



**University of
Sunderland**

Morton, Ian Joseph (2019) Guided walking tours exploring the landscapes of Communist urban modernity in Prague and Krakow: sets of small-scale events with the capacity to influence society. *Event Management*. ISSN 1525-9951

Downloaded from: <http://sure.sunderland.ac.uk/id/eprint/10390/>

Usage guidelines

Please refer to the usage guidelines at <http://sure.sunderland.ac.uk/policies.html> or alternatively contact sure@sunderland.ac.uk.

GUIDED WALKING TOURS EXPLORING THE LANDSCAPES OF COMMUNIST URBAN MODERNITY IN PRAGUE AND KRAKOW: SETS OF SMALL-SCALE EVENTS WITH THE CAPACITY TO INFLUENCE SOCIETY

IAN JOSEPH MORTON

Tourism and Events, Department of Tourism, Hospitality and Events, Faculty of Business,
Law and Tourism, University of Sunderland, Sir Tom Cowie Campus at St. Peter's,
Sunderland, UK

This article contributes to the small but growing body of academic work taking events literature beyond the confines of the events industry: appraising the impact of events on a fundamental socio-cultural level, in the long term and in sectors outside of events. This case study, using participant observation, examines the impact of small, guided walking tours operating at the local level as they contribute to setting the theoretical agenda for dark tourism, a phenomenon that resonates heavily at the societal level. The walking tours in Prague and Krakow explore urban landscapes that emerged from historical modernity under Communism. Dark events or visitor attractions, which deal with modernity—often giving attendees a vision of the enormity of change and ambition inherent in modernity—commonly extend to the darkest and most profound reaches of the dark tourism sector. This article identifies three “themes of interpretation” in the tours: the stunning speed of modern change to have occurred in the urban landscapes visited; the greater abundance of “open air” between neighboring structures that can be sensed by the human being in the modern city, which can, at times be impressive to behold but can result in a dark or insecure experience for the pedestrian user; and the vast power of the state in the Communist regimes historically at work in Prague and Krakow to plan and bring about wholesale change of a landscape. This study also deepens understanding of interpretative techniques used in guided walking tours and appropriate research methods to study them.

Key words: Small-scale events; Impact of events; Guided walking tours; Dark tourism; Urban landscapes of modernity; Participant observation

Introduction

Lockstone-Binney, Holmes, and Robertson (2015), in their introduction to the *Events in Society* special

issue of *Event Management*, considered how an important body of academic literature was developing, which provided an understanding of the key ways in which special events influence and are

Address correspondence to Dr. Ian Joseph Morton, Senior Lecturer, Tourism and Events, Department of Tourism, Hospitality and Events, Faculty of Business, Law and Tourism, University of Sunderland, Sir Tom Cowie Campus at St. Peter's, St Peter's Way, Sunderland, SR6 0DD, Tyne and Wear, UK. E-mail: ian.morton@sunderland.ac.uk

influenced by wider societal trends—taking events literature beyond the confines of the events industry and into an exploration of the impact of events on a fundamental sociocultural level, in the long term and in sectors outside of events. This article seeks to contribute to this body of academic literature. The number of academic publications in this area has been low in comparison to the extent of literature on the managerial and logistical aspects of staging events and on the nature of demand for events and consumers' motivation for taking part.

In 2004, Chalip set out the rationale and a strategy for considering the impact of events at a fundamental sociocultural, or what could be termed a structural (societal) level, in the long term and in sectors outside of events. Further studies to probe such areas of impact for events include Frew and White's (2015) investigation in Australia of how events commemorating dark historical occurrences impact on national identity. Also, in Australia, Davies (2015) analyzed how events impact the quality of local community leadership. In Scotland and Canada, McPherson, Misener, McGillivray, and Legg (2017) looked at how parasport events influence the social inclusion and equality sector. Finally, Duarte, Folgado-Fernández, and Hernández-Mogollón (2018) and Zamani-Farahani and Fox (2018) both investigated the impact of festivals on destination image. They developed the link between the staging, content, and reception of events and the cultivation of destination image (itself an independent product/asset and area of academic study, which in political, policy, and strategic terms is thought of as being of fundamental importance).

This article looks at the impact of events on the sector of dark tourism, a type of tourism that resonates heavily at the societal level in that it addresses content, questions, and debate of a very high degree of intellectual, philosophical, and emotional depth, based on tragic history, which have often had a defining role in the formation of national and regional identities. Specifically, the type of events covered is guided walking tours covering dark history in and around Prague and Krakow. Lockstone-Binney et al.'s (2015) introduction to the *Events in Society* special issue of *Event Management* drew attention to "the limited research attention afforded to smaller scale, local, and regional events and their role in developing tourism destinations" (p. 429).

The walking tours in Prague and Krakow are examples of events operating at a small-scale local level, which in terms of content and impact on participants aspire to resonate with how people view history, the world, and even humanity. In terms of their impact on the field of dark tourism, the walking tours explore and interpret examples of urban landscapes that emerged from historical modernity under Communism for visitors. Stone and Sharpley (2008) and Bowman and Pezzullo (2010) both made the assertion that dark events or visitor attractions, which deal with modernity—often giving attendees a vision of the enormity of change and ambition inherent in modernity—commonly extend to the darkest and most profound reaches of the dark tourism sector. Bowman and Pezzullo (2010) also suggested that the interpretation of modernity in dark events and tourism is an area that requires further academic research.

The tours focus on the bold, and often sinister, political, military, and territorial ambitions of Communist leaders and agencies of government behind the planning and construction of the neighborhoods and individual structures, which make up certain urban landscapes. On the tours, such ambitions are often understood within the dark overarching prism of the Cold War. The tours also concentrate on the dramatic upheaval to existing landscapes caused by Communist experiments in modern planning and architecture, particularly those that were part of attempted propaganda or military endeavors during the Cold War. Finally, the tours highlight the dramatic departure from the traditions and human scale of the premodern city that modernity under Communism brought to urban landscapes.

This research takes the form of a qualitative case study, the cases being the guided walking tours in and around Prague and Krakow. Specifically, these are, first, the Communism and Nuclear Bunker guided walking tour visiting the Prague Nuclear Bunker aka Bunkr Parukarka delivered by Prague Special Tours and, secondly, a guided walking and bus tour of Nowa Huta, a neighborhood on the periphery of Krakow, entitled Communism Tour and delivered by Crazy Guides. Data collection has been achieved using participant observations of the tours. Primary data took the form of observation field notes written during and shortly after the walking tours. Data analysis consisted of various

stages: production of more formal observation notes by refining and concentrating the field notes, coding the formal notes through thematic analysis, and critical discussion of the themes that emerged with reference to existing literature.

This article seeks to contribute to the body of academic events literature covering the impact of events on a fundamental sociocultural level, in the long term and in sectors outside of events. The article also endeavors to inform events practice, particularly providing stakeholders producing and operating events that interpret dark history with a critical interpretation of the reach and direction of the content of a selection of existing events—as well as how this contributes to the ongoing formation of dark tourism as a product and the level of darkness that it achieves, both in terms of conceptual level and the experience that it provides for the event attendee.

De Certeau (1984) positioned walking as a powerful means of understanding and creating meaning in urban landscapes. He also championed the potential for urban walking and the accompanying sensory experience to be used as a form of research methodology. In studying cases of guided urban walks exploring the history of urban landscapes, this research contributes to the body of literature using and developing the power of urban walking on this basis.

Finally, this study uses participant observation as a structure for data collection and analysis and is informed by Spradley's (1980) model of consecutive but overlapping stages of "descriptive," "focused," and "selective" observations (p. 34). The approach to this research also draws from Spradley (1980) and Musante and DeWalt's (2010) work, which suggested that participant observation of social situations should begin without preformed questions. The researcher should allow the observation process and the developing understanding of the social situation and its participants that results to unearth meaningful questions and answers. This work follows Spradley's model and suggestions and also hopes to contribute to the body of academic work, which elucidates the most realistic ways of implementing participant observation in practice. The approach to the research is also informed by an analysis of historical thinking on participant observation conducted by Kawulich (2005).

Kawulich identified historical disagreement on the necessary extent of "active" participation by the researcher engaged in participant observation and also on whether or not the researcher occupied a distinct status in comparison to other participants in the social situation being studied. This research in Prague and Krakow takes the view that active participation by the researcher in the guided walking tours as a participant like any other is key.

Guided Walking Tours as Small-Scale Events With the Potential for Wider Impacts

Guided walking tours as small scale events involve small numbers of attendees per individual event, but over time have the potential to leave a reasonably profound legacy on a large number of people's lives, particularly in the area of dark history, because the material covered on the tours is likely to evoke strong emotions and form heartfelt memories.

Depending upon content, guided walking tours can have impacts on a fundamental sociocultural level, in the long term and in sectors outside of events. Markwell, Stevenson, and Rowe (2004) provided an example. They discussed the experience for the participant provided by "two interpretive heritage walks in a large, working-class suburb in Australia" (p. 457) and found that the small-scale events made accessible for the participant ideas that resonate at the societal level, namely: "the impacts of de-industrialisation and urban transformation by identifying and marking places of contemporary and historical significance and interpreting them and their broader connections to people and to place" (p. 457).

A further example is provided in one of the articles comprising the special issue of *Event Management*, entitled *Events in Society*. The article was a case study of dark events in Australia by Frew and White (2015). The events contribute to the formation of dark tourism as a tourism product. Furthermore, the introduction to the special issues by Lockstone-Binney et al. (2015) commented that the Frew and White article developed an appreciation of the "broader implications for national identity" created by events "commemorat[ing] tragedies and disasters in Australia's recent and past history" (p. 429).

Collections of guided walking tours covering converging topics in the same destination can emerge, developing a theme of discovery in a destination, which can become—via phenomena like electronic word of mouth (eWOM)—one of the key tourism products of a destination. Examples include coffee tours in northern Nicaragua (Kleidas & Jolliffe, 2010), ghost tours in the city of York in the UK (Holloway, 2010), and trails celebrating the historic music scenes of northern English cities after the fall of heavy industry (Long, 2014).

The Power of Walking and Guided Walking Tours as Events for Learning and Interpretation in the Urban Landscape

De Certeau (1984) positioned theoretically the activity of walking as a powerful means of empowering the average pedestrian with roles in the “tactical production of [urban] space” (Aoki & Yoshimizu, 2015, p. 4), the determination of the character of the city and the interpretation—as well as the creation—of the meaning of pieces of urban space. This extends to the weaving together of the “sensory and embodied experience” (Aoki & Yoshimizu, 2015, p. 4) of urban space in its present form with an understanding of the historical changes it has gone through. For De Certeau (1984), walking is almost a subversive activity and a powerful antidote to the “strategic production of [urban] space” (Aoki & Yoshimizu, 2015, p. 4) by the professional urban planner and/or the politician imbued with the power of the state. Whereas the urban planning interventions of the state create shape and meaning in the city from above (i.e., politically), the pedestrian creates shape and meaning for themselves and others from below.

In this context, guided walking tours are events that empower the participant, the guide, and the combination of participants and guide with a subversive power to experience urban landscape, produce urban space from below, and understand the meaning of urban space—combining the “sensory and embodied experience” (Aoki & Yoshimizu, 2015, p. 4) of its present state with a learned appreciation of its history. Guided walking tours provide a structured vehicle for the participants to experience urban space and learn about its history.

Shades of Darkness Conveyed in Dark Tourism and Dark Events Including Those Interpreting Modernity

In 2006, Stone published his dark tourism spectrum, which suggested that there were certain factors that contribute to some dark visitor attractions and events being darker than others. These factors included whether the attraction or event was located at the site of the dark historic event or whether it was spatially removed, how historically distant the dark historic event was, and whether the main focus of the interpretation was education and/or commemoration or if it was “funcentric.” In 2008, Stone and Sharpley identified that “the degrees or ‘shades of darkness’” (p. 575) comprising the spectrum merited more research.

Stone and Sharpley (2008) and Bowman and Pezzullo (2010) also expressed a specific interest in dark tourism attractions or dark events that deal with modernity—often giving attendees a vision of the enormity of change and ambition inherent in modernity—as they believed dealing with modernity commonly extends the dark tourism and events sector to its darkest and most profound reaches. Bowman and Pezzullo (2010) suggested that the interpretation of modernity in dark events and tourism is an area that requires further academic research.

Urban Landscapes of Modernity and Their Dark Appeal

The “dark” shock of modernity was a common theme in the work of Charles Dickens, particularly in terms of its physical impact on landscape and the new dimension of human experience that resulted. In Dickens’ *Mugby Junction*, the narrator Barbox Brothers explores an industrial landscape centered on the junction of numerous train lines. During his experience, he is bewildered and disconcerted by what he sees. He declares that “Mugby junction must be the maddest place in England” (Dickens, 1894, p. 8), describing how “mysterious goods trains, covered with palls . . . glid[e] on like vast weird funerals” (p. 2). Barbox Brothers asserted that there is “no beginning, middle or end to the bewilderment” (p. 7).

It is often the case that writers discuss what defines modern urban landscapes by looking at what distinguished and distinguishes them from

premodern urban landscapes. It was in being “swept away” from the consistency of traditional, age old forms of society and the urban environment; and the total uncertainty of leaving that realm—of a totally unprecedented change to the world—in which the darkness lay/lies. It is bewildering and unpredictable for those experiencing it, commenting on it and theorizing it (Giddens, 1990, 1998). For, as Giddens (1990) surmised, “the modes of life brought into being by modernity have swept us away from all traditional types of social order, in quite unprecedented fashion” (p. 4).

In recent decades, Dickens’ dark interpretation of urban landscapes has, itself, provided inspiration and content for guided walking tours. For example, a number of such guided tours are on the website of Visit Medway (the tourism body responsible for part of the Thames Estuary) forming a key tourism product for the region (Visit Medway, 2018). The branding of the tours is recognizably dark.

The data collection, analysis, and discussion in this article seek to identify and provide insight into the themes of interpretation, which guided walking tours focusing on landscapes of modernity in Prague and Krakow choose to focus on and how they elaborate these.

Methods

This research is a qualitative case study, the cases being guided walking tours covering dark history and focusing on urban landscapes of modernity. These are the Communism and Nuclear Bunker guided walking tour visiting the Prague Nuclear Bunker aka Bunkr Parukarka delivered by Prague Special Tours (2018) and a tour of Nowa Huta, a neighbourhood on the periphery of Krakow, entitled Communism Tour delivered by Crazy Guides.

Research Design and Data Collection

Data collection regarding each walking tour took the form of participant observation. Spradley (1980) considered that “in doing participant observation for ethnographic purposes, as far as possible, both questions and answers must be discovered in the social situation being studied” (p. 32).

Musante and DeWalt (2010) supported this approach, justifying it based on the idea that during

participant observation the researcher, their observations and their understanding are moved to and fro by the behavior and interactions of the participants in the social situation. They state that “‘being there’ [in the social situation being observed] in the fullest sense means that our ideas and notions are continually challenged and ‘resisted’ by the actions of those within the setting” (p. 15).

This research follows the approach established by Spradley (1980) and Musante and DeWalt (2010). The researcher fully participated in and observed the “social situation” (Spradley 1980, p. 32) of each guided walking tour without preformed questions in mind, open to whatever happened and was said.

Kawulich (2005) highlighted that there have been historical disagreements between academic authors whose research made use of methods, which, over time and as a group, have come to be known as participant observation. Kawulich (2005) noted that some authors (e.g., Stoking) mentioned active “participation” by the researcher in the social situation being studied explicitly as a stage in the process. These authors tended to consider that the researcher’s participation should place them in the social situation, occupying the same status as others there. Other academic authors (e.g., Malinowski and Mead) seemed to regard participation as signifying that the researcher was clearly present in the social situation, but their participation was perhaps less involved than that of other participants as the researcher occupied a distinct status, role, and responsibility. In this sense, the approach taken in this research in Prague and Krakow follows the thinking of the former group of academic authors identified by Kawulich (2005). Active participation by the researcher in the guided walking tours as a participant like any other was key to this work.

During and shortly after each walking tour, what Spradley (1980) termed “descriptive” observations (p. 33) were made and recorded through detailed descriptive field notes. These notes formed the primary raw data.

In Prague, the observation covered the second half of the tour only, comprising the visit to the nuclear bunker, which lasted approximately 2 hr. Based on the marketing of the tour, the researcher had identified prior to visiting Prague that the second half of the tour contained the principal dark

historical content. In Nova Huta, the neighborhood on the periphery of Krakow, the observation covered the entirety of the tour, which lasted approximately 5 hr.

There were 27 participants on both walking tours including the researcher. The tours in Prague and Krakow took place on Tuesday February 28, 2017 and Thursday March 22, 2018, respectively. The participants were staff and students from the University of Sunderland aged between 19 and 38 years. With the exception of the researcher, the participants were different for the two tours. All participants were based in Sunderland in the UK for work or study but were originally from a very wide range of countries across the world including the UK. All participants were proficient in written and spoken English. The tour in Prague was conducted by a single guide from the Czech Republic, who conducted the tour entirely in English. In Krakow, there were three guides who split the work approximately equally between them. All three were from Poland. The tour was also conducted entirely in English.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was a process of refining and concentrating the data and deriving observations about the social situations studied (the walking tours). Through the process of analysis, observations about the social situations progress from what Spradley (1980) identified as “descriptive” observations (in this study gathered in the original field notes) to “focused” observations, and eventually “selective” observations (formed through analysis, consideration, and reflection) (p. 34).

The first stage of data analysis involved writing up the raw, initial field notes as more formal notes, with the main aim of this stage being to add coherence. The chronological order of the initial notes was kept but within the different “chronological stages” in the notes, details were clarified and grouped into common themes. At this stage in the analysis, it is considered, that based on Spradley’s (1980) model, the transition from descriptive to focused notes was beginning. The second stage of data analysis consisted of coding the more formal notes produced in the first stage of data analysis. This involved identifying the main common themes, across the two cases and across the chronological narrative of each

observation, and then grouping relevant content from anywhere in the notes under each theme. It is considered that this stage of data analysis, based once more on Spradley’s (1980) model, constituted the formation of focused observations and some selective observations. Finally, the third stage of data analysis moved towards critical discussion and the further formation of selective observations. Relevant existing academic literature and the theoretical concepts therein were used to consolidate and add depth and precision to existing observations from the second stage of data analysis and also to form further observations. Finally, and crucially, in the third stage of analysis, observations were combined into key themes that emerged from the research.

The First Case Study: Visit to the Prague Nuclear Bunker aka Bunkr Parukarka on the Communism and Nuclear Bunker Tour

The researcher, as part of a group of 27 participants, attended the Communism and Nuclear Bunker tour on Tuesday February 28, 2017. It is the principal guided tour provided by Prague Special Tours, a company established in 2010. The tour is provided twice daily, and the bunker is visited in the second half of the tour.

The Bunkr Parukarka is located at the western extreme of Parukářka Park on the edge of Prague’s Žižkov neighbourhood. A CIA intelligence document from 1957 reports that construction of the bunker was started but not finished by the Germans during the Second World War. At the time of the report, it was thought that the Czech state was continuing to build it with a plan for it to accommodate “several thousand persons” (CIA, 1957, n.p.). The bunker continues to be owned by the Czech state. There are a number of companies providing walking tours featuring it, including Prague Special Tours. The bunker is also used as a nightlife venue and it hosts a climbing wall. It is claimed the site remains ready to be used at any time if required as a civilian bunker.

The Second Case Study: A Tour of Nowa Huta Entitled The Communism Tour

The researcher as part of a group of 27 participants attended a tour of Nowa Huta, a socialist

utopian planned urban extension on the periphery of the city of Krakow on Thursday March 22, 2018. The Communism Tour is one of the principal products of the Crazy Guides tour company founded in 2004, which is run daily on request.

The online travel guide *In Your Pocket* (2018) has been one source to promote Nowa Huta as a travel destination offering a dark experience. It describes Nowa Huta as “one of only two entirely pre-planned socialist realist cities ever built” and has labeled it “Orwellian.” The other “entirely pre-planned socialist realist city” is Magnitogorsk in Russia’s Ural Mountains which, as a still elusive, mysterious, and distant twin city, perhaps also contributes to the allure of Nowa Huta for the Western visitor.

Results and Discussion

This section of the article is organized according to the themes to emerge from the data analysis. They have been termed “themes of interpretation in the walking tours.”

Themes of Interpretation in the Walking Tours: High Speed of Change to Landscape

A central theme interpreted in both walking tours, which emerged from the data analysis, was the elevated and stunning speed of modern change to have occurred in the urban landscapes visited. High speed of human-induced physical change in a landscape is a facet of modernity, which has attracted commentary from a host of well-known literary figures over the last 250 years. In both walking tours, where it was identified and discussed, it carried with it dark overtones. In both tours: the rapid change at the site(s) visited was brought about in order to fulfil great political and military ambitions; and the projects and structures built at the sites were vast in spatial scale and were of a character that was modern, partly industrial, and not intimate/human, making it all the more stunning that they had been built at high speed.

Regarding the Nowa Huta case study, the online travel guide *In Your Pocket* (2018) stated that “the decision to build . . . [the city] was rubber stamped on May 17, 1947 and over the next few years construction of a model city for 100,000 people sprung up at breakneck speed.”

During the walking tour, the guides wondered rhetorically how such a thing as the entire city of Nowa Huta could have been formed so quickly—from a utopian vision driven to such an extent by a single person (Josef Stalin), deploying the most unbridled of master planning by designers of the state, to the “breakneck” (as *In Your Pocket* term it) physical transformation of green land.

One aspect of rapid modern urban change to landscapes is the “initial” change from a rural “bucolic” as Tomlinson (2007, p. 17) terms it, to an industrial/urban landscape. The “shock of modernity,” experienced as green land quickly became urban during the British industrial revolution, as recounted by Tomlinson (2007) and H. Jennings (2012), is brought to mind. The initial rural to urban change has often been described as a process of shockingly dark brutality, “the earth seems to have been turned inside out. Its entrails are strewn about” remarked Nasmyth (1883) of a site, recently industrialized, in the UK’s Black Country (cited in H. Jennings, 2012). In fact, accounts of the rapid upheaval of rural land during the UK’s Industrial Revolution in H. Jennings book, *Pandaemonium* influenced perhaps the most eye catching and darkly compelling part of the London Olympics opening ceremony—the sudden upsurge of mill chimneys from a piece of green land.

Another aspect of the speed of modern urban physical change in a landscape is the rate of ongoing change in the urban environment, after the “initial” transformation from rural to urban has taken place. Professor Sir Peter Hall, speaking in a BBC radio documentary on *the city—a history* (BBC, 2010), described the construction of part of the UK East Coast train line through the city of Newcastle upon Tyne and an accompanying viaduct a very small distance from the ancient castle keep. He used it as an example of the speed and magnitude of physical urban change that took place in the Victorian city as well as the huge difference in regard for physical urban heritage in Victorian society as compared to current British society. Certain figures of the Victorian period such as John Ruskin and William Morris spoke publicly of feeling melancholic and disturbed by an uncontrolled rate and magnitude of change to the urban realm as well as a lack of regard for the value of conserving the city of the past.

In Prague, Bunkr Parukarka was constructed within an existing urban neighborhood, in fact in part of a civic park of formal design. The walking tour guide referred to statistics on the immense amounts of iron and concrete assembled per month during construction and the bunker's vast overall mass. The effect of the guide quoting the impressive sounding statistics, redolent with the magnitude and speed of the process of physical change to the landscape that brought the bunker into being, was partly to bewilder and stun. This is a form of dark feeling based on being disorientated by the speed of modern industrial change to a landscape, which Tomlinson (2007) and H. Jennings (2012) recognized in social experience of the industrial revolution in Britain.

Tomlinson (2007) observed that a perspective often used to avoid feeling dark or being overwhelmed by the high speed of change in the creation of an urban landscape, or in its ongoing transformations has been to rationalize the change by understanding it as primarily representing positive progress. He states, "what redeems this infernal vision is the promise that these forces can be tamed and contained in a rational-progressive—and moreover, wonderful—industrial order" (p. 17).

Asa Briggs (1993) claimed that the Victorians used the promise of progress "to sanctify much of their own destruction' of existing, pre-modern urban form" (p. 25).

There was perhaps even greater darkness when considering the formation of the Bunkr Parukarka because the high speed of change and deployment of industrial methods had been deployed motivated by paranoia, fear, and as a guard against total destruction by nuclear war, rather than by, for example, the outward looking confidence and entrepreneurial energy that as Hudson (2014) stated, many have associated with the creation of modern landscapes by British industrial venture capitalists of the Victorian period.

During the tour, when inside the bunker, one of the topics on which the guide most frequently spoke was the intense paranoia of many Communist governments at the time of the Cold War towards the possibility of a nuclear attack—in his view, greater and more all-consuming than the preoccupation felt by the governments of capitalist countries.

He was aided in his explanation by an exhibition of original Cold War artifacts in a section of the bunker. The many objects that formed part of everyday people's lives were particularly dark—posters explaining how to fit a respiratory mask to a baby and maps showing the totality of destruction that would occur to life and the city in a series of concentric circles, radiating from the epicenter of a nuclear blast. The guide measured the depth of the state's paranoia of attack by the vast amounts of money and labor they spent on military and civilian defense, an example of which he suggested was the speedy creation of the bunker.

Themes of Interpretation in the Walking Tours: Extent of Space Between Neighboring Structures in Modern Urban Landscapes

Another key theme that emerged from the data analysis was the greater abundance of "open air" between neighboring structures that can be sensed by the human being in the modern city in comparison to the premodern city. Ford (2000) described it in the following way: "the evolution of the western city over the past thousand years, from its Mediterranean origins to its diffusion on the North American continent, represents a gradual loosening of the urban fabric through the addition of various spaces" (p. 14).

In the modern city, the construction of transport corridors for trains and road-going motor vehicles, monumental urban planning and architecture, and the spatial requirements of industry have meant that cities have departed from their historic compact form. "Chasms" of open space, either at ground level or above, have been created. Vast urban areas have arisen that do not have the feeling of containment, the close proximity of mixed uses, and the structuring of life around nonmotorized forms of transport of the historic compact city.

The abundance of open air, the chasms, between structures of the modern city can, at times, be impressive to behold but can result in a dark or insecure experience for the pedestrian user. Opportunities for serendipitous human interaction and the availability of natural surveillance—the safety of seeing other humans and being seen by them—are lowered as compared to the historic, compact city. In addition, the human being is more prone to the

elements of the wind, rain, and hot sun without the protective embrace of the narrow streets and high density of the historic compact city.

In addition, the modern city has larger amounts of space devoted to industry, retail, hospitality, and transport without featuring residential space as a mixed use, as compared to the premodern city. This means it is often the case that on either side of the “chasms” of open air formed by transport corridors, monumental spaces, or industrial zones, there are structures, yet not inhabited ones (Dennis, 2008; Tagsold, 2010).

In Prague, the walking tour to Bunkr Parukarka begins with the guide leading the group on the approximately 5–10-min walk to the above-ground bunker entrance from the nearest tram stop at Olšanské náměstí. The entrance is on a hill on the western edge of Parukářka Park—itsself the result of modern monumental planning—and feels removed from the residential buildings closest to it. There is a growing sense of exposure during the walk, of leaving behind the pockets of concentration of people and vehicles at the tram stop and walking along a deserted route. The scene is truly modern in the sense of being surrounded by open air for a significant distance on all sides, yet still being in what is undoubtedly an urban area. The scene is one of those empty ragged spaces that have emerged within urban areas after the “loosening of . . . [traditional, compact] urban fabric” associated with modernity (Ford, 2000, p. 14).

The entrance to the bunker is a metal door surrounded by a concrete shell, leading to a spiral staircase, which descends into the bunker. There are commanding views from the entrance, giving some sense of the sprawling residential and industrial areas that developed in and around Prague throughout the modern period.

During the tour, when the guide reaches the entrance to the bunker, they stop the group outside the entrance and speak about the journey the thousands seeking refuge in the bunker would have made in the event of attack, leaving their homes and neighborhoods, making the same walk we had done—suddenly exposed on the open route climbing the hill to the bunker, undoubtedly feeling contemplative and scared. In this context, a human moving on foot through abundant empty space in an urban setting has similar connotations of darkness,

hostility, and control to that felt by Baudelaire in the newly created Haussmann boulevards of Paris (Frisby, 2004).

In Paris, the architect Haussmann constructed a series of boulevards that were wide, monumental, modern arterial routes supplanted onto the premodern city. Large areas of existing compact urban fabric were demolished, leaving open air bounded by the monumental grandeur of the boulevard facades. However, “the warren of [narrow historic] streets leading away from the elegance of the *grands boulevards*” (M. W. Jennings, 2006, p. 16) remained. The breadth of space between neighboring buildings and the open views that the boulevards brought were unprecedented on such a scale in central Paris, as was the monumental impression that the boulevards were designed to create (Urry, 1996).

The poet Charles Baudelaire saw darkness in both the motivation for the construction of the boulevards and their social impact. He interpreted them as a means of political and military control over the city and as venue intended solely for people of a certain socioeconomic level (Frisby, 2004).

The grand, wide principal thoroughfares of Nowa Huta evoke the *grands boulevards* of Haussmann’s Paris. During the Communism Tour, the abundance of open space often found between structures in Nowa Huta was used as a form of prop or theatrical backdrop by the guides. The guides thrived on using the visually striking extent of space in Nowa Huta to speak and gesture in front of; for example, in the wide monumental streets, the extensive public spaces encircled by wide vehicle routes separating them from their nearest buildings, and in and around the industrial complex of the steelworks. Practically, in contrast to Krakow’s Old Town, the relative abundance of open space in the streetscapes of Nowa Huta was well suited to creating a temporary forum for the guides to speak to the tour participants every time we stopped. In terms of conveying a sense of darkness to the participants regarding Nowa Huta, the guides stood in front of grand views of abundant space in the modern urban setting and gestured towards it while speaking of speed of planning and construction of the city and the political and military ambitions behind it. The extent of space around the walking tour group conveyed with gravity the latter two points.

*Themes of Interpretation in the Walking Tours:
Predominance of Communist State Control
Over Planning and Development of Land*

A final key theme to emerge from the data analysis was the vast power of the communist state to plan and bring about wholesale change of a landscape. The tours identified that the authority to develop the Bunkr Parukarka and the entire settlement of Nowa Huta—projects that altered completely the landscapes of the sites—rested with small numbers of people whose power was magnified by occupying offices of the state or being members of influential committees. The guides returned often in the tours to the sinister image of the dictator at the top of the political structure or the faceless state employee or committee within the structure exercising power, whose extent was evident in the great changes to landscape their decisions brought about.

The tour in Nowa Huta covered at length the significant extent to which creation of the entire settlement rested on the political maneuverings of a single person, Josef Stalin, who led state machinery whose reach extended over a large swathe of the world and the lives of millions of people. In his book *Cities of Tomorrow*, Peter Hall (2014) talks at length of the colossal extent of urban landscapes across a vast region of the world whose principal structures, monuments, and monumental facades are of a character influenced by Stalin. Hall creates a compellingly dark impression of the terrifying depth of power of this individual to have the finest detail of his architectural and design tastes become a reality in stone and concrete.

On a number of occasions on the Nowa Huta tour, the guides would sweep their hands horizontally across the scene around them and explain that what we could see—be it a monumental boulevard or public space or the socialist realist architectural style of the buildings—was as Stalin had wanted it. A related theme often touched upon was the thoroughly modern concept of urban master planning by architects and urban planners in the employ of the state and the idea that it was emblematic of the state possessing enormous power to determine the shape of the urban landscape. Authors such as Njoh (2009) have explored the nexus of urban planning, power, and social control.

At the Bunkr Parukarka the guide peppered his description of the planning, construction, and operation of the bunker with many names of politicians and organizations of communist officialdom that had been involved, as well as the names of the planning documents that they had created. The guide clearly appreciated the dark/darkly comic kitsch that has grown up around the names of bland, and perhaps sinister sounding, organizations and plans of this kind from communism. However, there is a deeply intense darkness about the way in which the state planned and maintained sites of nuclear protection like this. The image of blandly named departments, committees, and plans of the authoritarian state overseeing acts and interventions affecting the lives of thousands of people springs to mind (e.g., Robespierre, the Kymer Rouge, and the Nazis).

For Bertrand Russell (1946), a key feature of the transition from premodern to modern societies was that power moved from ecclesiastical structures to the state—led either by a royal, democratic, or dictatorial presence. Ecclesiastical power was central to medieval society, where it provided an impulse for or otherwise influenced the formation of human-made landscapes. For societies in which religious belief was central and even for those societies inheriting landscapes from these forebears, ecclesiastical motivations for landscape being the way it is can seem natural, coherent, and perhaps reassuringly familiar. There is a sense that direction came from God, or at the very least is based in a longstanding belief system, immovably entwined in the fabric of society and people's lives. Modern society is marked by power being in the hands of the state. Russell considered that this made it more likely that a single person would gain great authority than if a complex religious structure, imbedded deeply in society wielded great power. This included power for the state to change the landscape, which could sometimes be directed by a recently emerged or quickly changing political ideal—sometimes without much of a hinterland. When we see the evidence of this, this can seem disconcerting and sinister. Russell (1946) remarked that:

The men at the head of the vast organizations which it [the application of modern practical science] necessitates can, within limits, turn it this

way or that as they please. The power impulse thus has a scope which it never had before. The philosophies that have been inspired by scientific technique are power philosophies and tend to regard everything non-human as mere raw material (p. 399).

In the case of Nowa Huta, the power was Stalin's, to imagine and create a new city, which aided and symbolized his political and territorial ambitions. In the case of Bunkr Parukarka, the power obtained was the power to develop a vast modern structure of concrete and metal and determine the likely fate of members of the public in the event of nuclear attack.

Conclusion

This article aims to contribute to the small but growing body of academic work, discussed by Lockstone-Binney et al. (2015), which seeks to take events literature beyond the confines of the events industry and into an exploration of the impact of events on a fundamental sociocultural level, in the long term and in sectors outside of events. Frew and White's (2015) investigation in Australia of how events, which commemorate dark historical occurrences and contribute to the arena of dark tourism, impact on national identity is one publication to have previously contributed in this area. Lockstone-Binney et al. (2015) also drew attention to "the limited research attention afforded to smaller scale, local, and regional events" (p. 429) in determining the wider impact of events. This piece of research, conducted in Prague and Krakow, follows the lead set by Lockstone-Binney et al. (2015) and Frew and White (2015) in that it critically analyzes the impact of small guided walking tours operating at the local level as they contribute to setting the theoretical agenda for dark tourism, a type of tourism that resonates heavily at the societal level in that it addresses content, questions, and debate of a very high degree of intellectual, philosophical, and emotional depth, based on historical events involving human suffering, which have often had a defining role in the formation of national and regional identities.

The walking tours studied, explore, and interpret for visitors examples of urban landscapes that emerged from historical modernity under

Communism. Stone and Sharpley (2008) and Bowman and Pezzullo (2010) both made the assertion that dark events or visitor attractions, which deal with modernity—often giving attendees a vision of the enormity of change and ambition inherent in modernity—commonly extend to the darkest and most profound reaches of the dark tourism sector. This article identifies three "themes of interpretation" in the tours as they seek to understand and explain the modern urban landscapes they are concerned with and in doing so help create a meaningful dark tourism product in the destination in which they operate.

The first theme was the elevated and stunning speed of modern change to have occurred in the urban landscapes visited. During the walking tour in Krakow, the guides wondered rhetorically how such a thing as the entire city of Nowa Huta could have been formed so quickly—from a utopian vision driven to such an extent by a single person (Josef Stalin), deploying the most unbridled of master planning by designers of the state, to the "breakneck" (as In Your Pocket term it) physical transformation of green land. The dark and brutal "shock of modernity" experienced as green land quickly became urban during the British industrial revolution, as recounted by Tomlinson (2007) and H. Jennings (2012), is brought to mind.

The second theme is the greater abundance of "open air" between neighboring structures that can be sensed by the human being in the modern city, which can at times be impressive to behold but can result in a dark or insecure experience for the pedestrian user. In these circumstances, opportunities for serendipitous human interaction and the availability of natural surveillance—the safety of seeing other humans and being seen by them—are lowered as compared to the historic, compact city.

Finally, the third theme was the vast power of the state in the Communist regimes historically at work in Prague and Krakow to plan and bring about wholesale change of a landscape. The guides returned often in the tours to the sinister image of the dictator at the top of the political structure or the faceless state employee or committee within it exercising power, whose extent was evident in the great changes to landscape their decisions brought about.

This research also contributes to developing a better critical understanding of how guided walking

tours and routes can exploit the liberating, creative, and almost “subversive” power of walking in the city (De Certeau, 1984), combined with entertaining/educational content about aspects of urban landscapes, to bring about profound experiences and learning for the participant. This work also contributes to improving knowledge of the research methodologies that best interrogate the operation and impact of walking tours and routes. Guided walking tours draw on the “sensory and embodied experience” (Aoki & Yoshimizu, 2015, p. 4), when walking of one’s surroundings and of one’s position in those surroundings. Walking tours covering dark history weave together this experience of the realities of the city in the present with a guided understanding of the historical changes it has gone through. In addition, tours covering landscapes of urban modernity combine the embodied experience of walking through such landscapes with the guide’s detailed description of how the landscapes arose and replaced and changed previous iterations of urban form.

There have been epistemological and procedural disagreements in literature about how participant observation as a research method is best conducted. This work follows the approach of Spradley (1980) and Musante and DeWalt (2010), whereby the researcher is encouraged to begin observations with neither questions nor answers and form both informed by the experience of observation. The work is also informed by Kawulich (2005), who compared different traditions in participant observation concerning the issue of equality of status (or not) for the researcher and all other participants—this work considers that striving for equality of status is crucial.

In following Spradley (1980), Musante and DeWalt (2010), and Kawulich’s (2005) lead, this work continues and updates the application of participant observation. The experience of “to and fro” for the researcher—of repeated conflict and agreement between their ideas and the input of other participants and event leaders—described by Spradley (1980) and Musante and DeWalt (2010), was something the author experienced and found beneficial for forming a grounded understanding of the social situations being studied. The author developed some minor strategies towards assuring the participant observation was as open as could

be to the input of all others (operating at an equal status to the researcher). These strategies included reflecting carefully before and during the observations on what ranges of inward and outward behavior from a person participating in a walking tour in the cultural context of the cases could constitute “average” participant engagement. It was important that the researcher’s behavior when collecting data for this trip exposed them fully to the input of other participants and the tour leader. It was also important that the researcher’s behavior did not make the occasions of the walking tours that the researcher attended remarkable in comparison to other times the tours occurred.

References

- Aoki, J., & Yoshimizu, A. (2015). Walking histories, un/making places: Walking tours as ethnography of place. *Space and Culture, 18*(3), 273–284.
- BBC. (2010). The city—a history, part 2 [Radio series episode]. In BBC (Producer), *In our time*. London, UK: Author.
- Bowman, M. S., & Pezzullo, P. C. (2010). What’s so “dark” about “dark tourism?” Death, tours, and performance. *Tourist Studies, 9*(3), 187–202.
- Briggs, A. (1993). *Victorian cities*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Chalip, L. (2004). Beyond impact: A general model for sport event leverage. In B. W. Ritchie & D. Adair (Eds.), *Sport tourism: Interrelationships, impacts and issues* (pp. 226–252). Clevedon, UK: Channel View Publications.
- CIA. (1957). *Construction of a large underground shelter under Zizkov Hill in Prague*. Retrieved from <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB439/docs/Underground-Doc2.pdf>
- Davies, A. (2015). Life after a festival: Local leadership and the lasting legacy of festivals. *Event Management, 19*(4), 433–444.
- De Certeau, C. M. (1984). *The practice of everyday life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Dennis, R. (2008). *Cities in modernity: Representations and production of metropolitan space, 1840–1930*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Dickens, C. (1894). *Mugby junction* [e-book]. Retrieved from <http://www.eclp.com.na/elibrary/books/d/Mugby%20Junction.pdf>
- Duarte, P., Folgado-Fernández, J. A., & Hernández-Mogollón, J. M. (2018). Measurement of the impact of music festivals on destination image: The case of a Womad Festival. *Event Management, 22*(4), 517–526.
- Ford, L. R. (2000). *The spaces between buildings*. Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Frew, E., & White, L. (2015). Commemorative events and national identity: Commemorating death and disaster in Australia. *Event Management, 19*(4), 509–524.

- Frisby, D. (2004). Walter Benjamin's Arcades Project: A pre-history of modernity. In M. Hvattum & C. Hermansen (Eds.), *Tracing modernity: Manifestations of the modern in architecture and the city* (pp. 271–290). London, UK: Routledge.
- Giddens, A. (1990). *The consequences of modernity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Giddens, A. (1998). *Conversations with Anthony Giddens: Making sense of modernity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Hall, P. (2014). *Cities of tomorrow: An intellectual history of urban planning and design since 1880*. Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons.
- Holloway, J. (2010). Legend-tripping in spooky spaces: Ghost tourism and infrastructures of enchantment. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 28(4), 618–637.
- Hudson, P. (2014). *The industrial revolution*. London, UK: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- In Your Pocket. (2018). *Nowa Huta: Krakow's socialist realist suburb*. Retrieved from https://www.inyourpocket.com/krakow/Nowa-Huta_73840f
- Jennings, H. (2012). *Pandaemonium 1660–1886: The coming of the machine as seen by contemporary observers*. Retrieved from https://play.google.com/store/books/details/Humphrey_Jennings_Pandaemonium_1660_1886?id=JWORAAAAQBAJ&hl=en
- Jennings, M. W. (2006). Introduction. In M. W. Jennings (Ed.), *The writer of modern life: Essays on Charles Baudelaire* (pp. 1–24). Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Kawulich, B. B. (2005). Participant observation as a data collection method. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung*, 6(2).
- Kleidas, M., & Jolliffe, L. (2010). Coffee attraction experiences: A narrative study. *Turizam: Međunarodni Znanstveno-Stručni Časopis*, 58(1), 61–73.
- Lockstone-Binney, L., Holmes, K., & Robertson, M. (2015). Introduction: Events in society. *Event Management*, 19(4), 429–431.
- Long, P. (2014). Popular music, psychogeography, place identity and tourism: The case of Sheffield. *Tourist Studies*, 14(1), 48–65.
- Markwell, K., Stevenson, D., & Rowe, D. (2004). Footsteps and memories: Interpreting an Australian urban landscape through thematic walking tours. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 10(5), 457–473.
- McPherson, G., Misener, L., McGillivray, D., & Legg, D. (2017). Creating public value through parasport events. *Event Management*, 21(2), 185–199.
- Musante, K., & DeWalt, B. R. (2010). *Participant observation: A guide for fieldworkers* (2nd ed.). Lanham, MD: Rowman Altamira.
- Njoh, A. J. (2009). Urban planning as a tool of power and social control in colonial Africa. *Planning Perspectives*, 24(3), 301–317.
- Prague Special Tours. (2018). *Communism and nuclear bunker tour*. Retrieved from <http://www.prague-communism-tour.com>
- Russell, B. (1946). *History of western philosophy*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
- Spradley, J. P. (1980). *Participant observation*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Stone, P. R. (2006). A dark tourism spectrum: Towards a typology of death and macabre related tourist sites, attractions and exhibitions. *Turizam: Međunarodni Znanstveno-Stručni Časopis*, 54(2), 145–160.
- Stone, P., & Sharpley, R. (2008). Consuming dark tourism: A thanatological perspective. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(2), 574–595.
- Tagsold, C. (2010). Modernity, space and national representation at the Tokyo Olympics 1964. *Urban History*, 37(2), 289–300.
- Tomlinson, J. (2007). *The culture of speed: The coming of immediacy*. London, UK: Sage.
- Urry, J. (1996). Tourism, culture and social inequality. In Y. Apostolopoulos, S. Leivadi, & A. Yiannakis (Eds.), *The sociology of tourism: Theoretical and empirical investigations* (pp. 115–133). Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
- Visit Medway. (2018). *Dickensian medway*. Retrieved from <https://www.visitmedway.org/see-and-do/dickensian-medway/>
- Zamani-Farahani, H., & Fox, D. (2018). The contribution of rose and rosewater tourism and festival to the destination image. *Event Management*, 22(4), 541–554.

Copyright of Event Management is the property of Cognizant, LLC and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.