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|   |  |              |   |
|---|--|--------------|---|
| Study programme:  | Tourism Masters 2015-2017  |              |   |
| Semester:   | 10   |              |   |
| Exam Title:   | Does location affect the way WW2 related dark tourism destinations see and present themselves and their historical subjects to visitors? |              |   |
| Name, Date of birth/<br>Names, Dates of birth of group members:   | Name(s)  | Study number | Date of birth (not CPR number – only 6 numbers: dd/mm/yy) |
|   | Flemming Nielsen   | 20150789     | 180666  |
|   |  |              |   |
|   |  |              |   |
|   |  |              |   |
| Hand in date:   | 31/07/2017   |              |   |
| Project title /Synopsis Title/Thesis Title  | Does location affect the way WW2 related dark tourism destinations see and present themselves and their historical subjects to visitors? |              |   |
| According to the study regulations, the maximum number of keystrokes of the paper is:   | 192,000  |              |   |
| Number of keystrokes (one standard page = 2400 keystrokes, including spaces) (table of contents, bibliography and appendix do not count)* | 191,103  |              |   |
| Supervisor (project/synopsis/thesis):   | Gunvor Riber Larsen  |              |   |

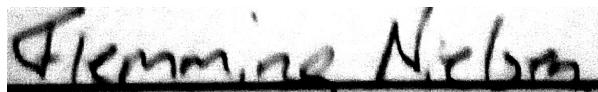
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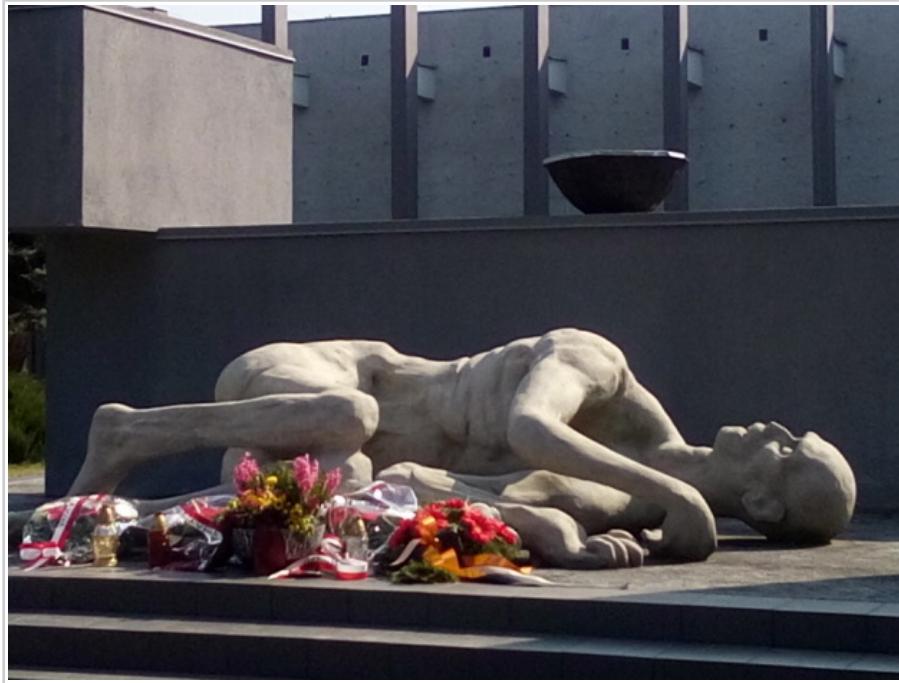
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# **Dark tourism**

***An analysis of different WW2 locations in Poland, Germany and Denmark***



***Does location affect the way WW2 related dark tourism destinations see and present themselves and their historical subjects to visitors?***

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Flemming Nielsen, student no.: 20150789         |  |
| Tourism masters 2017                            |  |
| Aalborg University - Culture and Global Studies |  |
| Supervisor: Gunvor Riber Larsen                 |  |
| Deadline: 31/07-2017                            | Master Thesis: 10 <sup>th</sup> semester |
| Key-strokes: 191,103                            | Pages: 123                               |

Photo on the cover:

Memorial for WW2 victims, at Stalag Luft III, Poland, 2017

(Own photo, photo allowed according to Polish law regarding freedom of panorama)

*The human word has incredible power.  
Words create history, words form thoughts,  
the thoughts that create the word.  
It is the word that forms history, reality.*

(Pope Benedictus XVI, 2008)

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## Abstract

The question researched in this paper is: How does location affect the way World War 2-related dark tourism destinations see and present themselves and their historical subjects to visitors?

The paper deals with dark tourism and WW2 destinations and discusses how museums and memorials see themselves, how their exhibitions and websites look, etc. The paper also discusses the differences between how museums and memorials in different locations present the same or similar historical events to their visitors.

The paper itself contains several main chapters and a short introduction with an explanation why I have chosen this subject. In the chapter about philosophy of science I present myself and my academic viewpoints. Then comes the methodology chapter discussing the approaches I have taken for the paper and the literature on the subject and explaining the way I have worked and gathered data and knowledge for the project. Then there is a chapter presenting and discussing the concept of "dark tourism", and placing the museums and memorials I have worked with in this paper on a scale, pointing out how dark or light these destinations are (the darkest places are the ones where genocide has happened and the lightest ones are fun entertainment parks where no actual killing has taken place). In the next chapter I present the main theories used in the paper. These are Fairclough's discourse analysis and Pauwels multimodal framework for analysing websites. The theories have been used for getting in-depth knowledge and understanding about the individual museums and their work. The next chapter contains my analysis of the data collected from the four researched museums and memorials (Fort VII in Poznań, Poland; The T4 memorial in Berlin, Germany; The Bernburg Euthanasia Centre in Bernburg, Germany; and Besættelsesmuseet in Aarhus, Denmark). The final chapter is the conclusion, summarizing the knowledge that I have gathered through the process of working with the paper, answering the research question as well as all the additional questions that have arisen in the process. The conclusion also includes a little paragraph about the relevance of this paper for other companies.

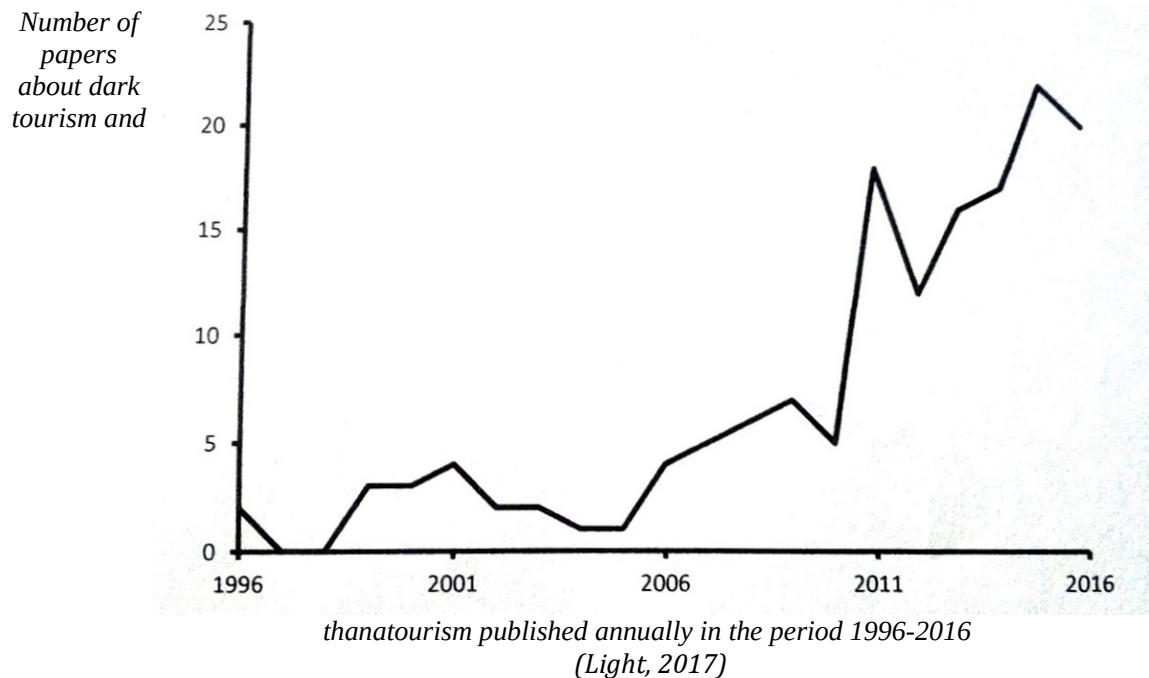
The data for this paper has been gathered in several different ways: from personal face-to-face interviews through analysis of exhibitions to analysis of websites and additional texts. The

data has been collected in several different countries, making the paper somewhat international and intercultural, which I see as one of its strong points. The world is getting smaller, and we all have to think more about how we present our messages, both on-line – on websites – and off-line. Wrong content in a website will affect the number of visitors to a place or a company, how much money the company can earn and also how many people hear the message the organisation is interested in spreading. The wording will influence the people visiting the website or location and can mean a lot for both their understanding of the information presented, their attitude towards the company, museum, memorial, history and society in general.

## Introduction

As a tourism student interested in World War 2 I felt it natural to combine both these themes in my thesis.

Dark tourism, WW2 tourism and ways of presenting history to different visitors are not new subjects. A lot of different publications exists in this area, as can be seen on the below chart. There has actually been a large growth in the annual number publications about dark tourism and thanatourism for the last twenty years.



I wanted to do something a little different than to write a typical academic paper about the matter where the focus is either placed on visitor motivation or on how history is presented in certain countries and locations. Therefore I set out to research how different museums and memorials in different countries work, how they see and present themselves, and how they present history to their visitors.

The reason for choosing museums from Germany is of course that the WW2 was German doing. The reason for choosing Poland is that Poland must be the country that suffered the most during the war, and also is the country with the highest number of known and well-preserved dark WW2 destinations. I added Denmark much later in the process: as a Dane I am naturally interested in looking into how Denmark differs from the other countries when it comes to how and what we focus on when we present WW2 to both national and international visitors.

The paper includes chapters about how I have been working with the research, who I am as a researcher, some of the literature I have read, the theories that I have chosen to focus on, the locations that I am working with, the analysis of interviews, exhibitions and websites, and a conclusion that sets out to answer the main research question and the questions that might have arisen during the work on the paper.

The main research question I ask in the paper is: How does location affect the way World War 2-related dark tourism destinations see and present themselves and their historical subjects to visitors?

The research question covers several subjects, from how dark tourism destinations see themselves; are they museums, memorials or both; is there a consistency between what they aim to be and how they come across to visitors; finally: are there any noticeable differences in how museums in different locations present the same or similar history to their visitors?

While gathering data for the project I have worked in several ways. When possible and needed I have conducted face-to-face interviews. In other cases I have acquired my data through either e-mails or other type of written material like websites, flyers or booklets. The reason for this mixed approach is that it has given me a chance to visit interesting places, a chance to talk to and get in contact with professional people who opened my eyes for new ideas and knowledge that I otherwise would not had thought about. Finally, I have – through the website/discourse analysis – got an in-depth knowledge about how differently the chosen destinations present their similar historical subjects – often simply by choosing different words etc., and have been able to look into how destinations that can be said to be visitor-focused often have problems with presenting themselves to visitors in a way so that they in fact can attract them.

For me visiting dark tourism places is a very positive and learning experience that has increased my interest in both local and international history, culture, politics etc even further.

When visiting historical locations connected with war and suffering I have noticed how easy it is to create parallels between the past events and today's society. In connection with World War Two destinations it becomes especially easy to draw a line between the way the Nazi propaganda machine worked and to how hate is spread in today's society. I find that history is important to remember and it has contributed to my decision to work with this project and to look into what location means for the way the history about the war is presented through museums and memorials and how these institutions work to become what they understand themselves to be.

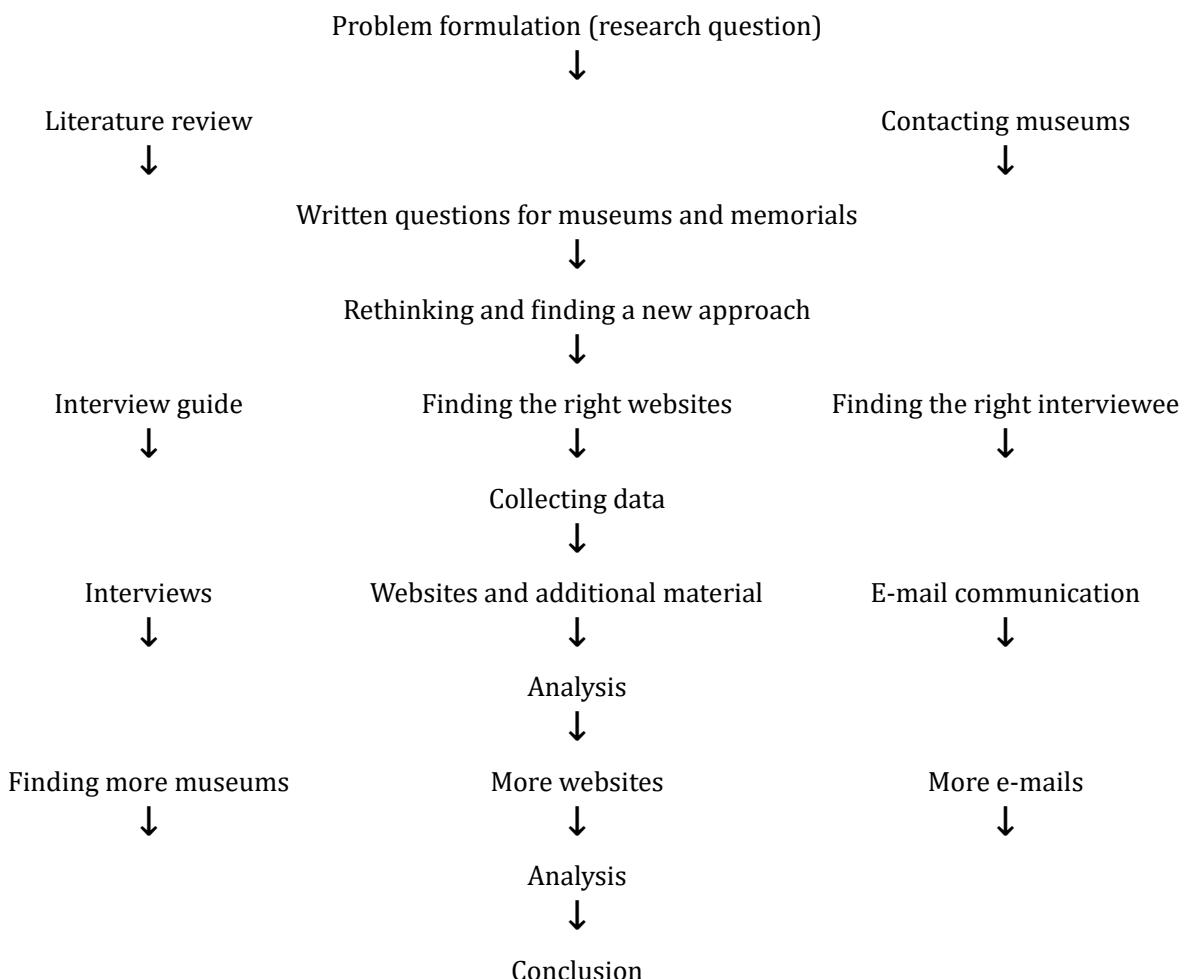
# The theoretical background

## ***Methodology***

In this chapter I talk about the methods used to conduct the study. The research design, and the way I have gathered the data necessary for answering both the main research question and the additional questions.

## **Research design**

In this section I describe the steps I have taken working with in the project – from deciding upon the formulation of the problem, through the gathering of the data, the analysis to the conclusion.



As I already had completed a number of projects with the use of qualitative in-depth interviews, I knew that it could be rather problematic to get the right people to participate in an interview. Therefore I decided early in the process that this time only a limited amount of the data gathered for the project would be acquired through either face-to-face interviews or emails from professionals and that the rest would be gathered from third party data like web-sites, brochures, visits to museums and memorials etc.

At the beginning of my work I focused on literature that could say something about WW2 tourist destinations, especially the darker kind of such destinations. There was an abundance of literature to be found about the subject, but most of it was rather shallow and did not provide good and in-depth discussion about what dark tourism and dark tourism destinations really were. At that point I had to drop about 80% of the books that I researched for the project. The problem area turned out to be the focus on web-sites. Finding a good model for in-depth websites analysis was not easy, but after a while I settled for Pauwel's *Multimodal Framework for Analyzing Websites*. On the other hand, finding resources about discourse analysis was not a problem, as there were a lot of books about the subject. In the end I settled for Fairclough's *Analysing Discourse* (2003) and *Discourse and social change* (1992).

The research and work for this paper have not been done in a linear way. I have been going back and forth all along the way, sometimes simply to find better and more usable academic material, sometimes with the aim to change or broaden the focus of the paper etc. For example, after about two months work I decided to also include a Danish context. It was therefore necessary to find a relevant Danish museum or memorial that could say something about how Danish museums work in comparison to Polish and German ones. A lot of Danish museums work with the Second World War, but I only found three that were relevant for this paper: Frøslevlejren (Padborg), Frihedsmuseet (Copenhagen) and Besættelsesmuseet (Aarhus). Out of these only Besættelsesmuseet in Aarhus and Frøslevlejren are up and running at this point. I visited Frøslevlejren a couple of years ago and I knew quite a lot about the place. I contacted them to see if they were interested in participating by answering a few questions, but it took a few months before they replied to my request, and their response was not something that I could use. I therefore decided to work with Besættelsesmuseet in Aarhus and visited it

on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April 2017. Getting information from the people working at the museum in Aarhus turned out to be possible, and I received some very usable and interesting data from them.

The author of this project (I) do see some limitations in connection with the gathered data. The chosen tourist destinations might not be seen as representative for the general WW2 destinations and maybe the outcome of the research would have been different if other locations had been chosen. However, considering my experiences with a lot of different WW2 destinations, I have come to the conclusion that the chosen locations actually give a very good understanding of how such places work, how they see themselves, and of the cultural differences that exist in different destinations both within the same country and internationally.

The final museums and memorials have all been chosen because of several reasons, among others:

1. together they can give an understanding of how dark tourism destinations in several countries differ in the way they present the same history to their visitors;
2. they can show if there is a conflict between how WW2 destinations see themselves and the way they present themselves on their websites, in their flyers, exhibitions etc.;
3. they can provide an understanding of how collective memory is used to make certain aspects of history stand out while other aspects of history are more or less swept under the rug or forgotten.

Before conducting interviews I had to contact the relevant museums to figure out if they were interested in taking part in the project at all. This first immediate contact was conducted by e-mail. I first contacted around ten museums and memorials and – as expected – it turned out to be rather difficult to get answers. I ended with answers from four of these: Bernburg Euthanasia Centre (Germany), Fort VII (Poznań, Poland), The T4- Memorial (Berlin, Germany) and Auschwitz (Poland). Out of these only Fort VII and the T4-memorial were interested in taking part in interviews, so visits for these places were arranged for the week ending on Sunday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 2017. The answer received from B.E.C. was – in spite of them not being interested in taking part in an interview – still quite usable for this project, and because of that I exchanged e-mails with the institution to get more in-depth knowledge about it and the way it works. Auschwitz turned out to be too large a museum or memorial to get much information, they simply get to many requests to be able to answer them all.

At the end of the process I decided to include a photo of the old location in Tiergartenstraße, Berlin where the T4 memorial is now placed. With that in mind I had to contact the copyright owners of the relevant pictures. I was allowed to use the pictures, just as I was allowed to use a few other illustrations (the copyright information has been included under the pictures where relevant). Most of the pictures in the paper were however taken by myself.

Until the final dot was put, the research can be said to jump back and forth. New knowledge and discoveries meant new thoughts and new research. This sometimes meant that things that had already been decided upon had to be changed, and that is how I have worked in the process with this paper.

## Collection of data

The data for this paper have been collected with the use of qualitative methods.

The interviews conducted for this paper are all qualitative interviews, conducted according to Kvæle's seven levels, as described by Trost & Jeremiassen (2010: 54-56).

| Kvæle's seven levels for qualitative interviews |  |
|---|--|
| 1: Setting the theme                            | How does the participant museums see themselves?<br>How do they want the visitors to see and understand them?<br>What is their aim with presenting such dark tourism to visitors?<br>Websites, why/why not an English version?   |
| 2: Design of the interview                      | The interview is designed as a qualitative interview, with an interview-guide that will be presented in the annex.   |
| 3: Conducting the interview                     | In the interview focus has to be placed on both the question, the answers and the relationship created between myself as the interviewer and the interviewed. Here focus was placed in creating a relaxed and friendly atmosphere making it possible to get in-depth interviews, |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 4: Making usable                               | Interviews had to be written down, and made usable for the following steps in Kvale's levels.       |
| 5: Working through the interviews or material. | What can be found in the gathered data.   |
| 6: Conclusion                                  | What could be concluded based on the gathered data. Can the gathered knowledge be seen as credible? |
| 7: Finalising                                  | Writing the paper, keeping in mind who it is for, and to write for others than one-self.            |

The conducted interviews were created on the basis of an interview guide devised by Langkjær, Holleufer, Bülow (2015: 55-56) where the interviewer works with reformulation his or her theoretical questions in a way so that they can be used concretely in the interview. A question about how museums work with presenting history, can e.g. be made more concrete and instead be directed towards the single institution like "how do you work to present WW2 history, what kind of words do you use about the people who committed genocide during WW2 etc." According to Langkjær, Holleufer, Bülow (2015: 55-56) a part of the interview guide can also be to introduce yourself and your subject to the interviewee, but as I already had contacts with the interviewed several times before the actual meeting it was not something that was placed any focus on in this concrete guide.

According to Langkjær, Holleufer & Bülov (2015), there are both advantages and disadvantages of using the qualitative methods:

| Advantages  | Disadvantages   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elaborated answers</li> <li>• A deeper understanding of the person or target-group being examined</li> <li>• Possibility for new knowledge and a larger insight</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time consuming</li> <li>• Can be expensive</li> <li>• Very dependent on the person conducting the examination</li> <li>• Might not be representative – Too few participants to draw a conclusion.</li> <li>• Gathered information can not always be compared</li> <li>• Lost focus on ones questions.</li> </ul> |

During the interviews I made sure that the interviewed (respondent) had the chance to elaborate and come with own input, providing me with a deeper understanding of their institutions and their origin. Quite often the interviews were structured as a two way focused conversation.

The negative sides of the qualitative methods are as stated by Langkjær, Holleufer & Bülov (2015: 52-53), see above. That is especially relevant when it comes to the interviews: they are time consuming and expensive. Travelling to Poznań, Poland and to Berlin, Germany to conduct interviews took both time to arrange and time for driving between countries and towns, but also money for travelling and staying somewhere close to the places where the interviews took place. The interviews depend on the person who conducts them and on the persons being interviewed: where do they come from? do they talk the same language and do they understand each other? While working with this project I have only had positive experiences with the interviewed and the international aspect made the work more interesting.

I only conducted two spoken interviews, not because I did not feel more interviews would have been relevant or nice, but because it turned out to be as hard as expected to arrange them, and because more interviews were not a must for the project. In connection with the qualitative interviews I also conducted research and observations on the spot, as suggested by Langkjær, Holleufer & Bülov (2015: 52-53). During these trips I researched whether the statements made during the interviews and on the websites matched the exhibitions. I also paid attention to how many people were visiting the places while I was there. Langkjær, Holleufer, Bülow (2015: 55-56) say that observations are good because they show what people do, not what they say they do, and apart from concrete things like counting the number of other visitors this is also what I used my observations for.

The data for the discourse analysis and the website analysis was acquired inexpensively and without many problems. This kind of research can to a large extend be done directly from home as all that is needed is an internet connection and a computer. The text was analysed on the basis of the qualitative discourse analysis; see Fairclough (2003: 2) about his version of the critical discourse analysis, where he puts focus on the fact that discourse is a co-creator in the creation of the social world: "language is an irreducible part of social life, dialectically interconnected with other elements of social life, so that social analysis and research always

have to take account of language" and, also Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional model of discourse.

Combined the interviews, the visits to exhibitions and the analysis of websites and additional material have given a large amount of knowledge to be used to answer the questions raised in this paper.

## ***Philosophy of science***

The main focus in this project has been placed on WW2 museums and memorials: how they see and understand themselves, what they present to their visitors and if there is a consistency between the way they look at themselves and the message they send to the people visiting their websites, exhibitions and reading their brochures. Researching this can of course be done in many different ways, and as the manner chosen for conducting the research is closely connected with the decisions the researcher makes during the work, it is important to consider the underlying paradigmatic stance.

Guba & Lincoln (1994: 105) say that a paradigm is "the basic belief system or world-view that guides the investigator, not only in choices of method but also in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways." Phillips & Hardy (2002: 2) claim that discourse analysis works with a strong focus on the social constructionist paradigm. The social constructionist paradigm fits this project because of several reasons, among other because it – as described by Greenhalgh (2007: 46) – sees reality as a social construction that might seem "natural" and "obvious" for those that accept it, while it in fact is an invention based on a specific culture. The aim of this paper is among others to research if there are significant differences in the way the same historical events are described in different museums, memorials and countries based on the specific museums or countries history and culture? Because the social constructionist paradigm, as discussed by Dreyer & Sehested (2003: 186-187) is closely connected with the use and understanding of language in social contexts, which again dates back to the above mentioned reality question, does the way we (as in society) talk about things also affect the way that we see and understand these things? In this project the language is looked into in connection with how similar historical events are treated differently based on country and culture, but also in

connection with how museums see and understand themselves: are the way they understand themselves also seen in the language they use on their websites, their flyers, exhibitions etc. ?

Ontology is about the subject of existence (Guba, 1990: 27) and about the nature of reality and its dependence on human beings. It provides the researcher with answers to questions such as "What is the nature of reality" (Guba: 1990: 18) and "What kind of being is the human being" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:12). According to Guba (1990:18) the social constructionists often work with a relativist ontology approach. Guba & Lincoln (2005: 176-178) state that the relativists work with an understanding that there is no ultimate truth. I, as the researcher, do not believe in any specific truth. As I see it, the truth always depends both on the person(s) behind the messages (the stated truth) and the person trying to understand and decode the message. In this paper I do not work with the understanding that there is an ultimate way to attract visitors through a website, or the right way of presenting historical facts to the general public. Through the in-depth analysis I aim to get a deeper understanding of individual museums' or memorials' goals and to see whether they actually achieve these goals. Carroll & Swatman (2000: 237) say that "All researchers interpret the world through some sort of conceptual lens formed by their beliefs, previous experiences, existing knowledge, assumptions about the world and theories about knowledge and how it is accrued. The researcher's lens act as a filter: the importance placed on the enormous range of observations made in the field (choosing to record or note some observations and not others, for example) is partly determined by this filter." Based on that it can be stated that all the research questions in the project, the methodological choices that have been taken, the analysis and the conclusion are all connected with my person and my reality.

As the social constructionist ontology works with the understanding that there is no single ultimate truth, all the versions of truth that are discovered in my research must be concluded to be true – or do they? I will discuss it in a later chapter. In general one can state that how we see and understand ourselves (identify) is closely connected with who we are, what we have experienced and what our cultural background is. This goes both for us as individuals, but also for nations. How we identify will also play a major role in how we present ourselves to the world. The general assumption has always been that Denmark is a very humanitarian country, and that we (as the society) did everything we could to help people in need, during and after the Second World War. At the end of the 1990s that assumption was however questioned when Kirsten Lylloff brought up the talk about the 13 000 German refugees (7000 children)

who died in Denmark after World War Two (Ertel, 2005). John V. Jensen (2012), inspector at the museum in Varde in Denmark said that “our national self-understanding does not feel good about the fact that we after the war had camps where up to 35 000 humans were placed behind barbed wire, that is something we want to connect with totalitarian regimes like Stalin's Soviet and Nazi Germany, and not with ourselves.” Maybe the truth is to be found somewhere in the middle. After the war Denmark helped a lot of German refugees, but things were not always perfect and a lot of people died because of the less than perfect treatment they received.

Epistemology is, according to Guba (1990: 18), about the relationship between the knower (the inquirer) and the known (or the knowable). It is connected with questions like “how do I know the world”, that is: “how is the knowledge acquired?”, “how do we know what we know?” Researchers who work under a social constructivist paradigm often work with subjectivist epistemology and as the analysis in this paper is done on the basis of discourse analysis and spoken interviews, this is also what I focus on. Bergström & Boréus (2012: 22-25, 305, 326) talk about how the subjectivist epistemology of discourse analysis is connected with our understanding of reality being shaped through our language, and say that our observations are never made through neutral language. Guba (1990: 27) connects subjectivist epistemology with the interaction between the inquirer and the inquired stating that they should be combined into one joint unit, something the writer of this paper considers more of something to aim at than something that can in fact be achieved. Murphy (1997) says that “the knower interprets and constructs a reality based on his experiences and interactions with his environment.” In this paper everything that is discovered is found out on the basis of language, both spoken and written, and everything that is discovered is connected with my understanding of the presented data and information. This understanding is naturally also influenced by my knowledge or lack of knowledge about the subject presented in this thesis, my cultural upbringing, my history and my general knowledge.

When looking for data that could help answer the questions raised in this paper I had to look into several sources of information about how the museums and memorials see themselves and how they present the World War Two to their visitors and the general public. Therefore it seemed logical to start by contacting the museums and getting them to answer questions either through face-to-face interviews or e-mails. The data acquired during these contacts was then compared with the information that was gathered through exhibitions and through the

website and discourse analysis. Without the interviews and e-mails I would have had no knowledge about how the museums and memorials see themselves, and what they aim to do, and the interviews also provided some basis information about why the museums worked the way they did; without the website analysis and the discourse analysis a lot of knowledge would have stayed hidden in the written language, the choice of some words instead of others would have gone unnoticed which would have meant that the outcome of the research would have been completely different, and maybe less in-depth.

Guba (1990: 18) says that methodology is about how the inquirer should go about finding the knowledge and states that the answer is closely connected with one's paradigmatic viewpoint. Guba (1990: 26/78) goes on to say that constructivist(s) should use hermeneutic dialectic methodology. The hermeneutic aspect is, according to Guba (1990: 26), "depicting individual constructions as accurately as possible." Morrow & Brown (1994: 93) describe hermeneutics as "a theory and method of interpreting human actions and artefacts." In this project knowledge has been acquired in a variety of ways that all include interpretation of data gathered through face-to-face personal interviews, exchange of emails, visits to museums and memorials and analyses of websites and additional material. The work has been carried out in a non-linear way. It can be concluded that all the research conducted for this project has influenced my understanding of the way museums and memorials work, both in the way they attract visitors and the way the present history to their visitors.

Guba (1990: 26) says the dialectic aspect is about the process of comparing and contrasting existing constructions "with the aim of generating one (or a few) constructions on which there is substantial consensus." I have used this aspect to look for patterns in the collected data: how do the interviewed present their institutions, how do they present history, and is it done the same way in their exhibitions, on their websites and in the additional materials? Is there a difference in how different museums and memorials working with the same historical aspects present the history? All of this will be discussed in the analytical parts of the paper.

## ***Literature review***

First focus point in this paper was to explain what I consider "dark tourism" and how to distinguish between the different types of dark tourism destinations. Most books and publications read for this paper only confirmed the obvious: that dark tourism is "visiting places connected

with human suffering and death." However, finding publications that would distinguish between the different types of dark tourism destinations turned out to be hard. The first publication about the matter I discovered was by Dann (1998): *The dark side of tourism*, in which he, among others, writes: "since there has been no comprehensive attempts to categorize dark tourism [...] a tentative scheme has been devised." Dann's publication was a very good starting point for looking into some of the different types of dark tourism destinations. Duncan Light's article *Progress in dark tourism and thanatourism research: an uneasy relationship with heritage tourism* (more below) also contained a little about the research aimed at categorising and distinguishing between different types of dark tourism destinations. In the end, however, I found the dark tourism spectrum created by Stone (2006) (see chapter defining dark tourism below) the most usable for this project. The dark tourism spectrum is an elaboration of Dann's scheme for categorising dark tourism destinations.

After having done some research in connection with what dark tourism is and how different scholars and writers talked about the matter, I had to decide where I wanted to place my focus on the subject of dark tourism (on visitors or institutions). To do so I had to look into what had already been written and researched about the matter. A very relevant article for getting an understanding about dark tourism research is the above mentioned one by Duncan Light (2017). In the article he gets very much in-depth with what different types of dark tourism research that has taken place the last 20 years. According to Light (2017: 277) the areas of dark tourism that have experienced the biggest growth in publications during the last 20 years are the visitor focused areas like visitor motivations and visitor experience, but also an area like collective memory and collective identity has experienced a large growth in the number of publications.

When I started looking into what had been published in those areas I quickly came to the conclusion that there in fact had been published a lot of material connected with the visitors to dark tourism destinations, from the more scandalous articles about protesters getting naked and slaughtering sheep outside the gates of Auschwitz (AFP, 2017) and people misbehaving at the Jewish memorial in Berlin (Parkinson, 2017), to more qualitative research about visitor motivations for visiting dark tourism sites and their experiences with doing so. As an example I can mention the Norwegian book *Pilegrim, turist og elev: Norske skoleturer til døds- og konsestrasjonsleirer* by Kyrre Kverndokk (2007), in which the author among others described trips Norwegian students had made to Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland. The book is a

good read and is both about how the children (the youth) planned the trip, their background for the visit, how Auschwitz presented history to the students (visitors) and how they perceived the presented history etc. For research with more visitor focus than mine this book would have been a good starting point. Additionally, a lot of other material has been published about tourists' motivation to visit places like Auschwitz. This includes both research by students looking into motivations for visiting dark tourism destinations (for example *Dark tourism: tourist motivation and experience of visitors to sites of death and disaster*, thesis by Stephanie Marie Yuill, in which she examines visitor motivations for places like Auschwitz-Birkenau (Poland) and the Holocaust Museum Houston (USA)), to publications by more experienced scholars like Biran, Poria, Oren (2011: 820-) who in their article *Sought Experiences at (Dark) Heritage Sites* write about visitors experiences and motivations for visiting dark tourism sites.

When it comes to looking into publications about how dark tourism destinations see themselves, I first came across White & Frew's (2013) *Dark Tourism and Place Identity: Managing and Interpreting Dark Places*. Most of the museums and memorials I have engaged with in this paper consider themselves a mix of a museum and a memorial. Some of them pay a lot of attention to the museum part and only little attention towards being a memorial. However, for this type of institution it seems rather common that a lot of attention is also paid to the memorial aspect, being an institution that shows respect towards the past and the victims of the past.

Light (2017: 296) writes about how more focus in future research has to be placed on dark tourism destinations management, interpretation, marketing etc. When it comes to managers it is needed that academic researchers engage more directly with them, as this is something many researchers have been reluctant to do. In this paper I have worked with several of these aspects: from contact with the managers to the marketing aspects of the websites, interpretation etc.

Halbwachs (1992) said, according to Keil (2005: 481), that "significant sites are represented within a context of cultural and social tradition. They are items of collective memory, and visits to them form part of the social construction of rituals of remembering, and the grounding of both personal and collective memory in physical place," meaning that things presented at specific locations like holocaust memorials are a part of what helps form the countries collect-

ive memory and understanding. Keil (2005: 485) talks further about the differences between visiting various types of dark tourism destinations, e.g. the Colosseum in Rome where everything is fun and entertainment, and Auschwitz in Poland where things are more controlled and there are strict rules for how people must and may behave. Keil states that the memories in connection with memorials like Auschwitz are “distanced, externalized and perhaps also disarmed” and that a visit there becomes at least partly a leisure time activity, simply because “memory is externalized; it is made safe by being displaced and framed. [...] The framing of what is selected and represented, through physical distance and seclusion – often behind glass – reinforces a visitor-role which is semi-passive, semi-leisured, comfortable.”

A lot of research has been conducted about museum and memorial exhibitions, collective remembrance etc. in the recent years. Other scholars that have written about this are among other Neuberger (2014: 66), who also connects memorials like Auschwitz with social and constructed collective remembering, and says “This performance of the past is meant to force tourists to encounter the horrors of the Holocaust.” Friedrich & Johnston (2013) also talk about the way history connected with genocide is presented to tourists and about how national and international tourists might understand the presented history differently. Merriman (2000: 301) among others talked about how museums construct national identity. Rivera (2008: 613) has used the example of Croatia to examine how countries can cover up their dark past to become attractive to tourists.

Research of dark tourism destinations by means of analysis of their websites is not the most common approach. Nevertheless quite a few researchers have tried it. The most relevant for this paper are the ones who – like me – have worked with several aspects of the websites. For example Krisjanous wrote a rather informative piece where he analysed 25 different dark tourism destinations (2016: 341). Pallud & Straub (2014: 359) researched how museum websites influence our free-time activities, and if websites do attract more visitors to museums, and among others concluded that the design and aesthetics of the site and the coherence between what the museum offer and the website is some of the most important aspects when it comes to attracting visitors. Cebi (2012: 1030-) also conducted research about what parameters websites owners should consider the most attractive or relevant for visitors (or customers) and here the technical adequacy and usability came on top as some of the most important features. On a broader scale the importance of a good website for museums has also been the study subject of many other scholars than only the ones working with dark tourism

destinations. Many others, like Lopatovska (2015- 191), have conducted research about what is needed to make visitors like a website, and even want to return to the site. The result was somewhat similar to the findings of Pallud & Straub, that is: the aesthetics was the feature that would be the most important factor, and additional right and relevant images would also be of an importance in making people like the websites.

As might be concluded from this literature review, most of the recent research has been conducted with the focus on the visitors and only a fraction of the writing has dealt with the museums and institutions. This is why I have decided to concentrate on the institutions instead of the visitors.

As there is an enormous amount of literature about dark tourism, I could have given more examples, but I have picked the ones I feel are most usable for this paper. I could have chosen differently, because dark tourism is an area getting more and more attention both in and outside of the academic world and a lot of writings have been published about the subject. However, I feel that the pieces of literature and the research discussed here paint a very good picture of what I have read, and what is going on in the dark tourism field.

In the next section I am going to discuss defining dark tourism: what is dark tourism in reality?

## **What is dark tourism?**

Visiting places connected with war, death and/or human suffering is nothing new. Lennon (2005) describes dark tourism as “the tourism of sites of tragedy.” Dalton (2015: -2) states that “the dark tourist walks in the shadow of suffering, anguish and death of real people and their surviving families.” Lennon (2005) describes how dark tourism has existed for many centuries: “As far back as the Dark Ages, pilgrims were travelling to tombs and sites of religious martyrdom. The Battle of Waterloo in 1815 was observed by nobility from a safe distance and one of the earliest battlefields of the American Civil War (Manassas) was sold the next day as a visitor attraction site.”

Also in literature visiting places connected with death and tragedy is also nothing new. In 1860 Charles Dickens (1907) wrote “Whenever I am at Paris, I am dragged by invisible force into the Morgue. I never want to go there, but am always pulled there” and in 1933 a fire on SS Morro Castle (an American ship) that caused the death of 137 passengers and crew members was talked so much about in the papers and the radio that around a quarter of a million people travelled from New York to Philadelphia (Stone & Sharpley (2009: 3-5) to view the wreck and the place of disaster.

Even though World War Two ended over 70 years ago, many people still visit places connected with the war, and Auschwitz in 2016 had a record breaking number of visitors, reaching more than 2 million visitors in one year (JTA, 2016).



*Auschwitz death camp in summer 2016 (own photograph)*

In 1996 Lennon & Foley (2000: 3) were the first to use the label “dark tourism.” Their reasoning behind it was as follows: “In labelling some of these phenomena as “Dark Tourism” we intended to signify a fundamental shift in the way which death, disaster and atrocity are being handled by those who offer associated tourism tourism “products”. In particular we aim to show that “Dark tourism” is both a product of the circumstances of the late modern world and a significant influence upon these circumstances.”

Since Lennon & Foley first used the label dark tourism the interest for the area has only gone one way, and that is up. This is among others demonstrated by Lennon & Foley (2000: 3) who said “It is clear from a number of sources that tourist interest in recent disaster and atrocity is a growing phenomenon in the late twentieth and the early twenty-first century” as well as White & Frew (2013: 2): “that dark tourism has been recognised as a growing phenomenon in the twenty-first century, both from a demand and supply perspective”. Also Krisjanous (2016: 241) talks about how “dark places” in this day and age provide much welcome and significant earnings and visitors for the providers of such destinations.

Apart from the above mentioned tourist destinations there are a lot of other examples that could be used to show the interest in dark tourism. Chernobyl, the old nuclear-power plant disaster location in Ukraine now has about 10,000 visitors every year (Amey, 2015). In the years since the ground Zero memorial in New York was opened (9/11 memorial, 2015) for the victims of the 9/11 terrorist attack more than 23 million people have visited the place.

## **Definition of dark tourism used in this paper**

Based on the reading material studied in connection with this research, dark tourism will be defined for the purpose of this papers as “travelling to places that are connected with human death or suffering.”

I work with the understanding that dark tourism places can be both the larger and more known locations like Ground Zero (New York), Auschwitz (Oświęcim, Poland), where lots of people travel to learn about history and human suffering, the smaller places like Bernburg Euthanasia Centre (Bernburg, Germany) where mostly students go to learn about the history of their country, to small local places like the memorial stone placed at the road between Vestb-

jerg and Nørresundby, Denmark. The stone is a memorial for Ole Vagn Larsen, who was killed by the Danish Nazi group Brøndum; it is placed where his body was found.



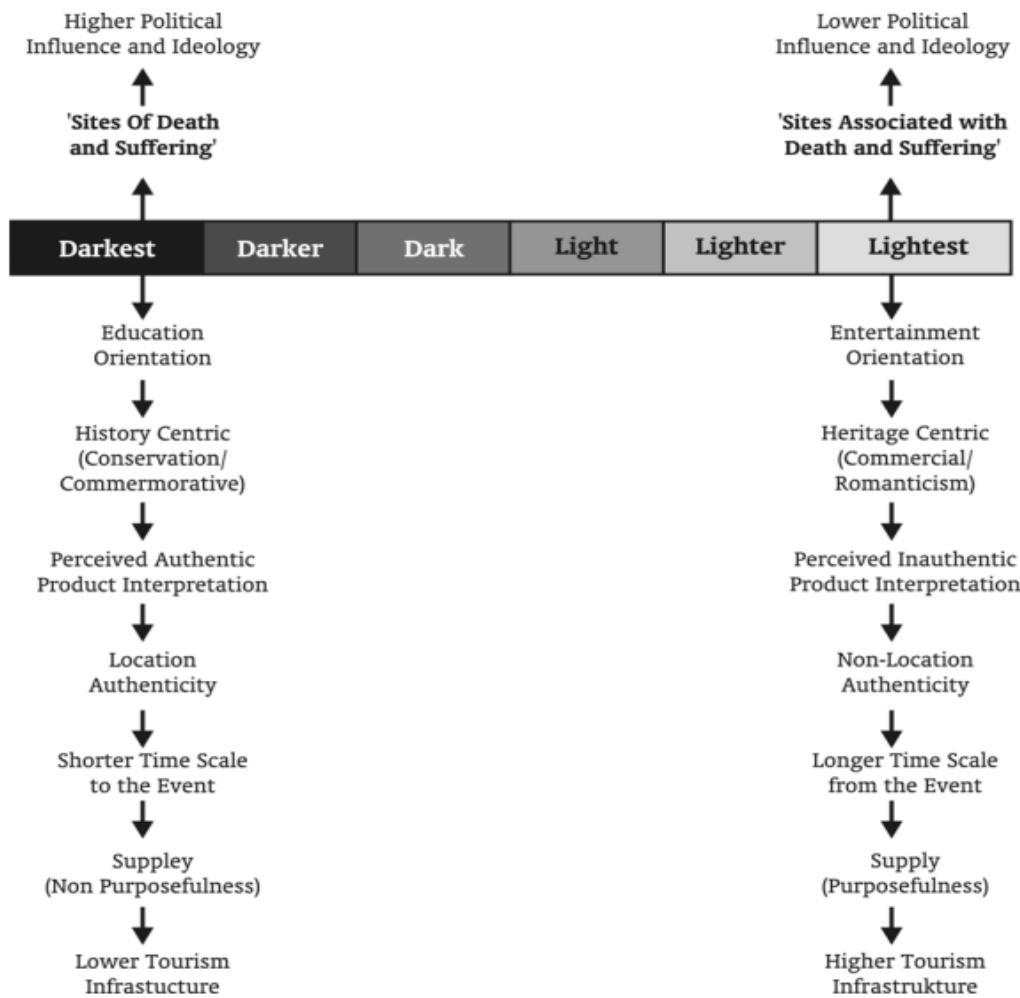
There are many different opinions about dark tourism, and I will discuss some of them at the end of this section. However, I am now going to look into how we can distinguish between the different dark tourism destinations. There is a large difference in visiting a place like Auschwitz and a small local memorial for a single person that was killed somewhere else than where the memorial was placed.

## Types of dark tourism

The definition of dark tourism might be too broad to say anything specific about the subject. Based on the name one can only assume that it is connected with dark stories, tragedies etc. Stone (2006: 146) start a discussion about the use of the word “dark” in connection with tourism and ask “whether it is actually possible or justifiable to collectively categorise a diverse range of sites, attractions and exhibitions that are associated with death and the macabre as ‘dark tourism’?”

In their book *The darker side of travel. The theory and practise of dark tourism* (2009) Stone & Sharpley talk about many different ways of distinguishing dark tourism: from Seaton's (1996) five categories of dark travel tourism to Dann's (1998) categories of dark tourism. They end up presenting Stone's (2006) spectrum of dark tourism. In this chapter I have chosen to work with that spectrum as it is presented in his article *A dark tourism spectrum: Towards a typ-*

*logy of death and macabre related tourist sites, attractions and exhibitions.* I will be using Stone's spectrum of dark tourism to look into what types of dark tourism exist and to decide where the places that I am working with (Bernburg Euthanasia centre, the T4 memorial in Berlin, the Fort VII concentration camp in Poznań, Poland, and Besættelsesmuseet in Aarhus, Denmark) can be placed on the spectrum.



*Stone's spectrum, 2006*

Stone divides dark tourism destinations into 6 different categories, from the uttermost dark places where a lot of death and suffering happened, to the lightest form of dark tourism destinations like a memorial place where no death or suffering happened at all. Stone argues that

dark tourism should be placed in the spectrum based on product features, perceptions and characteristics.

Apart from the *darkness* aspect the dark tourism destinations also have other characteristics. The lightest destinations are described as being entertainment oriented, romanticising the past, less authentic, taking place long after the events happened and as having a good tourism infrastructure. The darkest destinations are described as being education orientated, interested in preserving and remembering the past, happening on authentic locations, having started shortly after the historical events happened and for having a low tourism infrastructure.

A weakness of Stone's spectrum is that it does not explain any aspect in-depth. The model contains descriptions of 7 different types of destinations, but the model is really dependent on a lot of self-interpretation by anyone who wants to use it and place specific destinations in the spectrum. Stone mentions 7 types of destinations, while the model itself only includes 6 steps from the lightest to the darkest types of dark tourism. This is of course because several places might be placed in the same area in the spectrum, while still being different enough not to fully belong at the same spot. One example of missing information in connection with the 7 described destinations is how the tourism infrastructure is explained in connection with some destinations, but not mentioned with others. Again, this of course is connected with the fact that this might differ from location to location, and not all locations in one type of destinations might fit into the same scheme. The dark tourism spectrum can only be seen as a loose tool for understanding dark tourism destinations; it does not offer a complete guide on branding them: it requires looking at every destination separately.

In this scale Auschwitz would, according to Stone, be placed at the darkest end, as it is a site where a lot of death and suffering took place during the Second World War.

Stone divides dark tourism suppliers into seven types.

### 1) Dark Fun Factories

Dark Fun Factories are mostly connected with creating something fun and entertaining for their visitors. The fun factories are often seen as something less authentic. The London Dungeon attractions with stories about the Black Death or Jack the Ripper fall under this category, as well as Dracula Park in Romania. They are driven by economics and the need for visitors. The fun factories have a high degree of tourism infrastructure.

## 2) Dark Exhibitions

Dark Exhibitions blend a learning and education focus with the entertainment focus that can be found in the dark fun factories establishment. They are seen as more serious and more authentic than the fun factories. Therefore they are also “darker” than the fun factories. The Dark Exhibitions are also commercially focused and they need to attract visitors. Dark Exhibitions are mostly not placed on the scene of death and sufferings, but are likely to happen at museums presenting a story about death and suffering. One example that Stone gives of this type of exhibitions is the Smithsonian Museum of American History exhibit which displayed images and artefacts of the September 11 terrorist attacks. The tourism infrastructure at Dark Exhibitions is somewhat good.

## 3) Dark Dungeons

Dark Dungeons are connected with attractions that present historical criminal law and justice places to today's people. These places can be seen as both entertainment and education. They are locations that were not originally intended for dark tourism. On the dark tourism spectrum they are mostly placed in and around the centre. Stone says that in connection with dark dungeons the question about authenticity is often raised and it is hard to say for certain how authentic dark dungeons really are. Examples of Dark Dungeons Stone uses are Bodmin Jail Centre and Melbourne Gaol, but the dark dungeons can include a lot of different establishments connected with the justice and law systems of the old days. Earning money is mostly also an important factor for the dark dungeons.

## 4) Dark Resting Places

Dark Resting Places are connected with cemeteries, graves and grave makers. They romanticise death and are placed at the centre of the dark tourism spectrum. Stone says that “whilst Dark Resting Places offer serenity and the opportunity to both commemorate and pay respects to the deceased, this particular classification of Dark Supplier is increasingly beginning to take on a more commercial and entertainment based ethic, to the point where it may ‘move’ along the spectrum of supply to become a Dark Fun Factory”. According to Stone the tourism infrastructure at dark resting places is getting better: “With an increasing infrastructure being built around these Dark Resting Places,

mainly through association groups, the use of the internet and dedicated guide tours, the cemetery is fast becoming a place where the living are ‘charmed’ by the dead.”

## 5) Dark Shrines

Dark Shrines are places that “trade” on remembrance and respect shown to the deceased. They are typically located very close to the place where the death took place, and they are started close to the time when the death occurred. Dark Shrines are located at the darker periphery of the spectrum. Dark Shrines could be a mass floral tribute after a death of someone. Dark Shrines can be seen as a thing of now, it is something that gets a lot of attention in the moment, but gets quickly forgotten. Stone mentions Kensington Palace where princess Diana used to live as such a shrine. Dark Shrines have very limited tourism infrastructure and are mostly gone very fast, as they are temporary memorial sites.

## 6) Dark Conflict Sites

Dark Conflict Sites are sites connected with war or/and battlefields. They mostly focus on education and remembrance. Dark Conflict Sites have become more commercialised and lots of companies now organise tours to famous battlefields. Dark Conflict Sites are these days also used for re-enactment of bygone wars etc. The more entertainment focused parts of the Dark Conflict Sites will be placed in the lighter end of the dark tourism spectrum. Stone says that “Dark Conflict Sites are increasingly becoming more commercialized and as a result have an increasing tourism infrastructure.”

## 7) Dark Camps of Genocide

The Dark Camps of Genocide represent sites and places which have genocide, atrocity and catastrophe as the main thanatological theme. They belong to the darkest part of the dark tourism spectrum. Auschwitz-Birkenau is the best example of a Dark Camp of Genocide. Camps like Auschwitz-Birkenau have become the symbol for both the holocaust and dark tourism as a genre. According to Stone this focus on Dark Camps of Genocide has somewhat “skewed the wider meaning of dark tourism and other product subsets it incorporates.”

Stone says that not all dark tourism destinations can be easily placed in the spectrum, and that suppliers of dark tourism destinations might in fact move around in the spectrum depending

on political decisions etc. that might have an impact on the way they work. Stone however thinks that “the Dark Tourism Spectrum framework [...] does allow much needed clarity and a setting of parameters which may be applied to the eclectic dark tourism product range.” He does see that the spectrum have some flaws and stated in an interview (Baillargeon, 2016) that “the model does have certain flaws and limitations [...] Not least, my model does not address what “dark,” “darker,” and “darkest” actually means within the co-creation of meaning between producer and consumer.”

## Dark tourism destinations chosen for the paper

In the following chapter I will shortly describe the dark tourism places I am working with in this paper and try to place them in the dark tourism spectrum. I will also discuss why I feel they belong at that place in the spectrum.

### Euthanasia Centre, Bernburg, Germany

Bernburg Euthanasia Centre is located in a separate wing of the State Sanatorium and Mental Hospital, in the outskirts of the little town of Bernburg, Germany. Euthanasia took place at the Centre from the 21 November 1940 to the 30<sup>th</sup> of July 1943. In this period of time 9384 people were killed in the gas-chamber there. The place works as a memorial for the victims of genocide and exhibitions allow visitors to step directly into the old chamber used to kill nearly ten thousand people. The place has a very authentic feel that makes history feel closer. The intention of B.E.C. is to educate about the victims of genocide. Based on that I place Bernburg Euthanasia Centre at the darkest end of the dark tourism spectrum – the seventh category, Dark Camps of Genocide.



## **Fort VII, Poznań, Poland**

Fort VII, Poznań, Poland was a German death camp set up during the Second World War. The place itself was originally built as a defence point for Poznań at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but in 1939 it was turned into a German prison camp. The exact number of people who died at Fort VII is not known, but estimations vary from 4,500 to 20,000 people. Fort VII was the first place where the German Nazis killed people with gas. In October of 1939 the Germans made experiments with gas-chambers here, killing around 400 people at one time. Today Fort VII works both as a memorial and an educational place. Fort VI, like Bernburg, must be placed at the darkest end of the dark tourism spectrum – the seventh category, Dark Camps of Genocide.

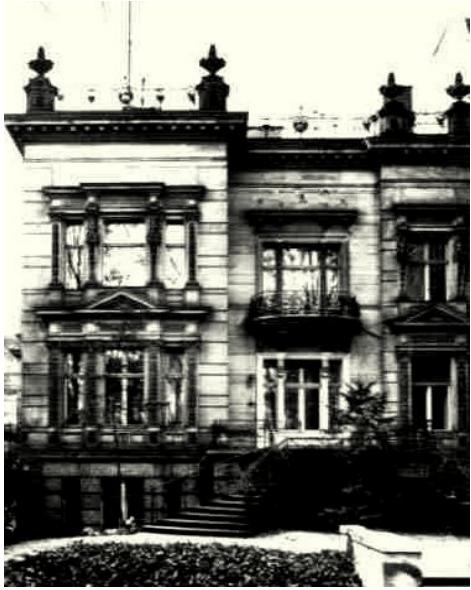
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| <i>Fort 7, Poznań, Poland (own photo)</i>  | <i>Gas-chamber 17, the first place where people were gassed during WW2. In October 1939, 400 mental handicapped were gassed in this room (own photo)</i> |

## **T4-memorial, Berlin, Germany**

The T4 memorial on Tiergartenstraße in Berlin is a rather new place of remembrance. It opened on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 2014. Originally no killing happened at the location; the place is connected with the program of eliminating Germany's handicapped and disabled population. The location of the memorial is very fitting, as it was here, at Tiergartenstraße 4, Berlin, that the T4 program was organised. The T4 memorial works both as a remembrance place and an educational place.

The fact that no people were killed at the location of the T4 memorial means that it does not belong at the darkest end of the dark tourism spectrum, while the large impact of the T4 program itself makes it still a somewhat dark place. Therefore I would place it somewhere in the middle between the centre and the darkest side of the spectrum – I would place the T4 memorial in the 5<sup>th</sup> category, the Dark Shrines.

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| <p><i>The modern construction at the Belin, T4 memorial. Meant to showcase the wall between the past/the present (own photo).</i></p> | <p><i>Information at the T4 memorial, Berlin, Germany (own photo).</i></p>          |

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| <p><i>The original house located at Tiergartenstraße 4, and where the murders of the T4 victims were planned (photo used with permission from Holocaust Education &amp; Archive Research Team).</i></p> |

## Besættelsesmuseet, Aarhus, Denmark

The occupation museum in Aarhus, Denmark is a rather small museum, working to showcase what happened in the city during the Second World War. It is one of the few Danish museums with an exhibition about the Danish Nazis and the so called “traitors of the motherland.” The place is a traditional historical museum. During the Second World War the house was the headquarters for the Gestapo in Aarhus, and it was in the basement of this house that some of the members of the Danish resistance were imprisoned and tortured. A large part of the house is preserved as it was during the WW2, only with added exhibitions.

Besættelsesmuseet in Aarhus will be placed in the second group, the so called Dark Exhibitions. Because the place witnessed real suffering, it would however be placed among the darkest locations in this category.

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| <i>Front entrance to Besættelsesmuseet (own photo)</i>                             | <i>Old prison cell in Besættelsesmuseet from the Gestapo days (own photo)</i>       |

## **Dark tourism controversies**

There are many different opinions and doubts about dark tourism: is it a good thing?; is it respectful to the victims to visit places where death and suffering happened or is recalled? In this paragraph I will look into what different professionals and scholars says about this.

The Executive Director of the Institute for Dark Tourism Research Philip Stone does not see any problems with people visiting dark tourism destinations, nor does he understand the critique directed at the visitors. He does however acknowledge that there can be a clash between the story that dark tourist destinations want to present and the way their visitors behave: "You've got to get people through the gate at somewhere like Auschwitz, but then they've got to act a certain way according to the ideals of the people who want to keep it alive to tell a particular political narrative" (Stokes, 2013). In a later chapter I will look into that aspect and discuss how the museums and memorials see themselves and what story they want to present to their visitors.

Stone is obviously not the only scholar who discusses visiting dark tourism places. His positive attitude towards the issue is backed among others by Knudsen (2011: 55-72) who talks about how well-done exhibitions can create a connection between the tourists and the past in a manner that will give the tourists some greater understanding and empathy for the victims of past crimes. Knudsen among other states: "It is certainly true that thanatourists are interested in feeling alive and in feeling the past; but they also want to relate to the difficult past and not least to its victims." Feeling empathy with the victims of the past is also something Miles (2002: 1176) talks about: "More than evoking historical knowledge, to be successful, any dark touristic "attraction" must also engender a degree of empathy between the sightseer and the past victim." Clack (2009: 6, 13) discusses the purpose of dark tourism places, and why people visit them. This is also connected with showing respect to the victims and both remembering the victims and what has happened in the past: "Trauma memorials are called upon to serve multiple functions – education, mourning, healing, nationalism and activism – for complex constituencies. [...] The work of developing sites of memory for tourism may be done by government or non-government organizations, private foundations or public trusts, international or local groups, preservationists or activists. They may be invested in redemption, reconciliation, or revenge." And finally Light (2017: 277) finds that dark tourism and thanatourism are

no different than any other type of heritage tourism: "Two decades of research have not convincingly shown that dark tourism or thanatourism can be identified as direct forms (of special interest) tourism. [...] dark tourism or thanatourism appears to be little different from heritage tourism."

Having looked at positive attitudes towards dark tourism, it is just as important to understand that not everyone sees dark tourism and dark tourism destinations as something positive. Numerous scholars list the problems with visiting places related to death and suffering. For example Bayer & Kobrynsky (2015: 6-7) raise the question of ethics and dark tourism and among other talk about how an old survivor from Auschwitz revisited the camp together with his family for making a music video of them dancing to Gloria Gaynor's disco hit *I will survive*. In early 2017, an Israeli satirist and author Shahak Shapira created a lot of attention when she used "stolen" photos of people visiting the Jewish memorial in Berlin to create alternative versions of the photos showcasing tourists having fun standing next to and on top of dead World War Two victims (Oltermann, 2017).

To conclude: as it can be seen that there is many different opinions about dark tourism, from the academical consideration, is there really such a thing as dark tourism, or is it only academical, as suggested by Stone (in Sandon-Hesketh & Naylor, 2015: 13) and Krisjanous (2016: 343) who talks about how some authors mean that there is no definitive explanation of what dark tourism is? Also, is it a problem that people takes selfies etc. at memorials for victims of crimes? When asked about the matter, the spokesperson for Bernburg Euthanasia Centre Dr. Hoffmann said: "There are always people, who are misbehaving. So this is not only a matter of Memorials. If it gets really bad, I decide that they have to leave the Memorial. But that's rarely the case."

In connection with this paper I also contacted Auschwitz in Poland. According to Ms. Hutney from that destination they do not do any research about visitor motivation and behaviour at the site. When looking at examples from the past it does however seem clear that Auschwitz also has rules regarding behaviour and that they have had their share of scandals caused by the visitors. One can for example mention two British teens who stole a few artefacts from the place and ended up in trouble because of it (Martin & Levey, 2015), a young woman who took selfies at the location and ended up getting a lot of criticism for it (Daily Mail reporter, 2014).

Another example: Auschwitz in the summer of 2016 had to forbid visitors to hunt for pokémon-go (Morley, 2016).

Every museum or memorial must therefore be assumed to work with a set of rules for how people can behave when they visit the establishment. However, there is a large difference in between how strict those rules are, and how aware the museums and memorials are about the fact that people often behave according to their culture and backgrounds, and that even if someone comes across as overstepping boundaries, they might in fact not know that they are doing so.

Dark tourism is connected with dark history and human death and sufferings, and as such it can bring on a lot of emotions and disagreement. I, the writer of this paper, believe that visiting dark tourism destinations can teach people a lot about history and in some sense connect people with the past. Cresswell (2015: 120) concluded that place is very much connected to memory and stated that “the ability of place to make the past come to live in the present and thus contribute to the production and reproduction of social memory.”

## ***Discourse and media analysis of dark tourism related texts***

As some of the main theoretical aspects of this paper I have chosen to work with a mix of Pauwels' (2012) *Multimodal Framework for Analyzing Websites* and Fairclough's (1992) *Discourse and social change* and *Analysing Discourse – Textual analysis of social research*. (2003).

According to Krisjanous (2016: 342) a multimodal discourse analysis is a “new set of concepts and approaches that extends study of language to combine interpretations of the construction of meaning with other phenomena that materialise within a communication structure, such as image, music, gestures, symbols etc.”

Pauwels' *Multimodal Framework for Analyzing Websites* was chosen because the only common written text genre that will be analysed for all three chosen tourist destinations are their homepages. Pauwels' work can be seen as a solid framework for analysing the homepage and answering the research questions asked for this paper. The framework consists of six different phases, which I will discuss a little later in this chapter. Pauwel's work has furthermore been used by other researchers looking into websites and their content, like Krisjanous (2016: 341).

I have also chosen to include pieces of Fairclough's work because it gives an in-depth description of how to proceed with understanding and analysing many different types of text genres, among other the interviews, the flyers etc. that I in addition to the home-pages will need to look into. Krisjanous (2016) also works with discourse analysis for the textual aspect of his website analysis, and, looking into research conducted in the area, I can conclude that it is now a very popular method of researching webpage content.

Combined with the interviews, analysing these websites (and additional material provided by the dark tourism destinations) should help understand how the chosen establishments see themselves, and if the way they see themselves is in fact also the way they present themselves to the visitors. If the places state that they see themselves as mass tourist destinations, do their website back this up? Do the websites therefore create motivations for tourists to visit the destination?

Other aspects that will be looked into is the story presented by the spokes-persons of the destinations and the message delivered by the websites. Are the messages consistent? What

points of views are presented both in the spoken interviews and the written texts? Is there a special discourse behind the what is presented by the spokes-persons and the websites? Do the messages match or do they tell a different story?

## **Pauwel's (2012) *Multimodal Framework for Analyzing Websites***

Luc Pauwel's *Multimodal Framework for Analyzing Websites as Cultural Expressions* is a tool that should be "used to decode/disclose the cultural information that resides both in the form and the content [...] on web sites." According to Pauwel (2012: 248) form and content are two sides of the same coin, and one cannot have one without the other.

Pauwel (2012: 250) talk about multimodality as when two types of inputs (senses) or outputs (medium/device) are involved at the same time. He states (2012: 251) says that his work "advocates a rather exploitative, descriptive ("what is there to be found") and interpretive ("What could it possible tell us about aspects of cultures") approach." He also says that the multimodal framework is a sophisticated way of looking into the content presented on web sites, and the way that it is presented.

### **The multimodal framework for analysing websites**

The multimodal framework for analysing websites, as presented by Pauwel (2012: 251-) "consists of a structured repository of potential cultural signifiers and a plan of attack, a methodology for moving from a general/salient/quantitative to the specific/implicit/qualitative and from a mono-modal to multimodal analysis."

#### **A multi-modal framework for analysing websites**

- 1)      Preservation of first impressions and reactions
  - Categorization of "look and feel" at glance
  - Recording of affective reactions
  
- 2)      Inventory of Salient features and topics

- Inventory of present website features and attributes
  - Inventory of main content categories and topics
  - Categorize and quantify features and topics
  - Perform “negative” analysis”: significant absent topics and features
- 3) In-depth analysis of content and format choice
  - 3.1 Intra-Modal analysis (fixed/static and moving/dynamic elements)
    - Verbal/written signifiers
    - Typographic signifiers
    - Visual representational signifiers
    - Sonic signifiers
    - Lay out and design signifiers
  - 3.2 Analysis of cross-modal interplay
    - Image/written text relations and typography-written text relations
    - Sound/Image relations
    - Overall design/linguistic, visual and auditory interplay
  - 3.3 In-depth “negative” analysis
- 4) Embedded point of view or “voice” and implied audiences and purpose.
  - Analysis of POV (Point of view) and constructed persona
  - Analysis of intended/Implied primary and secondary audience(s)
  - Analysis of embedded goals and purposes
- 5) Analysis of information organization and spatial priming strategies
  - Structure and navigational options and constraints (dynamic organization)
  - Analysis of priming strategies and gate keeping tools
  - Analysis of outer directed and-or interactive features
  - Analysis of external hyperlink
- 6) Contextual analysis, provenance and inflorescence
  - Identification of sender and source
  - Technological platforms and their constraints and-or implications

## The elements of Pauwel's framework

### 1) Preservation of first impression and reaction

The first impression of the website should be written down while the impression is still new, fresh and spontaneous. The first impression should among others be about the look and the feel of the website, is one attracted to the web-site, why and why not? Does one like the features of the site, why and why not. Is the site immediately easy to use, or are there some flaws when it comes to use? What is the web-sites genre?

### 2) Inventory of salient features and topics

Here it is necessary to look into both presented and absent features and topics used and presented on the site: what features like graphics are used, is it possible to give feedback, can web-cams be connected etc. In addition to looking into the most noticeable elements of the web-site, the elements that are being left out should also be a focus point in this paragraph. Why are these things left out, and are they left out because they would disturb the meaning or purpose of the message that the site works to spread. Pauwel (2012: 253) writes that “absent topics and features or “omissions” may be as culturally significant as the presented ones in that they may point to cultural taboos, or implicit values and norms.”

### 3) In-depth analysis of content and style

In the third phase one has to look at the different parts of the site, analyse them separately and afterwards look at them in combination.

The single part is looked at in an “intra-model analysis”, meaning here the focus has to be placed on analysing verbal and/or written signifiers and potential culturally specific meanings that might be found in the text. This can e.g. be opinions, propositions and descriptions.

The content can be analysed based on topics, opinions and value statements (e.g. politically, corporal or family-oriented). Here it is also needed to look into the style of writing: is the text written in first person, plural, with gendered statements, is the text written with metaphors, humour, abbreviations etc. all things that might say something about the writer (sender) and his or hers background, position and preferences, purpose, beliefs etc.

Visual representational types and signifiers – here the focus is placed on the many different ways content can be presented visually, from the photographs, drawings, paintings to the video, tables etc. The problem with visual content is, according to Pauwel, that it has to be analysed both for “what it depicts” and for “how it depicts or represents.”

Sonic types and signifiers – in the recent years websites have increasingly been including elements of sonic or auditory content, from spoken word, to music, songs and non verbal sound like laughter, screams, sighs, the sound of a car breaking, a train whistling, the door-bell or a clock ticking. These can often be strong cultural indicators.

Layout and design signifiers – according to Pauwel website design and layout features are “essentially tools used to attract, direct and evoke the desired effect on, or response from, website visitors.” Layout design is used to guide visitors through the website through the use of dominant features. Layout design means a lot of the usage of the site, and for how people experience the site.

Cross modal interplay analysis is connected with the interplay between different elements of the website:

- a) What is the relation between the written part of the web-site and the visuals?  
Is there a strong or loose connection?
- b) If sounds are used, what is the connection between sound and visuals? Is sound used to enhance the images or visuals?
- c) All other relations e.g. design against text, text against text etc.

#### 4) Embedded point(s) of view or “voice” and implied audience(s) and purposes

This phase is about looking into who is saying something, and to who they are saying, and what the reason for saying so is.

The point of view of a web-site can be hard to establish, as the material might come from different people, e.g. one person might supply the text, another the pictures etc. For pages with customer feedback many points of views will also be presented. The focus in this phase should however be to discover what the main point of view of the site is, and who the sender of the main point of view is. Understanding this will make it easy to understand whose goals are being presented, whose values are propagated and who will benefit from the message being spread.

#### 5) Analysis of dynamic information organisation and special priming strategies

Is the site static or dynamic, is the site in constant change, or is it static and always the same. Here one also has to look to the general architecture/organisation of the site and the position of the shared information in that structure. Does the structure allow free roaming, or is it split into a hierarchy making certain topics or material harder to access (e.g. if you ave to enter click several links to get to a specific topic).

Additional things to look at in this paragraph is if the site link to third party content, what type of content does it link to? Does one need a password to read and become a part of the site?

#### 6) Contextual analysis, provenance and inference

Pauwel says that in this phase it is important that the cultural indicators are connected with the cultural actors. Something that was also discussed in other points: how is the message of the site connected with the sender of the message, and how does the sender affect the message.

## ***Discourse analysis***

Elements from Fairclough's work that were used in the connection with the above presented website discourse analysis will be discussed and explained in the following paragraph.

The discourse analysis was, apart from being connected with the above presented framework for websites analysis, also used to analyse the additional interviews and material acquired in connection with this paper. This was among others an interview with the representative of the T4 memorial in Berlin, Germany, an interview with the spokespersons from the Fort VII concentration camp in Poznań, Poland, and additional e-mails and printed materials like flyers provided by these destinations.

A critical discourse analysis can, according to Fairclough (2003: 3/24), be seen as moving or shifting of focus back and forth between specific texts and orders of discourses. Orders of discourse are connected with the use of language to communicate with and affect each other.

Fairclough (2003) provides a step by step guide to use and investigate real language data. Not all aspects of this guide are relevant for this paper, some however are. Below I discuss the parts that I have chosen to work with.

## Fairclough's discourse analysis

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Texts, social events and social practices | <p>All texts are a way for people to act and interact in social events. This can happen both in a spoken, in a written way and more.</p> <p>Texts are shaped by two powers: 1) Social structures and social practise; 2) Social agents – the people involved with the event. The social agents texture texts, and set up relations between elements of texts. The way the agent connects words, will have a large impact on understanding the text.</p> <p>The communication of words can happen in genres, e.g. interviews, written articles, websites, etc. Fairclough sees the genres as “ways of acting, and state that they are connected with the way we represent (discourses), which in turn is connected with the words we use and the ways we present. The way we speak and communicate is always connected with who we are.</p> <p>Chains or networks of texts can be seen as different types of texts e.g. interviews, speeches, written documents etc. transformed into one text or story. Genre chains are different genres that are often linked together. This also includes transforming of one genre into another (e.g. from press release to TV news).</p> |
| Modality and evaluation                   | <p>Modality is connected to the relationship between the author and the representations. Does the author present something as the ultimate truth, as something that is probably the truth or something that is possibly the truth? Stating something as the ultimate truth makes the commitment stronger, and also strengthen the connection between the author and the representations.</p> <p>Modality is connected to words like certainly, probably, possibly, obviously, evidently, often etc. – words that claim to know how likely something is to happen, of how unlikely it is to happen.</p>  |

## Fairclough's three-dimensional model of discourse

|  |  |
|--|--|
| First dimension:<br>discourse as text                    | <p>It is connected to the linguistic features like the choice of vocabulary, (expression, metaphors), grammar (transitivity, modality), cohesion (conjunctions) and text structure</p> <p>Vocabularies are mostly individual words. An example of different words that might be used or reworded to give a different understanding of the same thing: "terrorist" vs. "freedom fighter." How one sees "reality" is also in this case connected with who one is and what one's background is.</p> <p>Cohesion is about how clauses and sentences are linked together.</p> <p>Interactional control features of a text include an exchange of opinion system – who speaks first, and who decides who can speak. They include control of topic and control of others opinion. They are very much about power, and who has the power in the text or situation.</p> <p>Politeness: How is politeness used in the concrete text or situation. Is it positive politeness used to give a good face, and come across as friendly and be admired, liked and understood, or is negative politeness used to pinpoint your power and show that you do not listen to the opinion of others.</p> <p>For Fairclough it is important to look into how readers belong in relation to the text – is the reader passive or are they required to take some actions?</p> |
| Second dimension:<br>Discourse as discursive<br>practice | <p>Discursive practice is, according to Fairclough (1992: 78), about the processes connected to the production of text, the distribution of text and the consumption of text.</p> <p>Texts are created differently, according to the social context behind them. It is therefore important to look into what lies behind the texts. In this phase one must look into what background the producer (author) has for his statements, who is really represented in the</p>  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <p>text: is it the author or is the author representing someone else?</p> <p>The consumption of the text is connected with the one reading and consuming it: how this person sees the world, also affects how he or she reads and understand the text.</p> |
| Third dimension:<br>Discourse as social practice | Social practise is connected with discursive practise, because it affects the way reality is seen and spoken about, which again affects the social structure in society.   |

These are the main parts of Fairclough's theories used in the paper. They have proven useful where the website analysis did not offer adequate tools to create a deep understanding of the analysed websites, interviews etc. and can in places be seen as an add-on to the website analysis model.

## **Analyses of the individual institutions**

The different elements that have been analysed for this paper are all discussed in the context of the four institutions described in the dark tourism chapter, that is Bernburg Euthanasia Centre, the T4 memorial in Berlin, Fort VII memorial in Poznań, Poland and Besættelsesmuseet in Aarhus, Denmark. For each of these institutions the following elements have been analysed: the visit (the narrative), the website and its discourse, additional materials (if any), the exhibitions and the interview with the representative.

### ***Bernburg Euthanasia Centre***

Bernburg Euthanasia Centre, Olga-Benario-Straße 16/18, 06406 Bernburg, Germany.

Elements used for analysis:

- A visit to the institution in July 2016;
- The sites website found at  
<http://www.gedenkstaette-bernburg.de/site/besucherinfos/besucher.html>
- Emails received from the institution in spring 2017

### **The visit**

Driving to Bernburg from Leipzig on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July 2016, I was somehow surprised how hard it was to find the memorial site. Bernburg was not the most easily accessible town in Germany and when I finally arrived in the town it turned out to be very hard to find the memorial itself. It was placed in an old hospital which was still in use, and despite driving past the building a couple of times I found no sign indicating that we were supposed to enter to get to the memorial. In the end I had to approach the reception of the hospital to ask if we had come to the right place and where the memorial was located. Turned out that we were at the right place and that the memorial could be found in a side building to the hospital.

Outside of the building with the memorial there was placed a stone with an inscription about the victims that had been killed at Bernburg. Upon entering the building I had to start with visiting the office upstairs and talk to a nice lady speaking fluent English. She told me that there was very little written material in English at the place and that they did not have English material available. If I wanted, I could send her an e-mail and she would send me an English language folder about the place. Additionally she told me that I was allowed to take pictures of the exhibition, but that they would prefer that I did not take any selfies in the gas-chamber etc. as it was disrespectful to the victims.

The exhibition itself was placed in parts of the hallway of the basement, where posters written in German presented parts of the places history, and in four additional rooms. Room 1 was a small room where the gas containers were placed. In this room there was a small hole for pumping the gas into the adjacent room, a bathroom-like looking gas chamber, with showers, black and white tiles on the floor and a mirror. Next to the gas chamber there was the dissection room, where all the bodies were moved after the persons had been murdered in the gas chamber. The final room was where the ovens for cremation had originally been placed. They had been removed long ago and replaced by large photos. Apart from the pictures of the ovens this room also contained pictures of some of the victims murdered at Bernburg. However, no information was given in connection with the photos.

B.E.C. was an interesting place to visit for people interested in World War Two. It was an old-fashioned kind of exhibition that could have done better with more information available in English, both about how to access the place and in general. B.E.C. did not come across as an attractive tourist destination, but with more information in English and a better flow in the exhibition, ensuring that visitors could follow the exhibition and understand it, it could easily be developed to a very good dark tourism place for people interested in this aspect of history. At present time some prior knowledge about the topic is necessary to get much out of the exhibition, as the single parts of it miss basic information.

The above story about my visit to the B.E.C. can be seen as a narrative story, with a beginning (I went to see the Exhibition at Bernburg), information about the hardships with visiting, the interesting parts in connection with visiting, and a conclusion.

Based on my observations I can say that B.E.C. is a very authentic WW2 memorial and a very interesting place to visit. The difficult access to the place, the lack of information in English

and the dated exhibitions do however put a limit to who will enjoy the exhibition and how much they can get out of a visit. People with a lot of knowledge about the German T4 (euthanasia) program and visitors fluent in German will get the most out of a visit, while people with no knowledge about the T4 program and no understanding of the German language will get much less out of a visit there. At present time B.E.C. is a tourist destination for the few.

## The (email) interview

In connection with this paper I exchanged a few emails with Bernburg. According to the emails B.E.C. is not a classic tourist destination and because of the memorial location there are no chance visitors. Most visitors to the place are either school-children or trainees under education.

Information in other languages is present in the form of some English and French flyers, but in 2018 a new exhibition with English versions of the otherwise German texts will be available. People will then be able to read the English texts through their smart-phone.

“Visitor regulations” document I received was in German and only consisted of a few points: 1) about taking photos outside of the building and 2) about the place being a remembrance site, which meant that members of extremist parties or organizations as well as their supporters could be denied access to the site. It was also stated that visitors were not allowed to wear “clothing or symbolism that expresses a glorification of dictatorships.” The final point 3) stated that the workers at Bernburg were allowed to ask anyone not following the regulations to leave the ground. In the email dr. Hoffmann stated that there are always people misbehaving, and when they do, he is the one to decide if they can stay or have to leave.

The written materials from B.E.C. confirms that the site is not a tourist destination for the masses, but for the ones with either a prior knowledge about the place or for people who visit because of their education. The information here however shows that B.E.C. is aware of the attraction the place has on foreign tourists, as they are planning a new exhibition in English. It can also be concluded that the site works a lot with visitor regulations and the way visitors behave on the site, which fits the impression that I got when visiting the place very well.

## The website

<http://www.gedenkstaette-bernburg.de/index.html>



The analysis is based on elements in Pauwels framework.

### 1) Preservation of first impression and reaction

At the first glance the official website for B.E.C. seems classic and stylish, but also a bit boring and unattractive. The B.E.C. can be classified as a memorial site, offering knowledge about the past of the institution and the victims of the gruesome program that was run there during the Second World War. The main colours of the site are white and grey; a splash of a brighter green colour has been used to create some contrast. The design is rather old fashioned and basic, which makes it very user-friendly. The site consists of 6 different pages, including the main page. Each of these pages offer a short, but understandable description of different subjects.

For people interested in the subject the site at a first glance seems satisfactory, but not very interesting. It is not a site many visitors would spend a long time on. An update with several language possibilities and more temporary ways of presenting the mater-

ial might be something for B.E.C. to look into, but realistically it might not be what they want. Maybe the boring design of the website is connected with the way they want to present themselves, as a memorial site connected with a sad history, and not an entertainment site for the masses.

## 2) Inventory of salient features and topics

| <b>Present features of the site</b>                   |   |
|---|---|
| Text  | Text in the German language is the most common feature on the site.<br>The small font on the grey background is not always very readable.   |
| Pictures  | A limited amount of pictures is used on the site. The pictures are small and not clickable, making it impossible to enlarge them.   |
| Graphics  | A few drawings are used to illustrate the layout of the building.   |
| Menu  | A classic menu is placed in the top of the website.   |
| <b>Missing features on the site</b>                   |   |
| Information in foreign languages, especially English. | The site offers no information in other languages than German.  |
| Information about named victims                       | The personal story is missing from the website.   |
| Pictures of the victims                               | More focus on the fact that the victims were real people might generate more interest for the site, this could be done by using pictures with information about the people on them. |
| Videos connected to the place and its history         | Most contemporary exhibitions include video and digital elements in this day and age, both the place and the website are lacking such elements.                                     |

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| More modern types of display | The site is in general old-fashioned, and there is no contemporary elements there, which makes the site seem dull and uninteresting. |
|                              |  |

### **Topics presented on the site**

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| Topics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The history of B.E.C</li> <li>• The victims killed at B.E.C</li> <li>• Euthanasia at B.E.C</li> <li>• Visiting B.E.C. (it is free)</li> <li>• The visitors</li> <li>• Nazi (NS) murders</li> <li>• Teaching at B.E.C</li> <li>• What B.E.C. offer to its visitors</li> <li>• Description of the buildings layout, what can be found where.</li> <li>• Yearly program for the memorial site</li> <li>• Who is behind the site</li> <li>• Contact</li> </ul> |
|--------|---|

In general many topics are touched upon on the B.E.C. website, but in a very shallow manner. Combined the site only contains as much text as two and a half average pages of 2400 keystrokes, which of course puts limitations on the material that can be presented. The topics that are best described are the history of the place, the layout of the building, the place as a memorial and its educational elements.

### **Missing topics, or topics without enough focus**

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| Topics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General information about the T4 (euthanasia program)</li> <li>• More information about the Nazis (national socialism)</li> </ul> |
|--------|--|

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More information about the victims, who were they, why they became victims</li> <li>• More information about the organisation behind the institution – Stiftung Gedenkstätten Sachsen-Anhalt</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

The lack of focus on the above topics sticks out when I examine the site. Perhaps the reason is the limited space used for the site. I however started out with the assumption that the missing focus has something to do with what the institution behind the site (maybe the German state) wants the site to showcase and promote. It is a site for remembering the masses that were killed there, not for remembering the single persons, and especially not the people who did the murdering there? This was somewhat backed up by the interview with Mr. Parzer in Berlin who said that the lack of personal stories, that is so characteristic for the places such as B.E.C., is strongly connected with the German policy, in force until a few years ago, of keeping the names and information about people who had been in mental hospitals private and secret.

By describing the people behind the killings that happened in the euthanasia program as Nazis and national socialists the focus is removed from the fact that they might in fact just have been everyday German people acting according to the time they were living in and the public German opinion at that time.

### 3) In-depth analysis of content and style

As already stated, the B.E.C. website is text-wise a rather small site and there is not much text to be found. Because of that analysing every single part of the site separately does not always make sense. However, I will write a little about each page and then try to combine the notes into a deeper analysis.

| <b>Pages on the site</b>                  |  |
|---|--|
| Intro page, welcoming people to the site. | <p>The page offered a short introduction to the place, its history and who to contact for more information.</p> <p>Visually the page is simple and only one photo is used: a contemporary picture of the location, but in such a small size that you only gives an idea about the building and</p> |

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
|                        | <p>the area where it is located.</p> <p>The main focus of the page is the memorial for more than 14,000 people that were killed at Bernburg between 1940 and 1943.</p> <p>The most noticeable shortcoming of the page is the lack of information about the people who killed the victims. Here they are only mentioned with the letters NZ. There might be different reasons for this: it might be because everybody visiting the site is supposed to know this, it might be because an official German site is not supposed to focus on this aspect etc.</p> <p>The page feels coherent: everything placed there is there for a reason.</p>   |
| The memorial Bernburg  | <p>A longer description of the past and present history of the location.</p> <p>A lot of focus is placed on the place as a memorial and on remembering the victims. Also: how the memorial was started in 1982, and how it since then has developed.</p> <p>A larger focus is also given to the visitors and what B.E.C. can offer them.</p> <p>There are more pictures on this page. They show the building both outside and inside, the gas chamber and the memorial for the victims, which does matter for the visual affect of the page.</p> <p>This page feels quite narrative, telling a story about the place, with an introduction, a development and a present situation.</p> <p>In this page very little focus is again placed on the victimisers and who they were.</p> |
| Layout of the building | <p>A small page, with two drawings showing the first floor and the basement of the building. Visually it is again a</p>  |

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
|                     | <p>plain site without any flashy elements.</p> <p>Content: A description of the different rooms in the building and how they were used in connection with the handling and killings of people during the World War Two. Still not much attention is paid to who committed the crimes.</p> <p>Additional information about what happened with the bodies after people had been burned would also fit well here, but no such information provided.</p>  |
| Visitor information | <p>Very basic information presented here. It is free to visit the memorial site. How to get there. What the place offers to visitors and opening hours.</p> <p>No visual images is used on the page, and fonts are the same as in every other page on the site.</p>   |
| Events              | <p>Mostly links to other relevant sites, but those sites are also all in German and unless one is very fluent in German, one cannot get much out of visiting them.</p> <p>This page seems somewhat out of place: why is the information about the institute behind B.E.C, and the link for a site offering more information about the place located under a yearly program headline?</p> <p>Visually this page seems a bit messy, a lot of different font sizes are used, some text is in bold, the links are underlined etc. The same fonts as on every other pages on the site. No images used on the page.</p> |
| Contacts            | <p>Simple page with information about who to contact about B.E.C, but information about which person or place to contact for what is missing.</p> <p>Same layout as on other pages on the site.</p>   |

On the basis of the above analysis it can be concluded that the pages on the B.E.C. website offer quite a lot of knowledge about the place on a limited space. Apart from the

elementary and basic information much of the content is presented as a kind of storytelling. The page itself seems visually old-fashioned and it is hard to conclude if anyone would visit the location based on a visit to the website. It is somewhat doubtful though, which might also be backed by both the text on the site itself: "The memorial site is mainly visited by groups [...] not only the general schools (subjects such as history, social studies, religion, ethics, philosophy), but also nursing schools, nursing homes and other educational institutions," and the answer I received by email from the establishment stating that very few people visit the place by chance.

#### 4) Embedded point(s) of view or "voice" and implied audience(s) and purposes

The voice presented on the website first and foremost presents the points of views of the Bernburg Euthanasia memorial centre. Everything described on the page is connected with that location and its history and presence. Additional points of view might be opinions connected with the Stiftung Gedenkstätten Sachsen-Anhalt (2012), a foundation created in 2007 to preserve the knowledge about the crimes committed by the National Socialist dictatorship during the Second World War. The foundation is located in the landlocked federal state Sachsen-Anhalt, where the law to create the foundation was also passed. What The Stiftung Gedenkstätten Sachsen-Anhalt decides to do is then closely connected with the state it is working under. The Sachen-Anhalt state is in some sense also working under the federal German law and the German state policy about what a memorial like B.E.C. should present to their visitors and how they should present it is likely to also have played a role in the shaping of both the B.E.C. memorial and the site for the memorial.

What is said on the site is only directed towards people who understand German. This can both be people interested in the World War Two, the T4 Euthanasia program, and students who have been told that they are to visit the place by their school or institute.

The message (the goal of the site) is about the memorial and its history, the people who died there and what people can get out of a visit to the place.

The message that is not present on the site is who committed the crimes, why they committed the murders and who they were. There are no stories about the specific victims, who they were, where they came from and why they ended up at Bernburg.

#### 5) Analysis of dynamic information organisation and special priming strategies

The site is for the most parts rather easy to navigate. At the top of the site there is a menu for accessing the individual pages. Additionally, sublinks are used on pages where needed, but they do not make navigating the site harder. The sublinks might be considered a form of hierarchy, but they are only used when they make sense, as when a sublink is given for opening hours on the visitor information page.

A limited number of links are given to other sites, but only to sites directly connected to the B.E.C, where one can get more information about the institution and memorial.

#### 6) Contextual analysis, provenance and inference:

1. Without a deep knowledge about how the German state works in connection with memorial sites and with presenting the crimes that happened during the Second World War to the general public it becomes very hard to conclude anything about how the messages presented on the website are connected with the sender. It is very clear that many of the historical details presented on the site are closely connected with the wish of the institution to spread knowledge about what happened there during the war. It is however impossible to guess why the focus has been placed where it has: is the lack of information about single victims and their personal stories decided by someone higher in the hierarchy or has it been the institution itself that made that decision? Is the lack of information about the T4- euthanasia program and the people behind it connected with a wish from the German state about how memorials are conducted, as my interview with Robert Parzer suggests?

## The discourse

B.E.C. can be said to belong in several social contexts, from the way that history is used to affect the collective memory e.g. through the use of Nazi and NS instead of Germans, to the more neutral aspects such as simply education and remembering of the past.

The agent, as defined by Fairclough, is B.E.C. – the institution itself, as it is the institution that creates the meaning out of all the presented elements for the visitor to the page. All the texts on the B.E.C. site can be seen as informative text, presenting the visitors with information about the place history and the recent situation. Examples of that can be “the visit to B.E.C. is

free" and "more than 14,000 sick and handicapped people [...] died in Bernburg." The text on the site must be concluded to be directed mostly towards students (or teachers) that understand German. This can be said based on the fact that most visitors to B.E.C. are students, as shown in the email I received from the institution and the following quote from the website: "The memorial site is mainly visited by groups. Not only the general schools (subjects such as history, social studies, religion, ethics, philosophy), but also nursing schools, nursing homes and other educational institutions." The text can in some cases be seen as educational, providing visitors to the site with information about the place and the T4 euthanasia program.

When first looking at the B.E.C. site it might not seem striking that the perpetrators are only named as "NS", "The Nazis" and "the national socialists" (examples: "für Opfer der NS-„Euthanasie", "nationalsozialistische Zwangssterilisation" and "Verfolgten des Nationalsozialismus"), but when compared with the other websites analysed in this paper and other similar German sites it becomes increasingly clear that all the researched pages seem to use more or less the same phrases and words. Examples of other German sites (not analysed in this project) using these words and phrases are the Pirna-Sonnenstein Euthanasia Centre memorial website: "In 1940 and 1941 the National Socialists murdered 13,720 people", the Hadamar Euthanasia Centre website: "Between 1939 and 1945 some 200 000 people from Germany fell victim to the Nazi-Euthanasia-crime", and the Hartheim Euthanasia Centre memorial website: "Comprehensive historical information about the Nazi euthanasia programme and the role played by Hartheim Castle are offered in the former functional spaces of the castle." This word use is of course connected with the social structure and practise in Germany. There is a certain way that the Germans like to see and understand themselves that can be seen in both the exhibition conducted by the T-4 memorial, their website and the interview with Mr Parzer. British historian Richard Overy (2013) said that the use of the word Nazi has meant a complete lack of historical precision. "Nazi" becomes a shorthand term that obscures more than it explains and that even if the use of "National Socialist" or "National Socialism" are better, they do open the way to the employment of a less strident language for understanding the dictatorship and its component parts. More about this use of words will be written in the final analysis chapter and the conclusion of the full project.

The communication on the site goes strictly one way. However, the site does offer e-mail addresses, phone-numbers etc. where people visiting the site can get in contact with staff from the institution.

The generic structure is partly like a narrative text, telling and explaining what happened at the place during and after the Second World War (an example: "In this garage two to three vehicles were able to drive in completely. Only then could the inmates get out. [...] Afterwards, relatives of nursing staff led the victims to the cellar. [...] In this room [...] 60 to 75 people were enclosed and suffocated by CO gas". Other parts are just informative text offering nothing else than basic customer information. e.g. opening hours, pricing, address etc.

The B.E.C. site chose to work with words like "you", "here" etc. to create a closer bond between the site and the reader. Jørgensen (2013: 94) calls this type of textualizing personalizing. It does somehow make one feel like being spoken directly to (examples: "Abhängig von der menge an Zeit die Sie mitbringen" (Depending on the amount of time you spend) and "Sie können hier..." (Here, you can...)).

Interactional control is connected with who has the power over the message spread through the site. Both the B.E.C. memorial, the Stiftung Gedenkstätten Sachsen-Anhalt and the German state can be assumed to have a say in what is presented on the site. Most parts are however rather basic and informative and must be assumed to be decided upon by the B.E.C. itself.

There is a limited consumption of the page and it only happens when people with an interest for World War Two are directed there from other sources like google.com, Wikipedia etc. The page is used by readers who want a basic understanding of what the B.E.C. is, what the T4 program was, how to visit the location and what one can get out of a visit. How much the single reader will get out of the site is of course also connected to hers or his background and the prior knowledge.

Coherence: all parts of the website are used in a way so that they together give an easily understandable description of the place and its history. Choice of words on the site points in the direction of being descriptive of what happened there, but often choosing words like "getötet" (killed) and "starben" (died) instead of the stronger "ermordet" (murdered) does somewhat impact (that is soften) the message presented. Still, the number of dark words used on the sites puts it in the direction of being mostly descriptive. Other words used are "Opfer" (victim), "erstickt" (suffocated), "Leichenbrenner" (corps burners), "Erbrochenes" (vomit), "Exkremeante" (excrements), "tote" (dead), "Leichen" (corpses), "Morde" (murders), "Tätern" (offenders) make it possible to understand what really happened at the B.E.C. during the WW2.

Modality: there are no markers of modality on the site and the writing does not offer any clue about the writers personal opinion about the subjects presented.

## The conclusion

Based on the emails, the websites and the personal visit to the place it can be concluded that, to a large extend, B.E.C. sends out a message that matches what the institution actually is. All aspects of the data gathered for this paper suggest that B.E.C. is mostly an educational institute offering knowledge about what happened there during the Second World War and meant for remembering the “masses” that were killed there during the war. The strong focus B.E.C. put on how the visitors behave and the statements about how visitors with the wrong clothing or opinions can be turned away does back the intention of being a respectful memorial for the victims of the T4 program. The aim of the establishment is to present history in an as neutral as possible way, which is somewhat showed by the lack of modality markers used in the texts on the website. However, the use of certain words like the “getötet” (killed) and “gestorben” (died) instead of the stronger “ermordet” (murdered) etc. does colour the message sent through the site as less neutral. It also feels biased that the perpetrators are never described as Germans, but always as Nazis or NS, which might seem like an attempt at disconnecting Germany's past from its presence: “the perpetrators were not Germans but Nazis.”

In general the website does give a good basis for understanding what happened at the B.E.C. during the World War Two. For anyone interested in World War Two and the T4 program it is a good idea to see the website before visiting the institution, simply because the website offers some basis information that might not be found when visiting the place without a guide. The exhibition at B.E.C. offers very little information about its particular elements, and without a basis knowledge it can be hard to really understand the place.

The place has, in spite of being open to visitors, no interest in becoming a mass tourist destination. This clearly shows in both the exhibition (see above) and in the choice of offering the website in German only. Despite interest for the subject (compare how many visitors e.g. Auschwitz can attract!) there is very little access to the information about the place and its offerings to foreign visitors. There might be several reasons for the lack of wish to become a mass tourist destination. Perhaps the reason is that the location is placed in an active hospital? Maybe it is because of the dark past and what some people describe as German *Kollekt-*

*ivschuld*, wanting to preserve and remember a dark history, but not wanting too much focus on it? Or maybe the place is in general located too far from any major towns to be relevant as a major tourist destination?

Textually B.E.C. lacks a lot to become a place for the mass tourists. Even-though the website does offer a lot of information about the place, it still lacks more focus on the storytelling aspects to become relevant for the present day mass tourists. As was stated among others by Mr. Parzer from the T4-memorial, the human and personal stories is often what makes history come alive and seem closer. Mr. Parzer also commented that the fact that B.E.C. still does not have those aspects on their web-page and in their exhibition is connected with the way the German society has been handling such problems. Until a few years back it was not allowed to publish the names and the stories of the people who died in the T4 program out of "consideration" for the surviving members of the victims' families. This has now changed and more modern exhibitions now include these aspects. B.E.C. informs that it is something the institution works with in their guided tours. But in their present exhibition and on the website it is still not present.

With an interest in WW2 the writer of this paper (I) thinks that it is a shame that the institution is not focused more on attracting visitors. However, it is necessary to realise that the place is only connected with dark history and that there are very few positive stories to tell from places like B.E.C. There were not a lot of survivors that could tell positive and uplifting stories about how people can survive even the worst and most horrible conditions. B.E.C. was mainly a killing factory, when sent there no one could really hope to be saved. Together with the fact that the memorial is placed in a location that is used as a hospital sets certain limitations to how many visitors the place can handle and attract. However, judging by the below table it seems like Bernburg is doing fine in comparison to other similar German destinations. Perhaps then B.E.C. is really where it needs to be in the tourism market: a small destination for the few with a special interest in the dark sides of the World War Two.

| Place  | 2010    | 2011    | 2012    |
|--|---------|---------|---------|
| Gedenkstätte Deutsche Teilung Marienborn                 | 168.000 | 176.000 | 171.500 |
| Gedenkstätte fur die Opfer des KZ Langenstein -Zwieberge | 16.200  | 12.500  | 12.500  |
| Gedenkstätte Moritzplatz Magdeburg                       | 11.000  | 8.500   | 12.000  |
| Gedenkstätte ROTER OCHSE Halle (Saale)                   | 9.000   | 8.600   | 11.100  |

|  |                |                |                |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Gedenkstätte fur die Opfer der NS-Euthanasie, Bernburg | 9.000          | 8.900          | 9.500          |
| Gedenkstätte KZ Lichtenburg Prettin                    | -              | 300            | 2.300          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>213.200</b> | <b>214.800</b> | <b>218.900</b> |

Number of visitors to chosen German WW2 memorials (Stiftung Gedenkstätten Sachsen – Anhalt, 2012)

## **Fort VII**

### **The interview**

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of March 20017, I travelled from Wrocław to Poznań, Poland to conduct interviews with historians Grzegorz Kucharczyk and Przemysław Jurkiewicz (working at the Fort VII museum/memorial). According to Google map the drive would take around 2,5 hours in car, but it turned out to take quite a lot longer than that. A lot of roadworks was happening along the highway between the two cities and driving one way took around 4 hours. This might have been a problem for people who tend to arrive for an appointment just a few minutes ahead of time, but as I always like to have enough time, the drive was just a possibility to experience a little of the beautiful Polish countryside, and a lot of the small Polish villages that were passed along the way.

Arriving in Poznań, it turned out to be somewhat hard to find Fort VII, memorial, but that was mostly because of not knowing the city and the GPS that was not working perfectly. The memorial was placed somewhat close to the centre, but at the same time at the outskirts. Fort VII signs were placed along the road directing me towards the location, and already at that stage the visit to Fort VII showed that the destination was more a tourist destination than e.g. B.E.C. had been.



*Sign showing direction to Fort VII (own picture)*

Arriving at the destination I was somewhat nervous and unsecure about where to go and who to talk to, but there was no need for that: the woman at the entrance had been informed about my visit and I was greeted in a professional and very friendly way.

The interview with Grzegorz Kucharczyk and Przemysław Jurkiewicz was conducted in a relaxed atmosphere and with a focus on the questions created in the interview-guide discussed in the method chapter. In this section I will discuss the findings from the interview, and these findings will later be used for researching if there is a match between what the museum or memorial sees itself as, they way it works, and with the way it presents itself through the exhibitions and the website. In my final analysis this will among other also be used to figure out whether different countries present the same historical events differently based on culture and the sides of history they want the world to see and remember.

During the interview I found out that the aim of Fort VII is to present the history to visitors in an “as accurate way as possible”. Therefore they pay much attention to the way history is presented at Fort VII. They consider themselves a tourist destination, but are aware of the conflict between this and the fact that they do not have a website in any other language than Polish. Apart from being a tourist destination they also consider themselves a memorial more than a museum. The aim of the place is to keep the memory of the people who suffered and died there during the German occupation of Poland in the Second World War alive. During most of my stay and the interview a Polish man was present in the room. Fort VII was going to conduct a memorial for a member of his family (Tadeusz Wojtczak), who had been a member of the Polish resistance movement, and the man was there to talk about that, and brought with him medals, photos etc. that he had of the now deceased hero.

Most of the visitors to Fort VII are either school children, visiting with their schools, the locals or people from e.g. Ukraine or England. Around 8000 people visit the museum or memorial every year. When I visited Fort VII I saw 7 other visitors there, two young girls, two older women and three middle-aged men.

At Fort VII they are very much aware of the use of the words, and especially the use of the phrases “German camp in Poland”, “German Nazis” etc. is seen as important there, as there in recent years has been a big conflict between the way some Germans like to “remember” the war and the actual events of the war. As Mr. Jurkiewicz said, we have to tell the real story about what happened and the fact remains that Germans were behind the war, Germans elected

Hitler as their leaders, and Fort VII and other similar places were German camps in an occupied country – they were not “Polish concentration camps.” If we use the wrong description or wording a lot of people will also get a wrong understanding of what happened, and this especially is relevant for the younger people, where a lot of people would not know that the camps were German if named “Polish.”

Apart from being a World War Two memorial and museum the place also attracts some visitors based on its history as a part of the defence system for the city of Poznań.

When it comes to how visitors behave when visiting the place, there are not many problems. The place is considered a grave-yard, a place of death where visitors have to behave with respect.



*Memorial event at Fort VII, 2017, photo used with the permission of Mr. Grzegorz Kucharczyk*

## The exhibition

Most of the exhibition at Fort VII is created with the focus on what happened there during the WW2. At Fort VII all of the aspects of the WW2 are presented. There are also some personal stories about named victims, among other the first people that were gassed during the WW2, which happened in the fall of 1939 at Fort VII, when the patients from mental hospitals in Owińska and Poznań were brought there to be killed.



Gas-chamber 17 at Fort VII (own photo)



Owinska Mental home, where some of the first victims at Fort VII came from, now derelict and falling to pieces (own photo)



A little part of the exhibitions at Fort VII (own photo)



The so called stairway of death at Fort VII, here prisoners were forced to run up and down the stairs with heavy stones, and sometimes kicked down the stairs leaving them to die at the bottom of the stairs. (own photo)

Fort VII works with several types of exhibitions, starting with the location and the building still left from the war (and before the war), to the old-fashioned types of exhibitions where artefacts and textual data are presented in glass displays, to more “arty” types of exhibitions where history is presented with sculptures representing victims like Count Adolf Bninski (member of the Polish senate) who was imprisoned in Fort VII and killed in 1942 by the Germans.

Considering that Fort VII is a rather small memorial or museum, it is still a very informative place to visit, and the place is both very well preserved and run.

Textually most of the exhibition is presented in Polish. All the text presented in the exhibitions is very connected with the place and can also be connected to the information provided by the website and the additional guidebook that can be bought on the site.

## The website

[http://www.wmn.poznan.pl/index.php?module=htmlpages&func=display&pid=40<sup>1</sup>](http://www.wmn.poznan.pl/index.php?module=htmlpages&func=display&pid=40)

Fort VII website is part of the larger *Wielkopolskie Muzeum Niepodległości* (Museum of Struggle for Independence of Wielkopolska) site. It consists of only two pages: 1) short information about Fort VII and 2) a longer and more detailed description of the fort and its history from around 1900 until present time. Considering that Fort VII is a very historical place that can be assumed to attract a lot of visitors from different countries it is surprising that this website does not offer versions in any other languages than Polish.

First impression: the two pages seem a bit plain, but also quite informative. As a tourist one will find all the information needed when planning a trip. The site is quite easy to use and has an intuitive menu. The color palette is rather unexciting: a plain white background with boring text fonts. A look at the site would not attract many visitors to the museum. One good thing about the Fort VII pages is the use of pictures. Many pictures are used, which gives a better understanding of the place. Technically not all of the pictures display correctly though, and sometimes the wrong links are given to galleries, which of course makes the site seem less professional.

Unfortunately the site has a few flaws as well. In spite of the site providing great information for (Polish) visitors, it needs a technical check up and an update. One example of a flaw can be the wrong links to the galleries. Another flaw is that half of the pictures on the second page on the site are simply missing.

## Inventory of salient features and topics

| Features on the website |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Text                    | Text in Polish only, which makes it hard for foreign tourists to get anything out of the website. Mostly rather plain fonts are used. |

<sup>1</sup> Under re-construction in June 2017

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | With a white background the black text is very easy to read.   |
| Pictures                                   | Considering that the Fort VII part of the site only consists of two pages a lot of pictures have been used, and from a subjective point of view they pictures have been used well here, making the site more interesting.  |
| Menu                                       | The Fort VII website is as described a sub-site to the larger Museum of Struggle for Independence of Wielkopolska site and the access to Fort's pages is placed in the menu on the left side of that main site. The menu is easy and rather intuitive to use.  |
|  |  |
| <b>Missing features on the site</b>        |  |
| The option for more international language | Text only in Polish is preventing a lot of people from visiting the site and affects the number of foreign people visiting the Fort VII memorial.  |
| The personal stories about named victims.  | Who was placed in Fort VII, from where did they come etc.  |
| Old historical photos.                     | Old historical pictures of the place, of the people who died there, of the Nazis etc.  |
| Videos                                     | Both historical and present time videos, offering a better understanding of the place.   |
| Contemporary types of presentation.        | Presentations on the site are rather old fashioned and low key. The site might as well have been created 15 years ago. Only information that dates up to 2016 is the information about pricing.  |
|  |  |
| <b>Topics presented on the site</b>        |  |
| Topics                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitor information</li> <li>• The history of Fort VII</li> <li>• First concentration camp in Poland</li> <li>• First place where euthanasia with gas was used on humans</li> <li>• The exhibitions</li> <li>• The German occupational forced and the way they changed Fort VII and the area</li> </ul> |

| <b>Topics missing on the site</b> |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Topics missing                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The aim of the exhibition</li> <li>• How Fort VII connects to other WW2 sites</li> <li>• Legal matters</li> <li>• Visitor behaviour</li> </ul> |

### **In-depth analysis of content and style**

As already stated, the Fort VII part of the website of the Museum of Struggle for Independence of Wielkopolska is rather small. With only two pages it does not leave room for much text to be found.

| <b>Pages on the Fort VII part of the site</b> |  |
|---|--|
| Intro page, welcoming people to the site.     | <p>On the intro page one can find information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opening Hours</li> <li>• Opening days</li> <li>• Pricing</li> <li>• Types of tickets</li> <li>• Guided tours</li> </ul> <p>This part of the page is mostly written as short sentences with very concrete information. Additionally direct speech is used when in a paragraph about seasonal tickets, the visitor is spoken to directly like "A seasonal tickets give you the right to visit every branch of the museum, in a seven day time-frame from the visit to the first branch."</p> <p>This page also includes a short description of the museum and its history.</p> <p>The text is written in a mix of past and present tense, depending on if it is about the past or what is to be found at the museum at</p> |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>present time.</p> <p>Considering the history of the place, and the history of Poland in general, the text is in spite of not being neutral still closer to being a statement of facts about what happened there, than a colourful and emotional form of storytelling. Words and sentences used are among other murdered ("zamordowani"), anti-German ("antyniemiecki"), German occupation power ("niemieckie siły okupacyjne"), the first concentration camp on Polish soil ("pierwszy obóz koncentracyjny na terytorium Polski"), the Polish resistance movement ("polski ruch oporu")</p>  |
| Museum for Greater Poland Martyrs – Fort VII | <p>This page contains a deeper and more detailed description of the place and its history from before it became a German death camp to present days when it is a memorial for the victims killed there during World War Two. The text is written in third person, mostly in the past tense and describes what happened at the place. A presentation of what Fort VII offers to visitors in this day and age is in present tense.</p> <p>Words and sentences used on the page: First concentration camp on Polish soil ("pierwszy obóz koncentracyjny na terytorium Polski"), Nazi occupation ("okupacja nazistowska"), rich and large collection of memorabilia from the war described ("bogata kolekcja pamiątek wojennych"), a historical important source ("ważne źródło historyczne")</p> |

For Polish speakers the two webpages about Fort VII offer rich and very usable information about the museum.

Looking behind the words and sentences used on the pages also makes it very clear that the site is Polish and that Poland suffered a lot under the German occupation. The page is without a doubt written from a Polish point of view, and the choice of words on the page is therefore considerably different than the words used on German sites and pages. This is consistent with the findings in the conducted interviews very well, but more about that in a later analysis chapter.

### **Embedded point(s) of view or “voice” and implied audience(s) and purposes**

The voice presented on the website is first and foremost the points of views of the Fort VII administration, but additional points of views are connected to the Museum of Struggle for Independence of Wielkopolska and the Polish government. It might in fact be hard to pinpoint which part of the presented material belongs to which of the mentioned actors, because they are all somewhat mixed together and are for some parts also grounded in the same culture and understanding of things.

The voices that Fort VII sets out to speak are the voices from the past, and especially the voices of the victims who died or suffered there during the war. It is also the voice of the Polish society, simply because the exhibitions are working to present a part of the Polish history in an as accurate way as possible.

The site must be said to be directed towards people who understand Polish, but apart from that it is really directed to a large group of people, from people who are interested in general military history (as the place already existed long before the Second World War) to people interested in the history of Poznań and of course all the people interested in the Second World War and the T4 euthanasia program etc.

The message of the site is about the memorial and its history, the people who died there, and what the place offers to visitors. Apart from some facts about who is behind the exhibitions, it does not feel like any information is missing. However, some more in-depth information about certain aspects of the exhibitions presented at the location would be a good idea, among others about the victims. Video material etc. would also improve the experience one gets when visiting the site.

### **Analysis of dynamic information organization and special priming strategies**

The site is quite easy to use and (apart from the language aspect) can as stated before be seen as rather intuitive. The menu for the parent museum is placed on the right side of the page, and there one can also find the two sub-pages for the Fort VII memorial place. On the Fort VII pages there are a few links, unfortunately not always functional. The overall website is in general built like a hierarchy, which also makes it easy to use.

## **Contextual analysis, provenance and inference**

As there is not much text on the site, it seems very clear that the message presented on the website is mostly connected with the sender, in this case the Fort VII memorial and its wish to spread knowledge about what happened there during the war. The way facts are presented is of course also dependent on Poland and Polish history. Where memorial places in Germany seem to pick certain aspects of history and present them at an angle that will not make Germany look bad, but puts the blame on Social Nationalists and Nazis, Fort VII works with a fuller version of history.

Conclusion: unfortunately the museum is not going to attract many foreign visitors because of the website. A shame, because as the place where the German Nazis first killed people in a gas-chamber, the memorial is actually of great historical importance, and should as such be able to attract a lot more visitors than it does today. As the museum itself also wants to attract more foreign visitors, this is something that has to be worked on in the future. Adding an English and German section to the website does not cost a lot, and is bound to attract at least a few more visitors to the place.

## **The discourse**

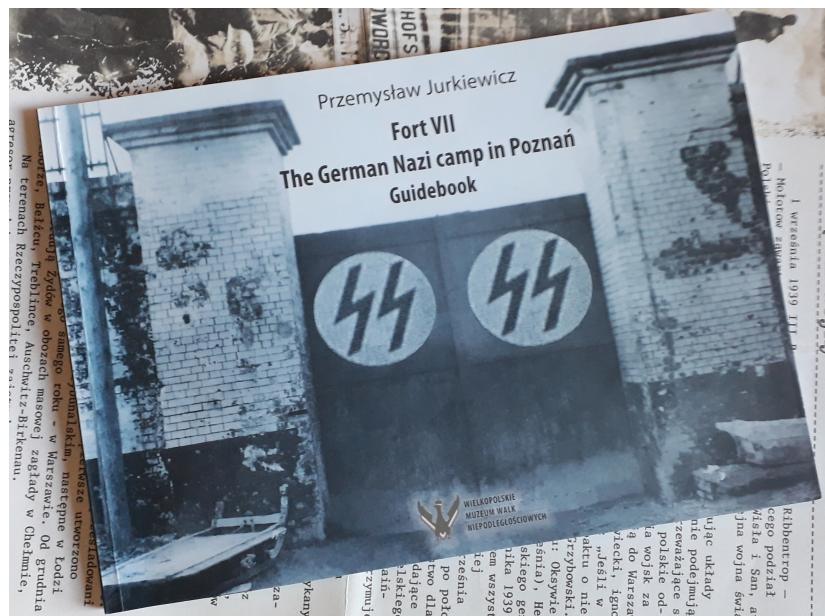
The text on the Fort VII website can be considered informative. The Fort VII part of the website consists only of a couple of sub-pages on the larger main Poznań museum site, and contains only a limited amount of text. All content is in Polish. The text is quite basic, and apart from some historical information about the place, most of the space is used for basic information such as opening hours, pricing etc. There is a strong hierarchy on the site, and the site is quite easy and intuitive to use. The sender of the messages on the site is without a doubt the people working at the memorial. In comparison to the German websites the most noticeable difference on the Polish site is the use of the words “German” and “Germany” in connection with the Nazis and the National socialists, which are rarely – if ever – used on the German sites. Text and data on the site consists of only a few genres: customer information and historical description or storytelling. The communication on the site goes one way only. The museum provides the visitors with some knowledge about the place (the practical details). The

modality is used in an attempt at presenting things as the truth: for example “this happened” instead of “this might have happened”.

The Fort VII pages website contains the smallest amount of text of the sites looked into for this paper, which of course also limits the number of messages presented and the conclusions that can be drawn. The interactional control of the site is somewhat limited, but there is no doubt that the ones with the biggest controlling power are the people behind the memorial and behind the site. In the end it is them who decide what is posted there and who set the rules for how visitors can post on the site. The linguistic cohesion in the text is created with the use of the more personal pronouns like “I”, “we”, “he”, “she”, “her”, his etc. Politeness is not a focus point in the texts, but none of the texts on the site can be considered impolite. Consumption: only people who understand Polish can use the site and most people visiting the site will most likely come from the larger Poznań museum site. Intertextuality: most of the data presented on the site dates back to many historical and third party texts. Coherence: all parts of the website are used in a way so that they together give an easily understandable description of the place and its history.

## Additional material from Fort VII

When visiting the Fort VII museum or memorial I bought the small book *Fort VII – The German Nazi Camp in Poznań, Guidebook* (Jurkiewicz, 2014). It might be interesting to discuss how it connects with the interview, the exhibitions at Fort VII and the memorial website.



The little guidebook to Fort VII consists of 52 pages and can mostly bee seen as a narrative telling about the place and the part of its history that is connected with World War Two. The book consists of a number of short chapters. The first chapter is a short introduction about how the place was seized by the Germans in 1939 and became the first Nazi camp in Poland. The chapter is written with the use of the words "Nazi", "Germans", "Gestapo" etc. and with a lot of coloured and dark words and descriptions like "Fort VII was also called "a camp of bloody revenge", "prisoners suffered from cold and hunger", and were "killed and tortured," "they were all soaked in blood." etc. – a picturesque way of describing the conditions prisoners lived under in the camp, making it quite easy to understand what happened there during the war. Chapter two is about the Commander's office. It is very short and concentrates on who the commanders at the fort were. The chapter includes a few pictures of the building (now torn down) and a picture of one of the commanders Hans Weilbrecht. Text-wise there is not much to analyse in this chapter. Chapter three, called "Barracks in the gorge" contains a part about the young poetess Irena Bobowska, who suffered from polio and was imprisoned in Fort VII where she wrote a poem with these lines: "I am learning the greatest art of life, to smile always and everywhere, and to bear pain without despair, and not to regret the past, and not to be afraid of what will be." Irena was decapitated in Berlin, Germany in 1942 (22 years old). The rest of the chapter consists of similar small descriptions, presenting history and human suffering with concrete and personal stories. The chapter contains pictures of both the building and Irena. The following chapter is called "Salinet Block" and focuses on the personal items of the people who were imprisoned at Fort VII. The chapter contains an amount of pictures of artefacts created by the prisoners. It also includes a part about Count Adolf Bniński who was imprisoned in cell 72, and killed by the German Nazis. The next chapter is "Stairway of death" – a short chapter with a strong focus on the personal story. Two prisoners tell their story here, and describe how prisoners were tormented and killed outside in the yard. A short chapter about the gas chambers at Fort VII follows. Also here the story is made personal because of a short story told by a former prisoner from the place. "Cell 58" was the death cell of Fort VII. Here 32 members of the Polish resistance movement The Union of Retaliation were hanged in January 1943. Original signatures by prisoners in cell 58 have been preserved until today (written on the wall). The last few chapters in the guidebook are connected with the closure of the camp in Fort VII, how the Fort was used after the war, a page about a selection of

prisoners murdered at Fort VII, and four drawings describing how the camp was organised and furnished during the war.

In conclusion one must state that the guidebook is written with a strong focus on the narrative storytelling and personal stories. It is a book that without a doubt can create interest for the Fort VII memorial, and it is a book that easily could be used as an inspiration for an English language web-page for promoting the memorial to foreign tourists. The focus on the personal stories is strengthened by the use of named prisoners describing what happened at the place during the war, and the amount of pictures used to show how prisoners looked during the war. The guidebook employs modality to emphasise that everything that is told is the ultimate truth. It is never mentioned that something “might have happened”, everything told is assumed “to have happened”.

## The conclusion

Based on the website analysis, the analysis of the book and the interview conducted in connection with the Fort VII museum, it can be concluded that Fort VII to a large extend is what it aims and sets out to be: a memorial and a tourist destination.

The main problem for Fort VII as a tourist destination is that they do not provide a website in any other language than Polish. On the other hand, the exhibitions (at least a small part of them) are available in several languages, making them accessible to more people. The place also has a little shop where one can buy books in several languages, including English.

Fort VII still works with the more old fashioned kind of exhibitions, websites etc. where artefacts are connected to a story that is presented as the ultimate truth, while more temporary forms of exhibitions, like video, are not used.

Fort VII does have the stories to tell and could most likely attract many more visitors, but to do so it needs to advertise a little more – first and foremost in languages other than Polish. According to the numbers provided by Poznań Tourist Barometer (Poznań Tourism Organisation, 2016), the city has in recent years experienced a large growth in the numbers of tourists. This is, however, not reflected in the number of visitors to Fort VII, where students and locals still are the most common guests.

## **T4 memorial**

### **The interview**

On the 27 of March I interviewed Robert Parzer from the T4 memorial in Berlin. The interview happened on the place of the memorial at Tiergartenstraße 4, Berlin. The interview lasted about an hour. We discussed the memorial itself, its website and German history.

The memorial, as can be concluded from the address Tiergartenstraße 4, is located very close to the famous Tiergarten Park in Berlin, but even if I had visited Berlin several times, and often lived in a walking distance from the park, I had never stumbled across this memorial before I started the research for this paper. The memorial is also located within a walking distance from Brandenburg Tor, Postdammer Platz etc. which should somehow be the perfect location.

Finding the place was not a large problem, but locating Mr Parzer was somewhat more problematic. Turned out that there had been a mix up with dates and days, and when I was standing there waiting for Mr Parzer, I discovered that we had agreed about the wrong date. Luckily Mr Parzer did turn up, and the interview went very well.

The following conclusions can be drawn from the interview: The T4- memorial is to be considered a tourist destination. At present time there is no knowledge about how many people visit the place, but in the near future a visitor research will be conducted, looking into how many people visit the place, who the visitors are, and where they come from. According to Robert Parzer, the place is daily visited by quite a lot of people. The people who visit the place are mostly there because of attending with their schools or because the by chance happened to pass by the memorial and found it interesting.

The aim with the T4 memorial is to remember the people who died because of the T4 program, to spread awareness about how handicapped and mental ill people were treated by the Nazis during the Second World War, and maybe also to influence the way people look at the world today. Both Robert and I to some extend did agree about people not learning from the past, and that Europe in this day and age is again moving in a politically dangerous direction.

Talking about how people sometimes misbehave at dark tourism destinations, or at places created to remember people who have been murdered, Robert said that they have so far not experienced any misbehaving at the T4-memorial, but that as the place is open air and with no

guards it can be hard to always know how visitors behave. At the place has however been placed a message about how the visitors are supposed to behave.

Robert said that they are aware about the lack of other languages than German on the website, but no information about when the alternative language versions presented on there would be up and running was received..

Talking about how history is put in words at the location, on the website and in Germany in general, Robert explained that the reason why a lot of memorials and museums in Germany in the past did not tell the story about the single victims killed in the T4-program has a lot to do with the German society and the law. According to him it is only in the last few years that it has been legal to mention people who have been placed in mental hospitals with name and personal information. Until recently it was, out of respect to the families of the victims, not allowed to publish this kind of information. Now the attitudes have changed and it is believed that the victims and their history are of more importance than protecting people from the knowledge that their family members were in a mental hospital. Because of this both the T4 memorial site and its website include a lot of information about named victims, who they were, why they ended up as victims etc.

Asked about German sites in general, and also why the T4-memorial site and website never describe the people who were behind the killings during the Second World War as Germans, but only as Nazis and National Socialists, Robert said it has a lot to do with the German self-understanding and the way they see themselves. This is of course connected with the scar the Second World War has left on the German society, and how much focus there still is placed on the WW2. Where other wars have come and gone and more or less been forgotten, WW2 is still shown a lot interest.

## The exhibition

The exhibition is located at Tiergartenstraße 4. This is a place strongly connected with the T4-program, as it was here the building where the planning of the T4-program took place stood. The exhibition is open air and available 24/7.

The exhibition at Tiergartenstraße consists of several elements. One of them is a wall-like sculpture made of see-through glass or glass-like material. When talking with Robert from the

memorial it was established that the wall was originally meant to illustrate how the victims from the T4 program were looking out at the surrounding world from behind the wall, but that they were not able to get out from behind it. During our talk several other ways of understanding the sculpture were also discussed about e.g. how it could be seen as an illustration of the walls that used to surround the German concentration camps, or an illustration of the old Berlin wall. In that sense the T4 exhibition can be seen as representative for a very large part of modern German history.

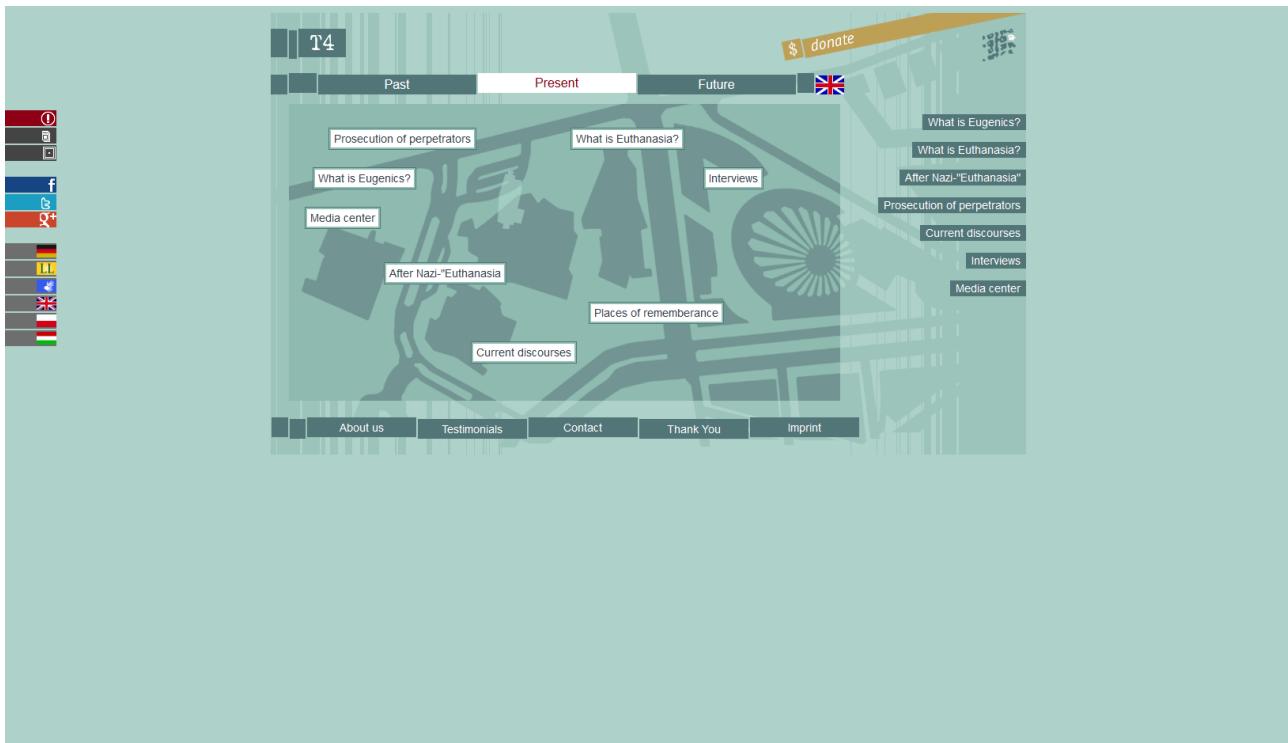
Apart from the sculpture the T4 memorial also includes a part showcasing the history of the T4 program, with a lot of information about chosen victims. Information in the T4 memorial is kept on a very personal level, describing both victims and their Nazi oppressors with names and pictures.

Text wise most of the text in the T4- memorial is a description of what happened in the past and it is also written in the past tense. It can also be stated that the memorial does show the fact that people who committed crimes during the War was hardly ever called Germans, but that they instead are referred to as Nazi or National socialists.

A few people came to visit the exhibition when I was talking to Mr Parzer, not sure the exact number, but around 5-10 people in all.

## The website

<http://www.gedenkort-t4.eu/en/gegenwart>



The website for the T4 memorial is the biggest and most in-depth site worked with in this paper. At the first glance it looks like several language versions are available, but in general they are not – only a few sections have been translated, especially into Polish, and the site is therefore nearly entirely directed towards people who understand German.

### Preservation of first impression and reaction

At the first glance the official website for T4 seems modern and contemporary. The main page consists of an interactive map offering the knowledge connected with euthanasia and the T4 program. These points can also be found as links on the right side of the page. On the right side there is a menu offering access to a blog, to additional media, to sub pages on Facebook, twitter and google+. There are also placed links to versions of the page in 4 other languages and two versions in different German languages.

The colours are mostly kept in green tones, with a dash of white and black for text and additional contrasting colours are used for the links in the left side of page.

In spite of the modern and contemporary feel of the site, it also feels a bit messy and boring, and from a subjective point of view I am not sure that it is a website that would in generally attract me as a visitor. There are simply too many points, presented in a small area.

### **Inventory of Salient features and topics**

| <b>Present features of the site</b>                   |  |
|---|--|
| Text  | Text in the German language is the most common feature on the site. The font used is plain Arial. Sometimes with a larger size font, but most of the time with a rather small size.<br>The texts are in general rather readable, but sometimes the blocks of text are too massive and one ends up losing interest in the written before having finished the reading. |
| Pictures  | A limited amount of pictures is used on the site. Where pictures are used they make a lot of sense, for example when victims are presented with photos in the victims bibliography chapter.  |
| Graphics  | There are very few additional graphics used on the site.   |
| Video   | Videos are among other used for interviews with a family member to someone who were killed in the T4 program and with a family member to one of the doctors who performed euthanasia.  |
| Blog  | The site contains a blog offering a lot of additional stories and information. The blog also offers the possibility of giving feedback on the written articles.  |
| Menu  | There are several menus on the site, one on the left of the site offering links for blog, other connecting sites like facebook, twitter, different language options etc.   |
| <b>Missing features on the site</b>                   |  |
| Information in foreign languages, especially English. | According to the menu German, English, Polish and Hungarian language versions are offered. However, most of those versions are in reality not present. I have still not  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | managed to find any usable information in English there.   |
| Easy structure   | The structure of the page is easy, but at times confusing to use.  |
| <b>Topics presented on the site</b>  |  |
| The site offers a lot of different subjects. For this analysis I have concentrated on the points I find most relevant for the paper. Subjects I have left out are among others The Board of the Association, townsplanning, competition for school children, the T4 program presented on stage, different places of commemoration, reconstruction of the villa in Tiergartenstraße and more. |  |
| Topics chosen for analysis   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The memorial and information place T4 arises</li> <li>• The T4 program &amp; Euthanasia</li> <li>• The offenders</li> <li>• The victims</li> <li>• Resistance</li> <li>• Eugenics &amp; forced sterilization</li> <li>• Prosecution of perpetrators</li> <li>• Current discussions</li> </ul> |
| <b>Missing topics, or topics without enough focus</b>  |  |
| The website is very big and covers a lot of different topics. Very few topics seem to be missing, a little more information about the official German opinion about memorials and the Second World War might have been relevant though.  |  |

## In-depth analysis of content and style

| Pages on the site   |
|---|
| The site contains a lot of pages, some more relevant than others. In this analysis I have chosen to work with a limited amount of pages – the ones I feel can give a better understanding of what the T4 program was, who was behind it, and why it is important to |

remember it.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Main page                                    | The main page of the site is more or less just for different types of menus offering the possibility to access the sub-pages one might find the most relevant (based only on title).   |
| The memorial and information place T4 arises | A very short text about the development of the memorial from 2012 to 2014 when it opened to the public. The focus point on the page is the pictures showing the development during that time period. It is written in present perfect tense, describing the development of the site. It is written in first person plural, as it is written with the use of the pronoun "wir" (we).<br><br>The people who committed the murders are called "nationalsozialistischen" (national socialists).                            |
| Remembrance in the city                      | Contains a very long text about the area in Tiergartenstraße where the memorial is located. The text discusses everything from how the place was bombed at the end of the Second World War, the building of Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in the 1960s, the first use of the place as a memorial for the T4 victims, etc. The story gives a good understanding of the place and its history.<br><br>The page is written in partly past tense and partly present perfect tense (past tense when the past is described). |
| Biographies of the victims                   | A large page, filled with photos and basic information about some of the victims from the T4 program.<br><br>The site also provides links to sub-pages giving a deeper description of some of the victims: who were they, where did they come from, when and where were they murdered etc.<br><br>Is written in past tense and third person. The sub-pages are also in past tense, and are personal stories of the victims.  |
| Perpetrators' biographies                    | The page itself is very short and offers hardly any text. There is no information about the content of the page presented there.   |

|            |  |
|------------|--|
|            | <p>The site however offers links to four sub-pages about perpetrators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Dietrich Allers</li> <li>2) George Renno</li> <li>3) Hedwig Michael</li> <li>4) Hubert Gomerski</li> </ol> <p>The sub-pages are all rather long pages, with elaborate description of the perpetrators. It is written in the past tense and in third person.</p>   |
| Resistance | <p>Textually heavy page about the people working against the T4 program.</p> <p>A lot of information presented here. This page can also be seen as a description about who was opposing the T4 program, the circumstances they worked under and how they were working against it.</p> <p>The text is mostly written in past tense and in third person.</p> <p>The page also includes a few pictures of named persons, and of important material in connection with the T4 program.</p> <p>At the end of the site there is some information about additional material to read about the resistance.</p> |
| The blog   | <p>A lot of different topics are presented on the blog. One of the post important aspects of the blog is that it offers visitors the chance to become active and to write answers to the posted topics. One has to sign in with either Twitter or Facebook to post answers on the blog.</p>  |
| Interviews | <p>A very short textual page. Includes the presentation of three interviews.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Sigrid Falkenstein, giving an interview about her father's sister who was killed during the T4 program.</li> <li>2) Gerrit Hohendorf, interviewed about the German "Nazi" euthanasia program and its consequences for both history</li> </ol>   |

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
|                             | <p>and presence.</p> <p>3) Mireille Horsinga-Renno, whose uncle was a part of the T4 killing machine.</p> <p>All interviews are conducted on video and the T4 memorial site is the only one in this paper to include this form for presentation. The video interviews make this page quite personal and more catchy and interesting than a lot of other sites.</p> <p>Text on the site is part present and past tense. It is mostly written in third person.</p>  |
| Prosecution of perpetrators | <p>Text about the prosecution of the people who committed the murders on the T4 victims.</p> <p>The page is written in past tense. Also on this page the people who committed the crimes during the World War Two are called “Nazis” and not “Germans.”</p> <p>Words like murder, died, violent etc. are used to make it clear what kind of crimes are discussed.</p>   |
| Current discussions         | <p>A very short page about recent events in connection with the T4 program.</p> <p>Short description of different topics, most of them connected with how Germany and Germans deal with the past, the memory of what happened during the Second World War, and the German culture and politics look at remembering. Each topic is provided with a link to a sub-page where more about the topic can be found.</p> <p>Page is mostly in present tense and can be seen as an introduction to a lot of sub-pages, a sort of appetiser for the sub-pages.</p> |

Combined it can be concluded that the pages on the T4 website offer quite a lot of knowledge about the place, the memorial and the reason why a memorial like the T4 memorial is needed. For anyone interested in World War Two the T4 memorial website offers a treasure of inform-

ation. One can spend hours and hours reading an incredible amount of documents on the subject.

The site however is not that user friendly, and even-though it at first comes across as easy to use, there are simply too many subjects and too many sub-pages etc.

The website might get people with a fluent understanding of German to visit the memorial. The mass of text presented there and the somewhat messy structure of the site might however also mean that some people do not feel like spending the time needed to fully use the site and this can prevent them from visiting the memorial. Foreign tourists who do not know German will most likely not visit the memorial because of the website.

### **Embedded point(s) of view or “voice” and implied audience(s) and purposes**

The voice presented on the website is first and foremost the points of views of the people working with the T4 memorial, as it is them having the final word in choosing what gets put on the site and how the topics placed on the site are worded. As can be seen on the site the memorial was among others founded by the EU, which means that the EU will also have had a say in what is presented on the site, and how. During my talk with Robert Parzer it was also somewhat made clear that the way history is presented on their site is connected with the way the Germans see and understand themselves, and the German society in general.

The site also provides a space for visitors to voice their opinion – the general public can add comments on the blog.

### **Analysis of dynamic information organization and special priming strategies**

The site is for the most part rather easy to navigate. At the top there is a menu presenting what pages can be found on the site. Additionally, sub-links are used on pages where relevant, which makes navigating the site even easier.. The sub-links might be considered a form of hierarchy, and are only used when they make sense, as when a sub-link is given for opening hours on the visitor information page.

As the website is very large and contains a lot of different topics, not many topics are left out. The only thing that strikes me when reading the site is that they never mentioned that the Nazis were in fact a very big part of the German society.

### **Contextual analysis, provenance and inference**

For this website more or less the same things can be said as was said about the Bernburg site: it is hard to know how much of the information presented on the site is demanded by the German government, the EU etc. It is however most likely that the people behind the site attempt to present as accurate description of the history as possible and that all of the information placed on the site in fact is very connected with the sender or the senders. All the information in some way or the other refers to the T4 program and provide a very good understanding of the program, why it happened, who the victims were, and who committed the crimes.

### **The discourse**

As with the B.E.C. website, the text presented on the T4 memorial site can also be considered informative. The visitors to the site are presented with an impressive amount of data about both the memorial itself, the historical background for it, the victims, the people who committed the murders and much more. The text on the site is very much in-depth and is directed towards people who want something more than just basic information about the subject. The sender of the messages on the T4 website is a very mixed group of people and organisations, like the Gedenkort-T4.eu organisation, EU – the EACEA program, the German state and other stakeholders like victims' families etc.

When looking into the text on the site, one of the things that is noticeable is that just like on the B.E.C. site the perpetrators were only named "Nazis" and "national socialists", they are never just mentioned as Germans.

Text and data on the site consists of many different genres, from simple description of the memorial to testimonials from and about victims killed in the T4 program, people who worked with the T4 program, articles about a lot of different relevant subjects, and written responses from the people visiting and reading the site etc. The communication on the site is mostly one

way, however there are places where the visitors are offered a chance to provide their input as well (on the blog, by e-mail, by phone etc.).

The modality of the text works with a truth or ultimate truth. Most things are presented as the ultimate truth. The interactional control of the site is somewhat limited, but there is no doubt that the ones with the biggest power over the sites are the ones behind the memorial and behind the site. In the end they decide what is posted there and set the rules for how and where the visitors can post.

The linguistic cohesion in the text is with the use of the more personal pronouns like "I", "we", "he", "she" etc. Politeness is not a focus point, but none of the texts on the site can be considered impolite.

The text on the T4-memorial site can be assumed to have been produced in several different places and by a lot of different people. Many texts have been produced by the T4 memorial itself based on data collected from historical sources. Additional texts have been produced by e.g. professionals writers in the blog and visitors answering or giving input on the blog articles. Some of the texts, for example in the interviews, have been created on the basis of what was told by families of the victims of the T4 program or people whose family members committed the T4 murders. With the amount of text presented on the site it is understandable that it has taken a lot of different people to produce it. The texts together create an impressive amount of data about the T4 program, its victims, and the story behind it.

Consumption of the page only happens when people with an interest in WW2 and the specific subject presented on the site enter it, either by chance or by search – or because they had prior knowledge about the site. As most of the site is in German, it is mostly used by people with an understanding of the German language.

Intertextuality on the T4-memorial site: most of the data presented on the site dates back to many historical and third party texts: from the description of the old villa that used to be located on the Tiergartenstraße address during and after the war, to the more contemporary interviews with members of the victims and the perpetrators' families etc. Coherence: all parts of the website are used in a way so that they together give an easy understandable description of the place and its history.

## The conclusion

Based on the interview with Mr Parzer, the website-analysis and the exhibition at Tiergartenstraße in Berlin, it is hard to say for sure if the memorial works the way it sets out to do. There is no doubt that it is a memorial and that it can attract some tourist. Mr Parzer is right in assuming that most visitors are either visiting because they go to the place with their school or educational institute, or because of passing by and finding the look of the memorial interesting enough to investigate it.

The website is full of information about the T4 program and the World War Two in Germany. However, there might be too much information for the casual visitor and the site might be a bit too complicated to use. As a result some potential visitors will not be encouraged to see the memorial based on their visit to the website. A smaller and more see-through website with multiple language possibilities might be a better option for the casual tourist visitor, of which there are many in Berlin.

Textually the exhibition works from a German viewpoint. It is very clear that the story is told from a POV of a country that still has not gotten rid of the ghost of what happened there 70-80 years ago. Choosing not to use the descriptive words like “Germans” and “Germany” is without a doubt connected to the way Germans want to see and understand themselves (as stated by Mr Parzer), but for the outsiders it also gives an impression of a joint guilt and a country that desperately seeks to avoid being connected with the history. Choosing to avoid the words “German” and “Germany” and only focusing on “Nazis” and “National socialists” might give a somewhat wrong picture of the war events, because was every German who worked for the Nazis in reality a Nazi or did they take part in the happenings during the war of other reasons?

The Jewish memorial in Berlin has an extreme number of visitors in comparison to the T4 memorial. One might ask why that is. The reason will have to be found in the way the murdering of the Jews have been introduced to the public discourse while other groups of people like the handicapped, homosexuals etc. have never received the same kind of attention. The T4 memorial in Tiergartenstraße is one way of getting attention to that forgotten group of people, but how to promote a memorial for thousands of murdered people often seem to be a problem.

## Besættelsesmuseet

### The (email) interview

To get a Danish view-point included in the paper I decided to find a relevant museum in Denmark too. I only found three museums that would fit and out of these only two were opened: they were Frøslev Lejren and Besættelsesmuseet in Aarhus. The museum itself is located just next to Aarhus Domkirke, so just in the centre of Aarhus, a perfect place for a tourist destination, but also a very hard place to find a parking spot.

Through email contact with the museum I got to know that they do consider themselves for a tourist destination, which means that they are very much aware of how attractive the museum is for some of the foreign visitors coming to Aarhus. Søren Tange Rasmussen is the one who decides how the museum is run, how the exhibitions are created etc. but he does so according to agreements with his bosses in the old town of Aarhus (Den game by) and the quality of the work presented by the museum is controlled by Kulturstyrelsen (Danish Agency for Culture), which meant that there are some governance rules the museum has to follow.

Søren furthermore stated that it is a conscious decision of the museum no longer to use the description "Nazis." It might still be found in old parts of their exhibitions, but as Søren said they really cannot know if the single person in reality was a Nazi or just a German solider, so therefore they have chosen to create future exhibitions with the use of the words "German" or "German solider" instead of "German Nazi". Søren said that the aim of the exhibition is to tell the story about Aarhus during the Second World War, and that they do not have any taboos, there is no story that they cannot tell, as long as it is done in a decent way. Søren said that there might be parts of the recent exhibitions that are too black and white and that some exhibitions are outdated. That is something they will be working more on in the near future.

### The visit and the exhibition

I visited the museum on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April 2017.

Judging by the fact that the museum had free material for visitors in Danish, German and English, and from the talk with the person selling tickets, it can be concluded that the museum does work as a tourist attraction, attracting visitors from lots of different countries like Denmark, Norway, Germany etc. A lot of the people visiting are however the older generations

from the local area. On the day I visited the museum there were quite a lot of other visitors at the place, a concrete number is hard to pinpoint but at least around 10-15 other people were there at the same time as I.

Besættelsesmuseet in Aarhus is located in the building where Gestapo had their headquarters during the Second World War, and most of the place still looks like it did during the war. The location must therefore be said to be very authentic. The museum has several exhibitions, among other a special exhibition about the national traitor Grethe Bartram, who turned 53 Danish people in to German Nazis. An exhibition about the Hvidsten Group's stay in the German arrest, an exhibition about the how the Gestapo behaved in Aarhus, and an exhibition about the prisoners that were sent to the Ravensbrück concentration camp.

Textually things are mostly described in a storytelling format, like the one used in the below example, connected with the how people from the Hvidsten Group were arrested. Texts are written in an easily understandable way with focus on telling a personal and emotional story about what happened during the Second World War. Texts are also written as the ultimate truth, which can also be seen from the below example, where things are stated as have happened, not as might have happened. In the story it is treated as fact that the area surrounding the Hvidsten Kro inn was disturbed by the sound of the German lorries, it is not something that might have happened etc.

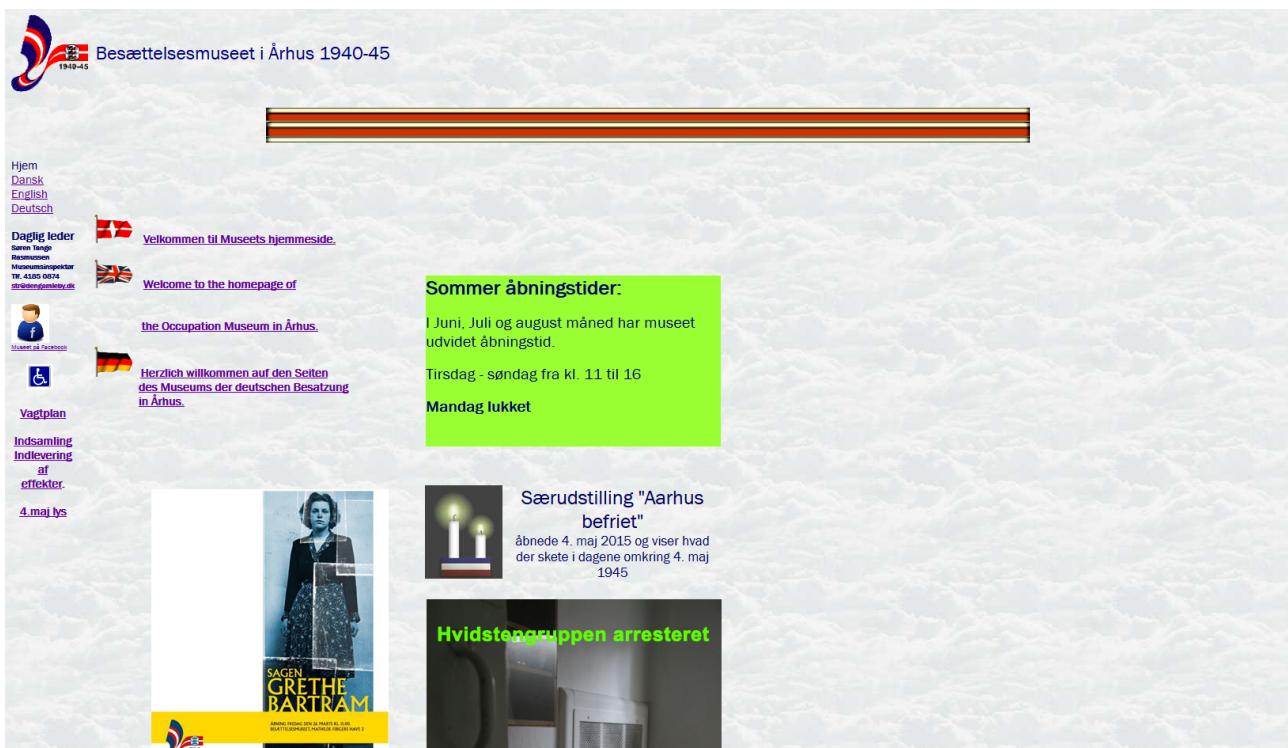
**Ved daggry den 11. marts 1944 greb  
lyden af tyske lastbiler forstyrrende ind i  
den landlige idyl omkring Hvidsten Kro.  
Gestapochefen i Aarhus, SS-Sturmbannführer  
Eugen Schwitzgebel, havde gennem længere  
tid holdt kroen under observation, og nu var  
det blevet tid til at sætte en stopper for de  
illegale aktiviteter, som kroens ejer, Marius  
Fjil, stod i spidsen for.**

*From the exhibition about Hvidsten group*

Looking into how the German occupation power is described in the exhibitions it becomes clear that nearly all forms of descriptions talked about before are also used here, eg. "German(s)", "Germany", etc. The term "National socialists" seems to be used way less in Besættelsesmuseet and additionally "German soldiers" are quite often used instead of "German Nazis". This in some way changes the message and makes it a bit meeker. As stated by Søren Tange Rasmussen, the use of the term "Nazi" is something the museum will not be doing in the future.

## The website

<http://www.besaettelsesmuseet.dk/>



## Preservation of first impression and reaction

The first thing that I notice when I visit the website of Besættelsesmuseet in Aarhus is the fact that it does offer information in three different languages: Danish, German and English. There are many pictures, links and texts in different colours and sizes on the intro page of the site, leaving a kind of messy and unprofessional impression. The content of the site seems useful though and at the first glance the site seems very easy and intuitive to use. The color scheme of the site does not work at all, and it strongly increases the feel of a lack of professionalism. The structure of the site seems to work well. The menu is placed in the left side and easily ac-

cessible, some of the points in the menu seem somewhat misplaced on the front page, but more about that later. The main area of the page is used for short descriptions of the exhibitions that can be found in the museum.

### **Inventory of salient features and topics**

| <b>Present features of the site</b>           |   |
|---|---|
| Text  | The site has three language versions. Most of the text is however in Danish and only the most important information for visiting tourists is present on the German and English sites.<br><br>Fonts are used in many different sizes, with many different colours, with and without underlining and both in bold and as plain text.<br><br>Placed on a whitish background, the text is always very easy to read. |
| Pictures                                      | A good number of pictures are used on the site, making the site more interesting and appealing.   |
| Graphics                                      | Not much graphics are used on the site.   |
| Menu  | On the left side of the site there is classic menu, rather easy and intuitive to use. There are however some sub-pages placed on the site that are less intuitive and more confusing.   |
| <b>Missing features on the site</b>           |   |
| in-depth description of exhibitions           | Exhibitions are in general described quite shallow, more information about the single exhibitions would be good.  |
| Videos connected to the place and its history | Most contemporary exhibitions include video and digital elements in this day and age, both the place and the web-site are lacking such elements.  |
| More modern types of display                  | The site is in general old-fashioned, and there is no contemporary elements there, which makes the site seem dull and uninteresting.  |
| <b>Topics presented on the site</b>           |   |

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| Topics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present exhibitions</li> <li>• About the museum</li> <li>• The aim of the museum</li> <li>• Friends of the museum</li> <li>• News (last updated 2009)</li> <li>• Guest-book / contact form</li> <li>• Gallery</li> <li>• Opening ours and other visitor information</li> <li>• Information for schools</li> <li>• Basic English and German information for visitors.</li> <li>• Contact</li> </ul> |
|--------|---|

In general there is a lot of information to be found on the site. Some of the information is however out of date and the site in general needs an update. An example of information that must be considered out of date is the fact than on the news site the latest piece of news is from 2009. Another example is the program for an event taking part in May 2015. Not many people are going to need this information now.

#### **Missing topics, or topics without enough focus**

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Topics   | Updated news |
| The number of topics presented on the site is rather large, but most of them could easily be more in-depth. No topic seems to be missing – everything needed to attract visitors is there. |              |

#### **In-depth analysis of content and style**

There is a very limited amount of text to be found on the site. Most of it are informative short descriptions. I will analyse some of the most relevant pages here and skipped the less relevant ones.

| <b>Pages on the site</b> |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Intro page               | The page contains links for the 3 different language versions: Danish, English and German. |

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | <p>The page furthermore contains short description of three exhibitions that can be found in the museum.</p> <p>The text is written in third person, and in past tense.</p> <p>Choice of words on the page points in direction of being descriptive of what happening there, but choosing words like "blame for" (skyld i), "trust" (tillid), "getting access to confidential knowledge" (opsnappe fortrolige oplysninger), "snatcher work" (stikkervirksomhed) does color the message quite a lot.</p> <p>Visually the site comes across as messy: too many different types and colours of fonts are used.</p> <p>The page can be seen as a unit – everything placed there is there for a reason.</p> |
| Welcome to the museum's website<br>(in 3 languages) | <p>Contains a short description of the museum's history, its aim and the present situation.</p> <p>Contains the most important visitor information like opening hours, pricing, how to get to the place, contact information etc.</p> <p>The page is written in a mix of past and present tense.</p> <p>This page feels quite narrative, telling a story about the place, with an introduction, a development and a present situation told.</p> <p>There are several photos from the place's exhibitions, but the pictures are not described.</p>  |
| Exhibitions   | Contains short passages on the museums'  |

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
|                     | <p>history and the present exhibitions.</p> <p>The descriptions are rather short, but do provide the basic information about the individual exhibitions. All the descriptions include pictures, which makes it a lot easier to understand the written part.</p> <p>All fonts on the site are in the same size, and rather plain text, but it is also easy to read.</p> <p>The texts on the site are written in both past and present tense. They are a descriptive, plain listing of facts and information about exhibitions.</p> |
| Visitor information | <p>Very basic information presented here: it is free to visit the memorial site; how to get there; what the place offers to visitors; opening hours, etc.</p> <p>No visual images are used on the page and fonts are the same as in every other page on the site.</p>   |
| Guest-book          | <p>Offers visitors to the site a chance to contact the museum, but messages are mailed to the museums, and one cannot see what other people have written.</p> <p>Plain text, with only a few variations in font size.</p>   |
| Gallery             | Very simple gallery, with very little text attach to each picture.  |

The website offers a lot of knowledge and information about the Besættelsesmuseet, but it is not always the most user friendly site. Its structure can seem confusing and the messages often are out of date. This might be because a lot of things in the museum are done by volun-

teers, and these might not have the time or the knowledge to run an up to date and modern website – but simply removing the outdated information does not feel too hard a task...

### **Embedded point(s) of view or “voice” and implied audience(s) and purposes**

The voice presented on the site is mostly the ones of the people working for Besættelsesmuseet. Additionally, it must be assumed that the museum (The Old Town Aarhus) is also represented as Besættelsesmuseet is a sub-part of that museum. The way we in Denmark in general focus on presenting WW2 history must also be assumed to play a part in the message presented on the site.

### **Analysis of dynamic information organisation and special priming strategies**

The site is for the most parts rather easy to navigate through. At the left side of the site there is a menu linking to several sub-pages. Additionally sub-links are used as well. They might be considered a form of hierarchy, but they do sometime make the use of the site a little less intuitive and confusing.

### **Contextual analysis, provenance and inference**

The aim of the Besættelsesmuseet is to showcase history as it happened in Aarhus during the Second World War. The site seems to succeed at it. The site is somewhat old-fashioned, but it does deliver what it sets out to: a short presentation of what happened in Aarhus during the war.

### **The discourse**

Again the biggest part on the website and the exhibition can be considered informative text. The visitors are presented with information about the location, its history and the history of the city of Aarhus during the Second World War. The text on the website is basic and just created to inspire people to visit the museum.

The sender of the website messages is, according to Søren Rasmussen, the museum management. They decide what stories are to be told and where the focus is to be placed – both in exhibitions and on the website. When looking into the text on the site, one of the things that is noticeable is that they do not use the word “Nazis”, but “Germans” or “German soldiers”.

Another aspect of the site that is different from the other analysed sites is the fact that Besættelsesmuseet’s website is mostly run by volunteer workers.

Text and data on the site include many different genres, from simple description of the exhibitions, to visitor information etc. Pictures are used in a very good way on the site. They strengthen and make the written content on the page both more clear and interesting. It would often be a good idea to add a little more information for each single picture, as what is presented now is very basic.

The communication on the site goes mostly one way. The visitors are offered a contact form, but their submissions are not published. E-mails, phone-numbers etc. where people visiting the site can get in contact with staff from the institution are however provided.

The modality of the text works with a truth or ultimate truth. Most statements are presented as the ultimate truth.

The interactional control of the site is somewhat limited, but there is no doubt that the ones with the biggest control over the site is the museum management.

Consumption of the site only happens when people with an interest for WW2 and the specific subjects presented enter it, either by chance from other web-sites like google, or because they had prior knowledge about the site.

## **The conclusion**

Based on the contact, the visit, the website and the additional material it can be concluded that Besættelsesmuseet in Aarhus is what it sets out to be: a small local museum presenting the local part of the World War Two history to local, national and international tourists. They work with ultimate truth, and work hard to present their exhibitions in a way so that things are not assumed but based on concrete knowledge. This is among other backed by the way the museum prefers to use the phrase “German soldiers” rather than “Nazis.” As stated by Søren

from the museum, we really do not know if all the people working for the Nazis were Nazis themselves or if they did it of other reasons.

The website of Besættelsesmuseet might work better and attract more visitors to the place if more attention was given to keeping the site up to date and to removing outdated or unnecessary information, such as old news or the employee schedule.

More contemporary exhibitions and ways of presenting the exhibitions might also be needed if the museum wants to attract more tourists. According to Søren Rasmussen they are already working on that, and it is something that will be looked into when the means for doing so have been obtained.

## Conclusion

I will start the conclusion with repeating the main research question and the additional questions that this paper sought to answer. The research question for the paper was: "How does location affect the way WW2 related dark tourism destinations see and present themselves and their historical subjects to visitors?"

This question covers several subjects, from how dark tourism destinations see themselves: are they museums, memorials or both? Is there consistency between the way museums see themselves and what they present online, in exhibitions, flyers etc.? Are there any noticeable differences in how museums in different locations present the same or similar history to their visitors?

I will now attempt to answer these questions, as well as say something on the relevance of my findings for other companies working to attract visitors, or presenting both historical and non historical facts to visitors.

In connection with the WW2 Germany can be seen as the perpetrator in the war and Poland as one of the biggest victims (more than 5.5 million Poles were killed by the German Nazis during WW2). Finally there is Denmark, that in spite of being occupied suffered very little in comparison to Poland and other countries. How has this "placement" in the World War Two affected the way the story is presented today in the different locations? Are there any problems with the differences?

When I started working on this project, I expected to find some differences between the way museums in different locations present history to their visitors, but I had not expected that the differences would be nearly as clear as they turned out to be. I also expected that most museums worked with a clear understanding of the importance of interaction with possible visitors, and that they needed to spread knowledge about their museum or memorial to attract as many visitors as possible. However, much to my surprise it turned out to be the most problematic area for the analysed museums and memorials.

The first step here is to look into what museums and memorials say that they are and see whether it is in tune with what they present on their websites etc.

### ***What the museums say they are and what they are***

Based on the research conducted for this paper it can be concluded that there to a large extent is consistency between what museums say they are and what they in fact are. However, there are some problem areas here, and this is where the most interesting findings have taken place.

Out of the four museums analysed in this paper only Bernburg Euthanasia Centre does not consider itself a tourist attraction. Based on the location of the institution (a working hospital in a small town) and the fact that B.E.C. only has a sad story to tell (no one escaped from B.E.C., being submitted there meant death), it seems very clear that B.E.C. is not a tourist destination for the masses.

The rest of the analysed museums and memorials do consider themselves tourist destinations. Both their locations (all of them in larger cities) and their exhibitions back that attitude up. All of these museums however have several problems in this area, as none of them are good at getting the message about their museum or memorial spread out to the tourists that might be interested in visiting their institutions, and most of them do not communicate their messages in English (or in any language apart from their native ones) in their exhibitions and on their websites.

Marty (2007: 337-360) conducted research showing how important the website is for visitors. Out of more than 1200 people who took part in the survey nearly 70% said that a website is very important for the museums to attract visitors, and about 82% of the people stated that they were likely or very likely to visit a museum's website before visiting the museum. All of the museums and memorials analysed in this paper had websites, but only one of them had

basic information presented in non local languages like English (and additionally German) – that was the Danish Museum in Aarhus. The T4 memorial in Germany does reserve some space for different language versions on their website, but in reality no such versions were available in the time-frame of this paper (from January to June 2017). It seems rather logical to conclude that not many visitors (tourists) are going to visit an establishment that does not provide basic information in a language that they understand.

As mentioned earlier (in the literature review), research has also shown that some of the most important aspects for website visitors are design and aesthetics (Pallud & Straub, 2014: 359-) as well as the technical adequacy and usability (Cebi, 2012: 1030-). In these areas the museum websites fail too, as they all have design problems that make them feel old-fashioned, flawed and somewhat uninteresting. The T4 memorial website is the one with the most modern and contemporary look, but it is quite messy and hard to use, and all the non working links for the non-existing language versions add to the confusion. Therefore, in spite of the more modern feel, the site does not work any better than the others. The design of all the other websites is very basic, and for example the Danish website for Besættelsesmuseet in Aarhus looks like something that could had been made in Microsoft Word 20 years ago.

For a more in-depth analysis of the websites please refer to the analysis section for each of the institutions. Based on the analysis it can be concluded that the websites almost work against the places that wish to be tourist destinations, to attract visitors and to spread the message about the history that took place at the given location. Apart from B.E.C. (that is not interested in attracting more random visitors) all of them have to both add more information in different languages and – just as importantly – update their websites with working links, viewable pictures etc. Additionally, social media have also become a good tool for promoting companies, institutions and their work. Some of the museums analysed in this paper (Besættelsesmuseet Aarhus, T4 memorial in Berlin, Fort VII in Poznań) are also present on Facebook, but their stories also there are presented in the local languages only, and the amount of information that can be provided on Facebook is somewhat too limited to attract foreign and national tourists that do not already know the place.

Looking at both the websites and the exhibitions it seems clear that there is a strong connection between the two and that the stories told on the websites are also the ones celebrated in the exhibitions. This is true for all the museums and memorials I analysed.

The lack of different language versions of websites is a problem that the museums have to address. However, it is just as important that the websites are made to look more contemporary and include the basic information that might attract visitors. As it is now, none of these museums will motivate many people to visit solely based on their websites. That is really a shame as they all have important histories to tell.

When it comes to the quality of the websites, location cannot be said to be of importance: all websites had problems with especially style, but also content is something they should all work more on.

### ***How history is presented***

This paper is unique, because it compares museums and memorials in several countries. Most of the times when people conduct this kind of research it is done in one country, e.g. what is the German WW2 discourse and what this means for Germany. However, as the world has become smaller, I find it extremely relevant to look into how things are done in different locations.

What I discovered during the research is that there is a significant difference in how the same or similar parts of history are presented in different locations. Before the research I had perhaps a vague understanding of how the stories one chooses to tell or not to tell, the points of view one adopts and the words one uses influence the way that we perceive and understand history. However, I never thought about how much location actually affects points of view and the way the same historical events are presented. This is of course connected with culture, national and collective memory. The way society wants history to be remembered is also how it is presented to the general public.

In their publication *Opa war kein Nazi* Welzer, Moller, Tschuggnall (2002: 464-466) provide evidence that Germans clearly differentiate between the terms “Nazi” and “German”. Grand children of people who lived during WW2 were in the research found to know everything about the war, but they did not connect it with their families’ histories at all. More research backs this up and even elaborates on it: among other one by Giesecke & Welzer (2012), a very in-depth publication about the German policy of remembering and its consequences for the German society. The research for this paper seems to back the German unwillingness to see the Nazis as regular Germans. This can both be seen in the fact that the two German museums

analysed in the research (and additional German museums also looked into in connection with this paper) only uses the term “Nazis” about the WW2 perpetrators and hardly – if ever – use the description “Germans”, and in the interview with Robert Parzer from Berlin, in which he explains this choice of words with the German people and their self-understanding.

I, as the researcher and the author of this paper, can only see it as the sign of the enormous amount of guilt still felt in Germany. Most German people hate to see the connection between “the ordinary Germans” and “Nazis”. Nothing shocking in that, perhaps, but it might become problematic when it affects or changes the way we look at history or its certain aspects and the way we remember it. It might not be a problem when WW2 crimes in Germany are presented as committed by the Nazis, but when the same wording is consistently used to e.g. describe the people who committed the murders in Poland, the use of the term “Nazi” becomes unclear and the blame for what happened is somewhat shifted away from the German society to the single Nazis.

For many years a lot of focus has been placed in Poland on the way Germany deals with the remembrance of the World War Two. As recently as on the 14<sup>th</sup> of June 2017, German daily *Badische Zeitung* caused an out-roar in Poland when it described the Sobibor German Nazi WW2 death camp as a “Polish death camp” (PK, 2017). There are many more examples of this, and in Germany (Lebovic, 2016) the use of the phrase “Polish concentration camps” or “Polish death camps” dates back to the 1950s, where it was used by Benzinger and the Agency 114 to try and change peoples memories about the war. According to Lebovic “in Germany, the group was so successful that when the US-made miniseries “Holocaust” had its 1979 airing, a TV panel of historians was overwhelmed by the number of Germans who believed Poland was responsible for the genocide.” The Polish feelings about this also came very much to expression in the interview with Przemysław Jurkiewicz & Grzegorz Kucharczyk, wherein it was made clear that the institute was very aware of the use of words and that it was on purpose that so many different words are used to describe the WW2 perpetrators: the wrong wording can give a wrong picture, and especially the younger generations will be misled about the past.

The situation in Denmark is very different from the one in Germany and Poland. In Denmark focus has more been placed on how to make Denmark look good, and it has been the good stories about Jews escaping to Sweden, about the brave resistance etc. that have been told. Very little – if any – focus has been placed on the thousands of German refugees that died in

Denmark as a result of bad treatment, the teen German ex-soldiers that were forced to remove mines from the Danish beaches, etc. The facts that could stain the image of Denmark have until recent years been somehow silenced or forgotten. Based on the experience I have with WW2 exhibitions in Denmark it also seems safe to conclude that the wording in connection with the WW2 perpetrators has not been given much attention and at least until recently all forms of names have been used. Even if the views by Søren Rasmussen from Besættelsesmuseet in Aarhus Denmark might be up for a discussion – a number of other museums and exhibitions in Denmark does use the same wording.

However, Søren's point of view (the Danish way of doing it) is strikingly different from the way the Germans present the WW2 history. In Søren's version the blame has been completely shifted from the Nazis to the Germans, not because he blames all Germans for what happened during the World War Two, but because the people who were behind the crimes during WW2 in most cases were Germans, while it was unsure if they were Nazis or simply forced into duty by the German state.

Based on the data collected in this project it has become incredibly clear that history is worded very differently based on location and the point of view represented. In the national context the use of these classifiers (words like "Nazis" and "Germans") is perhaps governed by different rules, but the world has changed and even national messages will be spread internationally today.

The German use of the libellous phrase "Polish concentration camps" is a clear example of that, and today one has to be very much aware of the messages spread and the way they will be interpreted by a lot of different people with different cultural upbringing and nationalities.

Apart from the use of specific words it can also be concluded that all of the museums analysed in this project are quite strict in the choice of stories that they present to the visitors. The biggest focus, understandably enough, is placed on the victims and what was done to them (no matter location), but maybe we as visitors would learn more from history if bigger parts of the exhibitions were also focused on the perpetrators, getting behind them, and understanding who they were, why they became a part of all the horrors that happened during The WW2. Making people understand that the Nazis were in many cases also just regular people blinded by manipulative politicians might in fact open some peoples eyes towards what is happening in the world today. We talked about this during my interview with Robert Parzer in Berlin and

discussed how little people in fact have learned from history. The Nazis had considerable luck with their propaganda machine, but politicians today are not using it any less than the Nazis did. If we are open towards history, it can teach us a lot, but there is no doubt that the way we talk and focus on historical aspects will also influence the way we see and understand it. If we pick and choose and only focus on certain aspects of it, it becomes much harder to learn anything from the mistakes of the past. Only when we manage to look behind the façade will we begin to understand how and why things could happen, and maybe learn what to do to prevent it in the future.

As stated above wording is of uttermost importance and it will not become any less important in the future. If museums and memorials want to attract more visitors, they have to consider the words they use very well and at pay more attention to use an as accurate and full description of historical events as possible. Looking into the example with of the terms "Nazi" and "German", it is hard to say for sure who is doing it the best way. I judge it to be the Polish museum that uses all the words possible, as this approach gives a fuller picture of history. The German way has shown to be problematic, because it prevents the younger generations from fully understanding the German role in the war, and the Danish way is somewhat good, but also misses a few important facts.

The other example used for this paper – the one where German media and politicians use and have used the expression "Polish concentration camps" about the German concentration camps in the occupied Poland – is pure fraud and rewriting of history. That sort of politics should never be tolerated. In the Philosophy of silence chapter I discussed the truth and the question whether it exists. It seems that the truth always depends on whose point of view it is seen from and as such there might not be an ultimate truth, but there are versions that are more real than others and versions that are further from reality. When Germans even today use the description "Polish concentration camps", they are nearly as far from the "truth" as possible.

### ***Suggested course of action***

It can be safely stated that all the analysed museums and memorials are in fact capable of attracting more visitors than they do today. This can be concluded based on the rather low number of visitors that they attract today, and the growth of interest in WW2 dark tourism destinations that has happened in the last 20 years. To gain more visitors all of the museums how-

ever have to get the knowledge about their institution out to the possible visitors and here their websites must be concluded to be the most important platform. Very old-fashioned websites filled with flaws, that hardly offer any information for international visitors can only attract a limited amount of visitors.

All the research done for this project and the knowledge gathered in it can easily be used in connection with any other institution in the tourism industry (and other industries). Having a contemporary, understandable and usable website without too many flaws is a necessity for any company that wants to attract visitors or customers. Paying attention to how one words the information directed at one's visitors and consumers is very important. One also needs to remember that one's visitors and customers come with very different background and upbringing. Making everybody happy might be impossible, but as a provider of services or products one has to at least try to deliver an as good and truthful product as possible.

At the beginning of this paper I quoted pope Benedict XVI to illustrate the power of words. I agree that words connect or disconnect and are essential for the way we perceive and understand the world. Words matter and should always be chosen with concern to the people receiving them. Only with that in mind can we ensure successful communication.

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## Annexes

### ***Interview T-4 Memorial, Berlin, Germany***

Interview with Robert Parzer, conducted 27<sup>th</sup> of march in Berlin, Germany. Interview started with a short greeting, and a little talk about why I am interested in the topic of WW2. This transcript will only contain chosen and needed parts of the interview.

First question asked to Mr Parzer, ***Do you see this as a tourist destination?*** Partly yes, but it is maybe not the best promoted site in Berlin. I'm here quite often, and no matter the hour, day or night there are always people standing here, reading the outdoor exhibition or wondering what it is all about. The entrance to the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra is just a 20 meters away, so every time there is a concert there, visitors see this place and might wonder what it is all about (peaking their interest and curiosity).

Second question was connected with this, ***your website does not offer much information in any other languages than German, is that a hinder for getting people to visit the place?*** I know but I do not know about this and where people get their information about the place, if it is in brochures from airports, hotels etc.

Third question, ***Who decides what you can present on the site?*** On this site it is a mixture, as this was the site where the villa of the origination behind the T4, that decided to kill around 70,000 people in a 3 years time frame was place, (a lot of information about the Villa, and it's history presented). The first thing that happened on the place (memorial wise) was that a group of people created a work-shop, bringing mobile exhibitions to the place, they rented a bus where they placed an exhibition about the T4 program. They put it on the site and marked the site, telling everyone here is something special, something historical significant and worth remembering, something that until then had been forgotten and ignored. As a result of that the city government commissioned a memorial plate that can be found in the right corner of the memorial, closest to the road (over there). Later they (the city government) decided to place a steel installation there, that strangely enough was not created as a memorial, but later became one. Around 2005 one woman (Unclear name) changed everything for the T4 memorial, a former teacher found out that a member of her family was killed in the T4 program, and went to visit the place, but thought it was very small and that it was a problem that no information could be found there when the street was e.g. covered in snow. She then

petitioned the federal government/The city government, and initiated a symposium, inviting all relevant people working with memorials in Berlin. In 2010 The Bundestag/the federal Parliament decided that this was a neglected area, and that the people killed in the T4 program also needed to be remembered like the Jews, the homosexuals etc. Money was secured from the DFG (German research community) to create the memorial. The exhibition was opened in 2014.

Fourth question ***The way to understand the memorial?*** The T4 memorial is the only one of the 4 main memorials in Berlin placed on the actual site where things happened. In some ways it is therefore the most authentic of the memorials, but in other ways it is also the most abstract one, I'm here often with students and I see the question marks in their eyes. The architects behind the memorial installation (the wall) said that it represents the wall between the past and today. We can look at the history, but we can not change it. The blue color of the wall is connected with the sky, and how the sky has always been an inspiration to people. Here we also talked about how the wall can be seen as connected to huge parts of German history, meaning the Berlin wall, the walls surrounding the old concentration camps etc.

Fifth question ***It often seems like there is a joint German guilt about what happened during the WW2, is it hard to move on and accept that the past is the past, and that people living today are not to blame for the sins of the past?*** Yes, in a way it is, but in another way it is not, it is not a coincidence that the movement towards remembering the crimes of the national socialists crimes in a big scale happened in the 1980s. It has a lot to do with the shift from a social-democratic government to a conservative government. People in general also just thought that it was time to remember all the crimes that had been committed, all the victims of whom some were still alive, and all the perpetrators of whom some also still were alive in the 1980s.

Asked about ***the use of Nazis and National Socialists and the way that Germans is hardly used to describe the perpetrators of the WW2*** Robert Parzer said, talking about the use of Nazis is connected with the self-understanding of the nation, and an underlying discussion about who are we as Germans, who do we want to be, who have we been, why have we become this way.

Sixth Question ***The single victims, and presenting the single victims to the visitors?*** Remembering euthanasia victims have always been harder than remembering victims of the Holocaust, first of all because there were no survivors to tell the stories, all except for 3 or 4

examples everyone that was brought to one of the killing facilities were killed. Also the relatives to people who were killed were just turned away after the war, they could not get any information, and were just told that there were no archival records. Back then there was a lot of shame about being mentally ill, and people did also not want to talk publicly about family members that suffered from mental illnesses and that also meant that it was easier to hide stories about what happened during the war. Also there were no public recognition of e.g. people who had been forcefully sterilised before after 2000. All the data that was held by the asylums and the archived were under a strong data protection law, and one was for a long time not allowed to publish the full name of a victim – one could only use “Kurt R.” or “Marie S.”, and it really do not make much sense to remember Marie S, who is she? The argument for this was *that you can not publish the names because relatives now alive would feel that their rights are breached*. This is of course an outrageous argument, because it still sees the disability as something to be ashamed about. This only changed in the last two years, because a very famous lawyer said that the archives are not right, the victims have the right to be remembered, and the family members of the victims have the right to know what happened to their family member. The right of a person to be remembered is also more important than the right of a family member not to be connected to someone who was once at an asylum and killed by euthanasia. In the old exhibitions they still do not do that, but here we publish the full names of the victims.

Seventh question ***How can you ensure that people behave with respect when visiting the memorial?*** How people behave is closely connected with cultural background, normally memorials have security, but here we do not have any security, we have the rules hung up at the memorials. When we started the memorial we were rather nervous that people might vandalize the exhibition, but nothing has in reality happened since it opened. In Germany holocaust memorials are endangered by to groups of people, the Nazis and the people who do not like Jews. The last group is always connected with the Israeli and Palestine conflict. Nazis in general do not know about the Nazi euthanasia program, so they do not care about it, and it is hard to imagine Nazis coming here and smashing things, they are more likely to go to larger places like Sachenhausen where an incident took place in the 1990s and Nazis burned some barracks. In general we can not ensure that that people behaves respectfully.

Eight question ***How many people visit?*** we do not know, we have not created any visitors research here, but a project should be under way for conduction such research. We have

received finds for researching who the visitors are, why they come here etc. and that is on the way now.

Ninth question ***Why do people visit the place?*** People come here either because they are interested in WW2 or by coincidence, you want to visit the Philharmonics, have been in the Tigratten-park etc.

## **Interview Fort VII (7), Poznań, Poland**

At the end of march 2017 I went to interview Grzegorz Kucharczyk and Przemysław Jurkiewicz from the Fort VII memorial in Poznań, Poland. The interview was conducted at the Fort VII itself, and in the following I'll present a transcript of the main and most important moments from that interview.

During the interview Grzegorz Kucharczyk, Przemysław Jurkiewicz myself and one unnamed Polish man were present, but more about that can be found in the chapter about Fort VII that was presented in the mail paper. The fact that two conversations were taking place at the same time has of course influenced this transcript, and in places the interview was hard to hear, and the transcript therefore mostly consists of the most important parts and statements made during the interview.

The first question that was raised during the interview was ***the question about using Nazis, National socialists or Germans about the perpetrators from the Second World War*** Przemysław Jurkiewicz said about this. If we want to learn a true lesson from the history, we have to speak about who committed the crimes, and it was the Germans that stood behind it. It was the Germans that organised the system and were proud of it. It was the Germans that brought Hitler and the Nazis into power etc. The way we present and talk about history is according to Przemysław Jurkiewicz important because, people see and people perceive what they have learned to focus on, and with the narratives in Germany people are not able to understand who committed the crimes. When we use the word the Nazis we do not say anything, when we use the word Germans we see everything, but when we say the Germans it does not mean that we are against the people because when we say the Germans we also remember about the positive things like the great minds as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, people who enriched the world. Goethe lived in the beautiful town of Weimar, and just thirty km from Weimar, you find Buchenwald the famous concentration camp, there is some symbolic in the way that you in one place can find the history of the biggest minds and the biggest criminals. We see and remember both sides. We must not reshape the history, you will not learn from history if you will not admit who committed the crimes, and even try to lie using expressions like 'Polish death camps', sometimes people are just ignorant and thinking Auschwitz, it is located in Poland, so it must be a Polish camp, but sometimes it is also used on purpose by people who know how things were in reality, simply to change or reshape history.

Przemysław Jurkiewicz says that most of the victims at Fort VII were Polish citizens of different national origins, you can not divide these people, they were simply Poles, but there were also some Germans, Germans lived here peacefully in the past. These Germans were placed in the Fort when they e.g. came to defend a Polish neighbour or friend that had been incarcerated in the Fort. They were placed in the Fort for a week or two, and after such a stay they did not want to talk about the place and they no longer wanted to defend their neighbour or friend. It was a scare tactic, to prevent people from speaking up against the Nazis (Germans). Most of the people placed in the Fort were however Poles of slavic origin. The Poles of Jewish origin were placed in different locations, there were very few of them here. We must however not forget that the most important factor is that they were simply human beings.

Here we had a little talk about the use of history, and how history can be used to connect people living today with the past.

We then had a talk about how the first people in history was killed with gas in the Fort VII, The Nazis used a gas-chamber in the fort to kill a group of handicapped in October 1939. Przemysław Jurkiewicz mentions that the company that produced the Zyklon B that was used for the killing was in fact a huge and international company still up and working, BASF, and that he finds it strange that a lot of companies like Siemens, Dr Oetker, Porsche etc. still exist after their involvement in the war. It is a shame, because instead of being punished a lot of people and companies were in fact given advantages.

Here we had a little talk about how handicapped, mentally ill and sick people were treated during the war and more, racial separation etc. but the recording is hard to hear because of too many people speaking at once, but here we also talk about how the bad attitude towards people are again coming back, where people in the past and now were and are considered like garbage and disposable. We talked about the leaders and the free media, and how the free media is not really as free as we think they are. Everyone can in some ways have their say, but it is only through places like social media that ordinary people can express their opinion, and there it often gets to be more of a fight filled with aggression than a talk or discussion, everybody thinks that he or she is right, and everybody wants to be heard, but most do not want to listen.

The next part of the interview was very hard to hear, so no transcription from it, it was about how people from different countries and with different backgrounds look differently at the

same things, based on their experiences and the culture that they are brought up in. Przemysław Jurkiewicz also mentioned that the things that happen in your neighbourhood hits you harder than the things that happen in another country, you might not be affected by a lot of people dying in another country, but then you hear that 3 people died in a car accident in your village and you are chocked.

The next questions were answered by Grzegorz Kucharczyk, the first one of these being about if the place considers itself a tourist destination, and Grzegorz Kucharczyk stated that it does, but that is just as much considers itself a place of remembering, and remembering the victims of the past crimes is the most important. He explain that for a lot of visitors it is a tourist destination, but for the place itself it is mostly a memorial site.

Grzegorz Kucharczyk also says that they are aware of the lack of websites and information in any other languages than Polish, and that it is something that they would like more of in the future. He mentions that they have the guide book in English (and other languages), but that this of course is mostly for people who have already visited the place, and not something that attracts new visitors.

We do show stories about the single victims and we tell some interesting stories about what happened to the single victims during the second world war, to let people know what a horrible place this was during the war. The personal stories connect people with the history.

Grzegorz Kucharczyk, said that they of course have rules for how visitors should behave, they should consider the place something like a graveyard and behave with the same respect as they would there.

Asked if the museum works with other museums he answered that they work with museums in Switzerland and that they also work with Auschwitz.

One of the last things we talked about was how many people visit the museum and memorial every year. Grzegorz Kucharczyk said that it is about 8000, but that they would like more people to visit the place. Most of the visitors come from England and Ukraine, but very few come from Germany. Here I was shown the book with the number of visitors visiting the place every day. It showed that not many Danes are visiting the place.

At the end we could all agree that remembering the past is very important, and that it is important to preserve places like Fort VII, so that people can visit and get a better understanding of the history.

## ***Emails from B.E.C.***

Dear Mr. Nielsen

Dr. Hoffmann has answered your questions in a brief form in German and I translated into English.

The Memorial Bernburg is usually visited by groups of school children and trainees. Tourists in the strict sense are visiting the Memorial rarely. The Memorial Bernburg is located at the edge of the town on the grounds of a psychiatric hospital. That means that no visitors are coming by chance. Due to that, the Memorial is no classic tourist destination but rather a place of information and reflection.

Foreign visitors receive flyers in English or French. A new permanent exhibition, which is planned for next year, will contain English translations of the exhibition texts. They'll be available via smartphone.

Which contents we present depends on our visitors, e.g. their background, education or the best approach. There is no decision for one or another way, but there is always an adaption to the current visitors.

Visitor Rules and Regulations varies from Memorial to Memorial. The concepts are very different, but they're neither better nor worse than the other.

There are always people, who are misbehaving. So this is not only a matter of Memorials. If it gets really bad, I decide, that they have to leave the Memorial. But that's rarely the case.

Hopefully Dr. Hoffmanns answers could help you.

Please contact me again, if I can help in any way.

Kind regards

By order

Judith Gebauer

Pädagogische Mitarbeiterin

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### ***Emails from Besættelsesmuseet***

1) Anser I jer selv for en turist destination?

Ja, vi er opmærksomme på, at museets emne er interessant for Aarhus efterhånden mange udenlandske besøgende.

2) Hvor mange besøgende har besættelsesmuseet pr. AAr?

I øjeblikket ligger vi på ca. 8000 om året, heraf er ca. 2500-3000 skoleelever, der besøger museet i forbindelse med undervisning.

3) Hvem bestemmer hvordan historien kan præsenteres hos jer? Har staten (kulturministeriet) indflydelse på hvordan historien fortælles og hvor fokusset placeres i fortællingen?

Jeg har det faglige ansvar for museet formidling, som jeg aftaler med mine egne chefer (overinspektøren og direktøren i DGB). Den overordnede afgrænsning af vores historier er: at Besættelsesmuseet er et museum, der arbejder med Aarhus' og nærmeste omegns historie i perioden 1940-45. Kulturstyrelsen fører tilsyn med DGB og dermed også Besmus, hvor de løbende kontrollere kvaliteten af vores arbejde. De blander sig ikke i, hvilke historier der fortælles med mindre det falder MEGET udenfor vores arbejdsmarked. KUAS tilskynder altid tværfaglighed, så det er min oplevelse, at der er på eng "højt til loftet".

4) I Polen fortæller man historien om anden verdenskrig med brugen af ordene tyskerne, Tyskland, nazisterne osv. medens man i Tyskland udelukkende bruger nazisterne og nationale socialister. Jeg kan se at jeres udstillinger er nogenlunde som de polske. Er dette emne noget I har overvejet når I har lavet udstillingerne?

Jeg anvender ikke udtrykke nazisterne, men derimod tyskerne eller besættelsesmagten. (Det er dog muligt, at der i ældre dele af vores udstilling anvendes andre betegnelser). Vi kan jo' ikke vide om div. repræsentanter for besættelsesmagten vitterlig var nazister eller bare soldater ... mm. Tyskerne selv, har selvfølgelig brug for en helt anden sprogbrug for tiden og dens aktører – det finder jeg helt naturligt. Der er i øvrigt skrevet en hel masse om det.

5) Er det svært at fortælle hele historien om landsforrædere, danske nazister osv. uden at træde over samfundsmæssige uskrevne regler for hvordan man fortæller historien om anden verdenskrig?

Nej, men det skal selvfølgelig gøres pAA en ordentlig mAde. Intet tabu. Jeg kan dog ikke afvise, at der visse steder i udstillingen opträder formidling, der tegner et lidt for simpelt billede af historien. eMen det er noget vi har planer for at arbejde med i en nær fremtid.

6) Har I overvejet samarbejde med andre museer, bAAde nationale og internationale, om fortællingen om anden verdenskrig? I forhold til bl.a. det besøg, jeg havde pAA Fort VII i Poznań, er det fx. yderst relevant, at en stor del af de danske landsforrædere (ogsAA nogle af dem I fortæller om i jeres udstilling) blev trænet pAA "Owinska mental home" lige uden for Poznań.

Ja, vi samarbejder meget gerne med andre museer og institutioner, der ligner os eller har samme arbejdsomrAAde. Vi har et fint netværk med div. danske museer, som f.eks. Natmus (Frihedsmuseet, Frøslev), Hanstholm, Tirpitz i BlAAvand osv. Desværre har i vi ikke noget særlig godt internationalt netværk, men det er noget, jeg forventer at gøre noget ved. Den føreslAAede polske kontakt giver fin mening.

PAA forhAAAnd tak for den hjælp du kan yde til min opgave,

Jeg kan oplyse, at vi i øjeblikket arbejder med at formulere planerne for at lave en stor opdatering af Besættelsesmuseets formidling, sAA den bliver mere tidssvarende og kommer op pAA samme standard som vore udstillinger i Den Gamle By. Det kræver selvfølgelig en masse fondsmidler, som vi er i gang med at søge.

## **The interview guide**

| <b>Questions for museums and memorials</b>  |  |
|---|--|
| 1) Do you see your memorial as a tourist destination?   |  |
|   |  |
| 2) If yes, how do you spread the message about the destinations to foreign tourists? The website, still only (mostly) contain a local language version. |  |
|   |  |
| 3) Who decides how the history can be presented at your location, are there any regulations from the state etc?   |  |
|   |  |
| 4) The use of NZ, national socialists?  |  |
|   |  |
| 5) Why is it needed to present the dark past to the general public?   |  |
|   |  |
| 6) History about the masses or the personal story?<br>What works best, and what is your stand on the issue?   |  |
|   |  |
| 7) How can we ensure that the exhibitions are created with respect for the victims, while still being historical correct?                               |  |
|   |  |
| 8) Joint storytelling from different destinations, eg, T4 – Berlin, Bernburg Euthanasia Centre, Sonnenstein euthanasia centre?                          |  |
|   |  |
| 09) Do you know how many people visit your museum or memorial every year, and who the visitors are?   |  |
|   |  |
| 10) Can I contact you with additional questions?  |  |