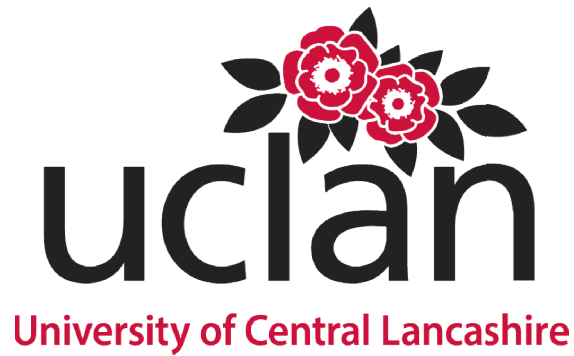# Tour Guides as Interpreters of Dark Tourism:
A Case Study of Berlin, Germany

Asaf Leshem

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Central Lancashire

January 2021

Student Declaration

Concurrent registration for two or more academic awards

I declare that while registered as a candidate for the research degree, I have not been a registered candidate or enrolled student for another award of the University or other academic or professional institution.

Material submitted for another award

I declare that no material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award and is solely my own work.

Signature of Candidate:

Type of Award: PhD

School: Lancashire School of Business and Enterprise

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Abstract

In the current chapter of Berlin's turbulent history, millions of tourists visit the city every year, engaging on the one hand in 'regular' tourist activities such as shopping and entertainment and, on the other hand, visiting sites and museums which offer opportunities to experience the 'dark' elements of the city's history. To show and interpret these events, there are more than 30 museums and dozens of memorials representing what has collectively become known over the last two decades as Dark Tourism. In Berlin, the atrocities and tragedies of (mainly) the Holocaust and the Berlin Wall are also presented by several hundred tour guides and museum docents who provide their own interpretation to the tourists and, in doing so, potentially present a new angle on a story or influence tourists' knowledge and views.

The aim of this study is to appraise critically the interpretive role of the tour guide in the dark tourism experience. More specifically, it seeks to analyse critically the nuances of tour guides' interpretation, to identify where tour guides' interpretation plays a mediating role in the dark tourism experience, to identify factors involved in tour guides' interpretation and how they might influence tourists' experience, and to identify and explore the parameters that influence tour guides to interpret events in one way or another. Thus, the research seeks to address a gap in the academic understanding of the role of the tour guide in the dark tourism experience, thereby contributing to the body of literature of dark tourism and tour guide research, and providing a unique insight to how events of atrocity and human tragedy are interpreted to visitors.

The research employs ethnographic data collection methods, including the observation of guides during tours, engaging in informal conversations with guides in various social situations, and conducting semi-structured individual and dyadic interviews. As a tour guide myself, I also employ auto-ethnographic writing methods to appraise myself in the same manner in which I appraise my colleagues. The research in this thesis analyses interpretation based on a three-level approach in which, respectively, words, anecdotes and narratives are

explored. The research explores the natural way in which guides process the knowledge they have about their tourists with the aim of providing them with a suitable interpretation. The findings suggest that guides take into account elements such as group size, type of tour and knowledge of the tourists whilst at the same time maintaining the style of interpretation they want to give. Although guides aim to please their tourists in a manner comparable with other tourism categories, they at the same time thrive to maintain authenticity and responsibility in accordance with the sensitive nature of dark tourism. As a result, the research reveals that guides make exceptional choices in interpreting for the topic (e.g. the Second World War or the Cold War) rather than for the tourists. Thus, the research concludes that tour guide dark tourism interpretation is a dynamic and calculated culmination of guides driven parameters, tour dynamics and tourist motivations and expectations.

Further contributions are made by this research in identifying and appraising the various interpretation methods guides employ that influence the dark tourism experience. These include reinforcing positive or negative stereotypes, the use of counterfactual history and the use of watered-down versions while allowing for further debate. In addition, the research identifies and presents an introductory discussion on the accumulative psychological stress of guiding in dark tourism sites. Thus, this thesis provides a platform for further research into the tour guide interpretation of similar sites of war and genocide, or at sites of disaster and other types of dark tourism. Moreover, it contributes to theory by further advancing understanding of the mediating effect of dark tourism on the tourists and their experience.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

A tourist asked his guide: "why there is such a big monument only for the Jews?'" The guide replied: "it is because the Jews 'raise their voice' over their genocide more than the other populations persecuted by the Nazis…"

October, 2014

Near the Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe.

I was at Topography of Terror. The museum talks about Nazis here, the Party there, but not so much about the German people, as if the party/the regime was so disconnected from the people, and they, the German people had no part in it [The Holocaust]; that's my interpretation… then I saw a group of German high school students being guided, and I thought to myself that it doesn't matter what interpretation the museum gives – the guide can say whatever he wants!

June, 2016

Topography of Terror Museum, tourist feedback

1.0 The context of the research

A wealth of variations in the above statements is part and parcel of the work life of almost every tour guide in Berlin. In the contemporary reality of the German capital, an estimated 500-600 hundred professional guides conduct tours to sites around the city, many of which are a presentation of darker times in the city's history. This type of guiding (to dark tourism sites), although not uncommon around the world, occurs on a large scale in Berlin owing to the often difficult and tragic chapters in the city's 20th Century history.

This thesis is concerned with tour guiding in Berlin, and the purpose of this introductory chapter is to establish and justify its aims and objectives. In order to do so, it firstly provides a brief introduction to the concept of dark tourism and its uniqueness among other forms of tourism before, secondly, turning to a discussion of tour guides, placing an introductory spotlight on the protagonists of this thesis and their place in the research. Identifying a

notable gap in knowledge with regards to tour guiding in the context of dark tourism, the chapter subsequently sets out the research questions, aims and objectives, as well as the methodological considerations that are central to the thesis. It then provides the background to the choice of Berlin as the location for the study and an overview of the specific dark tourism sites in the city where tour guides conduct their tours. Finally, a summary of the overall content and the structure of the thesis are provided.

1.1 Dark Tourism – unusual tourism to sites of death and suffering

For most tourists, travellers and tourism researchers, tourism is an economic activity revolving around such concepts as fun, leisure, escapism and other generally positive experiences. And for the most part, this is indeed the case. Dark tourism is, however, different. After visiting the memorial site of a concentration camp, for example, guides tend not to ask tourists whether they have enjoyed themselves. So, in what ways is this relatively recently conceptualised phenomenon of dark tourism distinctive from other forms of tourism? And how might this topical 'black sheep' be explained as an identifiable category of product or experience within the tourism sector?

Although visitation by people to places associated with death and suffering as an attraction is not a new phenomenon, and one that existed even in Roman times (Seaton, 1996; Stone & Sharpley, 2008), the term dark tourism was coined some two decades ago by Malcom Foley and John Lennon who defined it as 'the presentation and consumption (by visitors) of real and commodified death and disaster sites' (Foley & Lennon, 1996: 198). This implicit human interest in visiting and viewing presented death was emphasised further by Tony Seaton in his alternative conceptualisation of thanatourism which he defines as 'travel to locations, wholly or partially, motivated by the desire for actual or symbolic encounters with death, particularly, but not exclusively, violent death' (Seaton, 1996: 240).

Hence, in some ways it is not easy to argue that dark tourism is just another 'regular' form of tourism. Certainly, dark tourism in appearance is similar to most other touristic activities, involving as it does the elements of travel, accommodation and entertainment. However, in function, it is not; when the term is explained to them, it is probable that many people would claim to not make a connection between what they understand to be tourism and, for example, a visit to the Museum at Auschwitz. Rather, they are likely to make an emotional distinction between the way they view the activities of tourists surfing in Hawaii or walking

along the streets of Lisbon and visits to sites of human tragedy, such as the Killing Fields in Cambodia. Indeed, the juxtaposition of the words 'tourism', arguably signifying fun, leisure, escape and hedonism, and 'dark', which, at least in western cultures, implies 'something disturbing, troubling, suspicious, weird, morbid or perverse' (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2009: 190) is both challenging and intriguing and it is perhaps for this reason that, particularly since the publication of Lennon and Foley's (2000) text *Dark Tourism: The Attraction of Death and Disaster*, dark tourism has evolved into one of more popular areas in the study of tourism. At the same time, it is notable that the demand for dark tourism experiences has also increased; as Stone (2013: 307) suggests, 'the commodification of death for popular touristic consumption, whether in the guise of memorials and museums, visitor attractions, special events and exhibitions or specific tours, has become a focus for mainstream tourism providers'.

Despite the now extensive research into dark tourism, however, it remains, a controversial topic. What appear to be straightforward definitions tend to disguise its complexity and inherently subjective and pejorative nature whilst it has also become 'an umbrella term for any form of tourism that is somehow related to death, suffering, atrocity, tragedy or crime' (Light, 2017: 277). Consequently, the concept of dark tourism embraces an enormous diversity of sites and attractions from, at one extreme, sites of or related to genocide to, at the other extreme, what Stone (2006: 152) refers to as 'dark fun factories'. Hence, from this perspective, the term is so broadly applied that is has become virtually meaningless, to the extent that some suggest the term dark tourism should be abandoned (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2009).

Specifically, the controversy surround understanding of dark tourism reflects the unresolved distinction between supply and demand perspectives. That is, much of the earlier work on the topic focused on identifying and justifying the categorization of different tourist sites and attractions as 'dark', as well their management and interpretation. In fact, contemporaneous with Foley and Lennon's (1996) initial writing on dark tourism, Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996) introduced the notion of dissonant heritage as a framework for exploring the challenges facing the management and interpretation of dark sites and, since then, significant attention has been paid to identifying and defining sub-categories of dark tourism sites and attractions. Subsequently, the research turned towards the demand for dark tourism, exploring the explicit suggestion in many definitions that dark tourism is a form of consumption –

many refer to it broadly as travel to or visiting sites of death and suffering (for exmaple Preece & Price, 2005; Johnston & Mandelartz, 2015; Stone, 2006; Tarlow, 2005). In particular, Best (2007: 38) claims explicitly that visitors to dark sites are 'motivated primarily to experience the death and suffering of others for the purpose of enjoyment, pleasure and satisfaction', although more recent work challenges the notion of the 'dark tourist'. According to Light (2017: 285) 'there is little evidence that an interest in death (including morbid curiosity) is an important motive for visiting places and attractions that are labelled dark'; the motives for visiting dark sites may be as varied as for any other form of tourism.

Nevertheless, there exists general consensus that the significance of dark tourism lies primarily in the role that dark sites and attractions play in mediating between the event(s) they represent and those who visit them. In other words, visits to dark sites and attractions offer tourists the opportunity to confront the death and suffering that such places signify, represent or memorialise (Stone & Sharpley, 2008) and, as such, experiencing dark tourism can be seen as a form of mediation between the event (the dead) and the tourist (the living) (Walter, 2009). And in this context, that mediation is often provided or supported by tour guides at dark sites.

It is, therefore, surprising, that the role of tour guides in dark tourism has been accorded relatively little attention, that with few notable exceptions (discussed in Chapter 2), tour guiding at dark sites has been largely overlooked. The purpose of this thesis is to address this gap in the literature. It adopts the position that tour guides are not, as some would claim, brokers or in a sense passive middle-men; rather, they play a pro-active role in dark tourism, potentially having a significant influence on the dark tourism experience in guiding tours that encompass strong elements of learning and thinking, of agreeing or disagreeing. At the same time, however, tour guides also face the challenge of maintaining the more traditional sense (leisure, escape, enjoyment) of a tourism experience. Therefore, within the context of dark tourism, one of the aims of this thesis is to question critically the role of the guide as a broker through exploring how and to what extent tour guides influence the mediating process in the dark tourism tourist experience.

1.2 Tour Guides

Guides have been aptly called the orphans of the travel industry, somewhat hidden as they are within the trade (Pond, 1993: 13)

One of the main arguments pointed to above is that dark tourism, unlike other more conventional forms of tourism, cannot be 'left alone' to be enjoyed. In other words, guide books, museums and tour guides are arguably a fundamental, inseparable element of the dark tourism experience. Therefore, this section briefly introduces the relatively limited field of tour guide research.

The tour guide has emerged as the focus of research within tourism studies over the last three decades. Prior to this, what tour guides do, their role in the social process of tourism, their position in the economy of the industry and their influence on tourists and destination remained relatively unknown (Pond, 1993). Over time, however, an increasing number of scholars, led mainly by researchers such as Kathleen Pond, Erik Cohen and Betty Weiler, have argued that the importance of tour guides within the tourism industry should be recognised and that many aspects of their role deserve academic attention.

The first guides, as Erik Cohen (1985) suggests, can be traced back to ancient times when they had the single role of providing geographical directions, or showing the way. According to Cohen, however, guides subsequently took on a dual role, that of pathfinder and mentor. This early two-role categorisation of the tour guide later served as the foundation for other tourism scholars who tried to more clearly define what is it exactly that tour guides do. Kathleen Pond (1993), in what is perhaps the most cited book on the subject, *The Professional Guide*, continues to trace the history of the development of the roles of the tour guide. She follows historical epochs, noting the slowly expanding the role of the tour guide to include leading visitors to specific sites, and furthermore, interpreting those sites and the events related to them for the visitor.

The interpreter role of a tour guide – the main focus of this research – is one that researchers such as Betty Weiler and Rosmary Black (2015) acknowledge as a mediation role, one that may include being an educator, a role model, a social catalyst and so on. Over the years, others have offered other terms to describe the mediating role, referring to guides as 'cultural brokers' (Holloway, 1981) and 'ambassadors' (of a destination). In some cases, guides are

even called 'agents of sustainability' (Weiler & Hu, 2012). Chapter 3 (Section 3.2) of this thesis explores in detail the philosophical meanings of these various terms and their potential practical implications for the guides. Notably, viewing tour guides as mediators of tourism sites generally and of sites of dark tourism in particular has been increasingly recognised in recent years (see for example, Lennon & Foley, 2000; and Sharpley & Stone, 2009). Arguably, this reflects the perceived power tour guides posses when interpreting places, tourist sites and historical events relating to death, tragedy and suffering.

The quotation at the beginning of this chapter points to one of the characteristics of tour guiding, that tour guides can, in principle, interpret such sites in (almost) any way they want. Hence, one of the main claims at the core of this research is that, owing to the sensitive nature of visits to sites of death and suffering, interpretation by a tour guide has a greater impact than in other tourism situations; possibly informing and swaying opinions, making tourists feel better or worse, influencing their feelings in either positive or negative ways, trivialising history and heritage, and often romanticising an event or an era (Uzzel, 1989). Howard (2003, in Sharpley & Stone, 2008) and Weiler and Black (2015) emphasize this point, explaining that interpretation by its very nature can present a selective story line, potentially motivated by emotional, political or ideological bias.

1.3 The aim of the research

In many ways, the dark chapters of Berlin's history, such as the twelve years of the Third Reich or the division of the city by the Berlin Wall, continue to have an impact on people's lives today. In Berlin, these events are now documented in more than 20 museums and are shown to millions of tourists every year by several hundreds of tour guides who live in the city and by many other guides who come with groups from other destinations.

In 2014, I guided a tour of college students to the Jewish Cemetery in the Weissensee area of Berlin. The cemetery is a huge forest, a tragic place of a community that was lost yet, at the same time, the 115,000 graves provide a wealth of stories testifying to Berlin's rich culture in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. As we walked quietly through the graves of people whose families were lost in the Holocaust, we were wondering about the millions of tourists visiting places in Berlin which are related to this, and the lecturer of the group asked me: 'would Berlin today, as a hugely popular urban destination, be so popular if these tragic events hadn't happened here?'

Certainly, tourism activities around topics which are rarely controversial in their 'darkness' are an essential part of the itinerary for almost every tourist in Berlin. And almost every tourist uses one or more forms of interpretation (a book, a guide, or visiting a museum) in their exploration of the city's monuments, memorial sites and museums which are related to the dark chapters of the city's history. Many tourists pose the more difficult questions to their guides. The following is a small selection of such typical tourist questions:

> *Why didn't more Germans resist the Nazis in the Holocaust?*
> *Why did Hitler hate the Jews and not others?*
> *If the East Germans wanted to escape over the Berlin Wall, then how come many miss East Germany today?*

Guides who lead tourists through the city are tasked with the challenge of narrating historical events, then answering tourists' questions with their interpretations of these events. As demonstrated by the above examples, the questions, or potentially the answers, are of a controversial character. Many questions do not have a straightforward, easy answer.

Every tourist is different and every tourist in Berlin chooses what proportion of their time in the city will be devoted to going to the zoo or for shopping, and how much of it will be dedicated to visiting such sites as the Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe (the Holocaust Memorial) or the Berlin Wall Memorial at Bernauer Straße. Many will stick to their guide books, gather information from their favourite web sites or allow museums and exhibitions to interpret the site and the event for them. In this research, however, I focus on the many others who choose to be guided in the city, either on a walking tour or (usually) on an organised bus tour. The hundreds of tour guides working in Berlin are the façade of a large urban destination, with a population that for the most part does not have direct contact with tourists. For the tourists, too, the guides are an important means of gaining insights into local culture and a deeper knowledge of the destination. Thus, what and how tour guides talk about, for example, the Holocaust or the victims of the Berlin Wall, is of great social, cultural and even political importance.

Tour guides themselves work in a form of a metaphoric tourism zone (Frohlick & Harrison, 2008), in which the culture is a hybrid of the tourist's culture, the guide's background and the

destination's culture. In this special 'tourist zone' (conceptualised in Figure 1.1 below), tour guides in Berlin have the power, through their interpretation, to enlighten, teach and perhaps change the minds of tourists about various tragic events, the stories of which tourists come to hear. Tour guides can interpret stories in a way that will make tourists unhappy with the destination, and dislike local people; equally, they can interpret places and events in ways that that leave tourists satisfied and seeing new angles on the place that they have not previously considered. With regards to Berlin, for example, tourists may wonder what the contemporary situation is with regards to Nazis in Germany. Tour guides, then, might on the one hand analyse the situation in a manner that makes tourists believe that the Germans have not changed since the War or, on the other hand, persuade them that Nazism has been completely eliminated in Germany.

Figure 1.1: The theoretical merging of dark tourism and tour guide research

Evidently, in most cases interpretation is neither so extreme nor explicitly binary; there are many nuances to the topics which come up when visiting sites of death and tragedy in Berlin. Nevertheless, as subtle as these nuances may be, they carry with them a far-reaching impact on the visitor and, to some extent, on the destination, too. Therefore:

The overall aim of this thesis is to appraise critically the interpretive role of the tour guide in the dark tourism experience.

To achieve this overall aim, the thesis has the following objectives:

i.   To analyse critically the nuances of tour guides' interpretation of dark events and places to tourists

ii.   To identify the factors and parameters that determine variations in tour guides' interpretations of dark events.

iii.   To identify and explore critically how specific factors involved in tour guide interpretation might influence the dark tourist experience.

1.4 The study area – choosing Berlin

Berlin as the study site for this research is selected for the following reasons:

i. Few tourist destinations in the world offer such a diverse variety of tourism experiences, including holiday making, conferences, medical tourism and VFR, all engulfed in sites which present historical events of death and suffering;

ii. Whereas other globally famous cities (such as London and Paris) have completed one or more cycles in their development as tourism destinations, following the events of 1989 Berlin is only now experiencing its first cycle of tourism development, growing at an almost constant rate of 8% per annum (VisitBerlin, 2015). Taking into account the scope of both the number of visitors on guided tours (in the millions every year), and the number of tour guides (hundreds and increasing), and the sheer number of dark tourism sites, interpretation is an important component in the future social and cultural impacts of tourism the city and on its tourists.

iii. It can be argued that a large part of the attraction of Berlin as a tourist destination are several dark chapters in its history and their global (and often personal) interest to a wide variety of potential visitors. Perhaps the most noteworthy example of this is the Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe (commonly known as the Holocaust Memorial). Unless arriving in a vehicle at the memorial, the millions of tourists will include in their visit activities such as taking pictures in front of Brandenburg Gate, shopping at the Mall of Berlin, eating around Sony Centre, or going up the Panorama Punkt for spectacular views of the city.

iv. And, I have chosen to focus on the phenomenon of tour guide interpretation in Berlin as I am a tour guide in that city and, hence, have a unique daily insight into dark tourism in Berlin that occurs within the wider picture of the hugely influential tourism industry in the city.

1.5 Sites of Dark Tourism in Berlin

As implied earlier, sites of dark tourism and 'regular' tourism occupy almost the same geographical spaces in Berlin. In this section I list the more popular sites to which tour guides take tourists and where dark tourism interpretation takes place. These sites are listed here in the introduction as they were the main sites for data collection in this study. A full list of sites is described in more detail in Chapter 5.

The sites are generally divided into museums, large memorial sites and monuments.

Museums:
- The Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe's Information Centre.
- The Jewish Museum (part of which is dedicated to the Holocaust).
- Topography of Terror Museum.
- Otto Weidt Workshop for the Blind Museum.
- The German Resistance Museum.
- House of the Wannsee Conference.

Large Memorial Sites:
- The Wall Memorial Site on Bernauer Straße.
- The Memorial Site for Concentration Camp Sachsenhausen.
- The Stasi Headquarters in Magdalenen Straße.
- Check Point Charlie (a large site with several exhibitions and museums).

Monuments:
- The Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe.
- Platform 17 (Gleis 17) in Grunewald (including the two earlier monuments, located nearby).
- The Block of the Women on Rosen Straße.

- The Presence of Absence, Bebel Platz (location of the burning of the books on the 10th of May, 1933).
- Trains to Life, Trains to Death (Friedrich Straße).
- The Block of the Women at Rosen Straße

One geographical exception is The Memorial Site of the Concentration Camp Sachsenhausen, which is located 34 km from the centre of Berlin in a town called Oranienburg. Tours to the site are often comprised of heterogeneous groups of individual tourists who join a tour in the city, with the guide taking them on the regional train out of Berlin for a tour at the memorial site. At the end of about three hours' tour, the guide will normally return with the tourists to the city.

1.6 Research methods and methodological considerations

Ethnography and Auto-ethnography

In this section I briefly introduce the research methods used in this research in general and present a brief background to the choice of auto-ethnography in particular as an integral part of this project. As a concept for this research, I decided to view the tour guiding community as a 'tribe', a group worthy of observation, of obtaining information on and reaching conclusions with regards to their culture and behaviour. The limitations to this concept are clear – in most cases tour guides work alone and do not interact with other tour guides during their work (although there are rare exceptions to this rule). However, they do interact on a professional level, exchange information, work for the same companies, share research and go on educational trips together. For that reason, and also for the reason that the interpretation of dark tourism events often involves talking about sensitive topics with sometimes subtle difference in the choice of words, I decided to employ a qualitative approach.

This research, then, is an ethnographic collection of observations of tour guides in their work, supplemented by follow-up interviews. To adapt to the guides' schedule and preferred forms of communications, data were also collected by way of conversations in informal settings. In addition, I decided to add my own interpretation as a tour guide working in Berlin. Therefore, in the following paragraphs I explain my background and considerations for undertaking this research.

Thinking critically about tour guide interpretation of dark tourism started for me at the age of 23 when, as a representative of a travel agency organising Israeli youth delegations to Poland, I observed countless hours of interpretation of sites related to the Holocaust. At that time, I felt the topic was very important and that I was not sufficiently mature or knowledgeable to guide such topics. Over two years, I observed many guides and their interpretations, trying to identify their individual – and sometimes organisational, school's, or country's – agenda and bias. The stories I heard were presented through tour guides' interpretations in many different ways.

Some 15 years later I was guiding full time in Berlin. Doing so, I found myself positioned between the city and its guests, showing places of historical significance, such as the Berlin Wall Memorial Site at Berliner Straße or the Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe, narrating stories that went beyond the simple presentation of historical names and dates. Observing my colleagues and reflecting on my own interpretation of historical events raised a lot of questions in my mind: for instance, my customer is a daughter of a Holocaust survivor; what if I hurt her feelings with an analysis that sounds too forgiving to her? Or, when guiding people with a background in the former Soviet Bloc, might I offend them by depicting the story in a too 'black and white' a way, as I once heard a tourist asking her guide if they were on the side of the good guys or the bad guys… I realised that the variety of ways in which a tour guide can interpret the past, and therefore influence the present is enormous, spanning a spectrum of cultures and knowledge as wide and diverse as the world itself.

Furthermore, the world of tour guides, taking tourists to sites and interpreting the dark chapters of Berlin's history, is not separated from where people in Berlin go to work, study or commute back home. People hear what we say! From time to time, I see people enjoying how we explain things. At other times, people walk around looking angry or even interrupt us, arguing that we are falsely accusing them of something. As professional speakers and, as some would argue, a modern manifestation of tourism street actors (Hansen & Mossberg, 2017), most experienced tour guides are highly accustomed to selecting their words; different topics or points of explanation can be presented in different ways according to the needs of the moment. I show the sites, interpret them, tell the stories and, when it comes to talking about events of tragedy and death, I occasionally raise questions and even engage in small philosophical debates with my guests. It is for these reasons that I decided to document the stories I interpret in the same way as I observe my colleagues and their interpretations.

Importantly, at no point in the research did I expect to eliminate my bias (cultural, political, historical, and personal); rather, I sought to acknowledge it and incorporate it as data similar to that of the other tour guides.

1.7 Statement of originality and potential contribution

To date, almost no published research has dealt with the way in which tour guides interpret dark chapters of history, especially in a complex urban destination such as Berlin. In addition, there is the historical irony that the horrific genocides, terror, persecutions and wars that took place in Berlin have now turned it into a major world destination. Berlin's dark tourism sites are visited by millions of people every year, touching the lives of both residents and visitors. It is because of the importance of research into the areas of dark tourism and tour guiding to so many people that I have chosen to combine the two.

The findings of this research will therefore contribute to a notable gap in the academic literature and contribute to knowledge in the following ways:

- Enhancing understanding of the contemporary urban tour guide and their role in producing the dark tourism experience.
- Complementing other areas of dark tourism research, such as motivation, education, remembrance, site management and ethics.
- Offering residents of Berlin an unusual insight into how the history of their city is presented to visitors.

And finally, with the findings of this research I also hope to address some of the existential questions that many of the visitors to Berlin contemplate, with the goal of understanding the analysis and interpretation of dark events from the perspective of tour guides themselves.

1.8 Thesis structure

The thesis is structured into seven chapters. This first, introductory chapter has justified the focus of the thesis and the aims and objectives of the research. Given the framing of the research within the wider context of dark tourism, Chapter 2 reviews the dark tourism literature and critiques the concept, whilst Chapter 3 critically considers the literature on tour

guiding followed by a theoretical discussion of interpretation in the context of tourism. Subsequently, in Chapter 4, the research methodology and methods are presented and limitations of the data collection are discussed. This chapter also considers debates surrounding the use of ethnography and auto-ethnography. Chapters 5 provides background details of the key dark sites in Berlin at which much of the empirical research (observations) was undertaken. The outcomes of the research are presented and discussed in Chapter 6 and finally, Chapter 7 draws conclusions and brings the thesis to a close (see Figure 1.2 for a summary of the thesis structure and content)

Figure 1.2: Thesis content and structure

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Dark Tourism: The emergence of a new category of tourism	**Chapter 3: Tour guides: Roles and practices**

Chapter 4: Research methodology	**Chapter 5: Locations of interpretation: Dark sites in Berlin**

Chapter 6: Research outcomes: tour guides' interpretation of dark tourism sites

Chapter 7: Final discussion and conclusions
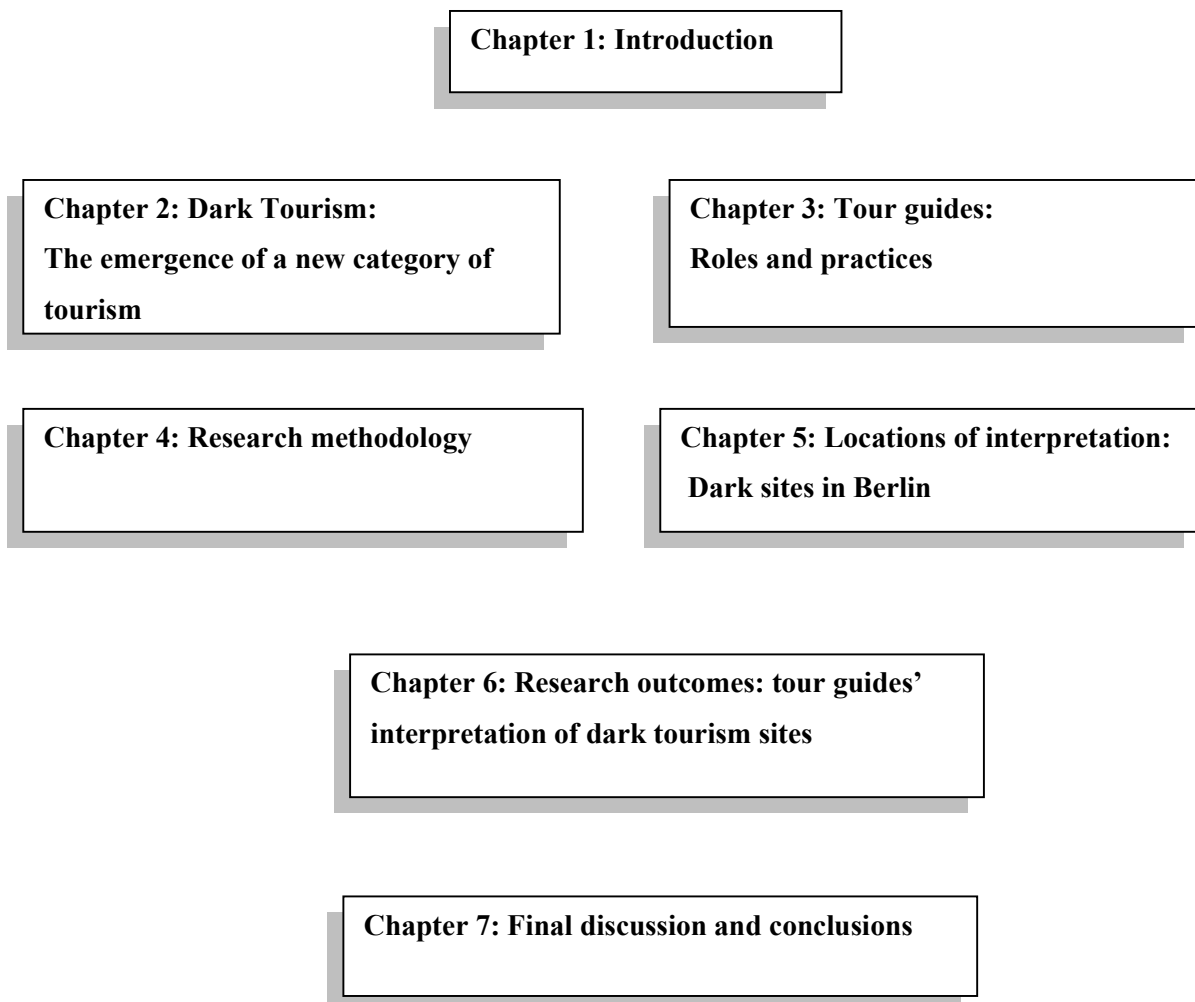
1.9 Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide a background to the two academic pillars that comprise this research. Thus, the tourism sub-disciplines of dark tourism and tour guide research have been introduced. Specifically, tour guide interpretation of dark tourism has been introduced as the focus of this research and its objectives. The chapter has also highlighted the problem of the sensitive nature of visitation to sites of death and tragedy and the vital role that interpretation plays in it. Although the focus of the research is on the tour guide's role within the dark tourism experience, it is also indirectly related to other fields of tourism research such as urban tourism and tourist behaviour. Hence, the chapter has also provided a rationale for the choice of Berlin as an appropriate study area, going on to provide a selected list of the main sites in Berlin which are the scene of tour guide interpretation. Following this introduction to the study area and its specific sites, the chapter has offered an overview of the research methods and, in particular, the rationale for incorporating auto-ethnography into the overall anthropological character of the thesis.

This introductory chapter has served to draw attention to the uniqueness of dark tourism within the tourism industry, a uniqueness that in conjunction with the scale and importance of tourism in Berlin serves as the key premise of this thesis. Building further on that premise, the chapter has also pointed to the relatively unexplored issue of tour guiding in the context of dark tourism, representing a notable gap in the literature. Finally, it has provided an overview of this thesis as a whole, in so doing highlighting the contribution to both dark tourism and tour guiding theory that it aims to make.

Dark tourism research engulfs almost every part of this thesis. Therefore, the next chapter reviews of the key dark tourism literature with an in-depth debate of its inherent definitions, themes and concepts.

Chapter 2

Dark tourism: The emergence of a new category of tourism

2.0 Introduction

As discussed in the preceding introductory chapter, the overall purpose of this thesis is to explore the interpretative role of tour guides in the dark tourism experience. More specifically, based on research amongst tour guides in Berlin, it seeks to identify and appraise critically the varying ways in which tour guides interpret dark sites. Therefore, the thesis embraces two broad themes within tourism studies, namely: tour guides / guiding and interpretation, and dark tourism. In practice, such as in the context of museums and memorial sites, these two themes are clearly interconnected in a significant way; however, their theoretical frameworks are quite distinct from each other. Indeed, although a small number of studies combines the two themes (see, for example, Gelbman & Maoz, 2012; Macdonald, 2006; Quinn & Ryan, 2016), the concept of dark tourism and what is typically practice-focused tour guide research are typically considered separately within the tourism literature. Hence, by engaging in an ethnographic research-based study in a tourism zone in which tour guides work at dark tourism sites, this thesis aims to address a theoretical void, merging the two disciplines into a single framework which makes an important contribution to both. Nevertheless, for reasons of both logic and clarity, the extant literature on dark tourism and tour guides are reviewed separately in this thesis, in this and the following chapter respectively.

In short, the, the purpose of this chapter is to explore the existing body of literature on the emergence of dark tourism as both an academic discipline and a recognised and distinctive form of tourism. It does so by reviewing and exemplifying debates surrounding a variety of issues within the study of dark tourism, such as definitions and meanings of the term itself, the supply and consumption of dark tourism, ethical political issues, the motivations of tourists to visit dark tourism sites, and the interpretation of such sites. First, however, the emergence of the concept of dark tourism is considered within an historical context.

2.1 Development of the concept

Dark tourism and, indeed, tourism more generally, is not strictly a social (or economic) activity unique to our times (Stone, 2005); as Young (1973: 9) observes 'like many other modern industries, tourism can trace its ancestry back to the Old Testament', reflecting the fact that people, albeit usually a privileged minority, have travelled since earliest documented human existence. Hence, as will be suggested shortly, dark tourism in particular can also be considered to have a long history (Sharpley, 2009a). The purpose of this section, therefore, is to provide a brief historical background to the evolution of modern-day tourism in order to locate dark tourism theory within the wider framework of the development of tourism as a whole.

Essentially, people have engaged in forms of tourism, or travelling for reasons other than trade or warfare, for as long as they have had the means to do so. As early as Egyptian times, people travelled for recreation, pleasure or education – and often for spiritual reasons (Gyr, 2010; Towner, 1995; Urry, 1990) – whilst ancient graffiti dating back to 1300 BC found on the great pyramids at Giza are evidence of an early form of tourist activity (Casson, 1974: 32). The legendary Marco Polo – perhaps the most famous tourist of pre-modern times – travelled partly for the purpose of trade and partly in order to get to learn about new cultures, to explore different places and to have adventures, adventures which he documented with some degree of accuracy (Jones, 2009). Interestingly, in his travels he was fascinated by, amongst other things, the life and death rituals of tribes and peoples he met along the way (Bergreen, 2007; Jones, 2009).

The growth and success of the Roman Empire was, in a sense, the first manifestation of globalisation, allowing people to cross borders for purposes of recreation (Young, 1973), though of course such travel remained the privilege of the elite and affluent (Towner, 1995). However, religious pilgrimage can be considered as an early form of popular tourism that preceded the growth of the Roman Empire (Seaton, 1996). Indeed, travel for religious purposes is widely considered to be one of the first identifiable forms of tourism (Kaelber, 2006) and, as Collins-Kreiner and Gattrel (2006: 33) note, 'it is impossible to understand the development… of tourism without studying ...the pilgrimage phenomenon'. Yet, not only did long-distance travel become relatively easy and safe during the Roman era (Sigaux, 1966), but also an early form of resort-based tourism evolved at places such as Baiae on the Bay of

Naples, where wealthier members of Roman society went to escape the summer heat (Sharpley, 2018: 24). However, in both scale and the degree of commodification of sites and services, this early example of tourism was, of course, in no way comparable to tourism as we perceive it today.

Nevertheless, one notable form of the movement of people during Roman times was travel to attend activities and attractions that can be considered an early manifestation of dark tourism entertainment (Stone & Sharpley, 2008). In particular, as Stone (2006) suggests, the Colosseum in Rome was one of the first dark tourism attractions to which people travelled to see fights, in so doing consuming death and horror as a tourism product. It is important to note that these early tourists also used tourism infrastructure, such as lodgings, transport services and food offered by vendors. Moreover, in contrast to international travel (other than for military reasons) to the more remote provinces of the Roman Empire, which remained the preserve of a minority of the rich people, attending events at the Colosseum could be categorised as domestic mass tourism.

Moving forward some thirteen centuries, scholars tend to focus on the Grand Tour of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries as a significant phase in the history of modern tourism (Towner, 1985). The age of the Grand Tour witnessed the increasing mobility of people for the combined purposes of, initially, education and then subsequently recreation, laying the foundation for modern mass tourism (Brodsky-Porges, 1981). Viewed from a geo-political perspective of that era, the end of the religious wars of Europe and consequently, the formation of European nation states provided the stimulus for young aristocratic Englishmen to go on extended tours throughout central Europe (Brodsky-Porges, 1981; Towner, 1984, 1985). In addition to visiting cultural centres, attending universities and engaging in other educational activities, a major motivational component for these young Englishmen to visit today's Spain, France, Germany and Italy was, according to Mead (1914), the attraction of wars and conflicts that had ended no more than two or three decades beforehand. Indeed, it can be argued that the cultural romanticism of the time was an influential factor in motivating young members of the English aristocracy to search for the romantic allure of war and adventure (Gyr, 2010).

Travelling in search of education and knowledge was not, however, restricted to the English nobility. In the eighteenth century, the French *Le Siècle des Lumieres* (literally 'the century of

lights') and the German *Aufklärung* (Enlightenment) played a significant role in the development of dark tourism as part of the more general evolution of mass tourism. That is, it can be argued that not only did the Enlightenment – essentially a movement that promoted reason and scientific knowledge above religious orthodoxy – bring with it social and cultural change which allowed people to question social institutions such as religion, God and death (Leibetseder, 2013), but also that it was influential in the development of the tourism industry at that time. In other words, the Enlightenment led to a religious / spiritual void in contemporary west European societies which challenged (and, arguably, continues to do so) the manner in which society contemplated or understood death and dying. As Stone (2009: 26) explains:

> contemporary society increasingly consumes, willingly and unwillingly, both real and commodified death and suffering through audio-visual representations, popular culture and the media.

Stone (2009) goes on to suggest that, in modern secular societies, not only does dark tourism take on the role previously played by social practices or institutions (particularly the Church and religious rituals) in dealing with death, but it also individualises the meaning and causes of death. Critically, however, the roots of modern tourism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries coincided with the beginning of the transition of societies from being governed by organised religion through to today's secular societies, and their consequential different understandings of life and death. Hence, although travelling during the Enlightenment remained at first primarily within the sphere of the intellectual elite (Leibetseder, 2013; Urry, 1990), as the Grand Tour became 'invaded by the bourgeoisie' (Turner & Ash, 1975: 41) and as tourism more generally became democratised (Urry, 1990), a growing quasi-secular interest in death became more widely evident, particularly during the Victorian era when more people started visiting prisons and sites of battles from their past (Seaton, 1996). Seaton (1996), for example, refers to Edward Stanley, the Bishop of Norwich, who testified on the popularity of tourists walking through the Catacombs in Paris where bodies were stored and, at times, even purposefully making their way to witness prisoners being guillotined. As discussed shortly, it was this widespread Victorian-era contemplation of death, or 'thanatopsis', that provided the foundation for Seaton's (1986) concept of thanatourism.

From these early beginnings, visitation to sites of or associated with events of death, suffering and atrocity have evolved an integral element of many people's holidays and leisure activities (Ashworth & Hartmann, 2005). Indeed, increasing interest and participation in what is now referred to as dark tourism have sparked not only widespread media interest in the concept (perhaps epitomised by the 2018 Netflix documentary series *The Dark Tourist* and populist books such as that by Dom Joly, also titled *The Dark Tourist* – see Joly, 2010) but also, over the last two decades, significant academic attention. Since Malcolm Foley and John Lennon coined the term in their seminal article (Foley & Lennon, 1996) and subsequently popularised it in their book *Dark Tourism: The Attraction of Death and Disaster* (Lennon & Foley, 2000), the concept of dark tourism has attracted increasing academic interest within both tourism studies and related disciplines, to the extent that a large and diverse literature on the topic now exists (see Light, 2017, for a comprehensive review). By way of introduction to it, the following section considers the various ways in which dark tourism has been defined, concluding with a working definition which will be used in this thesis.

2.2 Definitions

To those unfamiliar with the term, particularly from an academic perspective, the intriguing juxtaposition of the words 'dark' and 'tourism' may mean different things, from perhaps a sinister form of tourism to more simply engaging in tourism activity at night (a recognised manifestation of that latter is so-called 'dark sky' tourism; see Mitchell & Galloway, 2019). Moreover, even within the dark tourism literature there is a lack of consensus regarding definitions of the concept itself. Nevertheless, in order to reach a working definition for the purposes of this thesis, this section considers definitions of what is broadly referred to as dark tourism (Foley & Lennon, 1996) and the more specific concept of thanatourism (Seaton, 1996) referred to above, as well as sub-categories proposed by other scholars.

Although, as some commentators have observed, similar forms of tourism related to death, war and 'dark' heritage existed well prior to 1996 (for example, Light, 2017; Sharpley, 2009a), two seminal articles published in a special issue of the *International Journal of Heritage Studies* (IJHS) sparked a debate on the meaning of, on the one hand, dark tourism and, on the other hand, thanatourism; moreover, it was a debate that would be a major part of research in the field during the decade that followed (Light, 2017) and that, arguably, continues to this day.

In their widely cited paper published in that journal, Foley and Lennon (1996: 198) define dark tourism as a 'phenomenon which encompasses the presentation and consumption (by visitors) of real and commodified death and disaster sites', although they were to later adapt their definition to deal with (or perhaps avoid) the elusive and, indeed, contentious topic of the touristic consumption of death. In other words, addressing the implication in their original definition that tourists are mindful of consuming death as a product, in a follow up article, Lennon and Foley stated that dark tourism is 'tourism associated with sites of death, disaster, and depravity' (Lennon & Foley, 1999: 46). This later, second definition is clearer in that it is unambiguous about the phenomenon of dark tourism being about tourism to places of or associated with death and suffering, with the focus very much on the site rather than the tourist or the nature of the tourist experience. Implicit, of course, is that (dark) tourism is a commercial activity that occurs not only at the site itself. That is to say, in order to visit a site which presents a person or event related to death or suffering, tourists not only travel to the site, but may also make use of nearby accommodation, go to a restaurant in the evening, and so on.

In contrast, in his paper published in the same special issue of IJHS, Seaton (1996) coined the term 'thanatourism'. Drawing on the concept of 'thanatopsis' which, following dictionary definitions, he defines as the 'contemplation of death' (dictionary.com, for example, defines thanatopsis as 'view or contemplation on death'), he continues by interpreting it as 'stimuli by which such contemplations [of death] are generated and the forms of contemplative response such stimuli tend to produce' (Seaton, 1996: 235). Hence, in applying the concept of thanatopsis to the tourism context – what he refers to as thanatourism – Seaton, in fact, is suggesting that 'viewing on death' (from actual to representations thereof) is a prime motivation of thanatourism. This is supported by subsequent research that revealed that the contemplation of death was one of nearly twenty motivations to visit such dark sites, including visiting simply because one is in the region (Isaac & Cakmak, 2014). Interestingly, this latter point correlates with Lennon and Foley's (2000) contentious assertion that visiting dark sites tends to be serendipitous rather than planned.

The relationship between site (supply) and consumption (demand) perspectives is returned to later in this chapter. More generally, however, the challenge facing these early dark tourism scholars when developing their definitions was the need to not only understand *what* dark tourism is but also, as a conceptually distinctive form of tourism, *why* it occurs. Hence,

Seaton (1996: 240) clarifies thanatourism as 'travel to a location wholly, or partially, motivated by the desire for actual or symbolic encounters with death. Particularly, but not exclusively, violent death, which may, to a varying degree be activated by the person-specific features of those whose deaths are its local objects'.

Seaton's concept of thanatourism, then, makes an important contribution to understanding the reasons why people travel or are attracted to such sites and was one of the first to do so. Earlier, however, Rojek (1993), introduced the notion of 'black spots', or tourist attractions based on 'commercial developments of grave sites and sites in which celebrities or large number of people have met with sudden and violent death' (Rojek, 1993: 136). As such, Rojek (1993) was referring to what later became known as dark tourism attractions, in so doing implicitly raising a question subsequently faced by many dark tourism researchers; that is, is it ethically acceptable to turn someone's tragedy into a commercial product, particularly when considering the emotions involved in the implicit or explicit reasons for visiting dark sites (see, for example, Bigley et al, 2010; Biran et al, 2011; Podoshen, 2013). Importantly, Rojek (1997: 63) went on to distinguish between 'black spots' and 'sensation sites', the latter typically being disaster sites to which tourists, similar to Seaton's (1996) argument, are attracted by the opportunity to witness human suffering. Putting it another way, such tourists arguably engage in a form of voyeurism (Buda & MacIntosh, 2013).

Another definition is proposed by Tarlow (2005: 48) who identifies dark tourism as 'visitation to places where tragedies or historically noteworthy death has occurred and that continue to impact our lives'. Here, the problematic aspect of this definition is perhaps not its narrowness, as argued by Stone (2012), but rather that the 'impact' that Tarlow refers to is ambiguous, varying as it may according to the motivations and experiences of individual tourists. At the same time, this definition may exclude dark sites which are not 'noteworthy', again a categorisation that may depend on the individual tourist; a war grave, for example, may be noteworthy only to a relative of the deceased.

Stone (2006: 146), adopts a broader – and now widely cited – definition of dark tourism as the 'act of travel to tourist sites associated with death, suffering or the seemingly macabre' (Stone, 2006: 146). Essentially, this embraces a wide spectrum of dark places (see Section 2.2.1 below); although it points to the enormous diversity of dark sites, however, this definition arguably dilutes the essence of dark tourism. Hence, Preece and Price (2005: 192) suggest that dark tourism is 'travel to sites associated with death, disaster, acts of violence,

tragedy, scenes of death and crimes against humanity'. In so doing, they exclude 'paler' types of dark tourism attractions (such as Body Worlds or the London Dungeon), but it benefits from a lack of ambiguity and, at the same, it is inclusive of various types of tourist motivations. For example, a tourist may be on a skiing holiday in Zakopane in Poland and will incorporate a visit to Auschwitz because 'it is the thing to do'. Moreover, Preece and Price's (2005) definition also embraces all the types of attractions, monuments and memorial sites at which this research in this thesis is conducted.

Despite the burgeoning research that adopts either Seaton's (1996) concept of thantourism or Foley and Lennon's (1996, 1999) definitions of dark tourism, numerous other labels have been applied to dark tourism, essentially as sub-categorisations of the phenomenon. Typically, these are case-study or context specific and include, amongst many others: 'grief' or 'disaster' tourism (Rojek, 1993; Wright & Sharpley, 2018), 'morbid' tourism (Blom, 2000), 'death' tourism (Sion, 2014), 'horror' tourism (Ashworth, 2004) 'genocide' tourism (Beech, 2009), 'phoenix' tourism (Causevic & Lynch, 2011) and 'prison' tourism (Wilson et al., 2017). By far the most common categories are, however, war tourism (for example, Bigley et al, 2010; James, 2011; Schwenkel, 2006) and Holocaust tourism (for example, Ashworth, 2002; Gross, 2006; Krakover, 2005). (See Kužnik, 2015 and Light, 2017 for more sub-labels of dark tourism).

Usefully, and summarising the above discussion, Light (2017: 282) presents the variety of definitions of dark tourism and thanatourism. According to him, the various definitions can be categorised according to a number of topics and criteria, as shown here with examples from each category that are most relevant to this thesis:

- Definitions based on **practices** (the act of visiting particular types of place).
  - Dark tourism: 'visitations to places where tragedies or historically noteworthy death has occurred and that continue to impact our lives'.
    Tarlow (2005: 48)
  - Dark tourism: 'travel to sites associated with death, disaster, acts of violence, tragedy, scenes of death and crimes against humanity'.
    Preece and Price (2005: 192)

- Definitions based on **tourism at particular types of place**.

- Thanatourism: 'tourism to globally recognised places of commemoration'. Knudsen (2011: 57)

- Definitions based on **motivations**.
  - Thanatourism: 'travel to a location wholly, or partially, motivated by the desire for actual or symbolic encounters with death, particularly, but not exclusively, violent death'. Seaton (1996: 240)
  -

- Definitions based on **a form of experience**.
  - 'Dark tourism is concerned with encountering spaces of death or calamity that have political or historical significance, and that continue to impact upon the living'. Stone (2016: 23)
  -

- Definitions **based on heritage**.
  - Thanatourism: 'heritage staged around attractions and sites associated with death, acts of violence, scenes of disaster and crimes against humanity'. Dann and Seaton (2001: 24)

Fundamental to selecting the above examples is the fact that they omit elements of light entertainment or arguably trivial experiences, such as in the case of Dungeon-type attractions. Moreover, with the exception Dann and Seaton (2001) and Preece and Price (2005), all other definitions do not refer to visitation to sites of disaster. This reflects the argument that disaster sites are 'analytically distinct' (Rojek, 1997: 63; Wright & Sharpley, 2018) from dark tourism sites more generally. At the same time, the rationale for highlighting the above examples is that they also relate to the type of sites being interpreted in Berlin in this study, where the events in question were neither a disaster nor incidental. Hence, following the same rationale, Preece and Price's (2005: 192) definition is adapted here and, therefore, for the purpose of this thesis, it is argued that dark tourism is **travel and visitation to sites associated with death, acts of violence, tragedy, scenes of death and crimes against humanity**.

Overall, then, it can be observed that common to all definitions of dark tourism is the presence of death and its unexpected juxtaposition with tourism (as a commercial activity), with scholars defining the phenomenon differently according to locations, motivations and tourist experiences (Light, 2017). Yet, it may also be argued that an unsurmountable problem in defining dark tourism remains the fact that tourism is not intuitively connected to death and tragedy.

To conclude this section, it is important to refer to an alternative perspective on dark tourism which, in one way or another, is relevant to the the type of dark tourism sites experienced in Berlin. According to Ashworth (2008: 234), 'dark tourism…is where the tourist's experience is essentially composed of 'dark' emotions such as pain, death, horror or sadness, (many of which result from the infliction of violence) that are not usually associated with a voluntary entertainment experience' (Ashworth, 2008: 234; see also Ashworth & Isaac, 2015). In other words, and from the final point in the preceding paragraph, Ashworth rightly emphasises the point that in most tourism activities, tourists do not voluntarily experience pain or emotions of sadness (travel for purposes of medical treatments may be an exception in that the tourist may experience physical pain, although the objective does not include purposeful experiencing of death and sadness). Hence, it is argued that the consumption of dark tourism can only be fully understood by exploring visitors' emotional experiences of dark sites (Ashworth & Isaac, 2015).

2.3 A spectrum of dark tourism places
In addition to labelling sub-categories or typologies within dark tourism, both Miles (2002) and Stone (2006) suggest that a 'spectrum of darkness' can contribute to distinguishing between different forms of tourism sites. Miles (2002) suggests first that a distinction exists between sites *associated* with death and sites *of* death. For Miles, the two pillars of a site's authenticity (locations) and its interpretation are the main determinants of the distinction between 'dark' and 'darker'. However, although the authenticity of the site and and its interpretation are arguably the most important components of many sites (e.g. the museum at Auschwitz, or Ground Zero in New York), these are not necessarily preconditions for a dark tourism site. As Cohen (2011) argues, an authentic site (such as the Yad Vashem Holocaust museum in Jerusalem) does not need to be in the location where the event presented actually

happened, and nor does a site's location or authenticity lessen its capacity to fulfil the aims of education and commemoration that such a site probably has.

Notably, Stone's (2006) 'darkest-lightest' spectrum of dark tourism goes a long way to combining the features of dark sites with issues related to a site's marketing and management, politics and interpretation.

Figure 2.1: A dark tourism spectrum

Darkest	Darker	Dark	Light	Lighter	Lightest

Higher political influence
and ideology

Lower political
influence and ideology

Sites of death
and suffering

Sites associated with death
and suffering

Education orientation

Entertainment orientation

History centric
(conservation/commemorative)

Heritage centric
(commercial/romanticism)

Perceived authentic
product interpretation

Perceived inauthentic
product interpretation

Location authenticity

Non-location authenticity

Shorter timescale
from the event

Longer timescale from
the event

Supply
(non-purposefulness)

Supply
(purposefulness)

Lower tourism
infrastructure

Higher tourism
infrastructure

Source: Adapted from Stone (2006: 150)

Building on Miles' (2002) arguments, Stome (2006) identifies the following features as determining factors of the 'darkness' of dark tourism places: orientation (education, entertainment, etc.); historic and heritage (for conservation or commercial purposes); level of perceived authenticity; level of location authenticity; timescale from the event; intent of supply (made for tourism or not); and level of tourism infrastructure.

Although the model provides a basis for the understanding of dark sites, it is however important to note here that in terms of both site orientation and intent of supply, dark tourism sites are likely to have different purposes according to the perceptions and needs of their 'owners'/managers, of the tourist, of nearby residents of the region, and of the state/country. In other words, stakeholders have a significant influence on the nature of dark tourism sites, often giving rise to the phenomenon of dissonance or dissonant heritage (Smith, 2006; Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996). This issue is beyond the scope of this thesis but, overall, it is evident that understanding of the phenomenon of dark tourism has evolved and matured, though it remains contentious with some questioning the very basis of the concept (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2009). Nevertheless, it is unarguable that tourists visit sites that are 'dark', and experience them in different ways including, as this thesis explores, through the varying interpretation of tour guides. The following section, therefore, now turns to tourists themselves.

2.4 Tourism classification

Having explored definitions of dark tourism in the preceding section, the purpose of this section is to review briefly the main elements of tourism classifications and motivations, stressing in particular points relevant to the the phenomenon of dark tourism. First, it is essential to the discussion to present a summary of what John Urry (1990: 2) calls the 'minimal characteristics' of the social activity that is tourism. Specifically:

- Tourism is a leisure activity;
- Tourism involves movement of people to and from destinations;
- The journey is to a new place or away from the usual place of residence;
- The places gazed upon are not directly related to work (though this is contested by various classifications that include travel a category of tourism; see, for example, Ross, 1998). Hence, other forms of travel can be separated from 'pure' touristic activity. However, this is problematic as many tourists may have more than one

reason to travel and might engage in, for example, business activities as their prime reason and visiting tourist sites as their secondary reason (Page & Hall, 2003).

- Places/tourist sites are chosen following a process of anticipation. This anticipation and a process of fantasising is constructed from a combination of *push factors* (the tourist's own implicit and explicit personal reasons to travel, or motivations) and *pull factors* (the attractions of the destination that meet the tourist's needs and desires, or pull them towards a particular place) (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977; 1981; Gnoth, 1997; Nikjoo & Ketabi, 2014)

- Prentice's (2004) critique of this traditional modelling of tourist motivation is based on the argument that, in the present era, everything a person wants and desires is designed by a world of marketing to which all people are exposed to on a daily basis. However, although this argument has some currency, especially within the category of mass tourism, it wrongfully overlooks individual 'push' drivers, or the ability of tourists to make their own decisions based on their on recognised needs. Furthermore, it ignores the evolution of the so-called 'post-tourist' (Feifer, 1985); that is, individuals who both have access to information and the willingness to use it, and are aware of the maturity and changes in the nature of tourism (Sharpley, 2018: 115).

- The tourist gaze is aimed at landscapes (rural or urban) that are out of the ordinary, even exotic. Urry (1990) argues that these gazes – through the person's own understanding – are usually captured through photographs. It may be argued that other, more internal impacts of the gaze linger beyond the visitation and the specific method of documentation.

- The objects of the tourist gaze are produced professionally. In the context of this thesis, this is a potential point of departure between dark tourism and more 'traditional' or common forms of tourist attraction. Dark sites (as defined above) may be commodified (Sharpley, 2009a), but sites (and the events they commemorate) are unlikely to be 'developed' for the purpose of tourism. In other words, a memorial site or a museum at a former concentration camp may be developed into a commodified site fully equipped with tourism infrastructure, but it is not developed from the outset as a tourist attraction in the same way a water park or a wax museum would, and arguably, nor is its primary purpose commercial or profit-oriented.

Building on Urry's (1990) minimal characteristics of tourism, Ross (1998: 6) adapts the then World Tourism Organisation's classification of tourism activity as follows:

(i) pleasure: holiday, culture, active, sports, visits to friends and relatives, other pleasure purposes

(ii) professional: meeting, mission, business;

(iii) other tourist purposes: studies, health, and pilgrimage.

Within this popular classification, dark tourism can be viewed as a form of tourism located within the sub-category of the experience of culture, studies or pilgrimage, arguably a less 'popular' form of tourism given that the majority of travel is based on the pleasure motive, and consequently escapism (Iso-Ahola, 1982; Ross, 1998; Urry, 1990). However, it should be noted that 'ego-enhancement' (Dann, 1977), which may include learning, cultural experiences and so on, has also long been considered a primary tourist motivator. The argument here, though, is that perhaps with the exception of voyeurism (Buda & MacIntosh, 2013) and *schadenfreude* (Sharpley, 2009a; Stone & Sharpley, 2008), dark tourism is not usually considered in terms of pleasure and escapism. Putting it another way, Ross (1998) refers to escapism as not only a motivation for travel but also as a psychological benefit as an outcome of the leisure travel experience, arguing that there is an interplay of two forces: 'escaping of routine and stressful environment and seeking recreational opportunities for certain intrinsic rewards' (Ross, 1998: 12). In the context of dark tourism, it is hard to imagine people either choosing a destination for the purpose of escapism, or receiving the type of intrinsic benefits alluded to by Ross, although some form of positive emotional or psychological benefit might result from visiting a dark site (Sharpley & Friedrich, 2016).

Similarly, Williams (1998) offers a classification of tourism activities, namely:

(i) recreational tourism;

(ii) business tourism;

(iii) health tourism;

(iv) educational tourism;

(v) cultural tourism;

(vi) social tourism.

As Williams (1998) suggests, these elements help us to define the structure of tourism and the tourist experience although, broadly stated, most forms of tourism may be more simplistically divided into three categories: (i) business and professional; (ii) personal; and (iii), visiting friends and relatives. Although there is significant overlap in the activities that tourists themselves undertake, there are some clear characteristics to each of these three groups according to the principal motivators ands activities (Ross, 1998; Wall & Mathieson, 2006). For example, the prime activity for the business traveller will, by definition, be associated with their job, often (though not always) with no direct family or friend involvement at the destination. In contrast, the third group, again by definition, is motivated by the desire to visit their friends and relatives, with a distinct characteristic of such visitors often returning to the destination engaging in 'advanced' or 'niche' tourist activities (Doswell, 1997; Page & Hall, 2003).

The second group is, arguably, the most diverse in its travel motivators whilst it is important to emphasise that most tourists will have both a prime motivate for undertaking the trip and possibly several secondary motivations to engage in certain activities. As Ashworth and Hartmann (2005: 7) argue, 'the impossibility of knowing and then separating the motives of tourists during a particular activity renders most of tour definitions and selections essentially pragmatic and site- or product-based'.

However, interpreting Cohen's (1974) definition of the tourist, Ross (1998) suggests that one of the things that distinguishes the leisure tourist from other travellers is the need to seek novelty and change, as also argued by Urry (1990). With regards to dark tourism, this is a crucial point. On the one hand, visitors to dark tourism sites can be defined as tourists according economic indicators (for example, tourist expenditures on travel/transport to the site, and on accommodation and food/beverages in the region), or according to other sociological factors identified by Cohen (1974), such as the trip is voluntary is not permanent. On the other hand, with the exception of people who seek and derive pleasure from the presentation of death (Seaton & Lennon, 2004; Stone, 2006), most visitors' motivations to travel to a dark tourism site are unlikely to involve seeking pleasure and indulging in escapism, in the sense of 'regular' holiday making.

Indeed, it may be argued that dark tourism is a separate tourism category, distinct from all other categories not only because of what drives tourists to visit sites of death and the

macabre but also because of the objectives or purpose of dark sites and attractions. As Stone (2006: 146) suggests, 'the term 'dark', as applied here, alludes to a sense of apparent disturbing practices and morbid products (and experiences) within the tourism domain'. This can also be seen in Sharpley's (2005) typology of dark tourism model (see Figure 2.2 below) which identified 'shades' of dark tourism based upon both tourists' motives and the purpose, intent and, in some cases, exploitation of events.

Figure 2.2: Matrix of dark tourism demand and supply
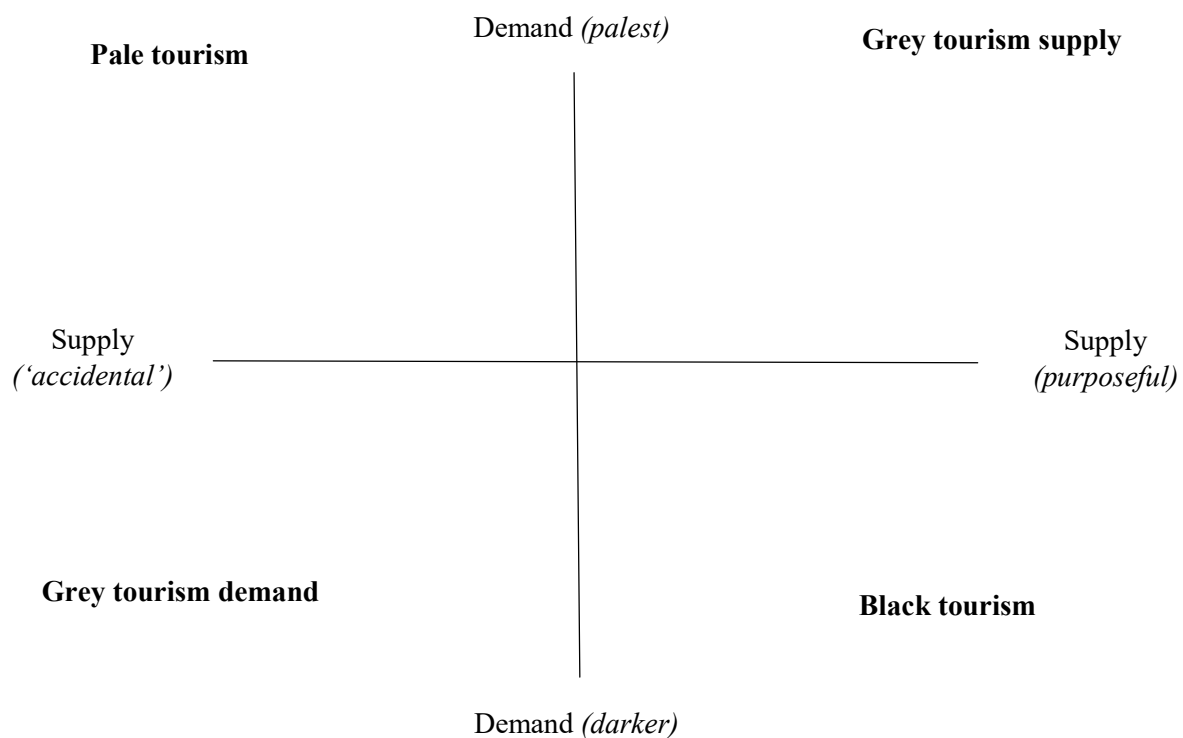
Source: Sharpley (2005)

Regarding the latter, two examples may be offered: the Memorial Bergen-Belsen states that it is 'a place of remembrance, a place where historical knowledge is collected and preserved, and not least it is a place of learning and reflection' (Knoch, 2011: 7), whilst the site of Sachsenhausen, a Nazi concentration camp in Oranienburg, north of Berlin, adapted its name in recent years to 'Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum' and, as stated by its former director Professor Günter Morsch, 'modern memorials now see themselves as

historical museums with special humanitarian and educational tasks' (cited in Morsch & Ley, 2010: 9). Nevertheless, despite the intended aims of 'humanitarian and educational tasks', the latter memorial site does not function without economic activity, which includes federal funding for its foundation, staff employment, the sale of books (but not souvenirs) at the entrance, and groups of commercial guiding companies which are charged guiding fees along with a symbolic per tourist entrance fee (amounting to substantial income given the 700,000 visitors to the site in 2016). The uniqueness of this relatively new (dark tourism) category is further explored in the next section, looking at production and consumption (or supply and demand) at dark tourism sites.

2.5 Supply and demand in dark tourism

The purpose of this section is to explore in greater depth the relationship between production and consumption in dark tourism. As a crucial element of this analysis, a distinction will be made between consumption in its traditional economic sense and consumption in the thanatological sense. In other words, consumption in dark tourism can, on the one hand, be thought of from the economic perspective as expenditure on travel, accommodation and even souvenirs at the site; on the other hand, the thanatological consumption of dark tourism can be interpreted and analysed through both a wider cultural lens (Stone & Sharpley, 2008) and the more specific physical and emotional experiences of the tourist (for example, Best, 2007; Biran, Poria & Oren, 2011; Kang et al., 2012; Kidron, 2013; Miles, 2014).

One of the main questions that scholars of dark tourism deal with is if and how the dark tourism experience differs from other tourism experiences. Williams (1998) states that the tourist is typically defined as a person who undertakes a circular trip (home-destination-home) for purposes of business, pleasure and education. He continues to explain that tourism involves the 'temporary movement of people to destinations that are removed from their normal place of residence but, in addition, the organisation and conduct of their activities and of the facilities and services that are necessary for meeting their needs' (Williams, 1998: 3). Two parameters that can be identified as relevant to the discussion here are that, as observed earlier, education can be a purpose or motive of tourist activity, and that tourism requires the commercial provision of facilities to meet the needs of the tourist, such as means of travel, accommodation and supply of food. As Urry (1990) explains, for the tourist, tourism involves planning, anticipation and subsequent expenditure on the consumption of services and products and so, in a strictly commercial sense, dark tourism shares one of its main

characteristics with most other forms of tourism. Where it differs, however, is arguably in its its consumption which for tourism more generally is, again as previously noted, based on pleasure and novelty seeking.

Many scholars have debated the difficult topic of supply and demand in tourism (see, for example, Lew et al., 2004; Sharpley, 2018; Urry, 1990; Williams, 1998). As discussed in previous sections, the 'product' in dark tourism essentially revolves around death. Therefore, although dark tourism is a tourism product in the economic sense of supply and demand, the consumption of its virtual, produced or authentic 'goods' takes a different meaning. Moreover, Stone and Sharpley (2008) point to a fundamental question in understanding the growth in the consumption of dark tourism: has there been an increase in demand for sites associated with death and suffering (perhaps reflecting a broader increase in interest or fascination in death?), or has there simply been rapid growth in the supply of sites and attractions related to death and suffering death which ever-increasing numbers of tourists are drawn? Certainly, more than two decades ago, Rojek (1993) argued that, during the 1970s and 1980s, there was an identifiable growth in the supply of tourism attractions focused on providing tourists with spectacles and sensations. Rojek connected this development with a growing celebrity and film culture (yet evidently to a far lesser extent than the contemporary pervasive celebrity culture – Marshall, 2004) and, consequently, tourist demand for 'black spots' related to celebrity deaths (for example, Gracelands, the home of Elvis Presley; see Alderman, 2002, or other sites of celebrity deaths; see Best, 2013) as well as heritage sites and parks presenting famous events (battles and wars) witnessed an increase. At the same time, it may be argued that both demand and supply of the 'dark' are interconnected to technological advancements of the time, facilitating both growth in tourist numbers and an increase in the diversity of tourism products. Rojek (1993) argues along similar lines that greater publicity surrounding 'new' deaths through, for example, more widespread, 24-hour news, also influenced the demand for new sites to visit.

More specifically, the film industry has long had an influence on dark tourism, reflecting the widely-acknowledged role of films in stimulating tourism more generally (Beeton 2016; Connell, 2012). For example, following the production of films such as *The Bridge on the River Kwai* in 1957, the town of Kanchanaburi in Thailand experienced a small stream of tourists flowing to the town (Braithwaite & Lieper, 2010) and, as the location of the 'death railway' museum, it is now a major dark tourism destination (Arrunnapaporn, 2012). Of

particular relevance to this thesis, the opening of Berlin to mass tourism development followed the German reunification of October 1990 (Ladd, 1998). At the same time, there was an increase in the production of films dealing with the Holocaust and the Cold War (for example, *The Plot to Kill Hitler*, 1990; *The Promise*, 1994; *Aimee and Jaguar*, 1999; *The Life of Others*, 2006) which undoubtedly acted as a catalyst in the growth of tourism to the city.

Tourism to Berlin also increased for several other reasons, including the low prices of tourism products, the city's growing reputation of liberalism and openness and numerous cultural events on offer. Moreover, sites related to death and suffering, such as relics of the Berlin Wall or former Nazi buildings, already existed and tourist demand to visit them also grew (Frank, 2015; Ladd, 1998). However, such attractions may be referred to as a form of 'accidental' supply of dark sites (Sharpley, 2009a); that is, not only did these sites exist where real events took place, but also they were not of course initially tourists attractions and nor were they supported by sufficient tourism infrastructure, the supply of which came after demand grew. As Lennon and Foley (2000) explain, authorities often invest inwardly in infrastructure only after a site where dark events took places becomes a tourism resource to be exploited.

Indeed, the example of post-unification Berlin is illuminating here. This era of political and social uncertainty (1991-2000) posed challenges for both the Berlin and federal authorities. Berliners lacked social cohesion and, understandably, wanted to remove the Berlin Wall as soon as possible (Klausmeier & Schmidt, 2006). Moreover, they were not able to envisage the future tourism development of their city (Ladd, 1997). Nevertheless, despite the rapid removal of almost all parts of the Wall, it did leave its mark on the fabric of the city (Klausmeier & Schmidt, 2006) and, undoubtedly, on its character as a large urban tourist destination. At first, international visitor numbers to Berlin were very small, totalling less than a million in 1992 (visitBerlin, 2014), while most visitors to Berlin were domestic – that is, residents of the former West Germany (FRG) who wanted to see East Berlin or even the west side of the city, access to which was now a lot easier. Also at that time, relatively small numbers of business travellers and VFRs tourists were also making their way between the eastern and western sides of the city, partly engaging in visiting undeveloped dark tourism sites, such as the Jewish Cemetery at Weissensee (Wauer, 2011). It was only subsequently that, with significant investment in tourism infrastructure, tourism to Berlin grew dramatically.

In contrast to 'accidental' supply, there are, however, other examples of typically lighter types of dark tourism that can be collectively described as 'purposeful' supply, one being the London Dungeon and its eight branches opened by Merlin Entertainments. As a 'lighter' shade of dark tourism (Stone, 2006) supply, the 'dungeons' – essentially a form of 'fright' tourism (Bristow & Keenan, 2018) – are purposefully developed family and entertainment-oriented attractions. To an extent, the demand for such attractions is unique within the spectrum (typology) of dark tourism sites, as they are produced without necessarily presenting authentic interpretation. Moreover, given the historical distance of the events portrayed, organisational dilemmas of interpretation or sensitive social taboos are not a consideration (Lennon & Foley, 2000). Also, Rojek's (1993) argument with regards to the industry supplying spectacle and sensation holds true in this case.

Nevertheless, when examining dark tourism sites from a supply perspective, it is evident that development may arise out of the following circumstances (see Baldwin & Sharpley, 2009a; Sharpley, 2005; Stone, 2006):

- Heritage conservation – conservation of disappearing culture or the fear of losing cultural elements;
- Seeking financial gain from culture;
- Seeking financial gain from events of atrocity or disaster;
- Using heritage for presentation of political agenda or reproducing historical narrative for the same purpose (Foley & Lennon, 1996; Rojek, 1993; Smith, 2006);
- Development of a dark tourism site or attraction as part of a regional economic development (based on an existing event of tragedy, disaster, war and so on). Such sites are often degraded because of the disaster itself (Chernobyl, Kanya Kumari in southern India after the 2005 Tsunami) and are in need of tourist money;
- Education – domestic and international, schools and varied ages of tourists.

With this in mind, significant differences can be observed between dark tourism sites, and, essentially, how 'dark' they are and, hence, the supply of dark tourism can be considered according to Stone's (2006) dark-to-light six shades spectrum. This is helpful in pointing out aspects of entertainment-education balance, location authenticity, 'product' authenticity, and

low-high tourism infrastructure. However, caution must be observed when examining sites which may be consumed by different groups of tourists in different ways, the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin being a good example. In terms of site authenticity, it has medium authenticity as no specific event related to the Holocaust happened in that particular location. Yet, whatever the purpose of the site may be – commemoration, political or education – it refers to the darkest of events. Its design, however, is such that can be consumed by tourists with personal connection to the event, and at the same time, by young visitors with no national, cultural or personal connection, who may (at least initially) enjoy the site as a mighty playground (Gross, 2006).

To return to the discussion at the start of this section, however, supply and demand are commonly used as economic terms. Therefore, it is impossible to discuss the supply and demand of dark tourism without questioning the transformation of death (as the common theme) into a tourism commodity. It is not surprising, therefore, that dark tourism scholars have discussed the commodification of death, focusing primarily on two types: commodification of the event and commodification of the site.

2.6 Commodification in dark tourism

The commodification of an event relates generally to the manner in which the emphasis is places not on the event itself but on the commemoration ceremonies and processes and the social aspect of these (Seaton, 2018). However, the commodification of events within the specific context of dark tourism is an issue concerned less with the metaphysical aspect of death, and more with how death is 'packaged up and tourisitified in contemporary society' (Stone, 2018: 194). In particular, it is concerned with how dark events, through their presentation and interpretation for touristic consumption, become an experience or product that is sometimes, though not always, accorded an exchange value – that is, fore which tourists pay. Hence, although the declared mission statement of a memorial site is typically to remember and to educate on a particular difficult chapter in history, there has been increasing academic concern with commodification of such events in dark tourism. For example, Grebenar (2017) refers to the event of 9/11 in New York now being commodified to such an extent of popularity that the site itself is the second most visited in New York. In contrast, the Holocaust – undoubtedly one of the most tragic events in human history – has attracted much academic attention from scholars dealing with the moral and ethical dimensions of so-called Holocaust Tourism (see, for example, Ashworth, 2002; Beech, 2000; Grebenar, 2017; Gross,

2006; Miles, 2000; Stone, 2006). Cole (2000) goes as far as demonstrating the extent to which the Holocaust – in some cases metaphorically, in others less so – has been packaged and sold through sites, books, films, memorial events and political agendas. In short, through commodification, the significance of a dark event becomes secondary to its packaging and consumption.

The commodification of sites refers to where death is sold as product of entertainment, complete with souvenirs, books, entry fees and so on. In addition, countries and companies investing in memorial sites, museums or attractions (for example, the aforementioned Merlin Entertainments Dungeons) may go further by marketing those places on social media and through agencies. The site, then, becomes a tourism product like any other. Roberts (2018) points to the moral ambiguity of the economic commodification of dark tourism sites, whilst White (2018) suggests a model of dark tourism as a business whereby the commodification of sites includes souvenirs on sale, brand building, the promotion of the site on social media, and designing alluring exhibitions in museums. Again, questions can be raised about the subordination of the significance of the (dark) events to the commercial imperative, and the moral issues inherent in doing so.

Crucially, the consumption of dark tourism sites has a life span which precedes the visitation and continues after the tourist returning home. As Williams (2005: 63) suggests: 'commodification encompasses not only the holiday period but also the pre- and post-tourism experiences'. Indirectly, this is enlightening with regards to the difficulty in separating push and pull factors in the context of dark tourism. Tourists may consciously or unconsciously accumulate a variety of reasons for visiting Berlin, including the opportunity to visit, for example, the Holocaust Memorial. Moreover, tourism providers (including the city itself) will promote the site as one of the main places to visit, included in the 'main attractions' or 'must see highlights' to visit when in Berlin. Hence, the commodified experience of the Memorial will be anticipated prior to arriving in Berlin.

Another way to look at supply of dark tourism is through the distinction between purposeful and 'accidental' supply (Sharpley 2005; Stone, 2006). Specifically, Park (2014: 83) argues that 'on a supply side, dark tourism development also refers to the growing expansion of death- and disaster-related attractions and experiences in the tourism environment… A range and scope of dark tourism attractions have increasingly become vast and diverse due to the

increasing exploitative and commodified nature of tourism development'. In other words, Park (2014) is suggesting that participation in dark tourism is on the increase because of the intentional / purposeful growth in the (arguably, commercially motivated) supply of such experiences. At the same time, however, and rather tragically, it can also be argued that such increased supply reflects not only the expansion of the tourism industry but also an ever-growing abundance of events of human tragedy (natural disasters, nuclear plant disasters, genocides, massacres and so on) that tourism providers are quick to develop and package as dark tourism attractions.

Although it may be true that, in the evolution of dark tourism sites, many end up commodified and perhaps even over-commercialised, more often and contrary to Park's argument, sites start with the aim of conveying a political agenda through the display of dark heritage. As Sharpley (2009b) argues, atrocities, tragedies and other dark events not only have the potential to be exploited for commercial gain through tourism, with quite evident ethical implications (Kelman & Dodds, 2009); they are also highly susceptible to political influence. In other words, the development and interpretation of dark sites may be undertaken to convey particular political messages, reflecting what Light (2007: 747) refers to more generally as the 'cultural politics of tourism development'. One such example is the Memorial Site to Concentration Camp Sachsenhausen, which started as a memorial site in 1961 (Bookheimer, 2015; Morsch & Ley, 2010). At the time, only socialist and communist victims were remembered and an obelisk with red triangles (the colour the Nazis marked on the uniforms of communist prisoners) was erected (called the Tower of Nations). Subsequently, it was only in 2013 that the site management started charging fees, mostly from external tour guides and their tourists, in so doing commodifying the experience of the site. Another (contrasting) example is the establishment of more than 200 hundred memorial sites in Rwanda following the 1994 Genocide. Moffat (2012) observes that the initial aim of establishing the memorials there in 1998 was not to serve as tourist sites; rather it was to allow Rwandans to have fixed points to focus their mourning and, indeed, they continue to be promoted by Rwandans, who do not want the world to forget the impact of the genocide, as memorials rather than commercialised tourist attractions (see also Friedrich, Stone & Rukesha, 2018).

Walter (2009) argues that the majority of visitors to dark tourism sites are casual 'dark tourists', whose visits to such sites are mere side trips, as part of 'the right thing to do' in

their itinerary. Arguably, however, this trend has by now changed with more people travelling purposefully to destinations to visit dark sites (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2017). Moreover, and more specifically to Berlin, it has been argued by some (for example, Frank, 2015; Gross, 2006; Ladd, 1998) that the city's success largely (and ironically) derives from its 20th Century dark past. In other words, the supply of dark tourism sites in Berlin is 'accidental' or 'unintentional'; events happened there first and were later developed into tourism products (Sharpley, 2005) and nowadays, the Holocaust and Wall related sites are a primary draw to the city. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that, undoubtedly, many people visit the city primarily for more hedonistic activities.

As noted, commodification of dark tourism is manifested in the forms of commodification of events – such as in the cases of 9/11 in New York or the Holocaust, or commodification of sites – such as in the case of Merlin Entertainments Dungeons. These cases reveal a common theme, whereby the events or sites become less about the element of death and more about packaging for touristic consumption. Furthermore, it is argued that even when the supply and consumption of dark tourism is accidental, commodification is commercially motivated (Park, 2014) and, as a consequence, sites are quickly developed and packed for dark tourism consumption.

2.7 Ethical considerations

Following on from the preceding section, a number of ethical issues emerge with regards to the commodification of and visitation to dark tourism sites, not least whether it is appropriate or acceptable to gain financially from the presentation of death and the macabre? (Seaton, 2009; Sharpley, 2009a). As discussed above, it is almost inevitable that the development of tourism in dark sites may lead to commercialisation; it could be argued that this is no more than a cynical attempt to profit from people's grief (Cohen, 2011; Oren & Shani, 2012).

At the same time, the commercialisation of death may reduce the authenticity of the experience of the site, limiting the opportunity for education, contemplation and remembrance (Cohen, 2011), although it could be suggested that a loss of authenticity can be justified as long as educational goals are achieved. Krakover (2005), for example, points out that in the case of Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, such is the financial backing of the museum that it does not have to actively try to attract tourists. That is to say, in terms of content and

interpretation, the museum is able to maintain the authenticity of the 'story' of the event (the Holocaust).

Another relevant question in the context of commercialisation of sites is whether it is more socially acceptable at (authentic) dark sites of death, suffering and atrocity to seek financial gain. In this regard, Brown (2013) makes an important contribution in her exploration of the potential of dark tourism shops to add meaning to the event being presented. Analysing the merchandise displayed in the shops of memorial sites, she concludes that 'The book shop presents itself as a worthy place of learning, which reconfirms the memorialising message and sober atmosphere of the museum, but also meets the needs of the visitors by providing the educational material they expect' (Brown, 2013: 275). The question then arises as to whether such merchandising is ethically appropriate at all types of dark sites, or more meaningful / appropriate only at darker sites.

Similarly, off-site parameters should also be considered. In other words, is there an invisible moral border beyond which it is no longer reasonable to seek to profit from a dark site and the events it portrays? It may be appropriate to sell postcards and other merchandise at the entrance to former sites of concentration/extermination camps, but is it unethical to do so in the nearby towns? For example, in Krakow, tour organisers tout for tourists to join an Auschwitz tour, whilst Figure 2.3 presents a screen shot of the blending of dark tourism into regular online tourism practices. Here, GetYourGuide – a global online tour guiding platform – offers Black Friday discounts on tours to Auschwitz (with the unfortunate use of 'black' Friday).

More generally, Lennon and Weber (2017) consider the dilemma of small towns located around or near former concentration camps, focusing in particular on the case of the town of Dachau. They emphasise the problem faced by the town's authorities. On the one hand, they want to transform the image of the town from simply a site of Nazi horror to a place of education and art – that is, to change the current reality in which the town's name is synonymous with one of the most infamous concentration camps. On the other hand, while there are many cultural attractions to be seen in the town centre, re-branding the town as a

Figure 2.3. GetYourGuide Black Friday offer
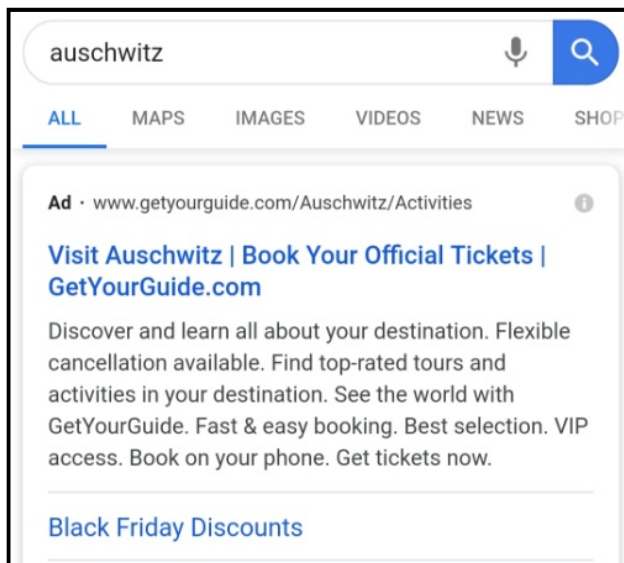
tourist destination is a risk for the tourism authorities, in as much as they might be accused of revisionism. Moreover, it can be argued that for majority of visitors, there exists a cognitive dichotomy; they may wish to separate their perception of tourism, specifically using the tourism infrastructure in Munich (a 20-minute suburban train ride from the memorial site) from their experience of visiting a place of immense tragedy and human horror (Biran & Poria, 2012; Hartmann, 2014).

Another specific consideration is whether entrance fees to sites of dark tourism are ethically acceptable. Some may argue that such fees are vital to support maintenance or further research. However, as Morten et al. (2018: 241) observe in the case of Chernobyl, 'physical barriers are enforced and made all the more meaningful by the social ritual of tourists having to apply for formal access to the site, paying access fees and signing personal medical disclaimers to alleviate the State of any potential wrongdoing'. In other words, in particular cases of dark tourism, entrance fees play a role in enhancing the sense of taking part in a tourism activity as opposed to a more meaningful activity, whilst also creating a spatial separation between the 'outside' world and the tourism space. In addition, it could be questioned whether entrance fees are more ethically acceptable at some types of dark sites than others. For instance, with reference to Stone's (2006) spectrum model, it may be that it is more appropriate to charge fees at 'lighter' dark sites which are defined by a more touristic ands commercial approach. Equally, requiring victims or relations of those who suffered in the event presented to pay an entrance fee is also ethically and morally questionable.

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A final yet significant issue related to the ethics of dark tourism is that of dark edutainment (Sharpley & Stone, 2009). Foley and Lennon point out that although many sites and museums put forward education as their primary mission statement, they nevertheless veer towards spectacle forms of entertainment. The result, they claim, is a loss in educational quality in the trade-off of being more tourism oriented (1996). Roberts (2018) goes as far as pointing out to the institutional taboo involved with auto-identification of sites as dark tourism sites; the reluctance, she explains, is derived from the concern that the site/museum would seem too entertainment-oriented.

Other authors express the ethical concern that the development of mass tourism around sites of historical significance will 'cheapen' the severity and importance of the event (Frank, 2015; Lowenthal, 1985; Hildebrandt, 2006). Addressing this proposed ethical contradiction between education and entertainment in dark tourism is Tony Walter, who suggested a separation of aims according to the type of dark tourism. Thus, although rather simplified, Walter suggests that 'shrines are where care, guidance and prayer take place; memorials are where remembrance takes place; museums and heritage sites are where edutainment takes place' (Walter, 2009: 50). Crucially, Walter himself acknowledges that in practice, such a distinction is not very likely.

Nevertheless, there are cases where attempts have been made to artificially create a distinction between remembrance and edutainment. Frank (2015) tells of how the central theme of the 1990s debate on how to commemorate the Berlin Wall was the challenge of establishing memorials that were either historical in nature or, alternatively, performative and entertaining. To a large extent, Frank argues, the sites of Bernauer Strasse and Checkpoint Charlie were designated respectively for remembrance and teaching, and for entertainment with small elements of education. Sharpley and Stone (2009) argue that such cases may pose an ethical problem if the development of dark tourism edutainment results in a site looking nothing like the event it purports to represent.

The problematic nature of edutainment of dark tourism focuses on the reduction of quality of education, the loss of the seriousness of the event presented, and the potential of being untruthful about the location and the event shown. The latter aspect of authenticity will be discussed in the next section.

2.8 Authenticity and dark tourism

The concept of authenticity in tourism has long been the focus of academic attention. Indeed, during the latter part of the nineteenth century, commentators were concerned with the extent to which emerging mass tourism, facilitated by the development of mass transport systems (specifically, rail travel) was diluting the perceived authenticity of the travel experience (Sharpley, 2018: 221) whilst, in more recent times, the work of Boorstin (1964) , Cohen (1988) and MacCannell (1989) established the foundation for continuing research into the topic. Essentially, this is concerned with the extent to which tourists are able to enjoy or perceive themselves to be having an authentic experience dependent on both the context and their own perceptions and expectations. MacCannell (1989), for example, famously argues that authenticity in tourist settings is staged and, as a consequence tourists are denied authentic experiences, whereas Wang (1999) introduced the notion of existential authenticity, whereby authenticity is an individually experienced 'state of being' unique to the individual tourist.

A full consideration of authenticity in tourism is beyond the scope of this thesis (see, for example, Sharpley, 2018: 221-248). However, it is an issue that has been increasingly considered within dark tourism studies over the last two decades (Light, 2017), with discussions including authenticity related to commodification (as the principal challenge to authenticity, an emphasis on entertainment, the authenticity of the site and so on (Light, 2017). For the purpose of this section, however, authenticity in dark tourism will be considered under four specific headings, some of which have been alluded to in preceding sections, namely:

    (i) time scale from the event presented (temporal);
    (ii) site authenticity (physical);
    (iii) authenticity of the presentation of the death related event (commercial), historical accuracy and interpretational (ideological/political);
    (iv) site popularity (supply and demand).

2.8.1 Timescale

Generally speaking, the more time that has passed since the (dark) event, the less authentic is its presentation. This hypothesis is explained by Lowenthal (1985) who argued that there are two influences. First, in the process of developing a nostalgic view of the past, the tendency exists to romanticise wars and even atrocities when sufficient time has passed to allow people to create emotional dissonance or more precisely, emotional detachment. And second, from a more practical perspective, the more temporally distant the event, generally the less is the availability of physical and historical evidence, let alone eye-witness testimony (Hansell, 2009). Lowenthal critiques this phenomenon in a way which to some extent is contradictory, arguing that 'those who remake the past as it ought to have been, as distinct from what it presumably was, are more keenly aware of tempering with its residues. They deliberately improve on history, memory and relics to give the past's true nature better or fuller expression than it could attain in its own time' (Lowenthal, 1985: 328). Although he is correct to argue that those responsible for (re)writing history or managing dark tourism sites alter the past, it may, however, be difficult to ascertain whether this is always done deliberately to make the past more suitable for their needs or whether they do so because they interpret the past through the contemporary 'lens' of the era in which they live, as Lowenthal himself suggests in his work (e.g. Lowenthal, 1985: 216). Similarly, Sharpley (2018) also suggests that the presentation of facts and events may over time assimilate into culture and effectively become authentic. Either way, there is a correlation between the time passing and diminishing authenticity, posing a challenge and dilemma for the presentation and interpretation of a dark past.

2.8.2 Site authenticity

Location authenticity, as Light (2017) points out, is a much-debated theme within the dark tourism scholarship. On the one hand, according to Stone's (2006) popular spectrum of dark tourism, the authenticity of the physical location (is it the site where the event occurred or not?) is influential in determining not only the 'shade' of darkness – a site of death /suffering is considered to be 'darker' than one just associated with the event – but also the authenticity of the (re)presentation of the event for tourist consumption. On the other hand, Cohen (2011) highlights the role of education in dark tourism takes, suggesting that geographical proximity to the event is not a prerequisite for authentic presentation and interpretation. In his study of the Yad Vashem Holocaust museum in Jerusalem, he proposes the term 'in populo' to describe 'sites which embody and emphasize the story of the people to whom the tragedy

befell. These may be located at population and/or spiritual centers of the victimized people, irrespective of geographical distance from the events commemorated' (Cohen, 2011: 194). Interestingly, then, Cohen is proposing a different kind of authenticity, one which allows dark tourism sites to be authentic outside the geographic location where the atrocity took place, assuming it is understood that the primary purpose of the site is educational. Hence, visitors to Yad Vashem may consider the site to be authentic in the sense that it is qualified as a place of education; an indication of the information presented, not the location.

In contrast, Hohenhaus (2013) argues that the Gisozi Kigali Genocide Memorial in Rwanda has a relatively mid- to low authenticity rating as it comprises a memorial garden, a modern museum and theatre-like large room with pictures of victims and videos of live testimonies. Certainly, as Beech (2009) explains, the two main priorities of the numerous genocide memorial sites in Rwanda are to educate and to assist in Rwandan reconciliation and, as research demonstrates, there is evidence of success in both objectives (Friedrich, Stone & Rukesha, 2018; Sharpley & Friedrich, 2016) whilst, supporting Cohen's (2011) arguments, is has also been found that the authenticity of the experience is heightened by tours offered by survivors of the genocide (Sharpley, 2014). Hohenhaus (2013) goes on to argue that even with location authenticity, a site could lose its authentic nature owing to design or other presentation or interpretation factors; however, given the fact almost all memorials in Rwanda are on the site of atrocities (the Kigali Memorial is on the site of a mass grave containing the remains of 250,000 victims (Sharpley & Friedrich, 2016)) and, with reference to the preceding sub-section, the short timeframe (the Genocide occurred in 1994), most would argue that the authenticity of the sites is enhanced by their location.

2.8.3 Presentational authenticity

In addition to both temporal and locational issues, the authenticity of the site or event may be determined by the process of tourism commercialisation. Indeed, commercialisation or commodification is widely considered to diminish the authenticity of tourist experiences in general (Cohen, 1988) whilst, as Lennon and Foley (1996) point out, the commercialisation of death and tragedy and their presentation as a postmodern spectacle risks the inauthentic misrepresentation of historical events. In addition, the commodification and commercialisation of sites may lead to the cheapening and trivialisation of the event or be manifested in what Sharpley and Stone (2009) refer to as 'kitchification'. Supporting this argument are Heuermann and Chhabra (2014), who argue that the risk with commodification

of death is that the location and objects on display may be authentic but are packaged in stylised way for the tourists; thus, the object itself may no longer be genuine.

In the extreme, perhaps, the presentation of events may be inauthentic to the extent that it becomes offensive to victims of the event or their decedents. Certainly, Sharpley (2009b) suggests that the rights of those whose death is commodified should be taken into account whilst others observe that, through commodification, a dark event might be misrepresented even if the location itself is authentic (Ashworth & Hartmann, 2005; Beech, 2009). Frank (2015), for example, argues that the Disney-like situation at Checkpoint Charlie in Berlin has caused social conflict; indeed, the case of Checkpoint Charlie stands out as a negative example of dark tourism site development. To some extent the focal point of the Cold War, Checkpoint Charlie was a border crossing for diplomatic personnel mainly from the US and the Soviet Union. Nowadays, however, few authentic elements remain, whilst Frank (2015) points out that with the exception of one 19th Century neo-classical building, the entire block represents the 'disnyfication of history', where one could find actors dressed like soldiers charging 3 Euros for a picture, pickpockets roaming the popular Einstein and Starbucks cafes, and souvenirs for sale that have been manufactured in East Asia. The problematic nature of 'soldiers', and the countless complaints from tourists resulted in action. In the summer of 2019, during the writing of this thesis, the actors simply vanished, and several media articles highlighted the local government's decision to remove this shameful staging of history (Smee, 2019). In addition, Klausmeier and Schmidt (2006) note that the earlier state of the site had encouraged the city of Berlin to promote further development of the more authentic Berlin Wall Memorial.

The authenticity of dark tourism sites may also be considered in terms of historical accuracy, with its incidental or deliberate political implications. The presentation and representation of events may be altered over time according to political ideologies, cultural values and identities (Sharpley, 2009b). As Feldman (2002, 2008) and others (Bookheimer, 2015; Gross, 2006) have argued, the ethical violation lies within what is presented (often by the state) as authentic and real to the public in order to develop or maintain a national ethos and narrative.

Furthermore, there may also be technical and spatial challenges to presenting objects, not least to cater for the needs of the visiting public within the availability of research resources (Heuermann & Chahhabra, 2014; Lennon & Foley, 1999). That is to say, in order to educate

tourists and present tragic historical events, sites have to develop forms of presentation and interpretation that do necessarily reflect the event in an authentic and accurate way. Schwenkel (2006: 8) accurately sums it up, stating that 'foreigners who came to Vietnam searching for physical traces and remnants of the war were often surprised by the 'lack' of visual reminders, and they frequently expressed disappointment that there was 'not much to see'. Thus, although at times unintentional or even unavoidable, sites resort to violations of authenticity in order to fulfil seemingly positive aims of education and remembrance.

2.8.4 Site popularity

The subject of supply and demand is mentioned earlier in the context of both economic and thanatological dark tourism consumption. In addition, the ever-increasing popular demand to visit dark tourism sites may weaken – albeit unintentionally – the authenticity it may wish to present.

For some, popularity and the crowds that come with it are equitable to a beach in Thailand or Disneyland, conjuring negative emotions. Similar to Frank's Disneyland of Checkpoint Charlie argument (2015), a 2006 Jerusalem Post article (TheJerusalemPost, 2006) brought claims that Auschwitz has reached such a level of popularity that new development was underatken in order to make it seem less scary and more friendly to the tourists; a change which would be good for an amusement park. This challenge of managing popularity while losing authenticity is well illustrated with Walter's (2009) explanation of memory in sites of genocide. For the descendants of Holocaust survivors this is a very personal memory, whereas for many others this is just a site of history.

For Aller (2013), this does not always have to be the case. On the one hand, suggests Aller, the popularity of Anne Frank's museum is so great that it has become a major part of the attractiveness of Amsterdam. However, Aller argues that, o the other hand, this popularity has not damaged the authenticity of the site itself. Nevertheless, Aller goes on to argue that both Anne Frank's museum and the museum at Auschwitz-Birkenau have reached such a level of universal popularity that they have moved beyond their roles as memorials to becoming symbols of the Holocaust. The claims that popularity does not mean loss of authenticity remains controversial with counter claims that with rising popularity dark sites

inevitably will transform from memorials to tourist attraction (Light, 2017). Although it may be argued that increased popularity may cost a memorial site its aim of being a place of solemn contemplation, it can be argued that there is a scholarly gap in proving that there is sufficient loss of authenticity for sites to lose their ability to function as memorials and places of education. This is supported by Cohen (1988), who argued that a loss of authenticity does not necessarily mean the destruction of meaning of an already existing cultural product or site; rather, it may change and more likely add new meanings to the old ones.

2.9 Interpretation of dark tourism

With the exception of lightest dark tourism attractions or sites, the common perception is that dark tourism sites have education – in a broader sense – as their primary goal (see, for example, the discussion of the Torgau prison sites in Linke, 2009, and of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in Morsch & Ley, 2010). Furthermore, visitors to such sites are exposed to visual information through texts, pictures, objects or monuments, and to aural information, or sounds, through audio or live guiding. In addition, particularly at darker sites, experiencing such sites may be emotionally difficult and at the same time politically charged through ideological and selective presentation of heritage (Lennon & Foley, 2000; Sharpley, 2009b). Hence, through the use of text, audio guides or guided tours, interpretation becomes an essential tool facilitating understanding amongst visitor of dark tourism sites and the events they portray or represent (Ashworth & Hartmann, 2005; Light, 2017).

Freeman Tilden's seminal work on nature interpretation (1957) paved the scholarly road to the examination of the importance of interpretation in heritage tourism. Tilden (1957: 8) defined interpretation as 'an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by first-hand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate information', arguing that one of the main elements of interpretation is provocation. In other words, by presenting information in a certain way, one can provoke visitors to think, consider new information, and even view this new information from a completely new angle. Another element that Tilden (1957) emphasises is manipulation. That is to say, information, once interpreted, may convey different meanings depending on how it was interpreted.

An important precondition of interpretation is that it should be different from the simple display of information. Hence, Kang and Lee (2013: 242) cite Moscardo and Ballantine's definition of interpretation is 'a set of information-focused communication activities, designed to facilitate a rewarding visitor experience'. In a similar vein, Grater (1976: 5) suggests that 'interpretation – by contrast with information – conveys the meaning of something, through exposition or explanation. Whereas, information is the knowledge derived from study, experience, or instruction'.

Interpretation, then, should accomplish the following (Tilden, 1957):

- understanding
- stimulation
- appreciation

By way of illustration, a visitor can understand what they hear, but without interpretation this information may from their point of view be sterile; a mere display of facts. Understanding, or partial understanding, may be one part of the experience, albeit not a complete one. For interpretation to be successful, the other elements must also be outcomes although it can be argued that there is no need for a particular order. In other words, appreciation may precede understanding, and so on.

Interpretation, both in general and in the context of tour guiding, is addressed in more detail in Chapter 3. However, for the purposes of this chapter, it is important to note that, at dark sites, not only is interpretation considered to be a means of mediating between the tourist and the site (Sharpley & Stone, 2009) but also, as Kang and Lee (2013) argue, interpretation is an essential feature of dark tourism sites; without it, the site may be meaningless. Dumbraveanu et al. (2016: 71) go into more detail, explaining that 'the ultimate goal of interpretation at the site is not only to inform about the common past, but also to bring before the public information which years ago was not accessible, precisely in order to learn from past mistakes and avoid the possibility that similar events may occur in the future'.

Following this logic, Ashworth and Hartmann (2005) argue that interpretation at the darkest sites where atrocities took place can and should be presented differently to different groups:

victims (victim strategies catering for needs of grief and commemoration), perpetrators (strategies focused on denial, revisionism or forgiveness), and spectators (strategies focused on that visitor who is identified with neither the victim nor perpetrator group). They go on to suggest that the solution lies in market separation (Ashworth & Hartmann, 2005: 11). Sharpley (2009b), on the other hand, acknowledges the management challenge in creating total separation, and that certain sites should seek to cater for all visitors. Nevertheless, choosing to use both victim and perpetrator strategies may prove to be detrimental to a site or a museum as it may make it difficult for the visitor to make sense of place or event (Henderson, 2000). Whilst it is also important to note that whereas sites and museums can control their interpretation strategies via static displays of information, guides conducting tours in these sites have a more dynamic control on their interpretation strategies (Quinn & Ryan, 2016).

Another significant challenge for site interpretation is finding the balance between the site's potential goal as a place of commemoration and education. Uzzell (1989) proposed the idea of hot interpretation, an approach to interpretation in sites offering the heritage of war and where, through the usage of interpretation, high emotional responses can be provoked. In the case of Yad Vashem Holocaust museum in Jerusalem, discussed previously, Cohen (2011) describes it as an example of hot interpretation geared specifically to largest target market and its education and commemoration objectives. Similarly, Bigley et al. (2010) refer to hot interpretation at the DMZ in Korea, explaining that the majority of visitors are emotionally motivated to visit a site that shows tangible evidence of war.

Arguably, however, the most challenging element of dark tourism interpretation is ensuring its appropriate reception by the visitor. Light (2017), for example, argues that there can a wide gap between how the site or museum intended to interpret the event and how it was understood. This may be influenced by an assortment of difficult to measure parameters, such as age, socio-economic status, level of education, nationality, relation to the event, work related stress, bad mood, conflict dynamics with other people on the tour, and even jet-leg fatigue on the day of the visit.

Dumbraveanu et al. (2016) argue that places with high emotional value require little interpretation and the mere presentation of facts is sufficient. In other words, it can be argued that in the case of tourism to sites of genocide, such as the museum at Auschwitz or the

Genocide Memorial in Kigali, Rwanda, such is the scale and power of the atrocity and human suffering that no additional interpretation by a guide is required. However, a contrasting perspective is offered by Feldman (2008) who argues that visitors to such sites come with their own preconceived notion of events which is to a great extent culturally and socially 'produced'. Hence, they expect the site to enhance their already existing world views whereas interpretation may provide a more balanced understanding.

Language tenses are also a very useful tool of dark tourism interpretation, whether used statically in museums or memorial sites, or during spoken interpretation by tour guides. Frew (2013) explains that the use of the present tense in interpretation gives the event a sense of immediacy. Thus, for the dark tourism visitor (whether a viewer in a museum or the audience on a tour) the event becomes more realistic and, in a way, very palpable. This is perhaps more important to the interpreter in cases where the visitor may feel remote from the event by either time that has passed or due to the visitor having no personal connection to the event. There is, however, a risk that the visitor will confuse the chronology of events and will generally find the whole narrative confusing.

Macdonald (2006) refers to the interpretation function of 'façade pealing', where a building, a monument or a picture were designed to show something as a façade to hide a less attractive reality. The 'pealing' is done through interpretation, revealing the real intention of the item or object, and the real story behind it. One prime example in sites related to the Nazi regime is the Nazis' well-known propaganda strategy, in which they often staged pictures showing prisoners in a good condition, almost proud in their work. Interpretation, then, can reveal that the prisoners in such pictures were carefully selected and were, in fact, threatened to cooperate for the picture.

Figures 2.4 and 2.5 below are are pictures taken by the SS for the purpose of their propaganda campaign. The pictures are presented at exhibitions of the Memorial and Museum Sachsenhausen. Without interpretation (static or vocal), the visitor might not understand the origin and purpose of the pictures.

Figure 2.4: SS propaganda photo   **Figure 2.5**: SS propaganda photo

Source: de Visser (2013)

Certainly, there are different ways in which interpretation may influence the visitor at a dark tourism site. Uzzell (1998) identifies five degrees to which interpretation influences visitors, and its strength: (i) time (from the event); (ii) distance (physical and psychological); (iii) experiencing places (site design, group dynamics, weather conditions, etc.); (iv) degree of abstraction (the Holocaust Memorial is very abstract, intended to leave room for visitor personal interpretation, as compared to the Block of the Women – a memorial in Berlin – where the monument depicts women demonstrating); and (v) site management. Uzzell also asks if interpreters have a responsibility for visitors' being moved or even having a traumatic response; what if interpretation is only used for shock value? Hence, he is concerned that overly dramatic interpretation 'might be used for propaganda purposes – to introduce ideas, reinforce stereotypes, incite and encourage fear' (Uzzell, 1998: 512), a concern that is of particular relevance to the interpretation of dark sites.

2.10 Political considerations

Within dark tourism, a political agenda can overlap, reinforce or collide with the events presented at a dark tourism site (Light, 2017). Often, this is manifested in forms of interpretation which, arguably, are designed to serve the victor (Merbach, 2009) or to construct and maintain a national identity (Palmer, 1999). Recent research in Japan, for example, reveals that the interpretation at the country's principal museum and memorial dedicated to Pacific War 'kamikaze' pilots presents them erroneously within a blatantly nationalistic narrative as heroes who willingly sacrificed their lives (Sharpley & Kato, 2020). Alternatively, political influence may be manifested in controversial attempts at forgiveness and unification, such as in the case of Rwanda (Beech, 2009; Friedrich, Stone & Rukesha,

2018; Hohenhaus, 2013) and, with some differences, also in Berlin (Frank, 2015; Ladd, 1997). In other cases, political leadership may use dark tourism sites to substantiate a national image through the eyes of foreign visitors (Weiler & Black, 2015). One contemporary example of the connection between dark tourism sites and political leadership is that of Poland and the case of the Polish government's amendment of the law regarding the interpretation of the history of the Second World War. A bill that was passed by the Polish government in 2018 made it illegal to refer utter the phrase 'Polish Concentration Camps' (Tarnopolsky, 2018). Conflicts over the interpretation of tourism sites presenting the events of the Holocaust had been reported in 2016 (Lewis, 2016), when the relatively new government stated that it would ban museums and tour guides from referring to Auschwitz (and other extermination camps) as 'Polish Death Camps'; though located in Poland they were of course established and run by Nazi Germany. In itself, this could be described as insistence on historical accuracy. However, the unusual intervention of the government in historical and tourist sites resulted in an international outcry, as it was suspected that the decision was evidence of a more extreme agenda that would reduce culpability of war crimes committed by Polish people during the Holocaust (Lewis, 2016; Tarnopolsky, 2018).

Arguably, forgetting is central to the politically influenced design and redesign of collective memory (Light, 2017; Lowenthal, 1993); it also makes it easier to allow outside deniability of an event. For example, so-called Holocaust revisionists depend to an extent on the temporal distancing of global society as a means of planting the seeds of doubt (Lipstadt, 1993). Their motivation may be purely anti-Semitic, or it might hide an underlying political agenda that challenges the contemporary Israeli or German governments. Either way, Axel Drecoll, the new director of the Memorial site Sachsenhausen, was cited in an article by Emily Schultheis in early 2019, stating that although directors of dark tourism sites are not politicians, they do however have a duty to continue to present a critical view of the past in order to combat those who wish to diminish the importance of the Nazi era, encourage forgetfulness and national pride (Schultheis, 2019). Drecoll continue to shed a light on politicians of the German extreme-right who deliberately 'take on historical events', a reason enough for him to continue to tell the story through tourism. Such a case of combating outside deniability and political revisionism took place in September 2018. According to Drecoll, a group of 'rhetorically trained' extremists continuously interrupted the guide on tour, equating SS crimes with alleged Allies crimes. The group was made of party activists from the

constituency of AfD leader Alice Weidel, who Drecoll felt displayed typical revisionist behaviour to serve their political aim of historical forgetfulness (Winkler, 2019).

As a further example of the politicisation of dark tourism related to the Holocaust, anthropologist Jackie Feldman's research has focused on the specific case of Israeli youth groups travelling to Poland. He argues that such group travel serves several purposes in addition to facilitating young Israelis to learn about the Holocaust and to remember its victims. Soen and Davidovitch (2011) also conclude that the so-called 'journeys' to Poland are a poor substitute for teaching; they quote professor Nitza Nachmias (Director of the Future Leadership Institute), who questions whether Yad Vashem museum in Jerusalem might do a better job at teaching Israelis about the Holocaust and if indeed dark Israeli tourism to Poland is a learning experience, whether that means that the hundreds of thousands who do not take the trip know less about the Holocaust. This almost sarcastic questioning of the phenomenon is a strong critique of not only the economic commodification of the Holocaust by the tourism industry (charter flights, hotels and tour operators), but also of the political agenda behind the 'journeys'. Indeed, although Feldman's research was based upon a relatively small sample of groups, it does provide valid insight into part of the political agenda behind the 'journeys'. According to Feldman (2002, 2008), the primary motivation behind sending pre-military service youths on trips to Poland is to maintain a sense of victimhood, to emphasise the belief that Jews have but one safe haven (Israel) and that that haven must be protected – in short, to provide a justification for serving in the Israeli army (despite the fact that most tours are paid by the parents and the schools, not by the Israeli government). This is also demonstrated clearly by the documentary film makers Udi Nir and Sagi Bornstein in their 2016 film *Uploading Holocaust*. In the film, created from YouTube clips uploaded primarily by students on the trips, these messages are clearly conveyed in some groups. Hence, although it can be argued that the film is not representative of all groups and 'journeys', it provides evidence, as Feldman (2002) suggests, that, if not always consciously, the 'journeys' are used by the Ministry of Education to develop a world view amongst Israeli society.

More generally, dark tourism sites have an important political role in the politics of remembrance and national identity (Light, 2017). As new governments are formed and power shifts occur, the narrative presented at dark tourism sites, such as museums and memorial sites, may be developed or altered to serve the agenda of a new government. Indeed,

numerous examples exists, such as at the Kigali Genocide Memorial in Rwanda where the role of the Rwandan Patriotic Front and its leader Paul Kagame, the current President of Rwanda, in ending the genocide and bringing peace to the country is firmly emphasised (Friedrich, 2016), or the selective interpretation of Lithuania's wartime heritage (Wight, 2016; Wight & Lennon, 2007). Constructing a collective memory or narrative may contribute to creating or giving substance to the social community of a nation (especially amongst young nation-states). As Light (2017: 287) argues: 'nation-states seek to construct and promote a national past to promote an allegiance to the political entity of the state'. However, with reference to the concept of dissonant heritage discussed earlier, the heritage of certain victim groups might be accorded preference over that of others. One such controversy emerged in 2016 when the new Polish government threatened the academic operations of a new war museum in Gdansk, saying that it will merge the new museum with another one which will be built nearby in order to present an 'alternative narrative'. The new yet to be built museum will – according to the Ministry of Culture – place greater emphasis on the suffering of the Polish people during the Second World War (Nelson, 2017).

Dark tourism sites can also be viewed by national or regional governments from two contradictory perspectives. In some cases, tourism is merely tolerated (Light, 2017) as the site serves to encourage the building of national identity, to present a social and cultural narrative or to act as collective tool for reconciliation and even redemption (Young, 2015). In other cases, however, economic pressure may influence government policy towards allowing development of tourism infrastructure, not only for domestic, but also for the international tourists. One such example is the development of tourism infrastructure in and around Oswiecim (where Auschwitz is located) and its regional capital, Krakow. In the early stages of development of the Israeli youth group travel to the camps in Poland, discussed above, the Polish government treated the new phenomenon with great suspicion. Nearly three decades later, however, dark tourism in the region is a vast industry providing jobs in the transport, hospitality, catering and other indirect supporting sectors – Auschwitz itself attracted 2.1 million visitors in 2018 (DW News, 2019). Thus, the political system accepted and indeed encouraged the growth of tourism, though it can be argued that so significant are the political and economic gains for the Polish government that ethical boundaries have been crossed with little consideration of the impacts (in Krakow, tour operators shout 'Auschwitz! Auschwitz!' in the streets of the old town to promote day tours to a 'must-see' site). Moreover, the acceptance and support of the development of tourism and dark tourism infrastructure in the

region has a great deal to do with the maintenance of the mutually beneficial bi-lateral relations (including military collaboration) between the Polish and Israeli governments.

In contrast, reconciliation and healing are also among the political goals of developing memorials as dark tourism sites (Young, 2015). The most famous examples of this are the memorial sites of Rwanda (Friedrich, 2016; Sharpley, 2015), sites in Ireland where conflict-related events took place (Quinn & Ryan, 2016), and the memorial sites of Berlin (Gross, 2016; Frank, 2015; Ladd, 1997, Young, 2015). Indeed, Young (2015) argues that tourists themselves play a role in moulding remembrance, pointing to the need to understand and explore the motivations of tourists for visiting dark sites. This is the focus of the following section.

2.11 Tourists at dark sites: Motivations and expected outcomes

Perhaps the most intriguing topic in dark tourism research is the question: why do people visit places where death has occurred? In their early study, Foley and Lennon (1997: 155) contended that tourists who visit sites of death and suffering generally do so for reasons of 'remembrance, education or entertainment' whilst others, such as Schaller (2007), adopt an equally general though pejorative perspective, suggesting that 'dark' tourists are driven by voyeuristic fascination. Over more than two decades of academic study in dark tourism, the issue of motivation has been increasingly addressed (for example, Raine, 2013), with commentators seeking to understand what it is that makes people want to visit such places, and what do they expect from their visit. Their research reveals evidence of a more complex set of motivations but, at the same time, as with tourist motivation more generally, generalisations are difficult to ascertain. Thus, this section first addresses the general motivations for engaging in most (other) types of tourism before going on to consider the primary and secondary motivations for visiting dark tourism sites, Lastly, explores the individual and social expectations of these visitors.

2.11.1 Motivations for travel, tourism and going on a holiday

Prentice (2004) interprets Pearce's (1993) three theoretical approaches to the psychology of tourist motivation. The first is known as the psychocentric-allocentric model (see also Plog, 1977), where tourists are divided into either psychocentric, that is, risk-averse tourists seeking looking for a relaxed holiday in a familiar environment, or allocentric, risk-taking

tourists seeking adventure and variety. The second model is derived from Maslow's 1950s seminal model of Hierarchy of Needs. The elements of Maslow's model applicable to tourist motivations are people's need for relaxation (bodily needs), the need for self-esteem, and relationship needs (Maslow, 1954; Prentice, 2004); this model also formed the basis of Pearce and Caltabianao's (1983) concept of a travel career, whereby tourists' motivations evolve and become more complex as they become more experienced and have satisfied 'basic' tourism needs.

Prentice (2004) argues, however, that the third, intrinsic motivation model does a better job in explaining the complex nature of tourist motivations. Ross (1998: 18) elucidates the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: 'If a person is seen doing an activity for some goal independent of the activity (e.g. higher pay, promotion, status) that person is said to be extrinsically motivated… Intrinsic motivation on the other hand, refers to the pleasure or value associated with the activity itself'. Thus, for example, intrinsic motivation may include escape from the routine of everyday life, adventure, rest and relaxation, social interaction, and health and fitness, whereas extrinsic motivations include social interaction for career purposes (networking), prestige ('last week I was in the Seychelles Islands'), or even satisfying the needs/wants of loved ones who prefer a certain destination or activity. To further clarify intrinsic motivations, Ross (1998) maintains that they can be broken into two categories:

(i) The intrinsic valence, associated with task behaviour ('I like it!').
(ii) Intrinsic valence, associated with task accomplishment ('it makes me feel good getting the task done well').

More broadly, Urry (1990: 8; see also MacCannell, 1989) compares the tourist to a contemporary pilgrim, seeking authenticity in the 'other' in a different place or a different time. He goes on to explain that 'tourism necessarily involves daydreaming and anticipation of new or different experiences from those normally experienced in everyday life' (Urry, 1990: 13). Similarly, in his mass tourism paradigm, Prentice (2004) refers to the anticipation of different experiences and the tourist seeking the extraordinary, but also – perhaps with a pinch of cynicism – refers to the commodification of the gaze onto the 'other'. Such an example is brought by Knapp and Wiegand (2014: 162) who, through the example of European narration of tourist experience, argue that 'the pattern conceptualises Africa from

within a civilisational discourse, regarding 'Africa' as pure wilderness set against 'European' civilisation. Africa […] becomes an adjective describing Europe's 'Other''. In other words, in itself Africa's 'otherness' to Europe is the cause for anticipation and for stepping outside one's everyday life (Knapp & Wiegand, 2014).

The latter post-modern view is supported in David Lowenthal's (1985) seminal work *The Past is a Foreign Country*. Lowenthal's critique of the human need to romanticise the past coincides with Prentice's (2004) suggestion that one of the main tourist motivations is the need to achieve spirituality through a romantic gaze at the destination.

In contrast, Gnoth (1997) claims that motivations are site specific; that is to say, tourists may have different motivations to visit different sites within the same destination. Gnoth also considers the challenge in understanding and predicting tourist behaviour, as tourists' motivations tend to change at the spur of the moment. This reflects the fact that most tourists tend to be more relaxed whilst on holiday (Ross, 1998) and are aroused by and respond to a multitude of olfactory, auditory and visual senses that differ from those to their normal environment (Koc & Boz, 2016; Ross, 1998; Urry, 1990). Moreover, it is imperative to remember that, for most tourists, the motivation to visit one site / destination or another is often influenced by their travel companions, whether those are family, friends or the group they travel with.

Arguably the greatest challenge in determining why people choose one destination over the other, and which activity to participate in at the destination, is the elusive combination of push and pull factors (Dann, 1977). Push factors, or the recognised motivational needs that push people towards specific goal-oriented behaviour (Sharpley, 2018: 126), can be both intrinsic and extrinsic. For example, one can travel to a beach resort both to escape and for prestige; satisfaction then is achieved from the activity itself (swimming in the ocean) and from the 'likes' from Facebook friends and Instegram followers. Pull factors, or those destination-specific characteristics that pull the tourist to a specific place, may in this example be the destination's climate, distance from home, product exposure, price, quality of accommodation and so on. Wu Qing Jin (2009) provides a comprehensive list of push and pull factors as referred to in published works on the topic (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Common push and pull factors

Push factors	Pull factors
To see culture and history, admire beauty	Tourism products, tourism charges
Increase knowledge	Distinctive lifestyles at one's destination
Experience different lifestyles	Interesting nightlife
Fulfil one travel dreams	All kinds of good food
Visit family and friends	Convenient transport
Find new friends, develop relationships	Accommodation, sports facilities, and information
Escape day-to-day life	Quality of service
Rest and relax body and mind	Abundant historical and cultural resources
Relief work pressure	Safety
Seek stimulation and excitement	International metropolises
Physically challenging oneself	Peace, hygiene, comfort
Get close to and understand nature	Familiarity
See different things	It's a good place to understand nature

Source: ANTOR (HK), 2009: 78

However, Prentice (2004) argues that even with regards to defined forms of tourism, such as medical tourism or ecotourism, tourist motivations are far from straightforward. Indeed, as Krippendorf (1987) has more generally observed, understanding tourist motivation is particularly complex as, more often than not, tourists themselves are unable to explain (or are unwilling to admit) what motivates them to go on holiday. For that reason, and owing to the complexity of dark tourism, the following section now considers the potential variety of motivations involved in dark tourism sites, such motivations being either primary or secondary to other motivations. Broadly, Rojek (1993: 136) suggests that in an allegedly postmodern era 'meaning has been replaced with spectacle and sensation dominates value' (Rojek, 1993: 136). Although this argument may hold true in the context of mass tourism in general, and even in the case of some sites of dark tourism in particular, it nevertheless oversimplifies the diversity of individual tourist motivations and the complexity of tourists having primary, secondary and even tertiary motivations to visit dark tourism attractions.

2.11.2 Motivations to visit dark tourism sites

More than any other reason, it can be argued that dark tourism's heterotopic nature has inspired numerous scholars to attempt to identify and explain tourists' motivations for visiting dark sites. Within the literature, the following motivations have been identified:

(i)   Fascination with death and/or violence of war (Biran et al, 2011; Preece & Price, 2005; Le & Pearce, 2011; Seaton, 2000);

(ii)   General historical interest, learning history and culture (Best, 2006; Bigley et al., 2010; Preece & Price, 2005; Ryan & Kohli, 2006; Turnell-Read, 2009);

(iii)   General historical interest for reasons of personal, family or socio-cultural heritage (Biran et al, 2011; Feldman 2002);

(iv)   Desire to learn about the site and events that took place there (Preece & Price, 2005);

(v)   Morbid curiosity (Best, 2007);

(vi)   Desire to 'see it to believe it' (Biran et al., 2011; Dunkley et al., 2011);

(vii)   Mourning and remembrance (Raine, 2013; Sharpley, 2012; Soen & Davidovich, 2011).

(viii) Social duty (Biran, Feldman, Hyde & Harman, 2011; Soen & Davidovich, 2011; Tinson et al., 2015;

(ix)   Visiting a 'must see site on the way' (for example, Auschwitz when in Krakow)

(x)   Voyeurism (Sharpley, 2009a; Buda & McIntosh, 2013; Lisle, 2004).

(xi)   *Schadenfreude (*Sharpley, 2009a*)*;

(xii)   The modern need to contemplate death, in the lack of religious or social ceremonies to fulfil that human need, especially in secular societies (Sharpley, 2009a, Stone & Sharpley, 2006);

(xiii) Trying something unusual and different (Le and Pearce, 2011);

(xiv) Participation in educational programmes (Cohen, 2011; Feldman, 2008);

(xv)   Empathy with one of the sides of an existing or previous conflict (Simone-Charteris et al., 2013).

It is evident that an individual tourist may have more than one motivation and that, in the above list, there may be overlaps between two or even three motivations (Bigley et al., 2010; Isaac & Cakmak, 2014). For example, visiting a former concentration camp may embrace elements of remembrance, social duty, the need to learn and understand and morbid curiosity

all at one level or another within the visitor's consciousness – or perhaps even subconsciousness (Beech, 2009).

Interestingly, some researchers try to group motivations according to typologies of dark sites. For example, Toussaint and Decrop (2013) use Lennon and Foley's (1999) typology to divide the visitors they observed into either spiritual travellers with a personal or emotional connection to the site, or tourists who are looking to be entertained or thrilled by their visit. Sharpley (2009a) makes a similar division of dark tourism integration, where tourists may immerse themselves in the broader context of the dark object (the site or event), or conversely, consume dark tourism as part of the fantasy of death (for example, dungeon or medical history type museums). This can also be correlated with Stone's (2006) spectrum of dark tourism supply, where the 'shade' of darkness of the site may, in turn, point to possible or likely motivations to visit the site. In other words, if darker sites such as genocide memorials / museums, such as those at in Auschwitz or in Rwanda, are characterised by an education orientation and are historically centred, they are arguably likley to attract people seeking to remember, mourn and understand their heritage (Beech, 2009; Morsch & Ley, 2010). Conversely, the London Dungeon, as the lightest 'shade', is likely to attract tourists motivated by the need for entertainment and thrills and, perhaps, to satisfy their morbid curiosity (Biran et al., 2014; Rojek, 1993; Seaton, 2007; Stone, 2006).

One important research limitation inherent in most of the research findings referred to above is the possibility that people may not admit that their visitation is driven by voyeurism, *schadenfreude* or fascination with death, all of which may still be considered as social taboos, or even illegal as in the case of memorials to former concentration camps in Germany. Sharpley (2012) and Chearl and Griffin (2013), however, claim that in many cases – such as when family heritage is the motivation for visitation – there is little or no evidence that morbid fascination with death is the attraction of the site. Indeed, based on research amongst tourists at genocide memorial sites in Rwanda, Sharpley and Friedrich (2016) concluded that the pejorative notion of the 'dark tourist' – that is, tourists motivated by a fascination in death and suffering – is erroneous. In contrast, however, it might be proposed that tourists drawn to disaster sites in the immediate aftermath of the event may have more voyeuristic intentions (Wright & Sharpley, 2018). Following on from this point, Podoshen (2013) suggests that the wide variety of motivations to visit dark tourism sites can be placed in categories correlating to Sharpley's (2009a) dark tourism typology of supply. That is to say, for example,

schandenfreude may be a motivation to visit sites where genocide or atrocity occurred (though as suggested, this is unlikely) but the same cannot be said for visits to other less dark sites. And more pragmatically, it may be the case that, given the enormous variety of dark tourism sites and the varying needs and motives of individual tourists, it is simply not possible to generalise on the motivations to participate in dark tourism.

2.11.3 Expected outcomes: Individual and social expectations from the visitation to a dark tourism site

Excluding for a moment the arguably small number of tourists who are attracted to any dark site by the element of death (Walter, 2009), the majority of tourists are likely to hold certain expectations with regards to what they may 'get' from such a visit. In his research into tourism motivation and development of expectations, Gnoth (1997) argues that tourism more generally is primarily characterised by hedonistic behaviour and, hence is motivated by the need to satisfy the self rather than social norms. It is in this respect that, arguably, a distinction exists between dark and other forms of tourism. More specifically, in contrast to Prentice's (2004: 261) argument that 'motivation is about the causes of personal action', in dark tourism, visitors' expectations and reactions may to a large extent be determined by the pressures of their social environment (from the immediate level school/friends/family to the national-cultural level). To support this argument, in one of clips in the documentary *Uploading Holocaust* (Nir & Bornstein, 2016), referred to earlier in this chapter, one of the protagonists admits to confusion, shame, and fear of disappointing his teachers / parents / friends for not feeling sad enough or not crying during the group's visit to Auschwitz. Sharpley (2015) makes a similar argument with the example of Princess Diana's funeral, attended by one million people in London, who appeared to be crying in unison. Sharpley asks whether the same people would have reacted in the same way had they been watching the funeral on TV, knowing that no one is watching them or, arguably, expecting them to react emotionally.

Individuals may be motivated to visit a dark tourism site because of their interest in history, expecting to learn more about the event; others may wish to achieve psychological fulfilment through mourning the loss of beloved ones, or the loss of the thousands from the ethnic group they belong to (Ashworth, 2002). Crucially, it can be argued that people's motivations and expected outcomes are almost always socially influenced. However, this may be difficult for people to define for themselves, whilst there are distinct differences between individual

expectations and social expectations imposed on individuals as part of a group. Returning to Feldman's (2002) work on Israeli youth tours to Poland discussed previously in this chapter, various social expectations related to, for example, the state, the school, the students' parents and even between friends within the group were identified. These expectations included the engraining of the national feeling of victimhood, the social and national need for the soon-to-be-soldiers to sense the need for an Israeli-Jewish state and the need to defend it, the need to go on this 'journey' because other family members had done so, and because it contributes to their process of entering adulthood. Indeed, students who go on such trips receive psychological preparation at their school months before the trip itself, whilst their parents participate in their decision to go on the trips which the majority of their peers also participate in. During the trip itself, the social dynamic with their teachers, guides and friends plays a role in what they expect from the trip and how they experience the site. Such youth tours are, of course, not unique to Israelis; almost every high school in Germany and the neighbouring countries visits memorial sites to former concentration and extermination camps, and similar research amongst such groups would undoubtedly be illuminating.

Significantly, expectations are positively or negatively inclined; the tourist evaluates the level of expected 'satisfaction' from the experience (Gnoth, 1997). Certainly, the difficulty with tourists defining their expected outcomes from visits to dark tourism sites related to their primary and secondary motivations to visit the site in the first place. For example, if they visited the sites simply because it was the right thing to do when in the region, they are not likely to have a set of expected outcomes. Arguably, the exception to that is when tourists' need to 'tick the box', in which case they can say that they have been to Auschwitz when they visited Poland in the same way that they went up Eifel Tower when they visited Paris. In these different examples, individuals may wish to act in what they think is the correct way to behave for the sake of the others (Goffman, 1959). They may, on the one hand, display performances which include outright cynicism or, on the other hand, be sincere and 'believe in the impression fostered by their own performance' (ibid.: 18). Thus, whether easily obtained outcomes such as being able to say that you've been to Auschwitz or a more complex expected outcome of going through a journey to become part of one's social fabric, two conclusions may be drawn: a) social expectations of visitation to a dark site or being on a tour in a dark site strongly influence the individual's social expectations, and b) as a consequence, change the individual's social performance.

2.12 Chapter summary

In summary, this chapter has discussed the main themes that are part of dark tourism's development into a new category in tourism research. Through a discussion of definitions and forms of dark tourism, it has highlighted the idea that tourism to sites presenting death and human tragedy is unique in the sense that it does not confirm to the hedonistic and escapist nature of most other categories of tourism. This led to further exploration of other emerging issues (such as commodification, authenticity and motivations), analysing the components which make up the social construct of dark tourism, whilst demonstrating the practical and theoretical circumstances in which dark tourism interpretation takes place.

Through this exploration, the chapter has provided a framework for understanding dark tourism as an emerging academic discipline with a rapidly growing knowledge base. Yet, while the two avenues of the academic and practical aspects of dark tourism may to some extent be analysed separately, together they do nevertheless form the all-important background to the interpretation work of tour guides in Berlin which is the core of the research in this thesis.

It is now important to consider the second component of this thesis, tour guides, and the existing academic literature on the topic. Therefore, the following chapter (Chapter 3) starts by shedding light on the historical background of the profession of guiding, leading to an exploration of their roles as guides and the practical quality of tour guiding research.

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Chapter 3

Tour guides: roles and practices

3.0 Introduction

The overall purpose of this thesis, as discussed in the first, introductory chapter, is to explore critically the interpretative role of tour guides in the dark tourism experience. More specifically, based upon an auto-ethnographic study of tour guides in Berlin, it seeks to analyse the dynamic relationship between tour guides and tourists, identifying and considering the factors that determine the varying ways in which guides interpret specific dark places / events and, hence, influence the tourist experience.

Given this aim, the preceding chapter established the framework for the thesis through a review of the concept of dark tourism. This chapter now turns to the principal focus of the research, namely, the tour guide. Tourists visiting tourism sites and attractions require a complex system of services – from hotels to food, entertainment, shopping and transport. Tour guiding is one such service yet, in comparison to many other aspects of tourism, limited attention has been paid to the role of the tour guide in the academic literature (Black & Weiler, 2015; Pond, 1993). This is, perhaps, surprising given the significant role that tour guides play; indeed, as is implicit in this study, at some dark tourism sites and attractions tour guides may be highly influential in the nature of the (dark) tourist experience. It is, therefore, important to understand the intricacies of the modern tour guide before discussing what is known about their position or role in the phenomenon of dark tourism.

Thus, the purpose of this chapter is, first, to explore the existing body of literature on the historical origins of the tour guiding profession before going on to consider the main definitions and roles of contemporary tour guides, and to describe the various types of guides working in the tourism industry. Furthermore, it also identifies the main theoretical work which has been undertaken to date on tour guiding performance, although it should be noted here that much of the relatively limited literature on the topic is more practical than conceptual in nature. In addition, a brief discussion of the relationship between history and

heritage is presented in order to provide a theoretical understanding of the nature of the industry to which tour guides belong. Finally, interpretation is analysed, leading to the main focus of this research.

3.1 From the historical guide to modern day terminology

An early form of a tour guide most likely existed as early as 2,000 B.C. or possibly even 3,000 B.C., and participants in this activity are referred to by Cohen (1985) and Pond (1993) as 'pathfinders', 'cicerones', 'bear leaders and 'geographical guides'. These antecedents of the modern tour guide are described as those who performed the function of showing the route or way through an environment they were familiar with to others who were not familiar with it. However, recreation, escapism and other characteristics of modern tourism were not part of that ancient profession; those guided were not travelling for pleasure (Cohen, 1985; Pond, 1993).

From these early beginnings, guiding continued to evolve alongside the human need to travel not out of emigrational necessity, but rather from the need to explore and discover the surrounding world (Pond, 1993). Moreover, as Cohen (1985) points out, there is evidence from documents from Greco-Roman times that guides provided more than simply the service of finding the way; in addition, they took care of their 'followers'' sleeping and eating arrangements, as well as providing security in unwelcoming environments.

Christopher Holloway (1981) and Eric Cohen's (1985) foundational papers on tour guiding established the basis for developing our understanding of a role that is easily absorbed within the category of tourism services. Quoting the early 20th Century Oxford Dictionary definitions of a guide, Cohen was the first to distinguish the guide from other tourism services more generally, not only as a pathfinder – in the geographical sense, one who leads the physical way – but also as a mentor; that is, directing a person in the ways of conduct (Cohen, 1985). Cohen argues that, on the one hand, the role of the pathfinder is easy to understand as it implies that the guide is showing people the route. On the other hand, he suggests that the role of the mentor comprises several quite complex roles, such as facilitating encounters with local people, conveying an understanding of local culture, teaching site history, keeping up morale, selecting points of interest, selecting stories of interest and interpreting sites and events. In so doing, his work can be contrasted with the earlier work by

Holloway (1981) who refers to the role of the guide role in more simplistic terms, such as being a provider of information and an ambassador for their country or region.

Guides who conform to Cohen's pathfinder and mentor roles may have existed throughout human history, such as in the case of the biblical image of Moses who, leading the Israelites on their way from Egypt to the Promised Land, functioned as both a pathfinder and a mentor, in the sense of being a 'guru', showing his followers a path to a new enlightenment. Whether or not such historical figures truly existed, the emergence of the modern guide combining the two roles was, however, only enabled by the development of travel during the Industrial Revolution of the 19th Century (Pond, 1993).

Indeed, it is generally recognised that in conjunction with the chronological development of modern tourism, the modern tour guide emerged during the periods of the Renaissance and the Grand Tour. The grand tourist travelled with a companion who was a personal tutor but who, at the same time, also functioned as a mentor, pathfinder, multilingual translator and an informal ambassador familiar with many cultures (Mead, 1914; Pond, 1993). The Greek term *cicerone* is often used in connection with that travel epoch (Cohen, 1985; Mead, 1914; Pond, 1993), and is still understood in modern Italian as one of the words describing a guide. In the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the word cicerone is defined as follows:

> Marcus Tullius Cicero (106 - 43 B.C.) was renowned in Rome as a statesman, lawyer, and writer, and he is remembered today for his skills as an orator and rhetorician. The Ciceronian style of rhetoric placed special emphasis on the rhythms and cadences of phrases and sentences and their ability to appeal to the speaker's audience. It is believed that Cicero's eloquence and learning influenced the use of his Italian name, Cicerone, to refer to sightseeing guides, themselves known for their talkativeness and eloquence, and later, to persons who serve as mentors or tutors to others. (Merriam-Webster, 2016).

From this description, we can ascertain two main points. First, the tour guide is defined by their role as a mentor, similar to Cohen's (1985) categorisation. And second, as both Holloway (1981) and Pearce (1984) suggest, guides are skilled actors who are able to choose their words, perhaps like politicians.

Before continuing to explore varying definitions of a tour guide, it is perhaps important here to distinguish the term 'tour guide' from several other terms which, when colloquially spoken, are used interchangeably but also erroneously to describe jobs or roles related to that of the guide. Pond (1993), for example, starts by listing a number of terms, including tourist guide (more commonly used in Europe at the time), local guide, city guide and step-on guide. These are all used to refer to a specific type of tour guide, often working in an urban environment, yet it can be argued that to experienced professionals, although these guides are similar, they may be perceived differently in different cultures and in different languages. Furthermore, as Pond (1993) suggests, tour guides may also work as tour leaders, tour managers, museum docents and language interpreters. However, it is important to note that, in this thesis, the term tour guide is not conceptualised in this way, the interpretation of historical sites and events being the focus of this study.

Specifically, tour leader and tour manager, as Weiler and Black (2015) explain, are roles which may involve greater emphasis on representing the tour agency/company as well as significantly more time being invested in operational tasks rather than in the interpretation of the history of the site visited. Therefore, although a tour leader would usually have some knowledge of the city being visited, on a tour of, say seven days in several countries, they are likely to hire the services of a local guide with expert knowledge of their own destination. Indeed, in their book *Tour Guiding Research*, Weiler and Black (2015) state that they are focusing primarily on tour leaders, tour managers, tour escorts and others who work beyond site- or area-specific guiding. In contrast to their perspective, the term tour guide is employed in this thesis to refer to professionals who guide tours in a site or in one urban setting (Berlin) and who are usually not engaged in the operational aspects of tour leading.

In an attempt to define a tour guide and, at the same time, to distinguish the guide from the tour leader, tour manager or tour escort, Mancini (1990: 4-5) states that a tour guide is 'an individual, who, either as an employee or affiliate of a duly licensed travel and tour agency, guide tourist [sic.], both foreign and domestic, for a fee, commission or any lawful form of remuneration. This is someone who takes people on sight-seeing of excursions of limited duration'. However, whether licensed or not, Mancini's definition can be contested on the grounds that tour guides may be and, very often, are freelancers (Pond, 1993; Wynn, 2011). Hence, Pond (1993: 8) defines a tour guide more broadly as 'one who conducts a tour or one with a broad knowledge of a particular area whose primary duty is to inform. The term tour

guide is widely used to describe the various professionals who are in any way engaged in guiding people, including tour managers, docents, and interpreters'. Nevertheless, this definition may still be confusing, lacking as it does a succinct but clear description of a tour guide; rather, it continues to suggest that these closely related jobs (tour manager and tour guide) can indeed be used to describe the same thing. Hence, is argued here that while a tour leader/manager can run a tour, confirm hours with restaurants and solve problems in hotels, they are able to do so without actually knowing how to guide or have any local or historical knowledge of the destination.

Today, one of the most commonly accepted definitions is offered by European Standardisation Committee (CEN) (European Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (FEG), 2011), which states that a guide is a 'a person who guides visitors in the language of their choice and interprets the cultural and natural heritage of an area; which person normally possesses an area-specific qualification usually issued and/or recognized by the appropriate authority'. This definition was adopted in 2003 by the World Federation of Tour Guide Association (WFTGA), which later amended it as follows:

> A tour guide can be defined as a person who guides groups or individual visitors on a tour around natural and cultural heritage sites or other attractions, and who interpret these places, in a language of the visitor's choice, often in an inspiring and entertaining manner. (Adapted from the original EFTGA, 1998, quoted in Salazar, 2006).

In this popular and widely cited definition, much more emphasis is placed on the intellectual rather than the logistical aspects of the work of the tour guide. However, in order to develop a broader understanding of these aspects and of the totality of what guiding entails, a discussion of the roles of the tour guide is required. The following section addresses this need.

3.2 The roles of the tour guide

In his ground-breaking research on tour guides, previously referred to, Erik Cohen (1985) divides the work of the guide into the two traditional roles of pathfinder and mentor, within which he identifies four components: (i) an instrumental role; (ii) a social role; (iii) and inter-actionary role (i.e. to be a catalyst of group social activities – sometimes referred to as the

'tour-leader' side of the job); and (iv), a communicative role. With regards to the latter, Cohen 1985) hints for the first time at the mediatory role of the guide.

Similarly, Rabotic (2010) proposes that the role of the tour guide can be divided into instrumental, social, communicative and interactive roles. The guide, according to Rabotic, evolved into a form of cultural mediator, an argument that is supported by Hu and Wall (2012) and by Yu, Weiler and Ham (2004) who add that a guide's cultural mediation is vital in facilitating and delivering memorable positive experiences to tourists. Furthermore, and within the context of cultural mediation, Rabotic (2010) also includes the role of providing cognitive accessibility. That is to say, the guide opens a metaphorical door to a specific topic or a place in a given destination.

Other scholars exploring the roles of the tour guide tend to be occupied by the evolutionary process from the historic to the modern guide in an attempt to describe clearly the role of the contemporary guide. McGrath (2008), for example, suggests that the modern guide's role is the outcome of historical transformations in demand. This process has continued to the point where the role of the guide in a post-modern context is:

> to bring something extra, something that the visitors cannot get through any other media and extend the traditional pathfinders aim of providing 'access to an otherwise non-public terrain' to encompass the intellectual terrain locked and otherwise inaccessible. (McGrath, 2008: 16)

In other words, the post-modern guide's role is a complex amalgam of skills which includes the traditional pathfinder as well as a teacher and interpreter of culture and place.

To some extent, this competes with the notion that the primary role of the contemporary tour guide is still to be an information provider as suggested by Holloway, 1981) Pond (1993) and Rabotic (2009, 2010), all of whom explored empirically the difference between guided and non-guided tours and the consequential distinctions in the tourist experience. McGrath (2008), however, challenges this rather simplistic perspective with the argument that information-giving can be viewed metaphorically as the frame of a car, whilst the other roles of the guide – pathfinder, interpreter, cultural mediator and so on – can be thought of as the engine, the paint, the navigation system and the various other components of the complete

product. Indeed, in an age of readily available global information (in some cases accessible during the tour itself), simply giving information is not sufficient to sustain a tour and, as a consequence, cultural brokerage (or mediation) has become the primary role of the guide (Ap & Wong, 2001; Dahles, 2002; Hu & Wall, 2012; Meged, 2010; Weiler & Black, 2015). This is supported by the work of Black and Weiler (2005), who identify ten key roles of the modern tour guide:

1. Interpreter/educator
2. Information giver
3. Leader
4. Motivator of conservation values/role model
5. Social catalyst
6. Tour and/or group manager/organiser
7. Cultural broker/mediator
8. Navigator/protector
9. Public relations/company/travel agency representative
10. Facilitator of access to non-public areas.

This list is useful for us to grasp the complexity of the contemporary guide, assuming a generalisation of types of guides in all guiding situation (for example, from a one-hour walking tour to a 7-day bus tour with an organised group). Two items, however, demand further consideration. First, it is hard to maintain that, beyond the mere logistical function of defining break times, the guide is a leader either in a political or a managerial sense. People on a tour are the guide's customers and, therefore, the guide will not normally command them or give them instructions. And second, some guides may not agree with being referred to as role models or educators. Indeed, although there can be tours where the guide is a leader and even a short-term educator, guides will first and foremost see themselves as providers of a commercial product (Cohen, 1985; Wynn, 2011).

3.3 Where do guides work?

In order to understand the conditions and circumstances in which tour guides operate on a daily basis – that is, not just where tours are provided but also the context in which they are typically provided – it is necessary to first understand the more general phenomenon that is urban tourism. This section, therefore, explores briefly definitions of urban tourism, defines

the urban spaces in which this type of tourism occurs, and considers relevant spatial and cultural issues in the geography of urban tourism.

Although tourism may not have always existed in its current form, Page and Hall (2003) argue that, throughout history, towns and cities have provided tourism infrastructure which included accommodation and entertainment, even in pre-industrial times. The Grand Tour, however, is perhaps the first and the most iconic step in the progress of modern cities developing from places where human mobility existed mostly owing to trade or migration to destinations for people traveling for leisure purposes (Brodsky-Porges, 1981; Page & Hall, 2003; Towner, 1985). While the extent to which the Tour was educational and how much of it was dedicated to pleasure is not always clear (Towner, 1985), it can nevertheless be argued that the Tour marks a process by which travel to towns and cities began to incorporate the act of tourism, a social activity undertaken by individuals or groups in their leisure time.

Today, as Page and Hall (2003: 11) explain, 'urban areas are not simply places where populations concentrate together with economic activities, cultural life and the control of political power. Urban places are also assuming a greater role as centres for tourism activity in their own right...' whilst, as Paradis (2004: 205) adds: 'the downtown's postmodern character is enhanced with a host of environmental themes and images'. Critically, however, it can be argued that one of the difficulties in analysing urban tourism as an economic and cultural activity is the distinct lack of separation between a destination resident making use of economic and cultural services (i.e. shops, theatres, etc.) and a visitor engaging in these activities and, perhaps, even enhancing the economic justification for them (Sharpley, 2018; Sinclair & Stabler, 2010).

Of course, city planners and policy makers typically did not always view tourism as a part of the prime functions of a city and, therefore, did not plan their infrastructures accordingly (Doswell, 1997; Page & Hall, 2003; Place et al, 1998; Sharpley, 2018). Nevertheless, the transformation in tourism from being just part of the economic activity of cities to becoming one of the most significant economic drivers in many contemporary large cities (Ashworth, 2014; Sinclair & Stabler, 2010) requires us to use proverbial filters of the post-industrial society in order to examine this phenomenon and its impacts. Indeed, Ashworth (2014) argues that in spite of cities becoming arguably the most important arena for tourism, and

tourism often being utilised as a tool for urban revitalisation, scholars still have a problem defining it [urban tourism] in a precise way.

Perhaps unexpectedly, one of the problems in defining this phenomenon relates to the issue of whether it is planned or occurs by coincidence; as Ashworth and Tunbridge explain, tourism in cities may be incidental rather than intentional (1990). A missing critical point to support that statement is that, although some cities – such as London after the Great Fire of 1666 or Hamburg's fire of 1847 – were designed to be attractive (Stamp, 2016), they were not necessarily designed as destinations with the consideration of today's tourism industry, with numbers soaring in the age of world population gone over the 7 Billion mark.

In the past two decades, however, this has changed with the development and implementation of policy initiatives purposefully aimed at developing cities to become more attractive to both residents and tourists. One well-known example is the EU's European Capitals of Culture (European Commission, 2019), a project aimed at celebrating local culture and European diversity while at the same time supporting the regenerating cities, enhancing their image of cities in the eyes of their inhabitants as well as boosting tourism for economic advantage (European Commission, 2019). By building new theatres, investing in art projects and improving public spaces, cities are intentionally made to be more attractive. There are, however, examples where 'attractiveness' in the context of urban tourism is not necessarily attributed to beauty or even to events planned to attract tourists. In other words, in the case of destinations such as Berlin, the location of the research in this thesis, it cannot be argued that wars, persecution and atrocity took place with the idea that the city will one day in the future become a successful dark tourism destination.

This brings the discussion back to the context of urban tourism today. Irrespective of their historical development, tourism in attractive or potentially attractive cities is intentional, and policy makers invest time and effort to design their cities as a collection of so-called pull factors for tourists of all kinds to come and visit (Wall & Mathieson, 2006). Moreover, it can be argued that the adaptation or promotion of existing resources to develop or enhance potential attractiveness is more common than planning ahead. One such example in Berlin is the Memorial and Museum Sachsenhausen, which started a Facebook page in early 2018, promoting events and paid educational tours.

Referring broadly to urban tourism development, Heeley argues to the ability to contrast 'supply-led tourist superstractural approaches' such as in the cases of Glasgow or Barcelona, with 'more opportunistic carrier and market-conditioned' epitomising Gothenburg and Dublin (2011: 58). In other words, and referring back to Stone's dark tourism spectrum (2006), the first will be argued to be planned to attract tourists or purposefulness planning of a site/destination, whereas the second is opportunistic or non-purposeful. Thus, in Berlin and similar destinations, significant dark tourism development is incidental, largely driven by visitors' fascination with the destination's dark past (Foley and Lennon, 1997). As Harvey (1989) rightfully argues, over the years with the growth of the tourism industry many cities had to transform their way of thinking into a promotional-oriented approach. Cities with dark past appear to follow the same rationale; enhancing interest in their past through marketing and other means of commodification. Consequently, tourism authorities in cities such as Berlin commonly now have a marketing organisation (such as visitBerlin.de) with the sole purpose of promoting its attractions (dark or otherwise) to potential visitors.

Whether it is a result of planned tourism infrastructure or of market powers making an impact on attractive cities, tourism takes place in a variety of urban spaces and, as with tourism in other contexts, involves a variety of sectors. Ashworth (2014), for example, acknowledges the sectorial division between hospitality (accommodation and food and beverage), transport, and tourist attractions, the first two of which are almost entirely distinguishable as services developed for the purpose of facilitating economic tourism activity. In contrast, although attractions, activities and events are perhaps the biggest attention-grabbing sector of tourism in cities (Page & Hall, 2003), they are not necessarily distinctive as specifically tourist services as they may be utilised by visitors and residents alike (Doswell, 1997; Smith, 1989).

Tourism, then, as Smith (1989: 172) argues, is 'not a monolith. It is an exceedingly large-scale and diverse industry, operating in a variety of ways under differing circumstances'. One such way it operates is through the guided tour, which typically takes place in urban geographical spaces, namely streets, where famous iconic buildings can be found or where famous events occurred. It is also dynamic in that the tour moves from one site to the next by various means of transport, and in that it is subject to changes in weather and, therefore, may also occur in lobbies of building, in museums or in markets. Notably, for the most part, the tours are *not* taking place in urban spaces that are detached from the resident population (Cohen, 1985; Holloway, 1981; Pond, 1993).

Psychologically, however, they may be thought of as a metaphorically different location. In his seminal work, Goffman (1959) writes about performances and the use of 'dramaturgical' methods. Tourists and their tour hosts are 'on stage' when they meet face-to-face. The guide has prepared a certain performance as part of a provided service, whilst the tourist has planned what to wear, the places they expect to see, and even the content they feel they may hear. As Smith (1998: 271) claims, 'Goffman's theatrical metaphors are often not far from reality. Tourists often alter their demeanour when away from home, and their hosts are likely to engage in roles designed to accommodate tourists that they would never play before their peers'. Similarly, Urry (1990) talks about the notion of 'departure' from the mundane, from the tourist's everyday life which leads to the tourist allowing themselves to engage with a set of stimuli that is for them out of the ordinary. Furthermore, it can be argued that the psyche of a tourist is such that since they are on a holiday and away from home they are generally less concerned with their day-to-day worries. Or as Sharpley (2018: 135) explains, 'for many tourists, the annual holiday represents the chance to rest, to recover from the stresses and strains of everyday life, to get away from it all…'. This undoubtedly alters their motivations, behaviour and Goffman's social 'performance'.

Second, it can be argued that there is significant difference between large (e.g. London, Paris, Rome, New York) and smaller destinations (e.g. Weimar, Blackpool) in their tourism carrying capacity (Urry, 1990). In other words, a big city will have the ability to absorb and maintain the tourism activity in much larger numbers than a small destination without causing major changes to the destination (Zhang, 2013). Third, although tour guides' culture is comprised of their own personal background, they are likely to attempt to find a balance between the city in which they operate and the country of origin of the tourist (Wynn, 2011). For example, a Bayern born guide who speaks Spanish may wish to put an emphasis on anecdotes related to Spanish history when guiding Spanish speaking tourists.

And lastly, the concept of the cultural tourist zone should be distinctive from tourism concepts of geographical space. For example, Shaw and Williams (1994) argue that there are urban tourism spaces, which require appropriate tourism facilities and infrastructures. Furthermore, the authors argue that such areas are important as they provide the needs of tourists and residents alike. This idea can be contested using specific geographical spaces: both tourists and residents use the same theatre or opera house. But only tourists stay in a

hotel. Therefore, although there are locations within large cities where tourism activity is to a large extent separated from other urban social activities, it is often the case that the boundaries between tourism and recreation are blurred (Page & Hall, 2003). Consequently, the above is explained by the distinction between geographical and psychological zones. Whereas most tourism concepts of space are geographical, the cultural tourist zone is a psychological one. In the geographical overlaps, the residents of a city working in close vicinity to a tourist attraction (e.g. Checkpoint Charlie) may overhear what tour guides are explaining, and in other ways interact with guides and their groups (Wynn, 2011). In other words, it can be argued that there is great significance in the fact that the cultural tourist zone is not physically separated from the city in which is exists.

Thus far, this review has considered the history of the tour guiding profession, the roles of the tour guide, and the spatial and psychological space in which tour guides work. Within the extant literature on tour guiding, the aspect of performance is a particular focus of many of the scholars (see, for example, Cohen, 1985; Holloway, 1981; Meged, 2015; Pond, 1993; Wynn, 2011). Although the performance of the professional tour guide is not the specific focus of this research (its aim being to explore the interpretative role of tour guides), it is nevertheless assumed that the two – performance and interpretation – are interlinked and that, crucially, one cannot be observed without the other. Therefore, the following section examines the dynamic and complex nature of tour performance.

3.4 Tour guide performance

Christopher Holloway (1981), one of the first instigators of tour guide research, states that tour guiding performance involves a variety of elements, from teaching and acting. Similarly, Weiler and Black (2015) contend that the tour guide performance has a lot to do with drama and the skill of storytelling and, hence, the idea of positioning tour guiding between teaching and acting may usefully be framed within Erving Goffman's seminal work *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959), referred to briefly in the preceding section. In this influential book, Goffman argues that people employ 'dramaturgical performance' in certain life situations in order to highlight particular qualities and hide others. He suggests, for example, that perfecting one's dramaturgy involves the management of one's voice and facial expressions; here, Goffman says 'is the true test of one's ability as a performer' (Goffman, 1959: 217).

Importantly, Goffman's work refers to all kinds of people in their many life situations, whereas the discussion of tour guides relates very specifically and literally to the performance of a professional, and to a performance which is a significant element of the job. Nevertheless, many scholars have drawn on Goffman's writing to inform or frame their research on tour guide performance. For example, Mcgrath (2008: 17) argues that:

> In terms of ancient history, the guide has the onus of dealing with several layers of deadness to create a performance for his audience. In this light, the role of the guide demands high levels of imagination and presentation skill to allow emotional and intellectual access to sites. This enables visitors to experience both the 'otherness' that tourism implicitly promises and thereby the opportunity for self-discovery.

Earlier, Cohen (1985) suggested that the role of the tour guide requires imagination in order to perform – in the sense of acting – and that this may be used to both present truthful and fabricated pieces of information. Interestingly, Modlin et al. (2011: 5), in their research on the Destrehan Plantation in Louisiana, further imply that tour guide dramatic enthusiasm is essential in their role as 'creators of historical empathy'. These theatrical skills may also be extended to include the guide's body language (movement, gestures, eye contact) and their physical distance from the group (depending on situation: in a bus, during a walking tour, in a crowded or loud environment, and so on) (Wynn, 2011). Indeed, Pond goes on to elaborate on the importance of both the voice and the body language as the guide's basic tools for successful communication (1993). According to her, good voice is 'natural, pleasant, expressive, and easy to hear and to understand' (Pond, 1993: 127) and she points out that those qualities are achieved by controlling one's pitch, resonance and volume. Control over pronunciation / diction and the rate / speed of speech are also vocal tools which can be used by guides to improve performance (Meged, 2010; Pond, 1993; Weiler & Black, 2015).

This analysis requires the added value of what Meged (2015) refers to as the 'tour frame' – voluntary, playful, and commercial – the elements which define the nature of the relations between the guide and the tourists, relations that, owing to the combination of these three elements, are very different to acting or teaching. As Holloway (1981) himself argues, guides are 'an authority' not 'in authority'. That is to say, that guides are expected to be the authority on information giving and group leading, but do not possess a teacher or workplace managerial authority.

Therefore, it is useful to consider at this stage what are referred to as elements of tour guide performance. The following list, drawn from the literature, presents the skills and actions which are generally considered to be an essential part of tour guide performance (see Cohen, 1985; Holloway, 1981; Mcgrath, 2008; Meged, 2015; Weiler & Black, 2015; Wynn, 2011).

- First rapport with the tourist – friendly, eye contact made
- Communication
- Volume – high or low
- Volume control - being able to adjust the volume according to group and environmental circumstances
- Rhythm of speech
- Listening to tourist questions
- Answering tourist questions
- Attentiveness to the tourists' facial expressions, comfort, etc.
- Empathy – being attentive to tourist needs (weather related, breaks, etc.)
- Approachability
- Body language – hand gestures, stance, movement, looking at the tourists
- Knowledge of subject matter – knowing the facts, knowing various interpretations of an event, knowing what historical information is missing.
- Understanding and knowledge of the destination
- Interpretation of subject matter – being able to analyse the accepted knowledge
- Timing – of the tour, of every point of guiding
- Humour – ability to shift from serious to light mood according to the situation
- Group/crowd management
- Professional appearance – the persona or 'look' chosen by the guide according to the needs of the customer
- Charisma – perhaps the hardest to define, this quality is essential in a tour guide and may encompass parts of some of the above listed qualities (such as voice, looking attentively at someone, smiling, etc.).

Tour guide performance, however, cannot be measured with such mathematical precision (Holloway, 1981; Wynn, 2011). It would, therefore, be more accurate to define it in a fluid

manner, where guides' performance comprises the ways in which they develop or cultivate their 'look' (or their appearance/chosen persona): their voice, their body language, their knowledge, humour and general less defined charisma in order to accomplish the goals of the tour. Pond (1993) emphasises the various aspects of the guide's personality as determinants to the guide's performance, and essential to their work. These she identifies as: enthusiasm; an outgoing and affable nature; self-confidence; a proactive nature; sensitivity (to the needs of the tourist, situation, interest, health, etc.); flexibility (to adapt to dynamic situations and changing tourist needs); authenticity; a pleasant professional appearance; a sense of humour; knowledge; good communication skills; organisation skills; decisiveness; good health; personal integrity; and, charisma (Pond, 1993).

In order to maintain a tour in which the tourists are entertained and listen, and where it has a constant flow, tour guides employ what Meged (2015) defines as 'seductive strategies'. These strategies are divided into rhetorical strategy, intercultural strategy, strategy of intimacy, and logistical strategy and, overall, this is achieved by the use of both verbal and non-verbal means. Meged's strategies may be viewed as means of manipulation, albeit not necessarily in the negative sense of the word. Furthermore, whether negative or positive, guides may be so natural in using these strategies that they may not even be aware of their actions being 'strategies' – as in actions planned in advance.

More generally, Goffman (1959) goes further to divide performers into those who believe in their own performance and those who are cynical about it. The cynical performer, as Goffman argues, may take secret pleasure in toying with their audience take seriously and absorb the information the performer may not consider to be important or care about. Hence, tour guide researchers such as Pond (1993) and Weiler and Black (2015), commonly argue that personal and informational integrity on the part of the guide are crucial to performing well on a tour. However, this can be criticised on the basis that although the quality of being Goffman's 'believer' is fundamental to a 'good' guide's performance, experienced or even 'burned-out' guides may at times be cynical, whether with or without malice. At the same time, as guides are constantly being observed (Pond, 1993), cynical ones may risk being 'spotted' by members of their audience, resulting in unsatisfied customers.

When guides employ the above skills and strategies, their performance can be described or manifested in a variety of ways, such as pedagogic or teacher-like, entertaining, loud and

outwardly, quiet and personal, and so on. Equally, the many types of tourists will inevitably enjoy different styles of performance. Nevertheless, a number of common points can be identified with regards to an effective or successful performance, including: the guide being heard loud and clear; points of the story being clear and easy to understand; a charismatic and entertaining show or, alternatively, a presentation of relevant intellectual information; speaking at the level of the tourist/visitor – speaking with a high level of intellectualism and knowledge or, alternatively, using easier vocabulary; presenting a deeper analysis if previous knowledge is expressed by the tourist or speaking in more complex language but starting from a lower level of knowledge (of the place or story); walking at the preferred pace of the tourists; attending to all participants; demonstrating accuracy of knowledge; listening to tourists' content-related questions or grievances and answering these questions; and, answering questions to the point and succinctly to keep to the timeframe of the tour or, alternatively, prolonging the answer if needs be.

Two points should be emphasised here. First, in some cases, even the most experienced guide may not be suitable for all types of tourists. Moreover, although good performance depends partly on being attentive to the mood of the tourist, there are a number of parameters beyond the control of the guide such as flight fatigue, sickness or work stress, which tourists are not able to fully leave behind. Wynn (2011) also explains how guides are constantly interrupted by passers-by or by other city noises, such as emergency vehicles. He goes on to argue that part of the guide's performance is the need to overcome these interruptions and, indeed, to turn them into an advantage, an integral part of the unique tour experience.

And second, visitors on tour tend to recognise when a performance is not going well and, at times, respond either by interrupting the guide or by focusing attention elsewhere, perhaps talking to each other. Fine and Speer (1985) suggest that the responses of tourists to the guide's performance are a form of feedback on weaknesses or problems, ranging from the guide being 'schoolteachery' to proving commentary which is boring, irrelevant, too informative, not informative enough, or delivered 'too enthusiastically'. It has to be pointed out, however, that although such pitfalls occur, the dynamic and 'chemistry' between the guide and the tourists are influential to how the tourists feel about the guide's performance (Meged, 2010; Wynn, 2011). Rabotic (2009) goes further by arguing that the dynamics between the tourists on a tour to their guide is not merely a question of group dynamics and

guide skills, but also of the socio-economic and political circumstances in which the guide works.

Finally, constantly adapting one's performance is an element part of the guide work. As Cohen (1985) suggests, performance skills include the dynamic nature of the guide as an instrumental leader controlling the group's tension between members, integration of members of the group or the decision not to integrate (depending on the type of tour), and maintaining the morale of the tour. A good performer, then, is one who can make these adaptive decisions (Pond, 1993). These components can be attributed to the management of the tour but, in a manner of speaking, they are secondary to the content of the tour presented by the guide. As Wynn (2011) and others (for example, Cohen, 1985; Fine & Speer, 1985; Katz, 1985) emphasise, guides often prefer the intellectual side of the job, seeing the group management as a function to make sure the tour goes smoothly.

Thus far, this chapter has demonstrated the importance of interpretation as one of, if not the main part of the tour guide's work. It is, therefore, necessary to delve deeper into the concept of interpretation in order to develop a more nuanced and theoretical understanding of its intricacies of interpretation. The next section, therefore, considers what interpretation is, where interpretation can be found, its definitions and components, and – of particular relevance to this thesis – interpretation in the field of tour guiding.

3.5 Interpretation

The word interpretation appears in the title of this thesis, functioning as the theoretical glue between the disciplines of dark tourism and tour guides. Somewhat ironically, though, the word itself has fundamentally different meanings in different fields of study, itself requiring interpreting. Moreover, the nature of the word is yet more challenging because interpretation may work in a slightly different way in museums and when it is undertaken by tour guides – the subjects of this research. For those reasons, this chapter now seeks to identify the different forms of interpretation in order to make a clear distinction between different fields or forms of interpretation, and to emphasise the type of interpretation that is the focus of this research. In the following sections, therefore, the nature and principles of interpretation within the field of tourism are explored before the chapter goes on to examine the nuances of interpretation in the tour guiding profession in particular.

3.5.1 Forms of interpretation

A common way to understand the word interpretation is in its linguistic form. In the world of language and translation, interpretation refers to translation from one language to another by a professional linguist (Tilden, 1957). More specifically, interpreters are considered highly skilled professional linguists. They provide simultaneous – or real time – translations from one language to another. If done well, a language interpreter conveys the full cultural context behind the words of the speaker (Language Scientific, 2019).

Although from a somewhat simplistic perspective this may appear similar to the roles of the tour guide discussed earlier in this chapter, in practice a significant difference is that whereas the interpreter is required to stick to particular text, the tour guide's role is to provide a cultural context to a site or a building with a much greater degree of elasticity (Miles, 1920; Pastorelli, 2003; Pond, 1993; Tilden, 1957) and, in addition, to have the flexibility to occasionally assist with finding directions (in a similar way to Cohen's concept of the pathfinder).

Another popular use of the word interpretation is in the field of law, where practitioners (judges and lawyers) give meaning to a legal document, (Tilden, 1957). According to Legal Dictionary (2019), legal interpretation is 'the art or process of determining the intended meaning of a written document, such as a constitution, statue, contract, deed, or will'. It goes on to explain that legal interpretation may seek to find a balance between identifying the plain, original intent of the written law and its specific applicability to the case according to particular circumstances as well as history, tradition and legal precedent (Legal Dictionary, 201). Thus, in this context, it could be argued that methods of interpretation, and indeed the understanding of interpretation in its legal sense, attempt to be significantly more systematic, albeit still allowing for some elasticity of what is understood about the subject or thing that is being interpreted.

Interpretation could also be the assigning of meaning to dreams. In ancient societies, such as Greece and Egypt, dreams were interpreted by people who were associated with spiritual powers (Encyclopedia2, 2019). One of the most famous examples in the Judeo-Christian culture is the biblical story of Joseph's interpretations of Pharao's dreams. In this story, Pharao dreams of seven handsome looking cows, robust in flesh, pastured in the marshland of the Nile. However, seven ugly and lean cows, coming from the Nile, then devour the seven

healthy cows. In the story, Joseph offers an explanation (i.e. an interpretation); the meaning of the dream is that the seven healthy cows represent seven years of economic prosperity, and the seven lean cows represent seven years of extreme famine (Kogan, 2019). Such a form of interpretation may be seen as financial or personal advice as to how the person who had the dream should behave next.

Similarly, in the field of psychology, dream interpretation has long sought to reveal the hidden meaning of dreams although, as the field of psychology and neurology developed into the 20th Century, it took a turn from the purely mystical to a more scientific approach. This was manifested in Freud and Jung's perceived interpretations which argued that people's dreams are a deeper reference to their subconscious awareness of other, more hidden aspects of their lives (Hall, 1983; Strachey, 2010). However, in both the mystical and psychological interpretation of dreams, interpretation aims to identify a problem or a challenge which is hidden, to seek its meaning and perhaps offer a solution. Here, again, the meaning, or solution, are then offered by the interpreter.

Whilst not rebutting these seemingly very different ways of understanding interpretation as a term, Pastorelli (2003) nevertheless attempts to define interpretation, suggesting that it can be a culmination of a number of disciplines. According to him, interpretation 'seeks to generate an increased understanding and appreciation of our environment' (Pastorelli, 2003: 3). In other words, a common theme can be found amongst the varying uses or applications of interpretation if we understand it to be the translation of many things, including languages, buildings, sites, stories, cultures and environment (in the broader sense of the word).

Within the specific context of tourism, the usefulness or value of interpretation has long been acknowledged. For example, Wall and Mathieson (2006) claim that tourism interpretation can help increase environmental awareness and contribute to making visitors more appreciative of and concerned about the nature around them. They further explain that environmental interpretation is used not just to stimulate interest but also the encourage appropriate behaviour. Such stimulation of interest and appropriate behaviour is also a point addressed more generally by Tilden (1957) as he identifies one of the principal differences between interpretation and the mere presentation of facts. Similarly, when explaining the use of stories, Pastorelli (2003: 256) argues that:

Stories are not about people hearing words and sentences and literary phrasings. Stories are about encouraging people to sense and feel, to imagine, to be moved and affected, to see the characters and events, and to experience the story far beyond the literary ingredients.

Interpretation may indeed be a form of educational story-telling; an argument that supports Tilden's principles of interpretation. He states that interpretation is a form of art and, that 'the chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation' (Tilden, 1957: 9). While it may be true, as Tilden suggests, that interpretation has to include an element of provocation, there is however no contradiction in arguing that provocation itself is a form of instruction. Furthermore, as discussed below, good interpretation is often argued to include both instruction – with supporting facts – (Pond, 1993; Weiler & Black, 2015; Wynn, 2011) and provocation by offering a new angle on a story (Weiler & Kim, 2011).

Nevertheless, not only is this is still a rather vague description of what interpretation is, but also it does not clarify what interpretation really aims to do. In contrast, Enos Mills (1920), considered to be the father of interpretation scholarship, was one of the first authors to describe interpretation in detail and to define the characteristics of good interpreters. Although Mills' book is now dated and focuses only on nature guides, several principles can be extracted from his suggestions.

Mills (1920) begins with arguing that the average person only observes about 50 percent of what they see. That is to say, an interpreter can provide at least double the information that the observer sees at a first glance. However, that alone is perhaps insufficient to define interpretation. Over the years, several authors have argued that interpretation is not simply a vocal listing of facts and figures (Grater, 1976; Pond, 1993; Tilden, 1957), whilst Mills himself presented what he considered the qualities of a guide should be and, by default, the aims of interpretation:

> The nature guide is at his best when he discusses facts so that they appeal to the imagination and to the reason, gives flesh and blood to cold facts, makes life stories of inanimate objects. He deals with principles rather than isolated information, gives biographies rather than classifications. (Mills, 1920: 186)

In other words, possessing an eye for the interesting and the unusual is the trait which allows a good interpreter to not only point out to the facts, but also to direct the attention of the listeners/observer to why are these facts important or what is important about them (Grater, 1976; Weiler & Black, 2015). In doing so, Mills (1920) argues, the interpreter 'gives colour' to dry facts, allowing their audience to deal with bigger principles.

Tilden (1957) further emphasises this argument, stating that interpretation aims to reveal the truth that lies behind the facts. This argument may be hindered by the possible subjectivity of the truth as presented by the interpreter. For example, in the case of language interpretation, the interpreter is tasked with finding the closest cultural meaning of a word. In contrast, historians and guides have – according to their personal bias – greater virtual distance and freedom in the process that starts with assembling the facts and giving the 'truthful' meaning of those facts. Moreover, while some truths are hard to argue with, others have greater 'elasticity' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Flyvbjerg, 2001). A simplification of this argument could be that if someone punches a concrete wall, they would undoubtedly break their hand, whereas, trying to understand why Joseph and Magda Göbels murdered their six children may be explained that Magda wanted to take revenge against her husband's indiscretions, or – presenting a very different truth – that she and her husband Joseph Göbels would never consider surrender and have their children captured by the Soviets (Beavor, 2015) and grow up in a non-Nazi reality.

At the same time, interpretation as a means of presenting the truth or a hidden meaning may be closely accompanied by other more extrinsic functions. For example, Mills (1920) argues that interpretation also aims to encourage us to explore, to be intellectually aroused, and to want to reveal more facts. Furthermore, he says, interpretation works on the psychological principle of morale, keeping people happy by being intellectually interested.

3.6 Tourism and the principles of interpretation

As the years progressed following Mills' introduction to the topic of interpretation, participation in travel and tourism increased significantly, particularly in the decades after the Second World War. With it came the awareness of interpretation as part of the experience of tourism, not only though the input of tour guides but also through the activities of tourists themselves. This change must be viewed as a gradual process, from the 1970s to the 2010s, in which people travelling to visit another country or region outside their usual environment

increasingly aimed to gain higher economic utility from their experience (Stasiak, 2013). This process, as argued by Andersson (2007) and Stasiak (2013), acknowledges the role that tourists play in the so-called 'experience economy', a concept popularised by Pine and Gilmore (1999), whereby the experience of tourism has shifted from a mere objective consumption of a product (e.g. a museum, an attraction) to the tourists themselves adopting bigger role in the production of content to achieve greater emotional satisfaction. In that regard, ever-growing attention is given to interpretation as a valuable asset in a variety of tourism situations.

Freeman Tilden's definition of interpretation was a stepping-stone in the development of the theoretical body of knowledge on the topic, revealing much about the position it occupies in the tourism experience. Tilden (1977: 8) defines interpretation as 'an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand [sic.] experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information'. Perhaps unnecessary in this definition is Tilden's elaboration of the 'how' of interpretation. That is, whether in a static museum exhibition or even walking through an old city, objects to be interpreted are not always original. To that end, scholars such as Ladd (1997) and Frank (2015) have pointed out the challenge of the passing of time to conversations about buildings of heritage; if left as they are, such buildings will in time fall apart, damaged by the elements. But if restored with new paint and other materials they will lose their authenticity. Nevertheless, the main gist of the definition remains relevant today; interpretation aims to reveal meanings rather to present than a dry communication of accepted facts.

Building on this theme, Weiler and Black (2015: 18) provide a clearer definition, arguing that interpretation is:

> engagement with tourists/visitors in ways that provoke them to think about and connect with natural and cultural heritage, including places, sites, people, artefacts and natural and historical events, and that foster a sense of care and stewardship among tourists/visitors.

The value of their definition lies in their locating interpretation in the context of tourism and, more specifically, in the guided tour. To understand the practical use of Weiler and Black's

definition, one may need to read it alongside Tilden's (1957) widely cited principles of interpretation. Compiled in the following list, Tilden suggests that:

1. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.
2. Information, as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.
3. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.
4. The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation [i.e. to encourage people to think].
5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part and must address itself to the whole rather than a part.
6. Interpretation addressed to children (say, up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentation of the presentation to adults but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.

Tilden's principles of interpretation certainly sparked curiosity amongst many scholars who followed him. (see for example Beck and Cable, 1998; Moscardo, Woods, and Salzer, 2004; Orams, 1996; Pastorelli, 2003; Pond, 1993; Uzzell, 1998) These scholars sought to improve, update and create a clearer philosophy of interpretation, perhaps most noteworthy being Beck and Cable's (1998) 15 principles of interpretation, as follows:

1. Lighting the spark – referring to the process of how interpreters decide what to interpret to the particular listener, in order to get the listener interested.
2. Interpreting the information – as with Mils and Tilden, the authors repeat the importance of interpretation revealing a deeper meaning of information.
3. Importance of the story – the principles combines entertainments with learning.
4. Provocation – interpretation is meant to inspire people to think further, to expend their horizons.
5. Holistic interpretation – interpretation is presented has a message or a thesis behind it. This should be presented in a form of narrative, which can be understood by the listener.

6. Interpretation throughout the lifespan – rather straight forward, interpretation should be applied differently to people from different age groups. It can be argued that this principle is problematic as it mixes interpretation content with technique (rhythm and other dramaturgical methods).

7. Bringing the past alive – in order to captivate one's audience, interpretation should be done in a lively manner.

8. High-tech gadgetry – interpreters ought to use other means beyond their voice and body to engage their audience.

9. Enough is enough – a good interpreter knows how to create a succinct presentation of the content.

10. Technique before art – before knowledge itself, interpreters need to master communication techniques that will enable the interpretation itself to reach its audience.

11. Interpretive composition – this principle refers specifically to interpretation in writing. Here, the authors emphasise the need for the interpreter to consider their audience and what they would like to know.

12. Attracting support and making friends – explained with reference to interpretation programs, this principle calls for the interpreter to consider the larger picture of their interpretation. That is to say, remember the tourist is on a tour, the student is one a degree course, etc.

13. Interpretive beauty – this principle refers to environmental interpretation and the need for it to assist in the visitor increased appreciation of the beauty around them. In the wider context of this research, that is the interpretation of guides in dark tourism sites, this particular principle is rendered moot.

14. Promoting optimal experiences – once more, the authors remind the interpreter that a positive experience will make the interpretation more efficient; their audience will remember more, take more with them from the interpretation.

15. Passion – successful interpretation is ultimately a function of how much passion the interpreter has for the subject matter.

Back and Cable (1998) acknowledge the respect they hold for Mills' and Tilden's earlier works when building their own framework of interpretation. However, they remain within the frame of environmental and heritage interpretation and, hence much room is left for

expanding on the application of interpretation through the use of the above definitions and principles.

3.7 Forms of interpretation in the tourism industry

Over the years, interpretation found its way into a variety of tourism attractions, sites, museums and tours. The principles of interpretation as developed by Mills, Tilden, Pastorelli and others can now be seen applied either with or without the use of a diverse array of technological aids. In order to illustrate the numerous ways in which interpretation can be provided, the following list provides examples of interpretation within the tourism sector:

1. *Information signs*: often outdoors, information signs present the story of a place, event, a statue, a piece of art or a piece of commemoration art, detailing in one more language the meaning of what is seen.

2. *Information signs in museums*: usually a part of a permanent exhibition in a museum, these serve as the main access to the topic of the museum or exhibition, and are typically longer than outdoor signs.

3. *Audio-guides*: hand-held, or hanging round the neck with an ear piece, audio-guides provide an explanation, an interpretation, a short story or a recording of quote, which helps the visitor to understand the exhibition they are visiting. In the past, these had to be operated manually, whereas more current ones operate on proximity with the interpretation, without the visitor being required to type in a number of an interpretation station.

4. *Brochures and information leaflets*: either provided at the entrance to a museum, a site or an attraction, these provide interpretation of the place, usually with other useful information, such as the location of various items on exhibit or the location of various items/sections of the exhibition.

5. *Virtual Reality (VR):* said to be the future of tourism interpretation, VR devices are rapidly finding their ways into tourism sites (Guerra, Pinto and Beato, 2015). Still carrying a relatively high production and operation costs, the technology of VR allows sites or guides to present pictures and videos of how places used to look, or even how they may look in the future. Although this is not within the scope of this thesis, it is likely that tour guides – like other tourism industry stakeholders - will be faced in the near future with the question of how to integrate VR in their tours (Guttentag, 2010).

6. *Paper pictures or pictures on tablets*: tour guides often use a folder or a tablet to present pictures of how the site looked like in the past. This supplements their verbal interpretation.

7. *Re-enactment or costume wearing*: some guides may use costumes to in order to 'get into the role' of a character in a story they are interpreting. For example, walking in a palace, a guide may choose to wear a full costume with makeup of a famous king in order better tell his story, and perhaps first to promote the tour and attract potential customers.

8. *Boat or bus audio interpretation on speakers*: commonly on small city boat cruises or hop-on hop-off bus tours, these interpretations are fix audio recordings, played for the tourist to hear as they go passed famous attractions of the destination.

The common theme in almost all of the above forms of interpretation is that they were created to be static (items 6 and 7 being the exception). That is to say, the interpretation content was written by an education, academic or marketing department and is then recorded to be used in the same way multiple times. It can be argued that these fixed forms of interpretation are suitable to the needs of the museum or site they interpret. Indeed, their importance is well explained by Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998: 7) who argues that 'display is an interface that mediates and thereby transforms what is shown into heritage'. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1988) goes on to suggest that objects not only show but also produce meaning of culture and heritage. It can be argued, however, that by being fixed and generally difficult or time consuming to change, they have a disadvantage of not being able to adapt to the diversity of people who are the target of the interpretation. Thus, although fixed and dynamic (verbal or live) forms of interpretation share the trait of production of meaning, they nevertheless differ significantly in how they are performed, and for what purpose. The following section will review the extant literature on interpretation undertaken specifically by tour guides.

3.8 Interpretation in the field of tour guiding

The conceptual integration of interpretation into the field of tour guiding is now widely acknowledged and is often referred to as interpretive guiding. Weiler and Black (2015: 49) observe that interpretive guiding aims to 'reveal meaning and relationships of objects, places and events'. This succinct explanation in effect blends Pastorelli's (2003) definition of

interpretation, referred to earlier in this chapter (see section 3.5.1), with the practice of guiding, in as much as interpretive guiding applies the principles of interpretation to tour guiding in order to achieve various outcomes, such as generating tourist satisfaction, enhancing the visitor experience, developing understanding of the place visited, influencing visitor attitudes, and so on. According to Weiler and Black (2015), being outcome-oriented and the use interpretation principles is what makes guiding interpretive. The veracity of this claim may, however, prove difficult to establish. In certain situations, for example, even the presentation of cold facts in a monotonous tone can provoke thought, leaving the listener with questions or requiring them to come up with answers. Indeed, contrary to Weiler and Black's view, it can be argued that within the context of certain sites and topics, the site itself may be dramatic enough to allow the outcomes of interpretation to take place even if the interpretation itself is unintended or minimalistic. Thus, according to Miles (2002), the authenticity of a site may act as a sufficient force in provoking emotions amongst visitors to dark tourism sites. For example, in tourism sites commemorating the victims of genocide – such as in Cambodia, Rwanda or Poland – the event presented at the site is in itself sufficient to provoke thoughts and emotions (Sharpley & Friedrich, 2015), without the addition of drama or interpretive guiding.

Perhaps following on from this argument, Pond (1993) questions whether guiding and interpretation are synonymous. As she rightfully explains, interpretation is no longer limited to an activity occurring only nature parks alone, as it may have been in the days of Enos Mills. Rather, it is now part and parcel of the entire tourism industry, including museums, visitor centres (Pastorelli, 2003) and, of course, with the work of tour guides. Although Pond (1993) does propose that interpretation and guiding are virtually synonymous, she nevertheless makes a distinction between the interpreter who takes a formal state role, and the one who only represents themselves. Whereas the more formal one may be more engaged in interpretation as part of their formal role with the aim of, for example, conveying messages and values as they are understood by the state authorities (Pond, 1993), the other is more focused on entertaining and making sure that the customer enjoys their holiday.

Nearly two decades since Pond's book was published, other authors have argued to the contrary, claiming that regardless of whether guides are state employed or 'free market', both engage in various forms of interpretation and have the potential to convey different positive messages (see, for example, Gelbman & Maoz, 2012; Weiler & Kim, 2011). This implies that

that conveying messages (personal or state views) and taking care of customer satisfaction are not contradictory activities, but mutually supportive.

As argued earlier in this chapter, interpretation can be undertaken in different ways, using methods that present varying amounts of information on the event or site. They could allow the site to 'speak for itself', or a combination of several might employed. Hot interpretation is one such method of interpretation which is notable for its description of the practical application of interpretation. As Uzzell and Balantyne (1998: 502) explain:

> The principle behind hot interpretation is that although a detached, cool and objective approach to the presentation and assessment of information and subsequent decision-making is seen as highly desirable in our society, there are many decisions that we make in both our private and public lives where a purely rational Vulcan-like approach is difficult, impossible or even undesirable.

The authors argue that, in life, we rarely stand from an outsider observer point of view. In other words, it can be argued that the interpreter's bias refelects their emotions, personal experiences, gender, age, political agenda, and even the political events of that week. Uzzell and Balantyne (1998: 154) then define hot interpretation as 'interpretation that appreciates the need for and injects an affective component into its subject matter'. This implies a use of psychological tools by the interpreter to arouse emotions, to encourage their audience to reflect, react and, ultimately, understand the message conveyed. Examples of such psychological tools may include crying or shedding a tear after telling a particularly tragic story, adding strong adjectives to the story's protagonist, offering gory descriptions of death or torture, or raising or lowering the tone of voice at a particularly dramatic part of the story.

When these tools are not used, the interpretational style may be termed as cold interpretation, insinuating that the information is given factually with little or no dramaturgical tools applied by the guide to enhance emotions (e.g. excessive body language, fluctuations in the tone or volume of the voice, and so on.), and with little or no additional explanation other than the provision of numbers and names (e.g. 'the prisoners were brought here every day at five in the morning', said in a monotonous tone). However, perhaps a limitation in Uzzell and Balantyne's (1998) argument that the cold factual presentation of information may not arouse

emotions is that it does not take into account the interpreter's ability to choose certain words or phrases which may then achieve the same desirable effect. Furthermore, it may be important to note that Uzzell and Balantyne's reference to 'our society' is inaccurate, as tourists are diverse in that they come from multiple ethnicities, ages, social strata, and even the mood they are in on the day of the tour.

Nevertheless, the use of such techniques, with varying levels of 'hot' or 'cold' methods of interpretation, is an acknowledgement that among professional tour guides, interpretation is fluid and organic (Grater, 1976; Pond, 1993; Tilden, 1977; Wynn, 2011). Thus, interpreting a building, an environment or an event is undertaken through the telling of an anecdote and is implemented in different ways. Some guides refer to the way they interpret a particular site or event as their 'spiel' – a German word that literally translates as game, used in English to refer to a set way a person has of presenting or performing something many times in the same way (Goffman, 1959; Wynn, 2011). Furthermore, guides talk about tricks of the trade or story telling tricks (Wynn, 2011) to convey their interpretation. Following an ethnographic exploration of tour guides in New York, Wynn (2011) details his findings of these so-called 'tricks':

1. Perfect guiding moment – talking about a broad theme, whilst adding drama to story. In the right moment, this allows the guide to 'reel in' various point from the tour into one message or perception (social, cultural or historical). For example, a guide can talk about the Cold War and their perception of the political duality of the word at the time, through dramatization of the events at Check Point Charlie (Frank, 2015) and the near eruption of another world war.

2. The Twist – in order to keep their audience listening and engaged, guides will use examples to break myths and stereotypes, to correct or question common perceptions. One can ask the tourists, for example, if they think Germans are always on time. When the common positive answer comes, the guide can then bring ample evidence to the contrary.

3. Evocation – guides may use acting to go in and out of character in order to re-enact a scene or a part of an event. To do that, guides use excessive body language, accents and different voices, as if they are on a theatre stage.

4. The Joke – although it cannot be argued that all guides are natural born comedians, many do feel the need to incorporate jokes into their guiding. Providing the moment is

right, and the group chemistry works, this can be an essential tool to change pace in a middle of the tour. Jokes are used to make transitions in narrative, often at the end of one guiding point, before moving on to the next.

5. Juxtaposition – this interpretational tool takes sometimes odd facts, seemingly disconnected from one another, to encourage the tourists to engage in different parts of the world around them.

6. The Break – guide allow breaks in particular points of interest. This gives people a chance to take pictures, or engage in an informal interaction between them. The break is also a mental pause, which allows tourists to gather strength to concentrate and listen again to the guide when returning from the break.

7. Show, don't tell – this pedagogic-dramaturgical tool uses the tourists as foil for the guide's next point. The guide can show a picture, a sign or a building, and ask the tourists what they think. Almost every answer can then be used to prove the point the guide wanted to convey.

8. Defuse – Here, Wynn refers to the nature of the guide's working environment, i.e. the city. There are many distractions, noises, problems with spaces on the pavements and many others. Guides use polite phrases in many forms to get their groups to behave in certain ways, according to different situations.

As translators of culture, guides work in between their guests, the destination they are interpreting and their own identity (Pastorelli, 2003). To do that, they must use interpretation of their own cultural identity, and the role it plays in the relations they have with the destination or site they are interpreting (Meged, 2010). According to Reisinger and Steiner (2006), to provide what the authors refer to as 'authentic guiding', guides must discover who they are and the heritage that shapes their identity.

3.9 Distinguishing the disciplines of heritage and history
Thus far, this chapter has discussed the various forms of interpretation in different fields of study and occupations. In so doing, it has pointed to the complexities of what might be described as the heritage-history debate and, in particular, discussions surrounding the meaning of heritage. Long considered to be closely linked, history and heritage have, in some quarters, come to be seen as almost opposing way of conceptualising the past. As one of the pioneers of heritage and memory studies, Lowenthal (1985) argues strongly in favour of history as a scientific discipline, claiming history draws on reliable sources to establish

historical truth aided by socially accepted evidence. For him, this means that the process of producing and documenting history should be as impartial as possible, based on reason, transparent and emply integrity and precision (Frank, 2015). Therefore, Lowenthal defines history as 'scholarly effort […] to understand what is generally agreed to be the true past on its own terms' (cited in Frank, 2015: 36).

It may be useful to first briefly locate the heriatge-history debate within the historical context in which it happened. The 1990s brought about major global political changes, along with the opening of borders and even the birth and redefinition of several national states (for example, the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the subsequent formation of five new countries, and the reunification of the German Democratic Republic with the Federal Republic of Germany). Undoubtedly, the further opening of borders influenced the travel and tourism industry on a global scale (Banaszkiewicz, 2017; Light, 2000), whilst these changes encouraged many countries, existing or newly formed, to find new ways of telling their past. However, as Lowenthal (1985) argues, rather than completely erasing the 'true' historical narrative, new regimes often go through a process of editing or 'fine tuning' the history taught at schools according to the new policy and ideology of the state (Lowenthal, 1985, 1998). Of relevance to this thesis, Ladd (1998) similarly argues that the interpretation of each particular era in Berlin's history gave the city its own special layer of cultural and political identity. In later years, Lowenthal continued to argue that 'heritage attests our identity and affirms our worth… When the patriot upholds "my country, right or wrong", heritage tells him it is always right'. (Lowenthal, 1998: 8). Importantly, Lowenthal does not hide his resentment regarding the risk of confusing heritage with history.

However, it can be argued that referring to heritage as an instrument for the implementation of political ideology or a narrative to build the ethos of new countries or regimes (Feldman, 2008) falls short in failing to take global sociological changes into account. Heritage, then, is argued to be interwoven beyond the political and social context of a place and into the part it plays as a sector of the tourism industry. Urry (1990) was influential in advancing the theoretical ideas underpinning the ways in which tourists 'consume' the sites they visit, ideas which would subsequently lead to other scholars (see, for example, Frank, 2015; Lowenthal, 1998; Rojek, 1993) claiming that heritage today is a mere reflection of what tourists demand from their time on a holiday. In other words, they argue that distinct pasts or historical cultural traits have been converted into commercially marketable goods in order to satisfy the

tourists' wish for information that is easy to digest and to bring home in a form of a souvenir (Urry, 1990). Hewison (1989) goes further in claiming that museums – as well as other sectors of the tourism industry – are not only places of consumption of history but, by displaying heritage, have turned into places of 'production' of history.

When considering the link between tourism and heritage from that perspective, tourism takes an active role, and is indeed a driving force, in the evolution of heritage. A heritage site or an event may depict events in a more dramatic manner, in order to serve visitors' hunger for the spectacular and exceptional (Frank, 2015). As a result, places which may have originally wished to tell stories of particular historical events in order to educate move towards the adoption of an approach that is consumption oriented (Hewison, 1989). Urry (1990) goes on to ask: if there is no heritage industry, how would history be appropriated? Urry rightfully points out that as heritage plays the role of the presenter of history, it is almost inescapable that history gets distorted, and that it is more occupied with the visualisation of events in order to serve the social function of the tourist experience.

Within the argument of heritage's role in the commercialisation of history, Frank (2015) brings us back to the postmodern coupling between culture (i.e. history as it used to exist in the realm of high society alone) and pleasure and consumption (i.e. in the age of social emphasis on the importance of leisure). However, this postmodernist interpretation, which manifests itself in the social practice of tourism activity, neglects to take into account the fact that visitors to a historical site visit it 'today' rather than at the time of the event; the time of the heritage which the site is displaying. Thus, as Lowenthal (1985: 216) explains 'the passage of time that has outdated the past limits our understanding of it, for everything we see is filtered through present-day mental lenses'. The significance of this statement in relation to Urry, Rojek, Frank and others who apply the postmodernist critical approach is that, as visitors, we may not have other ways of understanding history other than through the lens of the era we live in.

Continuing in that vein, Lowenthal (1985) highlights the temporal obstacle to tourists understanding the past, which is supplemented by Boas' (1941) concept of Cultural Glasses'. Historical events, then, are being distorted not only by political 'tweaking' of details, or by present consumption patterns, but also by the visitors' diverse backgrounds and ability to interpret what is interpreted to them at the site/museum they visit. Hence, as Frank (2015)

summarises, history can no longer be thought of as a neutral concept. Instead, it has to be understood as a plurality of meanings. Similarly, Lowenthal (1998) is useful here, explaining that fiction does not have to be considered as an opposite of fact. Rather, that it can be thought of as a complementary tool, to ensure the long lusting impressions of our lives. This brings to light the significance of the interplay between fact and fiction, highlighting one of the main objectives of this thesis: the examination of how guides interpret various dark events.

3.10 Tour guides in dark tourism research

Having considered then literature on the roles and practices of tour guides in general and on the relationship between interpretation and guiding in particular, this section now turns to a review of the literature focusing on the role of the tour guide in the specific context of dark tourism. Perhaps surprisingly, only limited research has been undertaken to date; at the time of writing, only three publications could be found; the work of anthropologist Jackie Feldman (2002, 2008) is not considered here, as he explores the interpretational and socio-political impact of an entire experience, rather than the specific role played by tour guides.

This section, then, reviews Sharon Macdonald's (2006) *Mediating heritage: tour guides at the former Nazi Rally Grounds*, Alon Gelbman and Darya Maoz's (2012) *Island of peace or island of war: Tourist guiding*, and Bernadette Quinn and Theresa Ryan's (2016) *Tour guide and the mediation of difficult memories: The case of Dublin Castle, Ireland*. The review compares the following five aspects of their research: the aim of the research, research methods, theoretical approach, main findings, and identified further research opportunities.

Pioneering the combined research fields of dark tourism and tour guides, Macdonald (2006) argues that there is a need for a better understanding of what is involved in the cultural mediation role of tour guides, whether harmonious or not. The research in this case arises from the author's broader aim of exploring the contemporary treatment of the Nazi past of the city of Nuremberg focusing specifically on the site of the Nuremberg Rallies. In contrast to her exploration of dealing with difficult heritage, Alon Gelbman and Darya Maoz (2012) approach their research from the starting point that tourism can be a tool to promote peace and reduced political tensions. Based on the case study of the so-called 'Island of Peace', a border strip between Israel and Jordan, their research focuses on the manner and extent to which tour guides integrate messages of peace into their narratives. Their hypothesis is

grounded on a situation where a site of a tragic death is at the same time called the Island of Peace, clearly pointing out to the site's official mission statement. The third study in this review (Quinn & Ryan, 2016) is similar to that Gelbman and Maoz (2012) in that it deals with mediating role of tour guides at a site of difficult events which took place in the very recent past; a site which is now at peace. The authors examine the tour guides' interpretation of difficult memories at Dublin Castle, the former site of the British rule in Ireland. Indeed, as Quinn and Ryan (2016) argue, examination of tour guide interpretation becomes more challenging when the history interpreted is open to negotiation and contestation. It can be argued that temporality is the main difference here. In other words, whereas in Nuremberg the events interpreted by tour guides took place more than 60 years prior to the research, in the other two cases the interpretation deals with peace agreements reached within the past 20 years; that is, within the lifetime of most visitors. Interestingly, this point is referred several times in the works of both Frank (2015) and Ladd (1998) who comment on heritage being narrated to people who experienced it only two decades ago.

In terms of site and research methods, the three studies explore sites of varying levels of popularity, but where regular tours are guided. The sites are all state/city owned, managed by local foundations, and employ their own internal guides. The findings of Macdonald's (2006) research are derived from her broader research and are based on observations of tour guides on tours in the former Nazi rally grounds in Nuremberg, as well as on interviews amongst the guides and other relevant people. Through a similar participant observation process, Gelbman and Maoz (2012) joined guided tours at the Island of Peace. Here, the authors observed the guides' interpretation in order to evaluate the potential for cultural mediation; in other words, rather than looking at guides as 'simple' information providers, they specifically observed and evaluated the mediating nuances within the guides' narratives. Quinn and Ryan (2016) continue to contribute to this small body of theory with their participant observations and semi-structured interviews. Unlike the two other studies discussed here, they obtained permission from the authority running the site and participated in the tours as tourists, taking notes and then later interviewing the guides. Although this approach of complete participation may be ethically problematic, it did allow the researchers to immerse themselves in the tour as tourists. Hence, the guides unfolded their tour narrative whilst being unaware of the existence of a watching eye; had they been aware, they may have censored or altered their narratives. In the following chapter in this thesis, I will discuss how, in comparison, during my own participant observation I obtained permission from guides to

observe and record their tours while in most cases, they were also aware of me being a tour guide like them.

Macdonald's (2006) theoretical approach is based on using the term 'encoding', rather than interpreting. More precisely, she uses this term to describe and explore the ways in which guides choose to interpret a site/event. Thus, the *medium* is a guided tour, and the *genre* is the type of tour, such as to a site of atrocity (for example, a former concentration camp) or a highlights tour in a city. Furthermore, according to MacDonald, audiences (i.e. tourists) are both imagined prior to the tour and encountered at the beginning of the tour. The encoding process is therefore dynamic, evolving between these two phases. Finally, *materialities* could be anything from pictures shown by the guide to the buildings on site.

Gelbman and Maoz (2012) incorporate a theoretical approach that is directly related to the name of the site they are researching: the Island of Peace. Thus, they refer to studies that dealing with the potential of tourism to promote peace and enhance understanding between people of nations with a past of war and conflict. More specifically, then, is the role tour guides play in the experience of (usually) domestic tourists in border tourism; the latter – as the Gelbman and Maoz (2012) argue – is an element of the broader phenomenon of dark tourism. As a result of this combination of circumstances (the dark past of the site, its border location, its name that indicates an intention to encourage peace and understanding), the mediating role of tour guides is viewed by the authors as a sensitive one. They argue that guides have the power to either encourage peace and mutual border collaboration or, in contrast, to emphasise the 1997 attack in which a Jordanian soldier shot seven 11 years old girls.

In the case of Dublin Castle, Quinn and Ryan (2016) face a different set of circumstances, where visitors in mixed (heterogeneous) groups could include both Irish (domestic) and English (and other international) tourists visiting the site with potentially opposing emotions and clashing views and perceptions of history. Here, like the other two researchers, the theoretical framework is the matching of dark tourism and tour guide literature, with a specific focus on memory theory.

Arguably, all three sites examined can be socially and politically contested and can be viewed as sites of 'sensitive' or controversial heritage. The main difference, perhaps, is that in the

case of the Nazi Rally Grounds, Macdonald examines how the city of Nuremberg itself as well as the site managers and guides are dealing with a more remote past and a collective responsibility. Conversely, tour guides at the Island of Peace and Dublin Castle are interpreting more recent events, events that may have even been witnessed or experienced via media, and during the lifetime of the visitors. Moreover, in both cases, the (Israel-Jordan and the Irish) cease fire agreements are relatively recent and their narratives are still widely contested by all stakeholders (Gelbman & Maoz, 2012; Quinn & Ryan, 2016).

Macdonald reveals how guides receive a basic script from which they are encouraged to undertake further research on their own; in this way, they engage in encoding meanings that they then bring to their on-site mediation (within the guiding). As the site itself has education as one of its formal missions, guides also receive recommended activities as part of the recommended reading list. Tours usually last two hours and group sizes vary. Macdonald also points out the significance of guides being employed by the foundation running the site. In other words, they are 'internal' guides and their positioning is very much in line with the way the site is managed. Furthermore, the guides are mostly history students with no or little guiding qualification prior to their work at the site. As part of their on-site training, they attend seminars and observe the work of experienced guides. Macdonald (2006: 127) states that 'the main variations made by guides are those flagged up as alternatives in the script itself… This is a context, then, in which guides are committed to the encoding preferred by the organization for which they work'. She goes on to explore the differences between the medium of guiding with those of TV or electronic media. Although this comparison may be relevant in terms of potential means of conveying information (and its absorption), it can be argued that a more fitting comparison may have been with class room face-to-face teaching. Nevertheless, tour guiding can be seen as a medium of narrative that is completely distinctive from media or teaching.

Unique to guiding in Nuremberg as opposed to at Dublin Castle or the Island of Peace is the clear educational aim of the site. As such, guides also encourage relevant reading on their tours and, in doing so, their mediation extends beyond the more common forms of guiding where guides complement story telling with pictures. Nevertheless, all three studies point to the difficulty that guides have in balancing the telling of 'difficult heritage'. Macdonald refers to the complex process of encouraging visitor reading, which entails visual mediation,

temporal mediation (connection between past events to present and even future possibilities) and identity mediation (connecting the site to the event).

These three studies have taken an important first step in contributing to knowledge of tour guide interpretation of dark tourism; touching the surface of how tour guides operate in dark sites. That is, a significant gap in academic literature remains, namely in the tools used by guides to decide how to interpret dark sites and events, their ways of interpreting events to diverse typology of tourists, and their dealing with the dynamic nature of their work as interpreters of dark tourism. Therefore, this research seeks to address these gaps, with a focused exploration of the connection between dark tourism and tour guiding research.

3.11 Chapter summary

This thesis set out to explore tour guide interpretation under the circumstances of the phenomenon of dark tourism in Berlin. After identifying the main theoretical themes of dark tourism relevant to the particular variety of Berlin in Chapter 2, this chapter has discussed the concept of the contemporary urban guide – the key focus of this thesis. Such a discussion is important as tour guides and the roles they undertake may still be variously understood by readers of this thesis. Moreover, from the literature reveiwed in this chapter it is evident that there continues to exist significant gaps in the tour guiding research. The role of guides within the tourism industry in general is one such gap, whilst their performances, their impact on the tourist experience and, indeed, their approaches to interpretation (the main focus of this thesis) have also been revealed as requiring further research.

Additionally, it has been established that inseparable to the work of the guide is the theoretical work on heritage and interpretation. Hence, theoretical discussions of these two concepts and their place in the tourism industry have been presented as a framework for the empirical research of Chapter 5. Finally, the chapter has identified the limited empirical research conducted to date on guides as interpreters of dark tourism in particular. Reviewing three extant studies, the chapter has illustrated the need to address the role of tour guides within the unique contecx of dark tourism.

This sets the stage for the following chapter that will consider the rationale for the methodology adopted in this thesis, as well as for the specific methods selected for this research as a distinctive approach to analysingthe work of tour guides.

Chapter 4

Research Methodology

4.0 Introduction

Having established the aims and objectives of this thesis in the first, introductory chapter, Chapters 2 and 3 then reviewed the relevant literature in order to provide the theoretical framework for the research. Specifically, Chapter 2 explored the literature on dark tourism, highlighting in particular gaps in extant knowledge, whilst Chapter 3 focused on the tour guide and on interpretation.

As explained in Chapter 1, in Berlin the two worlds of dark tourism and tour guides are frequently interlinked. Being an experienced tour guide in the city, my work life too connects these two worlds. For this reason, from this point on in this the thesis I will use the first-person pronoun rather than concealing my identity as the researcher. Given the context of this research and my own role in it, Cole's (2005: 64) argument is instructive; he claims that 'the use of the first-person singular is an attempt to avoid disguising the researcher as neutral'. However, as I explain in more detail later in this chapter, although as a guide amongst guides I am not neutral, I nevertheless maintain the use of scientific methods of data collection and analysis as a means of injecting objectivity into the research.

In this chapter, I aim to explore my role in the research and the choice and suitability of the constructivist qualitative research paradigm in order to obtain better, more nuanced knowledge of the Berlin tour guides and their interpretation of dark tourism sties and events in the city. In addition, I analyse and describe the methods employed to collect data and, consequently, the writing and analysis of the data.

4.1 Anthropology and tourism

Tourism research has long experienced the inherent predicament of not being considered as a traditional field of study within an identifiable, distinctive discipline (Sharpley, 2011; Tribe, 1997). Nunez and Lett (1989) argue that, for a long time, tourism studies was not even considered a 'proper' field of studies, requiring researchers to publish in various other fields,

such as economics or geography. Some even go as far as claiming that tourism research is as fragmented as the industry itself (Ritchie, Burns & Palmer, 2005). While this latter point may be a slight exaggeration, the relative 'youth' of tourism as a standalone field of research does mean that tourism scholars still feel the need to be accepted by the wider academic community (Tailon, 2014), whether in geography, psychology, environmental studies, economics, sociology or anthropology (Weiler, Moyle & McLennan, 2012).

My thesis is no exception. Although it is treated as the study of tour guides' interpretation within the frame of dark tourism, I argue that the combination of tour guides and dark tourism is a significant sub-culture outwith the tourism industry which has an impact on society sufficient to merit the need to find new truths about it. This thesis, therefore, leans towards the field of anthropology. For this reason, anthropology was chosen as the research discipline, whereby the theoretical body explored in Chapters 2 and 3 can be applied to accomplish the aims of the research.

According to the American Anthropological Association, anthropology is defined as 'the study of humans, past and present. To understand the full sweep and complexity of cultures across all of human history, anthropology draws and builds upon knowledge from the social and biological sciences as well as the humanities and physical sciences' (American Anthropological Association, 2020). Kottak (2005) explains that, in contrast to the common perception that it is the study of remote non-industrial societies, anthropology is in fact the science of comparing cultures in many types of societies, old and new, simple and complex. Nevertheless, historically, anthropologists were predominantly interested in the relations between subordinate and dominant societies, perhaps playing the respective traditional roles of hosts and guests or forms of cultural invaders. Hence, the focus of anthropology was largely on the changes within indigenous cultures (Nunes & Lett, 1989).

This perspective has undoubtedly transformed over recent decades. Indeed, the American Anthropological Association's emphasis on the words 'across all of human history' points to the evolution of the discipline beyond the bounds of the subordinate-dominant paradigm. Nevertheless, descriptions or definitions of anthropology have remained more or less unchanged, with various scholars arguing that anthropologists 'describe, interpret, and explain social and cultural similarities and differences' (Kottak, 2005: 3) or that anthropology 'is more concerned with human culture and social diversity explored through long term

ethnographic fieldwork' (Canosa, Moyle, Moyle & Weiler, 2017: 1). Thus, I argue that although the aim of anthropology as a field of study has not undergone considerable change, its scope has nevertheless expanded to include the exploration of many more aspects of all human cultures.

Perhaps one source of confusion in the discourse of anthropology as a field of study is the extent to which it branches into other fields, such as biology, linguistics, archaeology, geography and others (Kottak, 2005; Levi-Strauss, 1963; Smith, 1989). The pluralistic nature of anthropology, studying various aspects of human culture from many different perspectives, may pose a challenge for an outside scholar trying to understand what it is that anthropologists are concerned with. It is, therefore, crucial to understand that while they may seem in some respects indistinguishable from scientists who are biologists or psychologists, anthropologists are still concerned with the larger issues of human cultures that can also be explored through the lens of these and other academic fields (Chambers, 1987; Levi-Strauss, 1963; Schweizer, 1998). Hence, it is important for this thesis to distinguish the work of anthropologists intertwined with the fields of biology, psychology, archaeology and others from that of academics concerned with the study of anthropology in tourism.

What, then, are the main issues that tourism anthropologists concern themselves with? For Graburn (1983), the anthropology of tourism focuses on either the study of tourists and tourism or on the study of the economic, social and cultural impacts of tourism on host communities. Similarly, Stronza (2001) argues that research in tourism anthropology can be divided into studies of the origins of tourism (as a socio-cultural phenomenon) and studies into the impacts of tourism. Nevertheless, Stronza (2001) also acknowledges that this rather simple binary categorisation is limited in that the study of the origins of tourism mostly focuses on tourists themselves, excluding the many stakeholders involved in the tourism industry, and that the study of tourism's impacts is usually concerned with the consequences of tourism for so-called local people whilst ignoring those for tourists themselves.

To a large extent, these issues may also be divided into the sub-categories of:
  i.   Forms of imperialism,
  ii. Cultural commodification,
  iii. The relations between so-called 'hosts' and 'guests'.
(Nunez & Lett, 1989; Riley & Love, 2000; Sharpley, 2018).

The argument that tourism is a form imperialism deals with the economic impacts of tourism from an anthropological perspective. Specifically, as noted above, Nunez and Lett (1989) argue that, historically, tourism anthropologists employed a paradigm of dominant and subordinate cultural relations to explore the economic consequences of tourism development. In this context, they focused mainly on the changes that occurred in the subordinate culture; the destination – usually a poor country – was being changed socially and economically by tourists from rich countries. A limitation of this paradigm, however, is that nowadays greater numbers of visitors tend to visit developed countries. That is, much contemporary tourism occurs in rich, complex societies (Nash, 1981) and some of the most popular destinations globally are Paris, New York and London. Hence, not all destinations can be easily referred to as subordinate societies.

Closely related to this are issues of commodification, dealing with the topics of the (in)authenticity of products and experiences being sold to tourists (Edensor, 2001) and the more general packaging of culture and heritage for tourist consumption. It was, and is, the influences of such commodification on destination societies that researchers found interesting (see, for example, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998; MacCannell, 1989; Wallace, 2005). However, these research foci tended to ignore potential avenues of anthropological research (Nash, 1981; Wallace, 2005), such as transformations in the behaviour and experiences themselves. Furthermore, the anthropology of tourism gravitated towards viewing tourism as the social phenomenon of tourists and their impacts on destinations (Echtner & Jamal, 1997; Wallace, 2005), but almost completely ignoring the sheer size of the multi-cultures of the sub-sectors involved in the broad tourism industry. In contrast, Tribe (2005) has demonstrated that the earlier and relatively limited tourism research avenues of either being business-oriented or impact-focused are slowly changing, adopting a variety of new foci and even new paradigms. Nevertheless, I would argue that dealing with impacts of tourism or with relations between so-called 'hosts' and 'guests' may be referred to as the **anthropology of tourists**, whereas, researching the inner worlds of the transport, hospitality and service sectors can be more accurately described as the **anthropology of tourism**.

Naturally, my research falls under the bracket of the second. As discussed in Chapter 3, Pond (1993) addresses the problem of where to position tour guides within in the tourism industry as seen from a macro perspective. Should guides be considered, for example, to belong to the

hospitality sector? On the one hand, guides are not a physical place where people stay the night. On the other hand, it can be argued that modern hotels employ staff in various departments who are de facto the hosts of the tourists. However, even those working in the front office or restaurant have arguably little contact with the tourists, while guides spend between several hours to several days hosting tourists in the destination where they – the guides – live. Or perhaps the anthropological study of guides should be undertaken from the perspective of guides offering a service, just like restaurants, souvenir vendors or tour operators. Notwithstanding this sector placement difficulty, however, I argue that guides occupy their own distinctive sub-category, one which is both significant on the global scale and, more importantly, which occupies an interesting position (deserving of academic research) between tourists and the destinations they visit.

4.2 The use of qualitative data collection in tourism research

Between the ages of 23 to 25, as a travel agency representative, I had the opportunity to observe some 30 groups of tourists on their guided visits to a variety of places, from memorial sites to former Nazi extermination camps in Poland. This was not a part of a research project but, as I listened to the guides, I remember my thoughts clearly as many questions rushed through: Why did he use this word? Why is she telling this story? That seems a bit too dramatic! Does it need to be like that? What is this meant to achieve? How do they know that? Should they generalise like that? 20 years later, being a guide is now the essence of my professional being. These questions are still there, but the difference is that I am now endeavouring to research them and, when possible, to offer scientifically valid answers. Therefore, to explore interpretation in dark tourism, one has to understand how epistemology and ontology function in the context of tourism more generally.

Phillimore and Goodson (2004: 3) provide us with a relatively concise explanation of the process of qualitative research, stating that 'qualitative methods are employed to collect data about activities, events, occurrences and behaviours and to seek an understanding of actions, problems and processes in their social context'. Arguing that qualitative research covers ground unseen by positivist quantitative research, I would suggest that a good starting point for justifying the use of qualitative methods is if the questions asked cannot be answered precisely by quantitative methods (Erickson, 2018; Hartmann, 1988; Lincoln & Guba, 2013; Nash, 1981). For example, a patient using a new medicine is required to type one of four options to answer whether the new ointment made their skin itchy. But instead of answering

'very, not so much, not at all, or not applicable', the patient starts to think along the lines of 'maybe, but not all the time, and earlier I touched poison ivy…' Of course, this example is intentionally simplistic. Tourism and, specifically, dark tourism is significantly more intricate, often involving emotions which are hard to define or measure, or political views which are sensitive and controversial. However, the crucial epistemological point is that qualitative research stands on its own as a different form of knowledge, not one that needs to compete with the more traditional quantitative positivism (Lincoln & Guba, 2013; Morgan & Smircich, 1980; Phillimore & Goodson, 2004). It is the details of how individuals think and feel which can then lead us to a more profound knowledge of societies and cultures, leading to the usability of social science.

In attempting to understand tourism, there is a need to consider epistemology and ontology in the context of tourism as a social activity. According to Guba (1990), epistemology is the relation between knowledge and the 'knower'. Similarly, this can be phrased as the nature of 'truth' and, as Penecky and Jamal (2010: 1068) argue, the 'main focus is on interpretation, context, and language; what counts as "truth" is based on interpretation'. With this in mind, Phillimore and Goodson (2004: 4) make a particularly useful point, claiming that 'qualitative inquiry can generate theory out of research, should place emphasis on understanding the world from the perspective of its participants, and should view social life as being the result of interaction and interpretations' Hence, in the case of dark tourism, the nuances of tour guide interpretation can lead to new truths about such things as: the formulation of opinions of tourists; the nature of knowledge learned by tourists; the changing nature of dark tourism as an increasingly pervasive phenomenon; the challenges of presenting troubling information about tragic events; the awareness of people to the ways in which they experience the reality at the destination; and even what can be termed 'dark' in tourism. It is also, therefore, important to acknowledge that the relation between 'what is to be known' and the 'knower' is highly context specific (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). Thus, for me – as for any other ethnographer – clarity in communicating the setting and the findings of the research is crucial for the reader to understand the research.

Naturally, this demands that tourism researchers continuously consider the ontology of their data. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2015), qualitative research comprises the general concepts of ontology, epistemology and methodology. In my research, the epistemology is relatively straightforward as it is concerned with the relation between myself as the 'knower'

and guides' interpretation of dark tourism as the 'knowledge' I am seeking. The methodology, too, is intricate but not complicated; explained by Guba (1990) as the logic behind the methods of inquiry, I argue that in order to reach the required deeper understanding of interpretation, I had to observe, listen to and be around tour guides. Thus, ethnography is adopted as the research strategy, encompassing the research subjects, effectively creating more ways with which I would be able to conclude certain things about interpretation of dark tourism, about tour guides, and the connection between the two.

Put differently, my set of questions (my epistemology) is approached with a particular set of methods aimed to validate the knowledge acquired from several perspectives (as further explained in the following sub-section). Therefore, my most challenging task is indeed to make sense of the world around me through reflective representation, in an attempt to understand the nature of 'reality' (Guba, 1990; Lincoln & Guba, 2013; Pernecky & Jamal, 2010). In practical terms this means that not only do I – the researcher – come with a biography comprising my socio-economic position, my gender, ethnicity and cultural background, but also that I am tasked with trying to understand these components in the guides I observe. Later, I will argue that in order to understand the ontology of dark tourism guide interpretation, there is a need to address the deeper-than-standard sociological components specified above, as well as to delve into other 'drivers' (or components) that are the motivators for guides to interpret events the way they do. These may include individual psychological backgrounds, academic background, dual or multiple national identities (common among tour guides in Berlin), personal responses to contemporary local and global events, and complex political views.

The application of constructivism in my research is useful as it is concerned with the building of social theory (Schwandt, 1994; Guba & Lincoln, 2013). This is crucial in the relatively small field of dark tourism interpretation (and, more specifically, guide interpretation within that field), as there exists a relatively limited body of theory. The constructivist view of reality is that it is made in social ways (Guba, 1990; Hollinshead, 2004). Without a doubt, the activity of visitation to sites presenting death and human tragedy is a social and indeed a performative activity in the Goffmanian sense (as analysed in Chapter 2). Moreover, I argue that guide interpretation is a unique social construct which needs to bring together the reality of the guide with the reality of the tourist/s, whilst taking into account the socio-cultural reality of the destination or site. This in itself means that there are three or more perceptions

of reality, bringing this discussion to the conclusion that research which is derived from perceived socio-cultural realities is bound to be a slow development of theory (Guba, 1990; Schwandt, 1994) rather than a positivist testing of a hypothesis. In Chapter 6, I go on to analyse the social bubbles – real/tangible or the online/social media kind – whereby these perceptions of political, social or cultural realities appear to be the only possible reality for those who are occupy them. Thus, a constructivist enquiry into why guides interpret events and sites the way they do reveals more truths and is helpful in developing a better understanding of dark tourism and tour guiding.

Critical theory is based on the notion that all social relations are based on power struggles, and are laden with political, social and economic values (Hollinshead, 2006). There is also an argument that critical theorists should aim to contribute to a positive social change in some way (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). I mention this here for two reasons. First, owing to the interpretive nature of constructivism and critical theory, the lines may blur, potentially confusing the reader of this research. And second, for the ethical reasons that as a tour guide auto-ethnographer, it is paramount for me to keep in mind that my own interpretation is not the only truth or even the only way to explain the same truth. Hence, adopting a critical research perspective is, for me, not only an ethical violation of my role as a researcher whose integrity is trusted by my research participants; it would also be arrogant of me to make a claim that my research helps to contribute to a better society, as that would mean that I believe my value system is superior to others.

During the six years of my part-time PhD research I was faced with the situation – as are all PhD candidates – in which I had to briefly explain my research to total strangers in layman terms and succinctly enough so that they would not lose interest. Furthermore, a lot of these people were tourists, guests on a tour, which means it was their time I was using to explain a PhD topic. To be honest, it was always an opportunity for me to organise my thoughts and re-shuffle my research narrative as it developed. As I replied to questions from tourists, I found myself using primarily two metaphors or examples. The first, I had to explain that in my field I cannot employ a positivist research paradigm because interpretation of tour guiding is a multifaceted investigation of the 'why' and 'how' rather than testing, for example, pH in the soil. In other words, I explained to my tourists that my research is an exploration, not the testing of a hypothesis. The second refers to a choice I learned that tour guides make, which was that at times they present different views of a point they wish to clarify as one of several

possible ways of perceiving historical truths, although internally they consider only one view to be real. A close friend even argued that everything we know in history and archaeology is only true because as society we agree together that this is how events occurred. To that, I often responded by using the example where we perceive concrete to be a very hard material, but I would not punch it with my fist just to test if there is indeed another way to view this reality. The over-simplified point I was trying to make is that, even in our interpretation of historical events, there is a wide spectrum of historiography where certain events are easily viewed in a post-positivist framework whilst others require the usage of a constructivist paradigm.

4.3 Methods of data collection

The following section justifies and describes the methods used in the collection of data for this research. Thus, the section begins with a nuanced analysis of the particular type of observation I employed, and its suitability for the circumstances in which dark tourism interpretation takes place. Following this, I explain why I needed to use interviews and, subsequently, why I chose to conduct dyadic interviews. Lastly, owing to my research being a form of ethnographic work I was also attentive to other, 'smaller' forms of data, the nature of which I describe in this section.

4.3.1 Participant and passive observation

Participant observation is a qualitative data collection method common in ethnography and other social sciences (Seaton, 2002; Whitehead, 2005). It aims to gain familiarity with a particular group of people, to get to know their practices, their customs and other characteristics which are unique to them. In order to do so, the researcher/s observes their target group over an extended period of time, often with a particular paradigm or question in mind (Bowen, 2002; Kawulich, 2005; Seaton, 2002; Whitehead, 2005).

Observation in the social sciences is argued to be authorised by its foundation in the natural sciences (Bratich, 2018). That is, from its epistemological beginnings, this particular branch of social scientific methods of data collection has struggled to both distance itself from observations in the natural sciences and at the same time, prove itself worthy of scientific rigour (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004; Wilson & Hollinshead, 2015). Specifically, the scientific value of participant observation lies in the opportunity for the researcher to gather rich and detailed data in natural or 'real' settings (Burgess, 1984). Yet, researchers still ought

to ask themselves when and for what type of research should one use participant observation? According to Bowen (2002), it is most appropriate to use participant observation when several conditions are in place:

1. The research problem is concerned with human meanings and interactions viewed from the insiders' perspective;
2. The phenomenon of investigation is observable within everyday life situation or setting;
3. The researcher is able to gain access to an appropriate setting;
4. The phenomenon is sufficiently limited in size and location to be studied as a case;
5. Study questions are appropriate for the case study; and
6. The research problem can be addressed by qualitative data gathered by direct observation and other means pertinent to the field setting.'

(Adapted from Bowen, 2002: 9).

Considering collectively the above conditions, and following an examination of my research idea, I concluded that the conditions of my research setting fit with Bowen's conditions:

1. The research objectives are concerned with tour guides giving meaning to events and sites of dark tourism.
2. The phenomenon of investigation is almost entirely concerned with guided tours; an every-day tourism activity in Berlin.
3. As a guide myself, I was able to gain access to the research setting; namely, the guided tours observed, and social situations involving tour guides.
4. The phenomenon is sufficiently limited in size in that although there are nearly 500 guides in Berlin, I was able to observe several dozen. In my decade of guiding in Berlin – even prior to the PhD research – I observed countless tours.
5. The study questions were concerned with interpretation issues which could only be 'answered' through observation of the tours.
6. Although this research design does not include a particular problem, the issue at hand can be addressed by qualitative data gathered by direct observation.

I therefore chose direct yet passive observation. Direct-passive observation is distinguishable as a form of participant observation in that the researcher is known to the observed but limits

their involvement to such actions as watching, recording, taking notes and listening. This is typically used in a field setting where the researcher is able to observe without being interrupted, and without participating. This is not to be confused with Gold's (1958) complete-observer, where the researcher is practically engaged in a form of reconnaissance mission and is removed from any interaction with the observed. Rather, the aim of this method is to allow the researcher to observe verbal as well as non-verbal behaviours (Kuwalich, 2005). In order to solve the challenge of observing up to a net interpretation-time of approximately 2.5 hours in each tour, I received permission from the guides to record the tour on a small digital device. In that way, I could both observe the non-verbal aspects of interpretation and how it changes according to a variety of interactions (e.g. questions from tourists), and listen to the recording later at home, analysing the nuances of interpretation.

Observing the tours gave me the most 'live' observation of how interpretation takes place. That is to say, a 'live' observation can be viewed as a natural setting method which stands in contrast to more sterile surveys or interview conditions; it is direct but not participatory. Instead, by observing without participating, the situation (i.e. guide interpretation of the dark) was kept as close to natural as it possibly could. My argument here is one borrowed from behavioural psychology, namely, that any person who has a camera put in front of them would change their behaviour, facial expression and body language (Boerdam & Martinius, 1980; Goffman; 1959). This is also supported by Frohlick and Harrison (2008: 6) who argue that 'to create contact zones of engagement between tourists and ourselves… we often must attenuate our own presence so as not to disrupt these touristic experiences'. In a manner of speaking, the presence of a researcher 'contaminates the sample'. This is, of course, a research paradox: on the one hand, to generate data in order to obtain new knowledge I had to observe a tour as it happened; without that, I would not have an accurate and realistic data on interpretation as it happens. On the other hand, as soon as I joined a tour to observe it I effectively 'contaminated my sample'. Another point to remember, which is absolutely paramount to the ethics of my observations, is that these tours are all real work that guides engage in for large companies. Customers pay money for these tours and the companies are very sensitive to providing a good service and keeping their customers satisfied. Interrupting this process is something I worked very hard to avoid. Therefore, for the combined rationale of not disrupting the situation while also not violating the ethics of the research, I chose to limit my participation to the acknowledgment that I was there (see for example, Wynn, 2011).

Thus, joining a tour open to the public, although known to the guide and to some extent to the group, I was just another audience member, observing and listening to the tour. This could be considered similar to Scarles' 'researcher-as-tourist' approach (2010: 914), also adopted by Noy (2008) and Li (2015). The circumstances are understandably different, yet the core characteristic of the approach is the same: in order to better describe the perspective of the tourist, for the duration of the observation one has to be both a tourist and an analytical researcher. Moreover, as the tours are public, guides have to give their regular tour performance whether I am there or not. Bowen (2002: 9) perfectly articulates the situation for researchers who observed tours in the UK, Malasia and Singapore. He says that 'the tour was not created or manipulated by the researcher—other than any single tourist manipulated a tour… the setting was, indeed, natural rather than artificial'. In the same way, I went on public tours and listened from beginning to end.

Over the course of the six years of my research, I have given much thought to the group (of guides) I was observing. Half jokingly, I referred to them as 'my tribe', but even the term 'community' felt at times to be a bit of a stretch. Commonly, the word tribe would refer to a group of people who live in close proximity to each other, have kin relations and some kind of established social structure (Monaghan & Just, 2000). Even in the more colloquial modern use of the word, a tribe would be used to describe a group of people who may have close-knit ties to a particular club, most probably a sports club they are all loyal to (James, 2001; Monaghan & Just, 2000). In the era of social media and a smaller world, community is even more difficult to define or, at the very least, requires definition of which type of community is being referred to. Should they be in one place? Is it enough if they all use one web site or internet forum? I asked myself, what about my own community? The only two common traits all of us share are that we all work in the same profession, and that we do it in Berlin (even these two are not always true). That is not to say that I could not find many commonalities; however, labelling tour guides in Berlin as a community proved to be nearly impossible.

Effectively I engaged in both direct-passive observation and a more 'participant' form of ethnography. However, this was rarely done at the same time. That is to say, when I joined guides to observe their tours, I mostly just observed without any participation. However, during the six years of the research I also participated in many social gatherings of tour guides, completely immersing myself in the group which I am a part of and was studying.

4.3.2 Dyadic interviews

The first aim of this section is to acknowledge the advantages of this method of interviewing, which brought me to select it as the most suitable interviewing method for my research. The second aim is to describe the kind of dyadic interviews I conducted. I chose to use dyadic interviews as a support or triangulation method. The purpose in this case was to add to the validity of the data collected. The interviews were used to expand the sample of guides interviewed in order to deal with the problem of not being able to observe guides who only give private tours, or guides who only work in languages other the ones I understand. The rationale behind such a strategy is that research validity is stronger when observations are supported by additional methods (Kawulich, 2005); in my case, conducting dyadic interviews and the collection of small data interpretations (explained in the next section).

To date, and to my knowledge, the qualitative method of dyadic interviews has not been used in tourism research. Most of its research applications are found in the field of medical research (see, for example, Caldwell, 2014; Morgan, Ataie, Cander & Hoffman, 2013; Sohier, 1995) or in psychology with married couples (Eisikovitz & Koren, 2010). These are specific known situations where dyadic interviews are more beneficial than one-to-one interviews or focus groups. At a relatively early stage of my research I needed to think of ways to step out of my own cultural comfort zone in order to be able to examine a broader spectrum of interpretations. For that reason – and considering that our guides are the focus of my research – I started considering which interview technique would be the most suitable and if dyadic interviews were the right choice, could they be adapted to the topic I wanted to explore with my interviewees. Useful here is the contribution of Bell and Campbell (2014) who detail several important advantages of dyadic interviewing that are proven to be most relevant to my research setting and circumstances:

- More information is obtained with two accounts.
- A more complete, balanced picture is possible if each member of the pair corroborates the other's account.
- The interview exposes the differences in perception which can provide additional insight.
- Two accounts may open more avenues of research.

- Participants may feel more comfortable when in pairs.

Therefore, I chose to adopt and adapt this method to use with tour guides. The rationale behind this method choice is as follows: guides have strong personalities and are accustomed to presenting content for hours in front of small or large crowds. For the most part, guides love the attention and the rush of the performance (Wynn, 2011). Paradoxically, however, guides can also be introvert and quiet when placed with their peers in social situations (as I explain further in the next chapter). Using a focus group would have culminated in me losing data, as certain stronger personality guides would probably hog the proverbial microphone (or take over the conversation), while others would not bother to contribute with their own experiences and interpretations. From my past experience in situations where a group of guides comes together to explore a particular site or place they often interrupt each other, feeling the need to show their own knowledge. Although some are more polite than others, competitiveness and natural showmanship play a role in guides' interactions. On the other hand, a one-on-one interview felt too much like a journalistic profile piece, even too intimate, especially in contrast to the dynamic of three guides having a nice dinner together. In the situation where two persons were interviewed, I took the role of a peer/moderator. One guide normally spoke, while the other was reminded of a similar situation they also experienced. This kind of 'feedback loop' (Sohier, 1995) increases the level of rich data the interviewer can collect. This particular tactic of dyadic interviewing is unlike Eisikovitz and Koren's (2010) tactic, in which the researchers tried to find contrasts and overlaps between the couples and individuals interviewed; rather, I tried to get my interviewees to bounce stories off each other in the most time-efficient way.

Moreover, in order to avoid wasting the valuable time of the guides being interviewed (especially during the tourism high season) and to make the atmosphere more pleasant, I usually conducted the interviews in restaurants or cafes. In practice, that required careful selection of both the interview location and the pairs interviewed. Thus, for the location I chose restaurants or cafes that were:

1. Within a reasonable travel distance for both guides interviewed. Often this was close to their home or to where they had finished a tour.
2. Quiet enough or with a quiet area so we could hear each other talk.

3. Medium size; in a very small café we would have interrupted (and been interrupted by) other patrons.

4. I also looked for places with a cosy or otherwise pleasant atmosphere.

For the selection of pairs to be interviewed I mostly asked people who knew each other. The reasoning here was:

1. If I wanted guides to speak freely then it was important to choose guides who trusted each other.

2. I knew that guides who are friends or good work colleagues would find it easier to coordinate on a time to meet.

All of the above measures were important in order for me not only to gain the trust of the guides but also to ensure that if they spoke to other people in our guiding community, they would convey the message that the interviews were not a form of business espionage but essentially harmless.

In a few cases, I was able to get interview couples to agree on a mutually convenient a date relatively easily; however, there were also instances where the two guides I wanted to interview together were not able to find a date when they were both available. In these cases, I opted for a single guide interview. In retrospect, I believe that considering the characteristics of guides, as explained above, dyadic interviews work better. Single guide interviews were nevertheless useful to me, also providing interesting and useful data.

4.3.3 Collection of various secondary and small data

If the aim of the ethnographer is to explore a culture, then it is necessary to keep the 'wide lens' open in order to capture a comprehensive and more valid picture of the culture being explored (Kottak, 2005). According to Whitehead (2005), ethnographers should explore a wide range of secondary data sources before commencing primary data gathering. Here, it is important to note that the term secondary data is often used to refer to already published written or online sources (Mohajan, 2018). In the case of my research, this refers to either history books or display/information signs which are the main part of exhibitions in memorial sites. However, secondary data collection can also have a different meaning, in which a variety of types of information are collected as support for the primary methods used in the

research (Whitehead, 2005). In my research, secondary data collection refers to both already written sources (paper, in an exhibition, or online), and also parts of conversations that were noted outside the primary methods of tour observations and interviews.

Particularly for ethnographers, secondary data may encompass a wide range of sources which, on their own, may not constitute a sufficiently large sample to justify their own research focus. They are, nevertheless, extremely useful for the researcher and should not be ignored as they effectively offer different perspectives, contributing to the process of triangulation (Flick, 2018). Kottak (2005) goes further, suggesting that ethnographers should be acute observers who pay attention and record seemingly small details they see in the 'field'. Schensul and LeCompte (2013) explain that in preparation for field work, ethnographers should look for available secondary data. For me, that preparation meant being aware of what this secondary data may be, and where it may be found. In retrospect, as my research involved the interpretation of dark tourism sites, and my work involves visiting dark tourism sites outside Berlin, I started noticing what I referred to as 'interesting interpretational points' in places outside my usual observation points.

For Riley and Love (2000), the difference between primary and secondary methods lies in the chronology of the data collected. While primary data collection takes place at the beginning of the research and may include quantitative methods, secondary design arrives post hoc to elaborate and verify existing data. The chronology of my data collection aimed to contest that strategy. Observations of tours supported by interviews were planned as the primary methods, while collection of a variety of secondary data (detailed below) was planned and performed throughout the research. I collected secondary data from the following sources either ad hoc or intentionally over the six years of the research:

- Casual conversations with guides. For those, I asked permission to use any material that seemed relevant.
- Brochures at memorial sites.
- Written material in museums (E.g. information presented in exhibitions).
- News articles which contain interpretation closely related to my research.

- Books that are the historical source material for guides doing their own research when learning to guide tours in Berlin (E.g. about the Second World War, the Cold War, the Holocaust, etc.).

Thus, for example, in educational visits to the memorial sites of Dachau, Buchenwald and Bergen Belsen, I paid particular attention to the choice of words and the ways in which education departments of the sites chose to interpret certain sensitive topics. I also collected material during visits I made to factories, such as the motorcycle assembly line of BMW. Here, too, I paid attention to the way the company chose to interpret the chapter in their history that involved the usage of slave labour during the 12 years of the Nazi regime. Inevitably, much of this collected material does not involve tour guide interpretation or even dark tourism in Berlin and, therefore, was not always directly useful for my research. Nevertheless, it was useful to gain a perspective on the choice of words and general articulation of interpretation by different agents of information in a variety of situations and places. Moreover, data collected in dark tourism sites in Berlin was directly related and therefore an essential part of the triangulation of the research.

The main limitation of my secondary small data is that, as an involved researcher, I could not always expose my desire to use a part of a conversation I witnessed or even participated in. First, this would have disrupted the flow of the conversation; and second, using many of these conversations would not simply put me in a position of ethical violation, but would also put me at risk of legal repercussions. In that context, Ball (1990) argues that while immersing oneself in the world under study in the search for truth and meaning, the ethnographer inevitably feels uncertainty and discomfort. In the circumstances of my research, however, the risk went beyond a psychological researcher discomfort; it indeed posed a financial risk as the community studied also comprises colleagues who are business competitors with each other and, of course, of my own. At this point it is critical for me to give an important disclaimer: I never hid the fact that I was doing research and every guide I ever spoke to knew about my research. Our community is not a very big one, and although I cannot claim fame as such, my identity as researcher of dark tourism and tour guides was not hidden either.

4.4 Auto-ethnography

In this section, I will describe the rationale behind the use of auto-ethnography, and I argue that not only it is the correct methodological choice, but it would have been damaging to the

findings of the research *not* to use this method. Prior to the beginning of this research in the autumn of 2013, I had written a research proposal which received negative feedback both from my peers and my then lecturer (see section 4.6.1 below). He suggested that I should write about tour guides and tour guiding as I live in this 'world' and understand its nuances and intricacies. Or, put differently, I both hold the position of an academic researcher and have an insider perspective into a world I would be qualified to write on. As I will describe later in this chapter, this would end up being a huge advantage in terms of the feasibility of accessing a culture worth describing.

Despite the obvious advantage, however, the choice of employing auto-ethnography is not an easy one. This is because, as Ellis argues, auto-ethnographers have to allow themselves to be vulnerable… (Ellis & Bochner, 2014). Although her statement is a little vague, Ellis most likely refers to the emotional state of the researcher. However, as others such as Campbell (2017) discover, this researcher vulnerability manifests itself in both the emotional and the professional spheres. Similarly, Tolich (2010) argues that writing auto-ethnography can come at a certain personal cost. In my case, this happens because, unlike a biologist working in a laboratory who then gets to go home, separating their research from their personal life, I work, research and live in my 'lab'. In other words, as a researcher I will both have an impact on those who are my writing objects and they in turn will have an impact on me. This argument is put forward by Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011: 8) who state that 'researchers do not exist in isolation. We live connected to social networks that include friends and relatives, partners and children, co-workers and students, and we work in universities and research facilities. Consequently, when we conduct and write research, we implicate others in our work.' I will reflect further on my own experience and personal cost later in this chapter. For now, suffice to say that on more than one occasion I asked myself a question – a form of critique on Ellis and Tolich's words (Ellis & Bochner, 2014; Tolich, 2010) – why should I allow myself to be vulnerable at all? Why should I pay a price that goes beyond the boundaries of the research? But first, it is important to delve into the nature of this scientific method, its advantages and also its challenges.

For some, auto-ethnography is an acknowledgement that writing social science needs to be closer to literature than to physics (Bochner, 1994; Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). That, however, raises a stark critique – and a problem – whereby auto-ethnographers are often seen as being boring and self-absorbed (Campbell, 2017). Why, then, should we read an auto-

ethnographic publication as science? I have asked myself the same question many times. On the one hand, I told myself that there is enough epistemological and ontological grounding for researching my topic as an addition to scientific knowledge. On the other hand, my inner critical voice kept telling me that maybe I live in my own bubble – in real society and/or in the social media one – where I think something is more important than it really is, or that my observations and writing are not scientific enough. My contemplation battle is clearly not a first. Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011) explain that critics are looking to hold auto-ethnographers accountable for cutting scientific corners, for not looking to fulfil scholarly obligations of hypothesising and analysis. Perhaps this is best answered by Campbell (2017: 13) who argues that 'as we produce and consume more auto-ethnography our challenge is to champion deep and complex reflection which links to socio-cultural contexts and advances our understanding of the world'. Similarly, Adler and Adler (1998) claim that the intimacy of auto-ethnography can be a strong research tool as it goes down to a more detailed level of analysis. For me, too, this principle was always in front of my eyes when I observed guides on tours or engaged in conversations and interviews. I tried to gain a deeper understanding of interpretations of dark tourism and its importance as a complex social phenomenon.

At the very beginning of this PhD study, I knew that I was not going, for example, to be testing the acidity of soil, but neither was I going to write a fictional novel. If I was intending to invest six years of my life into this research, it would be better to make a contribution to a specific gap in scientific knowledge, even a small one. And in order to do that, I needed to find my own middle ground of qualitative methods of data collection. My requirements were determined by the circumstances in which the nuances of interpretation cannot be measured by quantitative methods; I have to critically analyse myself along several dozens of my peers, and I have to write about it in an honest way.

Being a researcher using auto-ethnography has been described as having two distinguishable components (Wall, 2006; 2008):

i.   Researchers who do ethnography – conducting systematic analysis of their own part of the culture ('ethno') they belong to. And,
ii.   Writing in an auto-ethnographic voice – using their first-person narration as the perspective from which they are writing about their culture.

While it can be easier to justify a first-person narration as being more authentic, even preventing ethnical problems of false objectivity (Wall, 2006), the epistemological pursuit of methodological rigour is argued to be the bigger challenge for auto-ethnographers. For Ellis and Bochner (2000), this is explained by the problem that most researchers are either not good enough writers or not sufficiently introspective to achieve both.

To me, considering the above justification of the advantage of my position (being both a researcher and a guide), the simultaneous writing about my colleagues and myself has more, rather than less, scientific authority. As a research method, auto-ethnography is said to be reflexive or critical of the self (Noy, 2008). In turn, the merit of critical reflexivity is that it may contribute to the scientific validity of the research (Botterill, 2003). The point made by these authors here is that more than simply a manifestation of researchers acknowledging their own bias, writing in an auto-ethnographic style is argued to be honest (Grant, 2010; Stanley, 2019), positioning itself in critical contrast to a dishonest third-person writing (Stanley, 2019).

Wall (2006) rightfully points out that reflexivity is not new; however, it was previously evident in, typically, one paragraph in which the researcher acknowledged that they are aware of their own presence changing the conditions of the research 'sample' (often in the 'research limitations' section). In contrast, insisting that this self-bias deserves more than a short acknowledgement transforms this way of writing into a centre stage writing style and even, as later discussed, a method. But as Grant (2010) and Wall (2006) argue, it is by no way a guarantee to ensure truthful reporting in one's research. Spry (2001) adds that reflexivity of the author might not be helpful in attesting to the sociological relations with others in the group. In my case, this argument provided a case against putting too much weight on writing about my own interpretation, as doing so would prevent me from being able to describe new knowledge and to find new meaning in the interpretation of other tour guides.

Another argument in favour of auto-ethnography is that it represents a response to the need for ethnography to move away from its colonialist, sterile research past (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). For example, an anthropological work by the famous essayist and poet Bessie Parkes-Belloc provides an insight into a way of examining other cultures in her era. Parkes-Belloc first published her substantial writing on cultures from around the world in 1870. She opens the book with the following statement: 'Of course, we must first take the

Englishman in our review of the Peoples of the World; just as in an atlas we put Old England first after the two hemispheres. Nothing looks stranger in a foreign book of maps than to see France or Germany taking precedence, and our country coming fifth or sixth on the list.' (Parkes-Belloc, 1904: 1). Two points can be observed from this short text. First, as argued in the previous paragraph, acknowledging one's bias is not a magical solution to the insufficient employment of scientific rigour. Secondly, although Parkes-Belloc shows awareness to the typical attitudes of the era, viewing her writing through the glasses of the value system of her time, the text continues to read as colonialist and morally unjust. Rather than this paradigm of the positioning of the self or one's ethnicity/nation at the centre for the learning of others, auto-ethnography is a 'self-narrative that critiques the situatedness of self with others in social contexts' (Spry, 2001: 710). Besio (2009) even argues that auto-ethnography's feature of making explicit textual references to the author is what makes it potentially a contribution to a more nuanced understanding in post-colonial research.

A noteworthy aspect of auto-ethnography is, as Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011) argue, that it recognises that researchers often choose how, when and where to do research according to how feasible it is for them to do the research. Three cases are interesting here. Chaim Noy (2008) used a family holiday to examine the rituals of the tourist in the Israeli desert town of Eilat. Committed to the analysis, he travelled with his family to the south, examining the rituals that he performed with his family as they were performing them while critically analysingthemt as they happened. Similarly, Mohan Li (2015) got the permission – and active participation in the research – of several university friends as they went on a 7-day holiday to the Isle of Wight. In both cases, the researcher was challenged by the two-fold task: observing cultural elements in order to tell the story of a particular group to which the researcher belonged while at the same time enjoying the holiday he was on. Another example is Phiona Stanley (2019) who, in preparation for a trip to the outdoors of Australia, joined a DIY diesel conversion workshop. Unlike Noy and Li, Stanley went out to describe a group – or mini-culture – which was not her own. However, her auto-ethnographic process was similar in that she continued to observe and describe as she went through the changes a non-researcher would have going through that experience.

These three interesting cases of auto-ethnography in tourism research were useful for me as they provided me with an answer to the critique of research validity in auto-ethnography. Not only is their writing analytic in nature (albeit literary and personal in style), but also it uses

theoretical tools and research literature as part of the whole that is their research work (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). It seems that like many others before me, I was infected by what can be thought of as 'positivism paranoia' or the concern that qualitative researchers generally and auto-ethnographers in particular have, that they are not sufficiently scientifically rigorous. Interestingly, Botterill (2003) argues for tourism research to be opened up to new methods and new ways of obtaining knowledge, but that we should put extra effort making those methods intellectually justifiable. I argue that keeping the crises of the social sciences (as mentioned in Denzin & Lincoln, 2018: 34, 63) in the back of the mind of every auto-ethnographer may function as a positive drive to maintaining their research integrity and validity.

These cases also demonstrate how doing auto-ethnography is akin to conducting a medical experiment on oneself; one can easily imagine the physiological risks involved if researchers in the pharmaceutical industry needed to take every pill they test or inject themselves with every new drug to see if it has side effects. Tolich (2010) supports this, arguing that in doing and writing auto-ethnography, the researcher inevitably risks hurting not only family and friends but also the objects of their research. The latter could be a part of the researcher's professional network and either suffer professional damage or are hurt in different ways. To that end, Tolich (2010) suggests that the auto-ethnographer should only write content with the assumption that the subjects of the research would read it. Conversely, it can be argued that by doing so, the auto-ethnographer may engage in self-censorship and, consequently, not reveal the very meaning they set out to identify and explore.

In my attempt to find the auto-ethnographic balance between doing and writing, I stumbled several times upon the way researchers before me looked at this method as a combination of ethnography and autobiography (Besio, 2009; Ellis, Adams & Bochner., 2011; Noy, 2008). I found it to be a problematic hybrid of art and science. Therefore, if I wanted to have the full package of 'ethno' and 'graphy' along with the 'auto' I would have to look for the surrounding socio-cultural context (Stanley, 2019). Moreover, to be distinctive from autobiography, one has to use scientific tools of analysis so as to avoid becomimg another bloger or social media commentator.

Undeniably, auto-ethnographers ultimately risk losing their objectivity. As Wall (2008) and Noy (2008) have pointed out, the main challenge that faces the auto-ethnographer is that their

writing becomes a personal story instead of a scientific analysis. Instead of conducting research aimed at making a scholarly contribution, the researcher might end up writing a nice story which is all about themself (Wall, 2008). Expanding on this point, a potential concern auto-ethnographers are faced with is reliability. In other words, what can be done to avoid making unsubstantiated claims about culture (Wall, 2008)? A response to this question is that the auto-ethnographer's challenge in representing the truth in a reliable and valid way can be addressed by the researcher's credibility (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). Like all other researchers, auto-ethnographers are entrusted with the responsibility of writing and providing data which is truthful, coherent (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011) and sensible (Besio, 2009); that is, with honest acknowledgement of their own self-representation in the text.

Moreover, one key advantage of the method is also a warning sign for researchers considering whether auto-ethnography is the appropriate method for their research. That is to say, auto-ethnography cannot be used by ethnographers if they do not belong to the group or phenomenon that they intend to research. Where they do belong, it can be argued that an auto-ethnographic voice and even writing style can be used. However, to avoid confusing the reader or hiding their identity, the researcher should identity themselves, preferably in a separate chapter, the purpose being to provide the background to the ethnographer's bias, world views, and so on. This distinction is indeed what separates ethnography from auto-ethnography; as Besio (2009) argues, one potential benefit of employing auto-ethnographic methods is that they move beyond the potentially 'dishonest' methods that are at the origin of ethnographic research. In auto-ethnography, the researcher is no longer an outsider and must therefore clearly define their social function – that is, their relation to the group they are researching (as I do in Section 4.6).

Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011: 4) correctly explain that 'auto-ethnographers must not only use their methodological tools and research literature to analyse experience, but also must consider ways in which others may experience similar epiphanies; they must use personal experience to illustrate facets of cultural experience and, in so doing, make characteristics of a culture familiar for insiders and outsiders'. In the process of undertaking my PhD, this debate was my metaphoric check and balance; put the human back in human sciences (Ellis & Bochner, 2014) whilst keeping the science in there as well.

The use of auto-ethnography in my thesis can be broken down into three elements applied in the thesis, as shown here in Table 4.1:

Table 4.1:   The auto-ethnographic elements of the thesis

Voice	• Using the 1st person pronoun • Used from Chapter 4 onwards
Writing style	• Writing about one's own experiences • Used in Sections 1.6, 4.6 , and 7.5
The researcher as part of the research	• Incorporating oneself in equal measure in the group described in the ethnographic research • Applied in Chapters 6 and 7.

I have chosen to write the core analysis of the data in such a way that words, anecdotes and narrative will be comparable between all research subjects and myself as one of them. I call these the three levels of interpretation. The reason I have done so is to allow room for observable conclusions (as explained in Chapter 7). Ellis and Bochner (2014) support this point, arguing that, in a similar vein to other forms of ethnography, auto-ethnography seeks to create meaning in social life and, furthermore, that in order to do that the researcher has to look both internally and externally. However, not every auto-ethnographer agrees with this need. Wall (2006) critiques this approach, claiming that because different epistemological assumptions inform the auto-ethnographic research, then generalisability is not necessarily what we should look for. Rather than trying to contradict this claim, I nevertheless decided to use the three levels of interpretation as units of analysis methodologically placed for me to be able to achieve the 'ethno', while maintaining the 'auto'. Critically here, and with observable conclusions in mind, we – me as the writer and the potential reader of this thesis – should remain aware that representation of experience may be altered by time, memory and other criteria affecting the 'sample' observed (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). Putting it another way, in many types of research it is doubtful whether it is possible to create authenticity in objective research with no trace of the author (Campbell, 2017) and the changes that they and

their subjects have gone through during the duration of the research. Nevertheless, although the content will undoubtedly be different, future research will be able to observe and use the three levels of interpretation as a frame of analysis.

Lastly, anthropologists argue for their own justification that the uniqueness of the individual does exist within cultures. Monaghan and Just (2000: 27) even argue that 'each ethnographer is a unique individual, the product of unique upbringing and education; replete with psychological predisposition – hidden as well as obvious – that constitute any human being'. Therein lies one of the paradoxes of auto-ethnography. If one writes about oneself, even in a reflexive critical way, then how can one describe epiphanies about a culture? However, in trying to take a wider view of the group they are researching, the auto-ethnographer risks losing the self, and as a consequence, losing the ability to describe their identity as a representation of their group's culture (Spry, 2017).

In summary, within the qualitative research methodologies, auto-ethnography is unusual and provocative (Noy, 2008), almost like the weird youngest son being rebellious yet always trying to prove himself and make his more established qualitative 'parents' scientifically happy. For example, one of the distinctive features about auto-ethnography is that the divide between participant and observer is blurred (Besio, 2009). Nevertheless, keeping with the metaphor of the rebellious teenage child, auto-ethnography is under great pressure to prove itself. Being a relatively new way to obtain social knowledge (Wall, 2006), it has to show itself reliable, valid and infused with researcher integrity.

4.5 Data analysis
4.5.1 Introduction
This section describes and justifies the two means of analysing the data collected for this research. As explained above in section 4.3 (methods of data collection), the main method for data collection is observation of guided tours. The second method employed are interviews, designed to supplement the observations with data generated from guides who either guide only private tours, or guide in languages additional to the languages I am proficient in (i.e. Hebrew, English and intermediate German). In addition to that, I am also analysing the interpretation I gave on tours, and an array of other auto-ethnographic experiences. These require a slightly different approach, albeit one which is close to and suitable for the analysis of the observations and interviews.

4.5.2 Locations of guiding

For the purpose of this thesis, I defined points of guiding as a particular spot on the pavement, or near a building or in a square, where the guide stops with the group to explain the meaning of a building or a memorial, or to tell a particular story. A point of interpretation may also be just a place where the guide is forced to stop because of such things as weather conditions or street traffic conditions. The guide may use so-called 'empty' five minutes to provide 'filler', meant to avoid unwanted silences on tour. Common points of guiding in dark tourism sites in Berlin and Sachsenhausen could be one of the corners of the Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe, the gate at the entrance to the former concentration camp of Sachsenhausen, the street corner of Wilhelm Strasse and Niederkirschner Strasse (near the museum Topography of Terror), and many others.

4.5.3 From data collection to data analysis: The practical side

Units of observation can be defined as the item, thing or person that is actually observed in order to learn something about the units of analysis (Babbie, 2005; Dolma, 2010). In my thesis, the units of observation, that is, the entity on which measurements are obtained (Dolma, 2010: 171) are the tour guides in Berlin. Therefore, the observational units can also be broken into observed tours, ethnographic observation during various social situations, dyadic and single interviews and auto-ethnographic recordings of my own tours and of my research process (as described in section 4.4), whereas the main part of the data analysis is an analysis of tour interpretations, comprised primarily of selection of words, anecdotes and narratives.

Naturally, my units of analysis must be analysed in connection with my units of observation. In practice, this meant connecting my units of observation with my units of analysis using thematic analysis. Here are examples of some of the common nuances I was listening for. In looking at word selection, I was looking for whether guides say 'Jew were murdered in the Holocaust' or 'Jews died in the Holocaust' or 'Jews died in the war'. In another example, I was listening for whether in the context of the end of the Cold War guides said 'after the reunification' or 'after the change' (direct translation from the colloquial way Germans talk about that time). I was also listening to the choice between 'Hitler was elected' to 'Hitler was

appointed', and to the difference between 'death camps' to 'extermination or concentration camps'.

The second thematic level was anecdotes. During observations I listened to a particular story/anecdote guides may choose, for example in Checkpoint Charlie, to interpret the place. In addition to that, I listened to anecdotes that were either told in random places but used to connect the story, or told in guiding points but were used to illustrate or interpret particular themes. For example, standing next to the satellite map of Berlin at Checkpoint Charlie, some guides choose to use this map to give a visual illustration of West Berlin during the Cold War and how isolated it was from the rest of West Germany. Others would use this to tell a personal story of their own experience in Germany in the 1980s; a technique used to captivate the audience and illuminate historical situation for the tourists. Another specific theme I was listening for was how guides choose to interpret the Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe. There I looked for commonalities, or if there is a share narrative framework for some guides or for a majority of guides.

The third thematic level was the narrative of the tour. This level refers in a way to the character of the entire tour. In some cases, guides told me that in working for public walking tour companies their tour narrative is the one advertised by the company, such as 'the Third Reich', 'Hitler's Berlin', 'behind the Wall', 'the Cold War', etc. However, I was looking for a title that guides may give – consciously or unconsciously – to their own way of interpreting the topic of the whole tour. In other words, what character does their narrative of the Cold War has? At first this was difficult because most people do not usually think about it, as it comes naturally for them. However, after listening to observation recordings, or after I questioned them during interviews, both the guides and I started finding a particular theme that characterises their own narrative of the topical tour that they give.

In addition, during the observation and recording of the tours, I paid attention to the overall atmosphere of the tour, including changes in conditions which could bring about changes in the interpretation provided by the guide. For example, sudden noise in the street can cause a guide to stop mid-story and move with his group to the next point of guiding. Another common example is an interruption from a tourist on the group, either by just saying something unrelated or asking the guide to repeat something that was just explained or asking a clarification question.

The ethnographic nature of my thesis manifested itself in that everything tour guiding related in the six years of the research was treated as meta-data. That is to say, if during any situation that was not an observed tour or an interview I encountered a piece of information that was relevant, I took ethnographic notes. In many cases, something that was said made me think of an idea that was later useful for the thesis, in which case I wrote myself a reminder on the phone. In other cases, it was something someone said and, if I wanted to use it, then I asked for their permission. There were also many situations where I felt the whole social dynamic was interesting and/or relevant but using it would be unethical.

During interviews or observations, I had thoughts that were not necessarily a direct analysis of what was said by the guide, in which case I noted them on my phone quickly. This was of course easier to do during interviews where, if I wanted, I could simply tell the interviewee that I need to write a quick note, and immediately continue the conversation. In observations I usually recorded with a digital recorder and wrote the occasional note on the phone. This is especially important during such observations because a guided tour may last between 2.5 hours to 5 hours and has many pauses and breaks. Taking specifically important notes during a tour proved useful as they helped me later in the evening to go back to a particular time in the recording.

After observations and interviews I listened to the recordings and transcribed all the relevant text. During a tour, there are many moments of idle conversation with tourists, for example, when the guide fills moments when they cannot guide by asking the tourists about them, such as where are they from? Where did they travel before Berlin? Often the tourists initiate conversations about all kinds of topics; most not relevant to my research. These conversations take place either during walking between guiding points, on short train rides, or over coffee during the break. In transcribing the observations, I skipped this content. Interviews were shorter, about an hour for a single guide interview or up to an hour and a half for the dyadic interviews. Having many hours of recordings from which to filter the relevant information was very useful; I usually listened to recordings in the evening after the tour or the next day.

4.5.4 Auto-ethnographic data analysis of my own interpretation

For the auto-ethnographic portion of my research, I used the same units of analysis on my interpretation as for all the other guides. In the application of the chosen units of analysis on the interpretation of my tours and other experiences, I argue that it is essential to build on the existing pattern of analysis with more insider insights. The rationale was, as Adler and Adler (1998: 97) explain: 'observers who place themselves in the same situations as their subjects will thereby gain a deeper existential understanding of the world as the members see it and feel it'. For me, this meant I had the duty to write additional explanations about my interpretation which I could not write about the interpretation of my research subjects. It meant delving deeper into my decision-making process and describing it, adding more depth and meaning otherwise not available. From both epistemological and methodological perspectives this is, of course, a double edge sword. On the one hand, I have access to my own thoughts and can therefore claim certain truths regarding my choice of interpretation or the meaning of my words in a particular situation. On the other hand, the same access providing me, the auto-ethnographic researcher, with a certain advantage is also a disadvantage as I could not place my thought process in a position comparable to my peers. I nevertheless made the choice to use this advantage as an addition to the analysis of the tours I observed (of my colleagues) and the interviews with them, rather than ignoring it or letting it upstage my colleagues' interpretations.

4.5.5 Limitations of the research

Again, my advantage as a guide researching guides was one of the reasons for choosing to embark on this ethnographic research of guides interpreting dark tourism in Berlin. It was also my greatest limitation: in the time frame of the research (2014-2020), the situation in the tour guiding market was very good. In terms of the limits of the research, this means that there is a lot of money to be made and, as a guide, I cannot just be a researcher, I am also operating in a competitive business. As most guides work as freelancers, the companies employing them on a specific day receive a tour booking and often send emails to a list of guides asking for availability, with the decision made on which guide to take based on first come (reply to an email) first serve (get the tour). In addition to that, I also now work on my own, which means I try – as my colleagues do – to get direct bookings from customers, which again means that there are many guides who compete with me in the same market. Understandably, not all guides wanted to hang around me, talk to me about their interpretation or allow me to observe their tours.

Out of all the guides I asked to be observed or interviewed, only two refused (politely) without giving me a reason, which was of course their prerogative. It is also possible that some guides had heard of me and my research but did not quite understand that I was observing interpretation rather than performance. They may have felt threatened, as many guides are not happy to be observed and perhaps evaluated by another guide.

Another limitation was one of sample size. I would have liked to have been able to observe a larger number of tours, covering a bigger array of guiding styles and interpretation choices. Unfortunately, owing to scheduling issues and budget constraints, this was not possible. Guides often work almost non-stop in the summer season, whilst many use the winter for other projects or to travel for weeks out of the city. There were several situations where guides stated that they were willing to be observed or interviewed but we were unable to find days when we were both available. I, therefore, continued the data collection sporadically, ending up with the following data collected:

1. I observed 40 tours (focused on dark tourism, including the 'dark' portions of the highlights tour).
2. I recorded 20 of my own tours.
3. I conducted 10 dyadic interviews.
4. I conducted 5 single interviews.

The process of data analysis is described in section 4.5.3. In retrospect, in spite of my desire to observe more tours, the sample had proven suffiently large to provide ample data from which I could draw conclusions on guides' interpretation of dark tourism sites in Berlin.

Finally, language and cultural context play a significant role in dark tourism interpretation. For that reason, I tried to interview several Spanish speaking guides (Spanish being the world's most commonly spoken first language and, therefore, the biggest market in Berlin next to English). However, in my view, an interview about interpretation can never replace the natural state of observing a tour 'live'.

4.5.6 Transferability
The limits of my research point to a positive outlook for future potential research to be able to replicate my research in a very similar way. Guides with different contacts, different business

ties, friendships and networks, or even guides with different language and background could potentially conduct this research and explore guides as interpreters of dark tourism, as I have. Despite different personal outlooks and different temporal contexts, the units of analysis could be the same or very similar. My research is in itself a form of replicating and strengthening the somewhat limited theoretical foundations of the three studies on tour guides interpretation of dark tourism undertaken by Macdonald (2006), Gelbman and Maoz (2012), and Quinn and Ryan (2016) as discussed in Chapter 2, albeit using a different theoretical framework.

4.6 The evolution of the research and the changing of research circumstances
4.6.1 The idea for the research, and the writing of the proposal in 2014
Born in 1974, I grew up in Israel of the 1980s. The ethos of the Holocaust was at its peak and knowing people who survived the Holocaust was common. My own grandparents, although luckily not themselves sent to the camps, lost their parents and many other family members. In 1987, in a unique bi-literal agreement between the Polish and Israeli governments (before the end of the Cold War!), Israel started sending high school delegations (tour groups) to Poland to visit the sites where many millions of Jewish people were murdered by the Nazi regime. By the time I was 16, my small countryside high school started organising such group visits. Only the best students were offered a place on the delegation. I was not such a student. Nor, if my memory serves me correctly, was I interested in going. I grew up knowing about the Holocaust, I stood for a moment of silence in the school ceremony every year and I was used to seeing my grandfather's partner and other friends with numbers tattooed on their hands; I simply did not give the trip much thought.

By the time I was 23, I had completed my mandatory military service and an almost mandatory year of backpacking around Australia, New Zealand and East Asia. When I came back to Israel, I immediately started working for my parents' travel agency which, at the time, had entered the business of organising these youth groups to Poland. My job was to help the office in their contacts with the schools, assist with visas to Poland (the need for visas has since been cancelled) and, most importantly, represent the company during the trip itself. The idea was that we would leave the guiding to the guide, and I would do everything else – as I now know - the work of a tour leader. I would take care of hotel check-in for the groups, make sure that everything functioned in restaurants, and coordinated the work between the different stakeholders on the trip.

Between 1998 and 2001, I accompanied about 30 youth groups on their trips to Poland. After the first four trips, I stopped accompanying the groups when they entered sites such as Auschwitz or Treblinka. However, I got to hear hundreds of hours of guides interpreting these sites and events to the groups during many long bus rides and memorial ceremonies. And I listened. I listened to the guides and observed the reactions of the students, as well as the reactions and behaviour of their accompanying teachers and parents.

The differences between the guides were huge. Some, I felt, were using their 'microphone power' to convey very strong messages without any pretence of hiding them. With others, there were subtle messages but also critiques of social conventions and thought-provoking ideas. There were guides who were very dramatic and emotional, and others who kept a cool and even distant composure.

Nearly ten years later, in 2010, I graduated with a Masters degree at Humboldt University in Berlin and started full-time work as a tour guide in a walking tour company in the city. A year went by and I started feeling the itch to continue studying and researching. I registered on another Masters degree at Humboldt, in which I took a course in writing a PhD proposal. My first proposal went bust. It 'bombed', as stand-up comedians would say. I presented an ecology-themed proposal to a class of social and political science students. It was received with puzzled looks. From time to time I chatted over coffee with my lecturer Professor Hans Blockland, and we talked among other things about my work. After that unsuccessful proposal he suggested that I write about my work as a guide. I had easy access to a huge amount of data, otherwise unavailable to other researchers, and it would be a discipline I 'live and breathe'. I started researching more about 'my' discipline.

4.6.2 Conducting the first observations

During the first year of the PhD, I started joining guides to observe and record them as they guide. It is not uncommon for guides to join another guide on tour, usually to learn a new tour, observe colleagues' different styles or at the request of a colleague to observe and give critique on a newly designed tour. In fact, most guides join between two to four walking tours before guiding that particular tour on their own.

Initially I observed colleagues whom I knew well. There were two objectives in doing so. First, I wanted to start with people who knew me and would feel comfortable having me on their tour. The second objective was for me to test technical issues, such as how the observation and recording would work, how much material would I generate, should I take notes during the tour or, rather, behave as one of the tourists, and, would the guide introduce me to their group or not.

A few things became evident very quickly. To make people who were more or less familiar with me to feel comfortable, I took a few minutes to explain my research and to make sure they knew I was not obsering their performance, only their interpretation. Following that, I obtained their agreement that with their knowledge that they could always – until the time of publication – withdraw their information by simply telling me not to use it. Once those details were clear, I tried to always stand near or in front of the guide for better recording quality, making sure that I did not block paying customers. Over time, I noticed that most of my peers preferred to acknowledge my presence to their guests in order to prevent the awkwardness or curiosity of having a person standing with a small (not hidden) recording device. I often made sure to tell the guests that I was researching the guides, not them. During the short walking parts between guiding points, and when possible, I asked the guides clarifying questions and when the guide was not busy, we sat down for coffee after the tour and chatted some more.

4.6.3   Ethical considerations 1: getting guides to agree to participate

At first I observed mostly guides who were friends or close colleagues, as I was an ethnographer already integrated into the community I was researching (Adler & Adler, 1998). It then became clear I needed to venture off to other companies and people in order to reduce the potential for strong interpretation or style bias. Among the 600 or so guides in Berlin, almost every guide I came into contact with knew someone that I knew, but we did not necessarily know each other. For that reason, I encountered some suspicion. Some guides were slightly concerned about their reputation, about whether they might say something sensitive on their tour and that would be revealed because of my research. I explained that, in the research, I would not use any identifiable details, not only to avoid sensitive issues which may hurt the guide, but also to prevent giving one guide a sort of advertising edge that others who were not interviewed would not receive. Similar to the procedure described by Meged (2010) and Wynn (2011) I explained briefly to each guide what I wanted to observe in terms

of my research in order to obtain their permission. In only two cases were the guides I asked not interested; in these cases, I asked a different guide and joined to observe their tour.

Most guides, however, told me that they knew that what they say is public knowledge; that is, no state or business secrets are revealed on tour and that most of what they say can be researched by anyone. The exceptions were stories or anecdotes about the guide's personal experience; those I of course omitted entirely. The majority also acknowledged that by the definition of their work they are always on display, often being photographed, and sometimes even recorded by their guests (some guides ask their guests politely not to film them).

Figure 4.1: Guided group in Sachsenhausen

Photo: Author

4.6.4 Ethical considerations 2: conducting tour guide research around customers

A starting point to explain the situation in which the data were collected is the type of tours I could observe. One possible way to classify guided tours in Berlin is the following: first, small private tours of families, couples, and/or friends – those which by definition are more premium and the dynamic is rather intimate. One colleague of mine even argued that what people buy is an expert on the city's sites and history who will be their friend for several hours. It is inappropriate for a researcher to join such a tour as it would damage the intimate

dynamic relations between guide and guests; it simply would not feel private and ruin the very thing the customer had paid extra for.

There are several other categories, however. Public tours are a huge business in Berlin, open for anyone to join for a cost of 10 to 20 Euros per tour and are heterogeneous and therefore not private in nature. For these reasons, observing such tours was chosen as the primary data collection method. Consent was obtained from the guides observed, as they are the object of the research. However, they of course do not exist in a vacuum. That is to say, there are people, customers/guests, who pay to walk with them and hear them guide. In that respect, I could join as a guest myself and tell no one about what it is that I was doing there. Yet, it was more important for me to hold a microphone openly as I wanted guide to provide more information and get their consent. I did not want to conduct an undercover mission (covert observation, see for example Quinn & Ryan, 2015) of gathering information about the guide, the knowledge they have or the information they tell on a tour.

Figure 4.2: Guided groups in Sachsenhausen

Photo: Author

In addition, it would be unethical to conduct data collection on the tourists themselves without telling them. For that reason, and for the reason that some of them would be concerned that I may be recording them, the guides told their groups that I was there to collect data for a PhD study and would not be writing about them or take photos of them without their agreement (see also Holloway, 1981; Wynn, 2011). On occasion, I spoke to some of the guests in what can be considered a dead guiding moment – that is, a moment when walking between points of guiding or during a break. Some people were interested in me explaining dark tourism to them and, more specifically, about my research. All in all, I

made an effort to never block a tourist, to always allow them to ask a question before me and in all other ways to allow the tour to continue without my interruption. The reasoning behind this approach was both that they had paid for the product and I did not want to spoil that, but also that I wanted the guide and the tour to be conducted in as much of the same way they would have been if I was not there. For all the reasons specified above, I also refrained from any video recording and only rarely took a picture of the guide, making sure the tourists could only be seen from the behind.

Figure 4.3: Guided group at the Memorial Site for the Berlin Wall at Bernauer Straße

Photo: Author

4.6.5   Going independent: when things started changing for me in 2017

I first started guiding in Berlin in June 2010, about a month after graduating with a Master of Science in Integrated Natural Resource Management from Humboldt University of Berlin. The combination of my need to work in tourism again, and my anxiety about being left without work led me to follow a link to a site of a walking tours company that my brother found in one of his random searches. I met with the boss a week after my graduation and immediately started researching the material required to become a guide in Berlin. Prior to that, I had only visited a few museums in the city and read a couple of basic history books about the city. That process included going the most important history and art museums in the

city (I had already visited about 15 but needed more and to repeat the more relevant ones), going over a reading list of books about Berlin's history, and joining experienced guides to observe the routes and their techniques of guiding.

In the next two years I worked full time, learning more tours as part of my professional development. Beyond the part of getting to know how to guide the main highlights of Berlin, I continued to learn the other five most popular tours in the city: the Jewish Heritage Tour, the Third Reich, the Cold War, Potsdam and the tour to the Memorial Site of Sachsenhausen. The last two are located in the federal state of Brandenburg, just outside Berlin, and are included in the 'wish list' of many tourists.

The process that I went through is probably the most common for people who wish to become guides in the city. At first, one joins one of the major 5-6 large walking tour companies to observe and learn the material for the highlights tour. The second step comes after the person and the company feel good about the work of the guide. Both companies and the guide then feel that they are able to give the guide more varied work (this usually serves both parties). The guide then continues to learn the other three Berlin tours (detailed above). Sometimes guides 'jump' immediately to learning about Potsdam or Sachsenhuasen, a step usually reflects the demands of the company and, perhaps, also the personal interests or academic background of the guide. Most guides who continue to work full time as tour guides in Berlin will eventually learn how to guide all six tours by the end of two or three years on the job.

The walking tour companies have an advantage that they provide a practical teaching environment for new guides, qualifying them by observation, advice and testing. For that reason, they are the best starting point for hundreds of guides who started working in Berlin (from Germany and abroad) in the last 15-20 years. This relationship, however, is a difficult one, mainly because there is no contractual commitment between the company and the guide. The companies cannot promise work all year long and therefore – in almost all cases – prefer not to sign a contract with the guide. By doing so, they avoid the responsibility of providing social benefits to the guide. In turn, guides – especially during the winter – try to work in other jobs. Their commitment to other jobs occasionally overlaps, making it difficult for them to fully commit to the tour companies. And this is where it gets difficult: the entire business model of the walking tour companies is based on the premise of the walking tour product

where, no matter what time in the year, there will always be a tour starting from a particular meeting point.

For many guides, this arrangement is very comfortable. Although they have to take care of their own finances and insurance, it gives them the freedom to fulfil dreams and aspirations. Many work as artists, painters and musicians of many sorts. Others continue with their academic studies. This type of work arrangement gives them the flexibility to work full time in the summer and have a dynamic work life in the marginal seasons and winter. As quite a lot of the guides originate from distant countries (e.g. US, Australia), they use the low season to visit their families. Finally, almost a professional requirement, most guides are curious people who love to travel; non-contractual employment allows for long periods of travel.

I worked for nearly three years before I went back to university to the Masters programme I mentioned earlier. Soon I was back to regular student life, which kept me fully occupied. Considering those circumstances, I found it useful to stay in the company. It would be another four years before I took my first steps towards becoming fully independent. This is not an uncommon story. Some guides feel more comfortable continuing to work for a walking tour company; although the pay is lower and the commitment can be restrictive, there is comfort in knowing what you will do the next day, and from where the next pay cheque will come. The other advantage is that, under those conditions, the individual guide is not required to do any sales and marketing or any work on operations of the tours they are booked for.

In the middle of my PhD journey, I felt that it was time to do things my way. In spite of the up-and-coming challenges of marketing myself and competing fully in the open market, I decided to take jobs from private companies. Up to that point in my work life, I had worked almost exclusively with two companies who work with each other. Although it varied, I guided about half of the time in Hebrew and half in English. My co-workers and friends were mostly from these two companies. In a time period of several months all that changed, having an effect not only on my finances and time management, but also in a variety of ways on the research itself. I will now specify the ways in which this career turn of events had an impact on the research.

Figure 4.4: The author guiding at the Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe

Photo: Author

First of all, in the early stages of the data collection, guides who worked with me in the company were happy to collaborate as they knew me and, of course, as people are usually happy to help a company colleague. Slowly working for others also meant that I now wanted to collect data from guides who work for other companies. Partly I wanted to identify if there were major differences in how guides in one company operate compared with those from another company. It is important to note at this point that although 99 percent of the guides are officially freelancers, many of them started from one company, building or adjusting their interpretation according to the tour description (on the website) of that specific company.

Second, as discussed earlier, I use the words tribe and community are a part of my research, albeit not in a literal sense. The relevance of these terms is that when as a tour guide I assumed the role of the ethnographer of tour guides I also acknowledged that I live within 'my tribe'. Despite that, the question of what makes us a tribe or a community remains, with the strongest adhesive common interests are that we share the same profession and work at the same destination. Nevertheless, whether or not we are a tribe or even a community, transitioning into an independent guide was also a big step into having a broader ethnographic perspective on this group of people who work as full time guides in Berlin.

Third, going independent meant that I now work primarily in English, with the rare occasional tour in Hebrew or German. My own interpretation changed! There are several

reasons for that, which I will elaborate on in Chapter 6. At this juncture, however, I will say that the main difference was the change from large open-to-public tours to small/private tours.

Lastly, as I will explain the next sub-sections, as time went by it became almost impossible to separate my work life from my research, and from my social life, too. On the one hand, I tried to engage in as many opportunities as I could in tour guide social gatherings, driven by early ethnographers' need to live a full life within the tribe they were researching. From an ethical perspective, one could argue that I used the research to advance my career. More important is the fact that I now exposed myself more and more to information and business gossip. In order to not violate this ethical line, I made an early decision to not include any personal or crucial business information that may cause harm to people, whether they were my friends or not. As I will explain in the next two sub-sections, this proverbial line between my research life and my professional life was not always easy to draw and one that at times forced me to decide not to include otherwise relevant materials in the research.

4.6.6 The establishment of the Berlin Guides Association in 2013

For various reasons, I always felt that tour guides are outsiders in the tourism industry, living a seasonally intense life-style. That guides live a seasonal life-style is in itself not necessarily different from other workers in the hospitality or even in the transport/aviation sectors (see for example Panos Mourdouskoutas' (1988) case of seasonal employment and unemployment in the Greek Islands). More so is Pond's (1993) 'orphans of the industry' image which often resurfaces in situations where guides may be exploited by big companies; or in other ways not considered in the same seriousness as the hospitality, food and beverage or the transport sectors by society at large, leading to questions such as: 'is that your real job?' or 'what do you do besides guiding?' The feeling many guides have is that no matter how professional we are, we are still sometimes considered by bank managers or even by our own romantic partners as 'not having a serious job', let alone calling it a career. In a large urban destination such as Berlin, this perception proves to be very different; indeed, in the majority of cases, it is in stark contradiction to the reality of the market.

In February 2014, a group of six guides established the Berlin Guides Association (in German: Bündnis Berliner Stadtsführer e.V.). Rather than creating a worker union, the association aims to create a community of professional guides. The aim is to improve

networking and collaboration between guides, to establish a platform for further education and improvement of tour guides, to have a community of professionals who support each other in different ways, and to establish a standard of professionalism for tour guiding in Berlin.

In Germany, there is no need to obtain a license for guiding, although such guiding licenses normally exist in museums/castles/parks, and at large memorial sites (e.g. Sachsenhausen, Dachau). Prior to the establishment of the Guides Association, the only platform for tour guides in Germany was the German National Tourist Guide Association (in German: Bundesverband der Gästeführer in Deutschland e.V.). Today, guides in Berlin refer to the Guides Association, as the 'Verein' and the Bundesverband as the 'Verband', although according to German law both organisations are Vereine – associations. According to their website, the Verband operates in 220 cities in Germany (or 230 in the German version) and has some 6,500 member guides (or 7,000 in the German version).

Amongst the criticisms that many guides have of the Verband is that it is too exclusive and archaic and, as such, excludes hundreds of international guides who work in Berlin but who are not able to pay the high entrance fees that the Verband charges. More than anything else, this rift in perception between the Verband and the Verein demonstrates the significant evolution in the guiding profession in Berlin and, perhaps more specifically, the growth of the city itself as a large international urban destination that was 'born' as late as the 1990s.

There are two issues that I need to highlight at this point. First, the establishment of the Verein was in a way evidence that Berlin is worthy of its own guide association. As I explained in earlier in this chapter, I estimate that although there are approximately 600 full time guides working in the city, there are also boat guides, museum docents and an unknown number (in the hundreds) of guides and tour leaders who come to Berlin with their groups from other German states and from abroad. Second, and as I argue, critical to the tourist character of the Berlin, interpreting the city's dark history is a task that has implications for the work of the guide and to the knowledge gained by the tourist.

The Verein, then, started its first steps in the autumn of 2014, round about the same time I started my PhD research. In the six years that have passed, the Verein has grown from having initially some 10 members to today's 120 members. The Verein Board of Directors decided

to accept only guides who had guided at least 200 tours and has passed a small guiding test known as a 'probe tour'. The Probe Tour is a small trial tour in which the guide is required to demonstrate that they are able to stand confidently in front of a group, that they have high level of historical accuracy, and that they are open to listen to tourists and to have the openness for self improvement. Interestingly, the Board of Directors acknowledges that there are different interpretations of the same story and that guides may see history in different ways or even display in different ways according to the group in front of them. Nevertheless, the Board of Directors agreed that guides who present extremely inflammatory opinions or interpretations on the probe tour will not be admitted to the Verein.

The latter issue will prove challenging in the life of the Verein. For one, guides are never fully supervised. This contradicts the observations of several scholars (Weiler & Black, 2015b; Yu, 2017) who argue that in many countries such as China, Israel or Indonesia, guides are often trained by and linked to their governments and are almost the official voice of the government. It can be argued that this claim does not account for individuality of the guide and for the nature of guides being almost always alone 'in the field' and therefore having many opportunities to voice their own views, albeit in a subtle way. Part of the task of this thesis is to find out the different interpretative ways in which this is done.

In its development from 2014 onward, the Verein was forced to deal with the need to be open to different opinions yet, at the same time, maintain the character of an organisation that does not allow its professional members to present opinions that are racist, homophobic or in other ways constitute hate speech.

4.6.7 Joining the board of directors of the Berlin Guides Association in mid-2018

During 6 years of studying part-time for a PhD, ethnographic research has an additional temporal aspect to it: social, personal and political circumstances may change. In the case of dark tourism interpretation in Berlin over the period of 2014 to 2020, this means that global and German political shifts that forced guides to behave in a different way. In Chapter 6, as I analyse the findings of this research, I will elaborate specifically how, in particular, the election of Donald Trump and the Brexit vote significantly altered the interpretation of many guides. Such important international political changes influenced how guides interpret,

reflecting changes in their opinions as well as the need to adopt a more sensitive way of interacting with their guests.

For me, too, there were changes in interpretation. This is natural; as time goes by guides change, grow personally and professionally, and respond to the world around them. However, I was also interested in how the Board of Directors of the Verein would react in response to these issues. The Verein works on principles of transparency in management and therefore encourages its members to sit at its board meetings (German Verein/Association law allows members to sit to observe board meetings). In early 2018, I started sitting in meetings. I did that partly as a member of the Association, and partly in my role as an ethnographer. I felt that listening would give me a deeper understanding of the tour guide world.

In the spring of that year, one of the members of the board left owing to personal reasons. This happened a little bit by surprise, leaving a small gap in the roles to be performed as part of the activities of the board. After some consideration and encouragement for the other members of the board, I decided to join the Verein's Board of Directors. As a guide, I felt that it would give me an opportunity to contribute to the development of our community. As a researcher, however I had my doubts, as I felt that it may prevent some guides from agreeing to be observed or interviewed by me. I made my final decision to join with the rationale that I would make every effort possible to separate my guide and researcher personas. In addition to that, as mentioned earlier, my research on tour guides was not a closely guarded secret.

The year and a half working on the Board of Directors were sometimes dramatic and generally very satisfying. My role was to organise excursions. In addition to that, every board member participates in monthly meetings where we debate issues, discuss new projects for the Verein and so on. In January 2020, however, I regretfully decided to quit the Board of Directors. Predominantly, the reason for this was, with the submission of the thesis just 8 months away, I felt I could no longer handle any distractions. I needed to significantly reduce any social or professional activities which were not PhD related.

4.7 Chapter summary – the unique elements of my research

This chapter set out to outline the methodological rationale of this thesis, from the anthropological approach and the use auto-ethnography as part of the research strategy to the

justification of qualitative data collection in tourism research. In addition to that, the chapter described the specific methods of data collection.

In particular, this chapter has demonstrated several elements which are unique to this research, born from the circumstances of the subjects of this thesis, that is, my colleagues and myself as tour guides in Berlin:

i. Participant (direct) observation on tours. The term itself implies some participation of the observer during the process of the observation. During the tours I observed and recorded, my role as observer was not hidden, but I did not participate in the tour or interrupted the guide I observed (both for ethical and research reasons).

ii. Ethnographic observation in other social situations. Here I did participate to the extent that I became a bigger part of the life of the community than I had originally planned or anticipated. This was both useful as a researcher in order for me to really live inside 'my tribe'. And at the same time damaging to the research as it damaged potential contacts with a more diverse group of guides, and additionally caused me financial damage as I found myself inside a battle of business competition within the network of my colleagues.

iii. I recorded myself, and later analysed myself using the same units of analysis as I did with my colleagues.

iv. Dyadic interviews. Rarely if ever tried before in tourism research, dyadic interviews with guides proven to be a successful and most suitable method for the outgoing strong personalities of the average guide. In twos, guides had just the sufficient opportunity to listen and express themselves.

v. Auto-ethnography is always unique as it is a personal account of the observation of the researcher (Ellis & Bochner, 2014). Nevertheless, in my case auto-ethnography was a strategy which was on the one hand a support act to the protagonist that was observing the guides, and on the other hand played a major role in the learning and exploration of us guides as interpreters of the dark chapters of Berlin's history.

To sum up, in this chapter I have considerd and justified the chosen qualitative data collection methods of passive observation, dyadic interviews and integration of the auto-ethnographic self into the research. In doing so, I have presented the rationale and justification for how I went about achieving the aims and objectives of this research. Most significantly, the

potential drawback of my position as a researcher and a guide is explained by the separate use of writing voice, auto-ethnographic style and equal integration of the researcher into the analysis of the findings.

The following chapter describes the main dark tourism sites that guides interpret in Berlin. This is then followed by Chapter 6, in which I will analyse and discuss the interpretation of dark tourism by tour guides in Berlin from the data collected on the tours I observed and during interviews with guides.

Chapter 5

Locations of interpretation: Dark sites in Berlin

5.0 Introduction

The purpose of this brief chapter is to introduce the main dark tourism sites in Berlin at which the research in this thesis was undertaken. It is in no way meant to represent a morbid 'shopping list' of locations of death and tragedy in the city. Rather, the aim of this overview is to provide a textual and visual aid for readers of this thesis who may not be familiar with Berlin, to enable them to relate the analysis of tour guides' interpretation in the next chapter to the locations described by guides in city.

Thus, this chapter describes briefly each site and the event or people it commemorates. It then continues to make connections with the chronological development of commemoration in Berlin (i.e. the building or opening year of the site) and places the sites within the context of dark tourism interpretation by tour guides.

It should be noted, of course, that this is only a partial list of the main dark sites in Berlin visited by groups with guides. Berlin has more than 600 memorials, several large memorial sites, many monuments and some 30 museums, all of which can be justifiably described as being concerned with dark tourism. Moreover, dark tourism interpretation can take place in any location in the city, as guides may use their limited time to interpret a particular event or chapter in history on the way to a site they would like to visit with the group.

The information in this overview is primarily adapted from Berlin's official tourism authority (https://www.visitberlin.de/en/memorials-in-berlin), and from the Foundation Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe (https://www.stiftung-denkmal.de/memorials/?lang=en) which is responsible for all five memorials for the victims of the National Socialist regime near the Tiergarten. Hence, much of what follows is a form of written interpretation.

The Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe – Also known as the Holocaust Memorial, this is a memorial to the Jewish victims of the Holocaust murdered by the Nazi regime. It was designed by Peter Eisenman and was inaugurated in May 2005. The memorial is a large abstract art. However, it includes a small museum known as the Information Centre.

The location of the site is between the boroughs of Mitte and Tiergarten, with the American Embassy and Brandenburg Gate on one side and the high rises of Potsdam Square on the other. This central location also means that the site is included in almost every tour for first time visitors and is a part of the interpretation made by tour guides.

Figure 5.1: Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe

Photo: Author

The Memorial for the Murdered Members of the Reichstag – The memorial was erected in 1992. It was designed by Dieter Appelt, Klaus W. Eisenlohr, Justus Müller and Christian Zwirner. It consists of 96 cast iron plates, lined upright, with the names and birth dates of victimes and the dates they died or were killed. Places of death of individual members of the Reichstag are also engraved on top.

Figure 5.2: Memorial for the Murdered Members of the Reichstag

Photo: Author

Memorial to Homosexuals persecuted under Nazism – Approved by the Bundestag in 2003, this memorial was designed by artists Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset, and was opened to the public in May 2008. A signboard near the memorial tells the story of the persecution of homosexuals in Nazi Germany. As part of the design, a small window was placed in the memorial showing a short film of two men walking casually holding hands in the street. After a later protest from feminist organisations, the film was supplemented by another film showing two lesbians kissing.

The location, in close proximity to the Memorial for the Murdered Jews in Europe, attracted some criticism. After its opening in 2008, Holocaust survivor Israel Gutman argued against the 'poor choice' of location, claiming that it is a scandal that visitors might get the impression that there was no great difference between the suffering of the Jews and that of Homosexuals (DW Staff, 2008). Nevertheless, although located less than 50 meters from the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, this memorial receives significantly fewer visitors and, in summer-time, is partially hidden in the trees. Many guides mention and point out the memorial when guiding the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe.

Figure 5.3: Memorial to Homosexuals persecuted under Nazism

Photo: Author

Memorial and Information Point for the Victims of National Socialist 'Euthanasia' Killings (the so called Aktion T4) -

The current memorial for the victims of T4 comprises two parts and is located in close proximity to the building of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra on the site of the villa that housed the headquarters of the T4 Nazi authorities. The first part was designed by Richard Serra in 1987. It is made of two curved walls of steel erected parallel to each other.

In the autumn of 2014, Richard Serra's statue was supplemented by a new addition to the memorial. This was designed by architects Nikolaus Koliusis and Heinz W. Hallmann. It consists of a light blue glass wall as well as an outdoor exhibition that provides information about the history of the Euthanasia killings. Similar to the memorial for the homosexual victims and for the victims of the parliament, this memorial is not usually included in mainstream tours but is referred to by most guides at some point in their Highlight or Third Reich Tours.

Figure 5.4: Memorial and Information Point for the Victims of National Socialist 'Euthanasia' Killings

Photo: Author

Memorial to the Sinti and Roma Victims of National Socialism – Consciously positioned between the Reichstag and Brandenburg Gate, the memorial was designed by Dani Karavan and officially opened in October 2012. It is dedicated to the memory of the estimated 220,000 to 500,000 people murdered in the Porajmos – the Nazi genocide of the European Sinti and Roma peoples.

The triangular shape of the black stone in the middle of the circular pool is a reference to the Nazi concentration camp badge system (different colours were assigned to different groups of prisoners), in which the Sinti and Roma were marked by a black triangle. This memorial is surrounded by a glass wall and trees, and provides a chronology of events.

The location of the memorial on a path between the Reichstag and Brandenburg Gate contributes significantly to guides stopping to show and interpret the place to their visitors.

Figure 5.5: Memorial to the Sinti and Roma Victims of National Socialism
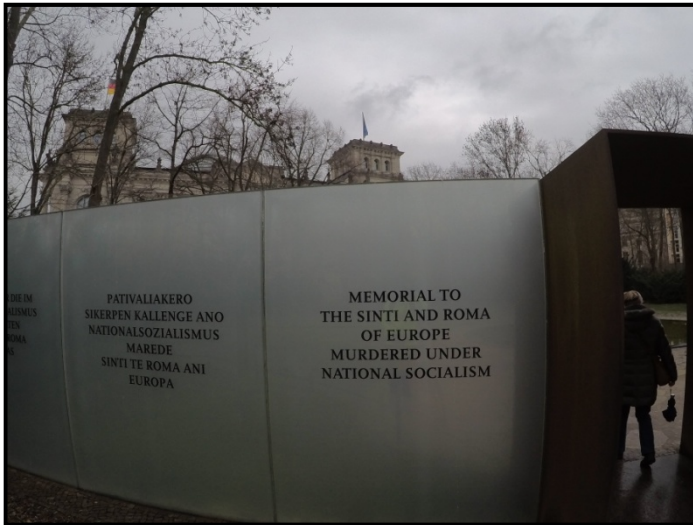
Photo: Author

Figure 5.6: Memorial to the Sinti and Roma Victims of National Socialism

Photo: Author

Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum – This is a former concentration camp of the SS which was in operation from 1936 until the spring of 1945. In the summer of 1945, the Soviet army used an area on the side of the camp as a prison camp; this was in operation until 1950. In 1961, the site of the former camp opened for the first time as a memorial site. After the German reunification in 1990, the memorial site had to reinvent itself and, as a consequence, went through many changes.

Figure 5.7: Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum

Photo: Author

Today, the site functions as both a memorial site and as a museum, with more than ten exhibitions in different buildings. The popularity of the site has increased over the last decade, particularly as it features predominantly on online travel platforms as one of the 'must see' sites when visiting Berlin. The site is located in a suburb of the Brandenburg town Oranienburg; it takes about one hour to travel there from the centre of Berlin.

Figure 5.8: Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum

Photo: Author

Bebel Platz is the location the memorial, colloquially known as the Book Burning Memorial and officially named The Presence of Absence. The memorial commemorates the events of the 10th of May, 1933 when, just a few weeks after Hitler was appointed Chancellor, the new regime organised the burning of books in universities around Germany. The books chosen were considered by the Nazis to be subversive or opposed to their ideology. In 1995, artist Micha Ullman designed the memorial. It features an underground room, shaped like an empty library, with empty white shelves sufficient to hold 20,000 books, the estimated number of books burned during the event itself. Close to the memorial can be found two plaques on two sides, quoting Heinrich Heine's famous line: 'Das war ein Vorspiel nur, dort wo man Bücher verbrennt, verbrennt man auch am Ende Menschen' – This was just a prelude. Where people burn books, they will eventually burn people, too.

Figure 5.9: Book Burning Memorial

Photo: Author

Figure 5.10: Book Burning Memorial

Photo: Author

Checkpoint Charlie – one of, if not the most, famous checkpoints in the history of the Cold War, this site is on the 'check list' of the vast majority of first-time visitors to Berlin. In July 1945, the Allied forces gave this border crossing its name, along with two more border crossings: Checkpoint Bravo and Checkpoint Alpha. The area itself has several museums and numerous large historical wall pictures and maps. In terms of the route public tours follow or private tours request, the site is located between historical Berlin (to the north-east) and a remnant of the Berlin Wall (400 meters to the west).

Although extremely popular and historically important, the site is not a favourite with tour guides. Its design and overall planning is controversial from a historical perspective and, also with regards to practical issues such the difficulty parking a bus and the high risk of pickpocketing. These issues have made their way into the interpretation of almost every guide observed or interviewed in this thesis.

Figure 5.11: Checkpoint Charlie

Photo: Author

Figure 5.12: Checkpoint Charlie

Photo: Author

Hitler's bunker – Führerbunker in German. This is the site of the former air raid shelter used by Hitler in the last weeks of the Second World War. Today, the site is a private parking lot, located on Gertrud-Kolmar Straße. In 2006, the city positioned a large information sign on the edge of the parking lot. Subsequently, the number of individual and group visitors who stop there has increased to the millions. Guided groups also stop here as part of their Highlights Tour. This site stands out in this thesis in that guides are, in essence, required to interpret a parking lot.

Figure 5.13: Hitler's bunker

Photo: Author

The Neue Wache - The New Guard House was originally designed by Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Salomo Sachs in 1816, with the function of being the Hohenzollern's guard house. In 1931, its function changed, becoming a war memorial (Marcuse, 1997).
In 1956, the site was part of East Berlin. It was renamed 'Mahnmal für die Opfer des Faschismus und beider Weltkriege' – Memorial for the victims of fascism and the two world wars. After German reunification in 1990, the site was once again renamed, this time as the 'Central Memorial for the Victims of War and Tyranny' – its official name today.

When guiding any combination of a highlight tour, many guides will stop at the Neue Wache. The exception is different kinds of bus tour when many will continue driving on Unter den Linden, although guides may still mention the site. During walking tours, some guides choose to use the site to start a discussion on national remembrance and who should be remembered.

Figure 5.14: Neue Wache

Photo: Author

The Block of the Women at Rosen Straße. – also known as the memorial site at Rosen Straße, the small park includes an information sign telling the history of the synagogue built there in 1714 and demolished in 1958. In addition, there is also a three-part memorial to the 27th of February 1943 women's uprising. Out of 8,000 detained, about 2,000 were Jewish men who were partners in mixed marriages. For a week, some 600 women engaged in demonstrations for the release of their Jewish husbands. The site is visited often, but by mostly guides with groups on the Jewish heritage (or similar) tour. The memorial was designed and built by sculptor Ingeborg Hunziger.

Figure 5.15: The Block of the Women at Rosen Straße

Photo: Author

Figure 5. 16: The Block of the Women at Rosen Straße

Photo: Author

The Memorial Site of the Berlin Wall at Bernauer Straße - It was not long after the concrete of the Berlin Wall was removed in the summer of 1990 that discussions started on how to remember the Wall. Out of the original 156.2 km of border surrounding West Berlin,43.1 km ran through the city from north to south. Remnants of the Wall can be found today all along the Berliner Mauerweg – the Berlin Wall Trail (https://www.berlin.de/mauer/en/wall-trail/). The largest number of visitors who wish to see the Berlin Wall make their way to East Side Gallery or to Checkpoint Charlie, whereas the mile-long memorial site with its various exhibitions functions as the more educational and official memorial site for the victims of the Berlin Wall.

Different parts of the site are included in various versions of the Cold War tour. Over the years, more and more guides and tour companies have made an effort to include the site or parts of it in their tours.

Figure 5.17: The Memorial Site of the Berlin Wall

Photo: Author

Figure 5.18: The Memorial Site of the Berlin Wall

Photo: Author

Figure 5.19: The Memorial Site of the Berlin Wall

Photo: Author

Platform 17 Memorial at Grunewald – The memorial site around the S Bahn station at the Berlin suburb of Grunewald is in fact one of several monuments and memorials located near the station. The station is said to have been one of the main sites for the deportation of Berlin and Brandenburg Jews mainly to Auschwitz and to Theresienstadt between October 1941 and April 1945.

The various memorials (there are both large installations and small plaques) have been placed there at different times since 1946. Platform 17 is the most famous one, built in late 1997 and inaugurated on the 27th of January, 1998 to coincide with International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

The suburb of Grunewald is outside the centre of Berlin where many of the other sites are located. That in itself has been a part of the interpretation for many guides. The types of groups who mostly visit the memorials are tourists on the Jewish Heritage tour or educational tours of school groups.

Figure 5.20: Platform 17 Memorial at Grunewald

Photo: Author

Figure 5.21: Platform 17 Memorial at Grunewald

Photo: Author

Topography of Terror – is a documentation centre, a museum and an outdoors exhibition. The site was the location of the former state security headquarters of the National Socialist regime and, in a later chapter in history, part of the border between East and West Berlin. The relic of the Berlin Wall is one of the longest sections remaining in its original location.

In its contemporary use, the word 'terror' entails so many political, social and cultural meanings that it is unlikely that every visitor to the museum or a tourist on a guided tour will immediately recognise the original dictionary meaning of the word and, therefore, the implied meaning of the museum name. The site is visited by guides with their groups on almost every highlights tour, on most Third Reich tours, and many Cold War tours.

Figure 5.22: Topography of Terror

Photo: Author

Figure 5.23: **Topography of Terror**

Photo: Author

Figure 5.24: Topography of Terror

Photo: Author

This chapter has presented the main dark tourism sites in Berlin. As such, it has served to assist in visualising the locations where tour guides give interpretations of the dark chapters of Berlin's history. In addition, it has also served to provide the reader of this thesis with a short overview of the content tour guides may interpret. The following chapter presents the findings of this thesis, analysed from data collected during tour observations and guide interviews.

Chapter 6

Research outcomes: Tour guides' interpretation of dark tourism sites

6.0 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 4, two principle research methods were employed in this study, namely, observation and dyadic interviews, although data were also generated through other complementary means including informal conversations with tour guides and secondary sources, such as brochures and other textual materials at the sites, relevant newspaper articles and so on. Collectively, these methods were implemented to address the overall aim of the research: to identify and appraise critically the varying ways in which tour guides interpret dark sites in Berlin. The purpose of this chapter is now to present and discuss the key findings emerging from the research as they relate to that aim.

The chapter is structured as follows (see Figure 6.1). First, in section 6.1, I describe the process, as revealed by the research, that tour guides employ to enable them to make more or less calculated choices in the way in which they interpret sites. In addition, in section 6.2, I consider the evolutionary nature of tour guiding; that is, how and why the personal and professional development of guides influences and transforms their interpretation of dark tourism sites during the passage of their professional tour guiding careers. As such, this provides the context for the subsequent sections. In sections 6.3 to 6.5, I present and discuss the main findings of the research through an analysis of dark tourism interpretation. More specifically, these sections collectively comprise an in-depth exploration of a variety of interpretation themes (as shown in Table 6.1), nuanced as they are between different guides in different tours.

At an early stage of the data collection, I observed that in any given tour there are three levels of interpretation: words, anecdotes, and tour narratives. Therefore, the findings in this chapter were analysed by means of highlighting their interpretation choices at the three levels of interpretation: (i) words chosen within stories/anecdotes; (ii) anecdotes used to illustrate a particular story or to make a point; and (iii) the arc narrative of the entire tour characterised by the guide's approach or interpretational message. Through these three levels, I consider the potential meanings revealed in each theme.

Chapter 6

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Figure 6.1: Chapter 6 Structure

Table 6.1: Interpretation themes

Dealing with controversial topics

- o Us versus them
- o Why the Jews
- o How much did the German people know?
- o First Second and Third Reich
- o Using Nazi terminology for the lack of a better option

Alternating wording

- o Killed is very different than murdered
- o Liberation or Occupation
- o The Soviets or The Russians
- o Using accurate terms: death versus labour, concentration, and extermination

Parts of the narrative

- o Hitler hated Berlin
- o Hitler was born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire
- o On why Hitler served in the German army
- o The end of the Berlin Wall
- o The rise of the Nazis to power

Delicate observations

- o Watered down cruise ship versions of Sachsenhausen
- o Legitimate jokes to break the tension
- o The thing that makes Sachsenhausen special for the guides
- o The responsibility of guiding the dark

Conceptualising dark interpretation

- o Employing third and first body talk in the narrative
- o On allowing people to be ignorant
- o Playing the 'what if' game
- o Shoe testing commando - making sure tourists understand words in the right context

Technique

- o Using sarcasm in when interpreting the dark
- o Interpreting Sachsenhausen to school students
- o Keeping it light - Cold War talk

Coined terms

- o The Law of the Third
- o Accumulative psychological pressure

Quotes from observed tours and guide interviews serve as the primary evidence for the analysis of topics and interpretational choices. Section 6.6 discusses interpretation in the form

of answering tourists' questions, presenting several examples of how answers are integrated into the tour narrative, whilst in section 6.7 I highlight several of what I see as more pronounced observations made over the course of this research and, indeed, during my entire time as a guide in Berlin. Lastly, section 6.8 provides a summary of the findings discussed in this chapter.

6.1 On the inner process of choosing interpretations

> *When you start you don't really know exactly which story to choose at every point of guiding. But in the end you learn very quickly to notice with people, how interested they are… what they already know, if they ask questions… and also what the mood is. They could be very interested but perhaps tired from the flight, or they woke up in the hotel in the morning and figured they'll take a tour. The best way is to ask them questions in the beginning and looking them in the eye when they answer.* (Guide I23)

A tour operator once told me that there are undoubtedly many guides who are highly competent in terms of their historical knowledge; they are also wonderful performers and able to convey this knowledge very effectively. However, to reach the higher professional guiding level, the operator continued, the guide has to be able to adapt to multiple types of tourists. Such a guide is able to work for more companies, giving more types of tours to more types of tourists. Thus, with regards to dark tourism, choosing how to interpret a particular event, or even a whole tour, requires the guide to make certain choices, bearing in mind that the content of dark tourism interpretation may spark strong emotions and opinions and may result in a range of either very positive or very negative outcomes for the guide. In this section, I present the various processes, as explained to me by the guides during the interviews, through which they choose what to interpret to their guests.

The most common starting point, I was told, was that group size and group dynamic are the two biggest factors. The first distinction many guides make is between public and private tours. This makes all the difference in the tour dynamics. For example, Guide I2 said that:

> *…there's a difference between public tours and private tours. With private tours, I'm assuming smaller groups usually. In private tours to Sachsenhausen there's a lot*

more time to discuss history; for example, on the way in the car. Or in the hotel lobby,
quite often they're not all down at the same time… I don't start off by telling them
22,000 were murdered in that location… I'd start by saying my name and where I'm
from, and then how long I've lived in Berlin. It's very common on a Sachsenhausen
tour that they would tell me that they've been to Auschwitz. Sometimes they even tell
me that they have a personal connection through their parents or grandparents.
Telling them where I'm from and asking where they're from is a process of breaking
the ice but it's a bit subconscious. It's also about finding something in common, so
you have something to talk about…

The first few minutes are indeed very important in determining the guide's form of interpretation. Both parties make a first impression which, in private tours, has a greater influence on how the guide is about to adapt their interpretation. However, as Guide I2 carefully explained, the first rapport should not be the main determinant: '*I don't normally know in the beginning exactly what I'm going to say. I don't want to decide not to tell the worst stuff. If I know why they wanted to visit Sachsenhausen I may tailor my interpretations to that. It's also my duty as a capitalist, isn't it? To give the customer what they want…*' This goes back to the special nature of a private tour to Sachsenhausen. Guides may wish to refrain from making hotel lobby decisions as they know they have more time to get to know the customer during the car drive and therefore may have a more accurate reading of who they are dealing with. In other tours in the city, however, this process has to be performed more quickly as the tour may start immediately or after only a few minutes of driving or taking public transport to the first site.

Guide I2's comment on being a capitalist was also expressed in different ways by other guides. Guide I1 commented on the nature of working for a big public tour company: '*I work for a company that is providing tours. I'd definitely say that the way I go about tour guiding is that the stories I tell are somewhat limited by the fact that I want people to enjoy their time, that I and the company depend on their online positive feedback. The most important thing is that the tourists have had a good experience by the end of the tour.*'

Although this view is not controversial, there were guides who gave me a more nuanced answer. Guide I3, for example, agreed that positive feedback in public tour companies is the most important thing but that, at the same time, there are ways to censor oneself to avoid

offending the tourist yet still convey a political message. For example, Guide I7 said that in Brandenburg Gate '*if I'm not sure about who my American tourists support then I wouldn't make a direct comparison to contemporary American politics, but I might mention the Nazis marching 2,000 Sturmabteilung troops with torches around the block several times to create the illusion on camera of having dozens of thousands of supporters. I don't need to mention the word Trump, they will already make the connection in their heads; they already think about the tiki torches in Charlottesville*' [this respondent was referring to the white nationalist marches in August 2017].

Inevitably, guides have to make certain assumptions based on how they perceive the people in front of them in order to be able to provide an appropriate interpretation. Guide I1 explained, half jokingly: '*With public tours you don't know who's going to be there. But I'm assuming that everyone has a basic level of European history. Everyone knows who Adolf Hitler was… I could be wrong…*' In a more serious tone, the guide continued:

> *If we talk about Sachsenhausen specifically, then we have to ask why they are coming there at all? We have to wonder about their reasons… I feel that it could be something that people feel like they should have been there; to learn about this piece of history, at least once in their lives. It's a sense of participation in Western civilisation, a part of belonging, a sort of – "I understand because I've been there". Like for the Dutch understanding Indonesian history, a sense of belonging.*

Guides I1, I2, I3 and I7 made a similar point that may be summarised in the following way:

> *There is a huge difference between dark sites of the 30 Years War and sites of 20th Century wars, mainly because of the number of sites you actually have left to visit. It's the physicality of tourist spaces. Tourism also implies a sense of mobility; it's not like sitting at home watching a documentary about the Second World War. There needs to be a sense of travel, staying at a hotel… There is the physicality of what you're going to show. Germany is still here, Prussia is not. Austria is here, but Austro-Hungary is not. So what do you relate there? I think for a lot of people to be there is in sense to participate in history… They don't necessarily need to understand every fact.*

For these guides, then, decisions as to how to interpret dark tourism sites are largely based on the perceived motivation of their guests to feel like they are taking part in history, which validates their cultural belonging. Furthermore, the guides are there to satisfy this need of their customers to be engaged by the story telling, functioning as a time machine to a reality that no longer exists. In that sense, for the guides, the events of the 20th Century that they interpret are darker and more relatable because they are present, both physically with memorials and buildings with bullet holes in them, and culturally in the social memory of the tourists.

In order to make better cultural assumptions, guides often briefly 'interview' their guests, gently probing with questions and actively listening in order to find the kind of interpretation that would best suit them. Therefore, in some ways they interpret as a response to the person or persons they have only just met. Guide I22 illustrated this situation:

> *…usually people volunteer stuff, because Americans like to talk. If someone says: me and my husband were in Checkpoint Charlie in 1981, in an email you can ask which focus they prefer. And then you notice other details quite quickly when you're with them. If you start talking about Prussia, and they ask about the Nazis, then you know you won't talk about Prussia... People from the company I usually guide for are not typical Americans. Rather, they can be very independent. So they try the Ubahn and often know what's interesting for them. I also always try to feel with Americans if they're Trumps or not... Very quickly I can gauge whether, or actually, in what way to talk about deterioration of democracy, propaganda, or fake news... You got to be careful, though, I don't want to offend them, but I won't pretend I'm a right-winger and say how evil communism is*.

Guide I16 mentioned an interesting way of identifying the political views of different tourists: '*We don't have archives in the West because we never toppled our secret police. On the whole, about 70 percent are not Trump people. If I do have Republicans, I would make small adjustments... I would maybe expand about Reagan in Brandenburg Gate. But not too much, it would be like giving the tourists what they want to hear and the story may not be my most important choice on that day, considering my time limit.*

Unsurprisingly, as most of my observations and interviews were in English, the politics of English-speaking countries came up more than those of other countries. Guide I22 continued along a similar vein: '*In the companies I work for, they* [American tourists] *really want me to talk about Brexit. I guess it makes sense because coming to Europe is a unique experience for many of them, and now there is a local person, an expert of sorts, who can give them an inside analysis, or point of view at least. In that way, I know who is Trump and who isn't because the non-Trumps say about Brexit: this sound very familiar.*' Regarding these political topics, the risk of offending some tourists does therefore exist as it is rare for a guide to have a group in which they know all participants to hold the same political views.

The level of tourists' knowledge may be determined by their education; that is to say, from their family, their school and the education system in their country of origin. But of course for guides, most of this information is not readily available. Instead, the age of the person can give some indication to the level of knowledge. As Guide I5 argued:

> *I look at the age first. Because if someone is old, I assume that they know more things. If someone is young, maybe their knowledge is based more on movies or video games. I need to know first what they know. If they know very little, then I have to start from scratch, what was the Stasi, who were the Gestapo... Or if they have a lot of experience, then it's different. If they come from Spain or from Argentina, I will tell stories differently, because I have to ask myself... If they were under the regime of Pinochet then they already know what it's like to live in such a country. If they come from Mexico or Guatemala, maybe they've experienced dictatorship. That helps me. If they were born in Spain in the 1960s or 1970s, each requires a slightly different interpretation. In Spain it's also about which side they were, the revolution or not.*

Naturally, guides have to deal with mixed levels of knowledge, not only on public heterogeneous tours but also on private family tours. Indeed, family tours are a good example of this situation. It might be that the family comprises parents with three or four children. The first distinction will be between the parents, as usually one of them was responsible for booking the tour. Studies have found that, in family tourism decision-making more gernerally, women often play a dominant role (for example, (Barlés-Arizón, Fraj-Andrés & Martínez-Salinas, 2004; Koc, 2004); whether this is the case for booking tours in Berlin is unclear but, either way, it is likely the person who does so is more versed in the history told

on the tour. The second distinction is between children of different ages and at different stages of learning history at school (not to mention different levels of being interested). What I have often encountered is that a child who has recently completed their high school education knows a lot as the information is fresh in their memories, whereas with younger children the parents encourage me to involve them because their exam time may be coming soon. Another interesting experience occurred when I was on a cycling tour with two men. One knew a lot about the Holocaust and the Second World War, the other only basic facts. As we cycled out of town, I slowly began to understand the situation. After asking them what they honestly wanted to do, the person who knew more was happy to listen to me explaining historical processes (for example, the 1920s election campaigns and the final appointment of Hitler as Chancellor in January 1933). He occasionally intervened to help explain details to his friend, and we ended up having interesting conversations. Indeed, although we mostly cycled in nature areas distant from any dark tourism site, my interpretation included historical guiding which interested them and enhanced their enjoyment of the tour.

Guides I5, I6, and I14 summarised their view in that, at the beginning of the tour, they ask people not to talk about any politics that are familiar to them during the tour. If they wish to do so after the tour, however, particularly after a Sachsenhausen tour, guides are happy to entertain this. In the interviews, the guides mentioned that they try to understand the political views of the tourists, but also that there are many tourists who are not ready to hear certain things, especially about East Germany. It depends on how they react and what they tell the guides. For instance, Guide I6 said that if they have a tourist in their eighties who says that Hitler did something good by fighting the communists, they probably would not push the point because it seems moot to try to change a person's views at that age. With students, however, all guides agreed that they would argue strongly against such a viewpoint.

Guides I5 and I14 argued that '*we are not teachers, we are tour guides. The tourists want to learn something, maybe some new information, and take a few pictures. But they are still on a holiday. I think some guides forget that sometimes*'. Here, the respondents are making a modest accusation that some guides have a misplaced enthusiasm in revealing the significant amount of knowledge they possess; in essence, they are forgetting their 'place' in the tour. In other words, the argument is that, as a guide you are there for the tourist, not for yourself. Although phrased differently, Pond similarly argues that guides interpret for the tourist, rather than for the tour (Pond, 1993: 17). Nevertheless, and this is a point I heard many times during

the research and that is repeated in this thesis on several occasions, many guides argued that, as tour guides, we have a responsibility to a topic which is very important, especially when guiding students.

In one unusual interview, I encountered an opinion about the changing nature of the clientele we receive. Guide I10 commented that:

> *I usually stick to one text and structure which, I'm afraid, aims for the lower common denominator. Sadly, in recent years, I have noticed that people are less and less knowledgeable or interested in self-education. I tend to lower the level of the tour and stick to giving them the basics, spicing it up with alternating anecdotes. Only if I feel that the group has more knowledge and wants to know more do I add debates that were not included in the original tour plan. I know whether to do all this in the first 15 to 30 minutes of the tour.*

The disadvantage of this approach is that it misses those in the group who are interested. I would argue that this approach has an element of collective punishment, despite the fact that some will probably acknowledge that they are in a diverse group which includes others with more limited knowledge or interest. I have experienced this challenge myself many times. It might appear that the group 'level' might require presenting the interpretation in easy-to-digest portions. However, even in homogenous groups from factories or unions (on so-called incentive tours), there are still those who are interested in knowing more. This is evidence of what I refer to as the Law of the Third (discussed in more detail in section 6.7.1). In such cases, the guide may choose to interpret to the group according to the demand of the group's leader.

6.2 Interpretations evolve

This section seeks to offer insights into the manner in which guides' interpretation of dark sites develops and evolves over time. That is to say, it reveals what the guides in this research had to say about the personal and professional influences that transform the manner of their interpretation as their professional life progresses.

Interestingly, this particular interview question encouraged my respondents to reflect in a nostalgic way on their early days in guiding. There was a sense of relief that I saw in the

interviews; my colleagues appeared to be happy to be over a hurdle – the challenge of starting out on a guiding career – and to be able to talk about it from the position of experience. Guide I9 commenced by stating that: '*In the beginning of my guiding career, I didn't know which stories to tell at every site, particularly sites such as the Holocaust Memorial. At a site like that I already knew I needed to be more accurate. Especially when I started doing my Third Reich tour or my Sachsenhausen tour it was more important to be accurate because people need to understand better what I'm talking about; it's a difficult topic…*'

Guide I9's comments highlight an interesting point. Before gaining significant professional experience, most guides already understand the unusual need for historical accuracy brought about by the unique difficulty of the topic. Guide I2 gave me a specific example: '*When I explain the gradual process of persecution, I do that out of my own guiding experience. I am not a trained historian, so I definitely had to learn a lot when I moved to Berlin and became a tour guide. I didn't know enough about the idea of mass murder or genocide. Solving these misconceptions is very important.*' Certainly, as I felt myself and was supported by my colleagues, experience also gave me the tools to be more historically accurate. This, in turn, helps guides to better deal with sensitive topics while staying within the time frame of their tour.

Guide I14 provided with me another example as to how comments from tourists can encourage a guide to work on self-improvement: '*At the beginning of my guiding career, I wouldn't notice the way I described Hitler's rise to power. After a couple of times hearing tourists making comments that were historically inaccurate, I decided to read more about the election campaigns in Germany in 1932. In that way, I was subsequently better equipped to support my argument should there be a need to do so. It also made me more meticulous about the choices of words I use*'. In one way or another, the great majority of the guides I have met over the years share this sentiment.

But guide I14 continued to give me another example of how their relationships in Berlin contributed to changing their interpretation, building on the accumulated historical knowledge they have gained through conventional research: '*I now understand that whether I'm talking about the Cold War or about the Third Reich, in the beginning I was very one sided in my interpretation. I used to talk only about people escaping from the DDR to the BRD* [from East Germany to West Germany]. *Now, when I have the time, I talk about the*

broader picture and make sure that it's clear that these stories cannot be seen using black and white filters like that.' When asked, Guide I7 agreed:

> O*h, definitely! I'm not gonna tell you details, but friendships as well as romantic relationships brought a change to my interpretation. Especially when it comes to the Cold War, it is very likely that if you live in Berlin you will interact with people who lived through this era that you talk about in your tours. You will have to have some serious elephant skin to block this kind of historical knowledge. I don't think these relationships should have too great influence on your broader historical analysis, but you should definitely allow room for the individual human perspective.*

Choosing what to listen to and when, factors into the everyday lives of guides. Guides are concerned about unintentionally mixing unreliable information into their work. Several guides told me openly that they originate from an English-speaking country and that their partner was born in East Germany. Their family relationships translate into regular choices they make in their work. In this common pattern, the guides mostly choose to maintain their broad analysis and the values they hold while, at the same time, striving to be less harsh regarding certain issues. This was most evident in the example of a guide who told me: '*I am quite sure my mother-in-law collaborated with the Stasi. At first I was very judgmental about that. Now, I'm just not sure she had a choice, considering what the husband did for a living.*' For Guide I6, the solution is clear: '*I try to say more positive things about the DDR, but not about the Wall! Of course, there are many positive things I can say. But it's also weird for me, because for some people even the Franco time was not so bad*'. A further issue related to these personal relationships has to do with how guides feel about the fear of listening to 'wrong knowledge'. That is to say, guides worry that if they listen to another guide presenting faulty information or to their parents-in-law making claims that are simply historically inaccurate, their entire bank of information may eventually become jumbled up and they may present incorrect information as historically acceptable facts.

In addition to historical research to improve their knowledge (reading books, watching documentaries, visiting sites, going to museums, etc.), greater professional experience for guides also evolves from the increasing number of opportunities (i.e. tours they have guided) in which they have listened to the stories of their guests. As Guide I3 explained:

I think my interpretation changes according to changes in my perspective. And that comes from experiences of meeting people who tell me stories. Once, I guided a person who served in the Korean War. I used to be less tolerant. Now, I think this old guy may be a Trump supporter but he has his life experience and that deserves my empathy. Even if I don't agree with their politics, I felt I had to be aware of what I say in front of people. Guides can be very involved; I mean how do you talk to people like that every day if you're not?

Undeniably, in any observation or interview I conducted from 2017 onwards, several issues were repeatedly mentioned by the guides as interpretation 'game changers'. Here is a synthesis of Guides I3, I16 and I7 who commented in a similar way:

Over time I changed my commentary about Brexit; it had to become more balanced. I meet a lot of very intelligent Trump supporters. They are very sensitive and their radar is always up. That is to say, they are used to being attacked for their views, and almost look forward to it in a defensive way. So, when they want to hear about Brexit, I now try to make the analysis broader; more balanced. After all, it's their holiday and I'm not there to insult them. I get the impression with many of them that they are very bright and clever, with high emotional intelligence and yet they voted for this utter tool...

Despite these comments, other guides argued that they do not think many of them would have made radical changes in their interpretation after Trump's election in 2016. Evidence from the majority of conversations I had with guides about other guides reveals that, unsurprisingly, there is a mainstream political spectrum of opinions within the guiding community, largely centralist, perhaps slightly left-leaning (I say that with great caution as the word may have different connotations to different people in different countries, and with great discrepancy between politics and economics). Despite that, the overwhelming conclusion is that guides understand that they can open people's eyes to certain issues, but not really change their minds, reflecting a point made in the literature. As considered in Chapter Three, several scholars argue in one way or another that one of the roles of the tour guide is to provide the tourist with a new angle on the story that they were not aware of prior to attending the tour (see, for example, Cohen, 1985; Pond, 1993; Wynn, 2011). Weiler and Kim (2015) go one step further in arguing that interpretive tour guiding has significant

potential to change tourists' attitudes, particularly with regards to their on-site behaviour in nature reserves, as well as to contribute to visitors' knowledge of environmental sustainability. There is an important point to make here; although it is not the role of the guide to change people's minds, it can be argued that it is their role to offer new or alternative perspctives. This reaffirms Tilden's (1957) argument that tour guiding interpretation is not in itself education in the traditional sense of the word; rather, its purpose is to reveal meanings and to encourage people to think about the place or event interpreted to them by the guide. In a similar vein, though referring to guides' performance (rather than their role), Yu, Weiler and Ham (2004) found that tourism industry representatives acknowledged that good guides are the ones who broaden their guests' views.

Owing to the unique politicised nature of the kind of dark tourism sites which can be found in Berlin, providing a new angle to a story or presenting an analysis previously not familiar to the tourist may in fact alter their opinion on various matters of idealogy or politics. Nevertheless, as I stated above, guides acknowledge that it is not their role to 'fix the world' (from each guides' individual perception of 'fixing'); they recognise that they are not guiding the tour in order to change people's minds. Probably for the reasons mentioned above, guides almost always preferred to divert attention back to local politics, where they felt safer to comment on the extreme and dangerous nature of the AfD (Alternative für Deutschland – Germany's far-right political party). The growth of the extreme right and neo-Nazi movements, and openly anti-Semitic sentiments was said by many guides to be a testament to the evolution of interpretation in correlation to current events. We would not have talked about it five years ago in the same way, as the AfD gained its first real political power only in 2016.

All in all, most guides agreed that there are indeed such major global events that affect their interpretation in a significant way. However, personal life events, relationships and professional growth are considered by guides to be the most significant influences on transforming their interpretation.

Having considered how guides initially choose their approach to interpretation for different groups of tourists and the factors that underpin transformations in their interpretation over time, the next section turns to the central focus of this research – that is, how tour guides

interpret dark tourism sites – commencing with an analysis of their interpretational selection of words.

6.3 Choosing interpretation words

Interpreting dark tourism is, arguably, different to other forms of tourism interpretation in that even a single word or a short phrase can have a significant impact on the meaning of the story. The choice of one word over another by a tour guide can not only reveal the guide's historical knowledge but also their political opinion or what they think about the tourists' political views, and even provide a testimony to their value system. In this section, I will demonstrate through various examples of guides' choices how these values and opinions are revealed, and what they could mean to guides and, in many instances, to tourists as well. The words presented in this section were not chosen randomly. Rather, they are words commonly used by guides that I have heard over several years of guiding prior to this research. Furthermore, in the initial stage of data collection, I observed that most guides do not use these words interchangeably (unless otherwise stated). Therefore, they were deemed useful in examining the nuanced or subtle differences in guides' interpretation choices.

6.3.1 'Death camps' – clarifying the difference between labour, concentration and extermination camps

Disambiguation of terms is a topic that arose in every conversation with tour guides. One of the most important clarifications that guides made was between the terms used to describe Nazi camps. The terms primarily used are 'labour camps', 'concentration camps' and 'extermination camps'. Most of the guides I observed usually incorporated such a clarification into their guiding not only at Sachsenhausen but also on various city tours whilst, during interviews, many told me that this is important for several reasons. In movies or television shows (i.e. outside academic research), it is common to hear the term 'death camps'. Even Holocaust survivors often use this term. I always thought that they are the only ones who should have the prerogative to use the term because, in the context of their testimony, it makes sense. However, most guides were of the opinion that, in the context of historical tours, accuracy is more important than the emotional impact that the use of the compound term 'death camp' has on people. Specifically, they stated that it was important for them to convey historical accuracy as best as tour circumstances allowed. From my observations, guides frequently mentioned (though in different ways) that deaths occurred in

all types of camps during the 12 years of the Nazi regime. In particular, however, it was important for many guides leading Sachsenhausen tours to tell their tourists that Sachsenhausen was a concentration camp with many labour camps under its supervision. In other words, it was not built for the purpose of systematically exterminating people. Some guides told me that they do so because they encounter many of what they consider to be ignorant people who base all their knowledge on popular movies and, consequently, confuse the most infamous camp, Auschwitz-Birkenau, with any or all other Nazi camps. The guides also stated that by taking an objective stance on the difference between the terms, they are being more professional and also feel more appreciated by the tourists for being more knowledgeable.

Here is one example of how Guide O1 incorporates disambiguation of terms in their opening of the Sachsenhausen tour:

> *The term concentration camp needs to be separated from the term extermination camp. By the term extermination camp we mean a place like Auschwitz, where there were large industrial scale gas chambers, built for the extermination of the Jews of Europe. So, by the term concentration camp we mean really a labour camp. People who went there died there at the hands of the SS. They died from starvation, torture, malnutrition, weakening of the body, and disease that spread as a result.*

Guide O1 also told me later that if they had real 'experts' on a tour, then they also explain in more detail that Sachsenhausen was a camp intended to concentrate inmates of different populations but where, at the same time, some of the prisoners laboured in the camp itself. However, most Sachsenhausen inmates worked in the 40 or more satellite or subsidiary camps around Sachsenhausen, most notably at the Brickworks. Guide O1 said that the most important thing here for most tourists is to understand that they are not visiting Auschwitz-Birkenau, implying that they perceive many tourists to be seeking the 'goriest' experience, as some suggest in the literature. For example, Blom (2000) argues that humans indeed have the tendency to be drawn to the very thing which makes us feel unease and anxiety whilst, in his research amongst young people visiting Auschwitz-Birkenau, Thurnell-Read (2009) refers to this kind of travel as Holocaust Tourism and questions whether it is not simply morbid voyeurism that motivates tourists to experience this kind of historical sites in a certain way. Nevertheless, Thurnell-Read (2009) goes on to draw conclusions that are comparible to my

own observations: the motivations of young people are complex, sometimes comprising morbid voyeurism but at the same time embracing a sense of social duty and other social pressures. Furthermore, this does not contradict the valuable lessons that people take from their visitation (Thurnell-Read, 2009).

Returning to Guide O1's observation, when tourists are in Berlin they appear to assume that they will have a similar experience at Sachsenhausen as they would when visiting Auschwitz. At the same time, however, it became evident in the research that guides want their guests to understand that life in a camp such as Sachsenhausen was as bad as Hollywood depictions of the Holocaust in films made about Auschwitz. That is to say, they try to convey the message that, for many, life in a concentration camp was a constant horror; indeed, I have heard guides arguing in a careful voice that life in Sachsenhausen was probably worse than dying in Auschwitz.

Nevertheless, some guides still employ the term 'death camps', either because they really are not sufficiently proficient to understand the difference or because they adopt a guiding strategy that uses dramaturgical tools to purposefully enhance the tourists' emotional experience and feelings of sadness. In addition, two respondents expressed their ambivalent position on this topic, claiming that, on the one hand, they prefer to use accurate terms, especially in this context, but on the other hand they sometimes have guests who are either not interested in such accuracy or are actively looking to express strong emotional responses when visiting such sites. Guests may also have personal connections to the event (as explained for example by Beech, 2000), in which case, according to the guides in interviews, being 'too academic' would be insensitive. In their study, Quinn and Ryan (2016: 13) observed that, in such circumstances, guides adoped a 'non-academic storyline [which] supports a decidedly neutralized and de-politicized narrative'. Although the motivation of the guides in Quinn and Ryan's research to be more sensitive was driven by the political nature of the events they were interpreting, the result is similar here in that the guides actively interpret events to their guests in a less academic and potentially less hurtful or sensational way (see also Bardgett, 2005; Currie, 2014; Haan, 2005, all quoted in Light, 2017).

Furthermore, and as discussed above, the guides felt that they are 'not here to fix the world'. I would argue here that this logic is partly grounded in that guides acknowledge that their guests having a variety of different motivations to visit dark tourism sites, but that that they

are primarily interested in a site (or indeed a part of a site) not because of the collective group of victims represented there but, rather, because of fascination in the 'form or scale of death in itself' (Seaton, 1996: 240). Thus, for the guide to identify the motivation or set of motivations to visit, or what specifically the guests are interested in, is key to how accurate they may be with their language.

In some instances, guides use Nazi terminology for the lack of a better option; *Kristal Nacht* – Night of the Broken Glass – is probably the most famous example. This terminology did not concern me as a child or young adult; it was only when I was well into my second or third year of guiding (age 34) when it became an issue for me. Growing up in Israel, the third generation of Holocaust survivors, I knew about the Night of the Broken Glass, as did everyone else in the society around me. Through my ten years of guiding experience and multiple conversations with my colleagues I can also observe that this story is widely known around the world, in places where basic education about the Holocaust is taught. However, that cultural embeddedness is, ironically, the problem. The events of the night of the 9th November 1938 are known to any person with a basic knowledge of the Holocaust. What is not generally known, though, is that the term *Kristal Nacht* was coined by the Nazis with the aim of belittling the public outcry from Jewish organisations, arguing that only a few shop windows were broken, and no real harm was done. At the same time, German ambassadors excused the event by arguing that the eruption of violence against the Jews was a spontenuous act of anger by the people (as opposed to an organised government act). History.com, for example, tells the story in the following way:

> On November 9, 1938, in an event that would foreshadow the Holocuast, German Nazis launched a campaign of terror against Jewish people and their homes and businesses in Germany and Austria. The violence, which continued through November 10 and was later dubbed "Kristallnacht", or "Night of the Borcken Glass", after the countless smashed windows of Jewish-owned establishments, left approximately 100 Jews dead, 7,500 Jewish businesses damaged and hundreds of synagoguges, homes, schools and graveyards vandalized. An estimated 30,000 Jewish men were arrested, many of whom were then sent to concentration camps for several months; they were released when they promised to leave Germany.

The Nazis used the murder of a low-level German diplomat in Paris by a 17-year-old Polish Jew as an excuse to carry out the Kristallnacht attacks. On November 7, 1938, Ernst vom Rath was shot outside the German embassy by Herschel Grynszpan, who wanted to revenge for his parents' sudden deportation from Germany to Poland, along with tens of thousands of other Polish Jews. Following vom Rath's death, Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels ordered German storm troopers to carry out violent riots disguised as "spontenous demonstrations" against Jewish citizens. Local police and fire departments were told not to interfere (History.com editors, 2019).

Gradually, Holocaust research publications have begun to refer to it as Pogrom Night – in essence, the commencement of the Holocaust – but in so doing creating a problem that tour guides face when interpreting the story: if we use the term Pogrom Night instead of Night of the Broken Glass, many will not understand to which event we are referring.

As one guide in the research half asked, half remarked: '*Wait, but if you say Pogrom Night, which one are you talking about? There were so many in the history of the Jewish people in Germany and Europe...*' This guide may have had a point, but it did not solve my problem; guides have to reveal the meanings of events and sites, and without such cultural references no interpretation of dark tourism would be possible. Once I became aware of the problem, I started looking for an interpretational solution. At some point in my tours, I began to set the scene before going on to talk about that terrible night. I explained that the Nazis wanted to excuse themselves by telling other governments that the Jews were exaggerating, and that only a few windows were broken. I explained that this is also the reason that historians have more recently begun to use the term Pogrom Night and. In addition, I started using both terms together on my tours.

An argument I want to make here is that tour guides do not share the academic 'luxury' that historians, authors of fiction or even stand-up comedians enjoy. We do not necessarily have the time to set the scene or to clarify a term or provide a working definition. Guide O8's opening interpretation inside Sachsenhausen is a good example. The guide used the term (Kristalnacht/Night of the Broken Glass) both in German and English several times when talking about Herschel Grynszpan (the assassin of Ernst vom Rath in Paris) being imprisoned in the cell block, and about the 6000 Jews who were arrested in Berlin and then brought to the camp the following day, effectively doubling the population of prisoners in the camp

overnight. There are instances where guides aim to be very clear about the problematic nature of historical knowledge and, in doing so, to make sure they are not responsible for presenting inaccuracies. Later in that same tour, for example, Guide O8 talked about the death marches of spring 1945, explaining to the tourists that the common belief is that the SS wanted to march the prisoners to Schwerin, put them on barges and eventually sink the barges. The guide then raised their voice slightly and changed the rhythm of their speech to tell the tourists that these are unsubstantiated rumours and that, as a guide, they would not want to present them as absolute facts, particularly when doubts persist. I kept thinking about this technique. I have said similar things myself, and I know of other guides who do likewise. But it leaves us with the question of how many guides do not? How many guides present the things we know as fact alongside things which are no more than rumours or based on unreliable data?

As I progressed with the writing of this thesis, I realised that the expectations of my director of studies (my doctoral advisor) with regards to the academic rigour of my writing were starting to influence my thinking as a guide. The more of the literature review I wrote, the more critical I became of almost every historical interpretation I gave and the more concerned I became that other guides are not. And it also concerned me even if they are aware of such methodological problems, they do not have the time or, in some cases, do not feel the need to address them. Yet, there is a distinctive group of guides who, after many years of guiding, continue to be critical of and qualify what and how they interpret. I have found that guides who do so typically have doctoral degrees or are otherwise academically trained, and usually do not work with large groups of people, though some do tend to drop their standards when working with particular types of big bus groups. Nevertheless, I came to think that there are ways to find the time to succinctly explain this problem of historiography.

6.3.2 Liberation or Occupation?

Choosing the word liberation over occupation when talking about the last days of the Second World War in general and the Battle of Berlin in particular, is extremely sensitive. It may reveal the political views of the guide, and may change the entire tour. For most tourists and guides, Berlin was liberated from the Nazis by the Soviets and the Allied Forces. I argue that most people see the world in black and white and, thus, almost everybody would consider the word liberated more appropriate here. However, some guides in the research indicated that although they clearly consider the defeat of the Nazis to be a positive history, they still

acknowledge that 'occupation' can be considered as a technical description of what happened. Nevertheless, during the research, no guide used the word occupied (as in the sentence 'the Soviets occupied Berlin'); to do so might generate suspicion of them being an extremist who mourns the Nazis losing the War. All the guides I spoke with were acutely aware of how overwhelmingly meaningful this word is; hence, they suggested they would only refer to 'occupation' and liberation' in the following way:

- 'When the Soviets stormed towards Berlin, they occupied the lands between the Oder River and the city'.
- 'Officially, the Soviets liberated the city on the…'

Another distinction to note here is that while some people may not be bothered by the phrase 'occupying forces' referring to the four powers after the war, they may still have an issue with the phrase 'occupied the city'. The difference lies in the meaning of 'occupy' as in to sit or hold one place as opposed to occupying a land, which has significantly more negative connotations, and points to the wider issue of the potential for dissonance or dissonant heritage in the interpretation of dark sites. Generally, heritage is 'a product of the present, purposefully developed in response to the current needs or demands for it and shaped by those requirements' (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996: 6), or, as Seaton (2001: 125) puts it, 'as much a product of present perspectives as past events'. Equally, '…all heritage is someone's heritage and therefore logically not someone else's, and the original meaning of an inheritance implies the existence of disinheritance' (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996: 21). This 'disinheritance' may occurs when past events are represented or interpreted in such a way that, for particular people, or groups, 'their' inheriatnce is distorted or displaced (see also Smith, 2006). Hence, choosing between 'liberation' and 'occupation' is one exampe of where dissonace may be experienced.

6.3.3 The Soviets or the Russians?
The distinction between 'Soviets' and 'Russians' is important, if not immediately evident. Most usually, guides employ either term when leading a Cold War tour, but also on Sachsenhausen or Third Reich tours (often when discussing the end of the war). And many tourists join a tour not necessarily knowing the difference. Indeed, several guides participating in the research stated that this is exactly the reason we are there on tour: to

enlighten tourists with such new pieces of important information. One even joked, with some seriousness, that if tourists knew everything when coming to Berlin then we would not have a job…

In the case of the use of the words 'Soviets' or 'Russians' in interpretation, most guides acknowledged that the difference between them is important, for two reasons. The first is 'because it is important to be professional, and being accurate with your facts is being professional'. The second is that it is not uncommon for a guide to lead a tour in English, Spanish or Hebrew and have a guest who was born in one of the former Soviet Union countries. That is to say, that although the tour is culturally aimed at people from Israel or from Spanish or English-speaking countries, the guide needs to be aware of the likelihood that they will have first generation immigrants from the former Soviet Union on their tour. Such guests are not only acutely aware of the historical difference between Russia and the Soviet Union; they may also consider it an insult and a sign of poor performance on the part of the guide not to make this distinction. Guide I7 told me the following story:

> *I was with a group in the Museum Island and I mentioned the bullet holes seen on the Berlin Cathedral (Berliner Dom) and spoke briefly about the Battle of Berlin. I made a slip of the tongue and said Russian when referring to the Soviet forces who fought the Nazis in Berlin at the end of the war. A woman, about 50 years old, came up to me and in a friendly yet stern voice corrected me that her Ukrainian grandfather fought in the war against the Nazis, and that it's important to get this fact right… She was nice and didn't shout it in front of the whole group, so the next time I spoke in front of everybody I corrected myself and explained to the group that although there are situations where it is appropriate to say Russians, in this case I was indeed referring to the Soviet army. It was a lame saving of face, but she was correct.*

As I show in other examples in this thesis, it was important for this guide to make their guest happy, but also to maintain their authority. The decision to explain and admit the mistake in front of the whole group was based on acknowledgment that it was an important point to make and also that the guide can continue the tour without losing their audience. The guide also mentioned that, prior to that incident, they had occasionally 'lapsed' with such things, but were subsequently more careful on tours.

6.3.4 Killed is very different than murdered

During the research, I explored the extent to which tour guides used the words 'killed' or 'murdered'. I found that their use of these words varied. This was a surprise because, to me, the inherent meaning of the two words is very different and, from the beginning of my guiding career, I have intrinsically sensed that difference when talking about the victims of the Holocaust. My own understanding makes a difference here and is undoubtedly influenced by my being a descendent of Holocaust survivors. When someone says the word killed, I imagine a car accident or any other possible form of unintentional or accidental death, whereas almost all victims of the Holocaust were murdered with pre-meditated intent. For that reason, for those tourists who are descended from or have a closer personal connection to victims (i.e. second generation), killed may infer that Holocaust victims could have been killed by mistake.

During the observations, I noticed several guides who were equally meticulous about this. They either felt that this was important for the reason mentioned above, or because they felt it was important to be as accurate as possible. I did, however, encounter some guides who used both terms interchangeably, sometimes without noticing. When I asked, they said that this particular point is less important, suggesting that it would be obvious to any customer that they are not implying that the Jews (or other victims) were killed by mistake.

Nevertheless, I still feel that this is a sensitive point and that because we never really know who is listening we should be cautious in the use of such words. Guide I5 explained this in an interview: '*These things can be dangerous because you never know exactly who the person in front of you is, what they like, what general topics they are familiar with. It's not just about history. Their life story can hold a secret and if you're not careful you can ruin the tour for them and they won't even tell you*'. Guide I5 also said that obviously we are never completely on safe ground, even if we are always careful, but we should be cautious in circumstances where we are able to be so.

Again, in the case of using the word 'killed' or 'murdered', my own sensitivity is a major factor. In 2019, after nearly 9 years of work, I encountered my first Holocaust revisionist on one of my tours. After visiting the Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe, I walked with the group towards Brandenburg Gate and we continued to engage in a talk about the war and its victims. One person then argued that 'of course many Jews died...' and continued 'but we

all suffered... In Dunkirk, in Normandy...' I kept a straight face but inside I felt angry, for two reasons. First, I cannot accept that six million Jewish people just died. In my mind, people die from cancer or from old age. The victims of the Nazis were discriminated, persecuted and eventually systematically exterminated. The difference is huge, and the emotions are justified. The second reason is perhaps more delicate. I find it difficult when a 60 years-old person talks about the Second World War in 2019 (74 years after it ended) and says 'we all suffered'. Perhaps it is also my dislike of our times, my subjective dislike of the commonality of appropriating victimhood. As we walked, I realised that in my mind I was already blaming this person for playing 'who's the biggest victim' with me. I said nothing about that. Instead, I quietly explained in one sentence about how died and murdered mean different things, then immediately changed the subject.

There is also a time and a place to be more accurate by saying 'systematically exterminated' instead of murdered, when explaining a particular point. For example, when talking about the camp system in Sachsenhausen, this choice of words could help younger people better understnd the severity of the events and the crimes that the Nazis committed.

The dilemma of whether we should strive to convey personal beliefs is one that pervades the work life of every guide. More cynical guides, often with more than 20 years' experience, argue that we cannot change people; not really. I also found that the larger the business a guide has, the less rigorous they are on such points. Cynicism, perhaps, comes with success, and the more business-oriented guides have long realised that the competition is fierce and that since we are not really going to change people, we should not care so much. That being said, I have heard stories in the guiding community of company bosses have supported guides who, in front of an entire group, have frowned upon a customer who 'revised' or even denied the Holocaust.

These observations, though possibly intuitive from a business perspective, may be seen in contrast to Weiler and Kim's (2011) argument that guides can contribute to sustainability. Certainly, there are guides who believe that guiding in dark tourism is a unique job, in that it incompasses a certain social responsibility and, indeed, the potential to contribute to social sustainability. This is supported by Morsch's (2010) observation that memorial sites such as Sachsenhausen have a humanitarian role in addition to the more obvious commemoration one. Similarly, Gelbman and Maoz (2012) also suggest that guides have the opportunity to

interpret dark tourism sites in such a way that will point to political collaboration between countries that were formerly at war with each other, thus showing positive political change. Nevertheless, guides, despite their evident discomfort (the extent of which varies amongst them) choose to not try too hard to change people. As argued above, guides do have exceptions to the rule, or 'red lines', which, if crossed by tourists, will be handled by the guides. This dichotomy of being able to influence opinions and at the same time being often reluctant to do so largely reflects the uniqueness of dark tourism in comparison to other forms of tourism. Dark tourism, as Stone (2016) and others (see for example Beech, 2009; Cohen, 2011; Sharpley & Friedrich, 2011) point out, is inherently political and continues to have an impact on our contemporary lives. Dark tourism therefore is more sensitive, and as I argued above, prevents most guides from aspiring to contribute to social change. A last, if important point to make here, is that such tour guiding dilemmas contrast with the managerial and political decision-making processes at the memorial sites, as these are not bound to the same commercial pressures. Morsch's (2010) claim with regards to the humanitarian aim of the Sachsenhausen memorial site can continue to function in the way it does as it does not depend on whether or not the visistors to the site agree with the interpretation presented in the exhibitions.

6.3.5 'us' and 'them'

I started guiding my first tours in Berlin in June 2010. The first tour I led was the Highlight Tour. My knowledge fell in the required minimum bracket and my style was still very raw. I had a good time. It was summer and it was fun to show my city to groups of Israelis who joined our walking tours. But the way I perceived Berlin as *my* city soon became a problem. After only a few tours, a man came to me towards the end of a tour and, in an angry tone, criticised me for using the pronouns 'we', 'ours' and 'us' when referring to the Germans and to Berlin. It was clear to me that, barely five minutes after visiting the Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe, emotions were running high. His aggressive tone caused the whole group, about 20 people, to raise their eyebrows in shock. Of course, I made a half apology, explaining that I did not mean to offend and that I was speaking as a resident of Berlin but also as someone whose family heritage is German and partly from Berlin. The scene ended without further damage and we all said goodbye politely to each other.

Nevertheless, I had learned my lesson. For many people from around the world, the reason for visiting Berlin and its dark sites has much to do with their family history. It is quite

common to meet people from Israel, the UK, the US or many other countries whose relatives were murdered in the Holocaust. Often there are direct ties, such as parents or grandparents; sometimes, however, the emotions are based on national rather than personal feelings. The person mentioned above was of European origin, but my use of pronouns offended him on an ethnic and national level. He perceived my treating Berlin as my home as a betrayal of Israel and of the Jewish people.

In subsequent tours over the years, the question of my identity became a recurring topic; however, when I started guiding in 2010, the term 'identity politics' (see for example Francis Fukuyama's book from 2018) was not yet popularised. In meeting with tourists, I needed to make my mind up whether I wanted to refer to Berlin as my city and my home or, rather, talk about Germans or about Berliners as a form of 'them'. It is much easier to feel xenophobic towards the 'other' or the 'different'. As Pajnik (2002) argues, such a process results in talking about people using categories, creating a dichotomy of 'ours-their', 'we-them', and so on. Pajnik (2002) argues further that this way of thinking has negative social implications. This view of being either a German or an outsider seems limited to me, and a notion I never wanted to represent on my tours. Yet, why should I care about a person I will not see again after a 4-hour tour? I also found it difficult to talk about Germans and Berliners as 'them' – I am a German national and my family is of German origin so it always felt like a lie, and I prefer not to lie if I do not have to. Instead, I started using the terms 'new Berliners' and 'old Berliners' and with an emphasis in my tone. For example, I might say: 'for people who live in the city, some more German, some less, including us new Berliners...' I say that with a serious but gentle tone, one that left no room for not recognising that I am not putting myself in the same bracket as the Germans who committed the crimes of the Holocaust during the Second World War.

Whilst observing tours in this research, it was evident that guides who were born in Berlin easily say 'us', even when accusing the Germans of war crimes. Such an approach is explained by Bentley (2016) who explains that in post-War Germany, the first generation was unable to directly confront their recent past or show remorse while the secon generation was preoccupied with the social changes of the 1960s. However, the third generation not only acknowledged their national past but became very critical of it. In contrast (to Berlin/German born guides), guides who have no German heritage or connction with the country always and

without hesitation say 'them'. Those who, like me, fall into a middle ground usually found what they felt was right for them, and that tended to vary.

6.3.6 Gedenkstätte, Mahnmal, Denkmal – memorials and monuments

Monuments and memorials are not the same thing and, significantly, the German language differentiation between various types of commemoration sites plays a role in how tour guides interpret them. The subject of memorials and monuments (and the distinction between them) has long been considered in the academic literature. A detailed discussion is beyond the scope of this section (see, for example, Bellentani & Fanico, 2016; Borsdorf & Grütter, 1999) but, in brief, memorials and monuments, though both celebrated and critiqued, are places for memorial ceremonies; they are an important part of our cultural toolkit and 'often provide a confused mix of genuine emotive involvement, political propaganda, and media interests' (Sørensen, Viejo-Rose & Filippucci, 2019: 2). As Lowenthal (1985: 322) explains, 'until recently, most monuments were exhortations to imitate the virtues they commemorated; they reminded people what to believe and how to behave.' The function of these commemoration sites is no different with regards to the hundreds of monuments and memorials in Berlin, albeit with certain nuanced language differences between the three types of site highlighted in the title of this sub-section.

It is, therefore, important to understand these differences because, in Berlin, they reflect distinctions in the size, role and atmosphere of different sites and therefore in the kind of interpretation providexd by guides. This is supported by my observations of tours, which included visits to Berlin's larger memorial sites. Hence, it is also important to provide definitions of three types of commemoration places in the German language. For example, the Foundation Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe defines them in the following way:

Denkmal: In the narrower sense, the term *monument* denotes a sculptural work that serves to preserve the memory of a person, a group of people or a historical event. Monuments can occasionally provoke different memories.

Mahnmal: Mahnmale (plural) can be understood as a subclass of monuments. They usually have the function of naming a person or a group of people for the purpose of heritage or rememberance, and typically denote the victims of difficult historical events – such as military casualties and defeats. Mahnmale differ from other commemorative sites in that they

offer an additional, morally far-reaching purpose; they invite those who observe them to remember not just the victims, but also events as a warning or appeal. They are, in principle, directed towards humanity as a whole.

Gedenkstätte: a memorial place where historical events occurred (for example, a concentration camp memorial). The term is used for large-scale institutions that connect different elements with each other, such as 'authentic"'relics, monuments, cemeteries, exhibitions or museums as well as archives, libraries and research institutions in which material, aesthetic, educational, scientific and hermeneutic dimensions meet. Such memorials can pursue the goal of educating present and future generations about the past, or enhancing self-esteem and national identity.
(adapted from Foundation Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, 2020).

In several interviews I talked to guides who mused about the meaning of these words, their meaning in English or Spanish, and the relevance to our work in dark tourism. Comments ranged from '*shouldn't we wonder why is it that German has more remembrance words than other languages?*' to '*what is it that we are meant to remember?*' The latter is very much a part of the argument. On the tours I joined, I observed that guides behave differently, perhaps more seriously, at the larger memorial sites (i.e. in the Gedenkstätten to the Berlin Wall and to the former concentration camp Sachsenhuasen). Moreover, guides used the words as a form of interpretation marker to pose remembrance questions to the tourists. This can be seen as both an opportunity that guides make the most of to confront tourists with their mortality (as argued for example by Stone & Sharpley, 2008) and, at the same time, to present tourists with the remembrance dilemmas of modern Germany.

6.3.7 Hitler was appointed, not elected

Based on evidence from the research, it is uncommon for guides to emphasise a particular word they might choose by raising their voice or changing the rhythm of their speech their speech, or by any other speech tool they can use. Nevertheless, choice of words is important, particularly within the story frame of the rise of the Nazis to power and the election campaigns in 1932. Guides make an effort not to draw attention to their choice of word(s) because it may be interpreted by their guests as a form of forgiveness of Nazi crimes or because an older guest may feel that the guide is too young to understand how bad it was.

Rather, guides place their word choice in the context of the moment in history when Paul von Hindenburg appointed Hitler to Chancellor.

This story is almost always related on the Third Reich Tour and on the Sachsenhausen Tour, and sometimes in the Highlights Tour. When included in the Highlights Tour, it is told in Bebel Platz in relation to the book burning event, or perhaps near Hitler's bunker. It is also a common occurrence for the guide to omit the story, but for a guest to bring it up. For this reason, I elaborate on how guides deal with that question in sub-section 6.6.

Although Hitler was officially elected to power in March 1933, he had been appointed Chancellor by President Paul von Hindenburg in January of that year. Hence, there is a subtle yet important distinction between the words 'appointed' and 'elected' that guides are able to make when relating the story of the Nazis' rise to power in the early 1930s. During my observation of tours, it was notable that the guides did not draw attention to or emphasise the word used and also typically said 'appointed' rather than 'elected', framing their interpretation in the moment in history when Paul von Hindenburg appointed Hitler to Chancellor. The reason they do so is that for some tourists it may be important to suggest that Hitler was elected democratically by the majority of the German voters, and therefore all Germans should bare responsibility for the Nazi crimes.

Historian David Clay Large explains the elections results of July 1932 as follows: 'Nationwide, the Nazis won 37.4 percent of the vote and 230 (out of 608) seats in the Reichstag... In Berlin, the Nazis generated 28.6 percent' (Large, 2000: 245) They became the largest political party in Germany, but as Large continues 'Hitler demanded full power immediately, threatening to turn the SA loose on Berlin if he was rebuffed. This outburst won him an audience with Hindenburg, but instead of handing him power the president rebuked him...' (Large, 2000: 245). Large argues that by late December 1932, the Nazi triumph had not yet concluded and that many Germans still hoped to keep the Nazis from claiming their prize, but that eventually Hindenburg would be convinced to appoint Hitler as chancellor as it was believed that Hitler would eliminate the Communist threat (Large, 2000). Most guides I observed were not willing to take the responsibility for suggesting that Hitler was elected by a large democratic majority rather than being appointed despite not being able to formulate a coalition government. It is, therefore, an example of dark tourism interpretation where the

nuance of one word embarces the larger political implications behind it, and guides are able to draw attention to that nuanced word by putting a vocal emphasis on the word they choose.

6.3.8 Committing *fewer* crimes – finding subtle ways to describe aggressive actions

On tours in Berlin guides often encounter opinions or knowledge that reflects what they consider to be the one-sided teaching of history. This is not surprising; it is widely recognised and documented that the manner in which history is taught, particularly more modern history, is influenced by and reflects the culture, political ideology and history of the society or country in which it is being taught (Philips, 2000), as well as by the interpretation of events by teachers themselves (for example, see Romanowski, 1997).

During interviews, guides told me that they do not need to agree with particular historiographies in order to understand what they are based upon. For example, to many guides it makes complete sense that there is a significant difference in the manner in which the history of the Second World War was taught in 1980s in the Soviet Union compared to in the United States. In my own guiding experience and from several observations during this research, on a number of occasions I encountered tourists of a certain age group who acknowledged that they were not aware of certain aspects of the war because of the way it had been taught to them when they were in school in the 1960s or 1970s. Typically, on my tours I address this issue by emphasising two contrasting points: I tell English speaking tourists that, on the one hand, around 80,000 thousand Soviet soldiers died in the Battle of Berlin but that, on the other hand, there was the widespread phenomenon of Soviet soldiers raping German women on their way to the Nazi capital.

When discussing this in an interview, Guides I21 flinched a little at my use of some words:

> *How do you talk about rape at all? Let alone in the context of the War. For a long time, I spoke only of the rapes committed by the Soviet Soldiers, with the sad anecdote of hundreds of thousands of abortions and the estimated 200,000 so-called* [in German] *"Russian Babies". Then I read recent publications on the topic and I had to phrase things differently. I started saying that American committed less crimes at the end of the war. This is very different than saying that the Soviets raped thousands of women and the Western Allies were the good guys who did nothing wrong. However,*

that is also very sensitive as it can offend American and British tourists. I would
reluctantly refrain from the topic completely if I notice that I have potentially
problematic people on the tour.

More than anything, this respondent's dilemma demonstrates that guides may find themselves in a situation where they feel caught between a social taboo and their need to reveal a side of history they believe their tourists would not be aware of. In this example, nearly all the guides I know would have no problem talking about Soviet soldiers fighting and dying on their way to Hitler's bunker. And if they feel that they have tourists in their group who are not receptive to such information, they probably still mention it but move on quickly to the next story. However, talking about other aspects of the Battle of Berlin, such as looting and raping, often proves to be more challenging. Nevertheless, most guides choose to talk about this during their Third Reich Tour, but omit it from their Highlights Tour unless asked specifically about it. It is also worth noting that some guides do not to talk about this at all because they either consider the recent research to be unreliable or they believe that the significant difference in the extent to which Soviet and Allied forces engaged is such that it is unfair to raise the issue.

6.3.9 The Reunification or the Change

The 3rd October 1990 is referred to in English as the day of German Reunification. Officially in German it is not that different: *Tag der Deutschen Einheit*. However, in the colloquial language of everyday life, Germans tend not to use these words. The more common way of referring to this day is *nach dem Wende* – after the change. The word *Wende* itself has no intrinsic meaning as it literally means change. However, when spoken in ths particular context, the phrase 'after the change' is understood by Germans to refer to the German reunification. The reunification had immense ramifications for individual lives (especially for people in the former East Germany) and for German politics as a now one unified entity (Fulbrook, 2004). I have observed that by using the phrase *nach dem Wende*, German guides can make their guests more attentive. This is because the phrase is loaded with historical and cultural meanings to the extent that when German tourists hear it they know something interesting and serious will be related by the guide.

For example, guides I17 and I22 (German guides) said that they choose *nach dem Wende* with a regular group in order not to sound elitist, and *Tag der Deutschen Einheit* if they guide a group of German parliamentarians in order to sound more professional. In contrast, all non-

German guides I observed could only use the term reunification, as a different word choice would be too confusing for their international guests.

Overall, as demonstrated in this section, particular words have significant meaning and the choices made between different words in a specific context can have a major influence on tourists' understanding of the story and on the message conveyed. Equally, such choices can lead to potentially incorrect interpretation of events. However, these words, although having an extended extrinsic meaning, are also just one element of the whole narrative of the tour and of the anecdotes which support each part of the main subject of the tour. This supports the argument made by Pastorelli (2003) that stories are more than words and phrases and aim to make people think and feel about events and characters; stories are more than their literary ingredients (see Chapter 3).

Hence, it is also important to consider the varying use by tour guides of anecdotes to interpret dark sites in Berlin.

6.4 Illustrating with anecdotes

As noted above, the use of anecdotes or, more generally, story-telling is for tour guides a fundamental form of interpretation. In this section, I analyse several examples from the research, particularly how they relate to specific topics or sites. All these sites are described briefly in the preceding chapter, and page numbers are indicated for reference. The section is organised according to these topics and sites, complemented by longer quotes from observed tours and from how guides interviewed described their interpretation to me.

The Holocaust Memorial – also known officially as the Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe (site described on page 148)

Vey few tourists make a conscious decision not to visit the Holocaust Memorial when visiting Berlin for the first time. Throughout my career, I have not guided one Highlights Tour, public or private, that has not included this memorial. However, on rare occasions I have had guests who were clearly uninterested and wanted me to just mention it in passing. All guided tourists visit the site and guides are required to visit the memorial several hundreds, if not thousands of times during their career. Consequently, most guides develop their own way of presenting the memorial and employ alternative ways of doing so in case of time limitations or the need to adjust to different types of crowd. For example, cruise-ship

tours demand a more succinct or brief interpretation whereas teenage student groups seek a more elaborate type of guiding which often includes discussions with the students to encourage them to be more engaged and to express their thoughts.

As a general rule (with a few exceptions), there are two methods guides use to present the memorial to tourists. The first is to say very little on arrival, allowing the tourists to walk through the memorial, and then to talk about it when they meet the group again on the other side of the memorial. In contrast, the second approach employed by guides is to initially talk about it in detail and, if time allows, also talk or even discuss it further with the group once they walked through the memorial.

Thus, for example, Guide I7 suggested that, unless there are time constraints, it is essential not to say anything before people experience the memorial. When asked to explain why is it so important for them to do it in that way, Guide I7 responded that the main advantage of the memorial is that it is abstract, thus allowing for many kinds of personal interpretations: *'If I'll explain things first, then I'll have already planted ideas in people's heads and they won't be able to think for themselves; to come up with their own feelings and sensations'.* In contrast, Guide I6 chose a different approach, explaining that it is important to keep things simple and direct. '*I tell them very little information before, and tell them that we don't really know what the artist wanted to say. After they walk inside I tell them my own stories or interpretations, and ones I heard from people'.*

With some minor variations, the research revealed that this was indeed the most common way in which guides present the memorial. However, not all guides agreed that the abstract nature of the Memorial is its advantage. For example, Guide O5 provided some factual information before entering the memorial, including its name – both colloquial and official, the year the memorial was built and the price it cost to build (27 Million Euros). They then went directly into the controversies surrounding the Memorial:

> *As many of you know, many people were persecuted by the Nazis: the Sinto Roma, the Homosexuals, A-socials, communists, and many others. Some of you may think that* ~~*we*~~ *maybe the memorial should have been dedicated to all victims of the Nazis. But the Jews were by far the most severely persecuted group, around 6 Million murdered by*

the Nazis. They really did deserve their own memorial. But the other groups are commemorated, too.

 Guide O5 then continued with a brief overview of the timeline of the building of other memorials to the main groups of victims of the Nazis.

Controversies surrounding the memorial are many (see, for example, Dekel, 2011; Mangos; 2007; Quack, 2013). Some guides referred to these on their tours; for example, Guides O5, O3 and others pointed out that the memorial was built on an area that has nothing to do with the Holocaust, explaining that the controversy is based on the argument that the money could have been spent on providing a shuttle bus to Sachsenhausen – that is, to enable people to easily visit a place where the Holocaust actually happened. The opposing argument by supporters of the Memorial is that if people choose to visit Sachsenhausen then thy have already made the decision to remember the Holocaust; conversely, because the Memorial is unavoidably central, people will not just choose to remember, but will be forced to do so.

I have often been asked by tourists if the Memorial really makes German people remember? My answer is usually simple: sadly, there is extremist minority in Germany who would actively prefer to forget and even deny. However, most people in Berlin are just normal people in normal jobs. They learned about the Holocaust at school and remember it on memorial days, but they do not necessarily want to think about it every moment of their day. For most, the Memorial is not on their way to work. Nevertheless, I still argue that the memorial achieves its main aim of education, remembrance and maintenance of public debate.

About once a year I still have a guest on a tour who wants me to to tell them the meaning of the memorial. 'Whatever it means to you, that is what it is supposed to mean!' is what I usually say; this was also the response of most guides I observed or interviewed. However, those who argue that the memorial is too abstract may add that it really misses conveying certain messages because many tourists do not bother to ask a guide or are too shy to do so.

Some guides also choose to mention the information centre, the reason being that, as Guide O5 mentioned, it provides a more human face to the victims; otherwise, it is impossible to visualise six million victims – this was similarly found in research into the commemoration

of the genocide in Rwanda in which respondnets suggested the scale of death was too large to comprehend (Sharpley & Friedrich, 2016). As Guide O3 said, they sometimes tell their groups that the human brain does not have the cognitive ability to imagine a number bigger than 80-100, let alone six million. They explained:

> *I risk a bit telling them that, as far as our brain is concerned, I could have told them 6 Million or 3 Million or 15 Million and we wouldn't get the difference. 6 Million is just a number we know, but it doesn't tell much about the suffering, about the individual stories of the victims of the Holocaust. Sometimes I go into the origin of the number, how we know that, and I even mention how Holocaust research improved since the opening of the Iron Curtain, and that now researchers can send assistants to check the stories of individual victims, rather than count Jewish communities that were eliminated by the Nazis.*

There is an element of support here to the argument, noted above, that the memorial itself is too abstract. Moreover, I argue that the authorities chose to resist Peter Eisenman with the addition of the museum because they were preparing for a mass dark tourism experience. Hoever, one problem with that is that it might appear that the city tourism experts were ascribing a lack of knowledge to the masses by making the memory of the Holocaust more accessible. In other words, that showing the faces of the victims is an essential commodification of death in order to achieve common knowledge and furthering of the debate.

Nevertheless, it is evident that guides do not enter the museum unless specially requested to; rather, if appropriate, they engage in the debate. This supports Cohen's (1985) ideas that the components of the guide as a mentor include a social role, one which acts as a catalyst for communication within the group. As Guide I2 described*:*

> *I like to walk with people along the edge and then talk them about what it is. When was it built? Who's the architect and what he thought of it? Should they* [the tourists] *like it? Is it important if they like it? Maybe offer a few interpretations. I think there's a benefit for allowing people to experience the Memorial before talking to them, but abstract is not good for everyone. It's not so easy for people to talk about thoughts*

and feelings. I'd normally give them three or four ideas, emphasising that none is right or wrong…

After I asked for an example of the direction in which such a debate can develop, Guide I2 continued*:*

I'd start by telling them that it might be a graveyard, graves, or buildings, train carriages. Once, a 14 year-old told me that the designer expressed his feelings about the absurdity of inherit racism and fascism. I'm pretty sure this young person experienced racism at some point, but you never know. I often finish with my interpretation: The height of the blocks represents a graph in the increase of the Nazi persecution of the Jews. So I give them bullet poinst, including the Nazis coming to power, Nuremberg laws, Kristal Nacht, the Final Solution. Four points very quickly, but they are very strong. It's important to me to give a bit of history. I know a lot of guides only take about the Memorial itself, and that's fine… Everyone heard of the number 6 million, if it doesn't mean anything to you, don't think about that when you walk inside, or think about whatever you want…'

In some cases, guides feel they need to omit certain details in order to maintain the focus on more important points. In this example, Guide I1 chose not to mention the exact number of stones:

I don't say much before I allow people to walk in the memorial. I just start with the year it was built, and that there are almost 3,000 stones, to immediately remove any implication that the number means anything. Then I say the name of the artist. At the other side of the memorial I try to do an intro on racial ideology, anti-Semitism, also of course to the gradual process of persecution. I make a point that it's not like the Nazis came to power in 1933 and immediately all the Jews were going to be shot. It's important because not everyone understand the process.

Thus, the choice was made because this guide was concerned that mentioning the specific number (2,711) would attract unnecessarily time-wasting questions, and the guide preferred to focus the group on the process of persecution leading to the eventual extermination.

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Certainly, the Memorial's abstract nature, size, importance and location allow for more diverse interpretations by guides than any other dark tourism site in Berlin. Guide I13 told me about the point they found most important to make:

> *It's so important for me to tell people that behind the Adlon* [hotel] *there's this huge memorial reminding people what happened. I mean, you talk about the Third Reich all you want but there's nothing there... Maybe an abstract memorial isn't enough. It's so important to illustrate to them the reasons and the relevance. To me, it's very different than the Trains to Life Trains to Death memorial in Friedrichstrasse. That one is like a memory straightjacket... It's very direct. It's assuming people aren't very intelligent, and they don't have imagination. You could argue that it's more instant: sad, boo hoo... you're reaching more people because there's no need to think.*

Overwhelmingly, through the research I found that whether they love or hate the Memorial, tour guides keep trying to find different ways to covey its importance to their tourists. While Guide I13 is an example of someone who is not a big fan of the abstract approach, in contrast Guide I5 stated they adored it:

> *I love it. To me it is important that people will cross the memorial. I don't care what they say along the lines of cemetery, graves, concentration camp, as long as they cross it. Normally I talk about the different controversies, especially the name Holocaust, and the other populations persecuted by the Nazis. I point out to the other memorials* [Homosexuals, Disabled, Sinto-Roma]. *How many countries do you know talk about their dark history, for free, in the middle of town? To me it's about teaching the little ones, not about apologising.*

Probably the only thing all guides agreed on was the importance of the Memorial. Otherwise, the controversy surrounding it runs deep in their emotions, and in what they believe its purpose to be. There are those who view it with cynicism and anger. For example, Guide I9 explained that:

> *One can connect with the memorial or not. However, the size, location and the fact that the Memorial is dedicated to the Jews are the most important facts. Even a group from Indonesia who visits Berlin for half a day will make it to the Memorial, and that*

says something about the Germans. No people have ever committed such heinous crime, and no people have placed such crime in the centre of their identity.

For Guide I9, the Memorial is a form of overcompensation, as if by placing such an over-sized memorial in the heart of their modern capital the Germans are in fact ridding themselves of guilt. For many guides, this would be considered as harsh critique. However, although G I9 also mentioned that in other parts of the tour they may criticise modern German society for its excessive liberalism, the guide also stressed that they would not pursue this point if it seems to the views of the customers; if they did, the customers would lose trust with regards to all other content interpreted by the guide.

Nevertheless, other guides feel that the purpose of the Memorial is not to rid the Germans of their collective guilt. As Guide I6 observed, *'the Memorial is not about blaming the Germans, or even their grandparents. It's about not forgetting.'* Without a doubt, the Memorial has regularly been in the public headlines since its official opening in May 2005. More than a decade later, far-right politicians use it to create media hype before election time by implying that there is no longer a need for the German people to apologise. For example, in 2017, Björn Höcke (an AfD politician), referred to the memorial as 'Denkman den Schande' – 'Monument to Shame', claiming that 'we the Germans are the only people in the world who plant a monument to their shame in the middle of their capital' (Kamann, 2017). A very different example, from the other side of the political spectrum, is of a young person of Jewish-German background who used it to promote his book sales by shaming people who took – in his opinion – inappropriate pictures in the Memorial for their social media profiles (deMilked, 2019). Interestingly, the website with the social media shaming pictures was published around the same time the artist published a new book; questioning the ethics and sincerity of the stated aims of fighting ignorance and anti-Semitism. Different as the aims of these people may be, however, these examples share one outcome: the Memorial returns to the domain of social discussion where it was originally destined to be. I would go further to argue that if at first Peter Eisenman (the American architect who designed it) wanted people to remember the Holocaust, today the Memorial pushes people to question the reasons for which we remember the Holocaust.

In some cases, guides have to adapt to unusual circumstances and interpret a place – in this case a large memorial – under less than convenient conditions. The following is one such

story, where the guide had to bring his group to the Memorial but could not spend much time there. I joined Guide O6 on an extremely cold winter's day. It was probably about -10c, not usually considered a comfortable temperature for a leisurely city walk. As do most public tours, this tour started at 10:30. The guide led the group on the usual route, to Museum Island, Unter den Linden and Bebel Platz with the Micha Ulman's Presence of Absence memorial, Gendarmen Markt and then to a café for a 30-minute break. By this point, the guide had realised that many in the group were not properly dressed for such temperatures. At the same time, it was obvious that the group would be more interested in the Cold War and Third Reich history than in early Prussian or Hohenzollern development of Berlin.

After the break we continued. As we passed Checkpoint Charlie and Topography of Terror, we could see that some of the tourists were really suffering. Indeed, three had already left and it seemed like some others would not make it to the end of the tour. Under such circumstances, even though it was only because of the cold conditions, the tourists who left would feel dissatisfied with the tour. They might not blame the guide, but neither would they leave a positive recommendation. Guide O6 is a friend and we discussed options as we walked along Wilhelm Straße. Eventually, we decided it would be best to enter the Mall of Berlin at the corner of Wilhelm and Voß. Guide O6 seated everyone down in the lobby of the mall and proceeded to interpret the rest of the tour, after which he would simply walk with the group quickly so they still got to visit the sites. So we sat there in the mall, and the guide interpreted the rest of the tour for the group. Regarding the Memorial, he said:

> *Peter Eisenman belongs to a school in architecture called deconstructionism, which is a very modern style. It tells us to deconstruct the frames that we have in our minds. Instead of always explaining what every architecture means, we need to be more active, and to experience it on our own and to accept our feelings, emotions, our interpretations, our understanding of reality, and our cognitive association when it comes to interpretations of commemoration art.*

Guide O6 continued, making deconstructionism connections to Daniel Liebeskind's similar creation in the Jewish Museum; interestingly, this reminded one of the tourists of another dark tourism commemoration site by Liebestkind, the 9/11 memorial in New York. Referring to the Memorial, he said:

When we walk there, it may seem to you like a huge cemetery. However, there are many interpretations, as the heights of the slabs are different and when you go inside it does not look like a cemetery, rather you may feel like you are walking into a Nazi abyss; something more threatening. In this weather we are not going to spend too much time there…. But we'll walk there and you'll be able to see what I mean…

I subsequently spoke with Guide O6 about this day several times in casual meetings. Even though we know each other well, it was important for him that I understood how unusual this kind of interpretation is. This was not because of the content; rather, it was because the guide was forced to overwhelm the tourists with a lot of information that would usually be spread over several guiding points. For the guide, this was unfortunate, believing that people are unable to digest so many sensitive topics in one seating, thereby missing the whole point.

I have chosen to provide the example of guide O6 presenting a large amount of information in a shopping mall instead of at the Holocaust Memorial itself for a reason. Interpretation of the memorial is a unique case in that guides see it as an interpretation opportunity in which they act less as mediators aimed at revealing meaning (Cohen, 1985; Weiler & Kim, 2011) and more as social catalysts of experience (Tilden, 1957); encouraging people to think about the event (i.e. the Holocaust), and maybe even about their world views. This is indeed supported by Stone and Sharpley's (2008) argument that the consumption of dark site may allow the individual a sense of meaning and understanding of past tragic events.

Bebel Platz (site described on page 154)
Interpretation in Bebel Platz commonly includes telling tour groups about the book burning event itself, about Heinrich Heine's quote and about Micha Ullman's memorial. However, the focus of the story is neither stand alone, nor does it prevent guides from elaborating with many details. Guide I18 argued that:

I feel it's important to make a transition from the establishment of the university to the book burning. I rather talk more about memorials, to establish what's coming next. I explain that here is an epitome of the city of the 1990s. They are trying to do something a little bit out of the ordinary, something that is not a sculpture that you might not recognise immediately and quickly forget; rather something that would make you think.

Other guides choose to dress the story in a different way; one which avoids talking directly about commemoration. Guide I25 explained the process:

> *I lead from Friedrich the Great, to the Prussian times of the 19th Century, to the establishment of the university, and then to the book burning. I mention that part of the reason the book burning took place here was that Adolf Hitler was a big fan of Friedrich. He publically stated that Friedrich was the best German in history. Crucially, I ask why does it matter? Because people can't always make the connection between the severity of books burned to people later being murdered.*

What Guide I25 has consciously done here is to turn correlation into causation. That is, there is line that starts from books being burned and particular populations being discriminated against and later persecuted, to eventually 6 million people being systematically murdered.

I was curious to find a guide who – given the choice – would provide a more detailed interpretation. Guide I15 mentioned that they actually had fun doing that, but emphasised that it can only happen on a private tour if there is sufficient time or in rare cases when perhaps there is an elderly couple who like to walk slowly and get more of every place they experience:

> *Usually (if I have enough time) I start by briefly talking about the last election campaigns in 1932, leading to telling people that for the Nazis, arresting and placing the opposition in the first established concentration camps was not enough. They wanted to kill their ideas as well, so prevent from people reading those ideas and from new leaders to emerging. I then continue to explain the memorial itself. I explain that the Presence of Absence represents to me the absence of books, the absence of ideas and, consequently, the absence of people… I also explain that the Nazis did not invent the idea of killing a culture by burning books. This leads me to talking about Heinrich Heine's literary protest in 1820, leading him to write the famous sentence: "this was just the prelude/introduction, where people burn books, they will eventually burn people." Sometimes I tell people that they should question (inwardly) who the memorial is aimed at, and what its purpose is. They can evaluate whether this is a good memorial or not, or whether this memorial serves its purpose. Sometimes I also*

talk about Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451, explaining how for me it is a literary form of the memorial by drawing a dystopian reality where books are burned, perhaps the kind the Nazis wanted to create by creating their idea of Gleichschaltung. There were tours where I offered a critique that I heard from someone I knew, who said that the memorial's shelves look too much like IKEA, and if they had made them of wood it would bring her back to the era, thus triggering a much stronger emotional response.

Bebel Platz is an interesting dark tourism site to interpret, partly because it is surrounded by other points of interest, but it attracts most of its visitors because of the book burning event. Guide O28 used the geography of the square to add drama to the story:

R*emember that we came from the Museum Island passing the Neue Wache* [pointing the building], *we then stood next to the university building. Now, if you look to the left you will see the statue of Friedrich the Great – a great military leader, a poet, a writer, a musician, famously homosexual, loved his dogs, and one who is credited for bringing in the potato into the German cuisine. On the other side you can see the State Opera building – destroyed in the war and immediately rebuilt by the Nazis. Next to it you see the St. Hedwig Cathedral, a curious case of a Catholic Cathedral in the middle of Protestant Berlin. Its priest Bernhard Lichtenberg spoke openly against the deportation of the Jews during the Holocaust. And of course we have the Hotel de Rome and the Faculty of Law. But none of these interesting places are the reason we came here now…*

There are two hidden effects to this kind of interpretation. First, the guide managed to point out every possible surrounding site without wasting time while giving the tourists the feeling that they are seeing a lot. Second, the guide elevated the drama to the point where, when they finally start the main story, there is already a psychological ranking of the thing that is most important.

Neue Wache (site described on page 157)
In the story of the Neue Wache (the New Guard House), although all guides run through all the main details, they are nevertheless divided into those who focus their story on the chronology of the history of the building and those who put more emphasis on Käthe Kollwitz's statue and other commemoration-related issues. For example, a guide with art

history qualifications may choose to talk more about the statue's potential Christian symbolism and the similarity to the Pietà (in St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City), or like Guide I1 who argued that '*it's very figurative. It's a woman, she's clearly unhappy, because there's a dead person lying in her arms.*' Indeed, one of the problems of remembering the life history of the artist is that we do not know for certain if she really aimed to hint at a religious motif; most of her work dealt with social, political and economic issues of her time.

Other guides choose instead to talk about the universal tragedy of a mother who lost her child in a war. One can also view the statue in a more abstract way that will, similar to other memorials, make people think about the horrors of war. Such are the words of Guide I1: '*it's a classic representation of memorialisation. Something that a politician put there…*' The reference being made here is to the national debate that was held in 1993 when then Chancellor Helmut Kohl insisted on the current design and wording of the memorial. Visiting the memorial now, it may be easy to forget that when it was commissioned and built (the building was renovated and re-designed for the purpose), there were no other memorials for the various victims of the Nazis. In my interpretation, I choose to point out to my guests the reasoning made by different organisations representing the groups of victims who did not wish to be remembered alongside German soldiers of both world wars. Even today, many people feel that, for example, the victims of the Holocaust should be remembered in the same place as the victims of the Berlin Wall. The controversial questions I often presented to the tourists linger along with the memorial: should there be an official state memorial for the Germans? Can we publically remember all the dead together? These victims of war and totalitarian regimes include people who tried to escape over the Berlin Wall, the guards who shot them and maybe died themselves later, victims of the Holocaust genocide and soldiers who murdered them. Or maybe grouping all of these people together is somehow the strongest anti-war message of all? Like many of my colleagues, I don't like to tell people what to think. Instead I liked to give them something to think about.

Checkpoint Charlie (site described on page 155; see also discussion in Section 2.8.3)
My interest in tourism research predates my commencing this PhD. Not only had I already completed a semester of hotel management studies and a bachelor degree in ecotourism, but I was interested in tourism development in general. That, in addition to my years of experience guiding at Checkpoint Charlie, encouraged me to explore deeper with the guides their interpretation of the site itself and not just of the events the site relates to. I wanted to

discover whether guides are faced with the same feelings that I was, or whether they even cared.

At this point, it is important to briefly summarise the causes of the conflict, as it is explained by Sybille Frank in her 2015 book. Although the site itself developed prior to the German reunification in 1990, the post-Wall era brought with it the deconstruction of the border installations and fortifications. Subsequently, a reconstruction of a small part of the American side of the border was built on location but, as a place of commemoration, Checkpoint Charlie lost its authenticity. Further conflict emerged with its development as a form of 'fake' site where, in 2004, drama students started dressing as soldiers to pose for paid pictures with the growing numbers of tourists visiting the city (after years of complaints by various stakeholders, the fake soldiers were finally removed in 2019). But as Frank describes, the conflict grew when further commercial development increased in 2010, with souvenier stands selling postcards, fake guard hats, and other similar products. Frank argues that commercialisation combined with clear lack of authenticity enhanced the sense of the heritage industry at play (Hewison 1987), and indeed, an almost complete lack of ability for the place to function as a place of education and remembrance. Rather, it largely feels like a Disney attraction.

Many guides indeed showed their awareness of the problem at Checkpoint Charlie. As Guide I20 explained: '*I often show people McDonalds, Pizza Hut and KFC. I wouldn't walk up to the actors dressed as soldiers and talk about how it was…*'. Since I conducted this interview, the authorities have removed the actors from the area although the American fast food symbols are still there as almost a form of political statement of commemoration. That is to say, it is very clear who is meant to be remembered on the former Western side of the area. Whether tourists recognise this or not is unclear; perhaps they are just happy to get their photographs of Checkpoint Charlie. However, this is unlikely; I have had American guests who revealed their discomfort: 'It's horrible! Asaf, you've not been to the States, we have culture there; it's not just those symbols'. I promised to visit one day, and then showed them how the Soviet side of the former border crossing is almost completely void of any commemoration.

By not saying something, guides are able to convey particular messages and ideas. As guide I12 put it: '*by not saying bullshit stories we say even more*'. Indeed, guides use a wide variety of interpretation methods at the site. For example, according to Guide I3:

> *There's so much important stuff at Checkpoint Charlie. I talk about the Alpha Bravo Charlie, from the American perspective. I talk about people's experience coming through. I try to compare the other crossings, because this one had a very specific function. And I do bring people's descriptions, so if ten people told me that I came through here and everything was grey, people bought loads of ice cream, or people told me that they would go to a restaurant and wait for an hour in an empty place and the waiter would just stand there... Then I also show them picture of Genderman Markt because most of my customers are Americans, so it connects to them on this level; the route they would have taken. You got to be very careful with the number of stories you tell because what you think is interesting is often overwhelming for them* [for the tourists]. *For example, in Checkpoint Charlie you have to talk about the tank stand-off. I find it very boring but you have to talk about it. I talk about reconnaissance missions, because that's also very interesting and even a bit funny.*

However, in one way or another, guides find it difficult to take Checkpoint Charlie seriously. Many find it an opportunity to talk briefly about the events of the Cold War while introducing some short comic relief in a tour that is overall more serious. I watched guide O9 explaining to their group:

> *...spies didn't look like Matt Damon or Charlize Theron... You sir, you could probably blend in, your clothes are not very colourful... You know, most spies during the Cold War were probably normal looking men and women who would collect small bits of information about someone. I regret to tell you, but most of them were not so cool like in a Bond movie or a John le Carré book.*

Connecting with the guests on a familiar cultural level worked. The guide achieved both understanding of a certain point, and a certain enjoyment and laughter (in this example, by mentioning Matt Damon's *The Bourne Ultimatum* or Charlize Theron's *Atomic Blonde*). Indeed, Checkpoint Charlie coud be thought of more as a film tourism (Beeton, 2016;

Connell, 2012) rather a dark tourism destination; its attraction arguably lies more in its poratryal in movies than in the events that actually occurred there.

The distain many guides have for this site is such that some try to avoid it completely. Guide I6 claimed:

> *I recommend people not to get off there. I would drive there usually. I'm happy that the circus ended and the fake soldiers are not there anymore. If I want to talk about the Cold War, there are way better places; I'd rather go the Trennen Palast* [the Palace of Tears Museum]. *If I have to talk there, I would talk about the basics, I would talk about the tanks. When the 'soldiers' use to be there, I would say 'this is something that remind us of Checkpoint Charlie.*

Following this interview, I gave some thought to this statement. Evidently, it would be unethical for guides to present the reconstructed replica guard stand or the actor-soldier as authentic (the original guard stand is in a museum). Yet, I would argue that nowadays there is no need to hide such things from tourists; the solution is to describe it as a re-enactment of real events that occurred there only 40 years ago.

In one interview I was presented with an unusual opinion. Guide I5 told me:

> *I like Checkpoint Charlie. I'm probably the only guide in Berlin... I tell them that this is the Disney Land of Berlin... But if the replica wasn't there, how would you believe me that these events happened here? It's useful because even if it's not original it's useful for you* [the tourists] *to see how things were, more or less. Then we usually go to see the real Wall near Topographie. After that I recommend them different museums on the topic.*

In other words, Guide I5 took advantage of the authenticity issue, using it positively to enhance their interpretation. As such, this reflects my own approach, as I always tell my guests that the place is not authentic, referring to the disneyfication of the site (Frank, 2015), but emphasising that these are the streets where events happened. Using Stone's (2006) darkest-lightest framework of dark tourism, on the one hand, Checkpoint Charlie's events were of highest political influence and relativelt recemt, and the location is location authentic.

On the other hand, the site has high tourism infrasctructure, its development is staged and void of authenticity and it is entertainment-oriented to the extent that policy-makers decided to leave commemoration to other Wall sites in the city (Frank, 2015; Ladd, 1998). Hence, Checkpoint Charlie can be considered a 'lighter-dark' attraction (Stone 2006)

First, Second and Third Reich

The term Third Reich is something that guides can choose whether or not to interpret, although from observations and interviews, it was evident most address the topic in the Third Reich Tour or at Sachsenhausen, whilst some also include it in the Highlights Tour. The term Third Reich is highly controversial. I and many other guides tell our tourists that in 1941, around the time the Nazis invaded the Soviet Union, Hitler started using the term *die Dritte Reich*.

Several guides commence their interpretation by explaining that the word Reich in German simply means empire. This leads to the obvious question: if the Nazi regime was (or was intended to be) the Third 'empire', then which were the first and second? And this is where the controversy lies. In my interpretation, I propose that Hitler considered the Holy Roman Empire (800-1806) to be the first empire, and that most contemporary mainstream historians define that political entity as a loose confederation of mostly Germanic kingdoms and principalities although, during the 1006 years of its existence, the Holy Roman Empire also had other non-Germanic ethnicities (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2012; Strauss, 1978; Stokes Brown, 2007).

Like many other guides, I also emphasise that there is a difficulty in referring to the Holy Roman Empire as an empire because it was often divided and dissimilar from the way we perceive the Roman or Greek empires. I then continue:

> *Hitler's (or rather Göbbels') propaganda machine chose to present the Holy Roman Empire as the First Empire. So of course, we have to talk about the so-called Second Empire. After the final collapse (or dissolution) of the Holy Roman Empire, the area we now call Germany saw several decades of political changes, leading to consolidation of smaller states into bigger kingdoms. Here in Berlin and Brandenburg, Prussia grew stronger, becoming a European power house when the Prussian army, led by the Kanzler Otto von Bismark* (Fulbrook, 2004) *won three wars*

– often known as the Independence Wars of Germany – against Denmark, Austria and finally France in 1870. After that, Prussia was so strong that it made a political move and united all the German speaking lands, thus creating the German Empire. This empire survived 47 years until the eruption of the First World War. When asked, most people will say that in history there was just one German empire. The Nazis, however, termed their regime the Third Empire with the obvious implication that the Holy Roman Empire was the first and the German Empire was the second. This still has political implications today, as various activists on the extreme right consider areas in modern Czech Republic, Poland and other neighbours to belong to Germany.

Before I started collecting data for this research, I was under the impression that only people with extremist opinions use Nazi terms, such as the Second Reich or Mischlinge – mixed – refers to 'mixed race' couples (Michael & Doerr, 2002). In one casual conversation, however, Guide I8 offered a different explanation: '*I don't think this is always the case. Sometimes I get tourists who use these terms, although it is quite obvious that they are not Nazis. It could be that they simply don't know, or maybe heard this from a YouTube history channel that got it wrong. It's not necessarily an indication of how they are politically inclined'.*

Continuing the conversation, I asked the guide: what about German people? Would you say it is the same with them? Guide I8 continued, with some hesitation:

> *Erm, maybe not. I would be more sensitive with German people because they had probably learned about this in high school. Still, I wouldn't necessarily reach the conclusion that they are Nazis based on that poor choice of words. Sometimes people use such words because they don't realise the Nazis coined them. Take the term Nazis, for example, the Nazis themselves never used it! If anything, they would call it the Party when used in casual conversation.*'

Nevertheless, as previously observed, guides typically feel they have a responsibility to make historically accurate usage of terms, such as the Second Reich (guides usually say the German Empire) or the Kristallnacht, in which case almost all of the guides I observed said Pogrom Night along with Kristallnahct/Night of the Broken Glass (to avoid confusion with other pogroms). Hence, depending on time constraints, different guides interpret the 'Reichs' in a similar way to me. For example, when talking about the German Empire (*das Deustche*

Keiserreich), Guide O4 used a snide tone of voice to indicate the Nazi re-writing of history, saying that '*at least that was an empire...*'. This leads to an explanation of how the Holy Roman Empire was divided into kingdoms and how Prussia grew from one of the smallest principalities when it was established in 1600 to being the biggest German kingdom following the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire. Here, there is also an opportunity for the guide to use the interpretation of this term to connect to the rise of German nationalism, chronologically leading eventually to the rise of the Nazi party to power.

On the rise of the Nazis to power

It is potentially questionable to consider the rise of the Nazis to power in a section focusing on guides' anecdotes, as it can be argued that it deserves a whole narrative. I am doing so in awareness that this topic is the basis of every Third Reich Tour, of many Sachsenhausen tours and, potentially, a major part of the Highlights Tour, narratives of which are considered later in this chapter. Nevertheless, interpretation of the rise of the Nazis is introduced here because it can stand as an extended anecdote or mini-story which supports many types of narrative. Moreover, similar to several examples above, there are multiple ways of interpreting this important sub-chapter in history. For example, Guide O4 analysed the process in the following way:

> *In order to understand how the Nazis came to power, one needs to know what was there before. We need to talk a little about what came before Germany; we need to talk about the Reich. The word in German simply means empire, The Nazis said we are forming the third empire, so what are the first two? The first was the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation. There is a joke that says that it was neither holy, nor Roman, nor was it even German, but at least it was some kind of the empire; one that saw itself as the natural continuation of the Roman Empire.*

Many guides would not agree that the Holy Roman Empire was an empire at all. Some say that it was a loose confederation of principalities and kingdoms; others go as far as arguing that it was in the interest of Nazi propaganda to portray the Holy Roman Empire as an empire. In other words, claiming the previous existence of a political entity that was German, of the 'German race', justified that it was now the time to establish a 'thousand years' empire' (the Third Reich), in so doing also justifying occupation, war and the systematic annihilation of whole groups of people. Hence, this anecdote can take one of two directions,

either presenting a historical picture that the Nazis themselves presented or one that explains why *they* presented history in that way. It is important to note here that what I argue to be incorrect might be related by guides unintentionally or because their nuanced interpretation is different from mine. In other words, I would not choose this word in my interpretation, but I can accept that another guide would if they would make sure that it is understood and only said within the context of a tour about the Third Reich.

Interestingly here, that the nuanced term – 'the thousand years' empire' (i.e. the Nazi Third Reich) – mentioned above might not stand out at all if the guide continues to clarify the rest of the story. Guide O4 continued:

> *The Empire was destroyed by Napoleon and the French forces by the beginning of the 19th Century. For the most of the 19th Century there was no formal Reich. A change happened at the end of the 19th Century. Here, there was one of the kingdoms of the previous empire, a kingdom called Prussia. The kingdom was quite small, but* [long vowel] *through the 18th and 19th Centuries it grew and expanded until by the end of the 19th Century it included most of north Germany and large parts of Poland, too. Finally by the 1860s there was a series of three wars, commemorated by the column you can see over there… the first war was against Denmark, the second against Austria, and the third against France, our old arch enemy… and for the French war they activated a defence treaty, especially with the southern states, and suddenly for the first time in history, there was a surge of feeling where people felt that now right now, fighting against our arch enemy the French, we're not just Bavarians, Rheinlanders, northerners, Prussians; we are all Germans, fighting against our old enemy, and our chancellor back then* [guide switches to speaking in the first person again] *Mr. Bismarck, used that surge and united all the kingdom and towns to what is sometimes called the Second Reich, second empire, das Deutsche Keiser Reich – the German Empire* [here, the guide creates an accurate formal naming of the political entity]*, with Berlin as its capital.*

Again, this could be considered a problematic statement as First, Second and Third Reich were terms mostly used by the Nazis.

Many guides start from the unification of Germany in 1871, through the Great War to the collapse of the Weimar Republic to interpret the circumstances that led to the rise of the Nazis to power. But conversations can develop in unexpected directions. In some interviews with guides, I wanted to identify what they considered the most important point or if they deviated in their stories. Guide I11 replied:

> *We have to talk about how many people in Germany did not support the Nazis. Maybe they didn't mind the racial propaganda too much (in 1932); rather they voted for someone who promised them jobs and roads. In fact, we could argue that the majority of Germans opposed the Nazis in 1932. That is why it is so important in SH and Third Reich narratives to talk about propaganda.*

In several interviews, the issues of knowledge and awareness of the German people came up in the context of rise of the Nazis to power, and the subsequent 12 years they were in power. According to Guide I12:

> *There are important questions and points that I bring to the table: there was some knowledge amongst some people. What could people do with this knowledge in a state that had practically no or a very dysfunctional judicial system? And a very strong secret police? The typical German would hear about how terrible the Jews are at every opportunity, every day. Even going to the Kneipe* [the local pub], *there would be someone who's had a couple of pints who would say 'did you hear what the Jews did...*

Here, Guide I12 is using a powerful tool by saying 'secret police' instead of using the term Gestapo. The psychological effect is that people think about the function of the organisation and rather than making automatic historical associations with the term. And that can be quite important distinction; for many people, the Gestapo and the SS are almost euphemisms for the Nazi killing machine, without giving much thought to the why and the how.

Guide I1 argued that '*when people started disappearing, to be deported (mainly towards 1943 from Berlin) it became way easier to not ask questions anymore. From that point onwards, what happened in people's heads remains a mystery... Because if you stoped asking questions, then you also never knew if what you thought wss actually happening...*' That part

of the story continues into the six years of the Nazis being in power before the war started, and guides sometimes continue with the line of interpretation which emphasises the psychology of the individual or the masses. As Guide I2 pointed out: '*even if we ask the questions today, you may not feel comfortable about what you hear.*'

Another perspective often encountered by tour guides, and one that they are not happy about, is the way in which many tourists do not separate Berlin from Hitler. Guides often feel the need to not only emphasise Hitler's origins in Austria but also his hatred of Berlin. For example, Guide O24 interpreted the topic in the following way: '*Hitler famously hated Berlin. He saw it as a cultural, sexual and intellectual site of experimentation...* [short pause] *it wasn't the Germanic heartland, like Bavaria and the others were'.* Once more, historical accuracy plays an important role here. The guide establishes the historical background to later explain other things about the Third Reich. From this point on a guide can, if they wish, discuss discrimination, the persecution of various populations and the reasons for the establishment of the concentration camp system by the SS. These topics are regarded as crucial by most guides and are usually told at some point in a tour, in both the Third Reich and the Sachsenhausen tours. For both tours, the rise of the Nazi regime includes the plans the Nazi leadership had for changing Berlin into Germania. As guide O24 continued: '*The Nazis thought that once the war had been won, they would build on this site the Welthauptstadt Germania – this massive new capital city for a new conquered Europe under the Nazi regime...'*

The issue of Hitler fighting for Germany in the First World War is important to many tourists as it returns to the issue of Hitler being German or not and, if not, how did he end up in power. One of the key moments in the interpretation of this background story is Hitler joining the Bavarian Army in 1914. Here, guides diverge in the points they emphasise. For example, Guide O2 mentioned that Hitler felt Germanic by identity but that his registering in the Bavarian army was almost certainly a clerical error as he should have fought for the Austrians. Bavaria (Bayern) at the time was still a powerful kingdom, part of the German Empire, but culturally closer to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Conversely, Guide I7 told me that they usually talk about Hitler's father serving as an Austrian civil servant on the Austro-Bavarian border and how he used to bring his son traditional Bavarian products. As a teenager, young Adolf felt attracted to fighting alongside the neighbour from the north and managed to draft himself into the Bavarian army through his father's connections.

There can be situations where the guide also uses the anecdote of Hitler hating Berlin (a point many tourists are unfamiliar with) in order to create a psychological distancing between Hitler and Berlin. The purpose here is to counter the accusation made by some tourists of some guides returning to live in 'this Nazi city'. This has happened to Israeli or Jewish guides, but also to British guides who feel they are being accused by elderly tourists who still consider Germany to be the enemy and may even have known a person who fought in the war. Moreover, by establishing this small yet symbolic separation between Hitler and Berlin, guides also encourage their tourists – if in a very small and unconscious way – not to criticise the Berlin of 1920s with its obvious parallels to the fun liberal Berlin of today. In this way, people maintain their feelings towards the Nazis but leave the tour, and indeed their holiday, with positive feelings. Guide O3 even said that occasionally, if they see that the mood is right, they quote the following joke: *'Berliners sometimes say that the biggest national achievement of Austria is to turn Beethoven into an Austrian and Hitler into a German...'*

Other guides employ different anecdotes to illustrate Hitler's character and the low value he put on human life. Guide O9, for example, uses an anecdote on their Third Reich tour, quoting Hitler's speech towards the end of the war: '*If the Germans are not strong enough to win the war, they're not worth surviving it at all!*' In addition to giving the group a deeper insight into Hitler's character, this guide also uses this anecdote as a narrative tool to start the story of the end we all know. Guide O9 continues to sarcastically say '*Happy Birthday mein Führer*' when describing the Soviets entering Berlin on the 20th April 1945, eventually to make their way towards the Reichstag and towards the bunker to kill Hitler. The tone used here is sarcastic, but very subtle; it is clear that the guide wants to show their dislike of Hitler but also not to make fun of the topic or turn it into cheap amusement.

Guide O9, like many others, continues with end-of-the-war anecdotes at a relative early stage of the tour. Beyond it being an interpretation strategy, there is also a practical reason; the meeting points for many tours start from either Hackeschermarkt in Mitte or the Zoologischer Garten in Charlottenburg. In both cases the group travels to Hauptbahnhof – a geographical middle point between the eastern and western boroughs of central Berlin and the location of most German government buildings for the last 150 years (since the establishment of the German Empire in 1871). Thus, starting the tour narrative from the Battle of Berlin at the end of war makes more sense. In order to avoid confusion over the time line, guides will usually

finish that first gripping introduction to the tour with clarifying that they had started fat the end of the story, but that now it's important to go back to the beginning and analyse how Hitler and Nazi Party came to power.

It is relatively common for guides to have guests on tour who know that Hitler was not born in Germany. In one of the tours I observed in this research, the guide found a very interesting way of using the correct choice of words (and interpreting it!) to tie together the complex set of circumstances which brought about the rise of the Third Reich. After giving a brief review of the history that led to the unification of Germany – the so-called 'birth' of the nation – the guide mentioned that Hitler was born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and is known to have felt that his identity was Germanic. This technique is extremely useful in two ways. First, it defuses any suspicion by the group that the guide may be either supportive of Hitler or alternatively too emotionally critical – the guide appears professional and objective. Second, it transports the group from the contemporary European order to viewing the world as it was when the events took place.

At a personal level, I find it troubling that there is still a global obsession with Hitler, that by mentioning his name so often we almost 'let him win'. Of course, I observed and talked to guides who – at one level or another – shared similar feelings and, hence, took a wider approach to the rise of the Nazis or to the entire story of the Third Reich. In doing so, the tour group may miss out on these colourful anecdotes that many people remain obsessed with. Even during the writing of this chapter, a colleague told me that a historical article that they wrote about Hitler got more website clicks than any other! But whether I like it or not is irrelevant. As guides, we are after all in the business of customer satisfaction (Meged, 2015; Wynn, 2011), which also means that it is not important if we get tired of talking about Hitler or for that matter showing Brandenburg Gate again after the thousand times we have done so. At the very least, if we visit Hitler's bunker during almost every Highlights Tour, then that place offers the legitimacy to talk about Hitler. In other words, as there are many Third Reich/Nazi era-related sites in the city, one can certainly find ways to talk about Hitler even when the site itself is not directly related to him. However, as described later in section 6.7.2, to provide an anecdote about Hitler purely to satisfy a morbid attraction is a form of 'feeding the tourists what they want to hear' at the risk of missing out on important parts of the narrative, or of violating an ethical line by heightening tourist emotions of a cheap thrill for the benefit of the guide. This is very much in line with Wynn's (2011) findings, that show

that such a balancing act is the nature of the business of guiding. Guides, according to Wynn (2011), may feel at times almost immoral by telling salacious stories which are sensational in nature. The result, then, is a constant play between the guide's role as an entertainer and that of of an educator.

Hitler's Bunker (site described on page 155)

One cannot avoid the fact that while talking about and arguing that Hitler's bunker can be defined as dark tourism, the site is also a car park. It is vital at this juncture to make the connection between McCannell's concept of markers (1976) and Stone's Spectrum (2006). The location of the former bunker is authentic. Furthermore, nothing on the current site is staged especially for tourists. As Stone suggests, there is a high level of darkness as the site is both authentic and refers to Adolf Hitler, the perpetrator of genocide, constituting the darkest form of dark tourism. However, the site does not look or feel anything like it did during the time of the told events. In fact, if one is not familiar with the location, then the only way to know about what happened underneath this car park is the information sign placed there by the Berlin government in 2006. In that sense, the sign is, as McCannell states, a 'touristic marker' (1976: 110): information specifically targeted for the tourists to know where and what had happened on this site. I would argue that the 'marker' neither adds to nor distracts from the authenticity or darkness of the site. But for the tourists – as McCannell argues – it functions as both a physical and mental marker, in this case turning a car park into a site of Hitler's bunker. Nevertheless, since there is little to see besides a car park and information sign, there is an interpretation challenge for guides as they are faced with telling stories about a site which is unseen, hidden underground. Creativity, therefore, comes strongly into play. Guide I13, for example, said:

> *I always change what I say because otherwise it would be very boring for me. I like it when guides immediately address the conspiracy, and how the Soviets hid his death for a long time* [not just after his death]. *Sometimes, I'd count down the days or events from his coming to Berlin* [in January 1945]*, telling them about the Soviets coming in, and his holding on in spite his situation deteriorating, I find that it helps people connect to the events and the last battle. But I find Hitler's bunker so boring. I think guides do a lot of research, so it won't be boring to talk about the bunker again and again.*

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Guide I5 showed distain for the site:

> *I hate it... It's probably the most visited car park in the world... Now you can watch the whole thing in a documentary, I'm not gonna show you anything. If you really want to, then maybe we can drive by the place. I talk about the suicide. And about how the Soviets found the body and identified the teeth and compared them to the dental records they found. In any case, it doesn't make sense to me that Hitler after everything would have escaped a day before... Now there's only a sign there because of tourism. For years there was nothing.*

Guide O4 explained to their guests that: *'it's inconceivable to me that Hitler would have liked to live in a non-Nazi reality. Sure, there's a tiny chance he escaped with an airplane through the Tiergarten, or that they used a double... A very tiny chance. Do you really think he would have liked to stay for a reality where he was completely defeated?'* Supported by more facts, the guide encouraged their guests to think critically about such conspiracies, while allowing them to be wrong. This kind of interpretation is also a useful strategy to show humility, to adopt a scientific approach, and to avoid insulting a guest who may believe Hitler survived.

Guides disagree about why the sign is there. Some believe it is a result of Berlin hosting the Football World Cup of 2006. There might have been concern in 2005 that, of the millions of football fans visiting the city during the hosting of the semi-finals and finals, there would be hooligans and possibly Nazis amongst them who would aspire to a pilgrimage to find the bunker. Other think the sign is there because so many guides over the years had told so many fantastical stories that the city wanted to put a sign up to put an end to all the myths and inaccuracies. Nevertheless, Guide I15 mentioned the confidence with which people talk about the details:

> *Often when I tell the story of Hitler's last days in the bunker, I tell them that history is problematic because there are things we know for sure, things we lack information about, and things we don't know at all. I know it may boomerang against me when I explain that I am sure he did not survive. How can I be sure if I am also in doubt regarding the methodology of historical research? Sometimes, because of that, I will go into the validity of historical research and talk about triangulation.*

According to McCannell (1976), the world is full of the social reality produced by collective experiences of tourists. The experiences of tourists at the site of Hitler's bunker – the comtemporary car park – are different in that this dark tourism experience is produced from events which took place in the past at that location. The experience, however, is interrupted by social experiences predisposed by countless reliable studies along with numerous fictional stories and conspiracy theories. It is for this reason that guides have a role in producing McCannell's Truth Marker (McCannell, 1976: 137), strengthened by the authority and the location authenticity of the site itself. One could argue that the increasingly socially acceptable gaze upon death (Stone & Sharpley, 2008) at the site of the bunker closes a loop that produces McCannell's collective changes in social reality.

Furthermore, and not unlike Stone's description of the London Dungeon, the current state of Hitler's bunker is that as a car park it offers an '*acceptable environment in which to gaze upon simulated death and associated suffering*' (Stone, 2006: 153). Nevertheless, it has been observed in the research that the two examples differ significantly in that tourists have almost nothing to gaze upon (besides the clearly produced information sign 'marker') and, therefore, any level of emotion they may feel (e.g. joy of Hitler's demise, sadness for his victims, etc.) is to a large degree determined by the style of interpretation, the narration of the story by the guide, and the level of how 'hot' (see Uzzell, 1989, 1998) the interpretation is.

In Sachsenhausen (site described on page 152)

In several interviews and casual conversations, guides argued about the information provided during seminars run by the Gedenkstätte (the memorial site) regarding the gas chambers. Some explain to their groups that the use of gas chambers was limited because they did not function well; others say their limited use reflected SS concerns that too much information would leak out to the population of Berlin. In the research, I observed that guides have various points they choose to focus on during their Sachsenhausen tour, and for the rest of the tour find interesting or horrifying stories to tell about how Sachsenhausen was as a camp. The point is, however, that the gas chambers are just a small, albeit horrific, part of the story of the camp yet, as at other dark tourism sites, they attract significant morbid interest from many visitors (Blom, 2000; Thurnell-Read, 2009). In addition, it may be, as Thurnell-Read (2009) found in his interviews amongst visitors to Auschwitz-Birkenau, that there are tourists who visit these sites with the awareness that they are motivated by morbid voyeurism.

I would suggest here that there is an observable gap between the wishes of the guides and the management of the memorial, for tourists to have what Tarlow (2005) calls a 'spiritual experience', and Stone (2006) refers to as secular dealing with death, to the seemingly less respected morbid curiosity or morbid voyauerism (see for example Blom, 2000 and Raine, 2013). In other words, most guides would have liked their guests to be interested in the more intellectually challenging aspects of visiting a former concentration camp but, in contrast, for many visitors the biggest attraction is what they perceive to be the most horrific part of what had occurred in the camp. I asked the guides about this.

Guide I6 said: '*I don't talk too much about it. It's not the most important thing for me. I feel it's not that important. If I feel people care about it, I would expend a little bit, but not too much. In the barracks I talk about Leo Salach. I think his story is very important. A book about Sachsenhausen in Spanish was published recently so I make the connections.*' This is an efficient interpretation technique; the guide both uses a personal story of an inmate and, at the same time, refers to a book that the guests may later read or have recently heard of. Moreover, the guide sticks to the minimum of interpretation on the gas chambers unless actively asked by their guests.

Guide I5 expressed a similar feeling: '*I don't like to talk much in Station Z* [a part of which contains the remains of the room that contained the small gas chambers]. *Probably people saw some things on TV or in movie about it... Often they would take no photos during the rest of the tour and only take their cameras near the falling ceiling of the gas chambers. I don't like that in Sachsenhausen. In the prison* [T Cell Block] *I talk a lot about Martin Niemüller and read his poem. I make connections to our lives today. Would we help strangers?*

During the interview, Guide I5 did not give me any specific examples of the movies their tour guests might have seen as they knew I am familiar with many Berlin-based films. Indeed, for guides this is often a sort of a 'reading list' for beginners as they make their way into the Berlin guiding world. This lengthy list includes such films as *The Bunker*, *The Life of Others*, *Wings of Desire*, *Cabaret*, *Octopussy*, *The Counterfieters* and many others.

Guide I5's intuitive feeling is confirmed by Chris Rojek (1993: 4, 1997). In the early days of internet and social media, Rojek argued that the media produces postmodernist images, keeping the past 'alive' in the present. Pop culture, Rojek claimed, was increasingly

dominated by recycled images from the past. Further support to this is offered by Lennon and Foley (2000) who suggested that Thomas Keneally's book, *Schindler's Ark*, was widely popularised by Steven Spielberg's film *Schindler's List* and, as a result, caused a significant increase in people's curiosity to visit Krakow. The authors go as far as naming the phenomenon 'Schindler's tourism'.

Often, experienced guides have a similar opinion and find non-confrontational ways to deal with this problem. Guide I7, for example, confirmed that people may look for the worst: *'Not everyone, but many. I think that if they come with such expectations and you keep them interested with another story or a focus on a debate that is equally important, then they will forget that they wanted to see gas chambers... In Station Z, I like to talk about the relations between the people of Oranienburg and the SS because you can see the houses so close to the camp.*

A similar approach was in evidence when observing Guide O6. Near Station Z, the guide took their time outside before entering the structure. They then talked at length about the 10,000 Soviet soldiers who were executed in the killing trenches in October 1941. The guide explained how hundreds were executed every day for weeks and nobody in Oranienburg (the town) said anything. In a subsequent converation, Guide O6 told me:

> *You saw that I didn't stop there. I always take great care to explain to people that I'm not justifying anything, like why people didn't resist. But I tell personal stories that I know, for example, about a woman who got pregnant twice at the beginning of the war, and later had to take care of two babies alone in the middle of the war. What kind of resistance was she supposed to put up? What do we expect from her?'*

If certain anecdotes are used to evoke emotions and leave the tourists with open questions, others are used to glue the tour narrative together. These include those relating to the various jobs the prisoners had to undertake in Sachsenhausen. These anecdotes make a direct connection between the narrative focusing on the lives of the prisoners and specific examples, ensuring understanding at a micro level. For example, Guide O7 started with: '*What is the worst job in Sachsenhausen?*' There is an almost inherent cynicism in the question. The common assumption is that, for most people visiting Sachsenhausen, everything in a concentration camp was horrifying; the most horrifying situation a human could find

themselves in. Therefore, all work assignments in Sachsenhausen were, by association, terrible and inmates undertook hard labour under barely imaginable conditions. That is also the second problem in the question – in our day to day lives, the word job is commonly used to refer to one's workplace or interchangeably with the word profession. And sometimes it is used in the singular, such as when a stand-up comedian has a 'gig' or a tour guide has one day tour with a group. However, within the context of interpreting the daily lives of concentration camp inmates, it refers to the forced labour 'job' that inmates were assigned to, often for long periods of time, assuming they survived it.

During one of my observations, I discussed this with the guide. Guide O7 said to the group '*I say this with caution because all jobs were horrible in Sachsenhausen, but if we had to choose one which was the worst then I'd say it was the Schuhläufer-Kommando*'. This was a punishment company where prisoners had to test shoes on a shoe test track. It was operational from 1940 for private German shoe companies and from 1943 for the Wehrmacht as well. Guide O7 and I discussed whether we were talking about worst job in the physical or mental sense. Guide O7 continued, facing the group this time.

> *I believe a job here could have been really bad physically or it could have been the most psychologically devastating job you could encounter. We did agree* [the guide pointed at me] *that it would have probably been the shoe testing track. Back in the 1930s, most shoes would have been made of leather. Leather is nice and durable on regular pavements. But if you're in battle and it gets torn by stones or iron, then you're exposed and you get water and fungus and it gets complicated, and if you remember, antibiotics didn't really exist. So you might end up getting gangrene foot, and then the only solution to gangrene is chopping off the limb. The Nazis wanted to make better boots for the German army. Usually they used British soldiers* [inmates]*, they came in better condition than the Russian soldiers who were caught after fighting is harsh conditions for a long time. So they were given rucksacks with 20, 30, 40 kg filled with rocks, made them walk up and down the tracks, for distances of up to 40 km a day. That's almost the equivalent of a marathon per day. How long do you think it would take you to recover from a marathon? Two? Three days? The inmates had to do the same job the next day. So life expectancy was one of the lowest.*

I'm not sure if Guide O7 is a runner. I think they are. But when they told this story it struck a nerve. I have run two marathons and several half-marathons in my life. Every time I ran such distances, it took a lot of training and I allowed myself hours or even days of recovery time on my comfortable sofa. I think that is also the reason Guide O7's interpretation was so powerful to me, because it was similar to my own and because I like running. In my guiding at Sachsenhausen, I emphasise the story in a similar way; I start by telling people the obvious, about how nowadays running is becoming an ever more popular pastime. I tell them that when we run today, we are dressed in high tech clothing, we think about our nutrition, and we sleep well, not to mention the fact we wear good shoes developed especially for running. None of that would have been possible for the inmates who had to work in the shoe testing commando, many of whom only survived for two weeks. For the individual tourist on the tour this could be argued to be a closer and specific look at one form of death and suffering. In part this confirms an argument made by Stone and Sharpley (2008) that exposure to the the specific cause of death (i.e. consumption of dark tourism) is a form of fragmentation of the meaning of death; especially in Western secularized societies. Furthermore, the anecdotal interpretation of such a specific form of suffering and death in this example may or may not contribute to the overall satisfaction (after the tour) of the tourist, but it provokes emotional involvement which, as Martinius (2016) findings confirm, are an important motive to visit dark tourism sites. A further point pertinent to this example is that it would be a professional mistake for the guide to ignore the Shoe Track (of the Testing Commando) as it is unavoidably visible by a passing tourist, and should therefore be commented on (Grater, 1976; Tilden, 1957). I would therefore argue that the Shoe Testing Commando is indeed an interpretation opportunity to confront tourists with the death and suffering that occurred in the camp without the use of shock or dramaturgical tools which could spoil the process of thought and contemplation.

Near the Wall memorial at Bernauer Strasse (site described on page 160)

Anecdotes that guides deem important have to feel good. In other words, guides need to feel confident that the story is important, that they know it well and that it will 'land'. At the official memorial to the Berlin Wall there is less of a need to warn the tourists of pick-pocketing or to talk about commemoration done badly, such as at Checkpoint Charlie (assuming that is what the guide thinks). Guides can also choose from a variety of points along a mile-long memorial site, with many parts to the exhibition. Furthermore, as there is no problem with regards to space or to where to stand, guides are only concerned with the

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amount of time they have for the tour. Thus, structured interpretation is made covering the basics of the reasons for the building of the Wall and escape stories in that neighbourhood. I asked the guides what, in their opinion, is the most important point to make that tourists may not be aware of.

Guide I5 responded by saying: '*I illustrate to people the shape of the Wall; that it wasn't so big, that there were two walls.*' This point is a vital. Guides know that many people will arrive on tour in the belief that the Berlin Wall was a single wall, but there are many misconceptions. Consequently, guides follow the basic story of the reasons for the building of the Wall with an almost obligatory anecdote on its structure, and that indeed there were two walls. Guide I19 preferred to adopt a more spatial approach:

> *I like to take them to the other side of the street to show them how people looked at the Wall from the west. I talk about Ida Siekmann, because she was the first victim of the Wall. I am concerned about talking too much about the victims, because I feel like I am bringing them down too much. It's important to talk about the pictures of the victims, just to be careful not to depress them too much. I talk about 140 victims more or less. I tell that because so many Spanish think that's it's too little.*

Guide O17 spoke to me after the tour. There was a feeling that I got from many guides that they believed showing me just one tour may not be the best example. I tried to explain that, for the research, I was not looking at their guiding performance but, rather their interpretation; that I know that every tour is different. Still, from time to time, a guide explained to me the circumstances under which tour interpretation can be different for them:

> *Sometimes I wake up in the morning and I don't feel like telling stories that are too tragic about specific victims of the Wall, because I feel like the story is dramatic enough, or because it just feels wrong to tell something so gory, like a shooting in the head or bodies smashed and killed. I like to bring in successful stories of escape after stories of the victims. I want the tourists to also feel good.*

In that context, I had to think about how on a number of tours I told the story of a 14 years old Christoph-Manuel who, after the gates of the Wall were open, tried to knock off parts of the Wall as a souvenir. The Wall fell on this head and he died the next day in the hospital.

Remembering tours where I told this story, I have to admit to myself that it is inevitable that people feel shocked when hearing the tragic story. After all, the boy died months after the Wall had been opened. But the interpretation question remains. Do I really want to go so far to illustrate the tragic nature of the Wall? Surely there is a way to capture the predicament of the Wall without painting such a vivid and troubling image? I tried hard to remember, and I think there were in fact several Cold War tours where I decided that the atmosphere does not fit, or that maybe the group was too young.

I told this story to guides in two or three interviews and they gasped in horror. The reason they had never heard this story before is that it was first published in an article in Der Tagesspiegel in 2013 as a short paragraph relating to the building of the Berlin Wall Trail. It does not appear in Berlin Wall literature, as Christoph-Manuel is not considered as a Wall victim.

I do not believe tourists need or even want such stories to enhance the darkness of the Berlin Wall (although surely some would). As a guide, I could certainly keep it in my arsenal of knowledge, to be used when and if I really need to. However, as a common saying among guides goes: what the tourists don't know, they don't know they missed! In the context of this example, as this story is relatively unknown, my guests would not feel like they are missing something.

The end of the Berlin Wall

As an anthropologist, part of my task was to identify commonalities between the guides I observed and interviewed; traits that were special to them. As I mentioned earlier in the thesis, such special characteristics include how guides often forget the day of the week but always know the date, or how we go into a sort of winter hibernation and slow our rhythm of life during the low season. Another interesting attribute I found was that each guide more or less has their favourite topic or thematic tour that they like guiding.

In my case it is the Cold War tour or a tour on a specific related topic, such as the Berlin Wall. Over the years, I have given much thought to why this is so. I have met people who expected me to be leading tours related to the Holocaust or to the Jewish heritage of Berlin, partly because of my own Jewish background and partly because my research has been focused on dark tourism – and what could be darker than the Holocaust? A friend who is not

a guide even told me that when someone who is not an expert thinks of dark tourism, the Holocaust is the easiest thing to put in that context, confirming Stone's (2009b) suggestion that site representations of the Holocaust may be the epitome of dark tourism (see also Biran, Poria & Oren, 2011; Miles, 2002; Stone, 2006). But I prefer the Cold War theme because I am so fascinated by this chapter in history. In addition, I found that living in Berlin only a few years after the so-called 'fall of the Wall', the Cold War is still very much alive in the minds of people. Even the scared city – as described by Brian Ladd (1998) – is still repairing itself right in front of my eyes! I might show a tour group an area in the city where the Berlin Wall use to divide the neighbourhood and, by the next year when I come with another group, the neighbourhood has already changed with a new luxury housing development.

One of the main anecdotes where guides diverge is the story of the end; the end of the Cold War or the 'fall' of the Wall. I even put the word 'fall' in inverted commas because I find that specific colloquialism incorrect and, more importantly, unnecessary. I do not remember when but, at some point, I adopted the phrase 'the opening of the gates of the Wall' instead of 'the fall of the Wall'. Many colleagues qualified that by saying that if they get a group that is in Berlin for only a short time and is really only interested in taking a few pictures, then they just say quickly 'the fall of the Wall'. However, many agreed that in a standard tour, and especially if there is a history buff in the group, then they make sure they get this detail right. I feel that the reason guides should be accurate in this interpretation is because although 'fall of the Wall' sounds more dramatic, we paint history with colours that please the listener but are not totally correct. Historically, at 23:02 on 9th November 1989, the guards opened the gates for the first time at Bösebrücke (Böse Bridge) between the eastern borough of Pankow and the western borough of Wedding.

Here is an extended version of how Guide I7 interpreted the events of November 1989:

> *In 1985, Gorbarchev started the economic, social and political reforms known as glasnost and perestroika. Slowly, East Bloc countries started changing, some followed suit whereas others took longer time. Poland had the movement of Lech Wałęsa, Romania started going through changes and, as we know, Yugoslavia would also go through a process that would lead to a bloody war and the country's breakup. In September 1989, Hungary opened its borders with Austria. Thousands of East*

Germans left the keys to their Trabant cars nailed to trees and crossed the border to travel to Bayern in West Germany via Austria. In the same month, the leader of the ruling party of East Germany, the SED, Erich Honecker, was forced to retire. Some historians believe that it was the head of Stasi Erich Mielke, who forced Honecker out, as he felt that Honecker was out of touch with the reality of change. The week before, during Gorbachev's visit to Berlin, thousands of East Germans stood in the square near Alexanderplatz shouting 'Gorbi! Gorebi! Help us!'. The then relatively young Egon Krenz was appointed to replace Honecker. He understood that there was a need for reform but that it needed to be done delicately. The other note-worthy change that took place in that month was that the Grenzpolizei (the Wall's border police) had their shooting orders changed to arresting those trying to escape, rather than shoot first and ask questions later.

Nobody knows exactly what happened on the day of the 9th of November 1989. In the Haus of Ministers, a meeting took place through the day. By evening time, the people of the Politbüro were tired and started getting ready to go home. No decision was made to open the gates of the Wall. In the big conference room, Günter Schabowski was heading a press conference to celebrate 40 years since the establishment of the DDR. He was sitting in front of journalists from around the world, many of whom were waiting to hear if he was going to say something about the Wall. He did not. He was reading dry statistical data about the rise in productivity in the DDR. [Theatrically, the guide imitates a speech in an official sounding tone] *'The manufacturing of washing machines went up by 5.4 per cent...' In the DDR many did not bother to listen to the radio, and even those with television sets most likely preferred watching the more exciting western football match in Düsseldorf. At 19:30 Schabowski went to the toilet, where he met one of the ministers, who was on his way home. As far as we know, Schabowski received a note he wasn't supposed to read, stating that further discussion needs to take place with regards to allowing freedom of movement for DDR citizens between the DDR and the BRD. Schabowski read the note as if the decision was already made! When asked by an Italian reporter from when this decision will be valid, Schabowski answered 'ab sofort!' – as of now. I imagine* [the guide made a subtle joke here] *that just as I stand here talking to you trying to seem confident, Schabowski stood in front of cameras from around the world and*

wanted to pretend like he knew what he was saying. He was playing with the papers in front of him but couldn't seem hesitant for too long.

Slowly, the rumour started spreading. Many citizens of the DDR watched as the western ARD was broadcasting. In the north of Berlin, thousands started walking towards the bridge at Bornholmer Straße. Normally a quiet customs border crossing, the bridge had one Stasi officer and several young guards. By 22:30, more than 20,000 people started pushing and shouting, asking to be allowed to cross to Wedding in the west. Officer Jaeger couldn't get anyone from the government on the phone, as they all went to sleep after that long day they had. By 23:00, he gave the order to open the gates to prevent people stampeding. The guards were ordered to cancel the validation of the people who crossed to the west. Most didn't care. The next day, the leadership tried to get Moscow on the phone, and that took a long time, too. Eventually by the 11th of November, all gates around West Berlin were open. Bornholmer Straße, Oberbaum Brücke, Sonnen Allee, Checkpoint Charlie and others.

In the following year, many people chipped parts of the Wall, broke and brought down portions of it. But the bulk of the Berlin Wall was removed in June, July, and August 1990 by cranes. A lot of the concrete was either sold or recycled to be used in roads around Berlin. Out of about 160 km, about 3 km of Wall were left to commemorate and educate us when we visit these sites.

6.5 Tour narratives

After about a year or two into my research, I started thinking that words and anecdotes are obvious opportunities for guides to make interpretation choices. Indeed, the more I continued to observe tours and to interview guides, the differences in the meanings and uses of words and anecdotes became easier to spot. Noticing these differences became a routine; for example, I might read an article in a mainstream media outlet about a conflict between two countries, and the article would refer to fighter jets as war planes. In the case of news media, it can be easy to spot the general narrative of the article, normally aimed to convey the political agenda of one of the sides in the conflict or to create drama that will entice readers to stay on the website for a longer time. Tour guides, however, already have their audience until the end of the tour and, hence, I became interested in establishing if guides are aware of a title

they give to the entire narrative of the tour. In other words, if the entire tour is a form of interpretation, how would they name it? This is what I asked the guides.

Guide I25 started by telling me that they find it difficult to give the tour interpretation one title: '*it's because I do a lot of work for the big companies, I can't deviate too much from the tour they sell. However, I think... Maybe I try to put an emphasis **on equality and tolerance**, maybe it has to do with my sexuality or the values I believe in*.' Similarly, on an observed tour, I could see that Guide O24 did not want to be blunt or be aggressive in their tone. Nevertheless, putting all anecdotes and words used together culminated into messages of tolerance and equality.

It is important at this point to elaborate briefly on the point Guide I25 referred to. Narratives in the public walking tour companies have much to do with how the companies market the tour. As several guides who worked for more than one company told me, one company may market the Third Reich tour in a tone that implies that the tour will have a military history theme, while another company may want to draw attention to the more morbid details, focusing on the Nazis and on Hitler's relation to Berlin. Inevitably, perhaps, there are guides who feel uncomfortable with the phrasing of the marketing of the company they work for. Hence, they keep their interpretation close enough to the content promised to the customers but, at the same time, find ways of explaining why their view may be different. For example, Guide O2 told the group that: '*I don't like to give Hitler too much credit. He was very good with his polarising ideas and the cult personality, but there were other catastrophic events that came into play. So what I'll do is I'll give you a background introduction, and then in parallel we'll talk about the rise of Hitler and the Nazis to power*'.

The guide then led with a brief summary history of the birth of Prussia, the unification of Germany in 1871 – that is, the birth of Germany – and the rise of pan-Germanic nationalism, going on to speak about the changes brought about by the industrial revolution and the improvement of weapon it brought with it. Relatively quickly, the guide then spoke about Germany's defeat at the end of the First World War, a defeat that was surprising for many Germans. The next step in this brief introduction was a short review of the post-war financial crisis of the newly established Weimar Republic and, finally, the collapse of the stock market in New York, the mass printing of money in Germany and the consequential hyper inflation in Germany.

Even now, I find it hard to discuss the following point without cynicism. The issue Guide O2 felt the need to deal with was that Hitler 'sells'! That is to say, tour descriptions which focus on Hitler in one way or another attract more attention from tourists. In Berlin, this so-called morbid attraction (Sharpley, 2005) or possibly morbid curiosity (Blom, 2000) is of concern to guides like O2 and others. Hence, Guide O2 chose a narrative which interpreted the entire system that revolved around Hitler; one that included the Party and, indeed, the socio-historical circumstances behind the rise and fall of the Third Reich. Put differently, instead of going for a fairly popular historical Führer approach, the guide's narrative may be titled as a **systematic approach**. I would also argue that in doing so, the guide kept the promise of the selling point of the tour while interpreting the relations between Hitler and Nazi Germany from their own perspective.

As I continued my research, the themes of tolerance and equality continued to arise in one way or another, with many guides emphasising that they always include tolerance in the content of their interpretation. This is because it is impossible to talk about, for example, the discriminatory racial policy of the Nazis or the blocking of different opinions as a policy in East Germany without talking about intolerance, and therefore tolerance is always a part of the tour. Nevertheless, it may not be how they wish to frame the entire tour. Guide I8 told me what they consider important:

> *I know from experience that it is often the case that in the West, people were taught in school that the West won the war against the Nazis. People arrive on the tour missing a lot of details, like the number of Soviet soldiers who died in the Battle of Berlin. It's support for one side or the other – obviously the Allies and the Soviets won the war together. Rather, it's my role to be professional, which is where providing historical accuracy becomes a process of **correcting perspectives**.*

Here, too, the choice the guide made was to maintain a certain focus, albeit one which still includes analytic or systematic approaches, or messages of equality.

There are sites or tours where guides invest time and experience to construct an identifiable narrative. As Guide I5 explained:

> *For me, **personal stories, personal angles** are very important. Sachsenhausen is the best place to confront people with real stories, with how Germans deal with their past. Confront people about reality versus movie knowledge. In Sachsenhausen I talk a lot about the psychological terror of the SS. I've met survivors before. One of them, today 95 years old, said that he doesn't care anymore about the physical punishment, but that he still wakes up from psychological terror. He still remembers the sound of the gate closing... I mean how do you control so many people with only 150 SS guards? Because of that I have to explain to people how this works.*

The stronger need to create a clear structure – a defined narrative – is of greater importance to guides who conduct tours in Sachsenhausen for the reason that the site presents a large and complex story. Guide I5's choice of focusing on personal stories worked for them because a combination of what they believed works on the tour and what they felt is most important to them on a personal level.

This narrative, however, can prove difficult to employ for many other guides. Telling tragic personal stories of the experiences that prisoners in Sachsenhausen had to endure is emotionally taxing. Guides who choose to guide in Sachsenhausen may do so out of sense of the importance of the topic as well the need to make a living and, thus, often feel they need to adopt an approach that will allow them to sustain emotional strength for a longer period of time. Because of that, many choose to describe the horrors of the camp by explaining the **psychology of the criminal**, that is, the SS. My own experience always showed me how difficult a balance this narrative can be. On the one hand, I never wanted to exempt the SS from being human; if they were just monsters, then it is easy. But if they had human qualities and human lives, that may also mean that I may sound as if I am describing regular people on my tour, and regular people make mistakes and take instructions and commands during their working life.

The solution to such a tricky balance may be as Guide I6 described:

> *Especially in Sachsenhausen it's important for me to make people think... to show them what humanity is like... Maybe make them contemplate on what we would have done... I also try to show different simple ideas that the general public may not have thought of. **Show the bigger picture**.*

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Crucially, guides who choose the bigger picture narrative approach still incorporate personal stories. The difference, however, is that they use these anecdotes to support the narrative of the entire tour, rather than them being the focus of the narrative. Indeed, I would argue that the two approaches may prove to have an advantage with different audiences. Focusing the narrative interpretation on personal stories is very useful for a young audience, an audience with relatively limited familiarity with the subject matter or, in some cases, an audience with personal connection to the tragedy or atrocity being interpreted on the tour. This is because if tourists in a group are not that familiar with the Holocaust or, for example, with the background to the SS concentration camp system, it may prove to be too big a story which, with many details, could make it difficult to understand. In addition, the guide may miss the opportunity to really convey the underlying meanings of the atrocity and the crimes the Nazis committed. Focusing on personal stories, then, connects people to the severity of the event interoperated by the guide.

Conversely, narrative interpretation which takes a 'wider lens' is more useful either with people who are able to think about and embrace the bigger picture or, alternatively, with those who have already heard personal stories – in the case of victims of the Holocaust – and want to learn more about the political processes and gain a fuller understanding of the story. Such an approach will usually include an introduction by the guide that adopts a perspective on the story that the tourists did not know before.

Many guides like to make people on their tour think, and even to leave them with more questions when they say goodbye at the end of the day. This is not the most popular approach, although I have encountered it several times with varying levels of intensity. Guide I1 gave me examples:

> *I used to take the time to explain how the Germans came to terms with their past from 1945. I don't do that anymore. I mean, there were two different countries! Even after Reunification, there were so many questions, such as who do we want to remember? Is it OK to remember the Germans? Should we remember all the Germans? Whose authority is it to decide? Is it going to be a statue? Who's going to be on the committee to decide what statue or memorial? Who should fund it? These are all questions which may lead to further discussions, and that made me drop that line of*

narrative. Although of course, I wouldn't shy away from that if a tourist asks me about it.

The guide points out to the problem that prevents more guides from adopting the **remembrance** narrative interpretation. Although tourists have no objection to thinking or to be faced with questions, overdoing it could leave them dissatisfied that they came on a guided tour but did not receive answers from the person who they paid to be an authority for the several hours of the tour. Thus, it could be argued that the challenge for the guides is to work out the fine line between the inherently potential role of dark tourism of confronting tourists with their own mortality (Stone & Sharpley, 2008), and on the other hand, maintaining tour satisfaction. That is to say, that guides may wish to encourage tourists to think about questions of death and tragedy whilst, at the same time, providing them with sufficient answers to ensure they leave the tour feeling satisfied with the guiding expereince. Nevertheless, some guides, as Guide I2 suggested, will still incorporate remembrance: '*I explain in Checkpoint Charlie that the place is not authentic and, in fact, almost completely fake. I use that in my narrative to bring the discussion on tourism development in Berlin to the tourists, even involving them in the dilemmas the authorities have with development of sites of remembrance.*' In that way the guide feels they maintain their integrity without damaging the overall quality of the tour.

In the context of the Wall and Cold War tour narratives, guides often stated that they like guiding this topic as it is still so relevant to their (and the) reality of contemporary life in Berlin. The narrative then can be seen as connecting the chronology of the Cold War in Berlin and contemporary life (1990 to 2020). Guide I3 explained their reasoning:

> *I like doing the Cold War the best because it's still very much alive and very complex. And we know people who experienced it, and we get guests who crossed Checkpoint Charlie or some similar experience. There are just so many aspects. You can choose different beginnings. I start with the Potsdam Conference, the Moscow School. I feel like people don't understand the collective amnesia. But on the other hand, how would you get people to start a new country?* [referring to the early days of the establishment of East Germany]. *I feel like I have to get to the root of it. I talk about grooming people... Installing them to run East Germany for the Russians; in essence a satellite state. A lot of people don't understand the transition between the Nazis and*

the Communists. I try to talk a lot about the ideological war between East and West. I try to include post-War and reunification. It's important to me to convey that not everything was bad in the DDR. It's lazy to compare the Third Reich and the DDR... Hoenicker really thought he was doing the right thing for East Germans. Maybe it was real naivety; he really did believe that the Wall was an anti-fascist barrier. It's important to me to explain the why, to get to the root of things. The background of the leaders who established the DDR – they saw Nazis, they experienced things. I'm not saying they were not dodgy characters, of course they were. But it's not enough for me to just say 'there was loss of human rights, and persecution, etc.' I need to explain the 'why' of these things in the Cold War.

To finish this section, I want to bring a longer excerpt from a Sachsenhausen tour. This excerpt is used here to provide a more comprehensive demonstration of how guides frame their tour narrative (in this case at the beginning of a tour). The interpretation of the rest of the tour is then connected to this introduction:

Sachsenhausen was a concentration camp built by the Nazis in 1936. The term concentration camp needs to be separated from the term extermination camp. By the term extermination camp, we mean a place like Auschwitz where there were large industrial scale gas chambers, built for the extermination of the Jews of Europe. So, by the term concentration camp we mean really a labour camp. People who went there died there by the SS, died from starvation, torture, malnutrition, weakening of the body and disease that spread as a result. Also, the camp was meant for men. By 1939, the Nazis set up a camp specifically for women and children, called Ravensbrück. The creation of the camp was part of the Nazis called Gleichhaltung, the Nazification of the state. In other words, the means by which the Nazis consolidated their power in Germany. The Nazis feared above all their main political rivals, so the camps were built first to incarcerate their political rivals. This means communists, socialists, and anyone who spoke against the Party, such as artists, writers, etc. They were set up ad hoc by the SA – the Sturmabteilung. They increased awareness of the Nazi party during the election campaigns during 1932, but they also actively disturbed the other parties, by beating up their opponents and disturbed their meetings. By 1933, when the Nazis came to power, they established the first camps to arrest their political opponents and the SA was a governmental body. By 1934, there

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were 64 such camps established all over Germany, with 100,000 Germans in them. The Oranienburg Camp was the first to be established in the region, and it was shut down in 1934. After that, the whole system was handed over to the SS. Theodor Eicke decided then to have three major camps in Germany, rather than many small ones all over the country. Sachsenhausen became the camp for the capital, but also far enough so it wouldn't be too close to the eyes of the people in the capital, especially as the Olympic Games were coming. It was set up as the administrative camp for all concentration camps. With the exception of three extermination camps, all concentration camps were managed from Sachsenhausen – hence the term IKL [the German abbreviation: Inspektion der Konzentrationslager – meaning Concentration Camp Inspectorate]. *It was set up as a training camp, for training of SS staff. Almost unbelievably, it was also set up as a propaganda camp, with the SS inviting dignitaries and senior politicians, and over the years the appearance of the camp altered accordingly. By 1937, the Nazis started arresting criminals and rounding them up, placing them in the camp. As time moved on, the camp started taking new roles; by 1937, inmates included work-shy people who the Nazis considered not contributing to the Nazi economy, as well as homeless people, baggers, long term unemployed, Sinti and Roma, Jehova Witness (because their religious beliefs they are not allowed to kill and therefore considered by the Nazis as an unwanted element). Homosexuals were also considered by the Nazis as an unwanted element in German society. Hitler's promise was to reunite the German speaking land, and, as a result, Austrians started arriving after the annexation. Then the war broke out and Polish people started arriving at the camp, then Czechoslovakian people, and slowly the camp started getting an international component to it. By 1944, it is estimated that 90 percent of the people in the camp were not German. Also in 1938, there was the first arrest of Jews brought to the camp just because they were Jews. There were Jews from the start of the camp, but this was the first time they were brought in because they were Jews. There was a massive influx of 6,000 Jews brought in November 1938. In 1941, with the invasion of the Soviet Union, it was the first time things started going bad for the Germans in the war, as they got bogged down in the Russian plains. More and more men were taken from the factories in Germany to serve in the Front, which changed the economy back home. The result of that was the realisation of the government that the work force of the camps was very important, and more and more industrial facilities were built around the camps. In 1941, they started developing the*

concept of the satellite camps. Later, around 21 such camps were even located in Berlin itself. So the site of the striped uniform was even familiar in the streets of Berlin. Conditions started to get much worse as the war continued. By 1945, the Soviet forces encircled the city and found Sachsenhausen and liberated the camp.'

Once the tour narrative is framed, guides can connect different anecdotes to this narrative. In an interview, Guide I4 told me*:*

> *When I do my Sachsenhausen tour, I walk with the people and I show them the houses. Then I tell them that there were houses, what does that mean? That people knew about concentration camps, this was not a secret. It's not secret whether these camps existed or not. The prisoners were marched on a daily basis, and people saw what conditions their prisoners were in… Now, I do actually say that many Germans came to view* [the camps] *as sort of prisons, and when people ask me about that I say: we have prisons in the middle of our cities, and we don't question whether they are valid or not, or whether the people are criminals or the way they are being treated… and then I go, but these* [the camps] *are not actual prisons, people don't see a judicial system, and then I see people go 'oh, yeah, that's actually true, we do have prisons in the middle of our societies…', so you get to relate to them that Germans knew and came to accept them as a fact of their lives in that situation.*

To summarise briefly at this juncture, several themes evident in narratives of dark tourism tour interpretation may be highlighted. Not surprising is that, with experience, guides are able to formulate more structured narratives for the tours which match their character as guides, the requirements of the company they are the doing the tour for or of the product they advertise on their site (in private tours – the requirements of the customers), and the main theme of the tour (e.g. Sachsenhausen, Third Reich, the Berlin Wall, etc.).

Through observations, and together with the guides through a thinking process during the interviews, I gave titles to several narratives:

- Equality and tolerance (as a set of values to be learned from the atrocities and human tragedies interpreted on the tour).

- Systematic approach (e.g. to the rise and fall of the Third Reich) – can also be termed the bigger pictrures or a macro analysis.

- Correcting perspectives (which involves breaking popular myths).

- Personal stories/Personal perspectives (of victims of the events interpreted).

- Psychology of the criminal (designed to explain, rather than excuse).

- Remembracne (designed to allow the tourists to engage in one of the perceived potential aims of dark tourism).

Naturally, these are popular narratives, of which there are many variations. It is also important to note that guides may not necessarily consciously perceive their narratives in those terms.

6.6 Responses to tourist questions and comments

I've guided so many times that many stories are automatic. Sometime when someone interrupts me with a question it forces me to sort of 'wake up' and think about what I said in order to explain the issue with different words or different phrasing. (Guide I4)

Being able to respond to a tourist's question is an important element of guides' interpretation on a tour. Owing to the nature of the topic covered in dark tourism sites, the answers have to be carefully considered. Similarly, there are situations where tourists make a statement rather than ask a question. These statements, as with tourists' questions, usually require the guide to respond in different ways that they deem appropriate for the group and the situation.

Guide I1 told me the following story:

On the bus, my microphone was on and this woman next to me said 'you don't know that he escaped?' [referring to Hitler] *This was heard by 40 people... At first I said 'well there are different opinions but most historians believe that he died', to which she responded with 'wow, you're a tour guide and you didn't know he survived??' That really pissed me off, so I switched off the microphone and continued briefly* [to discuss with the tourist]. *I didn't want to have this entire conversation with everyone.*

I could have easily explained the difference in narrative between Americans and Russians, and how they talk about the last days in the bunker, there's a lot to talk about. You could debate what had happened to the body. But her confidence that she could know more than a person whose profession is to know history, and to go about it in front of the whole group...

There was a reason the guide chose to tell me this particular story. Hitler's last days and his death were clouded with misinformation, followed by decades of rumours and, sadly, many conspiracy theories. These perceptions are so widespraed and heard so often on tours that guides often tell creative jokes about how Hitler is still alive and eating steaks in Argentina with, for example, Elvis and Tupac (the American rapper), a reference to other people who, in popular conspiracy stories, are believed to be alive and hidden somewhere. Guide I7 explained this common occurrence:

On many occasions, near the site of Hitler's bunker, people argued to me and to the group something similar. They had seen something on the History Channel or Discovery, etc. I always try a little to convince them to be critical of what they hear, to try to think of whether this is even possible considering the disease that he had, considering how he wouldn't have wanted to get caught or to live in a non-Nazi reality. I even advise them to triangulate rather than just watch one documentary and base their opinions on that.

There are other approaches that are arguably even more diplomatic. Guide I11 explained how important it is that tourists do not lose face, even if they say something so unlikely or preposterous in the eyes of the guide. In such a case, the guide explained, you can claim that perhaps they read different books or, specifically with regards to the bunker example:

I analyse why I believe Hitler did not survive, but that I am willing to accept a one percent chance that maybe he did escape somehow, as unlikely as that scenario is. In that way, the other members in the group notice my integrity and continue to see me as historical authority and, at the same time, they appreciate me even more for not using the opportunity to humiliate a person who is probably delusional.

Indeed, almost every guide I have met found one way or another to explain why the historical orthodoxy agrees that Hitler died – or committed suicide in the bunker. Guides I1 and I2 both said that:

> *We're not going to change the opinions of all the crazy people in the world... Most of the time it is enough to give the justification that even if you disregard the circumstances of the first days of May 1945 as evidence you still have to consider the logic that Hitler was not the type who would stay silent; not the kind of type who would sit on the beach in Mexico sipping Piña colada...*

The problem for me is the 'seed of a doubt'. On one of my tours, a tourist told me that he did not think that Hitler was now eating steaks with superman in Argentina, but that Hitler probably survived a year or so. For me, that is not so different to the concept of Holocaust revisionism.

One of the main obstacles facing guides when interpreting dark sites and events is the almost immediate cognitive connection tourists make to their own familiar political situation. On my tours, I try to ignore completely the politics of the country of the tourists. So, for example, I do not talk about the wall in Israel; I do not believe walls are comparable. I do not talk about American politics at all; I do not want to insult anyone. Similarly, Guide I2 said:

> *I wouldn't make comparisons with American politics. But of course, people make the comparisons to what they know. And then there are dumb internet troll types... I know that politicians today lie outright about how many people participate in rallies… That to me is very similar to what the Nazis did, but it is still not comparable and of course I wouldn't mention it like that even if people do on tour.*

In one interview, I pushed the guide to give me an example that they considered to a risky mistake. After some consideration, Guide I3 said:

> *With great caution, I did actually make a troubling comparison once or twice. I told the story of how the Nazis filmed their rallies in Brandenburg Gate with 2,000 supporters, but with editing and the marchers walking with torches around several times, it looked like tens of thousands of supporters. I explained that when the events*

of Charlottesville in the US happened [in 2017] *a lot of people here in Berlin were very sensitive about that, even if again such comparisons are very difficult, if at all possible, to make.*

For Guide I4, the solution was different:

I can talk about the politics of different countries, various walls in the world... About conflicts and wars... I do it through talking about the Germans and German history. If they start comparing to the Middle East or to Brexit, then I just say: 'you said it... you compared...'. The part about the two soldiers in Checkpoint Charlie is really about the Middle East conflicts. The global forces drew borders. But I won't say it outright. I would only show them that the American and Russian soldiers are actually one and the same, and only the politicians differentiate between people. These things happen...

Guide I3 explained why from the perspective of tour guides, who by the nature of their profession know their history, comparisons are so dangerous:

In early 2016, during the American election campaign, Louis CK [the American comedian] *said that Trump is like Hitler. This caused a minor controversy in the media. I argued that the biggest problem was that, if anything, Louis should have said that Trump is like Hitler of 1931, not 1945. This is because for most of us, when we think of Hitler we think of the person who gave the order to systematically murder millions. His rhetoric of 1931 would have vaguely been what Louis was referring to. Even then, it's not ok to make such comparison.*

The reason that guides consider such comparisons to be risky is that without intending to, they may offend someone. Furthermore, they could be inaccurate or just wrong. Ultimately, guides argue that it does not make a difference that they have historical authority to get the analysis correct; it is, after all, their guests' holiday.

Nevertheless, the guides I spoke to made a distinction between volunteering potentially volatile topic to discuss and being put on the spot by tourists. About half of them said they enjoyed a bit of discussion, especially considering the contemporary global political situation and the so-called online toxic debate culture, whereas others indicated that they prefer to

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conduct a 'safe' tour, keeping within the available time frame and 'producing' a satisfied tourist at the end of the tour. One or two guides even said that they know that talking about Nazism in Germany today and about the AfD (the far-right party) would not necessarily solve today's problems and prefer to leave people with open questions. For a long time, that was my own strategy until I encountered groups that, when I asked them to think about and give their own critique on certain memorials, engaged in a discussion but then turned to me, asking me to provide them with answers! And sometimes, that may indeed be the issue with dark tourism interpretation; the topics are difficult to contemplate or confront, and tourists may feel that they are paying good money to get answers from a person who is meant to be an authority on the subject.

There are controversial situations and topics that I am rarely exposed to but that certain guides must deal with relatively often. 'Israel bashing' in the context of the Holocaust during a Sachsenhausen tour is one of those 'minefield situations', as one guide described it. In one of my dyadic interviews, a small but noticeable disagreement emerged between the two guides on how severe they perceived 'Israel bashing' to be during a Sachsenhausen tour, and how stern the response should be. Guide I5 said: '*it's quite common, that; after I tell people after how the SS treated the Jews in the camp, there are those who would tell me - 'that's what the Jews are doing now...'* [to the Palestinians]. *I respond with 'well, let's talk about this place now...'* Conversely, Guide I6 found a slightly different diplomatic response: '*If someone says that what the SS did is what Israel is doing, I respond with 'if anything, if we must', then first I would say let's talk about the State of Israel and not all the Jews. And also, that could be a very interesting discussion, but let's talk about this place now. I do it in a very nice way.*'

These two responses have an important component in common, in that they both try to divert attention from a tourist's potentially volatile reaction with the aim of not allowing further anti-Semitic statements to be expressed and heard by the group, while simultaneously not engaging the tourist in a discussion that will anger them. The difference between the two is only the nuanced line of forgiveness. Both guides said that, in all likelihood, these statements are sadly a common type of ignorance and should not automatically be treated as Nazi statements or Holocaust denial. Guide I5 stated that '*in some cases I stop fast because I smell something much worse and I'd rather not know...*' The problem Guide I5 referred to is that if a tourist offers an opinion which is more than socially-accepted criticism of the modern state

of Israel, and actually deteriorates into Holocaust denial or revisionism, then the guide will have to delay the tour and deal with the situation by calling the memorial site management or, in extreme cases, even have them call the police. Instead, most guides – as Guide I6 chose to do –make small corrections and immediately return to the narrative of the tour, or even adjust it slightly to reveal elements of the camp history that will make the tourist understand why the comparisons were incorrect.

Questions that guides find difficult to deal with are those from tourists who arrive with strong opinions; although sounding like questions, they are in fact statements. One such question is the morally and ethically historically problematic questions of 'how much did the German people know? Who knew what? Why didn't they resist their government?' In my own experience, most people I encounter answer this question in simplified terms. Out of the need to be professional and perhaps out of natural curiosity that comes with the job, all the guides I spoke to engaged in a form of complex analysis when answering this question. Differences in opinion emerged between guides, always backed up with rational arguments, and interestingly guides found this point to be more emotional and even appeared to be a little annoyed that another guide may not see the logic in their argument. For that reason, the way different guides handled this question was quite diverse.

There are times when guides use an elaborate anecdote to address a controversial topic, one which may be difficult to address directly. In this example, Guide O12 used an anecdote to address the both common and difficult to answer question of how much the Germans knew during the war, and the no less challenging issue of German resistance. The setting is the courtyard by the German Resistance Museum:

> *The topic of* [German] *resistance is a very difficult one, it's a controversial one… There were 27 assassination attempts* [on Hitler], *some of them not executed, some remained in the planning stage… so definitely there was a resistance. A lot of historians will say that 3 percent of the German population resisted.*

The guide provided the following anecdote to convey the message of the problematic nature of addressing the intertwining relations between resistance and denial:

When in 1945 the Allied forces of the Americans, Brits and Soviets wanted to do de-Nazification of the population they gave questionnaires, trying to determine who was an active member of the Nazi regime. Or how high up were they in the Nazi party. So if you were a Hitler youth leader you would have not been able to have a teaching job… things like that. And it's very interesting because they were using this psychological trick. What was your stance against the regime? And so many people answered 'oh, God! I was so against this regime, this regime was so extreme… and then the next question was, did you know about the concentration camps? [Here the guide uses a different tone to 'act' or overact the role of the imaginary person answering the questionnaire:] *Ah, I'm sorry, I don't understand the question…', so the psychological trick is that several questions later there is a question: so, if you were so opposed to the Nazi regime, why didn't you act against? And then the inevitable answer would have been: are you insane?? If I resisted, they would send me to a concentration camp… To some extent the Nazi regime wanted people to know about the concentration camps so they would be afraid themselves…*

Guides would often link the questions of knowledge with the question of resistance. Guide O11 near the Block of the Women:

Here Ingeborg [the artist] *placed this person on the bench, sitting all relaxed, he's close enough, but he's not looking at the demonstration, he prefers to avert his eyes* [the guide pointed out to how the sculpted person is looking towards the TV Tower and not towards the rest of the memorial]. *Ingeborg is pointing a finger towards all of us, the visitors. She is making us face the question of what would we have done in the same situation? What do we do when we see a homeless person in the street? Do we help these people? They're not our problem!*

In the same situation, Guide O10 chose to go one step further:

Let me make it harder for you, just for the sake of a little philosophical discussion, we can handle that, right? [the guide said to the group with a smile]. *Try to imagine a horrible situation, that in your country right now, the government will start persecuting a certain minority, maybe even go as far as establishing concentration camps. Now, you personally may not be a fan, but you didn't want to kill these people,*

either. For many of us, there are minorities we don't like but that doesn't mean we
immediately want them persecuted or murdered; if only someone would make 'the
problem' go away... But that is not all. Here is where it gets difficult. What if you were
told that if you assist these people, hide them, you and your entire family will end up
in a camp? You know it's the morally right thing to do, but you don't want your family
to be arrested and probably killed. You don't want to take that risk. So what should
you do?

Reaching out to the psychology of the individual is another way in which guides illustrate difficult situations to their tourists. As Guide I2 explained:

I continue to sometimes make connections – with numbers – between Nazi Germany
and the DDR. Because even if people know, what can you do in that situation when
you have an absolute ruthless secret police force? And in the case of Nazi Germany,
practically zero police force. So, you've got some knowledge, is it worth putting it out
there, because other people probably know it anyway, what can you do with this
knowledge? Who's going to police the Nazis? There's no way to police them, which is
why things got progressively worse, and worse and worse. You go to the eckkneipe
[your local pub] *and you start saying 'did you know this and that', and before you*
know it you get a tap on your shoulder and you end up in a concentration camp.

A very different approach to address the issue of knowledge can be seen in a form of a direct analysis (as opposed to the previous example of anecdote). Guide O10 analysed the problem in the following way:

The way I like to think of this issue is in a horizontal and then vertical way. In the
horizontal way, we break down the German people at the time by defining their social
role as individuals in the population [64 Million at the start of the War]. *Children*
know very little, elderly people know something, a soldier knows more, and
increasingly more the more up the rank they are, an SS person knows more than a
soldier, the further up the Nazi party ranks you go, the more you know. In the vertical
way we integrate the temporal perspective into the horizontal population breakdown.
This means that if at first no one could have known about systematic extermination of
the Jews (The Final Solution) because it wasn't decided until 1941, as time goes by

people know more and more. At first, they see concentration camps, sometimes very close to home, and they see the treatment of Jews and other persecuted groups in every public space. As time goes by and the war starts, people know increasingly more. For example, soldiers (military or SS) are not supposed to boast with what it is they are really doing in occupied Poland. However, sometimes, especially for young people, killing is not so easy! When soldiers returned home, they often started drinking a schnaps or two and told their mother or grandparents (possibly with pride) about what they did. By the end of the war, almost everyone knew almost everything.

I found that, in interviews, guides had more time to reflect on what they say, and if the interview was dyadic, they listened carefully to the other person and even argued respectfully the finer points of the question. For instance, Guide I13 said:

…I actually say, by 1943 all adult Germans knew in detail what had happened…. OK, they knew that systematic murder took place. A man was recorded in Köln [before being deported] *saying: "why bother with the lies, you're gonna take me to Auschwitz and gas me anyway". So, I think you'll be surprised what people knew… the coming home and telling, the coming home and crying about what they've been forced to do. You look at those letters from the eastern front, that's three million letters to three million wives, even if only a few told things it would have been a lot.* [Guide I14:] *To what degree were those letters censored?* [Guide I13:] *I don't think the Wehrmacht was censored at all. In the parcels they could send a lot.*

Although not a common occurrence, guides also admitted to me that there have times, when answering questions or listening to tourist statements, when they have been left in increasingly awkward and very unpleasant situations. One such example is an anecdote told by Guide I3*:*

A man on a tour told me once that it [the ability to be so cruel like the Nazis were in the Holocaust] *was in the German DNA… I replied that of course you can do genetics experiment, take a German newly born to Mauritius, and bring them up in different language, different culture, and if it's in the DNA then all the different conditions wouldn't matter… What happened then was that it started a heated debate. Another woman supported me, but the man insisted and continued to verbally attack me in*

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front of most of the group. I had to quickly diffuse the conversation and change the
topic.

Most guides would consider a situation like that as malicious; one which requires tour management. Several guides went as far as to argue that we are under no obligation to make tourists happy at any costs. Fortunately, most situations are resolved with the trust tourists have in the guide's authority. This is nicely illustrated in a story from Guide I1:

Well, there was a Jewish family, and the man asked how many Jews there are in
Berlin today. I told him about 40,000 and he said, no way! That's not possible, so
many Jewish people in the city. I was quite confident on that particular point because
I actually did my research on this for something else; my facts were at least a bit
straight... However, this is a point where you ask yourself if you want to push this
point as it may ruin the atmosphere for the rest of the tour – this was relatively near
the start of a tour. It should be the case that I should be able to always tell the truth…
and it should be open for discussion. What is the right angle? You can say that we can
try to look it up… But you don't want to make people feel uncomfortable. There's
always a threshold…

Guide I1 went on to say that the rest of the tour went smoothly and that the people were actually nice enough. This is arguably an ideal situation. If the guide had pushed the issue further, knowing and showing that they are in the right, the tourist would have in all likelihood become antagonistic and probably not listened much for the rest of the tour. However, in resolving the situation with a smile and allowing the tourist to feel that they were correct, Guide I1 achieved not just tourist satisfaction but was also seen as an authority, respected by that person who would even give the new information serious consideration.

A popular question from tourists, and one related to the discussion on word choice in Section 6.3.7 above, is one that guides find to be an important distinction: was Hitler elected or appointed? On more than one occasion I have heard a tourist make a comment about how Germans elected Hitler, or how 90 percent of the Germans elected the Nazis, or that the Germans elected the Nazi party in a democratic way... There are many variations on that statement. Usually when a person makes this comment, they are trying to place collective blame on all Germans at the time, and maybe even to conclude that it says something about

Germans in general, even nowadays. It is a statement / question that can both damage the historical authenticity of the interpretation, and the authority of the guide. Furthermore, though it may come from a justified place of anger, it nevertheless can be seen as a form of enticement of hatred towards the Germans of today.

During the observations and interviews, I perceived that guides were concerned that if they displayed a more precise, detailed account of how the Nazis came to power, they may be seen as providing excuses for the Nazi crimes. Nevertheless, they all found different ways to interpret the process of Hitler and the Nazis coming to power. Here is how Guide I14 explained their interpretation:

> *The Nazis won the elections in 1932; I try to say that a lot of Germans who voted for the Nazis didn't vote for them because of their anti-Semitism or their racial policies. A lot of people voted for them despite their racial policies! People said, ok, we know that they have these weird policies but they have good economic policies and maybe new voices… with all these horrible people for the last 15 years that nothing has changed…* [during the days of the Weimar Republic] *so a lot of people who voted did not necessarily agree with the Nazi policies. Then, on April 10th, the Nazis implemented the first boycott and it didn't really work. And I think there's a whole bunch of people in Germany who did not agree with the Nazi policies, you might even say the majority did not agree with them. So you have to come to a point that you have to talk about propaganda even after they declared dictatorship. Even when they were staging elections there were people who came to believe that it may be the right way… I talk about the propaganda ministry and them saying that the German society is under threat…'*

Many other guides prefer to immediately present the election statistics showing how just over 36 percent of all Germans who voted in November 1932 actually voted for the Nazi party, and how in Berlin itself that percentage was even smaller. Guide I14 – like many others – emphasised that of course anti-Semitism was widespread all over Germany, including in Berlin, but that we must remember that in Germany at that time there were more than 40 democratic parties, some of which were more extreme than this relatively new and unknown National Socialist Party of the German Nation. And not to mention that there was also widespread support for the communist party in Berlin.

Guide I7 told me that if tourists comment that the Germans elected the Nazis, they prefer to get through the statistics quickly and go on to talk about the psychology of propaganda:

> *I tell them that Göbbels was an evil genius who understood that all people are stupid – if you tell people a particular piece of information enough times, they will eventually believe that it's true, or at least that it could be true. That is called 'the seed of a doubt'. From an early stage, the Nazi party spread the story of the 'Jewish stab in the back', the accusation that the German Jews were the ones who betrayed Germany and brought it to lose the Great War. Göbbels' propaganda machine went as far as accusing the Jews for being the evil capitalist who want to rule the world and at the same time for being the Bolsheviks and communists who are trying to destroy Germany. Once Hitler was appointed Kanzler, these messages were increasingly conveyed to people in Germany on all levels. You couldn't avoid this information. As a German you would hear it in the kindergarten, at school, when you went to your youth movement meeting, or when you went to work, on the official government radio channel and at work, and of course also in street signs everywhere! This went on for 6 full years before the war even started. Very few people have to ability to block such information if it would be conveyed by their governments. Eventually vast majority of us would have a little voice creeping in our heads thinking 'ahm, maybe there's something to it'. If about 37 percent of the German voted for the Nazis in 1937, this number continued to climb to the end of the bell curve until 1943-1944 when people started losing family members in the war. But of course, we don't have any reliable data from that time, because it was Göbbels' office that was responsible for information at the time...*

This type of interpretation may be seen as making some hidden parallels to today's politics in various countries, and possibly to the reality of social media and the controversy of authenticity of information in contemporary times. Nevertheless, the guide does not need to say anything directly, and may not think about it beyond genuinely trying to explain the psychology of Nazi propaganda and the increasing support of the German people in their government between 1933 and 1944. Other guides, however, feel bolder in certain group situations, as when Guide O3 explained to their group near the Mall of Berlin on the wide Leipziger Straße avenue:

*Look at these iPhone ads, they are building size! We can't avoid Apple products even if we wanted to. They show us iPads on mainstream state media, they do product placement in every romantic comedy, eventually we **have** to think that these are the best products. Now, I'm not comparing the aim of Steve Jobs to sell us products with Hitler's aim to get the German people to commit crimes against humanity, obviously not, but the psychological principle is similar.*

Most guides told me that they interpret these problematic points with success, rarely encountering a problem. However, Guide I15 told me the following story:

On one tour I had a man, about 70 years old, I guess. Soon I realised he was a second generation of Holocaust survivors. Immediately at Bebel Platz, when I was in the process of taking about Hitler's appointment, the book burning and the Nazi principle of Gleichschaltung [cultural synchronisation] *he said loudly that 90 percent of the German people voted Hitler as Kanzler... I felt bad, because I knew the emotional place he was coming from, but I couldn't let it slide and had to correct him with analysis of the statistics that we know, and change topic quickly. If I hadn't, there is a chance I would have lost my authority for the rest of the tour. I think most of the other people on the tour understood the situation. People also expect the guide to show empathy to the other tourist, even if they know this other person was stating something incorrect or even controversial.*

Answering the question 'why the Jews?' or 'why did Hitler hate the Jews so much?'
Another big question guides are asked frequently on their tours is 'why the Jews?' or sometimes put differently 'why did Hitler hate the Jews so much?' The difficulty in answering this question is due to the complexity of the answer, and because it could be asked in either a naïve manner or as an accusation that the Jews did something to deserve the Holocaust. Guide I3 said that, after all their years of guiding, they still find the question of 'why the Jews?" really aggravating:

I know most people would not ask that from a position of anti-Semitism. That is not the point. The point is that, to me, asking a question like that almost implies that the Jews did something that deserved years of persecution and eventually genocide. Who

could possibly do something that deserves their genocide?? But when I'm asked the question like that, I try my best to start my answer by telling them that nobody can do something to deserve genocide, but that if we try hard to analyse then we can come up with a combination of reasons, including pre-existing Euro-Christian anti-Semitism, the financial crisis in Germany that brought many people to desperation, a world war that was resolved in a bad way, young democracy in Germany that in itself was a young nation not ready for democracy, and several other reasons that brought about the appointment of Hitler to power. I conclude saying that none of this explain this level of hatred.

Another guide (I25) mentioned to me briefly that they give some kind of an analysis, but that the short answer is what they prefer to call 'the perfect storm' – the rare combination of horrible circumstances in Germany at the time, leading finally to the Holocaust, the systematic extermination of the Jewish people of Europe by the Nazis, which is a rare, and arguably the most horrible outcome to the aforementioned combination circumstances. Many guides start answering this difficult question with thoughtful hesitation. Guide O17 chose their words carefully:

I can answer that, but it's not a short answer… We can start to talk about the history of anti-Semitism in medieval Christian Europe, how the 'Jews killed our saviour Jesus Christ' was popularised. Jews were often the outcast, and people said 'this is your punishment for killing Jesus Christ', actually that explains why Jews were not allowed into parts of society… In the 19th Century with the rise of pogroms and the development of racism, hatred against minorities grew. Hitler then took all of that and combined it to use for his own ends. The Nazis generally did not invent these things, they existed before and the Nazis took them to a whole new level.

The core difference between these different approaches is that, on the one hand, a guide can go for a strictly analytical explanation, which means they avoid the risk of getting closer to the emotional dimension. They can easily talk about the post-War economic crisis, poverty in Germany in the 1920s and many other factors. On the other hand, they can go deeper, asking hard questions in the same way that historians might. I believe that these two main approaches are not contradictory. Rather, they can be either an interpretation that a guide is used to do and is happy with, or a guide might have a tour where they have sufficient time

and active interest from the tourists, in which case both avenues might be taken to enrich the analysis.

Several points arise, therefore, with regards to guides' experiences when interpreting dark events during a tour. First, as a rule, guides prefer an engaged group that asks questions. In tours that go by with little or no questions, guides often report boredom or even a bad feeling of poor performance on their part. Questions break the routine of interpreting the same thing over and over. Thus, tourists posing questions shows engagement and breaks the tedium of the job (Wynn, 2011). Second, in order to be able to answer familiar and maybe unexpected questions, guides constantly learn more and find new and creative ways to interpret places they may have visited a thousand times, such as Hitler's Bunker or Bebel Platz. These questions, then, allow the guide to show knowledge beyond their basic interpretation. This is good both to boost their confidence and to strengthen their professional reputation. Thirdly, there is no doubt that there is a lot of benefit in dealing with questions, especially when a good debate develops. However, due to the sensitive nature of the topics interpreted in dark tourism, guides find themselves pushed into many unpleasant situations which require both 'in the bank' knowledge and the ability to manage tricky situations. Lastly, and also unique to dark tourism interpretation, is the way in which engaging in an off-routine debate that arises from a tourist question might result in a deeper confrontation on the part of tourists with their mortality or with other moral and philosophical issues. Although this is something guides like, most try to remember that the time they spend with their guests is relatively short and for that reason try to treat these issues with caution.

6.7 Additional contributions

In the following section I describe in detail additional specific observations that are part of the work of guides in Berlin, and often, a direct part of interpreting dark tourism sites.

6.7.1 The Law of the Third

The dynamic in which one third of the group is not interested at all, one third is partly interested and one third is very interested. In such situations, it is likely that the guide will try to keep the interpretation succinct yet still make an effort to maintain quality for the third that *are* interested. Moreover, those interested will most likely sit behind the guide in the bus or walk beside them, allowing the guide to provide them with a more detailed interpretation. There are some guides, however, who argue that the Law of the Third may not play a role in

how they choose to interpret, such as when all participants in the group know each other from work. In such circumstances, it is unlikely that the group members will demonstrate much interest, probably preferring to use their visit to Berlin as a unique opportunity to socialise with each other.

6.7.2 Feeding the tourists what they want to hear – reinforcing stereotypes
Undoubtedly, guides enjoy having like-minded people on a tour. It feels good to agree on certain issues and it is easier to explain further details on a topic of which the tourists have a good basic knowledge. However, tourists inevitably have their own value systems and opinions, which might be racist, hateful or even just inaccurate. During the research, I observed several guides who chose to interpret dark events in a way that appeared to justify the opinions of the people in the group; they chose their words and anecdotes in such a way that might perpetuate stereotypes, enticing a level of resentment or otherwise maintaining the knowledge system the tourist came with, even if the details might be incorrect. This is called feeding the tourists with what they want to hear.

On the one hand, this strategy is clearly useful to keep the tourists happy and to have them return home satisfied with their tour; and if all goes well, possibly for the guide to receive a better tip. On the other hand, not all guides are happy with this, many feeling that they cannot bring themselves to interpret an event or a place in a way that will go against what they believe or know. Several guides stated that it is challenging for them not to express their opinions on the sensitive topics that arise at dark tourism sites. Hence, they try not to bring up topics they deem politically 'too hot' in order not to spark arguments, though they do express their opinion on topics related, for example, to memory, education and commemoration. Although I met two or three guides who argued that they no longer express any opinion in order to eliminate any chance of complaint, an overwhelming number of guides stated that if they feel comfortable with the group they will express an opinion but emphasise that, in this particular instance, they are stating their own opinion and not an accepted historical interpretation. This distinction was also evident between guides who only guide (freelancers who may also be termed one-person company) and guides whose operation grew to be a larger company; those work on volume and find it easier to create a form of standardisation.

As mentioned in Section 6.1, guides 'feel' their guests relatively quickly. Sometimes, guests provide information about themselves in an email preceding the tour whereas, at other times,

meeting them in the hotel lobby or walking with them on the way to the first site provides the guide with a lot of base-line information about the guests. Either way, with this knowledge, there are guides who wish to make their guests happy in that they interpret topics or answer questions in accordance with what they think their guests want to hear, even if sometimes they know that that the information they are providing does not necessarily adhere to facts.

Only during one or two observations did I witness guides giving an analysis that seemed to me to significantly diverge from the real situation in Berlin. And usually, guides do this only to a limited extent. When guides do exaggerate a topic, or cherry pick statistics, it is often because they may agree with their guests on certain political issues. Examples include talking about Brexit and German opinions about it, about anti-Semitism, or about whether it is safe to walk in various neighbourhoods in Berlin. Talking about the state of refugees in Berlin seems to always be a hot topic, and one which could easily be interpreted in whichever direction the tourist prefers. For example, one guide can easily explain that the government did such a bad job that the police are afraid to go into certain districts whereas, in contrast, another guide might use the same data to explain how Germany did a wonderful job dealing the situation.

Anti-Semitism is another such example. One can easily argue that the Germans have learned nothing and that there is widespread anti-Semitism in Germany and Berlin. If the customer arrives with an existing, deep seated distaste of Germans, that kind of message might make them happy. Here, too, other guides may choose to paint a more positive picture, analysing the situation in such a way that demonstrates Germany and Berlin are perfectly safe for Jews. Naturally, most guides would say neither, attempting their own analysis and understanding of the situation. However, there are those who would sway their interpretations if they feel it would produce more satisfied customers.

The reason most guides do not adopt this strategy of feeding the tourists what they (the tourists) want to hear is because they feel that it is bad form to send their guests back home with negative feelings about the destination they have just visited. Bryon (2012: 40) found that for many younger guides it is important to present their destination as naturalistic as possible, which means painting it in a positive way but at the same time including all 'cuts and bruises'. Similarly, the guides I observed and interviewed would not argue that everything in the city is perfect, but prefered to tone down the harshly negative messages. Nevertheless, I argue that 'feeding the tourists' can even be as common as telling a widely

familiar stereotypical joke about Germans not having sense of humour or being crazy with bureaucracy. Doing so may not provide an accurate analysis but would certainly be an easy way to make many people on the tour happy.

6.7.3 Tour guides' coping mechanisms for guiding in dark tourism sites

Thus far, this chapter has been primarily concerned with what the research tells us about the various ways in which tour guides in Berlin interpret dark sites in the city. Significantly, however, and overlooked in the extant literature on tour guiding (but, see Leshem, 2019), also emerging from the research were the emotional consequences of impacts on guides who lead tours to and interpret difficult, dark sites. In this section, therefore, I discuss the ways in which guides, as revealed in interviews, try to deal with their feelings after guiding a tour in Sachsenhausen, and how they try to avoid the potentially accumulative emotional or psychological damage they intuitively feel might occur.

The German word *Feierabend* – 'home time' or 'end of working day' – literally means festive or celebrate evening. Most tours to Sachsenhausen involve spending at least an hour and a half inside the memorial site itself. In this context, for most guides it is a relief to finish work, but they cannot associate this with a literal or psychological celebration. Guides often feel that guiding in Sachsenhausn is emotionally draining, which makes it challenging for many to transition between their working day to their normal or after-work life.

First, this section presents the feelings and responses of guides, divided into groups of simlar comments and behaviours, followed second by a commentary.

Four guides who lead tours to Sachsenhausen told me about their growing feelings of misanthropy and the general need for isolation:

Guide I1: '*After a tour in Sachenhausen I go home and don't talk to anyone for the rest of the evening. The next day I'm fine*.'

Guide I8: '*Once, back in the city after a tour, I realised that I reacted aggressively to a situation in the street, and that I probably wouldn't react like that if I hadn't done Sachenhausen that day*.'

Guide I9: '*I go home, put my legs up and watch a lot of sports for the rest of the evening.*'

Guide I10: '*I go home, put my legs up on the sofa. Shut myself completely and watch a lot of stand-up comedy on YouTube.*'

In a manner of speaking, it can be argued that what Guide I8 experienced was an outcome similar to *hostile attribution bias* (HAB). In research on child psychology, Usha Goswami (2014) summarises this, suggesting that young children whose behaviour is constantly interpreted as hostile and purposeful by their parents or caretakers will grow up to interpret the seemingly neutral behaviours of others as intentionally hostile. Researchers Helfritz-Sinville and Stanford (2014: 45) quote Milich and Dodge (1984) defining HAB as a 'tendency to interpret the intent of others as hostile, despite the fact that environmental cues fail to indicate clear intent'. In a similar way, then, after spending many days each tourism season interpreting the cruel action of the SS guards in the former concentration camp, guides may interpret seemingly benign situations as intentionally hostile.

There are two similarities between Guides I9 and I10. Both showed an inability to connect with others after a tour or, at the very least, they were reluctant to do so. Moreover, they acted in order to create a world of escapism, even for a short time. During the tourism high season, guides know that the next day they have to function with a smile on their faces and, indeed, they want to enjoy their work. In a different conversation, Guide I7 commented on the need for comedy during tours, including tours which may be considered as largely 'dark' in nature. The guide said that giving tourists a small psychological break is essential, but also said, however, that of course they understand why this is almost impossible for guides to do that on the Sachenhausen tour.

It is recognised that humour may be employed as means of dealing with trauma (Craun & Bourke, 2014; Garrick, 2006) and many guides certainly display sense of humour that many people would find rather offensive. During several trips I took with friends, where we visited former concentration camps and other similar sites for educational purposes, we avoided jokes while being inside the site itself. However, as soon as we left, we engaged in jokes that we could never tell outside our circle and certainly not on a tour.

A different response admitted by some guides is to find comfort in (over)eating:

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Guide I2: '*I tend to overeat. I eat nothing all day during a tour. Then at home I eat a lot.*'

Guides I3 and I4: '*I eat a huge cheeseburger and chips.*'

Context is important here. The guides quoted above generally try to live a healthy lifestyle; one of them is vegetarian, another is a vegan. All three stated that the psychological pressure of guiding in Sachenhausen that they traslated into to bad eating habits was another reason for them trying to reduce the number of times they guide there.

In many casual conversations over the years I have encountered maybe two or three people who have chosen not to guide in Sachenhausen at all. Amongst those who do, I found that there were several who found ways of limiting the number of times they guide this tour:

Guide I5: '*I made a conscious decision not to guide there anymore. I may change that in the future, if there is customer demand that I won't be able to refuse. At the moment I would rather not deal with that*'.

Guide I6: '*I limit the times I guide there. Never more than once a week*'.

Guide I7: '*I try to sway my customers* [before they book a tour] *to only get a Sachenhausen tour if they do the Highlights Tour first*',

Most of the time, tour guides do not have control over the kind of tour the customers request. If they do a lot of work for one of the public walking tours companies, then they may ask not to be scheduled on a Sachenhausen tour but may nevertheless be required to guide one from time to time. If, instead, they already do a lot of private work through their own company, then they probably charge more and may be obliged to follow a variety of tailor-made requests. They may try to sway their guests one way or another but, ultimately, the tourists may also have flight schedules or other time constraints. And of course, weather may play a role as well: the tour in Sachenhausen includes a lot of walking in an open area between buildings and exhibitions.

In addition, the Memorial and Museum Sachsenhausen used to charge fees from the guides, to be paid either daily or per annum. These have changed several times, and the charging system changed completely in early 2020, several weeks before the Covid-19 crisis started. Prior to that guides, had to calculate if the company or person booking the tour pays for the fees, or if they want to guide enough times so that the annual fee would pay off.

There are guides who find an almost obsessive need to do sports after a Sachenhausen tour:

Guide I11: '*I used to go home, close myself in and not do anything. I think in the long run it wasn't very good for me. Now I go home and do yoga on my own*'.

Guide I28: '*I go to the gym. Always after Sachenhausen. Burn away the toxins... When I go home I'm not so angry*'.

Although on the face of it I found this strategy to be somewhat more fruitful than the others I heard, I am still reluctant to comment on whether or not it helps in the long term. I would still argue that doing yoga, going for a run or going to the gym is a great short-term form of managing the type of anger and stress a person can feel after guiding in Sachenhausen.

Probably the response I expected the most was the need for hedonistic indulgence and sociability:

Guide I12: '*I love eating good food after Sachenhausen tours, especially Sushi*'.

Guide I13: '*I don't do Sachenhausen often enough to feel the weight of it so strongly… However, when I get too deep into these subjects, I need to do something fun or spend some time with family/friends.*

Guide I14: *To be honest, I drink a lot… I'm a social drinker, I often meet with friends after a tour and we drink. Life doesn't stop because of a Sachsenhausen tour… there are birthdays, events, gallery openings, etc.*'

In two interviews, the guides felt sufficiently at ease to go further into the topic. The arguments were similar: there is a strong connection between a good tour in Sachenhausen and the mood of the guide in the evening.

Guide I12: '*I'm in a different mood if the group was engaged and alert or if they weren't really there... if there was no chemistry between us. In the latter case, I feel quite depressed.*'

Guide I16: '*I follow up on questions I was asked on the tour and didn't know the answers to; there are always new questions! If the students on the group didn't ask any questions or worse yet, if the teachers were not engaged or at all seem interested, then I feel quite bad after a tour. I ask myself, if they're not interested, why did they even come on the tour? People like that end up voting for far-right parties. The whole situation depresses me.*'

The point made here is whether guides function as teachers or not. About half of the guides in all interviews or talks during observations agreed that they are sort of 'teachers for the day'. The other half were very much against this notion. These are not arguments which are easy to agree or disagree with. Any tour of history would ultimately engage in teaching something, and tourists might learn something while taking pictures. In all my years as a guide, I have hardly ever encountered people who really had no interest at all. After all, in any tour that has elements of dark tourism in Berlin, tourists would find it very hard to ignore the subject matter. I find that all guides understand that there is at least some form of responsibility. With it, however, whether they see it or not, there is a mounting level of psychological pressure.

The type of life guides live has significant connection to their behaviour after a Sachenhausen tour. Guides may go back to their partner and children or socialise with their friends. Many commented that after a Sachenhausen tour they prefer total detachment from these 'dark' topics.

Guide I15: '*I have a rule: no Hitler talk after 20:00! Many of my friends are tour guides, Hitler and Sachsenhausen, that's work, and we don't talk work stuff when we go out in the evening.*'

As a preliminary conclusion, I would argue that Work Fatigue, Burn-out or Secondary Trauma Syndrome are not suitable labels for the type of psychological challenges faced by

guides over long periods of time. However, Secondary Trauma Syndrome (STS) deserves special mention and a brief discussion. This syndrome is often researched and talked about in the professional context of medical staff (especially nurses and field medical staff), aid workers, criminal lawyers and criminal proceedings, and of several other similar professionals. Faced with metaphorically touching extreme trauma, under different circumstances, the phenomenon revealed above may be defined as **Guiding the Dark Accumulative Psychological Stress** (GDAPS). This phenomenon differs from STS in several ways. The first, and most obvious, is that in most cases the accumulative psychological stress comes from telling/interpreting the stories, not from hearing them or treating patients with PTSD. As Pearlman and McKay (2008) explain, by assisting people who have been victimised, humanitarian workers often experience the lasting effects of psychological stress and are spiritually changed. This is very different for tour guides who are clearly not in direct contact with victims of the related event and site. Guides spend anything between five tours per season to 3-4 tours per week (in extreme cases) telling stories of the prisoners of Concentration Camp Sachsenhausen and what they had to endure during their life in the camp. Therefore, in contrast to the direct contact endured by humanitarian workers or medical staff, the psychological stress accumulated is a result of repetitive mediation between the victims (and the event) and a listener (the tourist).

Second, although general burn-out is a relatively well-known known risk for tour guides, other psychological impacts are not commonly something tour guides consider. These include depression, an increase in aggressive behaviour (specifically aggressive reactions to situations that would not otherwise aggregate severe reaction), change in perceptions of people and society (the inevitable expectation in social situations that other people are intentionally aggressive or rude), and radicalisation of pre-existing opinions.

These vicarious feelings that tour guides have can be compared to those of Bernhardt et al.'s (1998) sporting fans. The authors argued that these changes are cognitive and behavioural; sporting fans are likely to experience fluctuations in positive and negative feelings and, therefore, will not be tilted into just positive or negative feelings. Tour guides of the dark will, in most cases, endure only the stress of the negative feelings, although there are exceptions. A Guide I12 explained: '*if I have a group and they ask good questions, and it leads to a good debate, then at least I go home feeling good about myself, and not too*

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depressed; *at least I feel like something worthy came out of visiting this horrible place again.*'

The issue of Accumulative Psychological Stress arises partly as a result of the ever-increasing visitor numbers to dark tourism sites. Considering Stone's (2008) spectrum of dark to light, the reference here is to the sites referred to as the darkest, as they present the most emotionally difficult historical events and may therefore be considered the most sensitive places of tour guides interpretation. These sites include the most infamous sites of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the Killing Fields in Cambodia, the museums in Kigali presenting the genocide in Rwanda, and the major concentration camps in Germany (Dachau, Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen). The sheer numbers of visitors to these sites are now counted in the millions. Sachsenhausen alone is listed as the first item on the list of Day Trips and Excursions in the TripAdvisor page of Berlin (TripAdvisor, 2018).

From the emerging findings of this research, it has been revealed that the vast majority of guides view guiding in Sachsenhausen as different to all other tours ("*it's not like any other job...*"). Bearing that in mind, along with the concept of the power that guides have on the tourist understanding of historical events, and with the large numbers of visitors to these sites, the accumulative impact on the guides is arguably of greater importance than simply arguing that guides may become numb to the material they are interpreting.

6.7.4 Playing the 'what if' game – the use of counterfactual history

In dark tourism themed tours in Berlin, starting sentences with 'what if' or with a version of it is very popular with tourists. Tour guides interpret the genocide of the Holocaust or the tragedies related to the Berlin Wall. It is understandable that people may wish to ask the guide for their opinion on what would have happened if one action would have been done resulted in a different way, and consequently history would have turned differently.

In historiography, this is known as counterfactual history or 'what if' history (Grimsley, 2015). In particular, historians such as Ferguson (1997) and Aviezer Tucker (2004) attempted to use 'what if' history to understand historical causality of events that had happened in the past. In his edited book, Ferguson and other contributors tried to deal with questions such as what if Hitler had invaded Great Britain, and, what if the Soviet Union had won the Cold

War. Another known 'what if' history question in the Israel-Holocaust context is 'maybe if the Holocaust hadn't happened then the State of Israel would not exist', as dealt with for example by Gurock (2015).

There were many such examples on the tours I observed and over the years during tours I have led myself. For example, guide O4 used the 'what if' game once in the tour I observed: '*it is possible that without Albert Speer Nazi Germany would have lost even six months before they did*'. I have heard several guides in the past placing the responsibility for prolonging of the war on the role that Speer played as Minster of Armaments. Using this example, I argue that it may be clear to me that the guide is trying to show the significant role Albert Speer played as one of the Nazi perpetrators of the Holocaust, but that the potential to confuse tourists with the use of 'what if' history is too high.

Similarly, a popular 'what if' is often asked on the Highlights Tour or the Third Reich Tour: 'if the assassination attempt on Hitler had succeeded in 1938 then the War wouldn't have started'. 'What if' questions relating to assassination attempts on Hitler have many variations and are almost the only one that guides use. Indeed, it is not rare to hear guides say: 'if Georg Elser had succeeded in his attempt, and if Hitler had stayed in the Beer Hall to give the speech on time, then history would possibly have turned out very differently.'

Those possible timelines, as they would say in *Back to the Future* type science fiction films, never happened. It can be argued that the popularity of Quentin Tarantino's *Inglorious Bastards* is explained by how it gives people a certain comfort in the wishful thinking people may need in dealing with the horrors of the Holocaust. As Rebecca Onion (2015) argues 'the counterfactual is a friend to science-fiction writers and chatting partygoers alike'.

I contest that being tempted into playing this historical 'game' on a tour is risky for three reasons. For one, it may diverge from interpretation of how events played out and, as a result, may confuse the tourists as to the real outcome of events as we know them in contrast to what 'might have happened'. The second potential problem is that if a guide is using 'what if' as part of dark tourism interpretation, they are guessing one outcome from many possible outcomes, and may use it to show causality of historical events where there is none. And a third potential problem is that in doing so, they may go on tangents that result in losing the

flow of the tour. Arguably, counterfactual speculations are not a friend of a guide's interpretation of dark events.

6.7.5 Dark responsibility

In one of the interviews, the conversation turned toweards a different kind of responsibility that a guide has. Guide I8 argued that:

> *My understanding of Berlin is that it exists outside the current dynamic of tourism. If you visit London, Paris or Rome, these are great cities; they're beautiful, with impressive history in their own right. And their history is important, but it's also distant, it's much more distant than the history of Germany, which is more contemporary. It is more relevant to the world right now. It makes us ambassadors for the history and accurately presenting it. Especially in a country where there is not an official version, you have to present history in a certain way.*

Conveying history via heritage in tourism sites is not new to controversy (Frank, 2015; Lowenthal, 1985; Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996). In several countries where they can only work with government-issued licences, guides have been criticised for being not much more than a voice for government propaganda (Weiler & Black, 2015). These studies, however, are often based on a small sample (see for example Bras, 2000; Bowman, 1992; Dahles, 2002; Gelbman & Maoz, 2012), and are not necessarily up-to-date or take into account regime changes in those countries. The situation in Germany is exactly the opposite; as guide I8 argued: '*guides have a greater responsibility to not only show the aesthetic of a location but also the political, economic, and sociological implications of the historical events we are interpreting. The role of the guide in dark tourism is to provide different points of view, to provide different avenues to access certain parts of history.*'

Guides rarely ever work together; we do not like to 'share the microphone' – virtually or literally. In other words, most guides feel that sharing the attention of the tourists may create uncomfortable situations for themselves. Sometimes, however, it does happen, usually when we split a big group and walk together between two guiding points. On one such occasion, I walked with a colleague and, after I had said something about the politics of Friedrich the Great, a tourist who listened to us both found a discrepancy between the two versions of the story. My colleague, Guide O6, found a creative – and largely accurate – way to handle the

situation without either one of us losing face. They replied to the tourists that we all read a lot of books and that it is plausible that we had read two different versions of the story in books by different biographers of Friedrich. Whether or not the guide thought they were in the right or I was, the response was diplomatic, allowing for the tour to continue.

In a later conversation, Guide O6 told me that they have a certain opinion about sensitive topics, such as refugees / asylum seekers in Germany, or about the volatile topic of contemporary anti-Semitism in Germany, but rather than 'stepping into the fire' unprotected they present several points of view to allow the tourists to agree or disagree according to the their own bias and, at the same time, to be exposed to another perspective presented by a person who is the authority on the tour. This goes back to what Guide I8 said about providing access to avenues of relevant history. Furthermore, it allows the guide to bring forward their own political views without jeopardising the tour by antagonising their guests.

6.7.6 Keeping it light – the right time for a joke

An important question, particularly in the dark tourism context, is it possible or right to guide a 'light-hearted' tour even if the main topic of the tour has to do with war and conflict?
For many guides, this goes back to the core of the phenomenon, namely, that dark tourism is still tourism! That is to say, people (the tour groups) are on holiday, and the approach of several guides that I observed and talked to during this research is best put by Guide I13 as 'I want them [the tourists] to be happy, to be satisfied with the tour, recommend me and/or give me a positive review [on an online platform or the guide's/company's page], and I want them to tip me. If I just depress them with a heavy tone, constant sadness and drama, I will get nothing at the end of the tour'.

So, how does one interpret in a light-hearted tone or even with a sense of humour on such a tour? Cold War tours, I found, were more likely to be perceived as an opportunity where jokes are acceptable. For example, passing by the large station at Friedrich Str. and on the way to the museum of the Palace of Tears (a former border crossing between East and West Berlin), Guide O9 pointed at the Weidendammer bridge referring to it at the *'Matt Damon bridge...'*. The guide's tone was such that you could not mistake it for being a serious bit of guiding. The guide continued to use this familiar cultural reference by involving the group, asking them *'wait, which Bourne movie is that?'* – after which the speedy 'Ultimatum' answer came from one of the tourists on the tour. Guide O10 made a joke, playing on the

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same theme*: 'I've been asked by tourists before where was the bridge Matt Damon jumps from in the Bourne Ultimatum. This is the bridge you see in the movie, and I can promise you, no one has ever jumped from this bridge onto one of the tourist boats that you see here...'* Guide O10 used this light hearted situation to transition to a more serious topic, explaining that Cold War spies were not likely to be as good looking as Hollywood stars and were in fact meant to blend into the street without standing out. It can be argued that the crucial part for guides is that certain aspects of the tour will be taken seriously, and that tourists will not have unrealistic Cold War images of Roger Moore in *Octopussy* or Anthony Hopkins and Isabella Russelini in *The Innocent* (other examples include Tom Cruise in *Mission Impossible III*, Robert Redford in *Spy Game* or even the fifth season of the series *Homeland*). As discussed earlier in this chapter, the distinction between film and dark tourism has the potential, in certain contexts, to become fuzzy.

To me, the humouristic style of some of the guides certainly feels easier to listen to than the dramatic style. One early afternoon I finished a short three-hour tour and started walking to a station to go back home. On the way, at Bebel Platz, I met a colleague who was with a group of about 25 people. I always feel that, for most guides, this is the perfect size group, as it represents the ideal group dynamics. On the one hand, there is not too much personal interaction – people know they are in a group and usually avoid interrupting the guide as they do not want to be embarrassed. On the other hand, it is not like a group of 40 to 50 people where sometimes faces become a bit of a blur and tourists at the back of the group may start talking to each other as you guide. Therefore, groups of 20 to 25 are where many guides can be at their best. I knew my colleague was a trained actor, so as we said a warm hello to each other, I asked if I could observe to see how they were interpreting [their 'spiel'] the guiding point of the Nazi book burning on the 10th May 1933. My colleague started telling the story, and as they progressed they became more and more emotional, telling the group about the gradual process of social exclusion, discrimination and persecution of certain populations during the early days of the Nazi regime. By the end the guide was crying, but apologised to the group and, after a few seconds, collected themselves and continued to show the group Micha Ulman's Presence of Absence memorial (the so-called 'book burning memorial'). The whole situation took me by surprise. I felt awkward, as if I had found myself sharing someone's intimate moment by mistake. As I watched the group, I saw that one or two people felt like me; they were fidgeting around in discomfort while at the same time being appalled by the horror of the story. I immediately thought that the difference was that I knew the story

well and they did not. The rest of the group, however, was captivated by the story, and seemed to have joined in the sorrow the guide genuinely felt.

I had to admit to myself that I often feel like that when I guide in Sachsenhausen, even though I could never present that kind of showmanship. Moreover, in a conversation I had with a person from the education department at Sachsenhausen, I gathered that they do not like much when guides add drama to an already very dramatic event in history. I agreed. But then, can we not consider all dark tourism dramatic? Especially the 'darker' kind? After all – and without cynicism – what could be more dramatic than genocide? Later, I spoke to another colleague who is also a trained actor. They gave me their view on the matter:

> *'being a trained actor is useful to me in that I know how to carry my voice, I am aware of my posture, and I am confident standing and talking regularly in front of groups of people. Of course, tour guiding has an element of acting, and even dark tourism can contain comedy at times. Sachsenhausen, though, is the exception in that I'd avoid comedy unless I really felt safe with the ability of the tourists to handle dark humour, and on the other hand I wouldn't add drama because I would be worried that I would lose authority in the eyes of my tourists.'*

This was again a point that many guides conveyed to me: the memorial site at Sachsenhausen has a certain aura of respect and 'darkness' in their eyes, in such a way that they would always treat it differently in their interpretation, despite many sites in the city telling similar and related stories of the Third Reich and the Holocaust.

Thinking back to my colleague who theatrically told the story of the book burning, I had realised that the most important thing for the vast majority of guides at Bebel Platz: is leave an impact, as direct as possible, that would encourage tourists to think about the social warnings that flow from this story. After all, the city itself placed two plaques on the ground with Heinrich Heine's quote *Das war ein Vorspiel nur, dort wo man Bücher verbrennt, verbrennt man auch am Ende Menschen* – This was just a prelude, there, where people burn books, they will eventually burn people.

Telling a joke on a dark tourism tour is a subtle skill and a risky thing to do. Guides, however, do so to create a necessary comic relief. Undoubtedly, attending a tour with a dark

tourism theme or one which includes visitation to sites of death and tragedy has its psychological burdens. It is emotionally difficult for many people and, as discussed above, can be detrimental for the guides. Even if the tourists come on the tour of their own free will, they may still suffer from negative emotions at the end of the tour and may return home depressed or 'heavy hearted' (Krakover, 2005; Miles, 2002). It may be argued that the role of a dark tourism site such as Sachsenhausen is to engender tourists to feel empathy to the past victims of the camp (Miles, 2002). And although guides do attempt to stimulate empathy within their tourists, they also tread a fine line in that they prefer their customers to be happy. In other words, even though it is inconceivable for most people to be 'happy' after a visit to a site presenting, for example, mass murder or genocide, being satisfied with the tour is attainable and is naturally an outcome much sought after by guides and tourism companies.

I learned about the psychological necessity of comic relief or taking any break from 'morbid topics' by, for example, going shopping, during my work with groups of Israeli teenagers in Poland in 1998-1999. As discussed in Chapter 2, historically such groups started travelling to Poland in 1988. At first they would visit one extermination camp after the other. Famously, the Polish government spoke to Shulamit Aloni, the then Israeli Minister of Education, arguing that they did not want their country to be treated like one big cemetery, and that it had a lot of beautiful sites to offer. In these early days of post-Cold War era, the Polish government needed to do a lot of work to encourage economic development through spreading tourism to interesting sites around the country. After some time, the Israeli groups started taking days off between visitations to dark tourism sites; these days were used to provide psychological relief for the young high school students by allowing them days to go shopping or by taking them to 'regular' tourist attractions like the famous salt mines in Wieliczka. This time off allowed the young tourists to relax but also to digest the horrors that they had witnessed and heard about from their guides. For the guides and the teachers, it was also an opportunity to use the evenings in the hotel to go deliberate the visit of the day before and prepare the students for the next day.

Guides in Berlin do not normally spend more than one day with their guests. However, I feel that the psychological principle is the same, and guides choose to apply that in a delicate way, usually between guiding points. They do that either when walking from one point to the next or when switching between topics/moving on to the next part of the story. Here are several examples of jokes guides tell on otherwise serious tours:

Guide O4: '*After the war ended the city was in ruins. Berliners started telling the following bitter jokes: once this was an area of warehouses, here were houses and here were houses...*' In this case, I would argue that this is an example of a niche type of humour. During this observation I remember having a little uncomfortable laugh. It was probably as dark a humour as you can do on a tour, because beyond that the guide should really know who they are up against.

In this case, Guide O4 could feel comfortable with their sarcasm as it was obvious that the group could handle it, and even enjoy it. Here is how the guide continued:

> *The victory column was in the way of the Nazis, so they moved it to be in the middle of the Tiergarten and put it one level up so it would always be above the trees as it symbolised German victories. The joke was that Nazi propaganda minister Göbbels did it so he could always up the lady's skirt. You can imagine what women had to do to get a role in one of the movies Göbbels produced. Göbbels later left his wife and moved in with an actress he had an affair with. Magda Göbbels, who had good connection with Hitler, complained to him directly and he ordered Göbbels to stop his affair and make up with his wife. But should Hitler even care about this*? [purposeful anecdote meant to establish ground, illustrate a more important point] *The point was that Hitler wanted to present a model family to the German public, for women especially in society, which meant for Hitler, women should be at home make German children, give a child to the Führer* [guide uses sarcastic tone to emphasise the cynicism used by the Nazis, and his own distain from this policy], *and expand the German people so it becomes the dominant force on the planet. The Nazis actually handed medals to mothers, bronze, silver and gold. And Magda actually got the Gold, as she and Joseph Göbbels had six children together, perfect, blond, blue eyed Aryan Nazis.*

 Here, although the guide is using a sarcastic tone, it is milder, as his point is practically common sense to his audience… The guide then took a break at the middle part of this story line, to allow the information to sink in, whilst moving to the next interpretational location. This is a good example to show the need for guides always have their hand on the 'pulse' of the group. In countless observations, interviews and conversations I had with guides, they all

agreed that the use of humour in such a tour is a very fragile thing: you should use it if you can, and it would certainly make your day as a guide better, but it can also turn on you if used with the wrong audience at the wrong time.

6.7.7 Watered down versions

A guide on a cruise ship tour to Sachsenhausen faces the challenge of being very succinct. The tour interpretation is 'watered down'. This happens for two reasons: first, because the group spends very little time in the memorial site and, second, because relatively speaking, cruise ship tours recieve more complaints than all other types of private or public tours.

Is it because the tour is politicised? Yes, in part. More particulatly, though, stories of dark tourism have a lot to do with the historical depiction of failures of democracy, regime propaganda, fascism, war and other such themes. Because of that, almost every story (or 'point of interpretation') may remind the tourist of something that they are familiar with from their world. That is, they will very quickly make a cognitive connection in order to make sense of the story they have just heard. The problem is twofold: first, they use the cultural glasses of the place they are from or living in. And second, they are interpreting stories using their contemporary value system. Put the two together, along with whichever socio-cultural or social media bubble they are living in and you get a cognitive interpretation (by the tourist) that may or may not be related to the interpretation the guide gave. It may easily be taken out of context. Although this is true for every tour, cruise ship tours tend to have more of the type of people that guides feel they need to be careful around. For that reason, they may censor or waterdown their interpretations. It may be of use for future research to explore wheather a 'playing it safe' interpretation is in anyway harmful to the dark tourism experience.

6.8 Chapter summary

This chapter started with an exploration of the comprehensive process of how guides choose to interpret dark tourism sites to guests on a tour. In this sub-section, as well as in several other places in this chapter, I touched further on the way in which guides view the difficulties and challenges involved in their interpretive choices. Guides commented on their choices, fully aware of the sensitive nature of talking about human suffering, war and genocide. Along this line, I continued with the discussion to explore a variety of aspects which contribute to the development of interpretation for tour guide over time.

The analysis moved on to explore the interpretations guides make, through examples compiled from over 50 interviews and tour observations, and many casual conversations with guides over the years. Specifically, I looked at the word, anecdotes and narrative choices guides make, of which I commented on the possible meaning and when possible – the reasoning behind these interpretations.

The final part of the chapter brought a number of unplanned observations. These were observations and ethnographic revelations that came about from spending six years with my colleagues in a dual role of a guide and a researcher. They address a number of seemingly unrelated topics, such as humour and dark tourism, history telling technique, and the pressure guides face after long term interpretation of dark tourism.

Based on the above findings, this chapter has identified how interpretation can be controlled and calculated, albeit not set in stone. To use a sports metaphor, prior to a game between a rich strong football club and a poor one from the middle of the league, the outcome on paper appears easy to predict, and yet surprises do occur. Similarly, one could predict how an experienced guide with clear planning would deliver an interpretation that will incorporate controlled manipulation of a variety of messages the guide may wish to convey to the tourists. Given the many identifiable parameters involved in a guided tour (e.g. the sensitive nature of the topic, group size, group character, weather conditions, tourist questions, etc.) as discussed in this chapter, the guide's interpretation remains impactful, if somewhat dynamic.

The final and concluding chapter will consider these findings in relation to the research objectives, and it will draw the thesis to an end through highlighting its conclusions.

Chapter 7

Final discussion and conclusions

7.0 Introduction

The preceding chapter presented and discussed the outcomes of the primary research in this study which was based upon observations of and interviews with fellow professional tour guides in Berlin and on my own role and experiences as a guide. The purpose of this final chapter is now to draw this thesis to a close by highlighting the key findings of the research and to demonstrate how they make a contribution to knowledge, in particular bridging a significant gap between dark tourism and tour guide theory. Conclusions are also drawn with regards to potential implications of the research, and suggestions for further research in other dark tourism destinations are proposed. First, however, the chapter considers the manner in which the objectives of the research, established in Chapter 1, have been met.

This thesis is the outcome a fusion of ethnography and auto-ethnographic research, as discussed in detail in Chapter 4. Unexpectedly, the last year of the research was overshadowed by the Coronavirus crisis and its impact on the entire global tourism industry including, of course, tour guides in Berlin and elsewhere. In this context, therefore, in the last section of this chapter I will offer some concluding thoughts on my PhD 'journey' as a whole and, in particular, the final year of undertaking this thesis.

7.1 Looking back at the research questions

In this section I return to the research objectives to evaluate how and the extent to which they have been achieved. Furthermore, through reviewing the research objectives I will reveal how, during the exploration of these objectives, additional and unexpected observations emerged from the research as discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

The objectives of the research, as established in Chapter 1, were as follows:

    iv.   To analyse critically the nuances of tour guides' interpretation of dark events and places to tourists

v.   To identify the factors and parameters that determine variations in tour guides' interpretations of dark events.

vi.   To identify and explore critically how specific factors involved in tour guide interpretation might influence the dark tourist experience.

7.1.1 To analyse critically the nuances of tour guides' interpretation of the dark events and places to tourists

This objective has been addressed by identifying and critically examining the specific interpretation choices made by guides. The few previous studies to explore this – namely, those by by Sharon McDonald (2006), Alon Gelbman and Darya Maoz (2012) and Bernadette Quinn and Theresa Ryan (2016) – have each focused on one dark tourism site and the manner in which guides interpret either one major event or several small events relating to that site.

As demonstrated in Chapter 5, however, Berlin is a large and extensive dark tourism destination comprising many sites of different type and scale. As a result, there are at least four to five established tours around the city that either incorporate dark tourism themes (e.g. the Highlights Tour or the the Jewish Heritage Tour) or are tours that are focused entirely on dark tourism events (The Berlin Wall, The Third Reich, Sachsenhausen). In addition, many of the stories that are presented and interpreted by guides on these tours are inter-connected; not only did many of the events they relate to take place during the 20th Century but also these events often followed from one historical chapter to the next.

Therefore, rather than focusing on the manner in which guides interpret one site or event, this research offered the opportunity to explore their interpretation to a variety of sites and on different tours, facilitating not only the identification of variations in interpretation but its analysis at three levels: words, anecdotes and narratives (as shown in Figure 7.1 below).

Figure 7.1: Three levels of interpretation analysis
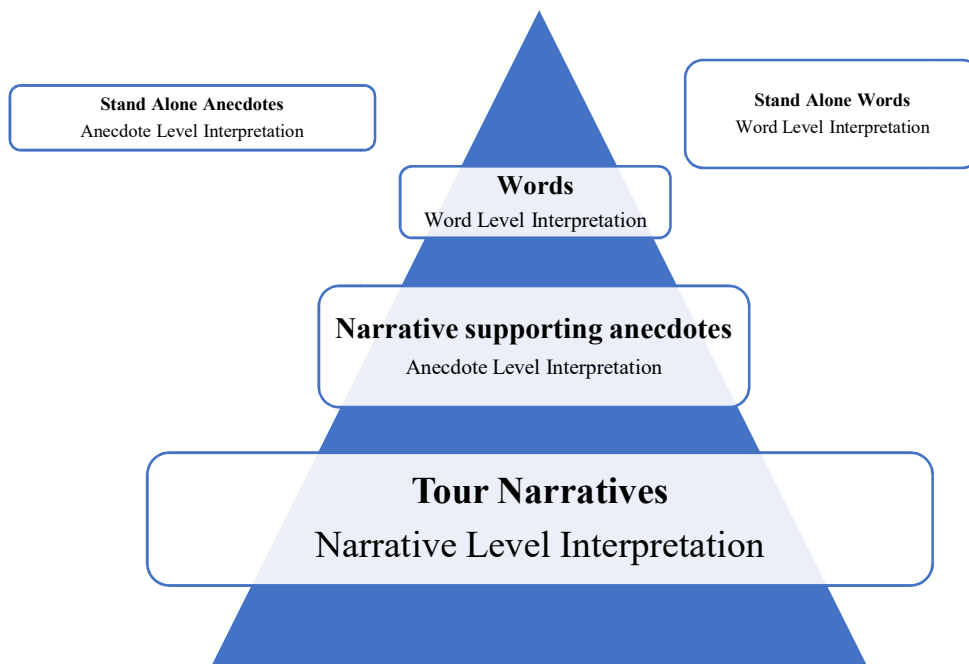
At the word level, I selected words that are significant in the interpretation of a dark tourism event or site and that are potentially replaceable if the guide chooses to do so. It was observed that, with greater experience on the part of the guide, words are chosen more carefully as often guides come to learn of the potential impact of particular words on certain customers. Furthermore, most guides are skilled at identifying words which have underlying political implications within the context of a specific historical event. For example, stating whether Hitler was 'appointed' or 'elected' could mean the difference between a tourist, on the one hand, understanding the prevailing complex circumstances that led to his appointment or, on the other hand, reaching an arguably inaccurate conclusion about the entire German nation at the time (and possibly also today) if the tourists believe he was elected. Similarly, the example of the Berlin Wall reveals the messages that guides can convey with the use of just one word, specifically whether they say that the **Berlin Wall fell** or that the **gates of the Wall were opened**. Again, each of these two words might imply an historical process which, if wrongly interpreted, might present a false history or a history that is misunderstood by tourists.

Anecdotes are referred to in this research as short, 5 to 8 minutes-long stories that are told at one interpretation point. Such anecdotes may 'stand alone'; that is, they are presented as a separate story, sometimes with the purpose of interpreting a small site that falls outside the realm of the standard tour narrative or sometimes they may simply be an interesting short story to tell. More frequently, however, anecdotes are connected to a guiding point on the route of the tour and are used to connect the narration of the entire tour. For example, a guide may incorporate an anecdote about the election campaigns of the Weimar Republic whilst standing in front of the Reichstag, thereby contribute to the overall tour narrative of the rise and fall of the Third Reich. Such an anecdote can then be used to encourage or inspire tourists to think more generally about the challenges or perhaps failings of democratic political systems.

Thus, although the use of an anecdote may function as a simple time filler or as a response to a tourist's question, most frequently they function as links to glue together and create an overall tour narrative. For example, an anecdote about the demonstrations and subsequent violent events of the 17th of June, 1953 (the East German uprising against the socialist government) can be used by a guide to demonstrate the social processes within the German Democratic Republic that led to the construction of the Berlin Wall.

The analysis of the use of words and anecdotes has implications for our understanding of the dark tourism tour narrative. Specifically, the observations and interviews undertaken during this research have demonstrated that, through their use of particular words and anecdotes, guides are able to create a narrative for each of their tours, a narrative which can be identified or characterised by a particular theme or title. For instance, as explained in Chapter 6, a narrative can be characterised as one of equality and tolerance, conveyed as lessons or morals to be understood from the tour interpretation. Alternatively, a narrative could be characterised as interpretation that seeks to correct commonly held misconceptions or inaccurate perspectives. Still other narratives may be more focused on the psychology of the criminals who committed atrocities or genocide; such narratives may challenge interpretations that may be understood as excusing people who committed these crimes. Either way, however, from the findings of this thesis it can be concluded that, through the use of varying tour narratives, guides are able to exert significant influence on the nature of the tourist experience at dark tourism sites in a number of different and often intentional directions. These might include, for example, reinforcing previously existing stereotypes, creating suitable circumstances in

which tourists are able to confront their own mortality, or providing a narrative which in itself is a cathartic opportunity for the tourist to mourn the victims of a certain event.

In summary, the choice of words, anecdotes and narratives that guides use to interpret dark sites and events may impact directly on the tourist experience; that is, they are a powerful mediating influence. Hence, how and why tour guides choose to interpret events and sites in a particular manner was the focus of the second research objective.

7.1.2 To identify factors and parameters causing tour guides to interpret events in one way or another

Within this objective, the research set out to identify the various ways in which tour guides decide how to interpret sites and events to their tourists. In order to achieve this, I observed groups on tour and the dialogues that the guides had with them. This alone, however, was a somewhat limited method as it did not reveal all elements of the process in which guides engage when choosing the approach to interpretation they adopt. Therefore, in addition to the observations, I asked the tour guides participating in this study (either after an observed tour or during interviews) to tell me about the methods they employ when deciding how to interpret dark tourism events and sites. Their responses revealed that they use a variety of parameters determined through a natural and quick process of data collection. Although this process occurs in an organic manner, an underlying structure to it is in evidence, and can be divided into the following three stages:

1. Pre-tour – through company marketing or by simply asking the customer at the emailing stage of the booking.
2. At the beginning of the tour – especially if there are still unknowns with regards to the nature of the group; often there is only one contact person, but the interpretation must be provided to the whole group.
3. During the tour –guides remain attentive to the reactions of the group to their narrative and, on occasion, adapt to a changing situation.

Pre-tour information often includes:

- Group size.
- Group dynamics (family, friends, company colleagues, etc.).

- Purpose of the trip (holiday, conference, company trip, etc.).

- Homogenous or heterogeneous group (tour participants know each other or not).

- Private tour family size/small group of friends, private tour bus sized group, tours open to the public - walking tours or cruise ship bus tours.

- Nationality of the tourist/s (if known).

At the beginning of the tour:

- Establishing dynamics and power relations (especially in private homogenous groups).

- Estimating the knowledge level of the guests (usually varies within the group).

- Estimating how interested the tourists are doing (their mood, fatigue levels).

- Adapting the interpretation to the time available (e.g. if the group is late).

- Motivations of the guests to visit dark tourism sites, and their expected outcomes, are also assessed (if known).

During the tour:

- Adapting interpretation to political opinions of the tourists (if known).

- Adapting interpretation to the questions of the tourists (if time consuming, if good debates develop, etc.).

- Adapting to the tour dynamic (if people allow each other to listen, if people interrupt, if they are interested or not interested, etc.).

- Adapting the interpretation according to the dynamics between the guide and their tourists.

From the breakdown and analysis of this process during the research, it can be concluded that the views of individual guides and their guiding style remains relatively unchanged from tour to tour, although both evolve over the course of the guide's career. For example, guides may typically incorporate an interpretation tool whereby it is more useful to utilise an inaccurate yet familiar word or term (e.g. the fall of the Wall or Night of the Broken Glass) in order to maintain tourists' concentration which may, in turn, depend on their familiarity with the subject matter. They then use anecdotal explanations to clarify the inaccuracy of the word or

term or interpret the event 'around' the word. In addition, with regards to their personal, individually-held views, guides may 'fine tune' an interpretation according to the situation/data of the group, but will not interpret an event in a way that contrasts or competes with to their specific views on social, economic and/or political systems.

Through this analysis, the research also revealed that, in the context of tours involving dark sites and events, guides are not teachers/educators nor are they actors. Rather, providing an interpretation of the serious topics surrounding in dark tourism sites is a constant interplay between educating and supporting a holiday activity (providing a tourism product). Whether the term 'edutainment', sometimes attached to the role of tour guides (Moss, 2009), therefore has a different meaning within the context of dark tourism remains questionable.

Nevertheless, from this research it is evident that most tour guides perceive dark tourism interpretation to be more sensitive than other forms of interpretation and one which imposes on them a greater responsibility than, for example, nature interpretation. In particular, achieving a balance in the interplay between the visitation of a dark site being a leisure holiday activity and an educational opportunity, shifts slightly depending on the severity of the event interpreted, on the anecdote (e.g. Hitler's suicide, prisoner roll call morning routine at Sachsenhausen, etc.), and on the group itself.

Finally, whereas Pond (1993) argues that guides interpret for the tourists rather than for the tour, this thesis suggests the opposite. In contrast to Pond's (1993) assertion, this research reveals that the perceived significance of dark tourism (or more precisely, the significance of events associated with dark sits) is such that guides will often interpret for the topic (i.e. the core narrative or the title of the tour) rather than for the tourist. Nevertheless, guides inevitably aspire to combine the two. In other words, from the guide's perspective, the ideal situation is where their interpretation serves both to do justice for the topic (e.g. the Holocaust, the Berlin Wall) and to provide tourists – the customers who paid for the tour – with a satisfying experience.
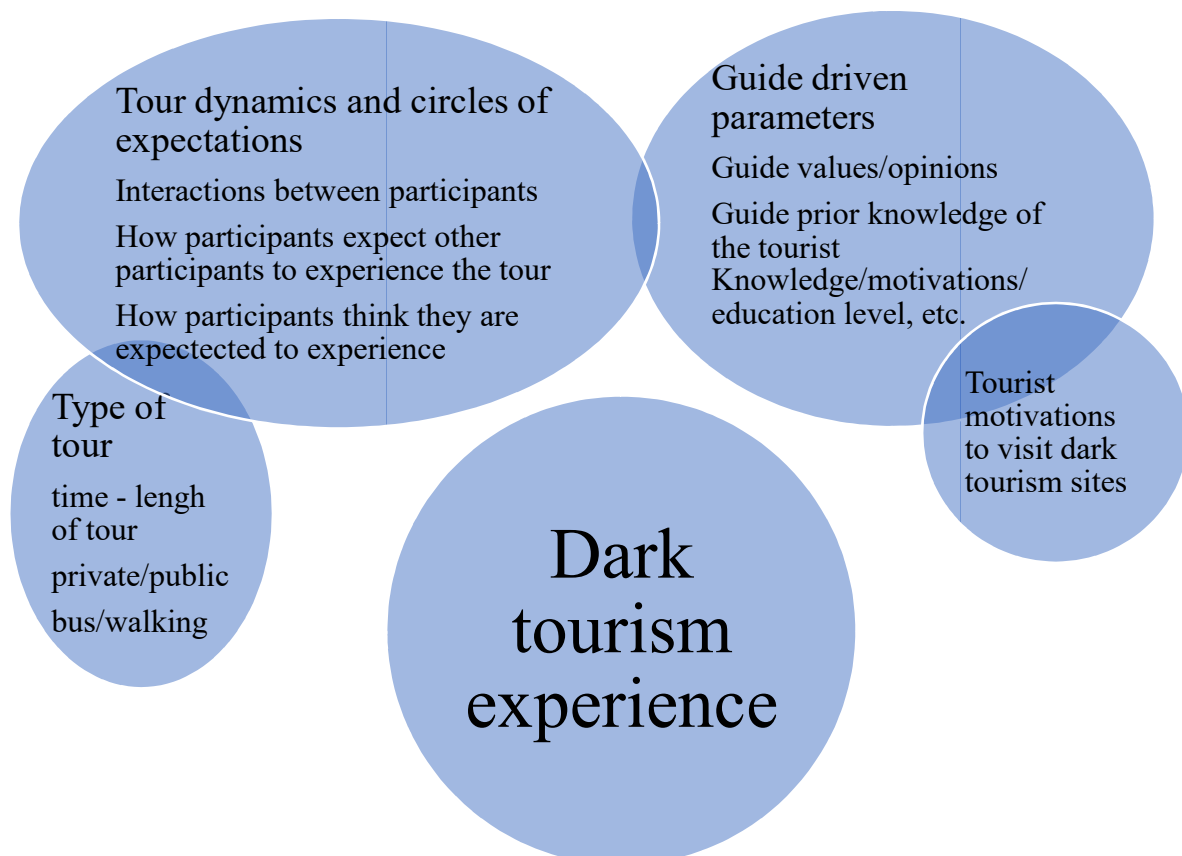
7.1.3 To identify and explore critically how specific factors involved in tour guide interpretation might influence the dark tourist experience.

This objective was addressed by identifying and examining the links between the different factors that might influence the dark tourism experience and how they are integrated into the

on-tour responses of the guide. These factors influence the type of words / anecdotes / narratives the guide had planned to use in their interpretation, but also play a role in how they respond to questions and in other ways adapt to situations that arise during a tour (weather issues, unexpected demonstrations blocking the streets, an antagonistic tourist, an unusually thought provoking question, and so on).

Through observation of regular or skeleton interpretations (ones used often by guides) and of how guides respond to common questions, the thesis revealed that the impact of a guide's interpretation on the tourist experience is influenced by factors that are grouped as shown in Figure 7.2 below.

Figure 7.2: Factors influential in the composition of the guide's interpretation and, hence, the tourist experience

Tour dynamics and circles of expectations

Interactions between participants

How participants expect other participants to experience the tour

How participants think they are expectected to experience

Type of tour

time - lengh of tour

private/public

bus/walking

Guide driven parameters

Guide values/opinions

Guide prior knowledge of the tourist Knowledge/motivations/ education level, etc.

Tourist motivations to visit dark tourism sites

Dark tourism experience

Guides are used to thinking on their feet (Meged, 2010; Wynn, 2011). The factors that influence the nature of interpretation and the subsequent tourist experience are therefore in a constant gentle dynamic relationship between the plan for the tour – expressed in Figure 7.2 as Guide Driven Parameters (including known tourist motivations) – and the circumstances of how the tour plays out. Inevitably, a dissatisfying experience for tourists occurs when unexpected incidents limit the control of the guide over their tour, such as a bus breaking down, preventing the guide from including the sites requested by the group, or when an extremely argumentative tourist constantly heckles the guide. And of course, guides may also be unprepared or simply have a bad day. I argue that a critical mistake occurs when a guide does not read their audience correctly by failing to incorporate all the parameters identified in Figure 7.2 into their interpretation. Consequently, the outcome may be a bad or dissatisfying experience for the tourist that might result from a variety 'wrong moves', such as providing an overly (or indeed, insufficiently) dramatic interpretation, providing too much or insufficient information, or focusing on content that the group did not want or not focusing on places/stories that the group explicitly requested.

Personality bias is undoubtedly a major influential factor. Quinn and Ryan (2016) argue that it is clear that guides are not value-free agents and that their interpretation often reflects their background and interests. Certainly, in this research most of the guides who participated are dual-nationals, and all have lived in at least two or three countries in their lives. Academically, too, they hold a wide array of degrees, including several guides having degrees in the natural sciences. Perhaps in recognition of the potential for personal bias in interpretation, guiding companies often impose a limitation on the guides by instructing them to avoid talking about modern politics as much as possible (outside the careful interpretation of contemporary Berlin and Germany for the non-German language guides). However, this on-the-surface depoliticisation of events may impact on the dark tourism experience in that it leaves the tourists having to draw their own conclusions with regards to the significance of past dark events to their own familiar social and political world. Yet, in my research it was observed that, to overcome this, guides either find a way to draw comparisons through the use of marker words, or, in less common occurrences, present comparisons openly. The latter occurs at times in response to a request made by a tourist, or to a controversial comment from a tourist that the guide feels requires a direct approach.

Two elements make the dark tourism interpretation in Berlin so important. First, there are two prime events at the core of guide interpretation in Berlin, namely, the Second World War (including the Holocaust) and the Cold War. As a destination, Berlin was arguably at the heart of both these monumental chapters in human history which continue to have a great impact on the lives on many people around the world today. And second, the scope of tour guiding along with the scope of dark tourism sites in Berlin, as well as the sheer number of tourists who visit the city, translate into a significant impact that dark tourism interpretation has on millions of people who take tours in the city every year. My research has demonstrated that guides are aware of this potential impact.

However, the large scale of the tourism industry in Berlin and, hence, the commensurately large number of guides working in the city (an estimated 600 to 1000 prior to the Coronavirus crisis), is manifested in significant diversity in how guides interpret its dark history. In my research I observed and interviewed only a few dozen guides yet, even amongst this relatively small group, quite a few disagreements emerged in relation to issues such as how much the German people knew about the Nazi crimes, whether to interpret using the word 'killed' or 'murdered'(in the context of Holocaust victims), and many other such differences. It can be assumed that if all guides conducting all of the main five tours with dark themes could be observed, then an even greater diversity in interpretation would be revealed. At the same time, though, consciously or not, guides constantly negotiate between the authority they are expected to present to the sensitive and the perhaps explosive nature of interpreting dark events. In this context, Quinn and Ryan (2016) concluded that guides make a conscious effort to buffer visitors from discomfort and unease. In a similar way, my thesis has demonstrated that the more sensitive the topic, the greater the caution guides take with regards to the words and phrases they use. Adding to Quinn and Ryan's conclusion, this caution serves to protect both the tourists and the guides themselves.

Clearly, many guides feel strongly about the messages that tourists can (or should) take home with them from their experience of, for example, a tour at Sachsenhausen. Ultimately, however, most guides prefer their interpretation to be thought-provoking rather providing answers as to how tourists should feel, experience or think. This could, in turn, be because guides do not want to take the risk of voicing an opinion that might lead to antagonism or

resentment amongst tourists who hold different views on the subject. Thus, overwhelmingly, this research has revealed that continuous negotiation on the part of guides between maintaining a clean slate, a good reputation and historical authority (no complaints, no problems) and the often challenging and sensitive nature of the topics interpreted at dark tourism sites is the principal factor that shapes the (dark) tourist experience.

To return to the overall point of this section, then, it is argued that it is highly improbable that guides do not offer their views on political or social issues, although in many cases hidden in the guise of interpreting historical political systems, social conflicts and wars. Yet overall, as a result of the factors discussed in this section, it is concluded that the tourist experience of dark sites will inevitably vary; it may be strong or soft, thought-provoking or reinforcing already held opinions, and the approach adopted by guides may be of significant influence. At the same time, however, it should also be noted that guides' dark tourism interpretation cannot (is unlikely to) cancel the tourists' agency, their value systems, education and culture. And in addition, the tourist experience on a tour of dark tourism sites remains, as in other forms of tourism, affected by factors beyond the control of the guide, such as the visitor's level of travel fatigue, whether they had an enjoyable shopping day before the tour, whether they are stressed about issues at home, and many other external factors.

7.2 Tour guides interpreting dark tourism: theoretical contributions

During an ethnographic data collection process, additional observations are often made; ethnographic research produces both expected and unexpected findings. In this study, although some of these findings are directly linked to the main focus of the thesis, namely, interpretation, others may be viewed as unrelated to guides' interpretation of dark tourism (see Table 7. below). The latter are, nevertheless, influential on a guide's work and, of course, have consequences on the tourist dark tourism experience.

These additional observations are not only patterns that emerged from the findings, but also represent contributions to the understanding of (dark) tour guiding that are more important than I had anticipated at the beginning of the research. For example, the law of the third requires guides to interpret events in such a way to give an equal measure of customer service to all three elements of a tour group. Undoubtedly, for many guides this means not displaying

Table 7.1: Phenomenon/causes with direct and indirect impacts on interpretation

Direct impact on interpretation	Indirect impact on interpretation
The law of the third	Guiding the Dark Accumulative Psychological Stress
Feeding the tourists what they want to hear Lazy reinforcement of stereotypes	Being responsible for dark tourism interpretation
Playing the 'what if' game – abusing counterfactual history	

their full repertoire of knowledge. Instead, their skill as guides lies in producing a succinct interpretation that leaves no one disappointed. In other words, the skill lies more in the performance and editing of the interpretation rather than in displaying a comprehensive analysis of the event. This may nevertheless have a negative effect on the experience of the third of the group who are interested, albeit one which most of them will accept (as they are in a group/company trip). In turn, guides often alleviate this negative effect by quietly expanding on topics with those interested in between guiding points.

Similarly, 'feeding the tourists' and playing the 'what if' game (see Table 7.1) have a strong impact on tour guides' interpretation of dark tourism sites and events. However, I argue that whilst the law of the third has a relatively benign impact on the tourist experience, the other two play a more powerful role in the guide's agency in potentially influencing opinions, understanding of historical processes, thought process, and even motivations and future experiences in other dark tourism sites. It is acknowledged that both reinforcing of stereotypes – feeding the tourists (see for example, Dahles, 2002; Gelbman & Maoz, 2012; Weiler & Black, 2015) – and counterfactual history or 'what if' history (Grimsley, 2015) are not entirely new ideas. However, these patterns, as they are described in this thesis, are a new contribution to our knowledge of dark tourism interpretation, and the mediation of the tourist experiences in these sites.

Unlike the patterns observed with a direct impact on guide interpretation, the responsibility of interpreting events of atrocity and genocide, and the psychological accumulative stress (see

Leshem, 2019) that comes with it has an indirect and longer- term effect on guides' interpretation of the dark. As both are new, original concepts emerging from this study, further research is required in order to delve deeper into answering questions such as the extent to which this long term psychological stress is different to more common job burnout, whether 'dark tourism responsibility' should be considered in discussions about site management or tour guide practice and perhaps also in questioning the political implication of dark tourism interpretation.

Accepting that tourists on a tour may lack certain knowledge or pieces of information is an underlying point that is missed by many guides; I would go as far as suggesting that downright ignorance on the part of the tourist is perfectly acceptable. A cynical and somewhat self-depreciating comment on that issue is that if tourists knew everything, then guides would not have a job. However, the arguments can be taken further to support the proposition that guides have the opportunity to encourage tourists to think about and connect to the site visited (Tilden, 1957), and to enlighten them with new angles on stories (Weiler & Kim, 2011) about atrocities, persecution and genocide; events that are unlikely to leave any tourist indifferent. Furthermore and directly linked to this idea, this study has found that dark tourism's role in bringing to light new or previously unknown information is perceived as a duty by the majority of the guides.

This thesis puts forward the idea that guides are a pivotal instrument between the collective of society which remembers the events, interpreted to new generations who will know them through the lenses of social knowledge. The dark tourism experience in Berlin is an international one and, to many, the stories of the events told are universal in nature. The findings of this study underline the intermediary role contemporary guides play in the shift between what Lowenthal's defines as collective memory to that of social memory (Lowenthal, 1998). Simply put, guides in contemporary Berlin are a conduit of knowledge of the Second World War, the Holocaust and the Cold War, from local collective memory, perhaps shared by people around the word also impacted by the events (e.g. descendents of Holocaust survivors not living in Berlin) to the scope of international social memory.

In terms of data collection, this thesis has demonstrated how dyadic interviews can be a very useful tool in tourism research (e.g. with tourists or as a form of elite or stakeholder

interviews). This method can address methodological disadvantages which can be found in other qualitative methods, such as one-on-one interviews or focus groups.

Finally, this thesis has made a major advance in the understanding of how guides operate. Furthermore, it shows that the immense control guides have over their interpretation of dark tourism events is likely to have both emotional and intellectual impact on the political perspectives and moral views of their guests. In addition, it has revealed how this impact may occur. The findings observed in this thesis have shown that this control is also used to purposefully leave the tourists with the same perspective they arrived with, or even build further on existing – at times negative – stereotypes. This new knowledge hints to the form of deliberation taking place in a guided tour of dark tourism, representing additional contribution to dark tourism theory.

Although much is left unknown about the tourist decoding of their experience in guided tours of dark tourism sites, this thesis nevertheless has enhanced the theoretical knowledge of dark tourism. Importantly, this first in-depth exploation of tour guiding at dark sites goes beyond its contribution to the theory of dark tourism interpretation; its outcomes can inform future research into related themes in dark tourism, such as management, ethics, motivations and expected outcomes.

7.3 Research limitations

This research has a number of limitations. First, my presence as a researcher observing those colleagues of mine who were also my research objects may have altered their behaviour. Although all guides who participated in the research (both as interview respondents and having their tours observed) agreed to do so, they may potentially have felt that being observed by a professional colleague may have an impact on their reputation. It is likely therefore that some guides who were observed in this research were rather cautious in their interpretation. However, this is also mitigated by two elements: (i) guides are always exposed to and listened to by their guests, and also listened to by passers-by on the street; they are therefore already aware of their exposure and are cautious as a result, and (ii) for this thesis, I only observed tours that were open to the public. Guides would not make big changes to their interpretation because of the presence of a colleague and at the expense of the group.

Second, although several Spanish speaking guides were interviewed, the research primarily focused on English speaking guides with an additional small sample of Hebrew and German speaking guides being observed. Hence, there is a clear Anglophile bias. Undoubtedly, findings may differ in tours observed in other popular guiding languages in Berlin, such as Russian, Chinese, Hindi, Italian, French and Arabic.

Third, the sample of this research could be considered extensive relative to the few studies conducted into (dark) tour guide interpretation in the past. Nonetheless, only a small number of tours were observed and guides interviewed in the context of the estimated 50,000 tours guided in Berlin every year. Although, for the purposes of this research, this number us considered both sufficient and representative.

And finally, as discussed in Chapter 4, researcher subjectivity in the context of this thesis can be viewed as both an advantage and a limitation. It is clear that every ethnographer has a certain bias derived from their world views and value system. In this thesis, I had the insight of a guide with the insider point of view into the world of tour guides in Berlin. As such, however, I also have the bias of my own interpretations, guiding experiences, guiding style and opinions on guiding in Berlin. In order to minimise the effects of this bias, interviews were analysed in comparison to other interviews, and without omitting or censoring the interviewees, regardless of whether their views or interpretations were close to my own. Similarly, during observations I did not interfere with the guide's work, and their interpretations were analysed in the thesis as they were recorded on tour. Lastly, examples from my interpretations were analysed in equal measure to those of my colleagues who were interviewed and observed for this thesis.

7.4 Future research directions

The potential exists to replicate this research in other large dark tourism destinations. Destinations containing multiple dark tourism sites, such as Rwanda (or various sites in Cambodia or Poland) could similarly produce findings that would further contribute to our understanding of the mediating effect of tour guide dark tourism interpretation on the tourist dark tourism experience. In addition, other, smaller destinations or sites could also benefit from a similar methodology to shed light on the process of dark tourism interpretation.

And second, it would undoubtedly be beneficial to strengthen the body of theory on dark tourism by conducting research into the mediation effect of tour guide interpretation on the tourist experience focusing on tourists themselves.

7.5 Final thoughts: the end of my PhD journey and the Coronavirus era

My auto-ethnographic role in this thesis was that I was one of many research subjects. That is, the research was, in effect a blend of ethnography and auto-ethnography. Thus, I have not only written auto-ethnogaphically (see Chapter 4.6), but I have also integrated my interpretation into the research, to inform and contribute to the analysis of the research outcomes through my own professional experiences. In this final part of the thesis, I want to add some further personal thoughts that are more akin to other auto-ethnographic writings (see, for example, Cremin, 2018; Noy, 2008; Pelias, 2003). Moreover, during the last six months of the writing of this thesis, the tour guiding profession, my work, entered what I like to bitterly call a Coronavirus-induced coma. Therefore, rather than writing a more traditional reflection on my PhD journey, I have decided to devote this final section to the outcome of the crisis on me and my friends.

Inevitably, undertaking a PhD changes a person. From October 2014 until the eruption of the Coronavirus crisis in early 2020, my life comprised two distinct halves: my work life and my PhD life. They are / were, of course, strongly interlinked; that was the aim of conducting ethnographic research from the outset. And in terms of personal and professional growth, I feel that personal changes occurred like two parallel lines racing against each other.

Nevertheless, as time went by and the thesis developed, I experienced circumstances in which separating these two halves of my life became challenging. I often failed. On the one hand, I am confident that reading the dark tourism, interpretation, tour guide and other related literature had the positive outcome of improving my skills as a guide. After all, such is the extent of dark tourism in Berlin that it is only natural that understanding the theory of it and its interpretation would be useful to my work as a tour guide in the city. But it was also a two-way street; my involvement in the fast-evolving tour guiding scene in Berlin contributed many ideas that were significant to the research itself. On the other hand, there were times where I feel I went too far with my enthusiasm for being an ethnographer of tour guides. Regretfully, this enthusiasm eventually came at a personal cost, one which added cynicism

and disillusionment with the ruthless behaviour of some guides and, more generally, the competitive nature of our business.

At the time of the writing of this chapter (late July 2020) all of that feels like ancient history. I spent half of February in a small rented flat in Martin, Slovakia. During the day I went hiking and running in the snowy mountains, and in the evenings I continued writing my thesis. By the 20th of the month, the news about the virus started appearing in the media and, soon after, that it had reached Europe. I arrived back in Berlin on the 24th of February and, on that day I received an email from a tour operator with whom I had a contract for 20 work days in March. The operator apologised profusely, saying that they had to cancel their groups to Berlin. The next day, another agent cancelled four more days in March. In an instant, I lost thousands of Euros of work. In the following two weeks, all other jobs for the summer were cancelled as the borders closed and Covid-19 was declared a global pandemic.

Clearly, I was not alone. Tour guides are freelancers. Even those who have bookings with cancellation fees only have them usually for a period of two weeks before the tour. As often happens in the tourism world, tour guides in Berlin are largely seasonal workers, meaning we work constantly almost without a break during the high season of June to September, and a little less during the months in the margins of the summer (Spring and Christmas). Our high income during the summer months is meant to provide us with income for the year. My colleagues and I lost each many thousands of Euros of potential income for the calendar year 2020, as it rapidly became clear that the entire tourism season has been lost. We are now part of a statistic pointing to over 100 million tourism jobs lost globally as a result of the pandemic (Statistica.com, June 2020).

> *I work for an American company. They told us to prepare for the worst. We will try to employ you – they said – but you should also look for something else... We all knew what was on the cards; they cancelled April, they cancelled May...*
>
> Maisie
>
> The Low Season Podcast
>
> Conversation from April 7th, 2020

For most guides, the initial shock was concerned with how we are going to pay our bills by the end of winter without eating into our savings. However, in Berlin, the local government awarded many freelancers a grant of 5,000 Euros to assist with day-to-day living costs. Hence, the immediate concern was reduced a little. Nevertheless, guides were now facing a different issue: we miss our jobs!

From optimistic friends, I heard that maybe the Coronavirus crisis was a blessing in disguise for me as I would now have more time to finish the thesis. I think I made a big effort to convince myself that this was true. And if I am honest, it probably helped. Nevertheless, it was – and still is as I write this section – a constant struggle against the reality that there is no tourism and there is no tour guiding. After Coronavirus was declared a global pandemic, my colleague, Wouter Bernhard, started recording conversations he had with guides, to talk to them honestly about how they were dealing with the crisis. He called his podcast The Low Season. The quotes in this section are from these conversations (http://thelowseason.podbean.com/); they are cherry picked and, as many were recorded in April, I am aware that the mood and the circumstances have since changed.

> *Everything I do is tourism related, so Corona is a living nightmare*
>
> Beate
>
> The Low Season Podcast
>
> Conversation from April 10th, 2020

Although not unique to tour guides during the Coronavirus crisis, depression started to sink in. Guides miss the attention we get from groups of people listening to us every day. We miss the adrenaline of the show. We miss the compliments. And we miss the intellectual challenges and gains that come with interpretation of dark tourism in Berlin. In the first three months of the crisis, a few of my friends reported experiencing depression, stating that if there are no tourists to guide there is no real reason to wake up in the morning.

> *The whole self-motivating is quite problematic*
>
> Heidi
>
> The Low Season Podcast
>
> Conversation from April 9th, 2020

As the weeks continued and the semi-lockdown we had in Berlin became more relaxed, guides started to find jobs in translation, advertising, language teaching, food delivery, social care, and other various temporary part-time solutions. On more than one occasion I heard myself uttering the words: 'well, you need to have a hook, something to keep you going during lockdown...' I thought that the last leg of the PhD would be my hook. It was. But I cannot deny that I had many low moments of depression out of which I was able to rise because I continued cycling, and because I was not willing to throw away five years of work on the PhD.

> *I really love my job, but I think I'm in the moment that I need some kind of financial security... I'm really thinking about leaving Berlin and starting a new life.*
>
> Stephanie
>
> The Low Season Podcast
>
> Conversation from April 17th, 2020

In early March 2020, in conversations with friends I exclaimed that we would probably not go back to work before April, 2020. Now, in late July, it looks as if many of us may not go back to being guides at all. It is one possible scenario, one which will hopefully be proven wrong by the time of the final submission of this thesis.

> *Travel now got a bad rap, as if it's responsible for spreading the disease. The basis of our job, our profession; now it's like the boogie man*
>
> Torben
>
> The Low Season Podcast
>
> Conversation from April 7th, 2020

From time to time, the pessimistic thought has crossed my mind that potentially I have written a whole PhD based on a reality that is lost forever. Perhaps it has all been for nothing!

Many questions come to mind: What is the point? Is the tour guiding profession going to change forever or is normality only a few months away? The unknowns of our profession have never been more pronounced.

> *I'm trying to read a bit more, somehow difficult, especially when it's non-fiction. All the non-fiction books that I'm thinking of reading, I find myself thinking: what does it all matter?*
>
> Wouter
>
> The Low Season Podcast
>
> Conversation from April 13th, 2020

Tour guiding companies and individual tour guides are now putting their efforts into virtual tour guiding. In the few times I have cycled through the main sites of the city during July I have seen a few guides walking around with a gimbal, talking to their cameras. Tours conducted virtually are shorter, as there are no breaks in the speech, nor a dialogue with the customer. I cannot help but think that dark tourism interpretation, too, is different. It is less responsive, and more intense. No doubt there are researchers out there who are already working on a research design to explore virtual tour guiding, virtual tourism, and generally working on researching the new face of travel and tourism in the post-Coronavirus era.

I stopped before writing this last paragraph, as I want to end on a positive note. Despite being a guide *and* a researcher of dark tourism, I am not by nature such a pessimistic person. My PhD journey has been a good one. I still believe in the importance of my topic, and in the potential of dark tourism to do good for those who visit sites of death, atrocity, disaster or genocide. And finally, I know that fellow guides will do their best to enjoy this unexpected summer and will adjust creatively into many new and exciting adventures.

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