourism enterprise” it is difficult to overlook the numerous commercial outfits that are independently owned and operated at Auschwitz I and immediate vicinity (Keil 484). On my recent trip to Auschwitz I counted at least four privately owned retailers at Auschwitz I including a retail/souvenirs outlet in the camp’s former laundry quarters. Across the street from the main entrance (well within the former boundaries of the camp) there is a mall with restaurants and additional souvenir sellers that sell everything Holocaust and everything Polish. Polish flags, mugs, maps and books about the Polish Pope John Paul II are placed next to postcards of the Auschwitz crematoria as if all the items were interrelated. In the future these commercial enterprises both within and around the camp will undoubtedly increase. In fact, in 1996 a German- Polish company tried to build a supermarket near the camp entrance (Krajewski 43).

Auschwitz has been and continues to be a major tourist attraction. Since the museum opened in 1946 over 26,000,000 million people have visited Auschwitz (Swiebocki 17). Between 500,000 and 750,000 people visit Auschwitz each year (Lennon and Foley, 2000, 28). These numbers have not been lost on Polish administrations, local retailers and commercial enterprises. The majority of visitors are from Poland, Germany, the USA, Italy, Israel, England and France. Many commentators have noted that in some of the aforementioned countries, particularly the USA and Israel, public consciousness of the Holocaust has “bordered on obsession” and certainly this has fuelled public knowledge and a desire to visit sites such as Auschwitz (Weinstein 152). The phenomenon of Dark Tourism shows no signs of slowing down.

CHAPTER FIVE:

Conclusion

At first there were few who knew about the Holocaust. In the first months and years after the last survivors were liberated little was known publicly about what transpired in the camps and few large-scale attempts were made to inform an ignorant public about the atrocities committed in occupied Europe by the Nazis. A few short documentaries were made about the “piles of rotting bodies” and the burning of bodies and former barracks to ward off disease. Instead of confronting the Holocaust the world media turned its attention to the escalating Cold War and the Nuremberg trials. All this would change on May 23, 1960 when Israeli Prime Minister Ben-Gurion electrified his nation and the world with his announcement that Israeli agents had caught Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann in Argentina. The media subsequently turned its attention to Jerusalem where the trial began the following April and lasted until August 1961. The Eichmann trial unfolded with hundreds of Jews giving thorough testimony of the atrocities committed against them by the Nazis. The world watched and followed the trial in horrified fascination.

Clearly the seeds of the fascination with the Holocaust had begun. It was in this atmosphere that one of the first academic books on the Holocaust was written by Raul Hilberg. Another academic, Hannah Arendt, covered the trial for the *New Yorker* and would eventually publish a mini-series and book about the proceedings. In the initial years after the Eichmann trial numerous publishers released many books on the

Holocaust that only a few years earlier would have failed to succeed in the market. The Eichmann trial created a fascination with the Holocaust and that fascination created a market for Holocaust literature. For example, the *Diary of Anne Frank* has since been translated into 67 languages and is thought to be the most widely read book in the world. The book demonstrates how the Holocaust can be commercialised by a fascinated worldwide audience. As the public interest in the Holocaust grew, so did the demand for additional books. The public interest and public pressure to commemorate the victims led to calls for the Holocaust to become a part of the curriculum in high schools and post-secondary education systems around the world, especially in North America and Western Europe. This process ensured a profitable market for publishers seeking to fill the academic and general publics' requests to learn more about the Holocaust.

As an era of easier mass travel approached, the public's curiosity about the Holocaust—fuelled by additional books and popular movies such as *Schindler's List*—intensified. The interest in the tragedy remained at a time when it became easier to travel to these dark sites. It has been observed by several scholars in "Tourism Studies" that people were drawn to dark sites of the Holocaust that featured death and disaster in much the same way they were drawn to other dark sites such as the Somme, Vimy Ridge, and the D-Day beaches of Normandy. In 2000, the academics Lennon and Foley coined this phenomenon "Dark Tourism" and soon after other academics would proclaim that visitations to sites of the Holocaust was the "darkest" of Dark Tourism.

Although the term Dark Tourism was developed in 2000 the phenomenon, like many phenomena predated its christening. However, that is not to say that the Dark Tourism phenomenon existed in the manner it does today, ten or even twenty years ago.

As chronicled in this thesis using the examples of Dachau, Krakow and Auschwitz, the Dark Tourism phenomenon developed unsystematically in all three places. There are similarities and differences in all three. The three sites have to some degree tried, to some degree failed, and to some degree tried with the intention to fail, to integrate the victimised into some narrative of official memory cultures. It has thus been, and continues to be, a competition among many interests for the memory that is the Holocaust. In all three places there has always been, and continues to be, a struggle to penetrate individual perceptions of the Holocaust and bridge the wide gap between what an individual's perceptions are compared with the interpretations given at the memorials. However, in the information age the role of the so-called "official commemorative agencies" is challenged and complemented by domestic and foreign agents who seek to transmit the legacy of the Holocaust through various religious, cultural and commercial realms.

As chronicled throughout this paper, the Dark Tourism phenomenon developed over time in the three aforementioned places. In Dachau, city officials continued to bemoan the pre-war City Councils decision to enthusiastically lobby the Bavarian State for six years to have the Concentration Camp (the first of the Concentration Camps built) annexed into the City of Dachau. Throughout the late 1940s and early 1950s the City authorities vetoed, delayed or simply ignored domestic and international requests for a fitting memorial to promote "inner reflection and education." During this time, individuals started to give tours on their own, and usually for a fee, to the dismay of both pro-memorial and anti-memorial groups. With few guidelines in place, the tours increased in frequency, Dachau became more known and additional tours and tourist

services started to establish themselves in the vicinity of the camp. Today the memorial is visited by roughly 750,000 people each year and is still a source of debate. The current debates are about the commercialisation and marketing by the City and by private enterprise that caters to the international tourist. Thus, the ever-changing Dark Tourism phenomenon still thrives in Dachau and continues to undermine the wishes of many onlookers seeking a “worthy memorial that promotes inner reflection and education.”

Two additional centers of Dark Tourism are Krakow and Auschwitz. Tourism to Krakow swelled after the release of Steven Spielberg’s 1993 film *Schindler’s List*. There are currently many “Schindler’s List tours” that will allow the tourist to retrace the settings for the film production. This development has essentially altered the manner in which the Holocaust is remembered. For many of these tourists, the former film set is the reality, Spielberg’s re-creation the real history. As such, these Schindler tours overlook the mainstays of the former community in favour of featuring sites associated with popular culture. The film has clearly made Krakow a popular Dark Tourism destination and laid the groundwork for the commodification of the Holocaust in the Krakow region of Poland. Complementing the Schindler tours are numerous tour operators who take tourists on quick trips to Auschwitz. The educational component of what has been called “impulse curiosity trips” continues to be questioned. Regardless, Krakow continues to demonstrate how history can be commercialised and commodified and is an epicentre of the Dark Tourism phenomenon in Poland.

The last example used in this paper to illustrate the flourishing Dark Tourism phenomenon is arguably the most known site, Auschwitz-Birkenau. Most researchers are unanimous that Auschwitz is the “darkest” of the dark sites. The competition for the

right to interpret Auschwitz has always been a controversial and unresolved issue. After the liberation, the Soviets downplayed the reality that Auschwitz was largely a Jewish tragedy. In short, Soviet authorities overlooked the fact that over ninety-five percent of the victims were Jewish and used the site to emphasize the notion that the “humane” Communists were ideologically superior to the Fascists. Throughout the Cold War, Soviet authorities maintained false inscriptions—in twenty different languages—to try and score ideological advantages. The Soviet bias was revised after 1993, however, the competition over the right to interpret the memorial continues. In fact, an intensified Dark Tourism phenomenon created additional controversies. To make things easier for tourists, artefacts have been moved and Auschwitz I has therefore re-presented the past for the present, blurring the main execution site, Birkenau. Tourists’ concerns and commodification have been deemed more important than maintaining historical authenticity. In this environment the boundaries of the camp have been changed and economic enterprises have entrenched themselves within the camp and in the immediate vicinity. In fact, the former prisoner reception center is now a facility that has a restaurant, bar, currency exchange, post office and retail outlets. A perceived need to serve the tourist has altered the site forever.

Over 26,000,000 million people have visited Auschwitz; between 500,000 and 750,000 people visit annually. These numbers have never been lost on Polish administrations (both past and present), local retailers and commercial enterprises hoping to “move in.” The majority of visitors are from Poland, Italy, Germany, England, France, Israel and the United States. In many of these aforementioned countries, particularly in the latter two, public consciousness of the Holocaust has bordered on obsession since

they “learned” about the Holocaust after the Eichmann trial. Since the early 1960s this fascinated public has contributed to the constantly changing Dark Tourism phenomenon. The phenomenon of Dark Tourism shows no signs of slowing down, as many different interests and groups continue to struggle for the right to interpret one of humankind’s biggest tragedies. In this environment the Dark Tourism phenomenon continues, lamentably with rampant commercialisation.

Bibliography

Bauer, Yehuda. Out of the Ashes: The Impact of American Jews on Post-Holocaust European Jewry. New York: Pergamon Press, 1989.

Bartov, Omer. "Reception and Perception: Goldhagen's Holocaust and the World." In The Goldhagen Effect. Ed. Geoff Eley. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2000. 33-87.

Berger, Ronald. Fathoming the Holocaust: A Social Problems Approach. New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 2002.

Bergoffen, Debra. "Improper Sites." In Contemporary Portrayals of Auschwitz: Philosophical Challenges. Ed. Alan Rosenberg et al. New York: Humanity Books, 2000. 27-42.

Burleigh, Michael. Ethics and Extermination: Reflections on Nazi Genocide. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Bridgman, Jon. The End of the Holocaust: The Liberation of the Camps. Portland, Oregon: Areopagitica Press, 1990.

Carrier, Peter. Holocaust Monuments and National Memory Cultures in France and Germany since 1989. New York: Berghahn, 2005.

Clendinnen, Inga. Reading the Holocaust. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Cole, Tim. Selling the Holocaust: From Auschwitz to Schindler how History is Bought Packaged and Sold. London: Duckworth, 1999. (This book is more commonly known by its alternative title: Images of the Holocaust: The Myth of 'Shoah Business.' London: Duckworth, 1999.)

Cool Tour Company (tourist pamphlet). Krakow: np. (obtained October 2005).

Distel, Barbara. Dachau Concentration Camp. Dachau: Comité International de Dachau, 1972.

Doneson, Judith. "The Use of Film in Teaching about the Holocaust." In The Holocaust in University Teaching. Ed. Gideon Shimoni. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1991. 15-23.

- Dwork, Debórah and Robert Jan Van Pelt. "Reclaiming Auschwitz." In Holocaust Remembrance: The Shapes of Memory. Ed. Geoffrey Hartman. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1994. 232-251.
- Dwork, Debórah and Robert Jan Van Pelt. Holocaust: A History. New York: Norton, 2002.
- Eiklor, Frank. "About Us." Shalom International. Online: Internet. 7 Feb. 2006. www.shalom-online.com
- Engelhardt, Isabelle. A Topography of Memory: Representations of the Holocaust at Dachau and Buchenwald in Comparison with Auschwitz, Yad Vashem and Washington, DC. New York: Peter Lang, 2002.
- Finkelstein, Norman. The Holocaust Industry: Reflections on the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering. New York: Verso, 2003.
- Friedlander, Saul. Memory, History, and the Extermination of the Jews of Europe. Indianapolis: Indiana University State Press, 1993.
- Gilbert, Martin. Holocaust Journey: Traveling in Search of the Past. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1997.
- Goldschläger, Alain. "History, Film, and Fiction: Jews in American Movies." In Building History: The Shoah in Art, Memory, and Myth. Ed. Peter Daily et al. New York: Peter Lang, 2001. 149-163.
- Guided Tours to Auschwitz-Birkenau (tourist pamphlet). Krakow: Unlimited Travel Center. (obtained October 2005).
- Haider, Siegfried and Gerhart Marckhwott. Memorial Sites for Concentration Camp Victims in Upper Austria. Trans. Barbara Zehetmayr and James Zimmer. Linz, Austria: Archives of Upper Austria (on behalf of Land Upper Austria), 2002.
- Hilberg, Raul. "Developments in the Historiography of the Holocaust." In Comprehending the Holocaust. Ed. Asher Cohen et al. Berlin: Verlag Peter Lang, 1988. 21-44.
- Hoffman, Eva. After Such Knowledge: Memory, History, and the Legacy of the Holocaust. New York: Public Affairs, 2004.
- Horowitz, Rosemary. Literacy and Cultural Transmission in the Reading, Writing and Rewriting of Jewish Memorial Books. San Francisco: Austin and Winfield, 1998.
- Jones, Malcolm and Ray Sawhill. "A Classic or a Hoax?" Newsweek 16 Nov. 1998: 84.

- Karpf, Anne. "The Last Jews of Krakow Cringe." The Guardian 28 Oct. 1995: 27.
- Keil, Chris. "Sightseeing in the Mansions of the Dead." Social and Cultural Geography. Vol. 6 (August 2005): 479-494.
- Klier, John. "The Holocaust and the Soviet Union." In The Historiography of the Holocaust. Ed. Dan Stone. New York: Macmillan, 2004. 276-295.
- Kozol, Jonathan. "Children of the Camps," Review of Fragments: Memories of a Wartime Childhood, by Benjamin Wilkomirski." The Nation. 28 Oct. 1996: 24.
- Krajewski, Stanislaw. Poland and the Jews: Reflections of a Polish Jew. Krakow: Austeria, 2005.
- Krakow Bike Tours (tourist pamphlet). Krakow: np. (obtained October 2005).
- Krakow Tours (tourist pamphlet). Krakow: Point Tours and Travel. (obtained October 2005).
- Kunst, Bob. "Dachau Death Camp is not Disneyland, Boycott *McDonald's*" Shalom International (Press Release). Miami Beach, Florida. 19 April 1993.
- Kushner, Tony. The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination: A Social and Cultural History. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1994.
- LaCapra, Dominick. History and Memory after Auschwitz. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1998.
- LaCapra, Dominick. Writing History, Writing Trauma. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.
- Lang, Berel. Post-Holocaust: Interpretation, Misinterpretation and the Claims of History. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2005.
- Lennon, John and Malcolm Foley. "Interpretation of the Unimaginable: The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington D.C., and 'Dark Tourism.'" Journal of Travel Research. 38 (Aug. 1999): 46-50.
- Lennon, John and Malcolm Foley. Dark Tourism: The Attraction of Death and Disaster. New York: Continuum, 2000.
- Lennon, John. "Journeys into Understanding." The Guardian. 23 Oct. 2005: 16-17.
- Locke, Hubert. "Closing Remarks." In Confronting the Holocaust: A Mandate for the 21st Century. Ed. Jan Colijn and Marcia Sachs Littell. Studies in the Shoah. Vol. XIX. New York: University Press of America, 1997. 169-174.

- Marcuse, Harold. Legacies of Dachau: The Uses and Abuses of a Concentration Camp, 1933-2001. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- “Memorial Place (Gedächtnisstätte) or Tourist Attraction?” Nordpress-Standard 15 July 1952: A1.
- Miles, William. “Touring Auschwitz.” Midstream. (April 2001):11-12.
- Miles, William. “Cadaver Worlds.” Midstream. (May/June 2005):11-13.
- Milton, Sybil and Ira Nowinski. In Fitting Memory: The Art and Politics of Holocaust Memorials. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991.
- Musiol, Teodor. Dachau: 1933-1945. Katowice: Slaski Institute, 1968.
- Novick, Peter. The Holocaust in American Life. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1999.
- Neuhäusler, Johannes. What was it like in the Concentration Camp at Dachau? Munich: Trustees for the Monument of Atonement in the Concentration Camp at Dachau, 2004.
- Richardi, Hans- Günter, Eleonore Philipp and Monika Lücking. Dachau: A Guide to its Contemporary History. Dachau: City of Dachau: Office of Cultural Affairs, Tourism and Contemporary History, 2001.
- Rojek, Chris. Ways of Escape: Modern Transformations in Leisure and Travel. London: Macmillan, 1993.
- Rojek, Chris and John Urry. Touring Cultures: Transformations in Travel and Theory. London: Routledge, 1997.
- Sachar, Howard. A History of Jews in America. New York: Vintage Books, 1993.
- Salamon, Julie. “Childhood’s End” Review of Fragments: Memories of a Wartime Childhood, by Benjamin Wilkomirski. New York Times Book Review. 12 Jan. 1997: 9.
- Seaton, A.V. “War and Thanatourism: Waterloo 1815-1914.” Annals of Tourism Research. 26 (January 1999): 130-158.
- Shandler, Jeffrey. “Schindler’s Discourse: America Discusses the Holocaust and Its Meditation, from NBC’s Miniseries to Spielberg’s Film.” In Spielberg’s Holocaust: Critical Perspectives on Schindler’s List. Ed. Yosefa Loshitzky. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1997. 153-168.
- Shuttle-Bus Stadt Dachau (tourist pamphlet). Dachau: Dachau Tourist Information, June 14th- August 13, 2005.

Sightseeing in City of Dachau (tourist pamphlet). Dachau: Dachau Tourist Information, 2005.

Stadt Dachau: Eine Stadt stellt sich vor (tourist pamphlet). Dachau: Dachau Tourist Information, 2005.

Strange, Carolyn. "Symbolic Commemoration: The Stories of Kalaupapa." History and Memory. 16 (Spring/Summer 2004): 86-117.

Swiebocki, Henryk and Teresa. Auschwitz: The Residence of Death. Trans. William Brand. Krakow-Oswiecim: Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, 2003.

Weinstein, Andrew. "Art after Auschwitz and the Necessity of a Postmodern Modernism." In Contemporary Portrayals of Auschwitz: Philosophical Challenges. Ed. Alan Rosenberg et al. New York: Humanity Books, 2000. 151-167.

Weissman, Gary. Fantasies of Witnessing: Postwar Efforts to Experience the Holocaust. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2004.

Wiesel, Elie. "The Holocaust as Literary Inspiration." In Dimensions of the Holocaust. Ed. Elliot Lefkowitz. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1990. 4-19.

Young, James. Writing and Reading the Holocaust. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988.

Young, James. The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.

Zelizer, Barbie. Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory Through the Camera's Eye. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Zimmerman, Joshua, ed. "Introduction: Changing Perceptions in the Historiography of Polish-Jewish Relations during the Second World War." In Contested Memories: Poles and Jews During the Holocaust and its Aftermath. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2003. 1-16.